

SOUTH SUDAN

QUARTERLY REPORT

Q4: OCTOBER–DECEMBER

2020



UNITED NATIONS
MULTI-PARTNER
TRUST FUND

Reconciliation Stabilization Resilience



HIGHLIGHTS

National and subnational dialogues, forums and consultations on cattle migration; youth; constitution-building; COVID-19 and conflict; masculinity; and harmful practices:

1,034  participants



Court chiefs, women and youth leaders, police and religious leaders trained in housing, land and property; human rights; gender-based violence; and South Sudanese law:

205

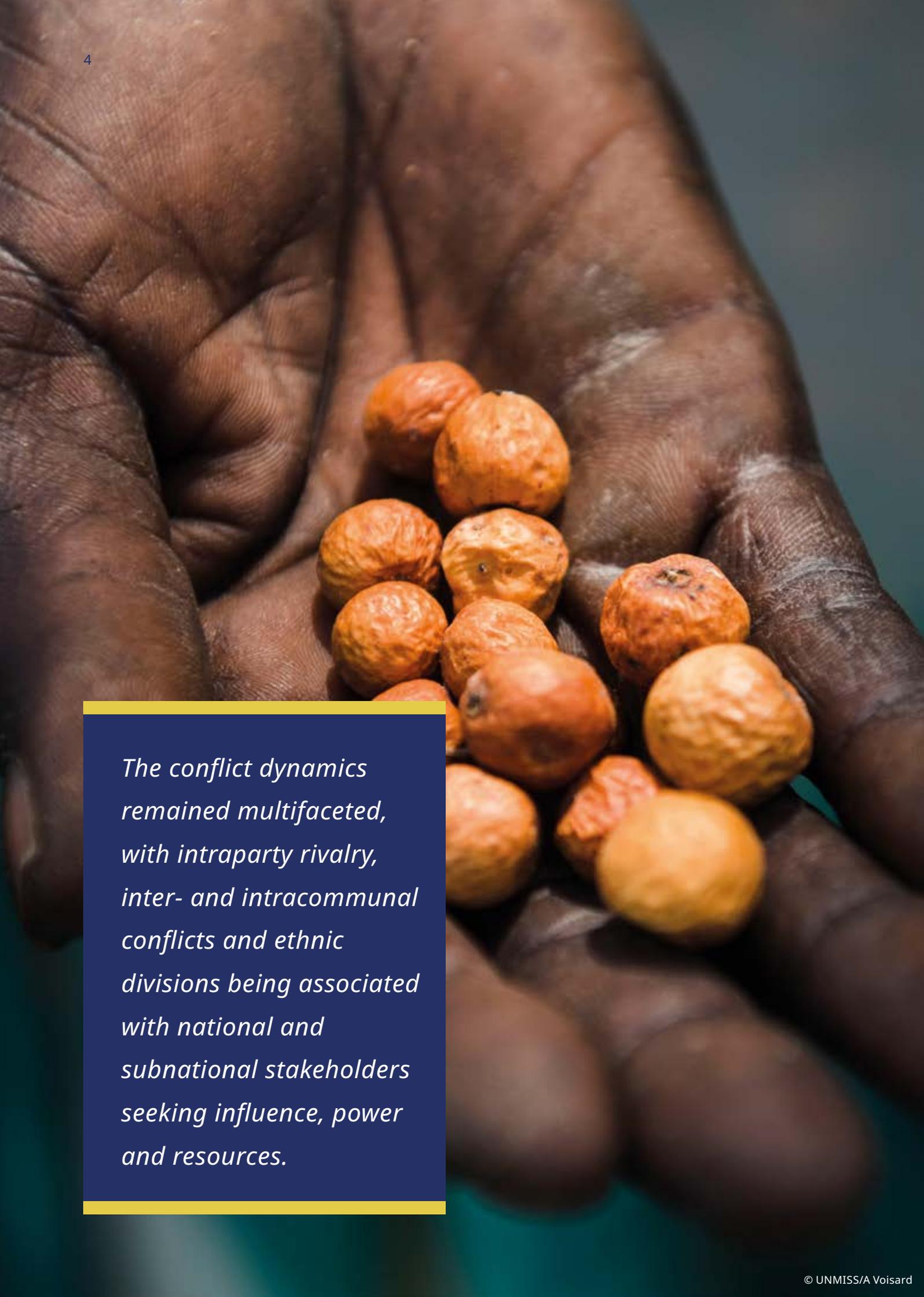
397 farmers, community-based animal health workers and women entrepreneurs **trained.**

7 community assets rehabilitated/improved:
 3 women- and girl-friendly spaces
 1 intercommunity road
 2 intercommunity bridges and 6 km of dykes



20,000 radio listeners sensitized on COVID-19 and intercommunal peace and reconciliation





The conflict dynamics remained multifaceted, with intraparty rivalry, inter- and intracommunal conflicts and ethnic divisions being associated with national and subnational stakeholders seeking influence, power and resources.

Overview of security situation in South Sudan

The general security situation in South Sudan continued to be dominated by subnational-level and localized conflict and violence, with fewer incidents being reported than in the previous quarter. As the formation of the state and local administrations moved forward, the conflict trends reflected political strife linked to power-sharing. The conflict dynamics remained multifaceted, with intraparty rivalry, inter- and intracommunal conflicts and ethnic divisions being associated with national and subnational stakeholders seeking influence, power and resources. The outbreak of fighting in Maban from 13 to 15 December was notable in this regard. The significant deficits in the transitional security arrangements, specifically the delay in the unification of forces, have played a role in fuelling the conflict, which is also influenced by a combination of factors related to the economy, such as protracted economic distress, the growing financial impact of COVID-19 and flood-related food insecurity. The weak economy, lack of resources and increased livelihood pressures spurred violence and crime, and led to rising employment-related tensions and violent protests in several states (Upper Nile, Jonglei, Unity, Lakes and Eastern Equatoria) in October and November. These impacted United Nations agencies and international aid workers through the suspension and delay of operations.

The weak economy, lack of resources and increased livelihood pressures spurred violence and crime, and led to rising employment-related tensions and violent protests in several states.

Security context in Koch

Interstate county to county violence, driven primarily by cattle-related violence between Koch and Rubkona communities, fuelled insecurity in Koch. This is best highlighted by two instances of violence in November and December that occurred in Buaw, which also saw violence in the preceding quarter. The fact that these two communities have previously engaged in notable violence, including incidents recorded in June 2020 that also drew in the Sudan People's Liberation Army in Opposition (SPLA-IO) and South Sudan National Police Service (SSNPS), highlights how subnational violence between community militias holds the potential to rapidly escalate and involve opposing armed factions. Despite this, general incidents of insecurity reported were slightly down from the previous quarter. In a different development, the 3 November attack on the World Relief compound in Koch, which led to injuries to three aid workers, represented a deterioration in the security environment for interagency partners and their projects in Koch. This deterioration was part of a trend which saw sentiments being expressed nationwide by local communities who perceived certain humanitarians' hiring practices as unfair. The situation coincided with the strained economic situation in the country.



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Although there was a reduced presence of cattle keepers in the area compared to the same quarter last year, the security context remained unchanged as multiple driving factors for insecurity remained unresolved.

Security context in Jur River

Security concerns in the Jur River region continued to arise from recurring tensions and violence stemming from cross-border seasonal migration and the presence of armed Dinka cattle keepers from Warrap. Although there was a reduced presence of cattle keepers in the area compared to the same quarter last year, the security context remained unchanged as multiple driving factors for insecurity remained unresolved.

The seasonal migration cycle and infringements of the existing conflict resolution mechanisms, such as the revitalized Marial Bai Agreement which prohibits migration with weapons, remained a fundamental driver of tensions. These areas are also susceptible to underlying conflicts of interest along political and ethnic lines that have the potential to drag security and armed actors into cattle-related violence. The incident on 1 October in which armed elements from Tonj South killed one Luo from Alur, and the subsequent violent response by the South Sudan People's Defence Forces (SSPDF) on 30 October specifically targeting the local Luo communities, reinforced the perception of alleged SSPDF complicity, which has potential to provoke further violence.

The situation may become further complicated given the firm stand by members of the regional SPLA-IO, who have indicated their intention to take action to resist the migration of Tonj cattle herders into the SPLA-IO-controlled areas. The period also saw unfolding dynamics within the SPLA-IO resulting in heightened insecurity, as demonstrated by the skirmishes between the SPLA-IO and a splinter SPLA-IO group on 19 October in Kangi.

RSRTF STEERING COMMITTEE AND SECRETARIAT

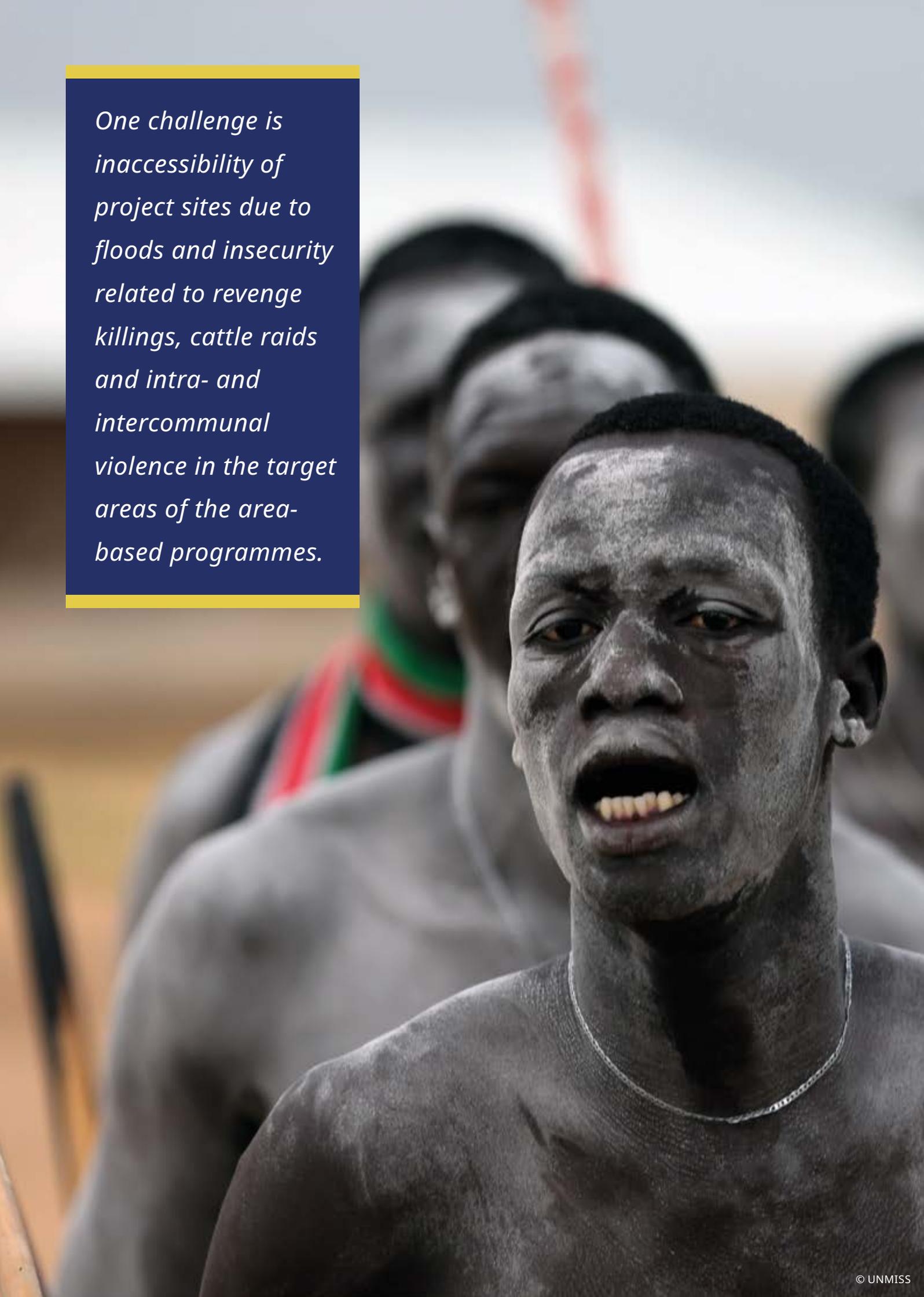
The South Sudan Reconciliation, Stabilization and Resilience Trust Fund (RSRTF) Secretariat and Steering Committee finalized the selection of projects for the Area-Based Programme for central and southern Jonglei and the Greater Pibor Administrative Area.

Four finalist proposals with an overall budget of USD 12,496,239 were approved by the Steering Committee in December 2020 and will be launched in January 2021. The Area-Based Programme lead agency is the World Food Programme, which leads the Jonglei/Greater Pibor Administrative Area Reference Group and coordinates activities by the Group's 17 partners.

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PARTNERS	PROJECT TITLE	BUDGET (USD)
World Food Programme (consortium lead), United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) Rule of Law Advisory Section (RoLAS), UNMISS Civil Affairs Division, UNMISS United Nations Police, UNMISS Political Affairs Division (PAD), World Health Organization, Nonviolent Peaceforce, Vétérinaires Sans Frontières Germany	Community violence reduction in central and southern Jonglei and the Greater Pibor Administrative Area	8,029,724
United Nations Development Programme, UNMISS United Nations Police	Community security for the most vulnerable groups in Jonglei State and the Greater Pibor Administrative Area	1,197,231
United Nations Children's Fund, International Organization for Migration (IOM)	Providing access to quality learning through secondary school education and functional adult literacy in Jonglei State and the Greater Pibor Administrative Area	1,700,000
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, UNMISS Human Rights Division, Save the Children, Community Empowerment for Progress Organisation	Reducing violence and intercommunal conflict in Jonglei State and the Greater Pibor Administrative Area by preventing the abduction of women and children and facilitating their release	1,569,284
TOTAL		12,496,239

One challenge is inaccessibility of project sites due to floods and insecurity related to revenge killings, cattle raids and intra- and intercommunal violence in the target areas of the area-based programmes.



CHALLENGES



The COVID-19 outbreak in South Sudan continued to disrupt the implementation of the RSRTF activities and projects due to restrictions on gathering. The uncertainty that remains around travel due to the COVID-19 situation is also complicating the planning of field visits and delaying monitoring processes.



Inaccessibility of project sites due to floods and insecurity related to revenge killings, cattle raids and intra- and intercommunal violence in the target areas of the area-based programmes.



Access challenges to the SPLA-IO-controlled areas (Baggari in Western Bahr el Ghazal)

Mitigation measures

The RSRTF and partners continued adjusting implementation mechanisms to overcome the challenges. They continued to utilize creative and safe means of communication and outreach (e.g., shifting to virtual meeting spaces; using mass media for raising awareness, outreach and sensitization activities; gathering information through phones), and remote implementation. Partners also further leveraged partner presence on the ground to gain comprehensive insight into local dynamics and contextual awareness, and to strengthen communities' leadership in and support for the Fund's activities. All activities followed the COVID-19 health measures, including reducing the number of participants in events, respecting social distancing rules and providing handwashing stations and masks.



TYPE OF PROJECT

Area-based programme

PROJECT TITLE

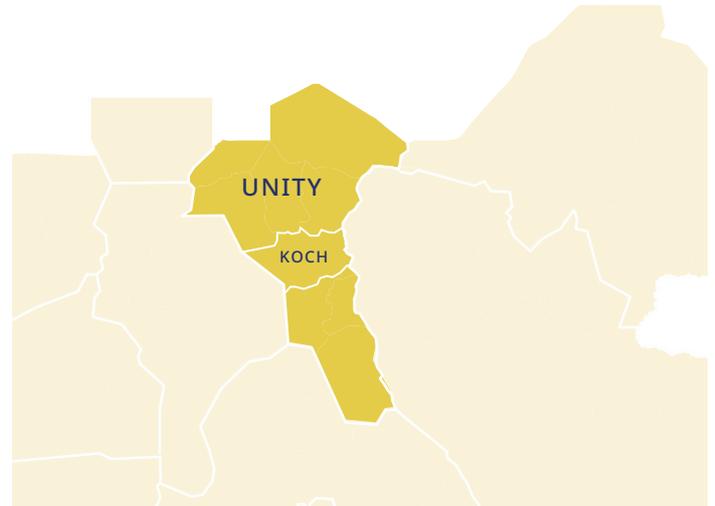
Restoring peaceful coexistence for better livelihoods in Koch

TARGET AREAS

Koch County in Unity State

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

World Relief, CARE, Danish Refugee Council, Mercy Corps



The RSRTF area-based programme in Koch advanced its interventions this quarter with tangible outputs and observed their short-term impacts on the lives of the target communities despite the ongoing contextual challenges.

These challenges include protracted insecurity due to the proliferation of small arms, militarization of the youth, historical grievances related to the war, cattle raiding, political divisions, floods and COVID-19 restrictions, which affected programme implementation and timely delivery of anticipated results. The peace committees and chiefs' courts, supported by the partners, have successfully continued resolving conflicts and holding court cases among the community members. Thanks to the infrastructure built for the courts, the chiefs have privacy to reduce interference from opponents and hecklers and are able to adjudicate cases year-round, which was not possible before, due to the seasonal challenges for court proceedings under trees. A good number of community leaders and chiefs were trained on good governance, legislation and response to and prevention of gender-based violence (GBV), as well as putting them into practice. This is building trust among the population in the formal justice system. The resilience-building efforts are contributing to reinforcing social cohesion and economic linkages between neighbouring communities, addressing food security issues, and empowering the most vulnerable groups with education and alternative livelihoods, as well as income generating options.

Peace committees

The peace committees continued addressing local disputes to strengthen the rule of law, safety and security. During the last quarter of 2020, the six peace committees, supported by the Danish Refugee Council and CARE, mediated 14 land disputes and raised awareness on housing, land and property rights for 98 people (61 percent women) in Bang and Kuachlual payams in Koch County. Due to COVID-19 restrictions on meeting in larger groups the awareness-raising activities were conducted through house-to-house visits.

Rule of law

World Relief continued strengthening local capacities in the rule of law. In the absence of formal courts in Koch to adjudicate criminal cases, chiefs' courts have continued to adjudicate all cases, including sensitive ones that should be referred to statutory courts. These include cases of murder, manslaughter and serious GBV cases, such as kidnapping, abduction, rape, and early and forced marriage. Although the presence of guns in the hands of civilians poses a security challenge for chiefs when presiding over court cases, their security is strengthened through the deployment of police. This quarter, World

Relief trained 20 (30 percent women) chiefs, police and women and youth leaders in South Sudanese legislation and other relevant customary laws. In addition, three monthly chiefs' forums were held in Koch and Bang, attended by 77 (28 percent women) chiefs, local leaders and women and youth leaders. The forums discussed issues affecting women and youth, human rights and challenges affecting the court justice system, as well as identification of harmful traditional practices in communities. World Relief also continued to strengthen the chiefs' courts in record-keeping, documentation and observing sessions by trained court observers. Within the reporting period, 96 cases were observed, 88 of which were resolved and properly recorded. The Danish Refugee Council continued raising awareness and sensitization among returnees, internally displaced persons, court chiefs, youth groups and community leaders. Within the quarter, 468 (23 percent female) individuals were reached with messages on housing, land and property rights, principles of non-discrimination and rights to basic services.

Good governance

The partners also continued efforts to enhance local capacities in good governance. One hundred community leaders (28 percent women), including acting commissioners, executive directors, payam administrators and women leaders were provided with refresher training on good governance. The participants stated that the absence of functioning law enforcement agencies and strong institutions at the county level were major drivers of the frequent and rampant cattle raiding among the youth which destabilizes the general security situation in Koch. CARE also conducted a forum on women leadership in public affairs with 25 participants (44 percent women), including village savings and loan group members, peace committee members, police and women leaders in Bang.

GBV prevention and response

CARE continued the efforts to enhance local GBV prevention and response capacities. The GBV referral pathway was updated in October 2020 as a result of concerted efforts by the protection partners and local authorities, and disseminated through various women- and girl-friendly spaces and during

community awareness activities. In addition, CARE trained 60 (47 percent women) chiefs, savings and loan groups, religious leaders, nutrition workers and youth on basics of GBV, case management, referral pathways and psychological first aid.

The partner also continued dialogue sessions on masculinity and harmful practices, and gender roles in conflict, peace and reconciliation in Koch. This quarter, two meetings were held in Koch town with 32 (57 percent male) community members.

CARE also progressed in provisioning the communities with enhanced women- and girl-friendly spaces. This quarter, three women- and girl-friendly spaces, in Perpet, Jahjah and Jaak payams, were rehabilitated and equipped with psychosocial support materials for creative and art-based activities as life skills. To date, three sets of women have graduated from these centres.

CARE equipped the new women's centre in Mirmir and the one-stop centre in Koch. Sets of sports items were also provided to six football clubs for youth in Koch, Bhang and Mirmir to engage them in sports activities while enhancing social cohesion and reducing youth violence.

CARE also provided information on responding to sexual and GBV cases with case management, counselling, legal aid and referral to partners' services. To date, 12 sexual and GBV cases (two this quarter) have been reported to police and managed by CARE.

Second chance education

The partners in Koch started offering 'second chance' education (SCE) for youth and adults, mostly women, who were denied educational opportunities due to the conflict and harmful and discriminatory social norms. Ninety-nine SCE students (80 percent female) in Bang and Koch started classes at primary school level. The community resource centre in Koch was handed over to the county authorities for SCE. The Bhang secondary school is also being used for SCE classes while formal classes are closed due to the COVID-19 restrictions.

Community assets via Cash for Work

Mercy Corps continued rehabilitation of community transportation infrastructure between neighbouring communities in Koch. This is vital for sustaining the livelihoods of the communities, intercommunity connectedness and short-term income generation for unemployed male youth as part of conflict prevention strategies. It engaged 330 community members (62 percent male youth) through Cash for Work to rehabilitate the intercommunity road and two bridges between Koch town and Bang (Gany), as well as 6 kilometres of dykes in Mirmir and Gany payams that were hit hard by the floods. The repaired assets improved crossing for cars and pedestrians and provided access to the markets. The communities made in-kind contributions of materials such as poles and soil, ensuring their ownership of the intercommunity asset rehabilitation processes.



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Food security

The partners' efforts to strengthen food security in the target areas started bringing visible results in the form of increased harvests, which in turn improved the supply of vegetables in Koch and Mirmir markets. The programme participants were able to supply about 2 tons of okra, kale, tomatoes, jute melon, eggplant, onion and amaranths to the markets, which had experienced great demand, but would have had very limited supply and diversity of vegetables without the intervention. Within the reporting period, Mercy Corps trained 200 new farmers (50 percent female) in improved farming practices with a focus on vegetable gardening in Boaw, Mirmir, Ngony, Gany and Kuachlual payams. Twelve additional demonstration gardens were established in Kuachlual, Gany, Ngony and Jaak payams. One hundred and forty households were provided with agricultural inputs (seeds and tools) in Mirmir, Ngony and Jaak. The additional income the farmers were able to obtain by selling their harvests allowed them to increase their income and improve their dietary diversity compared to 2019.

Community-based savings and loan groups

CARE and Mercy Corps continued supporting six village savings and loan groups and 53 self-help groups. These groups have proved to be effective mechanisms to enable community members who otherwise would have no access to financial services to save and obtain loans. The programme helps address socioeconomic issues and supports entrepreneurship for women. Twenty-seven self-help groups that had been formed earlier saved around USD 22,346 and were the beneficiaries of 103 credit transactions with a total value of over USD 9,200. These figures are considerably higher than in previous quarters due to the increased support the partners provided in terms of monitoring and mentoring the activities of the self-help groups this quarter. In addition, 22 women entrepreneurs (grouped in teams of three) received start-up grants of about USD 100. Finally, 57 self-help group women members in Koch (in addition to 140 who had been trained previously) were trained in income generating activities and business skills to sustain their progress and empower them.

TYPE OF PROJECT

Area-based programme

PROJECT TITLE

Mitigating livestock-related violence in the border areas of Western Bahr el Ghazal and Warrap States

TARGET AREAS

Western Bahr el Ghazal: Jur River County (Udici, Rocrocdong, Kuajena, Alur)

Warrap: Gogrial West (Kuach North, Kuach South), Tonj North (Manloor, Pagol), Tonj South (Wathalel, Yar, Tonj, Mayangnok).

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), IOM, UNMISS RoLAS



The RSRTF area-based programme in the interstate areas of Western Bahr El Ghazal and Warrap has seen considerable progress in bolstering intercommunity and inter-youth dialogue and commitments.

One of the main achievements was the inclusive facilitation of the interstate Pre-Migration Conference on the revitalized Marial Bai Agreement (MBA). This brought together key communities and stakeholders involved in the seasonal movement of cattle, who discussed the already observable positive role and impact of the MBA in preventing cattle-related violence, as well as areas for improvement in terms of scope, inclusivity and more adequate compensation plans for farmers. The youth conference, which brought together young cattle keepers and farmers in Warrap town and Tonj South, promoted peaceful coexistence and sought creative ways for a peaceful and safer cattle migration season in 2021. UNMISS RoLAS made significant progress at the political, technical and community levels to advance the establishment of the mobile special courts (MSCs) in ensuring the buy-in and support of the local and national governments and community leaders. To improve food security through enhancing livestock productivity, the RSRTF partners are strengthening the capacity of community-based animal health workers and undertaking mass cattle vaccination.

Pre-Migration Conference on Marial Bai Agreement

Preparatory grassroots consultation forums

In preparation for the Pre-Migration Conference on the revitalized MBA and to inject the voices and concerns of the grassroots communities into the discussions and outcomes of the conference, IOM, in collaboration with UNMISS RoLAS, UNMISS Civil Affairs Division, local authorities and other peace actors conducted eight grassroots consultation forums involving 300 local leaders and opinion shapers in different conflict hotspots within the two states on 14–18 November 2020.

In Warrap State and Jur River County of Western Bahr el Ghazal State, the communities were largely positive about the MBA and credited it with improved communal harmony, reduced hostilities during the cattle migration season and a growing culture of dialogue as a constructive way of solving intercommunal challenges. However, in Wau County,

in areas under SPLA-IO control, the communities were more ambivalent towards the MBA and described it as a mechanism that encourages a culture of impunity in which accountability for atrocities is not effective. All communities consulted expressed similar challenges, including insecurity arising from possession of firearms by the civilian population, lack of inclusiveness of some communities in the MBA, inadequacy or dissatisfaction with the terms of the current compensation grid in the MBA, and weak accountability and justice mechanisms to address serious crimes. The communities recommended inclusion of other neighbouring communities (who take part in the cattle migration season) in the MBA; speedy deployment of the MSCs; deployment of police in cattle migration routes and hotspots; disarmament; and revision of compensation, especially for crops. The reports from the grassroots consultations were presented at the beginning of the 2020 Pre-Migration Conference to inform deliberations and the eventual outcome of the conference.

Pre-Migration Conference

Under the leadership of the two state governments, FAO, IOM and UNMISS RoLAS, in collaboration with other peace actors and local authorities, held a four-day Pre-Migration Conference (25–29 November 2020) to reinvigorate stakeholders' commitment to the MBA and mobilize momentum for participants to work together for a peaceful and safer 2021 cattle migration season. The 140 delegates included cattle keepers (50) mainly from Warrap, farmers (60) mainly from Jur River and Wau areas in Western Bahr el Ghazal, government delegations from the two states, and peace partners and actors from both states, including United Nations agencies, civil society organizations, community-based organizations and several high-ranking security officials from the SSPDF and SPLA-IO.

During the conference, prevailing challenges were discussed and resolutions towards addressing them were made. The two state governors pledged to work jointly to address the challenge of insecurity fuelled by the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in the hands of civilians. On the issue of broader inclusivity in the MBA, it was resolved to include Tonj East (Warrap) communities in the agreement, and the desire was expressed to include Lakes State

communities at a later date. On the dissatisfaction with the existing compensation plan, the conference tasked the Inter-State Coordinating Committee on Seasonal Cattle Movement and chiefs to lead the review of the compensation rates.

The presence of senior commanders of the SSPDF and SPLA-IO was seen as a positive step towards finding lasting solutions to insecurity-related issues in target areas. However, the conference also experienced some critical challenges. The presence of SPLA-IO commanders stifled the active participation of civilians from SPLA-IO areas. Further, delegates from the SPLA-IO, including the participating senior military officials, expressed dissatisfaction with the existing MBA, alleging that the agreement has favoured cattle keepers at the expense of farming households. Unconfirmed reports about the early arrival of cattle in some areas of Western Bahr el Ghazal resulted in a walkout threat by SPLA-IO delegates. Partner-led negotiations, aided by the hosting governor, enabled the conference to progress to its conclusion but the SPLA-IO delegation declined to sign the Conference Resolution. The SPLA-IO's standpoint for an urgent need for complementary high-level dialogue was beyond the current scope of the project.

The RSRTF partners concurred that despite the challenges mentioned earlier, the conference realized its overall objective of bringing stakeholders together to renew their commitment to the agreement and to deliberate on ways of championing a more peaceful and safer cattle migration season in 2021.

Workshop for peace committees implementing the revitalized MBA

From 17 to 19 December 2020, IOM and UNMISS RoLAS co-hosted, with the support of the UNMISS Civil Affairs Division and local peace actors, a three-day workshop for peace committees implementing the MBA. The participants included the Inter-State Coordinating Committee on Seasonal Cattle Movement, the Monitoring Committee and the Dispute Resolution Committee, and aimed at strengthening internal and external coordination and collaboration within committees, as well with external stakeholders, including peace and justice actors and local authorities. As a result of the workshop, the



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peace committees developed a basic coordination framework and joint bi-annual workplan.

Inter-youth dialogue

IOM continued inter-youth dialogue in selected hotspots with the aim of stimulating youth commitment to addressing cattle migration challenges and conflicts using peaceful and constructive methods. This resulted in enhanced understanding of and adherence to the MBA. Two inter-youth dialogues, in Warrap town and Tonj South, brought together 70 youth leaders from both cattle keeper and farmer communities to address challenges concerning their localities and to find creative ways to work together for peaceful and safer cattle migration in the coming seasons. The youth greatly appreciated the platform to meet, interact and talk among themselves, and in both locations they resolved to promote peaceful coexistence between their communities and also to reach out to each other for early warning and de-escalation of tension or conflict between their communities. The recent Conflict and Social Assessment undertaken by IOM in Tonj South indicated that the youth from Kuajena

and Tonj South involved in the inter-youth dialogue have been reaching out to each other at times of intercommunal conflict and as a result of their efforts some stolen cattle have been successfully recovered and safely returned to their owners.

Mobile special courts

The RSRTF partners continued their efforts to strengthen accountability and rule of law through the establishment of dedicated MSCs and dispute-resolution mechanisms in the targeted interstate areas. This quarter, RoLAS made significant progress at the political, technical and community levels to advance the establishment of the MSCs. Through a series of negotiations and discussions, RoLAS obtained the two governors' full buy-in on the establishment of MSCs, and the governors in turn held a preliminary meeting with the Chief Justice and submitted a formal request and draft MSC establishment order on 11 December. Moreover, government officials identified personnel to serve as part of the dedicated justice team and nominated traditional leaders to serve as assessors and advisers to the statutory judge who will head the MSCs.

Together with other UNMISS partners, RoLAS held a five-day workshop for the nominees. The workshop focused on the roles of justice actors; mainstreaming gender and human rights; investigation; prosecution and adjudication of serious crimes committed in the context of cattle raiding; witness and victim protection; and case management. The joint session with the members of the MBA committees clarified the respective roles of the MBA committees and the MSCs, and served as an initial step to develop a framework for cooperation between them.

Research on harmful and inequitable social and gender norms

In December 2020, IOM and TOCH (the Organisation for Children's Harmony, a local non-governmental organization and IOM's implementing partner) conducted qualitative research on gender attitudes, behaviours and norms in Tonj South County of Warrap State (Wargiir, Tonj Town and Malual-Muok payams) and Jur River County in Western Bahr el Ghazal State (Kuajena and Mapel-Alur payams). The aim of the research was to develop an effective, contextual and evidence-based approach for challenging the key gender and social norms which underpin the cattle-related conflict in the area, especially those related to the normalization of violence as a key component of masculinity. A total of 315 persons were engaged in the research. The findings will be used to contextualize the adaptation of the current draft gender transformative dialogue curriculum that was developed by IOM in November 2020, which will be piloted in Jur River County and Tonj South County from February 2021.

The qualitative research found that toxic masculinities are key drivers of violence in the target communities. In a focus group discussion with youth in Tonj town, it was mentioned that "a man who does not beat his wife to discipline her when she misbehaves is called 'abuna' or 'pastor'... either he is weak or beaten by his wife", implying that he is open to be ridiculed and is 'not man enough'. In other words, violence against women in intimate relationships is seen as a norm. The study also confirmed that boys are socialized to defend their communities even if that means

resorting to violence. A respondent in a youth group mentioned that "a boy is brought up to be a warrior to defend his community... he should be strong... and if he does not have these qualities he will be called a coward and lazy". This is a major contributor to intercommunal violence because 'defending their land' also implies attacking other communities in competition for resources (e.g., grazing land, cattle, water). In addition, the study found that women and girls are seen as a source of cattle for dowries. One male respondent in Malual-Muok stated that "girls are our banks. When a girl is born in the family we know that we will get resources through her dowry.... She has no choice on who and when to marry as long as someone brings enough cows". This commodification of women and girls is a contributor to gender inequality as they are largely perceived as a source of income and are not respected and given opportunities to make their own choices or to go to school. The men who marry such girls abuse them throughout their lives on the basis that they paid many cows to marry them.

Livestock vaccination and treatment campaign

FAO continued the delivery of animal health services in Jur River (Western Bahr el Ghazal) and Gogrial West, Tonj North and Tonj South (Warrap) with the support of the local partners. To date, 170,907 animals have been vaccinated and 30,255 have been treated. By design, FAO's vaccination and treatment campaigns were conducted in synergy with other FAO projects, including its Emergency Livelihood Response Programme.

To support animal health campaigns, FAO relies on the network of community-based animal health workers, who routinely receive training and inputs to support livestock health activities. To date, a total of 140 animal health workers have been trained and deployed in the four counties to deliver the service and are being backstopped, supervised and monitored by livestock technical officers. One hundred and eight community-based animal health workers were trained during the reporting period.

PROJECT TYPE

Small grant

PROJECT TITLE

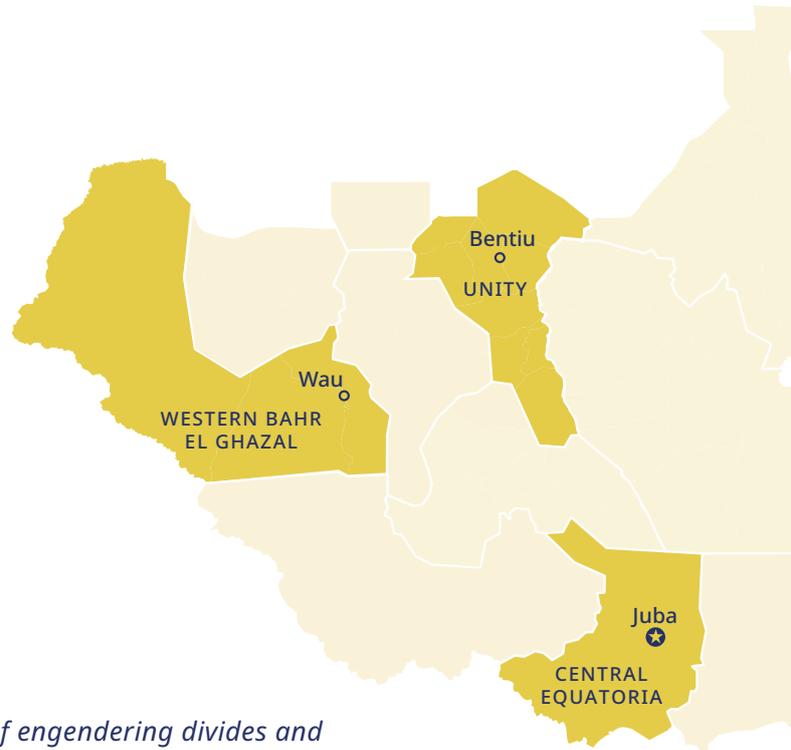
Promoting peace and solidarity in the face of COVID-19 in Juba, Bentiu and Wau

TARGET AREAS

Juba, Central Equatoria State; Bentiu, Unity State; and Wau, Western Bahr-el Ghazal

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER

IOM



The spread of COVID-19 in South Sudan poses risks of engendering divides and exacerbating existing ones, contributing to the continuation of conflict, while at the same time undermining confidence in the peace process and recently formed government.

RSRTF partners are promoting peaceful coexistence and social cohesion, and combating stigmatization and engendering the cooperation needed to limit and respond effectively to the spread of the disease.

IOM, with the key national civil society partners (Community Empowerment for Progress Organization and Action for Conflict Resolution) are training women and youth-led community-based organizations on mediation, conflict resolution and negotiation, as well as supporting them in encouraging messages of solidarity and in combating hate speech.

The partners rolled out a series of training exercises on conflict mediation in relation to COVID-19, negotiation and reconciliation, starting with training in Wau, with the participation of eight women- and youth-led organizations. Similar training will be rolled out in Juba and Bentiu.

The project also creates media platforms for community-based organizations and the communities that they represent to interface with relevant government bodies regarding the COVID-19 response. IOM and the civil society organization partners reached an estimated 24,000 people through radio talk shows in Wau with guests from the Ministry of Health. The

partners are developing more messages for radio programming and talk shows for Juba and Bentiu via Samar FM and Bakhita Radio.



PROJECT TYPE

Small grant

PROJECT TITLE

Targeted support to peace implementation – enhancing political and civic space

TARGET AREAS

Nationwide

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER

UNMISS Political Affairs Division (PAD)



The UNMISS PAD is working towards bolstering a culture of political discourse in South Sudan to allow political actors to build cohesion and understanding on key aspects and issues of governing for successful implementation of the peace agreement and a sustainable transition to a pluralistic democracy, while ensuring the meaningful participation of women, youth and civil society.

Despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 restrictions, the partner was able to undertake the next round of the Political Parties Forum at the national and subnational levels and a series of workshops on constitution-building and federalism, as well as conduct two research projects, on women's participation in party politics and on the impact of COVID-19 on engagement of women and youth in the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS).

Political Parties Forum

UNMISS PAD continued the thematic series of national forums on strengthening the role of political parties in transition in a hybrid virtual and socially distanced onsite format. The forum, held in Juba on 9–10 December 2020 under the title 'Strategic Communication for Effective Leadership', was attended by over 50 delegates comprising high-ranking national-level participants and, for the first time, nominated representatives from the state level (27 percent women). Participants were keen to discuss the militarization of politics and the move to a culture of political plurality and dialogue. The seminar addressed the strategic

perspective on communication for political parties, and issues discussed included primary considerations for political parties when publishing messages, talking to media or other political actors, and communicating inside their own parties. A coaching session was organized to provide general feedback on the participating political parties' strategic communication plans. The forum was followed by a radio talk show on 15 December, co-facilitated by UNMISS PAD on Radio Miraya, to discuss the role of political leaders in enhancing effective communication. Five members of different political parties participated in a panel discussion, which was later opened up for public discussion. Calls to the station by the public included praise of the inclusion of state-level representatives in the Political Parties Forum seminars. The participation of the public enriched the quality of debate and introduced a wider dimension and exposure for the political actors outside Juba.

Workshop on federalism

On 28 October 2020, the Ministry of Federal Affairs, together with the UNMISS PAD, the United Nations Development Programme and International Institute

for Democracy and Electoral Assistance organized a two-day consultative workshop to assist in the development of a policy framework to shape the policy direction of the ministry, in line with its mandate as stipulated in the R-ARCSS. The ministry, with the support of a national expert, had previously developed a draft policy framework and the working session was convened to finalize development of this framework. The workshop aimed to do this through the participation and contribution of different stakeholders, who, through discussion and sharing their experiences, generated additional inputs to the draft policy framework, and mapped and established collaborative mechanisms between stakeholders and development partners.

Workshops on constitution-building process

UNMISS PAD, in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme and International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, continued the series of consultative workshops on the permanent constitution-making process in South Sudan to embed the agendas of women, youth and civil society and inclusive political participation throughout the entire process and its outcome – the Permanent Constitution. Following the first workshop, which included civil society organizations, and was held during the last quarter (27–28 August), the series of events in the fourth quarter involved women leaders, political leaders and youth representatives.

Women

The workshop included 44 women leaders and was held on 13 October 2020. Issues discussed were the predominance of elite bargaining, the limited inclusion of the popular voice and the patriarchal nature of processes in South Sudan, as well as women's participation, which can create avenues for helping other vulnerable groups to overcome barriers to meaningful participation and ensure inclusion and diversity. Another subject of discussion was the importance of planning and strategizing with an aim of embedding the agendas of women (including their views and aspirations) throughout the

entire constitution-building process, as well as in the Permanent Constitution.

Youth

The consultative workshop on the role of youth in the upcoming permanent constitution-making process, which was held on 20–21 November 2020, engaged more than 50 youth representatives from the R-ARCSS implementation mechanisms, political parties, student organizations, civil society, media and faith-based organizations. The workshop discussed federalism, issues of boundaries and national identity and the youth's role and participation in addressing these challenges, including disenfranchisement of the wider youth constituency in important national issues and processes, adequate representation of youth in the constitution-making process (which should not be politicized), unawareness of civic rights and constitutional obligations and lack of legislations on youth related issues, as well as 'fissure'. The term fissure refers to intimidation of youth by youth serving in security organs, and the nominal roles of youth leaders in the Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity Cabinet and other R-ARCSS mechanisms, as they are often handpicked by those in power. The workshop concluded with the youth leaders renewing the commitment to work together towards adequate youth representation in the upcoming permanent constitution-making process.

Political parties

The workshop, 'Enhancing Political Party Leaders' Engagement in the Constitution-Building Process', was designed around broad objectives to assess needs, increase participants' knowledge about the process and share the vision of the constitution-making process with the national political actors. The 60 workshop participants included the Minister of Information, Minister of Defence, Minister of Public Services, Minister of Federal Affairs, Minister of Agriculture, Deputy Speaker of the Transitional National Legislative Assembly, members of the diplomatic community, heads of different institutions and senior members of different political parties.

Research on women's participation in party politics

The South Sudan Women, Peace and Security Monitoring and Advocacy Group, through the administration of questionnaires and direct interviews, collected data on women's representation within the 14 registered political parties in Juba and the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare. The results of the survey can serve as a reference guide to address the under-representation of women and to strengthen their meaningful participation in political institutions in South Sudan. It also highlights good practices, strategies and mechanisms, as well as success stories and lessons learned, that can contribute to overcoming the barriers to women's political participation. Some of the key barriers for women in politics identified were:

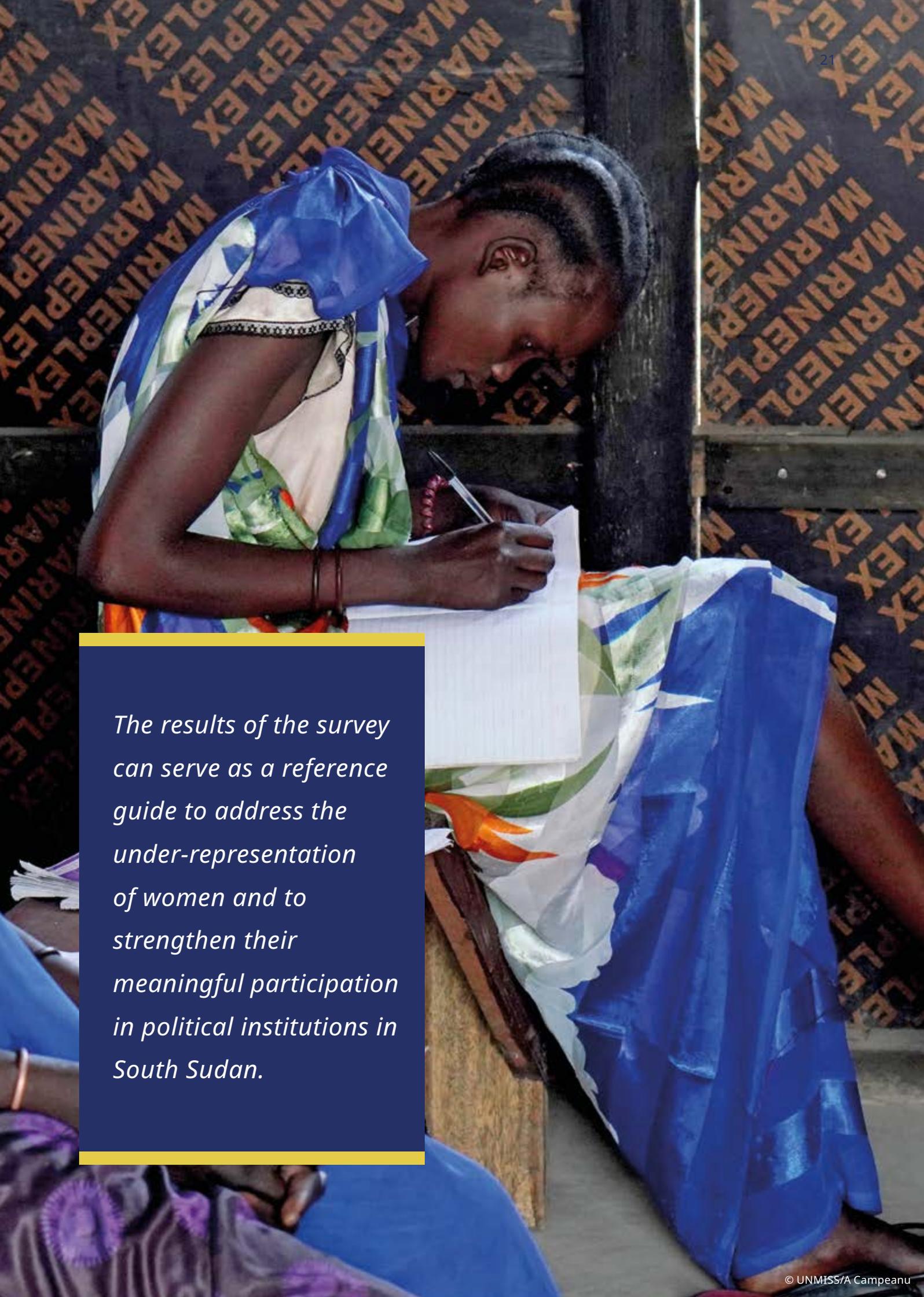
- **Barriers to entry:** Almost 50 percent of the respondents indicated that cultural norms and stereotypes pose the greatest challenges for policymakers to increase women's representation and qualitative participation.
- **Normative and legal frameworks:** Almost half the respondents also indicated that the absence of gender equality policies and legal regulatory frameworks (e.g., the Constitution and election laws) are institutional barriers affecting the promotion of women's participation.
- **Cultural norms and financial and technical resources:** There is unwillingness of actors to promote women into their ranks and respective careers. More than 50 percent of respondents indicated that the lack of solidarity among women, financial resources and skills, together with the high level of illiteracy among women, are additional challenges or obstacles to women's representation and meaningful political participation.

Research on impact of COVID-19 on engagement of women and youth in R-ARCSS implementation

The Community Empowerment for Progress Organization's research on the implementation of the peace agreement had to be slightly adjusted because of the impact of COVID-19. The research, conducted in Juba, Yei, Nimule, Makala, Rumbek and Wau, focused on the socioeconomic and political implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on women, and also on how to plan for the engagement of women and youth in the post-COVID-19 period. Over 69 percent of the respondents said COVID-19 has negatively impacted the political engagement of women and young people, and that the restrictions empowered state authorities to control civic gatherings, and this has reduced political activities.

The research included key informant interviews (500 women, 300 youth (100 female, 200 male), focus group discussions (1,200 women, 1,500 youth (500 female, 1,000 male)) and a desk review. Some of the key recommendations from the research are:

- Disseminate information on meaningful enforcement of the target for 35 percent representation of women across all government institutions and inclusion of young people in the face of the COVID-19.
- Initiate localization of United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325, 2250 and 2419 across the country.
- Encourage women and young people to use social media platforms for engagement on meaningful political participation.
- Increase the use of technology platforms such as radio talk shows, cell phone messaging and social media for increasing public awareness on COVID-19.
- Increase advocacy and public sensitization on COVID-19 prevention and protection of women's human rights, including schoolgirls' rights, in the face of the COVID-19.
- Raise public awareness on the United Nations Secretary-General's call for conflicting parties to observe a ceasefire during the pandemic period.



The results of the survey can serve as a reference guide to address the under-representation of women and to strengthen their meaningful participation in political institutions in South Sudan.

PROJECT TYPE

Small grant

PROJECT TITLE

Empowering the grassroots – linking national and subnational processes

TARGET AREAS

Nationwide

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

UNMISS Civil Affairs Division



The UNMISS Civil Affairs Division resumed efforts to link national and subnational actors and processes through the second of the series of ‘Our Peace’ forums under the RSRTF project.

The forum, themed ‘Identity Politics, Unity and Diversity’, was held in Juba on 1–3 December 2020 with 70 participants from all 10 states, and Juba. The forum provided participants with the opportunity to engage government representatives (ministers); notable South Sudan public figure Francis Deng; the United Nations Special Advisor on the Prevention of Genocide and his staff (from New York via video conference); UNMISS senior officials; Core Group advisers from the University of Juba; and RSRTF donors, including the Swedish and Norwegian Embassies.

The themes discussed included identity politics and how it drives government decisions and conflict; identifying what constitutes hate speech, how it impacts society and how to address and counter it; shared experiences of participants; possibilities for and benefits of diversity within a national identity to strengthen unity; and ways forward for constructing a national identity. The forum included a call for unity, growth and development in South Sudan to start from the grassroots level by relying on and utilizing local resources, knowledge and traditional mechanisms for conflict resolution and justice.

The participants formulated action plans to advance positive identity constructs that increase social and political cohesion, including intercommunal dialogue; connecting cattle camp youth through exchange visits; dissemination of R-ARCSS and awareness campaigns on the effects of hate speech; promotion of shared culture and values through a variety of media platforms; training for journalists on language sensitivities; and tackling issues of dowry and cattle raids, among others.

Following the forum in Juba, UNMISS field offices engaged state-level participants in ‘feedback forums’ at the local level to gather reactions, opinions and advice to advance the discussions on identity and hate speech in communities. Activities related to the forum continued to be carried out during the reporting period.

HUMAN INTEREST STORY

Nyamuka Bum is a 40-year-old resident of Bhang, who used to be a tea seller at the Koch market. However, her earnings were not enough to meet even the most basic needs of her children. When she learned about the recruitment to the village savings and loan groups (VSLAs) by CARE, she went to register and became a member of the Bang VSLA group. Membership of the group allowed her to save 40,000 South Sudanese pounds in the first cycle (nine months), which she used to add the making and selling of chapatis to her small tea business. This turned out to be the right strategy as it led to a significant increase in her income. She used the additional profit to buy a cow which she uses to provide milk for her children. She is also able to provide her children with the necessities, such as food and clothes. Nyamuka's success did not benefit only her – she also became a role model for other women in the community and inspired many of them to join the VSLA groups. She says, "I'm excited by the idea of VSLA, which improved my livelihood". Nyamuka asked CARE to continue to reach more vulnerable women with this life-saving project that benefits not only women, but also their families and communities, with better opportunities and alternatives to violence.



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ACRONYMS

FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization	RoLAS	Rule of Law Advisory Section
GBV	gender-based violence	RSRTF	South Sudan Reconciliation, Stabilization and Resilience Trust Fund
IOM	International Organization for Migration	SCE	second chance education
MBA	Marial Bai Agreement	SPLA-IO	Sudan People's Liberation Army in Opposition
MSC	mobile special court	SSPDF	South Sudan People's Defence Forces
PAD	Political Affairs Division	UNMISS	United Nations Mission in South Sudan
R-ARCSS	Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan	VSLA	village savings and loan group



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