

Peace and stability in South Sudan: Challenges and recommendations



A cattle keeper guards his cattle with an AK-47
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Introduction

Following the outbreak of civil war in South Sudan in December 2013, few people believed that the war would continue until today. The signing of the peace agreement in August 2015 did not halt the war and, when renewed violence flared up in Juba in July 2016, conflict quickly spread to previously peaceful parts of the country. The conflict has caused untold human suffering, destruction of property and livelihoods, massive displacement of people, and an increased number of armed groups. It has also exacerbated the polarisation of South Sudanese society along ethnic and tribal lines. The economy has almost collapsed, resulting in high inflation, inadequate basic service delivery, unemployment, high levels of gender-based violence and increased criminality. Cattle raiding and land disputes between pastoralists and farmers are also causes of conflict in many parts of the country.

However, concerted efforts at reconciliation have been made in some areas over the past few years. For instance, in Yambio, religious institutions have engaged communities – including armed youth – in dialogues, peace conferences and trust-building between the state government and those who joined the rebellion, encouraging the latter to pursue peaceful solutions to their grievances.

This briefing presents the main peace and safety concerns raised during eight state-level¹ roundtable discussions on strengthening community safety and

addressing peace challenges,² held between July 2017 and February 2019 in Aweil, Bor, Juba, Rumbek, Tonj, Torit, Wau and Yambio. The events brought together state-level and local authorities,³ heads of organised forces (military, police and national security), United Nations (UN) agencies, national and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community-based organisations, community members, religious leaders, and youth 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 forward for improving peace and stability in South Sudan.⁴

Safety and security

In this briefing, **security** is defined as the protection of people and their assets from violence or theft. It relates to potential harm caused by actions that 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.⁵

Key safety and security challenges

The following safety and security concerns were identified at the roundtable meetings by communities, civil society and other participants, alongside a set of recommendations for national, state and local government and civil society.

Ineffective law enforcement and justice delivery at state and local levels

This was highlighted as a key concern in:

Aweil
Bor
Rumbek
Tonj
Torit
Wau
Yambio

South Sudan is facing challenges related to the **discipline, behaviour and lack of well-trained law enforcement personnel** at all levels, and particularly at the local level. Police services were deemed inadequate and unable to deliver security and justice, particularly to rural populations. Participants stated that many officers in the organised forces, including police, wildlife, fire

brigade and prison services, are former combatants who were assigned to these services after the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005, without undergoing proper screening or training. Community members raised concerns about law enforcement personnel's behaviour and handling of civil cases, and repeatedly highlighted their lack of trust in security providers. For instance, in Aweil, Torit and Wau, community members reported arbitrary arrests and detention for long periods without trial.

Security services are also perceived by communities to **respond slowly to emergencies and active violent conflicts** across the country. In Tonj, police have been seen to side with their communities when they are involved in conflict with other communities, and are vulnerable to bribes. They also have inadequate means of transport. These factors fuel conflict between communities and deepen **mistrust between the police and communities**.

The creation of more states, counties, *payams* and *bomas* (administrative divisions at the local level) has put pressure on the already overstretched law enforcement agencies and their ability to deploy officers to new administrative units. According to the law enforcement agencies, logistical challenges, limited communications equipment, scarcity of vehicles and fuel for police patrols, and low morale among police officers hinder their ability to effectively meet community security needs.

Participants reported that in Wau town, continued **movement of soldiers with heavy weapons and guns** has created fear and undermined trust in the military. Civilians are uncomfortable with armed

military personnel moving around town. Although commanders of the South Sudan People Defence Forces (known as the Sudan People's Liberation Army until October 2018) cited the state of emergency that is in place in the area as the reason for soldiers' armed presence in town, it was clear that communities still see this as a threat to their safety and security.

The **inadequate capacity of the justice system** was also seen to contribute to communal conflict and revenge killings across South Sudan. The **limited number of judges** assigned to states and counties causes **backlogs and delays** in local and magistrate courts adjudicating cases, as seen for instance in the regional courts in Wau and Rumbek. Communities in Aweil highlighted the great distances they need to travel to access these courts.

In addition, a **culture of impunity** seems to be prevailing, which is perpetuated by some political leaders and military commanders, as well as political interference in local courts. Other factors identified by participants in the roundtable discussions as contributing to the vicious cycles of violence are unequal application of the law towards family members and friends of high-ranking and influential individuals, and corruption in the administration of policing and justice. Community members who perceive that they have received an unfair judgement in their case or believe that they have been denied their rights through interference by influential people in court processes were reported to have taken the law into their own hands. This culture of impunity poses a potent threat to social cohesion.

Finally, roundtable participants highlighted a lack of clarity and understanding of the **distinction between the jurisdictions of statutory and traditional/customary courts**. Since the enactment of the Local Government Act in 2009, the roles of formal institutions such as the police and the judiciary have overlapped with some key functions of the customary court systems, leading to ineffective dispute resolution and even violent confrontation when one party feels that they have been denied justice. Lack of clarity between formal and customary courts was cited as one of the reasons chiefs and traditional leaders were unable to deliver justice and handle cases in the way they used to prior to the enactment of the Local Government Act. Traditional chiefs felt that their authority and powers to adjudicate cases had been hijacked by politicians, police and courts, and that the overlapping roles have rendered the traditional justice system ineffective in preventing conflict among communities. This in turn was seen to cause an increase in the number of revenge attacks and to have exacerbated violent conflicts across the country.

Roundtable participants also highlighted that in some communities, **harmful gender norms** limit women and girls' access to justice; victims of gender-based violence (GBV) can be forced to marry their perpetrators, which denies the women and girls their right to pursue justice.

Recommendations to national government:

- Clarify the jurisdictions of customary and statutory justice mechanisms and clearly delineate the mandates of traditional/customary and statutory courts.
- The National Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs should clearly define roles and responsibilities of customary courts, formal courts, the police and criminal investigation departments to avoid overlaps.
- The Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs should establish a high court covering the Northern Bahr el Ghazal region, to reduce case overload and the need for those requiring court services to travel to Wau or Rumbek.
- The National Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs and the national Anti-Corruption Commission should revive state-level anti-corruption commissions and support and equip them to hold people accountable.
- Prioritise and invest in the capacity of law enforcement agencies, such as the police and prison services, in particular on community-based policing.

Recommendations to police and courts:

- Ensure that arrest procedures are followed and periods of detention and schedule of trial are in line with the penal code of South Sudan.
- Recruit more police officers and judges, ensuring that funds are properly allocated and used to strengthen the justice sector.
- Train police officers in community-based policing.
- Expedite the resolution of caseloads by committing financial and human resources and building capacity of the police and courts.
- Apply the rule of law and penal code equally and consistently.

Recommendations to state and local governments:

- State ministries and local government should ensure that traditional chiefs exercise their roles without interference from influential people, and that the chiefs dispense justice in accordance with human rights standards, particularly for women and girls.
- State ministries and local government should clearly define the roles of chiefs and traditional leaders in line with the 2009 Local Government Act.
- State ministries and local government should support chiefs and traditional leaders to handle customary cases, including through training on the legal framework at the county and *payam* levels.
- Conduct civic education to create awareness among communities on existing laws.

Recommendations to civil society:

- Raise awareness among communities of their rights under existing legislation, and of lawful ways of addressing grievances and conflicts in non-violent ways – for example by promoting dialogue as a means of resolving conflict over resources.
- Build the capacities of chiefs and traditional leaders in fair delivery of justice to communities, including on provisions of the 2009 Local Government Act, clarification of roles and responsibilities between customary and statutory justice systems, the rights of women and girls, and challenging harmful gender norms and behaviours that perpetuate inequality and violence against women and girls.
- Conduct dialogue between security providers and communities.
- With the UN Mission in South Sudan, train security providers on legal frameworks, human rights and professional conduct.

Spread of small arms and light weapons

This was highlighted as a key concern in:

Juba
Rumbek
Tonj
Torit
Wau

According to the roundtable participants, the second civil war in Sudan (1983–2005) and the civil strife that started in South Sudan in December 2013 have made access to firearms easy. Many young people across the country acquire guns to protect themselves, their communities, their livestock and other assets.

The **security vacuum** in most parts of South Sudan was identified as a driving force for civilians acquiring firearms as a way of securing their own safety and security in the absence of effective security provision by the state. The **lack of a clear and comprehensive policy for peaceful disarmament** by the national government and individual state governments was seen as another factor contributing to the increasing number of civilians carrying small arms. The proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) in the hands of unauthorised civilians, including pastoralists, poses a serious risk to communities, especially as these weapons may then be used in armed robberies in residential areas, markets and on highways. SALW also increase the rate of killings and the frequency and level of violent confrontations between communities, including over cattle raiding. Security providers also highlighted this as an obstacle to allowing members of organised forces to move without guns.

Weapons collected from civilians in Jonglei State.
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Recommendations to national government:

- Conduct comprehensive, orderly and peaceful civilian disarmament throughout the country and ensure the destruction and/or storage and proper control of illegal firearms. This will require a guarantee from the government to provide security and protection to communities (for example, by allocating adequate resources to the police). Where this is less feasible, steps should be taken to encourage authorities to address the security issues that cause people to arm themselves, as well as to raise awareness of the dangers of armed conflict and promote non-violent means of resolving conflicts. The policing and justice systems should also undergo reforms to ensure that people's concerns and grievances can be addressed effectively through official channels.
- Regulate and implement registration and marking of firearms belonging to security providers, as well as police and military uniforms, to limit their circulation in the hands of unauthorised people. Put in place adequate storage facilities and regular monitoring of firearms belonging to security providers, to help authorities to track them and hold individuals responsible in case of loss or theft of firearms.
- Increase border controls to limit the flow of illicit firearms into South Sudan from neighbouring countries.

Recommendations to civil society:

- Work together with local and state governments to organise awareness-raising campaigns on the dangers of civilian possession of SALW, targeting community leaders and youth in particular.
- Educate communities to not resort to violence to address grievances or the settlement of disputes.

Recommendations to state and local governments:

- The Bureau for Community Security and Small Arms Control at the state level should conduct awareness-raising campaigns on the dangers of civilian possession of SALW, and should consult with communities on the issues that need to be addressed in order for peaceful disarmament to take place.

Land and border disputes

This was highlighted as a key concern in:

Aweil
Bor
Juba
Tonj
Wau

In Aweil, roundtable participants stated that the large number of cases over land disputes – in both statutory and customary courts – was one of the main drivers of conflict in the state, particularly in urban settings. Some of these cases arose as a result of **inadequate land regulations and policies**. Reportedly, the

process of land acquisition features loopholes that have led to the fraudulent sale of land by individuals connected to surveyors at the state ministries of physical infrastructure and municipal councils. In Bor, delays in **land allocation**, unbalanced and unfair land allocation and double allocation of plots due to a lack of qualified land surveyors were highlighted as causes of conflict.

According to the roundtable participants in Aweil, Bor and Tonj, the **creation of more counties**, *payams* and *bomas* has increased tensions and fuelled violent conflict between administrative units over some villages and boundaries. They also indicated that a **lack of clear demarcation** is a source of state border disputes, including between communities in the border areas in Aweil, Gogrial and Lol states and between Tonj and Gok states.

In the rural areas of Juba County and in Wau and Bor towns, land disputes between pastoralists and agriculturalists – due to cattle destroying crops and the subsequent food insecurity – were a major concern. In Wau, tensions escalated into violent clashes in May 2017 when the farming community in the former Jur River County refused to allow pastoralists and their herds to enter their territories, as the crops had not yet been harvested. This resulted in the destruction of properties and displacement of many people into Wau and Tonj towns. Similar conflict in the Kuarijiena and Roc-Rocdong counties of Wau State in June 2017 was eventually halted by the governments of Tonj and Wau with support from peace partners, including the UN Mission in South Sudan and the German Corporation for International Cooperation GmbH. Although peace conferences were organised between pastoralists and farmers, community members have complained that the agreed resolutions signed by community leaders and government officials have remained unimplemented and the potential for reignition of conflict still exists.

In Tonj, **competition over grazing rights** and the use of swamp areas (*toch*) during the dry season was flagged up as a key concern. With increased numbers of cattle due to improved animal health services, the *toches* are no longer able to accommodate the demand. As a result, communities have resorted

to claiming access to other grazing lands through violent means. Competition over fertile, arable land has also become a source of violent conflict among communities, especially in border areas such as Atap-nhom and Majak-kot.

Unclear policies on land leasing and rent to investors or government institutions by chiefs in residential areas was seen as another concern. Some community members accused area chiefs of being accomplices in land disputes between Juba residents and other South Sudanese citizens. Across South Sudan, **the occupation of displaced persons' homes – by soldiers and also by citizens who didn't seek refuge in UN-run Protection of Civilians sites** – is seen as a potential source of conflict that could arise when displaced persons return to their homes.

Recommendations to national government:

- Form an independent land and border commission to address disputes over administrative borders. Alternatively, disputes could be referred to the Council of States (South Sudan's Upper House of Parliament), which is mandated to create, rename or determine geographical and administrative boundaries between states or counties.

Recommendations to state and local governments:

- Introduce and implement adequate legal policies and procedures for rent and land lease.
- Form community land associations to deal with land issues and coordinate issues of land allocation between local, state and national government.
- The ministries of physical infrastructure, together with municipal councils and survey departments (departments responsible for land surveying and town planning), should establish a digitised land registry for land allocation to residents, to avoid double allocation of plots and issuing of fraudulent land titles.
- Clearly demarcate borders between adjacent counties to ease issues of land allocation.
- Enforce land demarcation and registration as required by state land acts.

- Inform communities about documents needed for land ownership and provide them with the advice they need to obtain them.
- Develop action plans to address surveying and land allocation issues.
- Introduce dispute resolution mechanisms in line with the 2009 Land Act to help communities manage disputes over contested land and administrative borders and to pursue non-violent means of addressing grievances.
- Facilitate community dialogue on land issues, involving communities from neighbouring areas such as Aweil, Gogrial, Wau and Lol states.
- Regulate cattle migration to minimise conflicts between pastoralists and farming communities.
- Enforce the application of the Local Orders instructing unlawful occupants of the properties of displaced persons to vacate those properties.

Recommendations to civil society:

- Together with local and state governments, organise community dialogues to address land-related conflicts.
- Raise awareness among communities on the 2009 Land Act and its provisions to ensure that land disputes are addressed in line with the legal framework.
- Disseminate resolutions and agreements made between pastoralists and farming communities, such as the Marial Bai resolutions and Bussere agreements in Wau,⁶ and encourage their implementation.



Cattle raiding

This was highlighted as a key concern in:

Bor
Rumbek
Tonj
Wau

Cattle raiding within states and between neighbouring communities was cited by communities as one of the main drivers of insecurity, sometimes resulting in displacement or death. In Manyang-Ngok, Tonj State, communities described how they were compelled to abandon their homes

because of repeated cattle raids by *gelweng* (cattle protecting) youth from the neighbouring Gok State. As communities engage in violent clashes to protect their cattle, lives are often lost. Subsequently, people whose cattle have been stolen or who have lost family members mobilise and follow their raided cattle in an attempt to retrieve them, leading to more loss of life on both sides.

The high bride price demanded by families of brides as well as the desire to acquire wealth were cited as the key factors fuelling the incessant cattle raiding among cattle-owning communities. For instance, among the Agaar Dinka community – where the groom must pay the family of the bride several head of cattle, goats and cash in exchange for permission to marry – was cited as another reason for cattle raiding among various clans in Rumbek and the neighbouring communities in Yirol and Gok.

Recommendations to national government:

- Together with state governments, penalise cattle thieves and criminalise the practice of cattle raiding, and develop and implement laws against the practice.

Recommendations to state and local governments:

- Implement legal policies and procedures against cattle raiding.

Recommendations to civil society:

- Form community committees to help with identifying and returning raided cattle.



Member of the *gelweng* in traditional uniform moves his cattle
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Economic hardship

This was highlighted as a key concern in:

Aweil
Bor
Juba
Tonj
Wau

South Sudan has experienced tough economic conditions coupled with massive inflation as a result of the civil war that started in December 2013. Basic commodity prices have soared since the conflict erupted. Participants at the roundtable reported that high unemployment and economic hardship have resulted in **food insecurity**,

high levels of crime, drug and alcohol abuse, family breakdowns, high numbers of children living on the streets, and mass migration between the states and into neighbouring Sudan.

Inadequate availability of affordable food commodities in local markets and lack of access to **basic services**, in particular healthcare and education, were cited as sources of insecurity – especially by female participants in Juba – as people compete over scarce resources.

Limited health facilities, coupled with the delayed payment of health workers' salaries, have caused the overall levels of health in Juba to decline – with widespread diseases affecting women and children in particular. In Aweil, **mismanagement of public resources, corruption, nepotism and lack of accountability** by public officials were seen by communities as a threat to their safety and security, as they impact the effective delivery of much needed social services. **Unemployment among youth** also poses a considerable threat to security, as unemployed young people become more vulnerable to recruitment into violent groups or activities that create instability; these disaffected youth are more likely to turn to crime as a means for survival.

Recommendations to national government:

- Implement the Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in South Sudan in order to attract foreign investment.
- Prioritise the creation of employment options for young people by offering services such as loans and providing vocational training.
- Provide adequate security and protection to traders working along the highways, to enable the flow of more goods to markets.
- Make civil servants' salaries competitive as a measure against mismanagement of public funds in government institutions.

Recommendations to state and local governments:

- Streamline prices for basic commodities and reduce taxes levied on food items to make them more affordable.
- Create jobs for young people through loans and jobs training.
- Open vocational and technical institutes for young people to gain the skills they need to find jobs.

Recommendations to civil society:

- Through job training and loans, train communities on farming methods – such as using ox-ploughs – as a means of alleviating poverty.
- Open vocational and technical institutes for young people to gain the skills they need to find jobs.

High levels of crime

This was highlighted as a key concern in:

Bor
Juba
Rumbek
Torit

According to roundtable participants, economic hardship has led to increased criminality, such as killings, looting by armed groups, robberies and bag snatching, especially in Juba, Bor, Torit and Rumbek. Women are particularly affected by bag snatching along roads and in market places. Armed

robberies of commercial and international NGOs' vehicles, as well as armed robberies of citizens using the roads, was reported as a common occurrence on a number of major roads. It was also noted that civilians could acquire guns and ammunition from security services. Participants also noted an increased number of targeted killings of civilians due to their ethnicity along roads linking Juba and other towns. These major roads are therefore either not used, or travellers are escorted by government security forces for fear of attacks.

Recommendations to national government:

- Deploy more police officers and increase police patrols at crime hotspots.
- Strengthen police patrol units to enable them to respond quickly and adequately.
- Introduce regular inspections and accounting of ammunition by all security providers to prevent civilians from obtaining weapons and ammunition used in armed robberies.

Recommendations to state and local governments:

- Carry out regular inspections and accounting of ammunition by all security providers to prevent weapons and ammunition falling into the hands of criminal groups.

Recommendations to civil society:

- Carry out awareness campaigns for communities – in particular women – on how to protect themselves against bag snatching, theft and other crimes.



GBV and limited gender equality

This was highlighted as a key concern in:

Aweil
Bor
Juba
Torit
Wau
Yambio

GBV was identified by roundtable participants across different states as one of the most pressing cases of insecurity in South Sudan, with high numbers of cases of rape, sexual assault, domestic violence, early and forced marriages and early pregnancies. Women are also denied access to resources or their use of resources is controlled. The practice of

letting perpetrators of sexual abuse marry their victims encourages violence and impunity and denies victims their right to pursue justice.

In addition, participants reported that **gender inequality** persists across the country, with few women being able to exercise their rights to own and inherit property, and **limited participation of women in public life** and decision-making in the community and in state affairs. Major decisions on public matters are, in most cases, handled by men. Although some state governments have declared their support for women's rights and inclusion and have appointed women to some key state government positions, community members say that women are often only appointed to deputy positions. Reportedly, girls and women in many communities still have limited opportunities in terms of public participation and decision-making, education and vocational training as compared to boys and men. Roundtable participants in Yambio stated that many girls also drop out of school due to the combined factors of economic hardship, early marriages, forced marriages and teenage pregnancies. This is also a barrier to addressing GBV issues.

Recommendations to national government:

- Enforce and implement legislation to address cases of forced marriages and ensure that perpetrators are held to account.
- The national Ministry of Gender should work closely with state-level ministries of education and gender to address the prevalence of GBV through awareness-raising, enabling women's engagement in decision-making processes, and jointly training community leaders, chiefs and elders on gender issues.
- Guarantee access to justice to victims of GBV and prevent perpetrators from marrying them.

Recommendations to state and local governments:

- Enforce and implement the Child Act to address the practice of early and forced marriages.
- Introduce legislation aimed at protecting women and girls from harmful cultural practices that deprive them of their rights.
- Work with traditional leaders to include protection of girls and women in the administration of customary justice.
- Integrate gender into training manuals for police at county, *payam* and *bomas* levels.
- Pass laws that legally protect girls' right to education.
- State ministries of education, with support from education partners and civil society organisations, should strengthen parent-teacher associations and school administrations to develop plans that prevent early marriages and teenage pregnancies.

Recommendations to civil society:

- Organise awareness-raising campaigns on GBV to encourage behaviour change.
- Raise awareness of referral pathways and legal remedies for GBV victims.
- Train and work with communities, elders and traditional leaders to highlight the effects of GBV and challenge harmful gender norms and behaviours that perpetuate inequality and violence against women.
- Advocate for women's inclusion in key decision-making positions in local, state and national government.

Breakdown of social cohesion

This was highlighted as a key concern in:

Aweil
Bor
Rumbek
Torit
Wau
Yambio

Participants at the roundtable discussions emphasised that **ethnic divisions and tensions between groups** are a major conflict driver and a hindrance to enduring peace and reconciliation among and between communities across South Sudan. In Bor, fighting among youth – for example, during social gatherings such as wrestling

or traditional dances, or due to marriage arrangements and inflated bride prices following the introduction of monetary dowry payments – was seen as affecting the peaceful coexistence within and between communities.

Previously, the restricted space for communities in Torit to **express their views** or opinions made it difficult for them to discuss sensitive issues or have difficult conversations that were necessary for pursuing peace and reconciliation; in turn, this left many community members with little interest in actively engaging on governance issues. The introduction of quarterly rallies led by the state governor – and attended by state ministers – has given communities an opportunity to express their views and concerns, including safety and security concerns, and has improved relationships between citizens and the state.

The **erosion of social values and norms** among communities was identified as a major safety and security concern in and around Yambio. **High levels of trauma** among the communities as a result of 21 years of civil war, as well as intense violence that is in part linked to high levels of drug and alcohol abuse, were also seen as a barrier to conflict resolution and healing.

Women were often seen as playing a role in exacerbating communal conflict in Rumbek and throughout the state through the **composition of songs** to incite their sons and husbands into violence, looting, cattle raiding and revenge attacks, or to challenge the social and cultural attitudes of other communities – leading to misunderstandings and conflict.

Hate speech against other communities or clans – including composing negative songs, calling names and posting derogatory statements on social media and other platforms – was identified as one of the contributing factors to conflict in Aweil. Similarly, in Wau, **ethnic/clan stereotyping** in community meetings and on social media and the radio was seen to undermine trust-building among communities. In the aftermath of the violent conflict in Wau town in 2016, some youth and political leaders used social media to spread hate speech, which ignited violence among the communities of Wau.

Women and children in Agok, Wau
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Recommendations to national government:

- Ensure every citizen's right to freedom of expression.
- Publicly condemn hate speech.

Recommendations to state and local governments:

- Introduce legislation against hate speech and actively discourage hate speech in public forums.

Recommendations to civil society:

- Raise awareness of the harm caused by hate speech, including through working with youth, communities, politicians and the media.
- Train the media on ethical journalism.
- Engage communities, elders and traditional leaders in community debates and dialogues and in reconciliation and trauma healing to repair damaged social relations. Sensitise them to the effects of tribalism and ethnic division, and highlight the importance of peaceful coexistence.
- Bring communities together in peaceful ways through sports, music and drama.
- Civil society organisations and religious leaders should engage in trauma healing and management activities and provide counselling to individuals with signs of trauma.
- Women leaders should advise women in rural areas to desist from composing derogative songs.

Notes

¹ For ease of reference, this report refers to South Sudan's previous 10 states and 86 counties (with their *payams* and *bomas* – administrative divisions at the local level) as distinct from the newly created 32 states and 183 counties.

² The roundtables were organised by Saferworld together with our partners Solidarity Association for Relief and Recovery Affairs (in Torit), Church and Development (in Bor), the Organization for Nonviolence and Development (in Juba) and the Change Agent Organization (in Yambio). The roundtable in Torit was also organised in collaboration with the state ministry of local government and law enforcement and the Catholic Diocese.

³ This included deputy governors, state government ministers, state advisors, members of state parliaments, county commissioners, municipal council members, chairpersons of the state peace commissions, members of Relief and Rehabilitation Commissions, and members of State Legislative Assemblies.

⁴ This briefing aims to reflect the views of participants and does not necessarily reflect the views of Saferworld.

⁵ RedR (2008), 'Management of Staff Safety Course Manual', p 5.

⁶ These are agreements that were reached between the farming communities and pastoralists in relation to the movement of cattle into Wau State.

About Saferworld

Saferworld is an independent international organisation working to prevent violent conflict and build safer lives. With programmes in Africa, Asia and the Middle East, 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.

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. These programmes have taken place in sixteen locations across eight of the country's 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, Saferworld has included peacebuilding and reconciliation programming in its work. Recently, with funds from the United Nations Mine Action Service, we implemented a project on small arms and light weapons management and control in three locations, working with the South Sudan Bureau of Community Security and Small Arms Control, as well as civil society partners. We have started a new project to expand our overall programme to the two remaining former states (Unity and Upper Nile) and to address intra- and intercommunity conflict and gender-based violence.

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