



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office



UK Government Consultations on the
20th Anniversary of UNSCR 1325 in 2020
and the 2019 UK-Hosted
PSVI International Conference:
South Sudan consultation

**UK Government Consultations on the 20th Anniversary of UNSCR 1325 in 2020 and
the 2019 UK-Hosted PSVI International Conference**
South Sudan consultation, March 2019

Introduction and background

Gender Action for Peace and Security (GAPS) and the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) organised consultations on the Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative (PSVI) International Conference to be held in November 2019 and the 20th anniversary of UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security in 2020. These consultations took place in the UK and in 7 of the 9 UK Government Women, Peace and Security (WPS) focus countries: Afghanistan, DRC, Iraq, Libya, Nigeria, Somalia and South Sudan. They build on FCO-funded, GAPS-implemented consultations in the development of the UK National Action Plan (NAP) on Women Peace and Security in 2017 and best practice on the meaningful participation of women and girls. The consultations feed directly into the development of the UK-hosted PSVI International Conference and the international community's work and commitments ahead of the 20th anniversary of UNSCR 1325.

GAPS and CARE International South Sudan worked with Community Initiative for Development Organization (CIDO), a women's rights organisation, to hold consultations with South Sudanese civil society organisations (CSOs). Ahead of the consultation, CARE, CIDO, Women Development Group (WDG) and Women Empowerment Centre (WEC) collected responses to a set of UK Government questions on the topics to be discussed at the conference. This was done in Torit County (Eastern Equatoria State), Wau County (Wau State) and Bor County (Jonglei State).

The objective of consultations was to bring together CSOs to develop clear recommendations for the UK Government and international community (including international non-governmental organisations (INGOs), multilateral institutions and governments) to develop actions and commitments on and ahead of the 20th anniversary of UNSCR 1325 and UK's PSVI International Conference.

Recommendations

Recommendations – Women, Peace and Security

1. **National Action Plan (NAP) 2015-2020 on UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security and related resolutions:** International donors should fund and support the implementation of South Sudan's Women, Peace and Security NAP that was produced to address women and girls' rights during and post conflict.
2. **Long-term capacity strengthening of government institutions and civil society:** The international community should fund capacity strengthening of institutions that work on women and girls' rights, including government ministries and civil society organisations.
3. **Women and girls' meaningful participation:** The international community should fund holistic participation programming at all levels. Women and girls should be empowered and supported to attain decision-making positions in governments and in CSOs, at the national, state and local levels. To support this, policymakers need long-term, systematic training on women and girls' rights and gender equality to ensure that political systems become less patriarchal and therefore more accessible to women and girls.
4. **Long-term funding, women's rights organisations and more coordinated approaches:** Donors, the international community and governments should take longer-term and more coordinated approaches to ensuring a comprehensive focus on Women, Peace and Security. This should include specific funding for women's rights organisations. Without funding, their essential work on Women, Peace and Security, including the prevention of and response to violence against women and girls (VAWG) would not be possible.
5. **Prioritise funding for integrated VAWG programming:** The international community should support the identification of entry points and increase funding for women and adolescent girls' access to VAWG prevention and response services. This would ensure a holistic approach to VAWG where prevention and response are integrated into all humanitarian sector programming.
6. **Government of South Sudan:** The international community should better support the internal capacity of the South Sudanese Government to implement the Women, Peace and Security agenda, specifically the relevant ministries, to enable them to implement government commitments in the NAP on UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. These include: the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare; Humanitarian

Affairs and Disaster Management; Ministry of Defence; and support to the Ministry of Justice to uphold and strengthen state and national legal systems to respond to cases of violence, in particular VAWG, to ensure funding is allocated for legal aid support and to improve court administration and case management.

Recommendations – PSVI International Conference

- 1. Prevention and social norms:** The international community and donors should commit to long-term funding for the prevention of sexual violence initiatives that address social norms.
- 2. Fund civil society and women’s rights organisations:** The international community and donors should fund and support the long-term capacity strengthening of civil society organisations with a specific focus on funding to women’s rights organisations.
- 3. Women’s networks and groups:** Support women’s networks and groups/alliances to build local capacity for gender equality to improve the status of women and girls.
- 4. Survivor-centred multi-sectoral services:** The international community and donors should support an increase in survivor-centred multi-sectoral services to meet the needs of survivors, including medical (clinical care for sexual assault survivors), psychosocial support, legal support, and safety and security services.
- 5. Legislation:** The international community should provide long-term capacity strengthening to security and legal support services, particularly of the police, judiciary and holistic support centres for survivors.

Discussion

Discussion – Women, Peace and Security

- 1. National Action Plan (NAP) 2015-2020 on UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security and related resolutions:** International donors should fund and support the implementation of South Sudan’s Women, Peace and Security NAP that was produced to address women and girls’ rights during and post conflict.

This is anticipated to increase the participation of women in crisis prevention, conflict management and post-conflict peacebuilding and to protect them against any form of gender-based violence, including sexual violence, in situations of armed conflict and in times of peace. It should be monitored by and inclusive of civil society.

- 2. Long-term capacity strengthening of government institutions and civil society:** The international community should fund capacity strengthening of institutions that work on women and girls’ rights, including government ministries and civil society organisations.

There is a lack of knowledge of Women, Peace and Security in government institutions and civil society. These institutions and organisations can play a significant role in efforts to promote the Women, Peace and Security agenda and the advancement of more peaceful societies. It is essential that these institutions and organisations maximise the role they play in South Sudan. Efforts to build their capacity should therefore be prioritised and opportunities to enable them to undertake holistic programmes that implement the Women, Peace and Security agenda and advance women and girls’ rights in South Sudan, including their ability to engage in statebuilding and peacebuilding initiatives should be supported.

- 3. Women and girls’ meaningful participation:** The international community should fund holistic participation programming at all levels. Women and girls should be empowered and supported to attain decision-making positions in governments and in CSOs, at the national, state and local levels. To support this, policymakers need long-term, systematic training on women and girls’ rights and gender equality to ensure that political systems become less patriarchal and therefore more accessible to women and girls.

Programmes that target women and girls’ roles in decision-making and leadership are essential. These should focus at all levels of decision-making, from grassroots to international, and be tailored to their specific context (given the barriers to women’s participation are different in different parts of South Sudan). It should also support women and girls’ advocacy capacity, the creation and strengthening of women’s networks, and be targeted at enabling women and girls to advocate for gender-sensitive peace and security.

- 4. Long-term funding, women’s rights organisations and more coordinated approaches:** Donors, the international community and governments should take longer-term and more coordinated approaches to

ensuring a comprehensive focus on Women, Peace and Security. This should include specific funding for women's rights organisations. Without funding, their essential work on Women, Peace and Security, including the prevention of and response to VAWG, would not be possible.

Long-term funding should ensure that VAWG prevention is included in statebuilding and peacebuilding processes, that VAWG response is included in state-run processes, and should ensure the participation of women throughout statebuilding and peacebuilding. Long-term funding, particularly to women's rights organisations, also enables them to be more involved in accountability and advocacy, which is essential to ensure other actors are held accountable to their Women, Peace and Security commitments, policy and programmes.

- 5. Prioritise funding for integrated VAWG programming:** The international community should support the identification of entry points and increase funding for women and girls' access to VAWG prevention and response services. This would ensure a holistic approach to VAWG where prevention and response are integrated into all humanitarian sector programming.

VAWG prevention and response services should include existing assistance, services and facilities, including VAWG prevention and response; targeting teen mothers to access health services, especially sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR); creating adolescent spaces in women-friendly spaces; and providing static and mobile prevention and response services to access hard-to-reach locations without services. Particular attention should be paid to promoting holistic programming that ensures collaboration across multiple sectors. This includes protection, shelter, WASH, health, SRHR, nutrition, food security and livelihoods and camp coordination and camp management/settlements, so that these sectors integrate VAWG risk mitigation in order to protect and empower women and girls. It is important that shelter, WASH, health and food security and livelihoods identify and maximise all opportunities to mainstream and integrate gender and protection into programming. Where gender and protection are not integrated comprehensively and effectively across all sectoral and multi-sectoral activities, opportunities to enhance the empowering and protective nature of all humanitarian programming are missed.

All organisations involved in humanitarian response should develop a guide or check list of potential opportunities for mainstreaming and integrating gender and protection in the sector's activities to ensure that these are embedded into programme design and implementation.

- 6. Government of South Sudan:** The international community should better support the internal capacity of the South Sudanese Government to implement the Women, Peace and Security agenda, specifically the relevant ministries, to enable them to implement government commitments in the NAP on UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. These include: the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare; Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management; Ministry of Defence; and support to the Ministry of Justice to uphold and strengthen state and national legal systems to respond to cases of violence, in particular VAWG, to ensure funding is allocated for legal aid support and to improve court administration and case management.

Support to the ministries of Gender, Child and Social Welfare and of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management should enable them to coordinate and monitor implementation of the South Sudan NAP. The two ministries' coordination role extends to government institutions and international stakeholders, including: donors; United Nations agencies; development partners; INGOs; and CSOs. It should ensure gender mainstreaming in public and private sectors and reporting on the progress of the implementation of the South Sudan NAP to the Council of Ministers, national civil society organisations and the international community.

Support should enable the Ministry of Defence to strengthen democratic values, unity and sovereignty in collaboration with other national institutions in the security sector while engaging women too. Specifically, the Ministry of Defence should deliberately recruit and deploy women and ensure its military and civilian personnel conform to the constitutional requirement of having at least 25% female representation in all government institutions.

Support to the Ministry of Justice should ensure transitional justice is delivered in a more timely manner and is transparent, including clarity around how it will specifically address VAWG. Appropriate and responsive forms of

justice that are accessible to women and girls who need to access legal systems in remote areas should be prioritised. Specific support to the Ministry of Justice to support and strengthen the capacity of state and national legal systems to respond to cases of violence, in particular sexual and gender-based violence, is especially important. Funding should be allocated for legal aid support and to improve court administration and case management.

Discussion – PSVI International Conference

- 1. Prevention and social norms:** The international community and donors should commit to long-term funding for the prevention of sexual violence initiatives that address social norms.

Funding for preventing sexual violence initiatives falls significantly below the national need. In order to prevent sexual violence and protect survivors, an upscale in funding is urgently required. Without funding, international commitments made will remain meaningless. This funding should also address social norms which entrench gender inequality and cause gender-based violence. Programming should incorporate responses to gender inequality, and social norms around masculinities and femininities that make gender-based violence so pervasive. Without addressing social norms, gender-based violence will not end. Funding should be long-term as the causes of gender inequality and gender-based violence cannot change in short-term programming. It requires a long-term, holistic approach that is mainstreamed in education, awareness raising, and all community-based, state and peacebuilding and humanitarian programmatic approaches. Furthermore, all programmes should be survivor-centred and therefore based on systematic, meaningful consultation with victims and survivors to ensure programming delivers on their needs, rights and experiences. This consultation itself also requires funding.

- 2. Fund civil society and women’s rights organisations:** The international community and donors should fund and support the long-term capacity strengthening of civil society organisations with a specific focus on funding to women’s rights organisations.

This will better enable women-focused organisations to take a lead in supporting the advancement of gender equality and women and girls’ empowerment. Long-term capacity strengthening should include support for their work on women’s economic and social empowerment (such as income generating activities) to alleviate poverty, which is a major cause of violence

- 3. Women’s networks and groups:** Support women’s networks and groups/alliances to build local capacity for gender equality to improve the status of women and girls.

South Sudanese women and girls are well aware of the causes and challenges of sexual violence and the barriers to accessing services that affect their communities. Therefore, women and girls should be engaged meaningfully throughout programme design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Only through the meaningful participation of women and girls will sexual violence end and the multiple barriers that survivors and at-risk groups face in accessing services be removed.

There are extensive women’s groups in South Sudan, and they need to be supported to create sustainable programmes within the country. Moreover, they are important structures through which women can be meaningfully engaged in programme design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation through institutional and programmatic support to bridge the gap between informal and formal support services. Women’s groups are important agents for raising awareness about sexual violence, the delivery of services, and recommendations on how to adapt programming to better meet the needs of women and girls in the community, and on women and girls’ rights at multiple levels, including facilitating women’s advocacy and movement building, community mobilisation efforts, and engaging men and boys in gender-transformative activities. Therefore, with deliberate support, it is critical to expand partnerships with local women’s groups in order to increase women’s participation and voice, gender equality and gender-based violence prevention and response.

- 4. Survivor-centred multi-sectoral services:** The international community and donors should support an increase in survivor-centred multi-sectoral services to meet the needs of survivors, including medical (clinical care for sexual assault survivors), psychosocial support, legal support, and safety and security services.

Currently, such services are only provided in the hospital in Juba. Therefore, in addition to the need for services to be multi-sectoral and survivor-centred, they also need significant expansion across South Sudan to increase access for survivors.

5. **Legislation:** The international community should provide long-term capacity strengthening to security and legal support services, particularly of the police, judiciary and holistic support centres for survivors.

Women and girls accessing services were unanimously unsatisfied with the support they received from the police, local leaders and local courts. It is clear that targeted and long-term capacity strengthening is needed to improve the response of local traditional courts and police services to increase their sensitivity to survivors and to ensure safe and appropriate referrals. These efforts include: training; use of mobile courts by service providers; recruitment of more female security personnel; appointment of gender focal points (gender desks) within police stations/offices; and issuance and enforcement of zero-tolerance policies and codes of conduct on the perpetration of sexual exploitation and abuse by security personnel. In addition, strengthening of the customary and formal legal systems, including strengthened enforcement of existing laws and policies, training and support for local leaders and government structures are all needed to reduce the impunity of perpetrators.