End of Project Post-fieldwork Report for South Sudan 2010–2012

OBJECTIVES OF THE FIELD RESEARCH

The primary objective of our research was to delineate the extent to which risk management and enhanced threat awareness among UN agencies and international NGOs challenge their ability to achieve ambitious and transformational policy goals in conflict-affected fragile states. In the case of South Sudan, I approached the research as an anthropologist, using ethnographic tools to illuminate the challenges and contradictions in the international engagement with a war-traumatised population.

COUNTRY CONTEXT

The period of fieldwork, from November 2010 to November 2011, covered a time of dramatic change and challenge in South Sudan. In January 2011 citizens of the region of southern Sudan voted in a referendum in favour of secession from Sudan. The holding of a referendum was stipulated under the terms of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), which ended the 22-year civil war between the north and south. Six months later, on 7 July 2011, the region gained independence as the Republic of South Sudan. As part of the transition, the UN Mission in Sudan was renamed the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). The pre-Independence UNMIS mandate was to monitor adherence to the CPA by the two parties.

The post-Independence, UNMISS, mandate is an integrated mission in support of good governance and civilian protection. As part of UNMISS, South Sudan is to see deployment of up to 7,000 military personnel, 900 international police, and an unspecified number of U.N. civilian staff, including human rights experts. For the international humanitarian community, the period marked both a marked increase in IO/NGO presence, but also an effective reduction in agency reach due to worsening internal security. This insecurity was the result of internecine fighting, militarized groups opposed to the South Sudan government, and rising levels of armed assault and robbery by uniformed police and soldiers.

Highlighting the fluid nature of events in South Sudan, April 2012 saw the capture of territory inside northern Sudan by South Sudan's national army, the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), provoking international condemnation. This coincided with a final, three-week period, of fieldwork in South Sudan. Negotiations to reduce border tensions between the two

states, led by the African Union, were still underway at the close of the project, in late September 2012. The cross-border violence and warfare between the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) and remnants of the SPLA in the Nuba Mountains and Blue Nile Province, regions of northern Sudan, led to large numbers of displaced moving into South Sudan. This new humanitarian crisis saw IOs/NGOs becoming involved in the delivery of food aid for war-affected civilians. Efforts were also initiated to negotiate access to disputed territories where conditions for local populations were deteriorating.

METHODOLOGY

I conducted formal and informal interviews and engaged in observation as it related to the operation of international and regional humanitarian groups in a region considered to pose a relatively high level of risk. Separate and apart from internal conflict and the militarized state of South Sudan, the region is among the most undeveloped parts in the world. There are few roads and supply of basic goods and services poor. My fieldwork in South Sudan focused on recognizing and exploring social relationships between IOs/NGOs, regional or East African aid workers, internationals and the indigenous community. While these social relationships, or absence of, are in themselves of importance, my position within these relationships was an important factor in facilitating my movement through what is a very challenging environment.

The international community is highly interdependent. In order to facilitate its mission, the UN has created and sustains a parallel transport system. This includes fixed-wing aircraft, transport and rapid-response helicopters and vehicles for both heavy goods transport and the movement of UN staff. Access to this transport system is controlled, reserved for employees of IOs/NGOs and other agencies recognized by the UN as contributing to humanitarian development in South Sudan; government officials and employees of government ministries and departments; and, on a discretionary basis, individuals who receive permission to board UN vehicles or aircraft from senior UN staff.

By entering into the social relationships with IO/NGO staff, I was able to access transport throughout the region and observe individual and collective behavior. Depending on levels of perceived risk, I was also able to observe the varied responses by individuals and agencies. In this interdependent environment, I benefited from a perception that I, as an anthropologist, had insight or knowledge which was of use to humanitarian interests. Following on from this,

access to IOs/NGOs was not a problem. I was able to meet with a wide range of individuals, including internationals in senior policy-level positions; NGO and IO staff from East Africa in both lower- and higher-level positions; nationals working for indigenous and international agencies; and internationals and nationals working for private security companies/consultancy firms.

In addition to the social relationships which develop in such circumstances, I attribute the ease of access to interest in the research question and a widespread preoccupation with issues surrounding risk perception and security in general. Because of the nature of engagement in post-conflict regions, individuals are somewhat thrown together in both professional and social spaces. There were very few instances where an NGO/IO employee required clearance from a head office before engaging in conversation/interviews with me. Those instances included MSF-Holland in Bentiu, Unity State, during a time of heightened security concerns, and the World Food Programme in Wau and Rumbek. In the case of MSF, time constraints made it impossible for the clearance to be given before my scheduled departure from Bentiu; in the case of the World Food Programme, in both instances I was granted permission to interview senior-level staff.

I carried out my research using both structured and unstructured interviews. In the majority of cases where individuals answered my questions, the main factor in acquiring access was proximity and chance. The sites of contact included planes within South Sudan; at airports, while waiting for flights; at transport hubs, while waiting for Land Cruisers or buses; at tent compounds and company residences in main centres; and, where pre-planning had been carried out, in offices and residences. In addition to interviews and observation, I engaged in participant observation, including the following: staying overnight at NGO residences; travelling with de-miners to field sites; accompanying NGO staff on lengthy road journeys to remote field sites; attending the UNMISS weekly security briefings for NGOs in Rumbek, Lakes State; supporting the Carter Centre in a one-day workshop aimed at preparing newly arrived staff members to South Sudan; and facilitating recruitment of female volunteers from a secondary school in Rumbek for the Red Cross.

A large part of my research relied on observation and contacts with nations of East Africa and South Sudan. It is important to note that there was a high turnover of international staff during the period that I was in the region. Particularly following the January 2011 referendum,

a large proportion of the expatriate NGO/IO staff in South Sudan came to the end of their contracts. Generally, national staff remain in place, providing continuity for a researcher such as myself. I also acquired printed/electronic material and communications on security-related matters, including daily situation reports, classified documents relating to incidences of insecurity and advisories aimed at the staff of UN agencies and NGOs. More than 100 of these documents have been entered into the project's online archive. In all cases, individuals working within the UN or NGOs gave me free access to this material.

The strengths of my approach to acquiring information was that it enabled me to meet with a fairly wide spectrum of different kinds of NGOs/IOs, including long-established western-based groups such as Oxfam, Save the Children Fund, ICRC, and Samaritan's Purse, but also smaller, particularly religious groups such as Tear Fund, Healing the Healers, and church-affiliated communities which are permanently resident in South Sudan. It was commonplace for individuals whom I met by chance to recommend that I speak with others within their social or professional networks. In this way, I was able to constantly build on the number of my informants. I would add that in several instances I met and spoke with specific individuals many times over the course of more than a year, maintaining regular contact with them and engaging in updates of earlier discussions. The weakness of this approach, relying on proximity and availability, is that my interviews reflect more individual rather than organisational responses to risk and security. Given the nature of relief and development work in South Sudan, however, individuals find that they must often take personal responsibility for decisions and responses to conditions in the field. In this way, their connection with the organisational headquarters can be at times distanced in more ways than mere geography.

OUTLINE OF THE RESEARCH PERIOD

Because of the changing security and political conditions in South Sudan, I would divide the research period into three periods: pre-referendum, November 2010 to early January 2011; post-referendum, mid-January 2011 to early July 2011; and post-Independence; early July 2011 to end November 2011. I commenced my fieldwork in November 2010, focusing on establishing a base of operation and familiarizing myself with main IO/NGO actors in rural and urban centres. For reasons of access and cost, I chose to live, on and off, in Rumbek, the capital of Lakes State, in the geographic centre of South Sudan. I remained in South Sudan, excluding

a two-month period spent outside, until the end of November 2011. Throughout the research period, I travelled extensively, including five of South Sudan's ten states: Lakes, Western Bahr el Ghazal, Jonglei, Central Equatoria, and Warrap. I also spent periods of time in urban areas, including Wau, capital of Western Bahr el Ghazal; Bor, capital of Jonglei State; and Juba, the capital of South Sudan, in Central Equatoria State, where the UN and other IOs/NGOs maintain their head offices. Seasonal considerations required pre-planning: during the rainy seasons, travel throughout South Sudan is extremely difficult. Roads become impassable and flights are in high demand. For this reason, during periods when movement was restricted, attempts were made to be based in areas with a significant presence of international and regional aid and development workers. The main research period ended in the last week of November 2011.
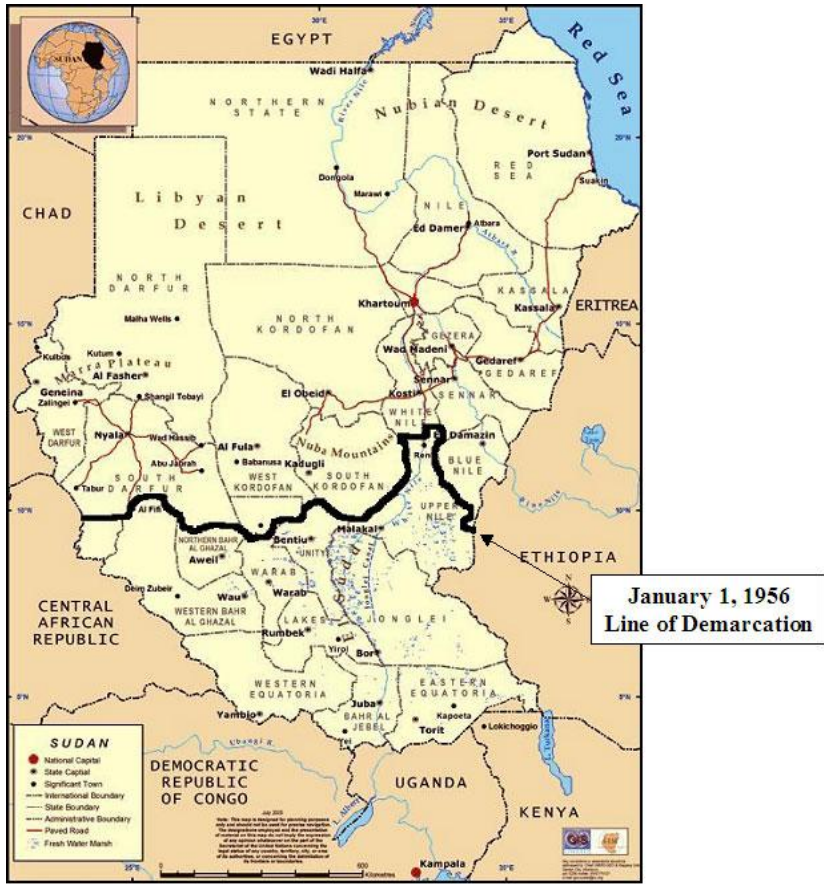
I returned to South Sudan in late March 2012 for a three-week period, ending in late April 2012. During the final trip to South Sudan I followed up on earlier collected material, seeking where necessary qualification of findings and supporting material, and led two round

table discussions, or workshops on the preliminary findings of our research, including the results of the project's South Sudanese research team. One of the workshops was aimed at IOs/NGOs, while the second was made up of South Sudanese employed by local NGOs.

<small>INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED</small>

Org name	Org type	Date	Location
Feb. 2011			
SS newspaper	private	02.02.11	Juba
Researcher	private	05.02.11	Juba
USAID	bilateral aid	06.02.11	Juba
March 2011			
Oxfam	NGO	31.03.11	Rumbek
April 2011			
Non-Violent Peace Force	NGO	03.04.11	Rumbek
WFP	IO	05.04.11	Rumbek
IRC	IO	05.04.11	Rumbek
IRC	IO	06.04.11	Rumbek
Red Cross	IO	08.04.11	Rumbek
G4	NGO/de-mining	11.04.11	Rumbek
G4	NGO/de-mining	12.04.11	Rumbek
US Embassy	diplomatic	14.04.11	Juba
US contractor	security reform	15.04.11	Juba
UNMISS	IO	16.04.11	Juba
US Embassy	diplomatic	18.04.11	Juba
Ethiopian contractor	Private	17.04.11	Juba
RSS	govt official	21.04.11	Rumbek
UNMISS	IO	21.04.11	Rumbek
SS reporter/UNMISS	press	24.04.11	Rumbek
SS reporter/UNMISS	press	25.04.11	Rumbek
May 2011			
USAID	contractor	9.05.11	Rumbek
SS/transport	private	18.05.11	Rumbek
Civicon	contractor	21.05.11	Rumbek
UNMISS	IO	23.05.11	Rumbek
June 2011			
UNHCR	IO	23.06.11	Rumbek
AECOM	contractor	23.06.11	Rumbek
SS	private indiv	24.06.11	Rumbek
SS	Boy Scouts	27.06.11	Rumbek

SS	Traders' Union	27.06.11	Rumbek
RSS	govt official	28.06.11	Rumbek
UNICEF	IO	28.06.11	Rumbek

July 2011

Min of Health, Lakes State	SS	01.07.11	Rumbek
Healing the Healers	NGO	02.07.11	Rumbek
SS transport	private/indigenous	03.07.11	Rumbek-Juba
US Embassy	diplomatic	04.07.11	Juba
UNDP	security reform	10.07.11	Rumbek
SS	private indiv	12.07.11	Rumbek
Awake South Sudan	SS NGO	21.07.11	Bentiu
SS consultant	private indiv	22.07.11	Bentiu
WFP	IO	23.07.11	Bentiu
WFP	IO	27.07.11	Bentiu

Aug. 2011

UNDP/RCMP	IO/law enforcement	03.08.11	Juba
Samaritan's Purse	NGO	04.08.11	Juba
UNDSS	IO	05.08.11	Juba
WFP	IO	06.08.11	Juba
UNDP/RCMP	IO/law enforcement	07.08.11	Juba
US Embassy	diplomatic	08.08.11	Juba
UNMISS	IO	11.08.11	Juba
UNDSS	IO	11.08.11	Juba
NGO Forum	NGO	11.08.11	Juba
SS Chiefs	"govt"	15.08.11	Cuibet
Samaritan's Purse	NGO	20.08.11	Rumbek
SS NGO	NGO	29.08.11	Rumbek

Sept. 2011

UNMISS	pilots	12.09.11	Juba
SPLA/Spokesperson	"govt"	14.09.11	Juba
Min of Youth & Sports	"govt"	15 .09.11	Rumbek

Oct. 2011

USIS	security reform	16.10.11	Juba
Italian NGO	NGO	18.10.11	Juba
Swiss Embassy	security reform	20.10.11	Juba
AECOM	security reform	24.10.11	Bor
PAE	contractor	25.10.11	Bor
SS youth	seeking NGO work	25.10.11	Bor
Deloite	contractor	26.10.11	Bor
AECOM	contractor	28.10.11	Bor
WFP	IO	29.10.11	Bor
Former AECOM	contractor	30.10.11	Bor

Nov. 2011

UNMISS	IO	02.11.11	Bor
Pilot/Bulgarian	private contractor	03.11.11	Juba
Pilot/Ukrainian	private contractor	04.11.11	Juba
Pilot/American	private contractor	04.11.11	Juba
Carter Centre	IO	04.11.11	Juba
UNMISS	IO	06.11.11	Juba
Episcopal Church of SS	religious	07.11.11	Juba
US Embassy	Diplomatic	10.11.11	Juba
UNMISS	IO	12.11.11	Juba
Pilot/American	private contractor	12.11.11	Juba
Catholic Church	humanitarian	13.11.11	Rumbek
UNMISS logistician	humanitarian	16.11.11	Rumbek
Evangelical church	humanitarian	19.11.11	Rumbek
USAID	bilateral aid	21.11.11	Rumbek
AECOM/UNMISS	contractor/IO	22.11.11	Rumbek
Carter Center	NGO	23.11.11	Rumbek
Oxfam	humanitarian	24.11.11	Rumbek
UNMISS	IO	29.11.11	Juba
UNDP	IO/Advisor 1	30.11.11	Juba
UNDP	IO/Advisor 2	30.11.11	Juba

April 2012

Pilot/Canadian	UN-contracted	16.04.12	Rumbek
SS Church figure	religious	19.04.12	Wau
UNMISS	IO	26.04.12	Juba

FIELD WORK SUBJECTS AND DATA COLLECTION

Over the course of the research period, informants came from a wide range of IOs/NGOs. The international presence in post-war South Sudan is dominated by UN agencies, which employ large numbers of regional employees (particularly Ethiopians, Eritreans, Ugandans, and Kenyans). Informants from smaller agencies, organizations or companies can be divided into the following categories: private contractor, religious, diplomatic, security reform, humanitarian, media and bilateral aid. The majority of interviews conducted were unstructured and informal. I selected the individual informants on the basis of appropriateness to the research question, availability and accessibility. These included individuals working with the UN, IOs, and NGOs; militarized South Sudanese, including police, prisons and army; civilian South Sudanese, both from among the minority which is educated and urbanized and the

majority, which is rural and illiterate. The interview data was recorded in notebooks, using shorthand. I later transcribed portions of interviews and incorporated into regularly submitted field reports. In this sense, I attempted to combine somewhat fragmentary information into a narrative or analytical structure.

PARTNERSHIP WITH LOCAL RESEARCHERS

Data collection over a one-month period was conducted by a South Sudanese research team, between 15 December 2011 and 15 January 2012. The team, part of the Juba-based Small and Medium Entrepreneurship Capacity Building Consult, South Sudan (SMECOSS), was contracted to carry out individual and focus group interviews in three urban centres in South Sudan: Juba, Bor and Wau. Originally, another Juba-based consultant had been contracted to carry out the work. Regrettably, this individual failed to carry out the work, claiming the first payment as agreed under the terms of the contract but immediately breaking all contact. Throughout South Sudan, international organizations have reported similar problems connected to the hiring of nationals. Contractual fraud is considered somewhat commonplace. Because of these complications, the work period of SMECOSS was shorter than originally envisaged. The research team did, however, complete the work as requested and, given the difficulties of working in South Sudan, to what I feel is a high standard.

The team carried out interviews in each of the three centres with individuals and groups on the question of local understandings of the role of the international humanitarian community. IOs and NGOs have become important sources of employment for educated southern Sudanese. At the same time, there is tension between local communities and the foreign-led agencies. This tension can be attributed to misunderstandings surrounding NGO programmes, disputes over salaries given to local staff, the targeting of expatriate employees for spurious criminal charges, and a general perception that foreigners are benefiting at the expense of nationals of South Sudan. The team targeted different interest groups, including youth, labourers, women, the educated, and returnees (both from abroad and within East Africa). The interviews aimed at identifying whether people are conscious of the NGO/IO presence and what their feelings about that presence are.

As part of capacity building, I held a two-day workshop in Juba on April 4 and 5, 2012. Present were three of the SMECOSS researchers, Mr. Henry Horace Azuruku, Chukia Gloria,

and Josephine Chandiru Drama. Upon my return to Juba, after an absence of ten weeks, I wanted to speak in greater depth with the researchers about how the interviews had proceeded, including their experiences acquiring the required permissions. In the case of Juba, the capital of the Republic of South Sudan, the team received oral rather than written permission from officials at the Juba County level. This "permission" was granted only after an individual researcher made ten follow-up visits to the mayor of Juba. At one point, staff at the mayor's office called the police and threatened to arrest him. I asked about local responses to the research questions: "They like the idea [research on the role and perception of NGOs] so much that they wanted feedback. The feedback they wanted was 'Are you giving us an NGO in our area? We're been having interviewers coming to our area but afterwards we get nothing.' All the places we went to, actually, this was the feedback we got." Because of the negative experience with the Juba authorities, the team altered its approach in the subsequent field sites of Bor and Wau. In both cases, SMECOSS did not request written permission to conduct the research; instead, they simply advised local authorities of their plans and, upon receiving verbal assurances that there were no objections, proceeded with the research.

MAIN CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS

South Sudan offers a challenging environment for the researcher. On the one hand, there were few problems of access, thus making the research somewhat straightforward. Putting to one side the infrastructural deficits, the need to be innovative and resilient in the face of poor transport, limited communications, the almost-constant presence of armed actors, what I found most difficult was moving between the different "narratives." As earlier mentioned, individuals working in different components of the mosaic that makes up an international intervention will employ specific narratives about their presence in South Sudan. These narratives, by definition, will conflict with representations favoured by local and regional actors.

From an institutional perspective, individuals working at particularly large organizations, such as UN agencies, are obliged to maintain institutional representations of both the host nation and their programmes. As a researcher, one must be something of a chameleon, moving between these different communities and narratives. Separate and apart from the IOs and NGOs, South Sudan's emerging state structure has not encouraged a free flow of information. The result can be an uncomfortable feeling of being not only compromised but complicit in the

encouragement or airing of conflicting analyses and representations of important issues. I would add that the contrast between the living conditions of the somewhat isolated, bunkerised NGOs and IOs and the more rudimentary conditions I lived in for most of the research period contributed to the general stress of long-term fieldwork in South Sudan. There is also the question of absorbing and synthesizing the results of the research over a relatively short period of time. Regrettably, I found my return to the UK coincided with a somewhat debilitating case of writer's block, not disconnected, I believe, from the challenging nature of the fieldwork period.

KEY FINDINGS FROM THE FIELD RESEARCH

With independence, on July 7, 2011, the numbers and types of international presence in the country underwent a major change. Prior to July 9th, there were no more than a handful of consultants in the South Sudanese capital of Juba. Immediately after independence, more than twenty consultants were competing for contracts offered by UN and other humanitarian agencies. This increase speaks to the rising volume of work on offer and the perceived opportunities for lucrative and longer-term employment. Along with consultants, there is a noticeable increase in the presence of western-based subcontractors. Formerly, many of these companies would have been classified as "defence-related". But just as humanitarian groups are committing greater resources to security issues, defence subcontractors are now branching into "humanitarian" activities. To this end, several of these major US-based firms now have humanitarian wings. Of western nations present in South Sudan, the United States is playing a major role. The influence of American technocrats and diplomats is evident in the setting of parameters or norms for representations of risk and responses to it.

It is also noted that there is a marked movement of staff between defence subcontractors and the UN system. This means that the core group of advisors — whether employed within the UN system or by private companies contracted to advise the government of the Republic of South Sudan — is increasingly interchangeable. This close relationship between private firms and the humanitarian community is changing the way information is handled. The framing of unfolding events is increasingly conforming to a single message. This message conforms to policy which supports the government of South Sudan. The climate for those voicing criticism

of the government, whether on issues of corruption or loss of life within the civilian community, has worsened and open discussion of such issues is increasingly less common. In relation to risk perception, NGOs and IOs are reliant on fewer and fewer sources of information. Restrictions on movement, whether advised by an individual NGO or the UNMISS, through its widely adhered to security briefings and advisories, also reduces contact between the international community and the host or recipient community. In effect, over the research period, the international community, its IOs/NGOs and other humanitarian agencies, became more and more isolated.

Since independence, the international aid community has been in a state of transition. This is in part due to the changeover of expatriate NGO and IO staff based in South Sudan and the establishment of diplomatic missions in the capital of Juba. Of even greater impact is the new mission of the UN. As the lead international body within South Sudan, the policy and practice of the UN has a major impact on the operations of all international groups within the region. In February, only weeks after the referendum, dissident SPLA commanders issued a declaration calling for the overthrow of the ruling Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM). In July 2011, when the original UN mission ended, UN figures estimated that nearly 2,400 civilians had been killed in South Sudan in the first six months of the year. Since then, another 1,500 people are believed to have died in interclan and internecine violence. In one single incident in mid-August, 650 civilians from the Nuer people in Jonglei State, along the border with Ethiopia, were killed. Recent analysis of the worsening internecine violence in South Sudan by US-affiliated humanitarian and activist actors appears committed to supporting the "state", in the form of the SPLM/A; to discrediting or disregarding armed opposition against the SPLM/A; and to downplaying and even misrepresenting the origin of recent mass killings of non-Dinka civilians.

Post-independence, the position of regional NGO and IO staff in the newly independent South Sudan became an issue of concern. The government the Republic of South Sudan is seeking to reduce the numbers of East Africans working within the country, thousands of whom are employed by humanitarian agencies. Continued speculation about the prospect of laws which will restrict the employment of non-South Sudanese nationals has contributed to what is widely seen as the vulnerable position of East African nationals in South Sudan. Official regulations call for the hiring of national staff and hefty visa costs have been imposed on

nationals of neighbouring countries. The Ugandan and Kenyan communities have complained of threats from South Sudanese, particularly from those in uniform.

Over the course of the research period, IOs/NGOs shifted their programmes towards providing relief to the hundreds of thousands of people who have fled the northern Sudanese states of Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile since May 2011. This follows the surge in fighting between the Sudan Armed Forces and local remnants of the SPLA (referred to as SPLA–N), and the aerial bombardment of civilian areas by the Khartoum government. The relief efforts include food drops by Nairobi-based Christian NGOs (supported by the WFP) and on-the-ground support for displaced communities which have taken refuge inside South Sudan. The camps for displaced people are in areas of heightened security risk, including the threat of aerial bombardment by SAF, and are considered militarized, with strong links to armed groups. This has also affected the free flow of information, information which the humanitarian community relies upon to ensure the well-being of its national and international staff. Not surprisingly, many of the international actors involved in this relief effort are veterans of the civil war-era OLS program. Interviews with pilots and relief workers now engaged in the growing relief effort open up space for discussion of differing engagements with risk. For particularly Christian-affiliated aid workers, the food drops are seen as part of a religious as well as political commitment to support oppressed peoples.

Approaches to risk, by type of agency, markedly differ. In the case of South Sudan, the differentiating factor is access to financial resources. UN agencies and a select few US-based organisations have not only vehicular but air transport. This separates the relief and development community into those with independent travel means, making them virtually independent of national constraints relating to access to geographical areas; and those who are dependent on road travel, and, in some cases, public transport. In the case of UN agencies, international staff are not allowed to move by foot in many areas of South Sudan. This means that even walking to a Sunday church service is ruled out. The dependence on using vehicles and on national drivers effectively adds another layer of gate-keeping and segregation for international staff. As a security measure, remaining inside a UN-marked vehicle is meant to keep the individual safe. UN standards for housing of international staff impose physical constraints. These standards effectively segregate those working for the UN. Because they

often live behind high walls and access is restricted, international staff have little contact with nationals, other than those employed in usually support or labourer positions.

Generally, in urban settings, virtually all NGOs now employ security staff provided by commercial companies. All major UN agencies and IOs employ security guards. Only one private security firm in South Sudan is licenced to carry arms. Other firms are, however, getting around this prohibition by employing off-duty police who are allowed to carry weapons. Particularly US-based interests and individuals request armed guards. This reliance on guards, whether armed or not, is highly problematic, not least because all guards hired by private security firms are soldiers of the SPLA. Within South Sudan, soldiers are considered responsible for virtually all armed robberies, kidnappings, sexual assaults and incidents of violence.

The smaller the NGO (or, to be more correct, the smaller the budget of an NGO), the lighter its security provisions. This includes NGOs which provide housing for both national and international staff on the same site, and to the same standard, and do not employ security guards. The emphasis in terms of security is on local contact and intimate knowledge of the local situation, including regular contact with local individuals who are responsible for maintaining security in a particular area. Rather than employing a security guard, these agencies are more likely to use a night watchman who is employed directed by the NGO, rather than through a commercial company.

Most IOs/NGOs are headquartered in the capital city of Juba. All other parts of South Sudan, even rural communities outside of Juba are routinely classified as being "in the field". This disconnect from the local community has contributed to the effective creation of a "virtual South Sudan," whereby "western" expatriate NGO and IO workers live a parallel existence with little knowledge or comprehension of the ways in which East African NGO workers and South Sudanese conduct themselves, or strategize, to ensure their personal security.

Further to this hierarchy of risk management, there is the matter of the ways in which the infrastructural needs of IOs and UN agencies affect local security conditions, including controversial land deals for construction of massive compounds in urban areas (i.e., "land grabbing" and displacement of marginalised groups, particularly in Juba; cooperation or reliance on "state" figures to acquire leases and construction permits).

Within the aid or humanitarian community in South Sudan, social relationships are important determinants of collective behaviour. These relationships differentiate collective behaviour from institutionalized behaviour. In the context of research examining international interventions, this distinction between collective and institutionalized behaviour is important. Within the United Nations and the international aid community, individuals are obliged to conform to regulations that govern their conduct. A large part of these rules are connected with security, keeping individuals and agencies out of harm's way.

When social relationships are included in the dialogue surrounding security, the researcher can observe behaviours that both enhance institutional notions of security and inhibit them. It also reveals the parallel nature of the lives of those within the different communities. These communities produce narratives which communicate how they position themselves within both South Sudan and the larger international space. Inevitably, these narratives are often in conflict with each other. Narratives that resonate with one community may offend or alienate another. There is the "heroic narrative" of the uniformed UN peacekeeper from Canada; the war-hardened, mortgage-paying narrative of the American veteran of the Iraq war who now works for a security company in Juba; the educated South Sudanese who purposely includes the word "gender" in his indigenous NGO, knowing that international aid money is targeted at supporting girls and women. Part of the competing and conflict nature of the narratives leads to day-to-day social distance between international staff and South Sudanese people. This is particularly true in the case of Juba, the capital of South Sudan, where the overwhelming majority of international and regional agency and NGO staff live and work. On the question of risk perception and security, the parallel — even estranged — nature of relationships between the international community and the supposed recipients of aid exacerbates the efficacy of interventions and creates situations of increased risk.

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