Supporting Civil Society and Women's Rights Organisations in Fragile and Conflict Affected Contexts
South Sudan Report

1. Introduction

As part of a consortium of organisations including Gender Action for Peace and Security (GAPS), Women for Women International, Saferworld, Women's International Peace Centre, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom Nigeria and Somali Women Development Centre, and Womankind Worldwide have conducted a research exercise to look at the challenges and opportunities faced by women's rights organisations (WROs) and other civil society organisations (CSOs) working on issues relating to Women, Peace, and Security in Somalia, Nigeria and South Sudan. The research aimed to support CSSF-Africa and the wider international community to better understand the landscape of WROs and CSOs in Nigeria, Somalia and South Sudan operating at different levels; learn the challenges faced by - and opportunities for - these organisations (including in the current context of COVID-19); and have informed guidance on meaningful ways to strengthen the sector in alignment with the UK Government's and CSSF's Women, Peace and Security (WPS) strategic outcomes.

In South Sudan, the research was led by the Women's International Peace Centre and Women for Women International. The research methodology involved a desk literature review on profiling women's rights and civil society organisations in South Sudan and the donor funding mechanism. 25 key informant interviews (KIIs) were conducted with organisations working on issues of women, peace and security from three regions, including Bahr el Ghazal (northwest), the Equatorias (southern), and Greater Upper Nile (northeast).

As the world's youngest country, located in the centre of sub-Saharan Africa, South Sudan faces massive challenges. Since its inception, severe underdevelopment, recurring conflict, food insecurity, corruption, and poverty have crippled the country. The gradual implementation of the September 2018 peace agreement including the formation of the Transitional Government of National Unity (TGNU) in February 2020 and agreement on number of states provided for a positive economic outlook earlier in 2020. Nonetheless, subsequent shocks that included flooding in parts of the country, locust infestation, the COVID-19 pandemic, and lower oil prices have changed the outlook over a relatively short time period and exacerbated existing vulnerabilities, inequalities and humanitarian needs. South Sudan remains in a serious humanitarian crisis due to the cumulative effects of years of conflict which has destroyed people's livelihoods.

These challenges have given rise to the increase in WROs, CSOs and other groups and coalitions working to advance the women, peace and security agenda across South Sudan. The activities of these organisations and groups have been significantly impactful, but have also undoubtedly been hindered by challenges particularly when it comes to accessing and utilising sufficient funding, as well as the operating environment for CSOs in South Sudan.

2. Recommendations

Recommendation 1 – Increase the availability of flexible, core and long-term funding for Women, Peace and Security, and direct this towards grassroots and local organisations.
The amount of dedicated funding for Women, Peace and Security should be increased – with flexible, core and long-term funding being directed to WROs at an institutional level. A specific percentage of funding should be allocated to grassroots and local organisations to amplify the voices of marginalised communities.

Recommendation 2 – Take an integrated, holistic and context-specific approach to funding.
Funding mechanisms should allow integrated approaches that are holistic and context-specific, and target gender equality/Women, Peace and Security priorities both directly and indirectly.

Recommendation 3 – Fund coalition building and networks for women's rights organisations as well as specific organisations and programmes.
To address the capacity gap of WROs in South Sudan, to the international community should support the building of both existing and new coalitions to enable the sharing of skills, peer accountability and review of standard operational practices that will help build weaker and less established organisations.

Recommendation 4 – Improve accessibility of funding by simplifying application, budgeting and compliance processes.
Where funding is available, the international community should improve its accessibility by simplifying funding proposal application, budget requirements and compliance processes.

Recommendation 5 – Prioritise monitoring, evaluation and learning frameworks as a key element of funding mechanisms, and emphasise the learning element of the process.
The international community should prioritise monitoring, evaluation and learning frameworks as a key element of funding mechanisms designed to be accessed by WROs – particularly at the grassroots and local level. The learning element of this process should be emphasised future funding and programme design, and this should be developed in a participatory way.

Recommendation 6 – Develop a standardised reporting (financial and narrative) format and/or system.
Donors and INGOs should develop a standardised financial and narrative reporting format and/or system that is accessible, transparent and user-friendly. Reporting periods should be lengthened to 6 to 12 months maximum. Narrative reports should be accepted in national languages and should focus on outcomes rather than activities. Financial reports should allow a reasonable flexibility between budget lines. Receipts should be required for expenditure only above agreed amounts and should be accepted in copies to enable organisations to keep original receipts for national audit processes.

Recommendation 7 – Provide capacity strengthening opportunities.
The international community should provide capacity strengthening opportunities by a) funding lower capacity organisations with a view to building a longer-term partnership and b) designing and delivering specific capacity strengthening interventions (with a specific focus on developing organisational capacity to apply for funding, manage budgets and fulfil monitoring, evaluation and reporting requirements.

Recommendation 8: Use diplomacy to support an independent civil society.
The international community has a key role to play in using diplomacy to influence the Government of South Sudan to ensure access to information and freedom of expression for WROs, CSOs and HRDs.

3. Recommendations and evidence

> **Recommendation 1 – Increase availability of flexible, core and long-term funding for Women, Peace and Security, and direct this towards grassroots and local organisations.**
> The amount of dedicated funding for Women, Peace and Security should be increased – with flexible, core and long-term funding being directed to WROs at an institutional level. A specific percentage of funding should be allocated to grassroots and local organisations to amplify the voices of marginalised communities.
>
> *Recommendation for:* Donors, multi-lateral institutions and INGOs

Investing in women also brings significant benefits, and using the maximum available resources is imperative to implementing the Women, Peace and Security agenda. Despite this, women's contribution to conflict prevention and peace remains undervalued and under-resourced.

Generally, the overall amount of dedicated funding for Women, Peace and Security should be increased – with flexible, core and long-term funding being directed to WROs, not just for specific activities and projects but at an institutional level.

Country evidence
Participants of key informant interviews in South Sudan reported that support received from women's funds to women's organisations needs to be more flexible, for example, core support instead of project-specific. They also felt it needed to be longer term, since project funding is also generally for specific, short-term programmes – often limited to less than nine months in a year.

Women groups in South Sudan felt that many donor agencies lack a budget line for gender equality at headquarters, making it difficult for gender advisors to take decisions to support WROs directly. Often decisions about funding women's groups are taken at the country level in the absence of any guidelines or a common understanding of how best to do this. Financial support for WROs then depends on the gender capacity of the country office, on how useful the head of office or embassy perceives supporting women's groups to be and therefore how much resource is directed to them. Interviews indicated that Women, Peace and Security programmes receive less funding compared with other programmes.:

> *"There are certain programmes - WASH, nutrition, health - that receive funding; but women participation and conflict prevention do not have much funding. This is because the other programmes are perceived to be specialised services with professional skills needed."*

Where limited funding is available, it should be provided through more accessible mechanisms by smaller grassroots and local organisations that are in desperate need of resourcing but are unable to apply for the bigger, multi-year consortium grants due to capacity issues.

Funding mechanisms need to be designed in a way that recognises that WROs and CSOs do not work in siloes, and in reality cut across themes, agendas and sectors. Currently, certain organisations cannot apply for the small amount of funding that is available since they do not fit into a narrow category of the 'type' of organisation or 'thematic issue' that they work on.

Country evidence

There are certain thematic areas that are easier to get funding for than others. For example, interview participants noted that most funders provide money for peacebuilding programmes in South Sudan, given the context of the country – but that funding for other thematic areas have been disproportionately awarded to international agencies due to the perception that local NGOs and CSOs lack capacity to implement complex, sensitive programmes for issues such as sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence.

One participant recommended context-specific programming for South Sudan as being key to taking a more inclusive approach:

> *"Look at the context rather than generalising criteria for all organisations. The criteria set can alienate local organisations."*

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Recommendation 3 – Fund coalition building and networks for WROs as well as specific organisations.

The international community should support the building of both existing and new coalitions and networks to enable the sharing of skills, peer accountability and review of standard operational practices that will help build less established organisations. These networks could be supported to provide specific capacity strengthening support to grassroots organisations to enable them to grow their institutional capacity, including in accessing and managing donor funding.

Recommendation for: Donors and multi-lateral institutions

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Funding relationship-building, alliances and learning between WROs, and with other social movements, is critical to strengthen collective voice, impact and sustainability. Coalition-building – especially when it connects elite and grassroots organisations – leads to a louder voice, coordination, solidarity, broader expertise and greater ability to mobilise public opinion and exert pressure for change.[1] However, this takes additional time and resources.

Donors should contribute by financing the co-ordination efforts required to build and strengthen coalitions, investing in women's CSO platforms and networks, and funding convening, including travel. Funding in ways that incentivise women's groups' working together is important, especially in contexts where the women's movement is fractured or civil society is under threat. This would also help to build a more collaborative civil society in South Sudan, rather than negative competition.

Country evidence

In South Sudan, coalitions and networks are not able to thrive – largely as a result of many of the challenges highlighted elsewhere in this report. There is also an additional challenge that the Government of South Sudan only shares information with a few civil society platforms, networks and clusters which can add to their ability to hear about funding opportunities, access relevant information, and maintain their capacity. WROs and CSOs in South Sudan need to be able to better access NGO networks and coalitions in order to work together to meet immediate service delivery needs and longer-term women, peace and security objectives.

Many interview participants talked of learning about or accessing funding opportunities through a network or coalition. For example:

> *"Through the NGO Forum, we have access to calls for proposals – in addition to the networks that we have with other CSOs and NGOs on the ground."*

Interviewees claimed that they lacked the knowledge of the sources of information where calls for proposals could be obtained, and suggested that these websites/sources of information should be provided to the NGO Forum in South Sudan to make them known to a wider range of eligible organisations.

A number of participants of the key informant interviews shared the importance of investing in coalitions and networks, as well as specific programmes and organisations. One remarked that *"through networking and working as a group can lead to easy access to funding from international community in South Sudan, for example when women led organisations are grouped, it will simplify their work and their voice can be heard as one voice and very fast."* Another noted that networks and coalitions *"promotes women through empowerment and capacity building and encourages forming strong women's alliances, thus promoting funding."*

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[1] O'Connell, H. What added value do organisations that are led and managed by women and girls bring to work addressing the rights, needs, and priorities of women and girls? Paper prepared for Comic Relief.

> **Recommendation 4 – Improve accessibility of funding by simplifying application, budgeting and compliance processes.**
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> The international community should improve its accessibility by simplifying funding proposal application, budget requirements and compliance processes. This should mean that calls for proposals are: in national languages; give a clear timeline for the process; are launched with sufficient time for applicants to apply; submit in different formats (such as email and online). That funding applications are: accepted in national languages; do not require line-by-line list of activities but focus on outcomes; can be submitted in various formats (for example, via email not just via an online portal). Budgets should not be activity based and therefore constricting, but focus on outcomes. Compliance should be scaled back to necessary information including: confirmation of registration/certification; submission of essential organisational and HR documents; bank statements; annual audit; and that due diligence and compliance is harmonised across donors to ensure organisations submit the same documentation to each donor rather than different information to each donor.
>
> *Recommendation for:* Donors and multi-lateral institutions

The international community should simplify funding application forms and proposal templates. These are often inappropriately structured for WROs and CSOs to provide the relevant information for the project they are proposing to implement.

Application forms and proposal templates should be simplified to fit WROs and CSOs capacities and make funding more accessible, for example making it possible to submit in various formats (via email, not just via an online portal). Budget requirements should also be less onerous.

With regards to compliance processes, the international community should look at harmonising some of the due diligence requirements, at least across their own national funds, if not across multilateral and other nations' funding mechanisms. Donors should also consider graduating the due diligence processes according to size and capacity of organisation, so that national and local WROs and CSOs have lesser requirements than the INGOs that they are competing for funding with. One participant noted:

> *"Look at the capacity of agencies you are giving funding to. Tailor experiences for specific organisations – for example, simplify the requirements for local organisations."*

Any investment in larger organisations to act as intermediaries must be guided by key principles that enable WROs and smaller, local CSOs to engage meaningfully in the design and development of projects from the beginning so that any sub-grant arrangements are not driven by short-term approaches, but have a longer- term and more sustainable partnership in mind.

Country evidence

Many interview participants reported that application processes are overly complicated, with one noting that "th*e application process is too difficult."* One person particularly noted that application processes are challenging as they require codes to be able to upload the relevant information to their server. Instead, *"making the application process as easy as possible via emails for example would be very helpful."* A number of participants shared that they have missed a lot of funding opportunities due to poor network connection.

There was also clear feedback that the application process needs to be more collaborative, and that *"the international community needs to work closely with WROs and CSOs during the call for proposals."*

Our research appears to show that there are two main mechanisms for accessing funding in South Sudan: directly from donors (both governments and multilaterals) and through a partnership framework in which international agencies secure funding from donor governments and contract either a part or whole of the work to local NGOs/CSOs.

Concerns over risk and results often lead to heavy compliance demands on organisations applying for or receiving funding. Participants expressed concern about the long list of difficult requirements that agencies places on CSOs in order to qualify for funding, especially core support. They questioned the focus on internal management systems at the expense of what organisations are doing and achieving. Another felt that the amount of detail and work required in proposals is heavy, especially when compared with the amount of funds and short timeframes on offer.

Many WROs and CSOs in South Sudan find it too difficult to access funding directly from international donors due to restrictive preconditions - for example, the requirement for applicants to have a certain threshold of funding in their accounts to be able to apply and to have a certain number of years' experience implementing similar projects which can be difficult considering the relative youth of South Sudanese WROs and CSOs which evolved mostly after the country achieved independence in 2011. Once participant noted:

"Due to these restrictive preconditions, the majority of local NGOs resort to working in partnership with international organisations that are more easily able to secure funding directly from donor governments."

That said, some organisations are more well-established than others and have good connections with the international community, meaning that it is often the same organisations that are approached to be part of a consortium.

Donors can make funding opportunities more accessible for WROs and CSOs by levelling the playing field and lowering the threshold for certain preconditions that are particularly difficult to be satisfied by national CSOs in South Sudan:

"Giving priorities to national NGOs and focusing on building their capacity will help to ensure that the country reduces its dependence on the work of international agencies which are relatively expensive given that they allocate exorbitant amounts of their budgets to human resources and overhead costs."

It is evident that donors and multilateral institutions can sometimes find it challenging to identify and fund the smaller, local organisations that have the relevant access, expertise and presence – particularly at the community level. Where direct funding of grassroots organisations is not possible, one well-established way of reaching these organisations has been through investing in specialist funding intermediaries such as women's funds or larger NGOs/INGOs. These intermediaries have a track record of grant making, processes and systems to manage large sums or money and the direct connections with grassroots organisations that the donors just do not have.

This investment in intermediaries should be guided by key principles that ensure that administrative and implementation burdens are not passed onto the local organisations. When being funded, grassroots organisations should be meaningfully included in the planning and design of any funding mechanisms from the outset.

Finally, interview participants noted that they rarely receive feedback from donors on unsuccessful applications. This would be helpful to increase the likelihood of future funding proposals being improved and in line with donor requirements.

> **Recommendation 5 – Prioritise monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) frameworks as a key element of funding mechanisms, and emphasise the learning element of the process.**
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> The international community should allow MEL frameworks that can be used by WROs – particularly at the grassroots and local level. The learning element of this process should be emphasised to ensure organisations can use the learning from programmes for their internal work as well as for donors to use. Such processes should have a focus on outcome reporting that looks at what has been achieved as a result of the funding, rather than a focus on activities.
>
> *Recommendation for:* Donors, multi-lateral institutions and INGOs.

Donors, as a key element of funding programmes, should provide institutional support to local partners in terms of training and support to put in place the appropriate tools, systems and processes to develop an effective organisational MEL function. This includes allocating sufficient funding to programmatic and finance staff so that local organisations can attract the best and most experienced long-term staff to be able to deliver on their commitments to donors.

Country evidence

When it comes to MEL, participants reported that this can sometimes be complicated for local CSOs and NGOs due to the *"complicated tools involved especially in large projects where certain software is required to be able to analyse project data and provide reports based on a sophisticated procedure."* It was also noted that it would be easier if these systems and processes were consistent across donors, partners and projects – including the key milestones at which MEL requirements need to be fulfilled.

Others – conversely – reported that the key challenge is not the systems and processes, but more that they do not have the resources to do it. One participant said: *"Monitoring the activities is straight forward and does not required sophisticated tools to undertake it. However, the challenge here is that funding for MEL units in local NGOs/CSOs is low. Partners allocate very little funds to support the MEL unit, leaving the organisation unable to attract qualified and experienced staff."*

Donors and partners should make financial and narrative reporting easier by developing standardised formats and systems – this should focus on enabling implementing partners to focus on reporting on their impact rather than overly focusing on processes. Reporting periods should be lengthened to ensure that reporting processes are meaningful and not overburdensome. Financial reports should be less onerous and more accessible. Receipts should be required for expenditure only above agreed amounts and should be accepted in copies to enable organisations to keep original receipts for national audit processes.

To make financial and narrative reporting easier, donors and partners should provide training and guidance – and allow flexibility on the level of detail, focusing on outcomes and impact. They should also develop and revise reporting templates, requirements and frameworks in partnership with women's groups.

Country evidence

Interviews highlighted that reporting processes can vary depending on the project, partner and donor. The reporting process are based on the document agreed and the timeline stipulated in the agreement. For partners, they may need weekly, monthly, quarterly and annual reporting that can be so tedious and cumbersome, while donors tend to require biannual reports and final reports against achievements and outputs.

A number of interviewees shared that they would like to see more creative and simple approaches to reporting templates, to ensure that these processes enable them to report effectively on impact and change. These templates and frameworks should also be developed in partnership with women's groups and organisations. Others also said that they would *"like donors and partners to provide training and guidelines for financial and narrative reporting to the implementing organisations."*

The lack of capacity of many civil society organisations and WROs means that they are not able to compete for the available funding opportunities, or feel confident in implementing a programme once this is funded.

The international community should provide capacity strengthening opportunities for WROs and CSOs. This could be done by funding lower capacity organisations to develop their systems and processes with a view to building a longer-term partnership. Donor governments and multilateral institutions should ensure that specific funding and resources are made available to grassroots and local organisations in order to enable them to build their capacity – and better amplify the voices of marginalised communities. This could be done by categorising or streaming funding opportunities, so that smaller, lower-capacity WROs and CSOs can enter into a competitive funding award process according to their size and experience.

Donors should also fund, design and deliver specific capacity strengthening interventions and programmes for WROs and CSOs, that focus specifically on applying for funding, developing proposals and budgets, MEL, general organisational capacity, project management, financial management, networking and advocacy.

Country evidence

In South Sudan, there is a poor understanding of the capacity of both national and local CSOs, NGOs and WROs. The majority of them struggle to access funding, form long-term partnerships or participate in coordination and consortium mechanisms.

A number of well-established multilateral funds have a mandate to support CSOs to advance gender equality, including women's rights organisations. These include long-standing funds such as the UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women and UN Women's Fund for Gender Equality, as well as newer mechanisms such as the recently launched Global Acceleration Instrument for Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action. These funds do detail South Sudan as a focus country.

However, there is a distinct lack of opportunity for WROs and CSOs in South Sudan to compete for and access this multilateral funding. Instead, international organisations, UN agencies and INGOs are relied on by donors to act as an intermediary – this means that they manage both the administrative burden and carry the risk, but that national and local WROs and CSOs are unable to advance their capacity to both apply for this funding and lead the implementation of funded projects. As a result, it is the same WROs and CSOs that are considered as partners every time.

This is partly due to donors' capacity constraints and limitations in their own country capacity to monitor or manage more partners, but also because many national and local WROs and CSOs do not have the capacity to be aware of, apply for and implement funding when the opportunity arises. Therefore, it is unlikely that lower-capacity WROs and CSOs will gain sufficient direct funding from donors and will continue to receive income via intermediaries. One participant noted:

> *"By having an individual agency approach, there is a risk of overburdening the successful CSOs and missing potentially capable CSOs that are less well known."*

What is more, in South Sudan, national and grassroots organisations feel that they are unfairly regarded as having low capacity. Their lack of organisational capacity is arguably a direct result of the unpredictable, project-focused and short-term nature of funding – WROs and groups struggle to recruit good teams, provide staff training, strengthen internal processes and invest time in coordination activities. They are often contracted to implement projects for UN agencies and international NGOs, but are excluded from proposal development, coordination and decision-making – there is no clear localisation plan. One interviewee reflected:

"It very hard to get funding for all programmes - most of the donors operating in South Sudan have a specific set of partner organisations where they tend to channel their funding, neglecting others. This is due to lack of transparency."

The Government of South Sudan needs to coordinate and cooperate with civil society to create a conducive working environment, for example by creating clear, consistent and unambiguous operating standards for CSOs and WROs.

The international community has a key role to play in this by using diplomacy to influence the environment for civil society in South Sudan and promoting mutual engagement between CSOs and WROS and the Government of South Sudan, for example by making supporting civic space a condition of international cooperation.

The international community should also use diplomacy to encourage the Government of South Sudan to cultivate an environment where international organisations can easily register and operate in the country. The presence of and partnership with international organisations will strengthen the capacity of national WROs and WROs and increase their access to funding opportunities.

Country evidence

A shrinking space for civil society has been observed in South Sudan. WROs and CSOs regularly faces threats, intimidation, and highly restrictive laws that make it difficult for them to register as legal entities[2] and freely operate.

Principles like peaceful resolution of conflict, power sharing, and mutual respect and trust are not yet deeply rooted in South Sudanese society. This poses very fundamental challenges for building a healthy relationship between the state and civil society. Civil society is regarded as a nuisance at best and the enemy at worst in a country marked by insecurity, insufficient infrastructure, widespread human rights abuses, identity politics, corruption, mismanagement of natural resources and impunity for the atrocities committed during the civil war.

Since the July 2016 violence erupted in Juba and the civil war escalated, the Government of South Sudan has actively used the National Security Service (NSS) to censor civil society and limit free expression. There are restrictions in place on public gatherings and meetings that must be registered and approved by the NSS in advance, and many WROs and HRDs report government attempts to monitor, censor, and infiltrate their organisations and networks. New bureaucratic impediments like mandatory registration under the NGO Act (2016) have also led to fears of targeting or deregistration, even for legitimate activities:

> *"NSS is the main culprit of violations against HRDs and CSOs. NSS have increasingly sought to restrict legitimate human rights work, including civilian activism, and the documentation of human rights violations that continue to be committed by both state and non-state actors."*

Participants of KIIs reported being intimidated and in some cases being infiltrated by security personnel. Meetings on possibly sensitive issues have been banned by state authorities. Bribes are sometimes requested and corruption is a major challenge. There is general lack of inclusive consultation and decision-making processes – most small-scale CSOs are not consulted at the national and provincial level. Lengthy administrative processes cause unnecessary delays in implementation of project activities, including the delivery of essential services.

One participant voiced this by saying:

> *"Civic actors are suffering from widespread intimidation, harassment, arbitrary arrests and detention, the kidnapping of journalists and the shutdown of media houses. There is limited access to information, caused by deliberate internet shutdowns, or refusal to grant access to government data. CSO representatives were at times prevented from speaking with parliamentarians."*

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[2] Knowledge Platform Security and Rule of Law (KPSRL). (2020). Civil Society, Democratisation, and the Closing of Civic space - Experiences from South Sudan. Retrieved 25th Oct 2020 from https://www.kpsrl.org/blog/civil-society-democratisation-and-the-closing-of-civic-space-experiences-fromsouth-sudan

In addition, civil society organisations are prevented from participating in international meetings - for example, no South Sudanese civil society representatives were allowed to participate in the UN Commission on the Status of Women meeting in March 2019, or the High Level Revitalisation Forum for South Sudan.

These barriers mean that women's rights organisations are largely unable to access the funding they need in order to thrive.

South Sudan is also a challenging environment for international non-governmental organisations. In 2017, the Government of South Sudan announced that it would be increasing the cost of a professional-level work permit for humanitarian aid workers from $100 to up to $10,000 (£8,230).[3] Even if registered, international NGOs can be banned from relevant activities if local partner organisations have not met all necessary requirements. This can – in turn – make it difficult for national and grassroots CSOs and WROs to develop partnerships which enable them to build their capacity and access funding.

> *"No direct connections with the international community makes it difficult for us to access funding."*

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[3] 'Famine-hit South Sudan rebuked over move to raise fees for aid workers', The Guardian 2017. https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2017/mar/09/famine-south-sudan-move-raise-fees-aid-workers

4. Partners

Women for Women International: Since 1993, Women for Women International has worked with more than 500,000 marginalised women survivors of war in Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kosovo, Iraq, Nigeria, Rwanda and South Sudan. Our core work is centred on a holistic, rights-based year-long social and economic empowerment programme to address the needs of marginalised women in conflict-affected countries.

Women's International Peace Centre (WIPC): WIPC, formerly Women's International Cross Cultural Exchange (Isis-WICCE), is a feminist organisation with 25 years' experience working with partners across 15 conflict and post-conflict African countries and regionally to ignite women's leadership, amplify their voices and deepen their impact in recreating peace. Their WEAVE model intersects research (on women's specific experiences and needs), evidence-based advocacy (to influence national, regional and international policy and practice), holistic healing (to enable women's wellbeing and participation in peace processes), skills and movement building (to equip WHRDs with necessary skills, build networks and facilitate exchange of strategies to advance women's leadership for peace).

Gender Action for Peace and Security (GAPS): GAPS is the UK's Women, Peace and Security civil society network. GAPS is a membership organisation of NGOs and experts in the field of development, human rights, humanitarian response and peacebuilding. GAPS was founded to progress the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. The role of GAPS is to promote and hold the UK Government to account on its international commitments to women and girls in conflict areas worldwide.