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POLICY BRIEF

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The Role of Women in Peace-Building in South Sudan¹

Nyathon James Hoth Mai

Executive summary

Grounded in the prevalent under-representation of women in peace building processes, this brief explores why women's role in peace building is critical more generally and particularly in South Sudan. Second, the brief examines the opportunities the recent Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (ARCISS) offers women in the upcoming peace building efforts. Third, it assesses the challenges that hinder the effective participation of women in peace building. Lastly, it proposes recommendations that may help address this persistent underutilization of women's vast skills to support durable peace in South Sudan.

The paper argues that women's role in peace building is essential. This is because 1) South Sudanese women have played instrumental roles in resolving past conflicts, which give them experiences and skills that are crucial in the current peace building process, 2) women's activities in peace building support healing and reconciliation efforts for women are known for bridging conflicts related divides, 3) war impacts on women quite differently, and as such, their needs and peace-building priorities are different from those of men, and 4) it is a constitutional right and an international obligation that women participate in peace-building activities.

The current peace-building phase in South Sudan offers an opportunity for promoting gender equity, advancing the position of women in the society, mainstreaming women's perspectives in all the pillars of peace-building and increasing their participation in leadership. This could be done through revision of and recommitment to laws and policies to address historical inequalities and root causes of conflict. However, the patriarchal nature of the South Sudanese society and the associated customary laws, the background on which peace-building works are to be executed, has in the past hindered (may still hinder) women's participation in public life. These factors are exacerbated by the underlying lack of political will, limited funding, ethnic politics, weak institutions, and the high illiteracy rate among women. Further, these factors could be aggravated by the current move to militarize the government, evident by recent appointments of states' caretaker governors. While some of these issues are associated with the long-term problems of underdevelopment that South Sudan faces, any meaningful change requires immediate progress on all fronts. It remains to be seen what impact the Transitional Government of National Unity (TGNU) will make towards improving gender equity in building sustainable yet inclusive peace.

There is a need for gender stratified intensification and tailoring of capacity building efforts, provision of more funding to support women's role in public life, implementation of the 25% affirmative action across the board, and

¹ The Sudd Institute acknowledges the financial support provided by United Nations Development Program (UNDP) through its Democracy and Participation Program.

mainstreaming gender perspectives in all sectors of South Sudan. These initiatives may promote women's greater participation in peace-building processes, hence sustainable peace.

I. Introduction

South Sudan presents a fascinating case for studying the role of women in peace-building in patriarchal and militarized societies. The nascent state has suffered sequences of violent conflicts since Sudan's independence in 1956. These conflicts include the Anya Nya war (1955-1972), the second civil war (1983-2005) and the recent civil war (2013-2015) following South Sudan's attainment of statehood. Likewise, clan and inter- and intra-tribal wars motivated by cattle raiding and competition over water and grazing points have featured throughout the history of South Sudan. And when these conflicts come to a formal end, peace-building efforts get attempted to consolidate sustainable peace, but often fail.

Peace-building in this paper is defined as processes, strategies and programs/projects that are aimed at restoring peace, preventing relapse into conflict and reconstructing post-conflict states or communities to secure sustainable peace. There are four key pillars of peace-building observed in the literature: security, governance, justice and reconciliation, and socio economic development². The focus of this paper is on the role of women in the above-mentioned four peace-building pillars in South Sudan. This includes examining the role women play in the decision-making processes and the inclusion of women's perspectives in prevention, management and resolution of South Sudanese conflicts. The use of "women" here refers to organizations representing women, women in leadership positions, and women in conflict-affected areas.

The study is motivated by the desire to stimulate debate on the means and/or methods for mainstreaming gender into various priorities and aspects of the upcoming Transitional Government of National Unity (TGoNU). South Sudanese women continue to face cultural, political, social and economical barriers that hinder their progress and/or exclude them from effective participation in the national issues. Consequently, women continue to be worst off socio-economically.

Despite this entrenched exclusion, South Sudanese women have consistently played an instrumental role in propagating peace during the Sudan's civil wars. They have also played crucial roles in bridging conflict divides and served as advocates for peace. This is because they saw themselves as key stakeholders with unique information, experiences and skills to contribute towards ending these conflicts.

II. Why Women are Vital in Peace Building

The following section demonstrates ways in which women bridge conflicts divides, and gain skills and experiences at national, communal and household levels during conflicts. These experiences could be useful during peace building processes. Also, the section establishes that women's role in peace building is a constitutional right and an international obligation.

² Evans et al., "A Conceptual Model of Peace building and Democracy Building: Integrating the Fields."

A. Women in Peace Building: Important Experiences and Skills for Peace Building

Most activities of women's organizations fall within the four pillars of peace-building work that give women ready experiences and skills useful for peace-building efforts. For instance, ranging from Sudan's civil war to internal clashes due to SPLA/SPLM split, women have been active in economic empowerment, good governance, and reconciliation activities. During Sudan's second civil war, women's organizations such as WATOP, the only women organization in Wau, Bahr El Ghazal, was engaged in providing education for displaced children, skill training for women in tailoring and tie-dyeing, and adult education³. In post-CPA, women's organizations such as South Sudan Chamber of Women Entrepreneurs (SSCWE) and Sudan Women Entrepreneurs Association (SWEA) emerged to provide information to women in business sector and to strengthen women's capacity in business. On the governance side, women in leadership such as women parliamentarian caucus and SPLM Women League have been working to promote the inclusion of women to cultivate equality in South Sudan. In healing and reconciliation, South Sudanese women such as Anna Kima of New Sudan Council of Churches and Awut Deng Achuil, Dr Pauline Riak, Nyoka, and Hakim of Sudanese Women Association in Nairobi (SWAN), were instrumental in the preparation and implementation of Wunlit peace agreement⁴. Besides, women's organizations have been instrumental in disseminating information to the grassroots. During South Sudan referendum, for example, South Sudan Women General Association (SSWGA) translated the CPA into several local languages and disseminated them to all ten states. As demonstrated in the examples above, some South Sudanese women have engaged in peace-building work in governance, economic empowerment, and healing and reconciliation, providing them with an in-depth knowledge, expertise, and skills that could support peace-building processes.

B. Women in Peace-Building Bridge Conflict Divides

Women's participation in peace and peace-building processes helps bridge conflict divides. Women have been recognized to cross religious, ethnic and tribal lines to promote peace. For example, during the Sudanese second civil war, South Sudanese women in Kenya came together and formed NGOs and related networks. They established these organizations as platforms to discuss conflict issues in Sudan and to connect with women in Northern Sudan. Some of these key NGOs and networks were Sudanese Women Association in Kenya (SWAN) and Sudanese Women Voice for Peace (SWVP). SWAN was formed in response to the split in the SPLA. SWAN managed to bring the women from the SPLA and those from the Nasir faction together and took the role of carrying out peace-building work. Likewise, SWVP extended its work to women in the Nuba Mountains and Northern Sudan, subsequently forming SuWEP⁵. Recently,

³ Sourced from The Women's Commission for Refugee Women Children's report titled "Hope for Breaking The Cycle of Famine and War in Sudan."

⁴ Jenner, "When Truth Is Denied, Peace Will Not Come": The People-to-People Peace Process of the New Sudan Council of Churches."

⁵ El Sawi, "Women Building Peace: The Sudanese Women Empowerment for Peace in Sudan."

during the negotiations on recently signed peace agreement in Addis Ababa, women groups formed Women's Bloc that represents both women in the government and in the opposition in the negotiations talks in Addis. The Women's Bloc reached out to other women in the two warring parties and fought for their representation in the peace negotiations. Comparably, in other parts of the world, women are recognized to help repair relations across conflict divides. The experiences of Indians and Pakistanis, Israelis and Palestinians, and Northern Ireland, highlight the critical role women play in mending relations in each of these cases. Overall, SWVP, SWAN, Women's Bloc and SuWEP united as wives, mothers, and daughters and used their unique experiences of motherhood and suffering of women to advocate for peace. The collaborations of women create trust and confidence, and open lines of communication among the conflicting factions, political parties and tribes, allowing healing and reconciliation to take place among conflicting communities.

C. Women Experiences During Conflict: Useful Information for Peace Building

At household and individual levels during conflicts, women become victims of war with traumatizing experiences. Women often experience widespread sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), long-term injuries, unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted disease (STDs), posttraumatic stress and displacement. These experiences make women important stakeholders, as they are an important source of information on human rights abuses. Most of these experiences are gender-based and only through engagement of women in decision-making and in the implementation can healing in such areas be achieved with sustainable effects. Also, given the extreme and disturbing nature of SGBV during conflicts, women and their organizations could provide useful perspectives into security sector reforms (SSR). Studies show that men generally tend to prioritize developmental activities through infrastructure and economic development over women's need for healthcare following the conflict. Only through involvement of women in the design and implementation of peace-building could their unique perspectives be considered and acted on.

D. Women Role and Peace Building: National and International Obligation

Since the CPA, the GOSS has developed national efforts aimed at addressing the historical disadvantages faced by South Sudanese women and their participation in peace-building. This section analyzes the framework on national efforts, taking into account documents and institutions that address gender inequality.

1) Constitutional right

South Sudan adopted institutional and legal frameworks to empower women and increase their representation in all aspects of governance in the country. The Transitional Constitution of South Sudan, 2011, Article 16 (4a), calls on the government to "promote women participation in public life and their representation in the legislative and executive organs by at least twenty-five per cent as an affirmative action to redress imbalances created by history, customs, and traditions." In addition, the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare (MGCSW), formerly known as the Ministry of Gender, Social Welfare and Religious Affairs, has been established as the national mechanism to promote gender equality and advancement of women in South

Sudan. The National Gender Policy is also in place with a vision of building a “country that is free from all forms of discrimination and violence, where women, men and children enjoy their human rights on the basis of equality and non-discrimination in all spheres of national life”⁶. Therefore, the affirmative action, MGCSW and gender policy are national strategies to promote gender equality and to empower women in all aspects of public life.

2) *International Obligation*

As a member state of the United Nations (UN), South Sudan is by default obligated to adopt the UNSCR 1325. South Sudan has developed a National Action Plan (NAP) for the implementation of the UNSCR 1325. UNSCR 1325 includes the full implementation of the provisions of the affirmative action that calls for at least 25% representation of women in the government. The NAP outlines four pillars as a framework that guides GRSS peace-building activities. One of the four pillars is the plan of NAP to promote women and girls’ perspective in all decisions related to prevention, management and resolution of conflicts ⁷ through consulting women organizations to inform local peace-building initiatives. In other words, the UNSCR 1325 requires South Sudan to ensure women and girls’ perspectives are incorporated into the four pillars of peace-building, and a minimum quota of 25% representation be reserved for women in all areas of public life and in peace-building efforts in particular.

However, despite the institutional, constitutional and policy provisions for women, and international obligation, the implementation has remained a big challenge. The implementation of the 25% quota in political life faces various challenges. To-date, women’s representation in key governance institutions are as followed: “Chairpersons of independent Commissions stand at 10%, Council of States Members 12%, Undersecretaries 13%⁸.” In addition, Foreign Missions stand at 4.5%, National Judiciary 3%⁹ and State governors at 0%. These statistics clearly indicate gender inequality and lack of women’s empowerment in decision-making positions in the government. Similarly, MGCSW faces its challenges of inadequate funding. Consequently, lack of adequate resources and capacity continue to hinder MGCSW from carrying out its mandates effectively, which has impacted on the execution of gender equality agenda. Also, discrimination against women is the second prevalent obstacle after illiteracy, and is faced primarily by women in positions of decision-making¹⁰. Lastly, like many other efforts, implementing the UNSCR 1325 suffers lack of political will, which hinders its effective implementation¹¹.

III. Window of Opportunities: The Implementation of the TGoNU

The new peace-building programming in South Sudan offers an opportunity for promoting gender equity, advancing the position of women in society, and increasing their participation in leadership and in all processes of attaining peace. This could be done through a holistic approach

⁶ MGCoSW. “National Gender Policy.

⁷ GRSS, “National Action Plan on the UNSCR-1325.”

⁸ Apuk Ayuel, “Women in Peace Making Processes in South Sudan.”

⁹ Mayai, “SPLM Politics of Gender Equity.”

¹⁰ MGCoSW, “Comprehensive Country Gender Assessment.”

¹¹ Dahlström, “Women’s Recognition in Peace building Implementing Security Council Resolution 1325 in South Sudan.”

by recommitting to laws and policies, enhancing political actions to address historical inequalities and root causes of conflict, and by incorporating women's perspectives in all the four pillars of peace-building.

A. ARCRSS Provisions for Women

The Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (ARCRSS), unlike the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), provides provisions for including women in governance. For instance, in the governance pillar, ARCRSS mandates the Government of Republic of South Sudan (GRSS) to nominate not fewer than 4 women and not fewer than 3 women from the SPLM-IO as ministers, and 2 women as deputy ministers. However, the ARCRSS limits the 25% provision to the executive branch of the government, and fails to extend the constitutional requirement to legislative and judicial branches. Equally important is the empowerment of women in decision-making positions at the state level because the state governments have been behind in term of women representation. Both parties should extend the national commitment to the state and county levels.

In addition, the ARCRSS guarantees women's representation in the National Constitution Amendment Committee (NCAC) through Women's Bloc. The provision also falls short of obliging all the stakeholders to observe the 25% affirmative action when nominating their representatives to the NCAC. The upcoming constitutional amendment process is an opportunity to address women's inclusion this time. In the previous constitutional amendment committee, women represented 22%, instead of 25% as stipulated in the constitution. Women in the upcoming constitutional review process should be adequately consulted, and their perspectives incorporated into the constitution. It is important that the parties remain faithful to this commitment, considering how behind the government has been in implementing the 25% affirmative action. Thus, the constitutional amendment process should be inclusive, transparent, and gender sensitive.

In the security pillar, in the Permanent Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangement (PCTSA), Women's Bloc is guaranteed one representative as a member of Ceasefire and the Transitional Security Arrangement Monitoring Mechanism (CTSAMM) committee. Also, one woman has a space on the Strategic Defense and Security Review (SDSR) Board to table women's security concerns. The CTSAMM is responsible for monitoring and reporting on the progress of the implementation of the Permanent Ceasefire and Transitional Security. However, the 25% mandate should be observed by all parities. Out of the 12 South Sudanese members on the CTSAMM committee (the warring parties, Formers Detainees, political parties and other stakeholders), there should be a minimum of three South Sudanese women. Women could be represented as follows: one from the Women's Bloc and the rest from the warring parties. The representation of women on this committee serves three purposes. First, women on the committee will serve as role models for women in the security sector, considering they have not been active participants in the security sector in South Sudan. Second, women could bring their perspectives into the work of CTSAMM. Finally, representing women on these committees is a constitutional obligation.

Further, the SDSR board is required to decide on what form and direction the security sector will take, which will have a huge impact on citizens' lives. It is important women are consulted

and their perspectives incorporated into the security roadmap because security challenges could mean different things to different segments of the population. To women, security challenges could mean rapes, domestic abuse, and food insecurity. To men, security challenges could mean national security and infrastructures. As argued earlier, women are closer to the communities, hence would have valuable information that could be useful for the board's work. Some might perceive this board as technical and military in nature, but women—individually or through their organizations—are important in regards to supporting local security. As such, women should be consulted in every decision of the committee and encouraged to produce their consensus and submit it to the committee to ensure their interests and priorities are captured in the Security Sector Transformation (SST)—the policy and strategy document of the committee that will guide the reform of the security sector.

In economic development pillar, the agreement calls for the establishment of Enterprise Development Fund in which the micro, small and medium Enterprises (MSME) are to be set up to target rural populations, urban poor and farmers. Women are among the most poor and majority of them play a key role in agriculture. Hence, MSME should be able to reach rural women and farmers. Women entrepreneurs will be able to benefit from Women Enterprise Development Fund (WEDF) that is aimed at providing subsidies for women-based entrepreneurial development and capacity building. The funds are schemes for women's economic empowerment through agriculture and entrepreneurship.

However, in the humanitarian assistance and reconstruction, women are allocated 0% representation in the decision-making positions. The agreement provides for the establishment of Special Fund for Reconstruction (SRF) and to be administered by the Board of Special Reconstruction Fund (BSRF). The BSRF is to be composed as follow: three representatives from TGoNU (each from the Minister of Finance, Education and Health), four representatives (two each from Equatoria and Bahr El-Ghazal state), three representatives (each from Jonglei, Unity and Upper Nile state), one from Political Parties and Civil Society respectively and the rest from international friends of South Sudan. There's no mention of Women's Bloc and the likelihood of the South Sudanese stakeholders nominating their representative, as a woman to the board, seems unlikely. Consequently, the BSRF could be gender imbalanced. It is critical to remember that, as a constitutional mandate and the UNSCR 1325's requirement, women are expected to make up 25% of the committee, and their perspectives integrated into the work of the BSRF. In the prevailing 0% representation, it is the role of women to lobby for their 25% provision on the BSRF. Alternatively, the BSRF could engage gender specialists on the committee.

In healing and reconciliation pillar, the ARCISS mandates three women out of seven participants as members of the Commission for Truth, Reconciliation, and Healing (CTRH). The mandate meets the 25% provision. However, women's representation in the decision-making position is not sufficient. Women have other natural skills that are useful for reconciliation. They are peacemakers who reduce mistrust among communities and create dialogues that foster peace. Therefore, women's roles in healing and reconciliation require a holistic approach that should be incorporated at all levels. At household and community levels, women need to be sensitized to preach unity and peace. Various healing and reconciliation initiatives done by the New Sudan Council of Churches and the Committee for National Healing, Peace and Reconciliation (CNHPR) have constantly engaged women as key participants. For example, as one of the first activities in the implementation of the Wunlit peace

agreement, women's workshop was conducted in Lokichogio, Kenya. The workshop was an opportunity to sensitize the women from the most conflicting communities in Kakuma Refugee Camp about the agreement. The workshop's participants acknowledged their contributions in encouraging and motivating their husbands and sons in conflict, which contributes to communal conflicts. Their recommendation was that they should be given opportunities to carry out the work of reconciliation and healing in their communities and homes¹². Similarly, in 2014 with the help of UNDP and church leaders, Nuer and Dinka women groups met in Jonglei state as a strategy to reduce tension and open lines of communication for healing and reconciliation efforts between conflicting communities. Moreover, the women in decision-making positions and NGOs have the power to unite the women of South Sudan behind them to promote healing and reconciliation among communities the same way thousands have gathered and rallied to demand an end to the conflict and called for peace. In short, women in the decision-making positions, households and community levels are all important players in promoting and executing the work of CTRH.

IV. Barriers to Women 's Role in Peace Building

Like many obstacles hindering women's participation in public arena, the role of women in peace-building process in South Sudan is likely to be impeded by a number of critical factors. These factors are explored below.

1) Patriarchal Society

South Sudan's society is constructed on patriarchal norms. In patriarchal societies, men are the heads of households, and exercise absolute authority in communal and national matters. Normally, in such societies, women's roles are in reproduction, production, and nurturing; during conflicts, these norms sometimes break down. When men go to war, women find freedoms to engage in NGOs and economic activities. They become head of households, primary providers, and members/founders of networks and NGOs. However, during peace building, especially when men return from wars, or from other war related activities that might have taken them away from their families, women are forced to return to their normal roles. On the side of economic empowerment, women in patriarchal society have limited control and ownership of productive assets such as houses, cash crops, cattle, vehicles and land¹³.

Also, in patriarchal societies, customary law is the legal framework that governs these societies, alongside formal legal framework. Customary law contains some customs and practices that are biased against women. Practices such as bride prices retard social progress of women in South Sudan. Bride price contributes to unusually long workload for women. Among several communities in South Sudan, phrases such as "a woman we married with our cows" give the extended family members a right to put that woman to work for them. Also, women have no say in key decisions such as the number of children the family may have and the allocation of household finances. As a result, the families' obligations on women and heavy workload physically exhaust women and leave them with no time to think about self-development (Adult

¹² Ibid.

¹³ MGCoSW, "Comprehensive Country Gender Assessment."

education), or to engage in economic activities and on other opportunities peace-building initiatives could bring. The patriarchal ideologies imbedded in the culture have crept into the modern institutions of governance. Women in leadership and decision-making positions are seen as trivial, despite unique skills and knowledge that they bring to the table. As well, women organizations or in general have been excluded and barely consulted in most processes of public life. One of the ways to minimize the effects of patriarchal norms on the progress of women is the implementation of 25% women's quota and UNSCR1325.

2) *Lack of Political Will*

South Sudan has in place the necessary legal, institutions, and policy framework to substantially increase the participation of women in public affairs, but lacks political will to implement them. The 25% affirmative action has not been fully implemented. On the other hand, the MGCSW lacks adequate resources and capacity to carry out its mandates effectively. Plus, the UNSCR 1325 continues to have no significant impact on women's participation in public life. Women's participation in security, governance, and economic development will require government's political will to commit to existing legal and policy framework and to adequately fund the institutions concern to promote gender equity.

3) *Illiteracy Rate*

The illiteracy rate of women in South Sudan is over 80%¹⁴, making illiteracy a critical obstacle to full participation of women in peace-building and other aspects of nation-building. This enormous illiteracy rate makes it difficult for women to benefit from workshop and other trainings provided to enhance capacity. The underlying lack of education translates to a more pronounced burden at home, undermining the participation of women in other important aspects of public life. Also, majority of women in leadership might have been educated in Arabic and in their native languages, but because South Sudan's official language is English, those literate women find it difficult to communicate at policy level. An added challenge is the lack of women with technical skills. Majority of women lack technical skills that could make them participate effectively in technical positions required in sectors such as security and economic development.

4) *Funding and Capacity*

The difficulty of accessing funding is a critical bottleneck towards the efforts of women. The government does not generally allocate funds to women's organizations. During the recent conflict, many peace-building consortia, networks, and alliances have emerged. As the negotiations have ended, these groups are planning to venture into peace-building projects. However, many of them face funding constraints. Also, capacity gaps as discussed above are another impediment to women's organizations. Because of lack of capacity, it seems that many are unable to meet the demands of donors and funding agencies. An additional factor is that most women's organizations are voluntary, which makes them unsustainable.

¹⁴ Ibid.

5) Ethnicity and Political Status

South Sudan is so diverse to the extent that this diversity could become counterproductive to women's efforts in peace-building and other public activities. South Sudanese are ethnically diverse, among others. Ethnicity could affect women's collaborations in peace-building. Even though women's organizations are/have made significant achievements in bridging tribal divides, some elements of tribal issues still come up when forming and running organizations and consortia, and in sharing information. Such factors could affect women in sourcing funds. The recent trend in funding from donors appears to be encouraging consortia and networks to access funding. Women could easily form consortia based on their tribal lines, especially the women from the conflicting communities. Women organizations should be encouraged to form consortia based on similarities in goals and objectives than on tribal affiliations. Further, government and donors should also encourage ethnic diversity as one of the criteria for funding organizations. Encouraging women organizations to come together could open lines of communication among the conflicting communities that may be useful for healing and reconciliation efforts.

Moreover, the political culture in South Sudan could play a role in hindering an effective participation of women in peace-building. Accessing most political processes, appointments, funding, and information is all about whom you know in South Sudan. Some capable and experienced women organizations and individual women who might not have this privilege of knowing someone in the government could face obstacles in carrying out their programs to influence political processes, or in accessing decision-making positions and information about the opportunities available for women. Some women have also stated that women in decision-making are sometimes the obstacles to new women coming into political scene. One woman, in a decision-making position, responded to such claim by stating that some women have taken the 25% as a tool to make noise instead of using their abilities, capacities and confidence to participate in public arena¹⁵. As illustrated above, divisions among women could hinder women from effectively participating in peace-building.

6) Militarization of the Government

In the last few months, political appointments appear to follow military background as one of the primary requirements. The current caretaker state governors, who all happened to be former or current military leaders, for example, replaced the elected state governors, including the only female governor. Also, recently, in the state of Jonglei, the contestants for governorships were all men with military background. Using military background as a criterion for leadership recognition may disadvantage women in political life and militarizing states will minimize women's perspectives in decision-making. The government should observe the 25% mandate in appointing governors, with women consulted when necessary.

¹⁵ This was a comment made by one of the women in decision-making position in government who I was discussing the issues of women's obstacles in decision-making.

V. Recommendations

The following are recommendations for improving the role of women in peace building efforts:

Government

- GRSS, SPLM/IO, SPLM leaders and other political parties need to commit and implement the 25% affirmative action in all structures of the TGoNU and other political processes.
- TGoNU should expand the mandate of the 25% affirmative action to private, non-governmental, inter-governmental sectors.
- TGoNU should commit and implement international obligation of UNSCR1325
- TGoNU, with the help of international partners, should provide more funding to the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social welfare to address issues of gender inequality.
- Provide capacity training support to women in leadership and organizations.
- The government needs to create and implement women enterprise funds to target women's entrepreneurs and farmers.
- TGoNU should bring in new women into the leadership and decision-making positions.
- TGoNU should observe the 25% of women in appointing the state governors.

Women Organizations and Women in Decision-Making Positions

The women organizations and women in leadership should also play a role in peace-building processes. They may do the following:

- Monitor and lobby for the creation of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) and Women Enterprise Development Fund (WEDF).
- Demand more support from the government in terms of funding and leadership training programs to enhance leadership skills of women.
- Continue lobbying in areas lacking clear commitments.
- Coordinate among women and push for women to be appointed as representatives on the committees as stipulated in the ARCISS.
- Arrange study visits to places like Rwanda to learn about their peace building work after the genocide.
- Create consortia and networks to promote women's works in peace-building and to generate funds.

Donors

- Provide team building training and workshops to women's organizations.
- Provide more funding to the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social welfare to address issue of gender inequality.
- Be mindful of women's diversity and show fairness to all women organizations in terms of funding.
- Encourage women to continue collaborating by funding consortia and networks.

- Encourage women from diverse backgrounds to participate in all women empowerment programs and networks.

TGoNU special committees

- Prioritize social services provision in the conflict-affected areas.
- Target women-headed households.
- Observe 25% affirmative action and the UNSCR 1325 as some of the guiding principles for formation of all committees, decision-making processes, strategies, and activities.

VI. Conclusion

The Government has been underrepresenting women in its peace-building initiatives. Yet, South Sudanese women have wealth of knowledge, information, and skills that are useful these initiatives. In addition, they have constitutional and international rights that obligate them to fully participate in every aspect of public life. The upcoming Transitional Government of National Unity offers opportunities to promote gender equity, improve the position of women, and increase women's participation in leadership and all other processes of peace-building in South Sudan. To promote and enhance women's roles in peace building necessitate that women's needs, priorities and representations be adequately addressed in the upcoming TGoNU. However, patriarchal norms, lack of political will, ethnicity, lack of funding and capacity among women are some of the stumbling blocks that could hinder women from participating in peace-building processes. Therefore, maximizing the roles of women in peace building requires political will, capacity building, and funding to empower women and harness their unique perspectives in all the pillars of peace-building efforts.

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About Sudd Institute

The Sudd Institute is an independent research organization that conducts and facilitates policy relevant research and training to inform public policy and practice, to create opportunities for discussion and debate, and to improve analytical capacity in South Sudan. The Sudd Institute’s intention is to significantly improve the quality, impact, and accountability of local, national, and international policy- and decision-making in South Sudan in order to promote a more peaceful, just and prosperous society.

About the Author

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