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Youth in South Sudan: livelihoods and conflict

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Questions

- *What does the available evidence say about the current livelihood options, choices and motivations of youth in South Sudan?*
  - What are the livelihoods options currently available for South Sudanese youth in the current context of severe/protracted economic crisis?
  - What are the key determinants ("push" and "pull" factors) of South Sudanese youth's decision making about livelihood options, particularly violent or potentially violent ones? How would you weight the relative significance of each push and pull factor identified in decision-making? Is there a significant difference in those determinants between armed/ethnic groups?
- *What are the main social norms guiding male youth's decision making on whether or not to participate in violence (through joining youth groups involved in violent activities, or more structured militias or armed groups)?*
- *What are the trusted actors and channels of communication that could be used to promote attitudinal and behavioural change amongst youth in South Sudan?*

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1. Overview

This review looks at livelihood issues related to "youth" in South Sudan, focusing on factors influencing decision-making by young men on livelihood options (both violent and non-violent) and trusted avenues of communication. In South Sudan, youth is not a fixed biological category, but a fluid social construct, and broadly refers to young men aged between 18 and 40/45. It is not possible to give definitive answers to the questions posed, and by its nature this review generalises motivations and choices. Therefore, when considering this review's findings, it is important to bear in mind the diversity of youth and their motivations in South Sudan, the complexity of its different ethnicities and cultural identities, and that these identities remain highly flexible and may change in response to the dynamic environment.

South Sudan is culturally, socially, economically, politically, ecologically and spiritually diverse. The literature suggests that there are multiple motivations for youth livelihood choices, including engagement in violent conflict, and these need to be understood in relation to their specific contexts (Walton, 2010). It is difficult to capture all the choices and motivations behind these decisions, and with the limited time available for this review the findings are not exhaustive. Local context is also key to a discussion of actors and channels of communication trusted by youth in South Sudan. There is evidence that engagement with youth, as well as levels of trust by youth in various actors, varies in different communities. The most recent outbreak of violence, and continuing volatility on the ground, has, however, impacted on the availability of up-to-date information for several areas.

There is also imbalance in where research has taken place within South Sudan, with some areas (especially those around Juba, Central Equatoria, Western Equatoria and Jonglei states[1]) having a much greater wealth of information available than others. The literature reviewed here offers only a snapshot into these complex interrelated issues, and highlights the rapidly changing situation in South Sudan. It also brings up a number of knowledge gaps related to youth in South Sudan, particularly at the local level (see below). The majority of literature reviewed takes into consideration gender differences and inequalities in relation to youth. However, the focus of this review has been on young men in South Sudan and so much of the literature on young women has been omitted. The evidence reviewed is not strong enough, both in terms of spatial coverage and subject matter, to adequately address the following aspects of the final query: How would you weight the relative significance of each push and pull factor identified in decision-making? Is there a significant difference in those determinants between armed/ethnic groups?

The review has been divided into four sections to cover the query questions, overviews of each section follow.

Youth livelihood options in South Sudan

There is a lack of academic, peer-reviewed literature on livelihood choices specifically for youth in South Sudan, much of the information is anecdotal or taken from broader country analysis. Findings include:

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[1] In October 2015, South Sudan's President Salva Kiir decreed that the country's ten states would be sub-divided into 28 states, a measure that was subsequently approved by parliament. In January 2017, President Salva Kiir decreed that this number would increase from 28 to 32. This review refers primarily to the ten state borders that existed prior to these announcements, for ease and clarity of reference.

- A series of recent internal and external shocks have seriously destabilised the South Sudanese economy; a steady escalation of the conflict, a drought, and a rapid depreciation of the South Sudanese Pound have all contributed to propelling the country into a severe crisis, with particularly serious food security issues (Pape, 2017).

- Traditional livelihood systems in South Sudan rely on a combination of agricultural production, cattle rearing, fishing, gathering of wild foods and trade. Cattle-keeping has particular economic and cultural significance, and are primary long-term assets for many families.

- Employment in South Sudan is characterised by low-productivity, unremunerated work concentrated in the agriculture sector. Informal employment is the main source of income.

- According to the High Frequency Survey (HFS) from 2015, almost 30% of the youth (defined here as those aged 15-35) identified themselves as currently inactive (not engaged in any economic activity over the past 12 months, are currently not enrolled in any educational activity, and are not looking for a job either).

- Activities such as farming, hunting and fishing were major modes of employment for youth surveyed by the HFS; others operated some form of non-farm business (especially urban youth); salaried labour formed only 11% of the overall employed labour force; only 3% of the overall youth workforce identifies themselves as employed in professional or managerial services (Foust et al, 2015).

Push and pull factors of livelihood decisions

- *Unemployment*: the term "unemployed" in South Sudan can more often refer rather to those who are underemployed within the informal economy. However, economic instability and lack of jobs in South Sudan has led many of the working age youth to drop out of the labour force.

- *Lack of opportunities:* the biggest constraints to livelihood security for youth in urban areas in South Sudan are a lack of access to financial capital, education, relevant and marketable skills, and scarce work opportunities. Another issue has been the heavy reliance on foreign labour (both skilled and unskilled).

- *Social norms:* cultural expectations constrain the choice of jobs considered acceptable for boys and girls in South Sudan.

- *Different backgrounds and aspirations:* there was a crisis of expectation for young people after independence, who were expecting a "peace dividend" which did not materialise. There are differences in education levels and aspirations of returnee youth and those that remained in South Sudan during the civil war. Returnee youth also have views on education, repatriation and integration which often differ from those of their Sudan-born elders. There are also unrealistic views by some South Sudanese youth of their earning potential and viability as workers.

- *Rural vs urban:* a number of factors influence the mobility of youth away from rural areas to urban areas. Pull factors include the hopes of generating an income, pursuing better education opportunities and the desire for a "modern" lifestyle. Push factors include low income levels, limited access to land. However, there is competition in the urban labour market from more educated returnee Sudanese and migrant workers. Young men from rural areas are also being pushed to Protection of Civilian sites to avoid ongoing recruitment into the conflict.

Youth decision making and violence

- *Non-violent decision making:* it is important to recognise that, in general, the majority of youth do not get involved in violence in conflict settings. However, the motivations behind this decision is poorly understood and researched for South Sudan.

- *Youth violence:* individual motivations in violent conflict around the world differ significantly across sex, age, ethnic, religious and other social, cultural, political and economic group divisions. Key groups to consider in the South Sudan context are cattle camp youth and urban gangs.

- *Social norms:* are one way that violence "transmits" within groups. It has been argued that within conflict settings violence becomes a normalised way of life and survival.

- *Exclusion, culture and family:* inequalities between generations in South Sudan have grown rapidly over the past few decades; youth are largely excluded from formal political processes and continue to be subject to age-based systems of authority. Some have focused on the vulnerability of youth to capture by the military, and family roles and responsibilities as the primary consideration in the decisions taken by youth.

- *Insecurity:* much literature points to the issue of insecurity and lack of government ability to ensure security as a factor in local "youth" violence. With the eruption of violent conflict in 2013, different ethnic and youth militias emerged such as the White Army, Gelweng and others as a way of protecting their own communities when the state failed.

- *Masculinity:* a common requirement to attaining manhood in Africa is achieving some level of financial independence, employment, and subsequently starting a family; this can be interrupted in post-conflict situations, leaving young men in a state of limbo and making them more likely to engage in violence. Violent conflict is often associated with producing "militarised masculinities"; in South Sudan these are being reproduced by both men and women, reinforcing the association between masculinity and cattle raiding.

- *Marriage dowries:* increasing inability of male youth to meet rising dowry (bride price) demands, leading to many male youth enlisting in militias or joining cattle raids.

- *Inequalities of power:* Politicians and military leaders in South Sudan are increasingly capable of mobilising their youth base to settle political scores. Young men's participation in conflict can also become ways to obtain empowerment.

Trusted actors and channels of communication

In the limited time allowed for this query it has not been possible to conduct a detailed assessment of these actors and channels by locality. Instead, this review highlights some key overall findings and key sources, as well as identified gaps, which can begin to build a bigger picture. The categories of actors and communication channels outlined in this review were focused on as they were the most frequently mentioned in the relevant literature. This review highlights evidence predominantly from 2013 onwards. However, where an earlier source might be considered particularly interesting or relevant, it has also been included.

The key findings from this section of the review reveal that:

- Aside from face-to-face interactions and personal networks, radio is overwhelmingly cited as the most effective and trusted source of information for diverse communities across South Sudan. The existence of multiple radio networks, including community-based radio

stations who broadcast in local languages, are able to reach areas beyond Juba and other cities and towns.

- Radio has also been used as a tool to specifically target youth for attitudinal and behavioural change, often with positive outcomes. Relevant programmes include **Sawa Shabab** (supported by PeaceTech Lab and USIP), **Hiwar al Shabab** and **Sergeant Esther** (supported by UNICEF and Search for Common Ground).

- Several surveys and evaluations were identified which have examined in detail the reach of radio, audience and listening habits, levels of trust etc. These have found that although radio is an effective and trusted tool for mass communication, there are disparities in access to radio, related to gender, age, geographic location as well as income. Nevertheless, there is evidence of a "trickle" effect from using radio – that is, the information communicated via radio is transmitted onwards beyond the immediate listeners.

- Performance theatre has been used to support and strengthen the impact of radio initiatives. Such performances are also considered effective given the rich cultural heritage of story-telling in South Sudan and the potential to engage with communities face-to-face and perform in local languages. Obstacles to using performance theatre as a communication channel include the volatile environment created by conflict (which can impact on access to communities), difficulties sustaining performances over the longer term, and challenges bringing performers from different backgrounds across ethnic and political divides.

- Access to, and trust in, other types of media is weaker. There is evidence that print media is neither accessible (due to low literacy rates, language barriers, high cost, and lack of distribution beyond the capital) nor considered trusted or impartial. Similarly, television is impacted by lack of infrastructure and electricity, and also suffers from perceptions of government bias. Internet usage is low. Mobile phone usage, however, is on the rise. Media access is shaped by gender disparities – all types of media are less accessible for South Sudanese women, than for men. Access is also shaped by income and education levels.

- Additional initiatives that are cited as successful in bringing together youth from different backgrounds, and disseminating important messages to them, are arts and culture-based ones such as **Ana Taban** and **Likikiri Collective** or sports events. Nevertheless, detailed information about these and their effectiveness in engaging youth does not seem readily available. Overall, there appears to be greater acknowledgement of their *potential* to engage youth than *empirical evidence* to support this.

- Spiritual and religious leaders as well as community leaders, chiefs and elders are often mentioned as trusted actors, although their roles have also been contested. The history of conflict has, in different contexts, either increased or decreased the level of trust in them. Although there is evidence that Nuer spiritual leaders have yielded a high degree of influence over youth who have fought in the conflicts, there is otherwise limited evidence over how engaged youth are with the large number of religious institutions and actors, or how trusted these are by youth. There is also evidence that the relationships between youth and community elders can be fraught. This is also impacted by the high numbers of "returnee" youth (many who, due to the conflict, may never have lived in the country of their elders before), whose aspirations of "modern", urban life may be in direct contravention to the values and lifestyles espoused by traditional leaders, particularly in rural agricultural areas. Intergenerational tensions have also arisen as a result of

decisions made by chief's customary courts, which have in some cases been seen to discriminate against women and youth.

- In the time allocated for this review, it has been difficult to find detailed and accurate information on other relevant civil society actors who are considered important stakeholders in the peace process, such as youth groups or women's groups. This may be in part due to the changing civil society landscape shaped by the conflict in recent years. For example, groups may have ceased to exist, or changed in name or form, or may have a limited online presence even if they are active on the ground.

- Relationships between police and wider communities also seem to be contested. In many cases, citizens see the value of what police should be doing to maintain security in communities, but are also acutely aware of their shortcomings. Mistrust of police is also related to the fact that many police are former actors in the conflict. There is some evidence that the implementation of community-based approaches to policing have begun to create greater degrees of trust.

Knowledge gaps and further research

Over the past few years, significant progress has been made in the collection of data on South Sudan. However, in general there is limited rigorous evidence of how people live in contexts of conflict: what choices people make, how institutional arrangements impact on and are affected by these decisions (Justino et al, 2013). Empirical and long-term research on livelihoods in conflict-affected South Sudan remains a key evidence gap (d'Errico et al, 2014). Youth are perceived to be important players in the state violence in South Sudan, but there is limited knowledge on the causes and drivers of such violence, and much of the "evidence" is anecdotal. Inclusive data collection and analysis of social and economic indicators in South Sudan need to be improved but efforts are hampered by the current conflict situation.

A key gap in the literature is related to the type of youth that have been studied in South Sudan. The focus is overwhelmingly on understanding the roles and perspectives of youth (ex)combatants and urban youth; little research is focused on youths who have lived through war as civilians or rural youth in general, and the motivations of those who have resisted getting involved in the violence. There is also a need for critical research into how young people deal with unemployment in South Sudan and navigate opportunities in the informal sector, and how this might relate to other forms of social and political action (Oosterom, 2016). Aspirations and long-term prospects of returning youth migrants is another area for further research (Ensor, 2013a). More detailed information on the role of civil society in youth's lives and the level of engagement and trust youth have in religious institutions and actors is also needed.

2. Youth livelihood options in South Sudan

Youth

There is no universally agreed definition of youth; it is a social and cultural construction bound by a range of indicators including age, marital status and financial dependency (Oxfam, 2016: p.5). These indicators vary considerably across cultures and contexts. The definition of "youth" in South Sudan is very broad and highly contested (Sommers and Schwartz, 2011: p.2). While the United Nations define youth as those aged between 18 to 24 years, in South Sudan it is more commonly considered to be those aged 18 to 40, but even this loose definition is disputed (Manasseh Zindo in Chatham House, 2016: p.4). The concept of youth in the country is based on

roles, responsibilities and social traditions within communities, which do not necessarily fit into a uniform age bracket (John Luk Jok in Chatham House, 2016: p.6). Although females also go through a youth phase in South Sudan, the local concept of youth typically signifies males (Rolandsen and Breidlid, 2013: p.5). It is also important when discussing youth in South Sudan to distinguish between different age segments, but also between cattle camp youth and urban youth (Rolandsen and Breidlid, 2013: p.9-10).

Current economic situation

A full consideration of the recent political history of South Sudan is beyond the scope of this report, some background information is given below on the current economic situation. For detailed history of South Sudan and the conflict see Maxwell et al (2012), Pendle (2015) and Young (2016).

A High Frequency Survey (HFS) carried out in South Sudan in 2015 and 2016 by the World Bank highlights the current situation in the country, which has been experiencing a macroeconomic crisis since 2015 (Pape, 2017). More than half of the population is below 15 years of age, almost 35% are between 15 and 35 and only 15% are above 35; the majority of South Sudan's young population live in rural areas (Pape, 2017). According to the last census, youth form 72% of the population (Lam Akol Ajawin in Chatham House, 2016: p.4; UNOCHA, 2016: p.a3).

A series of internal and external shocks have seriously destabilised the South Sudanese economy since a short-lived period of relative stability following the December 2013 conflict. A steady escalation of the conflict, a drought, and a rapid depreciation of the South Sudanese Pound (SSP) have all contributed to propelling the country into a severe crisis, that has partly manifested itself through high levels of inflation driven primarily by increasing food and fuel prices (Pape, 2017: p.9). The cost of living has risen exponentially, with the South Sudan annual Consumer Price Index increasing by 835.7% from October 2015 to October 2016, the highest year-on-year inflation rate in the world (UNOCHA, 2016: p.a2). The HFS found that poverty in urban areas of South Sudan increased from 49% in 2015 to 70% in 2016 using the international poverty line of US$ 2011 PPP 1.90. This has instigated a shift in the South Sudanese economy towards greater self-reliance and own-production of food (through subsistence farming, hunting and fishing) (Pape, 2017: p.25). The South Sudanese economy is heavily reliant on imports, especially to meet its food needs. Thus, the rapid depreciation of the SSP has exerted inflationary pressure through the large import-containing consumption basket of the South Sudanese (Pape, 2017: p.9-10). There is widespread food insecurity, which has been exacerbated by drought and lower than average food production across East Africa.

UNOCHA (2016: p.a21) report that food security in South Sudan is likely to deteriorate to unprecedented levels in 2017, with thousands of people at risk of famine. It is projected that more than five million people will be in urgent need of food security and livelihoods support during the lean season in 2017. The current conflict has led to the widespread displacement of people within and outside South Sudan, as shown in Figure 1.[2] Pape (2017) highlights that as South Sudan's crisis becomes even deeper and more prolonged, and more people are displaced over wider areas for longer periods of time, the livelihood options for South Sudanese households and kinship networks become ever more constrained. There are scattered reports of

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[2] For more information on the current status of displacement in South Sudan see UNOCHA (2016).

people leaving Juba to return to the countryside, having exhausted their urban options. Hundreds of thousands of people have crossed the borders into Uganda, Ethiopia and Sudan (see Figure 1). Livelihoods have been decimated by the crisis, for example about 50% of all harvests have been lost in areas affected by violence, and many farmers have been unable to plant or harvest due to insecurity and restrictions on freedom of movement (UNOCHA, 2016: p.a21). However, Pape (2017) highlights that many people were in a dire situation prior to the current armed conflict, due to livelihoods stress stemming from the previous civil war(s), ongoing political and inter-communal violence, seasonal natural hazards such as floods and droughts, livestock disease, lack of infrastructure, and many other extreme challenges that South Sudan has faced.

Figure 1: Map showing movement of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees in South Sudan
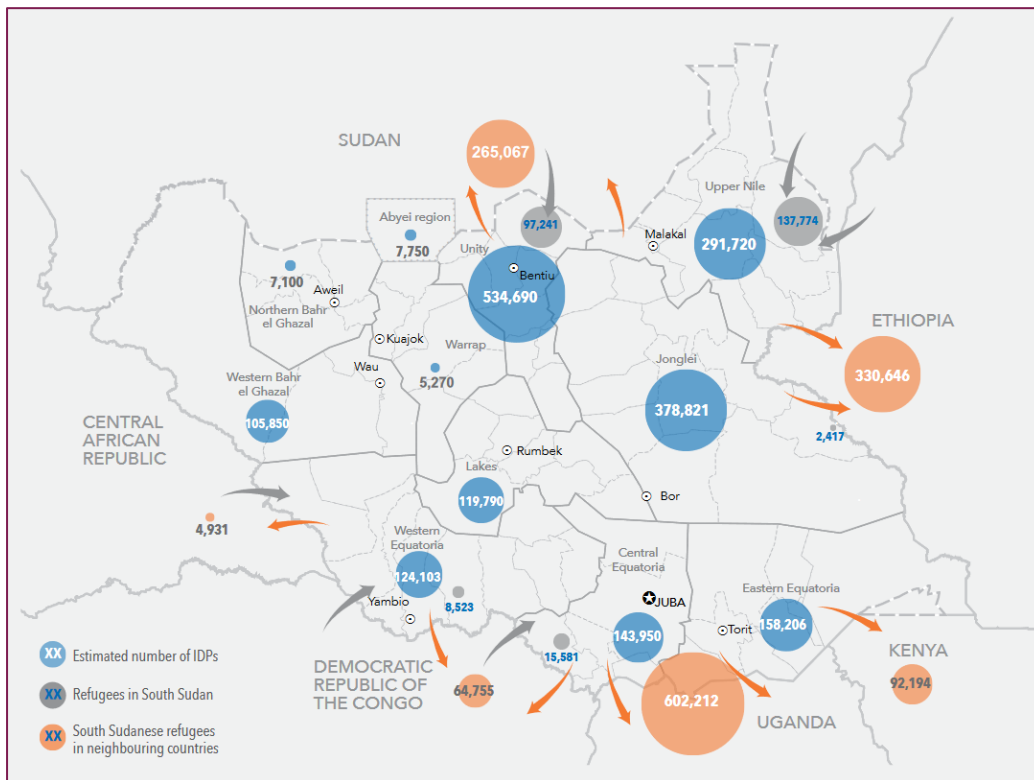
Source: OCHA and partners, Nov 2016 taken from UNOCHA (2016: p.2).[3]

Traditional livelihoods

Historically, the oil industry and the public sector have dominated southern Sudan's formal economy (Munive, 2014: p.339). However, only 12% of the population depends on wages and salaries for their main livelihood and less than 4% of the population is engaged in entrepreneurial activities, which illustrates the formal economic sector's limited importance. Traditional livelihood systems in South Sudan rely on a combination of agricultural production (c.85% of households cultivate land), cattle rearing (c.65% of households own cattle), fishing, gathering of wild foods and trade, with various combinations of these elements making up specific household economies

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[3] Please note that the boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Final boundary between the republic of South Sudan and the republic of Sudan has not yet been determined. Final status of Abyei region is not yet determined.

depending on each zone's agro-ecological conditions and tribal traditions and culture (Ensor, 2013a: p.40; Maxwell et al, 2012: p.8). Cattle-keeping has particular economic and cultural significance throughout all of South Sudan, and are the primary long-term assets for many families, with the size of a herd signifying both wealth and status. The country has huge agricultural potential, with over 90% of its land suitable for agriculture, however, the vast majority remains uncultivated except for subsistence practices and there is limited crop diversification (Ensor, 2013a: p.40). Most formal businesses in South Sudan are small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), these dominate all sectors of the economy, including retail and wholesale trade, construction, hotels, restaurants, transport and communication. SMEs are highly diversified in terms of ownership, type of enterprise, number of employees, capital investment and stage of development (AfDB et al, 2012: p.6). Urban households are more likely to earn their livelihood through wages and salaries or through their own business enterprise compared to rural households in South Sudan (Pape, 2017: p.11). Livelihood systems in South Sudan are highly dependent on mobility and trade. Although households have traditionally been able to survive mobility and trade restrictions caused by regular occurrences through coping strategies, restrictions resulting from years of prolonged conflict have significantly disrupted livelihoods and food security (Livelihoods Analysis Forum, 2006 in Maxwell et al, 2012).

Existing research shows that livelihoods in both Jonglei and Upper Nile are heavily dependent on livestock (in particular cattle) (d'Errico et al, 2014: p.12). The Nuer are traditionally agro-pastoralist; the Shilluk are predominantly agriculturalists. Agriculture is a supplementary source of both food and income for many households. Cattle raiding has been a significant factor in Jonglei and Upper Nile for many generations, but it has become more politicised and linked to commercial interests in recent years, and relies on modern weaponry. Due to raiding, particularly in Jonglei, livestock ownership is subject to sharp swings. A panel survey of the Upper Nile and Jonglei states carried out by d'Errico et al in 2012 found that livelihoods were severely constrained with very little diversification, with only about 5% of the population reporting more than two livelihood activities the year before (2014: p.14).

Maxwell et al (2016: p.1) highlight that livelihoods were in a precarious state in South Sudan even before the outbreak of the current armed conflict in December 2013. The assumption was that conflict had been the factor driving vulnerability, and that after the civil war (with the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA)) recovery would take off. But this recovery largely did not occur. Localised conflict was driven more by politics, control of livestock, and cycles of retribution than competition over land and water resources. Problems regarding land access in South Sudan continue. Despite signing the CPA in 2005, only 4% of arable land is cultivated, and livestock production is estimated at only 20% of its potential (Maxwell et al., 2012). More recently, livelihoods in communities hosting large numbers of internally displaced persons (IDPs) have been negatively impacted due to limited land resources available to newcomers for living on, livestock grazing and crop planting (Maxwell et al, 2016).

Youth employment choices

There is limited literature that focuses specifically on youth livelihoods in South Sudan; a larger literature looks at livelihoods options for the population in general, which provides insights into the youth position (for example the HFS in 2015 – see Pape, 2016 and 2017; Foust et al, 2015). There have also been some localised studies into livelihood choices and options but these are limited and are often "grey literature" undertaken by donors or non-governmental organisations

(NGOs). There is a lack of academic, peer-reviewed literature on livelihood choices for youth in South Sudan and recent empirical data, much of the information is anecdotal.

More generally, for those of working age in South Sudan (defined as all persons aged 15-64) agriculture is the dominant sector of employment, followed by the services sector and defence, while the manufacturing sector and education remain small. Those working in urban areas are also much more likely to work in services or manufacturing than those in rural areas (Pape, 2016: p.17). Afeti and Thomas (2014) discuss that employment in South Sudan is characterised by low-productivity, unremunerated work concentrated in the agriculture sector. About 84% of those employed are in non-waged work, for their family, for others or on their own account. The agriculture sector accounts for 63% of total employment and only a small minority of workers enjoy formal salaried employment or employment in the tertiary sector. The composition of employment varies between states, but, non-waged work and the agriculture sector predominate in all of them. Unemployment rates differ between urban and rural areas. Munive (2014: p.346) argues that South Sudanese are resourceful in generating cash-income, especially in the informal economy. These activities include: brewing and selling alcohol from maize, cassava, sorghum and sesame; making flour (sorghum, cassava and maize) and pastes (sesame, groundnut); cutting and selling grass and bamboo (for thatch and fodder); making and selling charcoal; trading vegetables; and engaging in casual labour. Maxwell et al (2012: p.30) highlight that although informal employment is the main source of income in South Sudan, no in-depth case studies exist on how entrepreneurial activities and small businesses have developed and how to support endogenous growth. Similar evidence is also lacking in rural areas, especially in the context of farmers and traders who are expanding and diversifying their activities.

Some studies provide more specific insights into youth livelihood choices in South Sudan. According to the HFS from 2015, almost 30% of the youth[4] identified themselves as currently inactive (defined as those who were not engaged in any economic activity over the past 12 months, are currently not enrolled in any educational activity, and are not looking for a job either), irrespective of their gender, area of residence (rural or urban), or level of education (Foust et al, 2015). Among those who reported themselves as employed (Foust et al, 2015):

- activities such as farming, hunting and fishing were major modes of employment;
- others operated some form of non-farm business (especially urban youth);
- salaried labour formed only 11% of the overall employed labour force;
- only 3% of the overall youth workforce identifies themselves as employed in professional or managerial services;
- 5% comprises of those working in support services such as clerical jobs).

Mercy Corps (2014: p.12) highlights agriculture as representing an important sector for youth as it plays such a critical role in South Sudan's economy. In Warrap and Unity States, agricultural production is stagnant and is focused on a limited number of crops. Although myriad challenges in agriculture exist, Mercy Corps (2014: p.12) argue that understanding and strengthening youth's role in the sector could enable young people to earn sufficiently as well as promote food security for their families. Data from the Mercy Corps (2014: p.8) surveys provides a snapshot of the typical economic activities in Warrap and Unity States. Youth shared that the most common

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[4] Youth defined by Foust et al (2015: p.6) as those aged 15 to 35, their calculations are based on HFS data from 2015

livelihoods activities performed in their households include jobs with local business, NGOs, and the government (36%) and selling agricultural products (29%). Surveys confirmed that work in the agricultural sector is less common in urban areas and is focused primarily in rural areas and small towns.

A food security and livelihoods assessment carried out in the Sudan refugee camps in Maban, Upper Nile for the Danish Refugee Council in 2014 (Forcier Consulting, 2015c: p.ix), found that refugee youth are more likely to be engaged in shop ownership and teaching, while host youth make money through selling tea and gardening. Ensor (2013a: p.42) highlights that many returnee youth acquired skills abroad in trades such as carpentry, masonry and auto mechanics. Demand for this kind of qualifications is rising as the urban economy expands in South Sudan, although not fast enough to keep pace with the rapidly increasing numbers of job-seekers. The main sources of employment available to unskilled returnee young males (and their local counterparts) in urban areas include collecting firewood, breaking stones, brick-making, digging latrines and similar forms of casual labour, while females clean and cook at restaurants and hotels, carry water on constructions sites, and engage in various forms of petty trade and small business. Furthermore, jobs are seldom reliable sources of income, including for those working for the government, as salary payment has remained erratic after independence. The predominant income-generating activity is thus usually complemented by a range of other livelihood strategies which may include part-time farming as a way to supplement food availability, rather than as the primary way for returnees to support themselves and their families (Ensor, 2013a: p.42).

3. Push and pull factors of livelihood decisions

Unemployment

Sommers (2015) argues that there is a difference between work and livelihoods for African youth; "work" is often defined as a salaried job, whereas a livelihood is normally "whatever it takes" to get by. Economic instability has led many of the working age to drop out of the labour force, with the labour force participation rate in urban South Sudan dropping from one half to one third between 2015 and 2016 (Pape, 2017: p.15). A food security and livelihoods assessment carried out in the Sudan refugee camps in Maban, Upper Nile for the Danish Refugee Council in 2014 (Forcier Consulting, 2015c: p.ix), found that the lack of jobs is the major reason for unemployment for male and female youth. To gain employment, youth desire skills in vegetable and fruit selling, business and marketing, as well as computer and healthcare skills. Sommers and Schwartz (2011: p.11) find that while some "elite" returnee youth with some degree of secondary and university education, who have returned from East Africa and Khartoum, have found lucrative positions in government and NGOs, most are unemployed.

As noted by a report by Page (2013: p.2) "for the great majority of African young people, the "youth employment problem" is more about the quality of the job than the absence of a job". For those lacking the networks to support themselves in periods of inactivity, the problem is often better characterised as being one of underemployment, poor working conditions and low pay. This means that the term "unemployed" often refers rather to those who are underemployed within the informal economy. Many have linked youth un(der)employment with recruitment as soldiers during conflict, and that for unemployed youth with no real alternative conflict is regarded as an income-generating activity. Munive (2014: 336) is more critical of the issue of unemployed youth and sees it as being securitised by state actors and international agencies, he highlights

that "[t]here are, however, no empirical grounds for the common assumption of a strong, automatic causal connection between unemployment, underemployment or low-productivity employment, violence and war". Moreover, there are many "unknowns" about the linkages between forms of youth engagement in the economic, social and political sphere, particularly for contexts of violence.

Finn and Oldfield (2015: p.31) argue that young men in Freetown, Sierra Leone, struggling to build livelihoods, instead enact a form of dynamic "waithood". This is seen as a "period of experimentation, of improvisation and of great creativity as young Africans adopt a range of survival strategies to cope with the daily challenges of their lives" (Honwana, 2014: p.24 in Finn and Oldfield, 2015: p.31), suspended between being youth and adults. They argue that young men are not simply inactive or idle in Freetown, and that waithood is not "empty time" but an opportunity to build social networks, learn new business strategies, and imagine and plan a different future (Finn and Oldfield, 2015: p.38). They argue for a more complex understanding of young men at work in Freetown and of the "youth bulge" in general in African cities.

Lack of opportunities

Hilker and Fraser (2009: p.5) find that "structural exclusion and lack of opportunities faced by young people effectively block or prolong their transition to adulthood and can lead to frustration, disillusionment and in some cases their involvement in violence".

Maxwell et al (2012) find the biggest constraints to livelihood security in urban areas are a lack of access to financial capital, education and skills. The lack of infrastructure development and poor security, an ineffective regulatory regime and economic shocks in South Sudan have added to the lack of employment opportunities for the youth (Foust et al, 2015: p.55). Suffering additionally from credit constraint, young entrepreneurs are restricted from fully embracing their potential (Foust et al, 2015: p.55). Obtaining credit in South Sudan is among the most difficult in the world. With only around 1% of households having a bank account, South Sudanese businesses face constraint to access formal credit. Additionally, high interest rates ranging from 18 to 23% and limited financial services outside urban areas mount to undeniable cases of credit constraint. These high cost in borrowing make investment less desirable and business start-ups or expansion unattainable for some (Foust et al, 2015: p.35). Microcredit programmes have been geared towards addressing urban populations' needs, despite the fact that limited access to credit remains a significant constraint on re-establishing rural livelihoods (Maxwell et al, 2012). The main factors limiting the expansion of microfinance institutions into rural areas include lack of security and limited transport.

Mercy Corps (2014: p.7) found that a significant factor thwarting youth in their pursuit of work in South Sudan is the heavy reliance on foreign labour and expertise within the private sector. In meetings with youth and other stakeholders alike, there was agreement that foreigners (including Darfurians, Ethiopians, Kenyans and Ugandans) and those who studied outside of South Sudan did better than South Sudanese in business opportunities (Mercy Corps, 2014: p.8). Maxwell et al (2012: p.6) also highlight the large influx of both skilled and unskilled foreign workers into South Sudan (especially Juba) since the signing of the CPA. It is estimated that over 85% of skilled labour in Juba is provided by immigrant workers. There have been reports this has created animosity among some Southern Sudanese, who feel they are being deprived of employment opportunities (Martin and Mosel, 2011 in Maxwell et al, 2012: p.6).

Another issue highlighted by some is that the current generation born into war in South Sudan has low levels of literacy[5]; limited education and often non-existent work experience. As a result there is a common reliance on humanitarian aid. Such low levels of human capital create challenges for companies to hire adequately skilled South Sudanese (Foust et al, 2015: p.14).

Social norms[6]

In South Sudan (as in other places) cultural expectations constrain the choice of jobs considered acceptable for boys and girls (Ensor, 2013b: p.11). Oosterom (2016: p.12) highlights that across the world, young people navigate not only economic opportunities, they also navigate culturally defined norms and expectations, and cultural models imposed by others in society, including about what good moral behaviour is for young people and what forms of work are considered appropriate for young men and women.

UNDP and the United Nations Inter-Agency Working Group on Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (2012: p.32) point out that "for some men, having a job may not be enough; rather they see the type of job they are doing as a direct reflection of their manhood". They point to ex-combatants in Liberia, who expressed resistance to jobs they deemed as "unmanly" or "women's work". In many cases, regardless of market demands and skill-sets, young men may reject work in "traditional" sectors such as agriculture in the belief they deserve more "modern" mechanical or technical jobs or that those jobs connote a greater level of prestige associated with achievement socially expected gender roles.

Oosterom (2016: p.5, 36) has formulated a useful conceptual framework for studying the (understudied) connections between economic, social and political engagement of young people in contexts of violence and conflict. She states that "in the everyday lives of young people in Africa, engagement in formal or informal livelihood activities is rarely separated from their social lives and politics, especially the politics that operate in the local economy. As young people are embedded in social and, possibly, also in political relationships, the ways in which they pursue opportunities for work will depend not only on their skills and demand for labour, but on their navigation of the political actors that shape the nature of the local labour market and economy. The conceptual framework consists of: the political nature of the local economy, social navigation and situated agency, and youth identity" (Oosterom, 2016: p.5, 36).

Oosterom (2016: p.12) also highlights that the forms of paid work that young people are involved in are important for the construction of youth identities in various ways. Different types of work have different forms of status attached to them, both from the perspective of young people and the adult generations. Rather than for simply materialistic purposes of getting an income, young

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[5] However, literacy levels among the youth are higher than the population as a whole, indicating that past education reforms have had an effect. The literacy rate for youth in South Sudan is 59 percent, compared to overall literacy rate of 48 percent (Foust et al, 2015: p.16).

[6] The World Bank Human Development Report 2015 defines social norms as "broadly shared beliefs about what group members are likely to do and ought to do[, these] are informal governance mechanisms that exert a powerful influence on individual decision making and behaviour" (World Bank, 2015: p.51). Humans are hard wired to develop and adhere to norms; imitation is one of the key ways humans learn strategies for interacting in the world.

people may pursue the intangible outcomes of doing certain kinds of work: the lifestyle or subculture associated with doing such work, the places where one can go.

Different backgrounds and aspirations

The lives of young people in South Sudan are characterised by conflict-induced displacement and movement between various locations. Returnees constitute a highly heterogeneous group whose motivations and objectives vary according to a number of factors, including family structure, education, socioeconomic status and conditions in exile. Sommers and Schwartz (2011: p.6-7) argue that there are three new identities for South Sudanese youth:

- those who remained in South Sudan during the civil war;
- IDPs who fled to Sudan's capital city, Khartoum (known as "Khartoumers" or, disparagingly, as "Jalaba" (Arabs));
- "diaspora youth", including those who lived as refugees in East Africa or beyond.

Fieldwork by Ensor (2013b: p.7) among South Sudanese refugees in Cairo, Egypt and Adjumani, Uganda, reveals views on education, repatriation and integration which often differ from those of their Sudan-born elders. Many young returnees were exposed to functioning cash economies in Egypt, Kenya, Uganda or Khartoum, and arrived in South Sudan with relatively high educational standards and expectations that local conditions in South Sudan are currently unable to meet (Ensor, 2013b: p.7).Some would have preferred to remain in the diaspora, at least until educational and employment opportunities improved back home. Unlike older generations, most of these young people, particularly those based in Cairo and Khartoum, are urbanised and unaccustomed to the rural lifestyle they associate with South Sudan. Those who grew up in Khartoum face mistrust and rejection from locals who identify them as members of the Arab culture of the North (Ensor, 2013b: p.7). Meanwhile many of the diaspora youth arriving from Kenya, Uganda, or other refugee asylum nations face a different set of challenges than their counterparts returning from Khartoum, being seen as "foreigners" importing an alien, dangerous, and threatening culture (Sommers and Schwartz, 2011: p.7).

Job allocation also commonly reflects ethnic affiliation and often relies on kin networks, placing uprooted returnees at a clear disadvantage (Ensor, 2013b: p.42). On the other hand, a study by Mercy Corps in 2013 (2014: p.13) did not find significant divisions or tension resulting from competition for training and jobs between groups returning to Warrap and Unity states from Khartoum or East Africa and those who remained inside South Sudan during the civil war. Moreover, many of the "elite" returnees who are fluent in English and have degrees from respected foreign institutions have secured high-status, well-paid jobs, including with international donors and NGOs (Sommers and Schwartz, 2011: p.6-7). Most categorically reject any kind of manual labour, especially farming, which they see as incompatible with their urban life style and beneath their superior qualifications (Ensor, 2013b: p.11). On the other hand, Ensor (2013b: p.11) highlights that some diaspora boys and girls and, to a lesser degree Khartoumers, appear to have a more flexible outlook on job acceptability. She suggests this attitude may have been born out of survival in the available limited livelihood options or alternatively could signal additional efforts to rebel against constraining traditional social mores.

Peter Biar Ajak (Chatham House, 2016: p.15) argues that a key issue after the initial peace in 2005 was a crisis of expectation. Young people were expecting a "peace dividend", and when this did not materialise they hoped that independence would bring new opportunities. Mercy

Corps (2014: p.14) reports that the pervasive view among youth that "skills plus capital equal success", without absorptive capacity in the informal and formal economy, has the potential to increase the frustration of youth. In 2013 young people in Warrup and Unity States reported to Mercy Corps (2014: p.7) that skills and training are the most promising pathways to economic independence, but these tend to be disconnected from market opportunities and raise false expectations of actual employability.

Sommers and Schwartz (2011: p.8-9) argue that the youth unemployment situation in South Sudan persists due to:

- an overwhelming focus on a finite number of government jobs;
- widespread nepotism;
- South Sudanese youth refusal to do many jobs (e.g. youths reported being criticised by peers, relatives, and elders for selling water, clearing land, cleaning buildings, and working in hotels);
- unrealistic views by some South Sudanese of their earning potential and viability as workers.

Rural vs urban

With rapid urbanisation in South Sudan, a once almost exclusively rural populace is rapidly moving to towns in search of meaningful employment opportunities. There is competition in the urban labour market (both formal and informal) from more educated returnee Sudanese and relatively large numbers of migrant workers from neighbouring countries (Maxwell et al, 2012: p.37). Maxwell et al (2012) highlight that it is often men that have migrated to urban centres, most notably Juba, which has left many female-headed households in rural South Sudan, an environment endemic with insecurity (Maxwell et al, 2012).

A number of factors influence the mobility of youth away from rural areas to urban areas. Pull factors include the hopes of generating an income, pursuing better education opportunities and the desire for a "modern" lifestyle. Push factors include low income levels, limited access to land.

Rural youth

Nevertheless, a large proportion of young people remain, or are based, in rural areas (Kristensen and Birch-Thomsen, 2013: p.176). Although there has been little research on rural youth livelihood strategies specific to South Sudan, Kristensen and Birch-Thomsen (2013: p.179) highlight three livelihood strategies, which are typically pursued by young rural people in Sub Saharan Africa:

- To stay in the village and engage in farming, thereby continuing a traditional agriculturally based livelihood strategy, where farming is the main source of income.
- To stay in the village and diversify the choice of livelihood strategies to include non-farm activities (e.g. retail, manufacturing or service provision); farming may be the main or a secondary source of income.
- To migrate from the village to an urban area in search of education or employment, either as a cyclical pattern (e.g. seasonal migration during the agricultural off-season) or a permanent move. Links with the village of origin may vary; in some cases, young people

may assist with labour on a regular basis (e.g. during school holidays) or contribute to household income through remittances.

Young men in rural areas can be easily and quickly mobilised for community defence, to raid cattle and recover cattle raided, as well as retaliatory attacks. These fluid groups are loose and opportunistic structures with a particular purpose and goal that often disperse afterwards (Danish Refugee Council, 2017: p.13).

The Danish Refugee Council (2017: p.13) released a report that explores some of the issues facing male youth in the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) Bentiu Protection of Civilian (PoC) site and in both urban and rural areas of Rubkona county (previously in Unity State). Ongoing recruitment of young men and boys into the conflict, especially in Guit and Rubkona, remains a serious issue, currently pushing young men from rural areas to the PoC. Rural youth in the PoC in most cases chose to move after losing their cattle and livelihoods and possibly having temporarily joined armed groups as soldiers, they are also moving to escape military recruitment. Young men who have deliberately chosen to remain inside the PoC are also taking a stance in this conflict, actively choosing not to fight. Outside the PoC, young men are at risk of enlisting with armed groups, being forcefully recruited and exposed to cattle raids (Danish Refugee Council, 2017: p.13). This has caused most young men in Rubkona to go into hiding and the villages visited were largely deserted of men (Danish Refugee Council, 2017: p.14).

Rural communities, who are both the primary victims as well as major perpetrators of violence in South Sudan, are largely excluded from national peace processes and dividends. White Armies leaders are rarely given prominent roles in regional and national peace processes. Instead educated youth representatives and politicians are prioritised, which deprives the cattle camp youth directly involved in these conflicts of representation and a sense of ownership over agreements and their implementation (Breidlid and Arensen in Saferworld, 2017: p.39).

Urban youth

Ensor (2013a: p.11) carried out a research project on the reintegration of refugees and IDPs returning to South Sudan since the signing of the 2005 Peace Agreement, focusing on the role played by displaced youth. She found that many returnees were choosing to resettle in urban locations, either because they lack the skills necessary to work as farmers after years of living in northern cities or refugee camps, or because they lack interest in returning to an agro-pastoralist lifestyle. Most anticipate that economic and educational opportunities will be superior in urban locations. However, employment opportunities in South Sudan's urban areas are, at present, not sufficient to absorb the large influx of people (Ensor, 2013a: p.10). Juba attracts the highest number of young returnees, other rapidly urbanising regional towns such as Wau, Bor, Malakal and Torit have similarly attracted displaced youth (Ensor, 2013a: p.17). The difficulties inherent in finding paid employment in the face of rising expectations and unfavourable socioeconomic conditions are at the core of practices of continuing mobility among young returnees in South Sudan (Ensor, 2013a: p.38).

Ensor (2013a: p.32) also draws attention to data from Lakes State that suggest that many of the boys and young men who move with the cattle camps, weary of the escalating conflicts over cattle resulting intertribal fighting, are seeking alternative livelihoods. Since pastoralist groups have traditionally perceived farming as undignified, and agriculture is not always feasible in some of the most arid states, urban life appears to constitute an increasingly powerful lure for these

youth. Typically lacking any formal education or marketable skills, many young cattle herders nonetheless express an interest in vocational training and a settled lifestyle.

4. Youth decision making and violence

Non-violent decision making

First of all it is important to recognise that in conflict settings in general the majority of young people do not get involved in violence and that young people can make a positive contribution to peacebuilding and development. A number of academics express concern about some of the language and assumptions made in the youth bulge literature that risks stigmatising young people (Hilker and Fraser, 2009: p.3). The literature suggests that there are multiple motivations for youth engagement in armed violence, that these need to be understood in relation to each particular context, and that there may be considerable variation in the motivations of individual youth within any given context. In-depth case studies suggest that while youth unemployment may provide part of the explanation of why armed violence occurs, this factor is rarely a main or direct cause of violence (Walton, 2010).

However, for south Sudan, little in-depth research or literature could be found during this review on the motivations and decision making of youth deciding **not** to participate in violence, and this is an important knowledge gap. Some anecdotal research was found but this did not go into detail on the motivations. For example, a study by the Danish Refugee Council (2017) into youth in Bentiu PoC highlights that rural youth were are also moving to the PoC to escape military recruitment, and young men who have stayed in the PoC deliberately were taking a stance by actively choosing not to fight.

Youth violence in South Sudan

Key conflict groups[7]

Nevertheless, youth have been key actors in the conflict and violence in South Sudan. The literature reviewed for this report has mainly focused on youth's role in violence in South Sudan through cattle raiding, militias and urban gangs. Table 1 shows the key conflict groups that have been active or emerged since the eruption of violence in December 2013 in South Sudan and a simple identification of their motivations as developed by Gebreyes et al (2016: p.25-26). Although this table oversimplifies the motivations for youth engaging in violence in South Sudan, it is a useful representation of the different ethnic and communal militia groups that have emerged and gives an indication of the complexity of youth defence forces across the country.

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[7] See http://www.crisis.acleddata.com/category/south-sudan/ for up-to-date information on the current conflict and Raleigh et al (2016) for information on communal and political militias

Table 1: Typology of conflict groups and actors in South Sudan's recent conflict

Major Conflict Actors	Motives for Conflict	Livelihood Systems	Areas Affected
Government	State control and legitimate control of violence	All livelihood systems	All states but particularly Greater Upper Nile region
Sudan People's Liberation Movement-in-Opposition (SPLM-IO)	Contesting the legitimacy of state	Eastern Flood Plains, Pastoral and Nile-Sobat Rivers	Greater Upper Nile region
Western Dinka Youth Armies: Gelweng/Titweng/ Dut Ku Beny/ Mathiang Anyoor/ Tit Baai/Machar Anyar	Youth and cattle keepers employment and engagement opportunities and Communal self-protection	Western Flood Plains, Pastoral and Nile-Sobat Rivers	States of the Greater Bahr el Ghazal region
Nuer Youth White Armies (Lou/Jiekeny and Bull)	Youth and cattle keepers employment and engagement opportunities and Communal self protection	Eastern Flood Plains, Pastoral and Nile-Sobat Rivers	States of the Greater Upper Nile region
Murle Youth Army	Youth and cattle keepers employment and engagement opportunities and Communal self-protection	Arid/Pastoral and Hills and Mountains	Jonglei State
Arrow Boys Army	Youth employment and engagement opportunities and Communal self-protection	Greenbelt	Western Bahr el Ghazal State
Eastern Dinka Youth Armies	Youth and cattle keepers employment and engagement opportunities and Communal self-protection	Eastern Flood Plains, Pastoral and Nile-Sobat Rivers	States of Greater Upper Nile region
Shilluk Youth Army	Communal self-protection	Nile-Sobat rivers	Upper Nile
Maban Defence Forces	Communal self-protection	Eastern Flood Plains	Upper Nile State
South Sudan Defence Forces	Communal self-protection	Arid/pastoral, Hills and Mountains	Eastern Equatoria State
Dinka Bor Armed Pastoralists	Securing free movement and access to pastures and water to their livestock	Eastern flood plains, Arid/Pastoral and Nile river	Jonglei State

Source: Gebreyes et al (2016: p.25-26)

Research by Justino et al (2014: p.16) points out that individual motivations in violent conflict around the world differ significantly across sex, age, ethnic, religious and other social, cultural, political and economic group divisions. They also depend crucially on processes of group mobilisation and interactions with local institutions and norms that will impact on individual and

household decisions to participate or refrain from participating in violent conflicts. Whereas traditional macro explanations have mostly focused on one factor (either greed or grievance) to explain individual participation in violence, the micro-level perspective identifies the often complex and multiple motivations involved in the behavioural choice (Justino et al, 2014: p.16).

Cattle raiding

In states such as Eastern Equatoria, Jonglei, Lakes, Northern Bahr el Ghazal, Warrap, and Unity, inter-communal violence and cattle raiding have become an important part of communities' livelihoods and economy (Gebreyes et al, 2016). However, since the latest conflict, the dynamics of cattle raiding have changed both in scope and magnitude, becoming more violent and with the deliberate destruction of assets (Gebreyes et al, 2016: p.1). The increased availability of small arms in recent years has made cattle raids more deadly, often sparking revenge attacks and provoking cycles of violence (Saferworld, 2014: p.7). Cattle-keepers and youth are becoming increasingly militarised and easily mobilised to take part in the current conflict (Pendle, 2015). Subsequent revenge raids have trapped communities in a web of continuous animosity (Gebreyes et al, 2016: p.1). Livestock resources, which should function as suppliers of household food and social security, have become liabilities for which communities are killed, maimed and robbed of their assets (Gebreyes et al, 2016: p.1).

There are multiple motivations for youth engaging in violence in South Sudan, for example, the choice to engage in cattle raiding and counter-cattle raiding has been attributed to the absence of any form of security, as a mode of socialisation or as a livelihood strategy (Tsuma, 2012: p.132). Rolandsen and Breidlid (2013: p.8) found that accumulation of cattle wealth is an important incentive for youth's continued engagement in violence. Since participants in large-scale raids and attacks receive the main share of loot, some youth have accumulated large amounts of cattle wealth. Many elders, on the other hand, have lost their herds in raids and have not been sufficiently compensated by the government or their own youth.

"Nigga" groups[8]

Part of the landscape of most post-conflict societies in Africa includes refugee camps, temporary settlements for IDPs and "protected villages". These are sites of particular disenfranchisement for young men, who are unable in such environments to fulfil most of the internal and external expectations of manhood held by their societies (Porter, 2013: p.494). One coping mechanism is joining gangs.

Sometimes called "teams", "gangs" or locally in South Sudan "niggas", these boys and young people coalesce together as a social group with a particular type of moral code seeking to connect to a wider global culture, who sometimes also engage in criminal activities and fighting among themselves (importantly not all the "Nigga's" in the PoC are criminals and vice versa) (Danish Refugee Council, 2017: p.15). "Nigga" groups are both a social and economic community, providing members with a sense of belonging, identity, protection, a coping mechanism and support system (Danish Refugee Council, 2017: p.15-16). "Niggas" were prevalent across urban areas of South Sudan pre-crisis and also exist in the Juba and Malakal

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[8] The term "nigga" has no negative racial undertones, rather it is associated to American hip-hop culture and its subversive contestation. For more details see also McCrone, 2016; Sommers and Schwartz, 2011.

PoCs, many of the 'nigga' groups in the Bentiu POC were established in Bentiu town by post-CPA returnee youth (Danish Refugee Council, 2017: p.15; McCrone, 2016: p.53). However, not all returnees are "Niggas" and vice versa. Many young men have sought membership in "Nigga" groups as a way to access an alternative largely western culture, identity and social world and the privileges associated to it (Danish Refugee Council, 2017: p.16).

The Danish Refugee Council (2017: p.13) found that in a militarised society where masculinity and status are in great part proven through one's ability to protect the community and provide for the family and household, young people in the PoC and those outside are exposed and attracted to different types of violence. The PoC hosts both rural and urban youth but "nigga" groups are mostly from a broadly urban background and tend to get involved in competition fighting between youth groups and petty criminal acts (Danish Refugee Council, 2017: p.13).

Motivations for participating in violence

There is a literature exploring the motivations behind youth participation in violence and livelihood decisions more generally, which has relevant analysis for understanding the situation of youth in South Sudan. For example, Hilker and Fraser's (2009: p.5) review of youth exclusion and violence in fragile states found a number of approximate factors that, given underlying conditions of exclusion, can lead to the mobilisation of specific individuals and groups into violence. These include: recruitment, coercion and indoctrination into groups; gender inequalities and socialisation; identity politics and ideology: charismatic leadership and organisational dynamics: trigger events. Another summary (Ebata et al, 2006: p.19-25) lists the popular theories on motivations for youth to engage in violent conflict as:

- The youth bulge, i.e. young people fight because they are too many;
- Coercion, i.e. young people fight because they are forced to either by physical abduction, or because of a lack of other alternatives for survival;
- A youth crisis, this brings in a more complex and multifaceted dimension and can be defined as either a societal crisis impacting on youth, resulting in a feeling of "uneasiness" in the face of societal changes and constraints, or a crisis originating from youth and impacting on society at large;
- Lack of education opportunities;
- Lack of employment opportunities;
- Exclusion from participation and decision making.

Social norms

Work by Lilleston et al (2017, p.124) points out that social norms are one way that violence "transmits" within groups. Through the fear of social sanctions, desire to win approval, and internalisation of normative behaviour, perceived social norms can influence people to perpetrate, condone, or challenge violence.

Normalisation of violence

It has been argued that youth in conflict experience a process of asocialisation into a polarised existence of hostility and are denied the normal cultural, moral and value socialisation usually gained from family and community set-ups. The collapse of customary socio-economic systems

during civil war creates a decision-making vacuum and reduces the possibilities of addressing issues in a non-violent manner. The choice to respond violently to any perceived threat becomes a common occurrence, and youth therefore become the custodians of security (Tsuma, 2012).

Since 2009, thousands of women have been abducted in Jonglei state in retaliatory attacks in the conflict between the Lou Nuer and Murle communities. Lacey (2013: p.91) argues that killing and violence aimed at women in the conflict by male cattle-camp youth has increased to a point where it could be said to have become normalised practice, where women are considered legitimate spoils of war, along with livestock and other chattel. She argues that abductions, sexual slavery, and sexual violence in the current conflict are not just a by-product of the conflict, but are a product of underlying patriarchal structures that value women solely for their reproductive capabilities and linked to this their role in commanding value for the procurement of cattle.

UNDP and the United Nations Inter-Agency Working Group on Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (2012: p.22-23) according to Social Learning Theory, individuals learn behaviour through observation, imitation, and modelling. In both conflict-affected and peaceful environments, violent masculinities and femininities are shaped by socially constructed and perpetuated norms related to the use of violence. Violence is a result of a socialisation process, whereby "people acquire those behaviours essential for effective participation in society". They point out that in southern Sudan (now South Sudan), most individuals and communities were in some way supporting either the largely volunteer-based Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) or other armed groups, thus contributing to the normalisation of violence as a way of life. The SPLA promoted violence as a legitimate way for the southern Sudanese to attain their political and economic goals, and instilled in its recruits a sense of hyper-masculinity that glorified the "raw power" of the gun. In the post-conflict period, the notion that manhood is closely associated with gun ownership and warfare still persists (UNDP and the United Nations Inter-Agency Working Group on Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration, 2012: p.22-23).

Exclusion, culture and family

Tsuma (2012: p.135) argues that the family plays a significant role as an accountability structure for young people, and its absence increases the risk of youth to indulge or get absorbed into crime and other unlawful activities. People are identified according to their tribal and family lines in Africa. Tsuma (2012: p.135) therefore argues that combined with the collapse or distortion of the family as a key unit of identity, the youth have adopted other means of shaping their own identity, i.e. joining a famous rebel group of vigilantes which becomes their new identity and instils a sense of pride.

An Oxfam (2016: p.2) Briefing Paper argues that inequalities between generations have grown at an alarming rate over the past few decades, and that youth are largely excluded from formal political processes and continue to be subject to age-based systems of authority. They lack forums and opportunities for political participation and influence; and are often underrepresented in influential government positions or in hierarchical systems that favour elders (Oxfam, 2016: p.9). Leonardi (2007) examined the structural opposition between the sphere of military/government (the "hakuma") and the sphere of "home" in South Sudan, and argued that to be a "youth" in Southern (South) Sudan means to inhabit the tensions of the space between these spheres. While attempting to resist capture by either sphere, youth have used their recruitment by the military to invest in their home or family sphere. Leonardi (2007) highlights that

"informants for the article did not cite either resentment against chiefs or generational antagonisms as significant reasons for youth recruitment into the armed forces, or indeed as the primary concerns of youth during the war. Instead, they repeatedly focused on the vulnerability of youth to capture by the military, and cited family roles and responsibilities as the primary consideration in the decisions taken by youth during the war". She questioned the universal applicability both of an African "youth crisis", and of the relevance of generational tensions to the involvement of Southern Sudanese youth in civil wars. Rather than seeing youth as between childhood and adulthood, the article saw youth as operating between two spheres: "*hakuma*" and "home". Frustration in the youth was in relation to their marginalisation or repression within the government sphere, rather than over their status in relation to elders.

Lehmann (2015: p.26) highlights conflicting opinions on the roles of youth and elders: "Some youth argued that elders encourage the youth to go raiding, for cows for their children's dowry payment and to gain prestige in the community…A few key informants emphasised that elders are powerless in light of the availability of guns in the hands of the youth."

Insecurity

Economic and social incentives also encourage many youth to participate in violence (Breidlid and Arensen in Saferworld, 2017: p.35). Rolandsen and Breidlid (2013: p.5) explain that the military role of youth (young men) in many cultures in South Sudan is related to social status and specific privileges: it affords them respect, the right to participate in decision making, and the ability to socialise with girls. Participatory Action Research in Eastern Equatoria's Budi County in 2015 (Lehmann, 2015: p.27) found that youth respondents perceived conflict in two ways: some youth, often formally more educated, emphasised the negative aspects of conflict; other youth, often warriors or youth without formal education, perceived conflict, as well as fighting, as an avenue to access resources such as cows for marriage.

The civil war shaped new structures for leadership and mobilisation of young men in rural areas, which are still employed for protection and large-scale inter-communal violence (Rolandsen and Breidlid, 2013: p.8). Aside from mobilising youth to be part of the forces of the warring parties, the Nuer and Dinka in South Sudan also organised their own sub-group youth militias (such as the White Armies and Gelweng) to protect their communities and form a kind of community police apparatus (Pendle, 2015). Other ethnic groups adopted similar strategies to mobilise community self-defence groups based on armed youth, giving rise to the Murle (Yau Yau group), the Arrow Boys in Western Equatoria, the Monyemiji among the Lotuko of Eastern Equatoria, and the Maban Defence Force in Upper Nile State (Pendle, 2015; Young, 2015: p.18).[9] Current violence in much of South Sudan is closely linked to the prevailing security vacuum in rural areas. Hence, the participation of youth in violence must be understood as a consequence not only of their social role and responsibilities as protectors of the community, but also of the political economy of civil war and large-scale violence (Rolandsen and Breidlid, 2013: p.3).

The White Armies' involvement in violent conflict largely reflects their social obligations to protect their families and livestock; community defence and justice provision, in the form of revenge, has long been one of the strongest motivators for participation in the White Armies (Young, 2016:

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[9] See Saferworld (2017) Informal armies: Community defence groups in South Sudan's civil war for more details on these groups and their motivations.

p.11). While participation in the White Armies is mainly voluntary, during times of high intensity conflict every able-bodied male is expected to join local units (Breidlid and Arensen in Saferworld, 2017: p.35). Social pressure to participate in the White Armies is especially strong during times of war, making it difficult for youth to stay behind (Breidlid and Arensen in Saferworld, 2017: p.36). There has been a growing number of educated youth in the White Armies and the average age of fighters has increased; today it is not uncommon to find fighters in their thirties and even forties (Young, 2016: p.39; Breidlid and Arensen in Saferworld, 2017: p.36).

For youth in Jonglei state, their sense of social worth and identity depends on success in executing their role as keeper of cattle and community protector, which also entails participation in intercommunal feuds and conflicts, and even largescale revenge attacks (Rolandsen and Breidlid, 2013: p.6). Youth and their communities at large consider participation in such violence as legitimate and moral (Rolandsen and Breidlid, 2013: p.6).

Mercy Corps (2014: p.20) emphasises that pressure by elders, politicians or family on youths in South Sudan to defend against outside aggression or become aggressors themselves will continue in the foreseeable future and that while dangerous, these violent acts are calculated choices by young people to improve their chances of survival, social status and communal influence. Some young men have joined the rebellion in search of financial rewards, and South Sudan's dire economic situation may well have fed this dynamic, increasing the movement of Western Equatorians from rural areas to towns in search of livelihood opportunities, spurring criminal activity and increasing the attractiveness of armed rebellion (Schomerus and Taban in Saferworld, 2017: p.15).

Masculinity

Versions of manhood in Africa are socially constructed, fluid over time and in different settings, and plural; there is no such thing as a "typical" young man in sub-Saharan Africa. However, a common key requirement to attaining manhood in Africa is achieving some level of financial independence, employment or income, and subsequently starting a family (Barker and Ricardo, 2005: p.2). Barker and Ricardo (2005: p.2) also highlight that older men "have a role in holding power over younger men and thus in defining manhood in Africa". Rites of passage are important factors in the socialisation of boys and men throughout the region. This is also true of South Sudan. Barker and Ricardo (2005: p.v) find that young men who do not achieve a sense of socially respected manhood may be more likely to engage in violence.

Porter (2013: p.492) highlights that post-conflict contexts are marked by norms of masculinity that are extremely negative: highly rigid, militaristic, and associated with violence, toughness, the objectification of women, and repression of all emotions other than anger. Men who have been members of (informal) armed groups are often heavily influenced by these norms even after conflicts have ended (Porter, 2013: p.493). Gender norms are also implicated in the practice of cattle raiding; owning a gun and participating in a cattle raid are rites of passage for adolescent boys, and for men these are symbols of manhood and virility which confer social status (Saferworld, 2014: p.7). Recruitment into the SPLA or non-state armed groups is closely linked with militarised notions of masculinity, and can provide a sense of identity and self-worth which would otherwise be difficult to find (Saferworld, 2014: p.7).

Oosterom (2017: p.191) points out that war and violent conflict are often associated with producing "militarised masculinities", but that these are not simply reproduced by the behaviours

of ex-combatant males. Notions of masculinity are negotiated and reproduced in local institutions and everyday social interactions, by both men and women (Oosterom, 2017: p.187). In Oosterom's study of gendered insecurity and agency among the Latuko, one of the Equatorian ethnic minorities living in Imatong state, it became clear that, in light of ongoing insecurity in South Sudan since the end of the civil war, (non-combatant) women actively seek to influence hybrid governance institutions but also reproduce the masculinities within the *Amangat* (a village-level decision making body of adult males) (Oosterom, 2017: p.199). [10] Search for Common Ground (2016b) highlight research which indicates that women in South Sudan are just as likely as men to believe violence is a valid way to solve conflicts, this is important as they influence attitudes and behaviour in informal social spaces like the home. Pendle (2015: p.426) highlights how "local popular discourse and bull songs often honoured militarised acts of the youth and referenced the bravery of the *titweng*. Women discussed their pride in sons who were part of the *titweng* and described methods used from an early age, such as storytelling, to foster in their sons a responsibility to participate in community defence". Highlighting the role of women in sometimes encouraging violence among young men and reinforcing the association between masculinity and cattle raiding.

Marriage dowries

To be recognised as full adults, male and female youth in South Sudan must marry and build a family (Danish Refugee Council, 2017: p.20). Sommers and Schwartz' (2011: p.1) field research in Juba and two South Sudanese states found an increasing inability of male youth to meet rising dowry (bride price) demands. Consequently many male youth enlist in militias, join cattle raids, or seek wives from different ethnic groups or countries. Recent research by the Danish Refugee Council (2017: p.20) supported these earlier findings. It found that many young men in Rubkona, especially those in the PoC and towns, deprived of their livelihoods and made destitute by cattle raids, are under severe pressure to meet escalating bridewealth costs. Kuol (in Saferworld, 2017: p.23) also highlights rising bride prices in the post-2005 period as increasing the susceptibility of young men to elite patronage, where cattle protection and military loyalty are exchanged for gifts from elites of guns and ammunition.

In Lehmann's (2015: p.24-25) research into conflict in Budi County, one of the prime motivations to raid cattle is to be able to pay the bride price. Other reasons identified by respondents to explain the youth's engagement in conflict include: the pride people take in being "warriors" who defend the community; peer pressure; and low levels of education (Lehmann, 2015: p.25).

Inequalities of power

It appears that politicians in South Sudan are increasingly capable of mobilising their youth base to settle political scores (Mercy Corps. 2014: p.11). Mercy Corps (2014: p.14) states that "Youth seeking to establish their social and financial independence and influence, yet struggling under the burden of a lack of education, relevant and marketable skills, and scarce work opportunities to apply those skills, are prime targets for politicians searching for foot soldiers to carry out their battles to gain political influence". Military commanders also have language and terminology to mobilise young cattle keepers by associating fighting with moral justice and community protection and rights. Military commanders are also known to establish military loyalty by contributing to the

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[10] This study was carried out before violent conflict re-erupted in December 2013.

bridewealth of their soldiers, who have in many cases lost all their cattle and are unable to marry (Danish Refugee Council, 2017: p.14). Raleigh et al (2016: p.5-7) point out that in South Sudan the presence of armed youth militias (especially the Dinka) is not simply just "a product of local disputes, but rather the effect of government forces arming cattle herders as a method of creating proxy fighters to ally against any existing opposition forces, as well as ensuring that new opposition is not created (by keeping local communities content and feeling able to defend themselves)".

Barker and Ricardo (2005: p.vi) found that in some settings, young men's participation in conflict and use of violence become ways to obtain empowerment, or essentially a means to achieving and wielding power, for young men who perceive no other way to achieve it. There may also be a sense of camaraderie with male peers for young men in some armed insurgency groups, and in some cases, male role models or surrogate fathers, and substitute families (Barker and Ricardo, 2005: p.vi).

5. Trusted actors and channels of communication

Media

Radio

Reviews of radio as a communication channel for youth and wider communities

Radio is widely cited as the most accessed, and often most trusted, channel of communication in South Sudan. Radio has therefore frequently been used by donors and other organisations to target attitudinal and behavioural change in youth. The reasons for radio's popularity includes its potential to reach mass audiences around the country, through networks that can reach beyond urban areas as well as local language programming. There are dozens of stations in operation and most of the population now lives within reach of frequency modulation (FM) and Medium Wave broadcasts; however, many remote areas remain outside of reach and coverage can be inconsistent. Shortwave transmissions of regular broadcasting stations do reach some of the more remote areas of the country (Forcier Consulting 2015b).

Radio is also an effective tool to use in the highly volatile context in South Sudan, which can change actors' access to different areas relatively quickly. In such an environment, when it can become difficult or impossible to physically visit certain locations, the use of media approaches – particularly radio – ensures that programming can continue to reach affected populations, even when their communities are inaccessible or when people are displaced (Search for Common Ground 2016a). For example, following the July 2016 violence, when NGOs were forced to evacuate and suspend their activities, Search for Common Ground and its partner the Catholic Radio Network were, however, able to continue engaging with their target audience through the two radio programs they jointly produce and broadcast.

Given the popularity of radio, it is perhaps not surprising that several detailed surveys and evaluations have been carried out to assess the media landscape as well as the effectiveness of radio communication initiatives. For example, in 2015 a survey commissioned by Internews (with support from USAID) was carried out by Forcier Consulting to conduct a detailed assessment of the media landscape in accessible areas of South Sudan (Forcier Consulting 2015b). This study is a key source of detailed information on reach and accessibility of various media sources

across the country. Building on an earlier survey commissioned by Internews in 2013, it collected information on South Sudanese media access and consumption to inform the strategies and programming of media houses and initiatives.

For the 2015 study, research was carried out by Forcier Consulting in five fully accessible states (Central Equatoria, Northern Bahr el Ghazal, Warrap, Western Bahr el Ghazal, Western Equatoria) and five states that were, due to the ongoing conflict, only partially accessible (Eastern Equatoria, Lakes, Upper Nile (Malakal and Melut counties only), Unity (Leer county only), and Jonglei (Bor South county only)). Although the study was not youth-specific, the majority of respondents were under the age of 35, making the findings highly relevant to understanding the relationship of South Sudanese youth to the media. Key findings included:

- There are a sizeable number of people (one in three) who have never had access to any form of media or device
- Despite this, radio remains the most commonly accessed type of media (51%) and has a larger weekly reach (38%) than all other forms of media.
- While access to television, newspapers, and internet remains sparse, mobile phone penetration levels are nearing levels of radio access.
- As media access increases, trust in radio as a source of information also increases.
- Individuals who have never had access to media say they trust religious leaders (25%) or face-to-face conversations with friends or family (21%) the most as sources of information, while individuals with high access to media trust the radio (69%) the most.
- Those with media access tend to choose radio as their source of news and information, even if they have access to other forms of media.
- Regardless of media access, radio broadcasts are thought to help reduce conflict and provide vital safety information.
- Information heard on the radio trickles down to reach beyond listeners. Nearly two-thirds (63%) of respondents say information from the radio has helped them to stay safe, regardless of whether they have regular access to a radio.

Forcier Consulting (2016a) also mapped its radio audience in Juba, based on an audience ratings system it has created. The results presented in the report are drawn from data collected between January and June 2016 and are representative of the three payams (administrative divisions) in urban Juba (Juba Town, Kator, and Munuki). It provides insights into the dynamics of Juba's radio market, audience preferences, composition, and behaviour. The study found that the average radio listener was under the age of 34, educated and lived in either Munuki or Juba Town. Other key findings included:

- Eye Radio is the top station in urban Juba. With an average 41% weekly reach in Juba, Eye Radio is the most popular radio station in the capital. It is closely followed by Radio Miraya, which has an average weekly reach of 40%.
- Radio listenership is high among the population in urban Juba.
- On average, nearly three-quarters (73%) of the population in urban Juba listens to the radio at least once a week, suggesting that radio remains a key means for reaching residents with important information.
- While high, radio listenership is not yet universal. Almost one in five people (18%) in Juba have never listened to the radio.

- Radio access is gendered. On average, weekly reach of radio is 78% among men, but only 68% among women.

- Radio access is highly correlated with socioeconomic factors. The Upper and Middle class have much higher levels of radio access than the Lower class.

- Listenership varies by location, even within the city. For general radio listening, Munuki has the highest weekly reach by payam, followed by Juba Town and Kator.

- Radio listeners in Juba look to radio as a key source of news and information. News about South Sudan is the most popular type of radio programming, followed by international news.

- Radio listeners in Juba prefer to listen in the mornings (6am-9am) and evenings (6pm-9pm).

McMurry and Lockhart (2013) reviewed Internews' community radio programmes in South Sudan. The purpose of this study was to assess the current information needs of the populations served by Internews' network of community radio stations in South Sudan, and how the stations were meeting those needs. The McMurry and Lockhart study found that radio was viewed as an effective tool for providing guidance to young people. "As a platform that connected youth with other individuals – elders and traditional authorities in particular – it could serve as a kind of moral compass and have a potentially strong social impact on local issues" (2013: 13). Nevertheless, the study also identified two groups – women and returnees – who experienced the most problems accessing information. An additional problem was the spatial diffusion of information – including radios and other information sources – beyond the main town where the community radio station was located. Additional challenges identified were different expectations placed on community radio stations by their listeners on the one hand and the South Sudanese government on the other. Listeners/community members clearly see the role of community radio as a government watchdog and in terms of social advocacy. Not surprisingly, several government officials who were interviewed for this study viewed the role of community radio as a mouthpiece for government itself, even suggesting that increased monitoring of program content was necessary.

Specific radio programmes and initiatives targeted at South Sudanese youth

This review has identified several specific radio programmes and initiatives that were targeted at youth with the aims of affecting attitudinal or behavioural change:

The radio peace drama series Sawa Shabab (which translates as "Youth Together") was widely cited as a successful example of radio programming targeted at youth. Since 2014, the programme has been produced locally by Free Voice South Sudan (and more recently by Ammalna) in collaboration with the United States Institute of Peace and the Peace Tech Lab. Sawa Shabab aims to promote peace and stability by hosting a continuing conversation with youth and changing attitudes about their roles in resolving conflict (Dolan 2015). Episodes are broadcast in English and Arabic as well as Nuer and Dinka, airing on Radio Miraya, the Catholic Radio network and other local radio stations. The show claims to reach, and aims to speak to, all communities, including South Sudanese outside of the country.

In 2014, UNICEF and Search for Common Ground, with support from USAID, carried out the "Communicating for Peace in South Sudan: A Social and Behaviour Change Communication Initiative". This targeted youth and youth influencers through radio programming and outreach

activities, aiming to "foster behaviours leading to more social cohesion" and "strengthen resilience against conflict" (Forcier Consulting 2016a: 1). In addition to communication workshops for religious leaders (who were considered to have considerable influence on youth) and media staff training and participatory theatre, a main component was radio programming targeted at youth. This included two radio programmes:

1. Hiwar al Shabaab - a talk show that aimed to provide an opportunity for youth to discuss the drivers of conflict in their communities
2. Sergeant Esther - a radio drama about Esther, a policewoman who resolves conflict in her community through peaceful dialogue and speaks up against the misuse of power

The non-radio components of this programme are discussed later in this review. With regards to radio programming, Forcier Consulting, who evaluated the initiative in 2016(b), found that:

- Effectiveness was measured according to three different criteria: reach (or whether the programme reached the intended audience); resonance (which indicates whether the broadcasted messages are relevant to local people); and response (linked to knowledge, behaviour and attitude changes associated to being exposed to the show).

- Although the reach of the programme can still be improved, Hiwar al Shabaab proved quite successful in reaching local communities in Juba and Wau (Sergeant Esther was not reviewed in this study as it had only started broadcasting a month before the research began).

- Hiwar al Shabaab listeners held a positive view of the programme, indicating that it was very effective in promoting peace. They highlighted the relevance of the topics and the usefulness of allowing local people to call in and express their views.

- The final evaluation survey revealed that 95.4% of Hiwar al Shabaab listeners did not believe their communities approve of violence against other tribes, compared to 82.2% of non-listeners. This difference was mostly due to the results recorded in Juba, where sentiments against the use of violence appeared to be much stronger among listeners than among non-listeners.

Another evaluation completed by Forcier Consulting in 2017 of two different projects ("'I Love My Country': Promoting Localised Understanding and Peaceful Coexistence in South Sudan" and "'I Love My Country': Strategic Communications for Peace Building in South Sudan", the latter being of particular relevance to this review). These projects promoted peace, tolerance and reconciliation, and included radio drama and short media productions as well as participatory theatre components. Examination of the indicators that track the reach and efficacy of interventions as well as those of social cohesion, suggest that radio programming and participatory theatre performances continue to be important and relevant platforms for transmitting messages about peace, tolerance, and conflict resolution. Nevertheless, several recommendations emerged from the evaluation of these projects that may improve their capacity to promote social cohesion and may have wider resonance for other similar projects:

- Targeted programming may be necessary to address pervasive issues in the communities. These are context-specific.
- Target areas may require different levels of programme resources and interventions should build on existing local capacities.

- The reach and resonance of these theatre performances can be multiplied if performances are captured on audio and/or video and re-played elsewhere.

- Informational activities that help listeners be discerning consumers of media may help counter misinformation, bias, and a medium promoting unity rather than division.

- Additional research is needed on why those with no formal education are less likely to listen to radio and attend theatre performances.

- Donors and implementing partners should consider methods for promoting positive intertribal contact as part of participatory theatre activities and other community outreach efforts. Theatre performances can be shown to an ethnically diverse audience, followed by informal discussion groups, for example. Other public spaces where positive contact between tribes can be promoted are schools and churches, where conflict is less likely to occur.

Together We Can was a six month pilot project carried out between 2015 and 2016 by Search for Common Ground, with support from UNDP. The aim of the project was to promote peaceful coexistence between Madi and Acholi communities in Magwi County. The project built on existing grassroots networks to train leaders from both communities to identify root causes and consequences of the conflict and create safe spaces for dialogue. In order to amplify the impact of the results and share the projects findings with the wider community, roundtable discussions were held on local radio stations.

Radio has also been effectively used as a medium for communicating with IDPs in camps. For example, **Boda Boda Talk Talk** is a radio program, developed by Internews, and airs in U.N. camps for IDP in Juba and Malakal. To circumvent the problem of lack of access to radios, this is broadcast on speakers in tents, or attached to speakers driven around the IDP camps on motorbikes (called boda bodas). This programme offers a news update with local information and NGO-sponsored info about services for displaced people. Greetings can also be sent from camp inhabitants to others and two-minute soap operas on relevant issues acted out by locals comprise the rest of the program. Internews trains local citizen journalists on how to gather information in the camps and investigate what the displaced communities' needs are. The goal of the program is to help humanitarian NGOs communicate more effectively with displaced people in need of services (Dolan 2015). In March 2015, Internews also launched a radio station called Nile FM aimed at displaced communities (Dolan 2015).

Challenges for radio programming

Forcier Consulting (2015b) concludes that the use of the radio is an appropriate means to target youth and promote peace, given its popularity in South Sudan. Moreover, media has the potential to generate social and individual change while providing useful information and entertainment to local populations. Nevertheless, the study also identified challenges. Remote areas remain outside of radio reach and coverage can be inconsistent. Additionally, the entire media sector faces a weak legal framework and a climate of fear. The civil war has exacerbated existing fragilities caused by weak legal institutions and political pressures. Government raids of major media outlets, harassment, intimidation, and arbitrary detentions are common.

Dolan (2015) also reflects on some of the challenges facing radio programming. These include lack of local language media content and poor information infrastructure – these factors limit the reach of media projects. The resurgence of war has created additional challenges. For example, several community stations were destroyed. Some have been rebuilt, while others have broken

new ground. Additionally, the political space for open debate and press freedom has been narrowed as a result of the on-going violence. Local media faced scrutiny prior to the first outbreak of fighting, control has increased since December 2013. Several journalists have been arrested and attacked. Local radio stations such as the Catholic Radio Network's Radio Bakhita have been shut down, while the U.N.'s Radio Miraya has been threatened with closure. Self-censorship by journalists and media houses is therefore widespread.

Other media: print media, television, computers and mobile phones

Trust in most other media sources remains low (Saferworld 2015). Forcier Consulting's (2015b) media landscape study finds that:

- Access to television and visual media are hampered by poverty and limited electricity and telecommunications infrastructure. The state-owned South Sudan TV dominates among existing channels. Saferworld (2015) also notes the lack of trust in state-run television.
- Print media is not readily available beyond the capital and remains inaccessible for large portions of the population due to low literacy rates and language barriers. Newspapers are often expensive given that there are only two printing presses in the country; many papers are printed in neighbouring countries and imported into South Sudan for circulation.
- Internet access is extremely limited for the majority of the population: the 2015 study found that fewer than 1 in 10 respondents had ever accessed the internet.
- Mobile phone penetration levels are nearing the same levels as radio access and usage. Overall, 44% of respondents have access to a mobile phone: three out of ten (31%) respondents have their own mobile phone and 13% have access to the phone of someone close to them such as a friend or relative.
- There are persistent gender disparities in access to all types of media.
- Greater levels of media access are associated with more favourable socio-economic indicators and higher education levels.

Arts, culture and sports events

The potential of initiatives centred around arts and culture to effectively engage with youth across the existing divides has been highlighted by several sources. This may be because of their potential to engage youth more easily than other types of initiatives, but also because they may be able to operate more easily, in the current repressive political climate, without the threat of being shut down by the government.

Almquist Knopf (2013) suggests that cultural initiatives have the potential to capitalise on South Sudan's heterogeneity (often a root of ethnic tension) in order to create potential unifiers. She argues that if ways can be found to create appreciation and respect for diversity which is rooted in culture, these may be harnessed to foster a new, unifying, national identity. Such a process would include identifying, documenting, preserving, and celebrating the rich cultural heritage that exists in South Sudan as well as shared histories of liberation struggle (Almquist Knopf 2013: 35)

Similarly, Forcier Consulting (2015a: 12) cites sport, games, music and cultural activities such as traditional dance as popular unifiers which can increase social cohesion and enhance nation-building efforts. Search for Common Ground (2016a) also suggests that traditional dance, music

and sports such as football and wrestling can provide opportunities for people to gather and engage in dialogue across dividing lines.

Despite numerous references to culture as a mechanism for engaging wider communities, including youth, this review found that detailed information about these types of initiatives, and particularly their impact on youth engagement or the ways in which they are perceived by youth, remains elusive. References are mostly anecdotal, referred to in journalistic accounts, (I)NGO and academic literature in passing or mentioned by the experts contacted. In the timeframe available for this review, no detailed sources were identified which are able to shed light on the degree of trust enjoyed by arts, culture and sports-based initiatives amongst South Sudanese youth. It is, therefore, difficult to assess to what extent these are trusted by, able to reach, and effectively engage with youth.

Nevertheless, the following section details some of the key arts, cultural, theatrical and sports events which were highlighted during the course of this review:

Arts, culture and performance theatre

Ana Taban (translates as "I'm tired" in Arabic) is a group of young musicians, fashion designers and poets who are using art and culture to demand peace in South Sudan (Dahir 2016). Ana Taban holds regular open-air performances around the capital Juba and in other towns to call for peace and to educate their fellow citizens on the need for a non-violent resolution of the conflict (Campeanu 2017). Because the literature on Ana Taban is limited to anecdotal accounts and short pieces in the local and international press and other "grey literature" it is not possible to ascertain any detail on the effectiveness of the group's efforts in engaging and mobilising youth.

Likikiri Collective is a multimedia arts and education organisation located in Souq Militia, Juba. The term "Likikiri" means "stories" in Bari, a language spoken in several communities in South Sudan. According to the organisation's website, Likikiri builds on the broader South Sudanese oral tradition which is "historically a vehicle for the intergenerational transmission of social and cultural information and values". Its arts and humanities-based projects document the life, explore the cultures, and voice the concerns of South Sudanese, and seek to make connections across various sectors, including education, culture, development, and peacebuilding. Reflecting the ideas put forward by Almquist Knopf (2013) above, Likikiri Collective's founders state that: "We believe that culture plays an essential role as a resource for nation-building, and to this end, we are dedicated to working with a diverse range of cultural producers–from amateurs and students to scholars and professionals in every field–and to empowering and mentoring marginalised voices."

Some of the activities carried out by Likikiri Collective include;

1. Community oral history and memory programme, in collaboration with educational institutions, government institutions, religious associations, civil society and community-based organisations and students at all levels. Aims to recover, reflect on, record and share South Sudanese oral histories.
2. An annual theatre lab and festival called **Planting Possibilities** focused on education, public entertainment and civic engagement.
3. Intercultural dialogue workshops sponsored by UNESCO in 2017.

Participatory theatre also emerged as a popular communication medium, utilised by a number of initiatives in South Sudan:

Masraa Ta Shaab (Citizen's Theatre) is a national theatre movement for reconciliation and social change through forum theatre. Although it is difficult to measure the impact of forum theatre, this is often cited as an effective tool to complement other communication initiatives such as radio, SMS and film (see, for example, Search for Common Ground 2016a). The effectiveness of forum theatre in South Sudan is attributed to several factors, including the country's longstanding cultural tradition of storytelling, as well as the use of local language in theatre performances. Masraa Ta Shaab has, since 2012, trained over 800 secondary school students across the country in "citizen's theatre" (a South Sudanese version of Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed). Whilst the initiative is aimed at youth, performances engage the wider communities, including through corresponding radio and film production. The main issues tackled by this forum theatre initiative are peaceful co-existence and national identity, need for youth empowerment and gender inequality. Citizen Theatre trainings, performances and festivals have taken place so far in 7 of the 10 states. A case study on Masraa Ta Shaab claims that participating in forum theatre and youth group work can have a positive impact at the individual level. This initiative is building a national network of theatre groups, through its work with secondary school students and youth groups.

UNICEF and Search for Common Ground's **Communicating for Peace in South Sudan: A Social and Behaviour Change Communication Initiative** (discussed in the previous media section) involved a participatory theatre component. Actors travelled to different communities, researched the main local drivers of conflict and designed a relevant performance to be acted out interactively with community members and discussed with the audience (Forcier Consulting 2016b). In its evaluation of this initiative, Forcier Consulting (2016b) concluded that while participatory theatre was perceived as an effective method for educating people, performances faced challenges. These include delays in transportation between performance locations and tribal divisions that prevent Nuer from performing in Dinka areas and Dinkas from performing in Nuer areas. Additionally, female performers felt that their role as peace promoters in the community was diminished by the fact that they were women.

Sports events

Sports, such as wrestling, football, running and basketball, have also been cited as potential unifiers across ethnic divides (Andruga 2016; Forcier Consulting 2016b; Search for Common Ground 2016a; Almquist Knopf 2013). Forcier Consulting (2016b) suggests that sports events have two key benefits: (1) bringing together different ethnic groups and helping to build relationships between them, as well as (2) providing psychosocial benefits for people who have experienced trauma.

Along these lines, targeted sports events have been used to engage South Sudanese adolescents and youth, to provide entertainment, foster dialogue between divided communities and communicate important information. For example, in 2014, UNICEF's Peacebuilding Education and Advocacy (PBEA) partnered with the locally based NGO Sports for Hope to organise a sports tournament for 7,000 adolescents and youth in Juba from Dinka, Nuer, and Zande ethnic groups. The event was also used to disseminate information on HIV/AIDS prevention, community resilience, and peacebuilding (Forcier Consulting 2016b: 3).

Wrestling is also popular amongst South Sudanese youth. In 2016, a **Wrestling for Peace** competition for Greater Yirol was organised by Solidarity Ministries Africa for Reconciliation & Development (SMARD), supported by UNDP's Community Security and Small Arms project (UNDP 2016). This aimed to promote social cohesion and foster friendly ties between the communities. A not-for-profit organisation called **South Sudan Wrestling Entertainment** (SSWE) was founded in 2010 to engage youth from different backgrounds in reconciliation efforts through wrestling as well as promoting youth employment. Its website states that: "The game of wrestling is endowed with cultural riches and at a crucial moment in the nation's history, the time is right for the people of South Sudan to look inward and build on things that unite them rather than the differences that exist among them. Tribes in Jonglei, Lakes, Eastern Equatoria, and Central Equatoria states practice wrestling; wrestling can be a building block towards a common national identity."

According to SSWE's website, the organisation received funding from USAID in 2016, to hold a wrestling tournament. After the tournament a group of wrestlers convened to discuss cattle raiding issues in their communities, which led to the successful return of some stolen cattle.

Whilst sports and wrestling initiatives appear popular, there is little empirical evidence, despite anecdotal outcomes cited above, on what impact they ultimately have on the attitudes and behaviours of South Sudanese youth.

Civil society actors and organisations

The definition of civil society in South Sudan is diffuse. Tubiana (2014) notes civil society is generally defined as "everything between the state and the family", but excludes the business and political worlds. Importantly, as pointed out by Virk and Nganje (2015: 1) "the nature and role of civil society in South Sudan has largely been shaped by a Western narrative that equates civil society with NGOs, while tending to ignore existing institutions such as local chiefs and traditional authorities". According to Virk and Nganje (2015), there are more than 5,000 registered NGOs in South Sudan, including "briefcase NGOs" (which have been formed mainly to access donor funding).

A number of problems have been identified related to South Sudanese NGOs. According to Virk and Nganje (2015), many lack sufficient capacity, clear objectives, subject-specific knowledge and skills. Others operate without adequate funding and technical support, in part because the majority of funding tends to go to Juba-based organisations. In turn, competition for donor resources can undermine crucial collaboration between NGOs as well as distort organisational agendas. The return to conflict in 2013 has further damaged relations between South Sudanese NGOs by heightening divisions based on political and/ or ethnic affiliations, whilst different parties to the conflict have sought to co-opt NGOs. Tubiana (2014) therefore cautions against the "widely held belief that [civil society actors] are broadly pro-peace and less ethnically divided and "political" than others – but still able to influence armed actors". He notes that efforts to involve civil society in de-escalating the crisis have been fraught since community-based leaders have often expressed their support for various armed factions. It has been suggested that during the conflict between South Sudan and Khartoum, one unified agenda which made it easier for civil society to engage with, and across, communities. Following the outbreak of violence in December 2013, however, ethnic divisions have been strengthened, which makes it more difficult for civil society organisations to work across ethnic lines (Rift Valley Institute 2016a: 38). In other cases, NGOs operate in "a climate of fear, intimidation and harassment" due to the current political climate (Virk and Nganje 2015: 1).

It is widely agreed that the context in which South Sudanese NGOs operate has changed dramatically since the outbreak of conflict. Kurki (2015) highlights that the protracted civil war forces civil society organisations (CSOs) to operate in a volatile and constantly changing environment. With a lack of appropriate resources and support, it can be difficult to keep operating. Indeed, with the outbreak of conflict, many NGOs ceased operations whilst others went underground. Some have resumed activities, but others remain weak, lacking in human and structural resources.

Given the timeframe available for this review, as well as the complex landscape within which South Sudanese NGOs operate, it has not been possible to carry out a detailed survey of the role of South Sudanese NGOs in engaging with youth or the levels of trust enjoyed by these. Additionally, the majority of existing literature relates to the more traditional CSOs referred to by Virk and Nganje (2015), such as spiritual and religious leaders and organisations as well as chiefs, elders and community leaders. Whilst this does not mean that there are not CSOs – including youth and women's groups - working effectively to engage youth, the evidence on these is much more limited (see for example Reeve, who in his 2012 assessment of the South Sudanese conflict concludes that there is a need for additional research on the structures of youth organisations and leadership in different communities in South Sudan and how these might be engaged constructively in support of peace).

This section of the review therefore focuses primarily on the more traditional types of CSOs, including spiritual and religious leaders as well as community leaders, chiefs and elders.

Spiritual and religious leaders

A number of sources highlight the trusted status of spiritual and religious leaders at the community level (including Andruga 2016; Search for Common Ground 2016a; Forcier Consulting 2016b, 2015b; International Crisis Group 2014; Almquist Knopf 2013). However, with the exception of Breidlid and Arensen's (2014) work on traditional Nuer spiritual leaders, much of this literature refers to the positions of respect and trust held by churches and religious leaders more widely within communities, and evidence on the relationship between religious institutions and leaders with youth more specifically is limited. Despite this, several international organisations have included religious leaders as key stakeholders in their programmes targeting youth. This implies that there is a perception that these actors are, or have the potential to be, trusted by youth. For example, the UNICEF-Search for Common Ground initiative outlined in a previous section of this review included communication workshops for religious leaders as one of its key components (Forcier Consulting 2016b: 4).

Traditional spiritual leaders

Breidlid and Arensen (2014) note the continuing authority of traditional spiritual leaders in the Nuer community as well as their influence over youth in the White Army. The authors explain that Nuer spiritual leaders held significant roles during the civil war and post-CPA period, and several were important actors in the renewed conflict. The most influential spiritual leaders were relied on for blessings, through the sacrifice of bulls, and are perceived to protect and direct youth during fighting through visions of the future. They also helped to resolve internal disputes and were, on some occasions, key to unifying rival Nuer factions in the face of a common enemy. Because of their perceived powers they often enjoy close relations with White Army leaders and youth in general, although their influence also rises and falls according to the efficacy of their

pronouncements. Breidlid and Arensen argue that while the international community primarily engages with political and military leaders in times of crisis, spiritual leaders are too often ignored.

Religious institutions and leaders

Almquist Knopf (2013) suggests that churches are one of the few platforms in South Sudan which can create social bonds and networks across social divides. She notes that churches are trusted because of their historical role in the country's conflicts. For example, during the war, mission-run boarding schools provided one of the only civilian platforms for building social networks. Leaders of the 12 main churches represent more than 60% of the population. Because churches have been perceived as a credible, independent voice, they have been able to facilitate engagement across ethnic divisions.

Forcier Consulting (2016b) highlights that the key role of religion in South Sudanese society means that churches, mosques, and other religious gathering points can be important neutral meeting places in communities. This is supported by Search for Common Ground (2016a), who suggests that churches are spaces where people from diverse backgrounds can gather and engage in dialogue across dividing lines. Religious gatherings are often used to pass messages and information to community members. A 2015 survey by Forcier Consulting finds that 26% of respondents in the study reported receiving their news and information from religious leaders. They are particularly trusted by individuals who do not access radio or other media (2015b: 3).

Reeve (2012) also suggests that Christianity is one of the more unifying aspects of South Sudanese identity, in part because church congregations are often ethnically mixed. However, his research also found emerging divisions between senior churchmen and the newer grassroots clergy members. Additionally, coordination between the churches, government and traditional leaders remains weak. Reeve also identified Islamic leaders as important intermediaries, especially in cities and northern states, and potentially with Sudanese communities north of the border.

Breidlid and Stensland (2011) attribute trust in churches and church leaders to the fact that these were often among the few actors that stayed and suffered with the local populations during the civil war. Because of this, they were often effective in bridging intercommunal differences. The authors argue that the role of the churches has diminished more recently due to both internal and external causes, including a problematic merger between the New Sudan Council of Churches (NSCC) and the Sudan Council of Churches (SCC). Financial mismanagement in the SCC has also impacted on perceptions of the church. Despite this, churches remain present in rural communities, and possess high degrees of indigenous knowledge and local legitimacy, which makes them well-suited to play an active role in grassroots peacebuilding. Since women are already active members in their congregations, churches also provide an important arena for strengthening the position of women in local peacebuilding.

Nevertheless, Breidlid and Stensland also identify several factors which can undermine trust in churches or weaken their capacity to operate effectively, including corruption, nepotism and ethnic politics. Following the CPA, some church organisations became fragmented. Others began to focus on internal organisation-specific interests, rather than ecumenical cooperation, weakening cohesion across denominations. The brain-drain phenomenon has also weakened the capacity of many local churches.

Community leaders, chiefs and elders

Forcier Consulting (2015a and 2016b) notes that community leaders and chiefs are often trusted to promote peace at the local level. Of the respondents in Forcier's 2015a study, over half stated that they would choose to consult with community leaders or elders to resolve intra-communal or inter-tribal conflict. Community chiefs are considered credible sources of information, and are responsible for implementing customary and traditional law. Search for Common Ground (2016a) also find that community leaders and elders are perceived as critical in shaping the overall attitudes and behaviours of community members and establishing societal norms.

Almquist Knopf (2013) writes that many South Sudanese hold higher levels of respect and confidence in their tribal leaders than in political officials. In some cases, this has created tension between the new state and traditional authorities. She also notes that in some places, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army's (SPLM/A) appointment of civil/military administrators to supervise tribal chiefs in liberated areas disrupted traditional processes and militarised the chieftaincy structures. In others, however, it helped to reduce violence. Nevertheless, Almquist Knopf points out that this practice has eroded the connection between citizens and their leaders by making chiefs accountable to a different set of interests (i.e., the SPLM/A) than those of citizens.

Santschi (2012) argues that chiefs are significant stakeholders at the local level, because of their ability to mobilise community members for local projects and campaigns, mediate disputes as well as administer customary law. She notes, however, that their influence has diminished since the war began and that their role remains contested. Considered by some as apolitical representatives of community interests, others have been implicated in their relationships to government institutions, co-opted by colonial and post-colonial powers, manipulated by the national elite and/ or acted in their own interests. Santschi suggests that further research is needed to gain insights into the relations between chiefs, communities, and local government institutions.

Others have also acknowledged the contested roles of local chiefs, highlighting that this can result in specifically intergenerational tensions. Reeve (2012: 55) suggests that the authority of traditional leaders is often contested by the youth. He argues that traditional leadership declined during the war due to their politicisation by armed factions or co-option by occupying military forces, which can also be linked to the escalation in cultures of violence among young men since the war. He reflects that "it is uncertain whether this authority can be re-established" (ibid).

Willems and Rouw (2011) also suggest that the influence commanded by traditional leaders has declined in more recent years, although to varying degrees in different parts of South Sudan. Local contexts are key to understanding the relationships between chiefs and youth.

The declining respect of chiefs and traditional leaders, including amongst youth, is widely acknowledged by chiefs who took part in a meeting to discuss the role of chiefs and elders in peace and conflict (Rift Valley Institute 2016b).

Ensor (2013a) examines the impact of the two million returnees to South Sudan since 2005. Her study focuses on the role played by the return of displaced youth and the intergenerational tensions that have emerged as a result. These are often due to displaced youths' aspirations to a "modern" – often meaning urban – way of life perceived as incompatible with traditional livelihoods and social relations. For the youngest generations, the terms "return" and "reintegration" can be misnomers, as they are settling in the land of their elders for the first time,

often adopting unaccustomed lifestyles which do not often meet their expectations. Many returnees resettle in urban locations, either because they lack the skills necessary to work as farmers after years of living in northern cities or refugee camps, or because they lack interest in returning to an agro-pastoralist lifestyle – or, in the case of children and youth, who were born and raised in cities and towns, have never actually done so. The author argues that intergenerational differences regarding reintegration needs and aspirations are still largely unexamined and insufficiently understood.

Customary courts can also provide some relevant insights into chief and elder relationships with youth on a local level. Ibreck and Pendle (2016) examine customary chief's courts at PoC sites in South Sudan. Although the UN civilian police service (UNPOL) was responsible for policing within the PoCs, its capacity to do so was dwarfed by the scale and nature of the task. Because of this, PoC residents turned to customary authority. While chiefs' courts are often the only functioning justice mechanism at community level, chiefs have been found to yield both "structural benefits" and "harms". That is, whilst some chiefs can effectively manage conflict and pursue legitimate justice, others have been implicated in perpetuating norms that reproduce gender and generational inequalities. Reflecting findings in other studies of customary justice, court decisions can reproduce inequalities between elders and youth and, in particular, the power of families and communities over women. Ibreck and Pendle suggest that rather than classifying authorities, chiefs, church leaders or militia groups along a spectrum, contradictions and changes which create evolving relations between authorities and citizens should be anticipated and examined.

Youth leaders and youth groups

From the limited evidence identified in the time allocated for this review, it is unclear to what extent youth leaders and organisations are engaging with, and trusted by, youth across South Sudan to serve as their representatives and/ or serve as trusted sources of information. This is supported by Reeve's (2012) research, which suggests that there is a lack of detailed and reliable data on the structures of youth organisations and leadership in South Sudanese communities, including how they might be engaged constructively in the peace process. The relevant evidence that was identified tended to be somewhat dated, indicating that there is less available data from the years following the outbreak of the most recent conflict. As noted earlier in this review, the conflict has significantly altered the landscape in which CSOs and NGOs operate, and this is likely also the case for youth organisations.

Sommers and Schwartz (2011) note that youth groups were instrumental in the 2011 independence referendum campaign. The authors observe that, since then, "most youth groups generally appear to be withering from decreasing support and either underemphasising or overlooking the issues facing South Sudan's massive, undereducated youth majority" (2011: 12). Youth representatives from different states, who also sit on the Youth Parliament, have been cited as possible influencers. Research by Sommers and Schwartz found, however, that "the Youth Parliament is essentially inoperative and mostly unknown". The authors also emphasise what they term "the elite youth factor". They highlight that while the majority of youth in South Sudan are undereducated and poor, a small influential group of educated elite youth are located in Juba and the state capitals. Some of these elite youth have gained employment with national and international NGOs and government. They also comprise South Sudan's "recognised civil society organisations". Despite this, they often articulate a different set of priorities from their

poorer, non-elite and rural counterparts and it is therefore questionable to what extent they are representative of, or trusted by, South Sudanese youth more widely.

Taflinski (2012) notes that youth are involved in various capacities and at various levels (at local, state, regional and national). This involvement is organised very differently from state to state. He finds that:

- In most states, state-wide youth umbrella associations were identified that link county-level youth organisations (e.g. Lakes State Youth Union). Yet, some states did not possess such structures. In other cases, these were politicised during the 2010 elections by the SPLM, which resulted in the cessation of activities by the association (e.g. in Western Bahr el Ghazal). Additionally, in Jonglei State county-level youth associations maintained liaison offices in the state capitals, representing the county youth at state-level but also liaising closely with other youth associations (e.g. with umbrella structures), a coordination mechanism not found in other states.

- In some states active CSOs were identified that focused on youth (e.g. Eastern Equatoria and Western Equatoria States). These also exhibited context-specific traits. For example, In Western Equatoria State, a CSO was found that was headed by an individual active with the Arrow Boys. In other states, there was little organisation in terms of youth CSOs and youth associations, although the governor had a dedicated youth advisor (e.g. Western Bahr el Ghazal).

- Youth structures linked to religious groups were also identified. Churches (including Catholic, Episcopal and Pentecostal) often ran youth groups. In addition, in some states the Islamic Councils (e.g. Western Bahr el Ghazal and Upper Nile State) also ran youth activities.

- Taflinski identified student-organised unions in several states. Student associations also existed in states without universities. At times these were structured along tribal lines.

- In other states, scout groups were identified. Their aims varied greatly and there were salient differences from one group to another.

- On a more regional and national level, organisation of youth also varied greatly: The Bahr el Ghazal area has recently witnessed the creation of the "Greater Bahr el Ghazal Youth Association" following the Bahr el Ghazal Youth Conference on 24-27 November 2011 in Aweil, Northern Bahr el Ghazal. There have been reports and claims that the other regions (Equatoria and Upper Nile) might follow suit.

- In addition, diverse organisations also sought to unify youth at national level: The organisation GEBU is working on fostering links between regional youth, and the Youth Parliament in Juba is also drawing in youth from across South Sudan. An additional noteworthy finding concerns youth activity in Juba: the team identified youth who are following the proceedings in the National Assembly as youth observers.

- Youth were also involved in traditional society, particular amongst some South Sudanese tribes: the Monyemiji in some Eastern Equatorian tribes (e.g. Lopit and Lotuko), held the particular assignment of protecting the communities. The Monyemiji were the ruling youth age groups in their communities and their primary role was to provide security, look into livelihood issues (for instance in times of drought), consult and petition the rain maker, and handle all social issues of their communities. These were often grouped by age. In some communities the ruling period of Monyemiji was between 20 to 23 years while other communities had a specific term limit of 12 years before yet another group was initiated.

Monyemiji from one village were developing a network with other neighbouring villages as a way to bolster the security situation in that locality, while in other tribes youth were responsible of keeping the cattle.

Taflinski's research does not indicate to what extent these various youth representatives and organisations are, or are not, trusted by youth. It is also unclear to what extent these identified groupings still exist following the most recent outbreak of conflict.

Women's groups

While this review came across references to women's groups as community influencers (for example, Andruga 2016), it was not possible to identify reliable evidence of these. It is possible that women's groups suffer the same challenges as youth organisations in the current civil society landscape in South Sudan. Furthermore, there are additional challenges for women, despite being key stakeholders that hamper their meaningful participation in the resolution of the South Sudanese conflict (Chugtai 2016). Pervasive gender inequality may also shape their involvement. Relatedly, these groups may also find it more difficult to access support and resources. Case (2016: 4) notes that although "women's networks arose immediately after the conflict erupted and have been working for peace since […] their sustained engagement requires dedicated funding from the donor community." Search for Common Ground (2016a) notes that community actors are often involved in conflict in different ways and that influences are likely to shift from private to public spheres; between open and hidden influencers. They note that while elders may be more visibly involved, for example, women may be working more behind the scenes. This may contribute to the challenges identifying evidence of their influence amongst youth. Examples this review came across were largely anecdotal. For example, Fordham (2012) notes that women often possess information on the ground, since they are at home and know what is going on. Yet, often they have not been empowered to use their knowledge. She describes the role of a group of South Sudanese women on a non-violent peace force team on the outskirts of Juba, noting that "for many of these women, their participation in the teams is the first time they have had an active, recognised role in this kind of group." She goes on to cite some examples of successes these women achieved mediating amongst men, including youth, within the community. Nevertheless, wider credible evidence of the role of women as influencers of youth remains elusive.

Police

Democratic policing is still weak in South Sudan, where local police forces often operate in paramilitary style (Small Arms Survey 2017). Jok (2013: 1) refers to the "very negative public image" suffered by the South Sudanese National Police Service (SSNPS), related to incidents of drinking on the job, engaging in corruption or extorting money from the public. The need to build trust between communities and police is widely acknowledged and evident in the emphasis on community-based approaches to policing initiatives. Attitudes towards, and trust in, local police are mixed in many communities.

The examination by Willems and Rouw (2011) of the local security context in Jonglei, Western Equatoria State and Eastern Equatoria State, including roles and perceptions of police, can shed some light on some of the challenges that undermine community members' trust in the police. The authors note that in their research areas, most of the police consisted of former SPLA soldiers who are too old to fight, and with aged senior personnel "retired" from the SPLA in the

command of the South Sudan Police Service (SSPS), junior recruits with training are restricted in their work. Furthermore, the police remained poorly trained, underequipped, and most police can be found at headquarters rather than at payam and boma administrative levels. The authors found that perceptions of police are mixed. For example, many communities saw the logic in reporting their security issues to the police, but they also recognise the inherent limitations of an underequipped and small police force. In addition to lack of capacity, lack of trust is created by the high median age of the police forces. Another component adding to frustration with the police is when "the police are from the same tribe as the raiders, they will have contact with them and do not come until the raiders are gone" (2011: 23). These insights correspond with survey findings indicating that "although most people surveyed say they would report insecurities to the police, many remain unconvinced of the capacity and efficacy of the police" (2011: 23).

Saferworld's work on community-based approaches to policing in South Sudan also reveal mixed perceptions of police. Whilst community members consider the police as the primary security provider in their communities, they also recognise their shortcomings (Daley 2015). As a part of its community-based approaches to policing, Saferworld advocates for female police offers to be based at local police stations. In some of these cases, female police officers have begun to play an important role in working with youth to prevent them from becoming involved in violence and crime (Brethfeld 2015). It was not possible, however, to identify more detailed information about this Saferworld initiative or its outcomes.

6. Knowledge gaps and further research

Given the patchy nature of the evidence in South Sudan, scarcity of academic literature on South Sudanese youth, and the complexity of the issues, this section provides a small selection of key knowledge gaps and ideas for further research. However, these suggestions are not comprehensive. Over the past few years, significant progress has been made in the collection of data on South Sudan. However, in general there is limited rigorous evidence of how people live in contexts of conflict: what choices people make, and how institutional arrangements impact on and are affected by these decisions (Justino et al, 2013). It is also important to recognise that South Sudan's social, economic and political context has been and is still changing very rapidly.

Taking into account the limitations of working in a conflict-affected country, where possible, future research and analysis of youth in South Sudan needs to be more in-depth, longer-term, empirical, and evidence-based. Prominent issues vary widely from state to state and from county to county, as do the livelihood options available and interest groups, local context is hence key. Moreover, further research needs to take into account the types of youth studied (i.e. rural vs urban, younger (under 18) vs older (18+), IDPs vs settled, ethnicities etc.) and the geographical extent covered (i.e. having a more even spread, focusing on less studied areas of South Sudan away from Juba and Central Equatoria (whilst not disregarding these completely), looking at both rural and urban areas within states/counties). The following suggestions are some of the broad thematic areas that could be looked at further, but these are is not exhaustive:

- More in-depth research that focuses specifically on youth livelihoods in South Sudan, looking at the types of employment young men are being employed in (e.g. non-waged work in the informal sector, working in the agricultural sector, formal sector, entrepreneurship etc., especially in rural areas).

- There is a need for critical research into how young people deal with unemployment and navigate opportunities in the informal sector, and how this might relate to other forms of social and political action (Oosterom, 2016).

- Aspirations and long-term prospects of returning youth migrants is another area for further research.

- More in-depth understanding of the motivations and mechanisms of youth who do not engage in conflict or who deal with conflict in a non-violent manner, bearing in mind that this is the majority of South Sudanese youth (especially focusing on youths who have lived through war as civilians or rural youth in general).

- More nuanced and in-depth understanding of the complex and varied motivations and drivers for (some) youth to engage in violence, especially on a micro-level (see Justino et al, 2014) (e.g. a better understanding of the many motivations behind cattle raiding, such as the influence of dowry payments, community pressures, social norms and wealth accumulation etc.).

- More detailed information on the role (and presence) of civil society in youth's lives in different communities (especially youth groups and women's groups), and the level of engagement and trust youth have in religious institutions and traditional community leaders.

- More nuanced and in-depth research into the degree of trust enjoyed by arts, culture and sports-based initiatives amongst South Sudanese youth, and the impact of these on youth engagement.

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Key websites

- Pulse of South Sudan http://www.thepulseofsouthsudan.com/
- South Sudan Peace Portal https://www.southsudanpeaceportal.com/

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