



Annual Narrative Report 2022

Building Sustainable Peace and Gender Equality in South Sudan



Development Cooperation
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands

List of Acronyms

AU	African Union
CBOs	Community Based Organizations
CoC	Champions of Change
CS(O)	Civil Society Organizations
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
CYPP	Children and Young People's Parliament
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration
GBV	Gender-based Violence
GE&I	Gender Equality & Inclusion
GYW	Girls and Young Women
HRD	Human Right Defender
IDP	Internally Displaced People
L&A	Lobby & Advocacy
LoP	Leaders of Peace
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MHPSS	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MP	Members of Parliament
NAP1325	National Action Plan 1325
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
PCCA	People's Coalition for Civic Action
PFP	Psychosocial Focal Point
PME&L	Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
PSEAH	Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment
R-ARCSS	Revitalized Agreement on The Resolution of The Conflict in South Sudan
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
RMM	Resource Mapping and Mobilization
RTGoNU	Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity
R-TNLA	Revitalized Transitional National Legislative Assembly
SEAH	Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment
SC	Steering Committee
SCS	Strengthening Civil Society
(S)GVB	Sexual and Gender-based Violence
SRF	Special Reconstruction Funds
ToC	Theory of Change
UNSCR1325	UN Security Council Resolution 1325
UNMISS	United Nations Mission in South Sudan
W/G/Y	Women & Girls & Youth
WPS	Women, Peace and Security
WRGE	Power of Voices Women's Rights and Gender Equality
WRO	Women Rights Organization

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1. Introduction

The Leaders of Peace (LoP) consortium is a 5-year joint programme (2021-2025) implemented by Assistance Mission for Africa (AMA), EVE, HealthNet TPO (HNTPO), PAX and Plan International and is funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The programme is implemented in 5 states located in South Sudan: Unity, Lakes, Western Equatoria, Eastern Equatoria and Central Equatoria.

2022 is the second year in which Leaders of Peace implements its strategies with the aim of contributing to a more empowering and inclusive environment, where women and girls (W/G) feel safer and better enabled to realize their rights, to play an influential role towards conflict prevention and sustainable peace.

The LoP Consortium is led by Plan International Netherlands and is implemented in strategic partnership with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs under the Strengthening Civil Society framework (Women Peace Security grant instrument). The Women, Peace and Security grant instrument is one of the grant instruments through which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs contributes to the implementation of the UN Security Council resolution 1325. The Netherlands has translated the Women, Peace Security theme into the Dutch National Action Plan (NAP)1325.

LoP prioritizes 3 key strategies in achieving success in three result areas:

- capacity building and resources
- influencing attitudes and beliefs on gender equality
- influencing laws and policies supporting Women, Peace & Security agenda

This annual report covers the period January - December 2022 and demonstrates the added value of working in a consortium as it reflects not only on the context Leaders of Peace is operating, it is also able to show some changes due to LoP's interventions in the difficult context of South Sudan. Progress is described per result area of the Theory of Change and signs and outcomes shown as noticed during implementation and outcome harvesting analysis. In the realization of outputs, the deviation from targets and explanation is given. Furthermore, this annual report reflects on the learning agenda, and the cross-cutting issues that include gender, youth, climate, and integrity and Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEAH). It closes with a reflection on the sustainability and partnership.

The result framework and risk assessment are included as an annex to the report. The result framework is indicating the actual results for 2022 versus the programme indicators and basket indicators.

2. Context Reflection

Political context and civic space

Although South Sudan signed the Revitalized Agreement for Resolution of Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS) on February 22nd 2018, the two parties were not able to fully implement the agreement. In order to implement the transitional security arrangements for a single joint command structure, a total of 52,000 men and women were graduated on August 30th 2022. However, the deployment of the forces to the regular forces and other bodies responsible for national security is not yet done. Other outstanding issues include the constitution-making process, establishment of the National Constitutional Review Commission, the Constitutional Drafting Committee, the Anti-Corruption Commission and the Audit Chamber. The roadmap has set the above critical issues that must be completed before the country goes to the elections.

On the 4th of August, all signatories to the R-ARCSS agreed to a roadmap extending the transitional period by 24 months set to end in February 2024. This will enable the implementation of its key outstanding tasks that includes the unification of forces and their redeployment, drafting the permanent constitution, and the electoral process. However, the extension was opposed by some non-signatory and has caused mixed feelings amongst the civil society groups.

There was a disagreement between the political parties on the formation of various specialized committees in the revitalized National Legislative Assembly particularly on the structure and composition of the committees. This resulted to delay of programme advocacy initiatives focused on legislative oversight and prolonged the passage of critical legislation.

In August 2022, first Lieutenant General Simon Gatwech Dual declared himself interim chairman and split out from the SPLM/IO. This led to increased tensions and conflict between armed factions in Upper Nile State and resulted in thousands of people being displaced.

Some parts of the country continue to experience insecurity and violence driven by clashes between government forces, opposition-aligned forces, and other non-signatory armed groups in community. This disrupted livelihoods and trade and contributed to an increase in humanitarian needs in 2022. As a result, access to justice and the rule of law are limited. The vulnerable groups of the situation are mainly women, girls, young and old people. Women and girls go through rape cases at the water points, flooded areas while crossing, latrines and firewood gathering sites. This resulted to the deterioration of their physical and mental well-being and living standards with increased rates of suicide reported in 2022.

At the project locations in Eastern Equatoria State (EES), the graduation of unified forces shows sign of peace among the warring parties as they are now under one command at their current location awaiting deployment. The project location in Mugali was affected with conflicts between cattle keepers and cattle raiders from April to October and resulted the displacement of

communities to Nimule and the camps. A total of 7 farmers and 35 cattle keepers lost their lives during the conflict. As of now, some community members in Nimule and the refugees camp have started to return to Mugali and are putting new structures/shelters. Protection of women and girls remain a challenge as there is no police post in Mugali. Mobility between Nimule, Opari, Kerepi along Juba and Torit has improved because of the new road.

EES government launched the 3-year strategic plan for (2022 to 2024). In early December the state assembly established the women's parliamentary caucus with the goal to discuss and put forward important issues affecting women in the state.

In Western Equatoria State (WES), violence broke out between government forces, SPLA/IO forces and community militias, resulting in killings of civilians in Western Equatoria State at Tambura in June. The violence resulted into a displacement of approximately 80,000 civilians, that hampered humanitarian assistance. The State also installed the King of Azenda on the 9th of February for the first time in more than 100 years after the death of King Gbudue in 1905. The king is a symbol of peace and war in Western Equatoria. In October, the governor of WES suspended the regular council of ministers meeting indefinitely and banned the ministers from having side meetings. This resulted into a tension between the governor and his deputy. The ministers on the other hand boycotted cabinet meetings. As a result, the governor and his deputy were called by the presidency to Juba to resolve the issue. The feud between the two caused insecurity in Yambio our project location.

In Central Equatoria State (CES), the governor replaced the male Minister of Gender, Child and Social Welfare, Mr. Bullen Amos Soro with a female Minister Hon. Huda Micah Laila. These changes have improved a lot of work in the Ministry indicating the importance of women in the Ministry and at decision making levels. The State also have undergone intercommunal violence between cattle herders and farmers around Lirya Payam during the year that caused many deaths and displacement from their villages.

In Unity and Lakes States, the year 2022 was politically generally calm with all the leadership vacuums in the local government structure being filled resulting in restoration of order in the states. This made it easy for the CBOs to advocate for increased implementation of GBV laws, promotion of human rights, gender equality and the WPS agenda.

In October 2022, under Women, Peace and Security (WPS), the UN Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Pramila Patten, visited South Sudan, where she held meetings with key government stakeholders as well as civil society groups and survivors of sexual violence. This visit provided a platform for survivors and organizations working on conflict related sexual violence to speak directly to policy makers on the challenges facing them. It also provided the opportunity to reiterate the need for protection, care and justice for survivors of gender-based violence and conflict related sexual violence. The visit reinforced LOP's consortia members' call to policymakers for attention to ending gender-based violence.

Changes in the enabling environment for Civil Society L&A

South Sudan continues to face shrinking space for civil society engagement in different political spaces and forums. In August 2022, 6 individuals plus Ding Magot, a freelance journalist covering the protests, were arrested in a market in Juba for peacefully protesting against the worsening economic situation. A lawyer who spoke to Human Rights Watch said she was unlawfully detained for eight days in Malakia police station without charge. Between April to June 2022, at least 188 incidents of violence were recorded.

The environment in which citizens can organize and participate in governance has remained hostile. But the civil society actors and human rights defenders continued to advocate for the respect of these fundamental freedoms. They requested the government to amend the National Security Service Act, which grants the National Security Service unchecked powers to arrest or detain suspects, human rights defenders etc. This call was made during a high-level panel discussion organized by the South Sudan Human Rights Defenders Network to strengthen dialogue between government stakeholders and civil society groups on the promotion of human rights. The civic space in South Sudan continues to shrink also due to bureaucracy and conditions for clearance and obtaining permits including interrogation of CSO personnel at the local level during movement and delivery of aid. The government has been asked to pass into law, international conventions such as the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Optional Protocol, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Protocol to The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol), and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Women's groups, and national and international organizations, including Leaders of Peace Project, have been lobbying and advocating for these international conventions to be signed into law.

Consortium partner PAX, leading on L&A, managed to find creative ways in the light of this shrinking civic space to continue pushing for the priorities by direct engagement with key policy makers and building allies across different stakeholder groups. The continued support of the donor and international community through releasing statements on the need to protect the civic space, supporting civil society activists by providing platforms for bilateral engagement, and continued financial investment in programs that promote civic engagement, helped and will help mitigate the effects of this shrinking space.

Protecting civic space is vital to the health, stability, and success of societies because it is only within an open civic space that people are free to share opinions, strongly debate ideas and hold those in power to account.

Economic context and COVID-19

The economic context in the Country remains fluid as South Sudanese pound continuous to be unstable and depreciate against the dollar (1 dollar/651-680 South Sudanese pounds). As a result, the commodity prices remain high in the markets. This attributed with the Russia-Ukraine conflict

which posed another significant threat to the global economy. Due to this, South Sudan witnessed an unprecedented economic meltdown and exacerbated by crippling hyperinflation. The situation has rendered millions of citizens hopeless, with aid agencies anticipating that over 7 million people could face severe food shortages and starvation.

On the other hand, the Authority issued a circular effective in August and revised the exchange rate used for customs valuations from 45 South Sudanese pounds to the dollar to 90 South Sudanese pounds to the dollar, this adjustment implied a 100 per cent increase in taxes and levies imposed on imports and exports, effective in August 2022. This also contributed to the skyrocketing of the prices in the markets.

In the same year the US dollar gained more value than the Euro which resulted into losses during exchange as the projects budget is in Euro. The increment in prices of commodities together with the inflation affected project implementation negatively as the transport costs and other costs increased while the budget decreased due to the conversion losses. To counter this, the 2023 targets for some activities were reduced to fit the budget.

Due to climate change, frequent droughts, floods and locust invasions resulted to lower agricultural productivity and worsened food insecurity. Scarcity of water and on the other hand floodings have aggravated intercommunal conflicts between pastoralists and crop farmers. Climate change-induced natural disasters and inter-communal clashes have triggered internal displacements and socioeconomic deprivation for the most vulnerable. These have also increased the incidence of infectious diseases in an already weakened national health system, with diarrhea and malaria among the top five causes of deaths, according to the Second Nationally Determined Contribution (SNDC) Report of 2022. This has worsened the humanitarian situation and in particular the needs of women and children in flood-affected areas such as Nyal and Ganyliel payams in Unity state. This economic situation has changed survival strategies and coping mechanisms in all the LOP program areas. The World Bank projected gross domestic product (GDP) growth of 1.2 per cent in 2022.

In general, the year 2022 witnessed significant reduction in the number of COVID-19 infections. The measures to contain the spread of coronavirus disease were relaxed and the opening of borders has allowed social economic activities as well as program activities to be implemented across the program locations. With the national vaccination campaign programme introduced by the government, many South Sudanese got vaccinated at a rate of 22% as of December 2022. More communities are getting vaccinated through sustained efforts by government and partners, and this is an important step to stop the spread of corona virus disease.

The spill over impact of COVID -19 continued to affect the social and gender dynamics in the project locations. Women and girls still face increased care demand within their families, leading to increased stress levels and poor (mental) health outcomes due to lack of balance in the distribution of care responsibilities and household tasks.

In the programme areas the SOP for covid-19 as part of interventions continued, providing protective gears such as covid-19 messages, hand sanitizers, hand washing facility in the offices and facemasks for staff to prevent/minimize covid-19 infection while conducting activities in schools and community. In public places such as banks, hospitals and churches it was still mandatory to use face masks and regular hand washing.

Socio-cultural context

The country has shown recognition of women through appointing some to key positions, including Ministry of Defence, Speaker of the parliament, the Vice President for the Youth and Gender cluster and the governor of WBG State. However, still more needs to be done to address the harmful gender norms to change cultural beliefs and attitudes towards women in political spaces and ending violence against women and girls.

Also, self-sufficiency and survival strategies are changing as local customs and cultural beliefs of the various south Sudanese communities are being eroded by the combination of constant insecurity, intercommunal violence, reliance on cattle, and a declining cattle population, these survival strategies can no longer be deployed with success. Due to displacements and diminishing number of cattle, affected groups especially women and girls face even greater difficulty in surviving on their own, if insecurity and floods continue. Therefore, the intercommunal conflict and continuous circle of violence has exposed communities and denied access to services for those affected population. Hence affected timely implementation of program activities.

LoP's L&A technical lead partner PAX is focusing to advocate on passing more gender-sensitive laws and policies. The power imbalance between men and women, boys and girls due to cultural norms and practices often results into domestic violence. Key to this strategy is bringing all the necessary stakeholders and policy makers together to address harmful socio-cultural norms through passage of protective laws and policies like the Family Law and Anti-GBV Bill.

In the project location for AMA, in 2022 there were cases of cattle raids mostly in Ganyliel and Yirol East. However, this was less frequent compared to the year 2021. In most cases the local authority succeeded in recovering the raided cattle and returning them to their rightful owners. Cases of revenge killing also declined in the past year compared to 2021. This can be attributed to the general calmness as a result of filling of the power gaps in the local government structure which were existed in 2021. This had a positive impact on the project implementation as the security situation was good throughout the year. On the other hand, there were high cases of child marriage and forced marriage for bride wealth. This could be as a result of the economic hardship that was caused by the inflation.

The issue of forced marriage and child marriage did not have a major impact on implementation as most of the cases reported were forwarded to the ABC courts for litigation and the victims were counselled by the Psychosocial Focal Persons (PFP).

In EES, there are signs of changes within the community, especially women are more participating in decision making, meetings, events and leadership as well, although with low percentage due to influence of their culture and men that are not pleased to expose their wife to public places. Changing cultural norms is a gradual process, takes time and requires necessary engagement of power holders.

Gender dynamics

Gender stereotypes are dominant in almost all classes and social groups in South Sudan. In general, negative attitudes towards gender equality are still evident and acceptance of violence against women, was found in Terekeka, Torit, Yirol and in Ganyiel and in most parts for South Sudan. Long-standing discriminatory practices, such as forced and/or early marriage, polygamy, and bride price, which is the custom of paying the bride's family, often in the form of cows, to marry a girl have created an environment where violence against women and girls is common and accepted. Due to continuous conflicts, many men have lost their cows, men will rape or abduct women as wives because they cannot afford to pay for one. Many families marry off daughters at early ages of 14 or 15 in exchange for cows to regain the wealth lost during conflict. This has increased cattle raiding to maintain economic stability. At the center of this issue is the concept of looking at the daughter as an economic commodity.

Historically within the South Sudanese society, the role of women in the family relates to reproductive ability and women are placed in a passive position for most family and community decisions. Women's participation in society and changes in traditional roles are shifting now through generational change. Women participating in the project are increasingly beginning to claim their rights. Men and boys participating in the male engagement groups in the project start to recognize the importance of gender equality, with younger men becoming agents of change and promoters of women's rights.

In Yirol East the peace committees revised their leadership structure out of the three executive officials of the committee one is a woman. The young people now comply with women members of the peace committees which was not the case before. The male allies from the male engagement group have also started to change some of the community norms and are promoting gender equality. This was proved during 16 Days of activism where women groups, peace committees, youth groups, the police and prison staff, the ABC court chiefs, Champions of Change boys and girls and the male engagement group all joined hands in conducting joint advocacy. This was a clear indicator that boys, girls, women and men are working together as equal partners towards promotion of the WPS agenda.

In the operation locations of EVE gender relations are complex, the roles and responsibilities of women, men, boys and girls are clearly delineated but can and do alter. Women and girls have responsibilities for farming, collecting water and firewood, cooking, cleaning, childcare, and brewing beer. Men and boys have responsibilities are decision making for the communities and their families, cattle (boys in particular tend to be cattle-herders), hunting, fishing and charcoal

making. Eve organization is taking mitigating solutions in the programme regarding gender, and we have observed that attitude is changing slowly in the areas of LoP activities.

In Terekeka, HNTPO created synergies with other projects such as Health Pooled Fund (HPF) to ensure and prioritize capacity building to address women's and girls' needs in health, education, and leadership through Health Facilities Management Committees (HFMC). The introduction of HFMC has provided a platform for women and girls to acquire the power to exercise their rights and fulfil their potential as equal members of society. For example, out of the 20 HFMCs 4 of the HFMCs are headed by a female and 16 of the HFMC have females as co-chairs. This has empowered women and young girls to make decisions free of coercion at the individual, family, community, and societal levels. Through HPF and LOP projects collaboration in Terekeka, women's rights have been advocated for through the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) activities. At the national level the gender dynamic has remained relatively the same. However, through other PAX led project interventions like the Dutch MOFA supported Power of Voices program and the German supported IFA project, women parliamentarians have been trained on political participation and public speaking increasing their confidence as leaders. These women parliamentarians have had their capacity strengthened and are currently lobbying under the LOP project for policy reviews and implementation of laws.

In the project locations of Plan, gender inequality is persisting in communities, such as men own land while women don't, men own children, wives don't, most leadership positions were taken by men, especially community leaders and chiefs. During the reporting period, GBV such as rape, early and forced marriage including domestic violence in the community is witnessed still. However, the establishment of CYPP's and enrolment of CoC programs in schools create safe spaces for young girls/ women to interact freely with their fellow boys and men. The dialogue sessions on gender equality moved some men and boys to show solidarity with their sisters and other young women. All those clubs and platforms were of added value and challenged mind set of men in issues of leadership and power imbalance.

Changes within the LoP consortium

In 2022, two key HNTPO program staff left the organization: The country director resigned in August and his replacement was in October. This did not affect the affairs of the organization as well as LOP consortium. The advocacy and communication officer left at the end of August and was replaced in November. This has delayed programme implementation in a minor way. Moreover, with AMA, the gender manager left in October and was replaced with someone who is totally new to the project. The development of the Men Engage strategy was hampered already because of time and capacity issues internally.

Because not all consortium partners have a continuous presence in all targeted locations, EVE withdrew implementation in Nimule as the target group appeared to be the same as Plan International's target group in this area. The establishment of permanent presence of EVE in Torit is guaranteed as Plan will be hosting EVE in its office. As EVE has no permanent presence

in Yambio, sub-granted CBOs will be capacitated to monitor and raise funds locally to continue implementation. Safety and support for trained focal persons of LoP is realised by adhering to the Just Future programme that EVE additionally implements in Yambio. The changes in this situation will be monitored closely. In case it does not work out to be successful, an exit strategy will be developed.

3. Theory of Change and progress of the programme

The Leaders of Peace programme aims to achieve a more empowering and inclusive environment in South-Sudan, where women and girls feel safer and better enabled to realize their rights, so they can play an influential role towards conflict prevention and sustainable peace. To achieve this a gender transformative multifaceted human rights-based approach is needed. Consequently, the overall strategic objective of Leaders of Peace contributes to SDG5 and UNSCR1325:

A more empowering and inclusive environment in South-Sudan, where W/G feel safer and better enabled to realise their rights, so they can play an influential role towards conflict prevention and sustainable peace.

To achieve the overall strategic objective, three result areas have been developed, closely aligned to the three previously mentioned WPS grant instrument sub-objectives:

1. Improved implementation of policies and regulations on GBV and protection of W/G including psycho-social support and self-care,
2. Changed attitudes and beliefs of civil society (CS) to facilitate inclusion of W/G and promote gender equality (GE),
3. Increased and effective participation of W/Y in leadership and peacebuilding.

The three result areas are mutually reinforcing each other: Improving knowledge/uptake of GBV/protection policies/regulations deters harmful gender norms; this is necessary to ensure that W/G equally participate. Equal participation of W/G in leadership and peacebuilding is key to sustainable /inclusive peace processes, and to protecting marginalized groups during (post-) conflict situations. The Gender Transformative Approach is interwoven in all strategies and activities, as addressing root causes such as gender discriminatory norms and the engagement of boys and men as agents of change are key to achieve gender equality and equal participation of girls and women in the peace process.

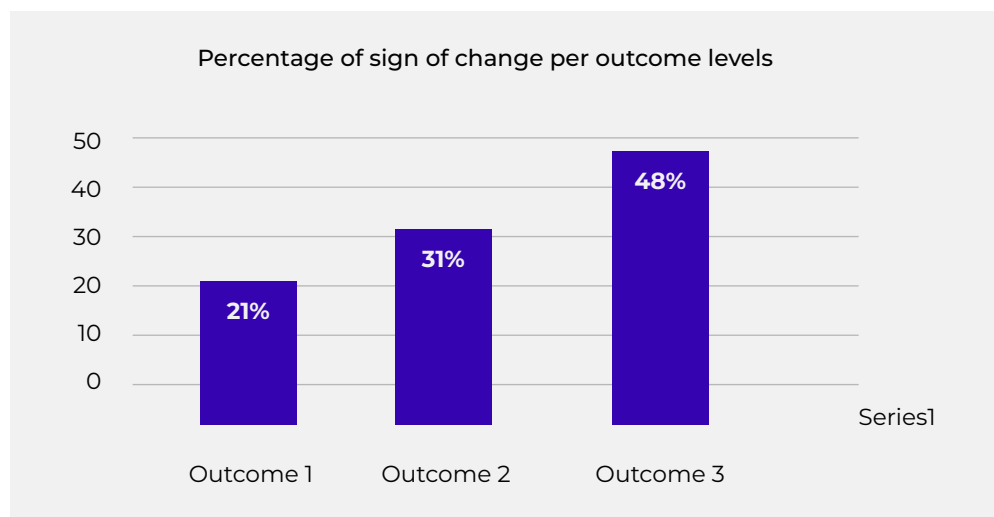
Monitoring outcomes in the Leaders of Peace programme

To do justice to the complex and ever-changing realities of advocacy programs, the LoP has adopted in its PME&L system key building blocks of adaptive programming, notably the use of

continuous reflection on Theory of Change and Outcome Harvesting. All organisations involved in program implementation have kept an advocacy logbook of relevant changes observed at the level of key stakeholders and advocacy targets. Each organization also maintains an Outcome Harvesting logbook which informs the progress made towards programme targets. Early 2023 partner organisations jointly reflected on the collected signs of change and determined whether and how their interventions contributed to these changes. All signs of change of the 5 partner organisations are kept in a master database.

In 2022, a total of 29 signs of change have been documented by the Consortium during a three-day workshop. These are considered as changes at the level of the key stakeholders to which they assessed their interventions as a plausible contribution.

Taking a closer look at the different pathways, most outcomes harvested in 2022 relate to outcome 3 (48% of the outcomes harvested). Whereas 31% of outcomes harvested related to outcome 2 and 21% of the outcomes related to outcome 1.



Result area 1: Improved implementation of policies and regulations on GBV and protection of W/G incl. access to PSS & self-care

Under result area 1 the LoP identified 2 output areas:

- 1.2.1.** Community groups have improved knowledge of available PSS services and legal protection/GBV services including strengthening case management
- 1.2.2.** Formal and traditional authorities are informed on existing legal protection framework for W/G including GBV survivors' rights.

These outputs are contributing to the following short/medium term outcomes:

Short/Medium term outcome 1.1: CS strengthened community based (MHPSS) support mechanisms

In 2021, 50 (18m/32f) Psychosocial Focal Persons (PFPs) were selected and trained from the project locations in Nimule, Torit, Terekeka, Yambio, Nyal and Ganyliel and Juba. In 2022, follow up trainings including onsite mentorship, coaching, individual and group supervision were provided to them. Eight partner staff were trained on SGBV case management, PSS and selfcare techniques and provided with tools to build a community-based support mechanisms for supporting women and girls.

Case management interplayed very well with community awareness sessions, service mapping and referral pathways. There was increased awareness of stakeholders (community & religious leaders, w/y groups, CSO/CBOS women and girls, police) on psychosocial and GBV concepts. Together with improved service mapping and jointly developed referral pathways combined with increased confidence in PFPs, it further enhanced the acceptance and utilization of community based PSS. Cases of GBV and Psychosocial nature were referred to the PFPs and Boma Health workers or to the police protection unit and health facilities by community members, as these had attended awareness sessions and/or were trained on psychosocial consequences of GBV and referral mechanism. This is shown by the 575 cases (female and male) the PFPs supported in 2022 on GBV and MHPS issues through case management, referral and self-care interventions, and by the increased demand for services. More parents were involved in the programme, as in previous years some resistance from their side was noticed, therefore the PFPs mobilized social support (relatives) and facilitated community and family dialogues. Furthermore, the PFPs were able to engage with women and girls and community groups to identify mental health needs and priorities that required further advocacy initiatives from the CSO/CBOs and the duty bearers, and these are included in the in 2022 developed L&A strategy (changes will be shown in result area 2 and 3).

The work of the PFPs have contributed to strengthening coping skills and overcoming challenges at the individual level resulting in improved wellbeing. The community groups felt that the trainings have empowered them as leaders for positive social change in their communities. For example, one of the PFPs said that this training has changed her attitude and now community members approach her for help and thereby she feels respected. Another PFP explained the level of empowerment of affected people and community members by saying, "a woman was raped at gunpoint. As soon as the Boma chief knew about this, he referred the case to PFP. The PFP provided emotional support and referred the case to Nimule Hospital for health services and to a local NGO for legal support". This shows empowerment at the level of awareness and referrals.

Representatives/leaders of various CBOs were trained on prevention of GBV, lobby and advocacy of MHPSS issues and laws and legislation. The CBOs have demonstrated increased awareness on MHPSS and GBV laws. This is evident from the outcome signs harvested in the past year and is closely related to and further translated in outcome 3.1.1. For example, the reporting of a suicide attempt by a member of the Peace committee in Yirol East County was given follow up by referral and MHPSS showing the strengthened community based (MHPSS) support

mechanisms. The outcome is important because initially such cases were not being reported and were taken as normal happenings in the community.

Another positive sign arises from Magwi County, where one of the GBV survivors, after attending the refresher training, identified the need for psychological support for her fellow sisters who are GBV survivors. Through PSS sessions, the woman identified negative coping mechanisms in some GBV survivors' behaviour and understood that this was linked to mental health. It made her realise that she needed to give more attention to the mental health of the survivors. Also, through her efforts and referral, 10 women received small-scale businesses capital and obtained a sustainable access to income by managing small-scale livelihood projects. This reduced their vulnerability, allowed them to restore self-confidence, and increased their acceptance in the community.

Short/Medium term outcome 1.2: Formal/ traditional authorities demonstrate capacity and willingness to work on legislation against GBV and W/G protection

51 police and prison wardens in Yambio and Nimule were trained on GBV, its root causes and legislation, human rights and gender equality. The training also looked at other related international legal frameworks addressing the rights of women and girls. The training of police has improved the way they handle GBV cases especially on confidentiality and treating victims with empathy and respect. This is evident from the outcomes harvested and direct observations. For example, all the police stations now have a women police officer who handle GBV cases for women and there is a specific register to report GBV cases.

Training of ABC Courts using the UNDP Pocket Guide enabled traditional leaders, chiefs and local government authorities to lobby and advocate for increased implementation of GBV legislations. The community leaders were drawn from the different Bomas of municipal councils and there were women leaders from the different tribal groups. Exchange visits to fellow traditional court authority to share learning experience have led to better functioning gender sensitive courts and better representation of female counsellors. The chiefs were drawn from eight counties of Equatoria, Magwi county, Kapeota East, South, North Counties, Budi County Ikwotos, Lopa/ Lopi, Torit Municipal and chiefs representation unity state panygeri counties. The female counsellors were represented from Boma, Payam, Counties and municipal court.

In Torit, the state chief forum resulted into the commitment of the minister of local government that more involvement of the county commissioner will be guaranteed. Feedback from community members indicated that trained ABC court chiefs have shown tremendous improvements on handling of GBV cases and victims. The customary court chiefs are demonstrating willingness to streamline the customary laws with the national laws and human rights and GBV laws and in implementing the laws for the protection of women and girls.

In Panyijiar a police woman who attended the ABC Court training lobbied and was finally promoted as a commander in the Military. Meanwhile in Nyal, two women from Nyal were promoted to lieutenant general rank in the police force. Women can now advocate for their issues

to the local government and the national government through the advocacy structure established by LOP. This shows that the community is breaking the bias against women.

Some traditional Judiciary Courts in Pageri west of Magwi County previously knew little about courts systems and how they operate, sometimes presided by one sub-chief without counsellors, nor any women counsellor in the courts. This led to unprofessionally handled cases and distrust from communities in the legal system. The training finally exposed these chiefs to attend the National Chief Forum to share experiences and learn from each other. Demonstration of the capacity and willingness to work on implementation of GBV laws, importance of women counsellors in the court system and to protect women and girls was shown in the following. One of the chiefs said “I am very happy for the exchange of ideas as it helped us to understand how others do their things and how important it is to involve women in decision making fora. What looked difficult became simple after the National meeting. We shall have to rearrange our courts councillors to reflect the active participation of women and their representation of 35%. We can now judge cases with reference to the legal provision and penal codes”.

Result area 2: Civil Society (CS) has changed attitudes and beliefs that facilitate inclusion of W/G and promote gender equality

Under result area 2 the LoP identified 2 output areas:

2.2.1 Community groups are gender aware and committed to W/G protection, gender equality and W/G's meaningful participation in peacebuilding

2.2.2 W/Y/men are empowered as Agents of Change through rights-based leadership knowledge that contribute to the following short/medium term outcome:

Short/Medium term outcome 2.1: W/Y/men as acting Agents of Change are organized into advocacy groups

The Male Engagement manual was developed by a consultant contracted by AMA and piloted in Nimule, Eastern Equatoria, Unity State and Central Equatoria State. The consortium partners received ToT and further information on using this through a virtual launch programme. Men and boys were given regular sessions on gender equality, UNSCR1325 and on debating gender issues in the community in order to transform negative attitudes and beliefs towards women and girls, and to promote gender equality and involvement of women in leadership and the peace building process. The males engaged have started demonstrating changes in behaviour. After the training, the participants in Torit organized themselves into L&A groups to champion and support women's agenda in the state. In Nyal, the CoC club showed a changed attitude and belief in gender roles as they announced that they have started helping in household chores which are perceived to be for women and girls. At the same time, another COC member convinced parents in his neighbourhood to send girls and boys to school and stop giving girls heavy tasks that prevent them from actively attending school, while a male agent of change testified openly that he has started helping his wife in house chore regardless of being ridiculed by fellow men.

Champions of Change training for youth (incl. in-school, out-of-school and cattle camp youth) continued in 2022 and youth was supported to self-organisation.

The empowered and graduated Champions of Change members created platforms called Children and Young People's Parliament (CYPP) and are active since June 2021. The CYPP is a testimony and a positive reflection of CoC strategy. The CoC's were able to create awareness on peaceful coexistence and how youth can resist manipulation by the adult decision makers. The CoC members facilitated activities such as debate, drama, sport and some advocacy songs in the COC enrolled locations in Nimule, Terekeke and Unity state. The members of parliament conducted two parliamentary sessions in May and July 2022 with the youth preparatory to the state forum. Through consultation from the state speaker of parliament and minister of parliamentary affairs, state legislative assembly hall was given as venue for the CYPP forum in August with attendance of state members. The CYPP from Terekeke and Nimule visited the CYPP and its program in Torit to learn from it. The planning to organize more youth groups into Children and Young People's Parliament (CYPP) was postponed to 2023 as in this last quarter of 2022 many national advocacy activities were ongoing including the annual women gathering, ABC court chiefs' forum and 'the 16 days of activism'.

The target for the training and on the job coaching of CBOs/CSOs was achieved. In this activity, leaders of the women groups, youth groups, ABC court chiefs, Peace Committees, the police and prison staff were trained on group registration modalities, financial reporting and developing advocacy action plans. This aimed at building their capacity for sustainability purposes after the end of the project.

In June 2022, Eve organization developed a guideline on the sub-grant and provided a coaching session to the consortium partners on the same. Another training was offered to the local partners who are the beneficiaries of the seed grant offered by the LoP to the national level women led organisations, W/Y groups, CSO's and CBOs. The seed grants are used for capacity building to conduct L&A and campaigning. By the end of the coaching session, the participants committed themselves to double their effort to support human rights and gender equality at the sub-national level.

A highly significant sign is shown by the women groups in Yambio that used to be focused on income-generating activities. They established a coordination body in December to facilitate their lobbying and advocacy on issues that affect women, a great achievement.

Women advocacy groups met with representatives from women groups in the other project locations and were linked with women leaders in the government and society including parliamentarians, ABC court chiefs, the police and prisons wards. The linkage has built strong relationships and networks amongst the groups, mutual support in their advocacy work and contributed to build allies in advocacy for the changes in the leadership structures in society and government.

As example the meeting in Yambio can be mentioned, where 20 women from 5 women groups (Kenapai Women Group, Idapai group, Women for peace network, Anitona Women Group, and New Vision group) met to establish a L&A coordination mechanism. At the end of the meeting, the participants established their own L&A group, named it the Kodati Women Group and elected some individuals to coordinate their activities. The group identified 3 Lobby and Advocacy issues that they want to address (The prevalence of GBV, the increase in the number of single mothers in the community, and Trauma among women) and came up with a work plan.

Result area 3: Increased, effective participation of women and youth (W/Y) in leadership and peacebuilding

Under result area 3 the LoP consortium identified 2 output areas

3.2.1 Gatekeepers including policy makers are activated to promote WPS agenda and create space for W/G in leadership positions

3.2.2 CSOs have resources and capacity to lobby on WPS agenda, that contribute to the following short/medium term outcomes:

Short/Medium term outcome 3.1: International governmental bodies (AU/EU), diplomats and media lobby and advocate to widen civic space

On the influencing and activating policy makers and gatekeepers to promote the NAP 1325/ WPS agenda, the target was met. Activities involved engaging parliamentarians, ABC court chiefs – customary law makers- and peace committee leaders to discuss the progress and gaps of the WPS agenda, specifically on the implementation of the 35% affirmative action on representation and meaningful involvement of women in leadership, in the peace building process and in all the leadership structures in the community and government. The leaders were regularly informed on the priorities of women groups to support them in advocating for the changes they want regarding the WPS agenda.

Three girls and young women from South Sudan participated physically during the 38th GIMAC meetings in February 2022, which was held in Ethiopia. On the side lines of the GIMAC conference, Plan AULO in partnership with GIMAC secretariat was able to popularise and raise the awareness on the Maputo Protocol Scorecard and Index (MPSI) among AU Member States (MS) and CSOs who attended the 38th GIMAC pre-Summit in February 2022. This has shed light on the Maputo Protocol to almost more than 200 participants of GIMAC CSOs across the continent for the first time in the implementation of the MPSI.

The 8th GIMAC youth advocacy training was undertaken as part of the GIMAC summit in Lusaka, Zambia in July 2022 at the margins of the AU mid -year coordination meeting. The youth advocacy training is an important platform for young women across the continent to be introduced to regional and continental advocacy and influencing issues that affect girls and young women to be tabled at AU level. The three South Sudanese girls and young women who participated, strengthened their advocacy and lobby skills. The youth training was concluded with the development of recommendations from young people which were presented by GIMAC during the

AU summit. Plan AUULO's GIMAC youth advocacy training aimed to create space and opportunities for girls and young women to participate in these high-level platforms influencing decisions regarding the realisation of their rights. In addition, the participants gained relevant skills to advocate and lobby duty bearers to adopt policies, laws and strategies to promote human rights. Participants were then expected to cascade the information from the advocacy training down to their counterparts within their communities.

It is important to note that the girls and young women from South Sudan also participated in GIMAC side events and the Nhanga (safe space for girls and young women) sharing their experiences and reflections on the thematic issues which were under discussion. Through this, they also influenced the outcome statements from the GIMAC Summit which was then shared with the AU Heads of States during their Extraordinary Coordination Summit.

Following, the 8th GIMAC Summit, the participants from South Sudan had an opportunity to have some feedback sessions with in total 132 girls and young women as well as some targeted stakeholders in their communities. Many participants, especially girls, expressed excitement and readiness to participate in similar events when given the chance in the future. Also, the feedback sessions encouraged girls and young women to actively participate in bringing duty bearers to account. For example, after being supported to participate in the AU Campaign "Gender is my Agenda" GIMAC Summit in Zambia in July 2022, a female university student begun to advocate at her university on the importance of youth participation in peacebuilding around the globe. She also held meetings with student groups to advocate for girl child education and women participation in economic empowerment.

The goal of the exchange visit of five female activists from South Sudan to the Netherlands and Germany in November 2022 was to amplify the voices of grassroots women and girls, to promote attention for the WPS issues and resource mobilisation. The Women Advocates of South Sudan (WAASS) being part of the delegation were given an opportunity to meet with representatives from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) to discuss among others how LOP consortium partners and women lawyers could work together to ensure laws and policies on GBV are reviewed to protect women and girls in South Sudan, creating a conducive environment for gender equality.

Short/Medium term outcome 3.2: CSOs consult local and national actors to build legitimacy

To enable CSOs to build legitimacy with local and national actors, 25 CBOs/CSOs were trained in lobby and advocacy to promote human rights, gender equality and the WPS agenda. Additionally, 21 women activists benefited from sub-granting.

On linking/platform building of CBOs to lobby jointly on WPS agenda, 45 representatives of the different CBOs were targeted. The aim of this activity was to link the four different groups the project is working with for the purpose of developing joint lobby and advocacy plan on the WPS agenda. The plan was developed, and the joint advocacy activities were conducted during the '16 days of activism'.

Members of peace committees, border committees and peace task forces were trained on UNSCR1325, specifically on the importance of including women in peace building and in leadership, human rights and gender equality. This had tremendous improvement in the structure of the peace committee in terms of women representation. The number of women in the peace committee has increased across the three project locations.

The L&A strategy was launched to link with other partners working on the WPS agenda as well as to promote the implementation of the NAP on UNSCR 1325 in South Sudan. The undersecretary in the Ministry of Peace Building urged the partners to cooperate with the government in implementing such important issues as mentioned in the Strategy and extended an open-door policy to LOP partners to engage them on their lobby and advocacy priorities. The Chief Whip of the government in the Transitional National Legislative Assembly, promised to collaborate with LOP consortia.

The participatory learning and action (PLA) approach was used to develop the L&A strategy for female leaders on local and national level. Female leaders – women Church leaders, women police officers, female ABC court chiefs, female leaders in the local government and parliamentarians – were facilitated to identify issues affecting women regarding the WPS agenda and drafted an action plan to lobby for the changes they want to achieve on these issues.

EVE successfully organised the 3rd Annual National Conference on Women Peace and Security. The event was made possible with support from the Netherland Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the LoP and Just Future and supported by Christian Aid. The conference brought together women from all over the ten states including the three administrative areas to brainstorm, reflect and examine the progress made following the past conferences on Women Peace and security. The National Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare considered the Women Conference to be a National Conference by scheduling it in the timeline of the development of the NAP 2 and incorporated the inputs and views of women gathered in Juba for the Annual Women's Conference in Oct 2022.

In the recommendations of the previous conference of 2021, women committed to remain seized on matters of peace. The ANC 2022 offered women the platform to follow-up issues such as the implementation of the R-ARCSS, environment and climate change, mental health, education and social economic empowerment as well as develop new advocacy agenda's that would support peace. This links with Leaders of Peace and Just Future project outcomes that seek to increase effective participation of women in leadership and peacebuilding through advocacy at national, regional and global levels. The conference also coincided with the development of the second National Action Plan on Women Peace and Security.

Participating and Speaking during an event such as the annual women gathering improved self-confidence and self-esteem of the young women who were trained in leadership. One of the participants of last year, was in 2022 elected by the majority of votes in Nimule Town to be women leader. She and her teammates have formed now a social resilience network among women in

Nimule to provide social support, which is a big achievement because since the eruption of the conflict in 2013 lot of women leadership structures were dismantled in Nimule and surrounding communities. In November, women groups in Juba County established an association to facilitate their L&A activities in Lirya payam.

One sign of change was observed during the International Day of the Girl. After the leadership training three girls were selected to take symbolic office of county leadership (office of County commissioner Magwi County, Office manager for the county and office secretary for commissioner Magwi count) as part of the #GirlsTakeOver campaign. The rational was to strengthen young girls in leadership and have hope for future leadership to address the WPS agenda for effective participation of women and girls at all levels. The county commissioner for Magwi County appreciated the action and welcomed more engagement of young people in leadership hoped that this will contribute enhanced women participation in higher positions in peace building.

In CES, radio talk shows on the legal protection of young girls and children and on mental health and psychosocial support for survivors of S/GBV were broadcasted. Once the direct call line was opened for listeners to dial in, more than 10 people called to appreciate the program and requested for a series of such discussions or asked legal advice for example about pertaining a case of child custody she had pending in court. The talk show reached more than 1 million listeners.

Realization of Outputs per Result Area

Result area 1: Improved implementation of policies and regulations on GBV and protection of W/G incl. access to PSS & self-care

Result Area	Output indicator	Output target 2022	Output actual 2022	Comment on deviation
1.2.1 Community groups have improved knowledge of available PSS services and legal protection/GBV services incl. case management	# Case workers/PFPs have refreshed training in age (children / adult), gender-appropriate PSS, GBV, legal protection information and are suitable to cultural context	50	50	50 case workers/PFPs (32f/18m) were given follow up training.
	# of members of community groups capacitated	110	105	105 members of the community groups were trained on basic GBV and PSS knowledge and skills
	# Community groups capacitated, resourced and coached on PSS, legal protection services and lobby & advocacy on these topics	53	58	5 more community groups had been mobilized and provided training GBV/ PSS topics.
	# Number of persons who are provided with age and gender appropriate PSS and GBV services	290	642	Training and support of HNTPO supported partners to increase interventions in other areas. Sign of increased demand due to interventions in R 1 and R2. (see under R1)
1.2.2 Formal and traditional authorities are informed on existing legal protection framework for W/G including GBV survivors' rights	# of traditional authorities reached with L&A on the importance of legal protection for women and girls, including GBV survivors	225	225	ABC court members were trained on important GBV regulations and laws
	# of trained formal authorities e.g. police and prison staff on GBV legislation, human rights and GE	243	164	164 formal authorities have been trained by Plan, AMA and EVE. The training of the Police was 64 persons less than planned, because these were previous participants, thus could not be counted again to avoid double counting. Part of the training planned for the targeted participants (Police & Prison staff) coincided with the 16 Days of Activism.

Result area 2: Civil Society (CS) has changed attitudes and beliefs that facilitate inclusion of W/G and promote gender equality

Result Area	Output indicator	Output target 2022	Output actual 2022	Comment on deviation
2.2.1: Community groups are gender aware and committed to W/G protection, gender equality and W/G's meaningful participation in peacebuilding	# of community groups capacited on gender equality, protection and W/Gs meaningful participation	58	53	53 community groups had been mobilised and provided training GBV/ PSS topics.
	# of members of community groups capacitated on gender equality, human rights and UNSCR1325.	60	50	50 members were reached with gender equality and human right messages.
	# of people reached with awareness raising on gender equality, human rights and UNSCR1325.	4500	4800	4800 people reached with awareness on gender equality and protection of women human rights
2.2.2: W/Y, men are empowered as agent of change through rights-based leadership knowledge and organized into advocacy group	# Key persons/youth in community trained as Agents of Change.	310	372	More members of COCs had been selected and will start participating in COC sessions in year 3
	# of trained youth organized in groups, platforms or CYPP parliament	276	139	The percentage shown here revealed largely achievements from Plan. The formation of the CYPP in the region under HNTPO and AMA was constrained by the ABC forum, held last year. This consequently offered limited space for the technical lead to discharge the expected support to the above partners. The establishment of the CYPP in the above locations is planned for 2023
	# of action plans of community groups on male engagement and intersectionality developed and implemented	18	15	15 action plans had developed by women groups and the male engagement groups. A slight under achievement is because some communities could not be reached due to bad road conditions. In 2022 more community outreach is planned and the under achievement in 2021 will be compensated.

Result area 3: Increased, effective participation of women and youth (W/Y) in leadership and peacebuilding

Result Area	Output indicator	Output target 2022	Output actual 2022	Comment on deviation
3.2.1 Gatekeepers including policy makers are activated to promote WPS agenda and create space for W/G in leadership positions	# of gatekeepers incl policy makers coached, capacitated, and resourced to lobby & advocate on the WPS agenda incl female participation in leadership positions.	270	285	285 Gatekeepers have been coached in 2022
	# of leadership tracks for young women provided, mentored by female politicians or business leader	21	21	21 leadership tracks have been developed
3.2.2: CBOs/ CSOs have resources and capacity to lobby on WPS agenda	# of CBOs/CSOs with increased capacity to lobby on HR, GE, UNSCR 1325	34	31	CSOs/CBOs have been trained in L&A skills. For the training of CBOs/CSOs in lobby on HR, GE, UNSCR 1325, a lobby and advocacy strategy has been developed by the LoP consortium. With the strategy in place, training efforts will be increased in 2023.
	# of female activists/CBOs/ CSOs with increased resources (sub granting)	38	34	34 female activists/CSO/CBO's have been provided resources through sub granting. Targets not met due to delay in registration process for CSO's.
3.2.3: International gatekeepers are activated to promote WPS agenda and civic space	# of joint L&A strategies developed to influence international gatekeepers	1	1	The LoP L&A strategy has been developed in 2022. This strategy is needed to take up L&A actions with international gatekeepers. The launch of the L&A strategy was in August.
	# International gatekeepers reached with lobby and advocacy to promote WPS agenda and civic space	6	6	

	Output indicator	Output target 2022	Output actual 2022	Comment on deviation
Involvement of the targeted CSOs and CBOs in program cycle management - downward accountability	# of CSOs and CBOs which have been meaningfully involved by the LoP Consortium in project cycle management	22	19	19 community groups CBO/CSOs had been mobilised and they have been training on GBV/PSS topics, financial management fundraising. Training behind schedule due to turn over of staff.
Project takes COVID-19 situation into account during project implementation and supports CSOs to do similar	# of people reached by COVID-19 awareness raising	12160	11404	11404 people reached COVID-19 awareness
	# of PPE provided in response to COVID-19	0	0	no PPEs were distributed to community member during public events
	# of people trained related to COVID-19 prevention and response	0	0	No new people trained on prevention and response to COVID-19.

Summary of L&A Actions contributing to NAP 1325 / WPS Agenda by LoP and/or the CBOs/CSOs supported by LoP

- The CYPP forum at state level resulted into a motion in state parliament to include the forum in state budget in 2023.
- In the annual Chief's Forum at state level, the ministry of local government gave commitment to support the chief's forum every year to discuss challenges chiefs are facing and fix the gaps.
- LoP's involvement in events such as the International Day of the Girl, Women Day and '16 days of activism' enabled policy makers taking lead in spearheading Gender Equality to ensure accountability on UNSCR1325/WPS agenda.
- On September 19th 2022, the Adams group engaged 20 stakeholders (18 males, 2 females), in a one-day symposium on Gender Equality & Social Inclusion in Yambio with the core objective creating a common and balanced ground for both men and women to enjoy same rights, opportunities and obligations in all spheres.
- On September 23rd 2022, LoP engaged 20 members (13 males and 7 females) of the state Legislative Assembly in a consultative meeting involving local leaders at state and county levels in Yambio so as to understand key decision-making processes. The meeting provided the leaders from the Assembly, local government and office of the governor to share key days on which the state leaders convene high level meetings such as the cabinet meetings which happens on Friday, county meetings, security meetings and cluster meetings chaired by

government line ministries. The platform created enabled MPs to interact with the few CSOs present in harmonising the relationship and suggesting options for CSO leaders and youth to influence decision through them.

- ▶ On September 27th 2022, LoP held one-day women in leadership and peace building Symposium for 20 women and young women leaders drawn from the assembly, civil society, and traditional authority to come up with tangible solutions to improve and support emerging young women leaders in the state.
- ▶ On Sept 28th Liwolo Women Association through the support of the Sub-grant, conducted a community dialogue in Munuki Boba of Juba Juba County.
- ▶ On 29 September 2022, ITWAK women Empowerment organization conducted a round table discussion in labalwa Boma Torit county in Eastern Equatoria state on women's role in peacebuilding.
- ▶ Launching of the lobby and advocacy strategy. This activity is one of the consortium activities under the technical lead of PAX South Sudan. To make sure the L&A is more of an inclusive consortium document; all LOP partners were invited for a 2-day validation workshop. HNTPO contribution was bringing into light an aspect for increased implementation of GBV laws and service for mental health and psychosocial support and inclusion.
- ▶ On International day of the Girl on 11th of October, a symbolic take- over of key Local government offices by young girls was organized. This built girls to be assertive and prepared them in leadership roles and decision taking.
- ▶ Annual Women Leaders Conference. South Sudan women leaders from the 10 states and three administrative areas convened in Juba on the 19th-20th October 2022 to dialogue on key issues affecting South Sudanese women under the theme Weaving together: The struggle, the persistence and the pull make a strong fabric for implementation of UNSCR 1325 on women, peace, and security. This gathering combined efforts from the LoP consortium members; Plan International, HealthNet TPO, Pax, EVE Organization and AMA. The activity was spearheaded by Eve Organization with support from partners members implementing WPS agenda in South Sudan. The event provided a platform for women to share experience, best practices on Women Peace and Security implementation and to come up with suggestions to address gaps and challenges faced. The occasion also hoped to strengthen development of South Sudan's second National Action Plan (NAP).
- ▶ During World Mental Health Day on October 30th advocacy was done for policies and laws that decriminalize specific mental health issues, support the integration of mental health care into existing service systems, empower people living with mental health conditions, and increase overall funding and support for a spectrum of women's mental health and emotional wellbeing.

4. Leaders of Peace Learning Agenda

The Leaders of Peace consortium and its stakeholders have jointly developed a learning agenda. The learning agenda helps the consortium to collaborate with peers and colleagues, fill gaps in knowledge and generates new evidence that the consortium uses to adapt its work. It also helps guide performance management planning by setting knowledge and information priorities. The learning agenda assists with prioritizing evaluations and research activities as well as in determining key indicators. The 3 learning questions are closely related to the assumptions in our Theory of Change and to our Vision on the partnership.

While reviewing the Theory of Change in 2021, the consortium has determined how learning takes shape at the level of context, programme (thematic), policy and the partnership itself. LoP's learning vision assumes that learning is strongly connected to monitoring, and it will inform the consortium how to alter, adapt, and steer the programme implementation based on the lessons learnt during the programme cycle.

In 2021 the LoP consortium designed a complete monitoring, evaluation and learning system including methodologies to monitor and evaluate both quantitative and qualitative results. In 2022, the LoP consortium received refresher training on Outcome Harvesting (OH) as one of the methods to learn from and reflect on successes and challenges in implementation, achieved results or lack thereof and regular qualitative reviews based on developmental evaluation practices. The implementation of the learning agenda was characterized by putting the infrastructure, processes and budget in place to make learning across the programme possible. It was also observed by the consortium that next to the three learning questions the implementation process provided rich other learnings and it was decided to explore how to structure and document these better. A knowledge platform was planned to be built for this in 2022 but did not yet materialize. One main reason is the fact that the high turnover of staff and the limited size of the partner organisations did not allow for expansion of management/governance structures or time expenditure. Nevertheless, the consortium developed an open and learning mind to exchange the lessons learned, to share challenges and invite others for input and improvement. Partners gained clear understanding on the responsibilities of each partner in the roll out of the three learning questions. The learning agenda is coordinated through the PMEL working group.

The learning agenda has three learning questions and therefor proposes three studies (one comparative and two action researches), while the lead over the three questions has been divided over the partners.

1. Learning agenda topic 1: Community based psychosocial support with specific context and thematic learning question on what can we learn from the experiences of WPS in South Sudan and Colombia on the intersection between mental health, psychosocial recovery and peacebuilding efforts?

2. Learning question two: Partnership /collaboration with learning question on how does the collaboration of the consortium partners lead to added value of the partnership?

3. Learning question three: Role of CSOs and Sustainability with a specific thematic and policy learning How do formal and informal CSOs (especially women, and youth-led groups) become sustainable lobby and advocacy allies jointly influencing the WPS agenda?

1. Learning question 1:

Community based psychosocial support with specific context and thematic learning question on what can we learn from the experiences of WPS in South Sudan and Colombia on the intersection between mental health, psychosocial recovery and peacebuilding efforts?

Community based psychosocial support, participation in strategic spaces and platforms to present and receive feedback on the content of the reports was organised. During the annual reflection meeting early 2022, review and reflection took place, and a specific action was agreed upon to include the need to conduct community awareness on the existing structures (Referral pathways) for GBV case management and MHPSS services. Based upon that, HNTPO has prepared a detailed activity planning and road map for 2022 and 2023 to implement the learning question. ToR and further logistics have been arranged for the assessment (KAP survey) about MHPSS needs, capacities and resources at community-level. The assessment will be led by HNTPO and consist of a desk-based review, site visits, key informant interviews, and focus groups discussions. After analysis a consortium reflection session will take place on assessment findings and a joint action plan will be developed to improve community members and local CSOs knowledge and capacity on MHPSS and advocate for better MHPSS and dissemination of lessons learned and key MHPSS advocacy messages with identified external stakeholders. Activities regarding exchange with Colombia programme staff are planned for 2023. As well further questions such as the effectiveness of LoP MHPSS interventions, exploring needs and competence skills of trained PFPs, CBOs/CSOs to address MHPSS and GBV and how intervention strategies apply a gender-sensitive/ do no harm approach and that no further stigmatization is ensured, will be researched upon.

2. Learning question 2:

Partnership /collaboration with learning question on how does the collaboration of the consortium partners lead to added value of the partnership?

Attending partners reflection workshops has allowed the consortium partners to understand the situation at the different working locations and strengthened the partnership collaboration of the consortium.

The Program Coordination (PC) meetings have been effective, developing different working manuals and modules based on each partner interventions and output activities. Most of validation workshops and consortium quarterly meetings kept the consortium partnership and collaboration strong. The good coordination and communication between the consortium members have helped in identifying of gaps as well as cutting down on duplication of resources. For example, EVE organization handed over the mentoring and supporting of PFPs volunteers to Plan International in Nimule since EVE has limited PSS services in Nimule.

Another example is the exchange of expertise, as in the second quarter of 2022, the consortium partners received training on the modalities for sub-granting of CBOs from EVE organization. This improved the process around the sub-granting of the CBOs including compliance and accountability guidelines and guidance related to the seed money provided to the CBOs. In the 4th quarter case workers from three project locations and consortium partners were trained on case management and MHPSS services by HealthNet TPO. This improved the quality of the case management and MHPSS related activities within the programme.

All strategic partnerships under the Dutch MFA subsidy policy framework for Strengthening Civil Society are required to conduct a Mid Term Review (MTR), covering the period January 2021 – June 2023 in which partnership collaboration, focusing on the quality of the partnership and nature of collaboration, including Leading from the South, partnership with the Ministry and the Embassies, lessons learned and good practices is part of. Plan International will implement a Partnership Assessment Survey, tied to this MTR objective for all its three strategic partnership programmes under the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) subsidy policy framework for Strengthening Civil Society (SCS) 'Power of Voices'. It provides data for an analysis of each partnership along the lines of a theoretical framework outlined below. The findings from the survey will be discussed (facilitated discussion) by the partnerships. The combination of the survey and facilitated discussion/conversation will provide deeper insights, in turn leading to agreements on ways forward. The proposed approach aims to provide a basis for assessment of the partnership collaboration in Break Free!, Leaders of Peace and She Leads. It thereby enables the partnerships to meet the MFA requirements for the MTR. But equally important, it aims to facilitate reflection, discussion and learning at the various levels of the partnerships (country/ regional networks, consortium level, strategic partnerships with MFA and embassies), with the ultimate aim to further strengthen the partnerships.

This assessment will overlap and coincide with main part of the learning subquestions under learning question 3. With EVE, discussion is ongoing how to combine their research with the proposed assessment, prevent duplication and increase outcome to generate optimal learning. Accordingly EVE will adjust its planning for this learning question.

3. Learning question 3:

Role of CSOs and Sustainability with a specific thematic and policy learning How do formal and informal CSOs (especially women, and youth-led groups) become sustainable lobby and advocacy allies jointly influencing the WPS agenda?

One of the main challenges that Pax has faced, is the delay in the development of L&A strategy which unfortunately led to less advocacy work being achieved in 2022. However, 3 meetings were organized with consortium partners on the L&A document and eventually successfully coordinated by the partnership. PAX completed the L&A strategy and launched it jointly with the consortium partners. The L & A strategy document developed cross cutting messages across all the NAP 1325 pillars. A key achievement was the consultative development and the launch of the L&A strategy which drew over 159 representatives from National and International organizations,

government representative and academia. This L&A strategy document was a main publication for 2022. In the coming year 2023, PAX will be extending its advocacy work to the state level to engage with stakeholders and policy makers at the grassroots with the civil society. PAX will be engaging women leaders especially the parliamentarians for a state exchange visit to strengthen Advocacy work at all levels.

Good Practices

There were many good practices and lessons learnt registered during LoP project implementation in year two and these includes among:

- Use of existing structures in project implementation especially local government, chiefs, women leaders and youth groups has strengthened relationship, cooperation and enhance mobilization of the beneficiaries and enabled project acceptance and ownership. For example, women groups were planning for the '16 days of activism' and were able to request for cash assistance and technical support, which showed the level of ownership of the project.
- The link between the project results areas 1, 2 and 3 contributed to each other. For example improved case management in result area 1 created more demand in service delivery for which a change of attitude and beliefs was also needed to engage community in ending violence against women and girls in result area 2.
- Localization agenda: CSOs and the national partners have been empowered to have a say on how the LOP program is implemented. Decisions are made on collegial and consensus and everyone's opinion is respected.
- Local visibility: The reporting of LOP in IATI has made some of the national partners visible in the global arena.
- Coordination and collaboration between a country programme and regional programme ensured that grassroots level issues were brought to the attention of high-level decision makers by the affected people themselves.
- Sharing feedback after participating in continental convenings assist in building a movement of girls and young women towards peace building and ensures that the knowledge gained is trickling down to grassroots levels for positive impact.
- Training the customary courts and the police and prison staff on formal laws including the GBV laws influenced reforms of the customary laws by revising or deleting customary laws that are against rights of women and girls. The customary courts are the most present in South Sudan and therefor assumed to be the most appropriate bodies to protect the rights of women and girls and more effective to prevent GBV.
- Working with male (men and boys) as allies in advocating for changed attitudes and beliefs on women and in promoting gender equality is a good practice as men in patriarchy societies like in South Sudan are likely to be easily influenced by fellow males compared to women and girls.
- Champions of change program is also a good practice as it aims at transforming social norms, attitudes and beliefs of the current and future generations by engaging children in promoting gender equality and human rights a tender age.

5. Crosscutting Themes: Gender, Youth, Climate

Gender

Gender equality is perceived both as a principal objective (result area 2) and as a cross-cutting theme throughout the program. In 2022 all partners have built the capacity of CSO's, communities and stakeholders in gender equality and inclusion (GE&I) while specific attention was given to the role of men and boys as agents of change to change negative discriminatory and gender norms to positive ones. The Men Engagement strategy is still under development, but the training manual for men and boys' engagement was finalized and piloted and is used in some of the programme areas already. Diversity got specific attention in 2022, as the programme aims to include diverse groups, inclusive of female and male headed households, from different ages, ethnicity, classes, religions, not only as target groups but throughout all phases of the project implementation.

Equal access, equal participation and satisfaction among women and men in the LoP programme are regularly monitored through different feedback mechanisms such as monthly meetings, field visits, outcome harvesting and activity reports and community feedback mechanisms.

But as well all partners have secured in their human resource policies that specific needs of women and girls are met or are addressed. In the recruitment more female staff to respond to issues of trust in issues of GBV, ambition to have women in leadership positions and better sharing of women and girls' specific issues affecting them. It is well noted that communication is as much as possible tender sensitive and illustrations depict equality between men and women. In meetings women's views are sought as much as the male perspectives, specific issues of women and girls are sought in any forum and responses well recorded. All data is gender disaggregated to ensure equal is reflected.

Remedial action has been undertaken through the annual review meetings and ToC review redressing any gender inequalities in the project implementation. For this purpose the Gender Transformative Marker was used as an useful tool to assess the potentiality of the programme to be or become gender transformative.

According to the six components of the Gender Transformative Marker, the following progress can be noted:

1. Addressing unequal and discriminating gender norms: The programme addresses key gender norms, barriers and/or drivers throughout the different result areas and worked closely with community groups, local leaders and women and girls to create awareness on gender equality, being the first step to change. Tailored dialogues with communities, creation of role models and peer-to-peer actions were organized by the Champions of Change in support of norm change. As context differs per region or even community regarding gender and social norms, more indepth analysis is needed. The recently (by Plan International) developed modules on

analysis of gender and social norms to promote change and measure to what extent social and gender norms have changed, will be looked upon and decided how these can be used to improve activities.

The project engaged all female and male ABC court members in court hearings and took care of equal representation and actively enrolled an equal number of boys and girls through COC sessions and CYPP activities to address gender issues affecting the life of young people.

The project will continue to engage men and women, girls and boys as agent of change in the communities through the COC and the couple approach. Despite several success stories, the ARPM concluded that discriminating gender norms are persistent and require more awareness raising. Therefore, the LoP programme will continue to influence and change harmful norms and attitudes including transforming violent masculinities by targeting influential powerholders (men/boys) as allies and positive role models, to jointly advocate with women and youth groups for gender equality, as well as for equal participation of women and youth groups.

2. Strengthening girls' and young women's agency over the decisions that affect them, as well as by building their knowledge, confidence, skills and access to and control over resources.

The establishment of the COC and the weekly sessions have built COC skills in critical thinking, self-esteem, confidence, and ability to dialogue and combat negative gender norms and masculinity.

The exposure and exchange visits to exchange experience and to interact with other COCs members in Nimule was one event that motivated the new members of the COC club. One COC member said, "with this exposure and learning experiences, they can do the same in Terekeka and ensure they bring more young people to debate on issues that affect them in the community". Through the CoC trainings young women were given self-confidence and knowledge, while women groups were able to develop action plans and others capacitated to raise their voice for equal rights and lobby for more decision-making power.

The project has specific focus on girls and has created health clubs in the LOP supported schools. Through Health Pooled Fund (HPF) sanitary pads were distributed to adolescent girls. The impact of the dignity kits distributed was great. The head teachers reported that with the distribution of the sanitary pads girls now attend class daily and has reduced girls' absenteeism. Volunteers that trained young girls who are fresh from the university were afterwards able to find out what exactly they want to do in life. The training was done for three months with different organizations and some girls ended up being retained for the same organization for one year contract. This program gave girls opportunity to be self-reliant and they got more confidence. By developing leadership tracks for young women, being mentored by female politicians and business leaders young women developed skills to participate in the decision making process.

3. Work with and support boys, young men and men to embrace positive masculinities and to promote gender equality, while also achieving meaningful results for them.

The programme started with exploration how to engage men and boys and the initial development of a Men Engagement Strategy in 2021. At the same time some men groups were formed and trained as agents of change, acknowledging their role in domestic violence and

gender inequality and acting as role models.

The male engagement modules were developed and training was tailored to transform negative gender norms. The program has engaged women, girls, men and boys through the male engagement and CoC approach. Because of high turnover of staff within AMA, the lead on the MenEngage Strategy, fine tuning of the strategy is postponed to year 3.

HNTPO employed the couple approach, where couples are selected and trained within the community to advance and promote gender equality and positive masculinity. The male and their spouse were capacitated on gender equality and cultural norms that are present in their community, the importance of women participation, their roles in nation building and their roles in maintaining peace in the community.

With their full consent members were trained and form a group that promotes positive gender norms. They first started within their household to set an example to the other members in the neighbourhood.

There was some resistance as some men did not allow women and girls to participate in project activities such as trainings, self-sessions etc. The project increased the engagement of men/parents to get them involved in the activities for positive transformation and awareness raising about the negative impact of masculinity.

4. Consider girls, boys, young women and young men in all their diversity when identifying and responding to their needs and interests.

The most excluded group of people in the community are those living with physical and mental disabilities including children. They suffer lack of recognition, stigma, and discrimination.

Gender equality and social inclusion programming provided more emphasis by including 'inclusivity' in all project activities. Modules developed by Plan International on gender and inclusion were taken note of and used in the coming period for the training of staff.

The programme will put more effort to identify the different needs and interests of adolescents, youth and adults in all their diversity (gender, age, ethnicity, geographical area, if possible, disability). Continuation of sensitization of all LoP partners have to take place on this, including the development of a strategy how diversity will be incorporated and addressed, as this is a sensitive issue in countries as South Sudan.

5. Improve the conditions (daily needs) and social position (value or status) of girls and young women.

The programme aims to improve equality in the conditions for adolescent girls and (young) women within their communities regarding equal decision making, resources and opportunities as well as equality in the position of girls and young women regarding equal value, status, respect and access to power, leadership positions. As shown in the other key components, activities to improve conditions and positions are mainstreamed in the whole programme as well addressed directly through R2.

The project has mobilized girls and have organized them into health clubs. Girls were provided with health promotion messages, menstrual hygiene awareness and provision of menstrual pads for older girls. This has enabled girl children to remain in school, since they are informed and supported to manage their periods while in school. Not only their condition improved but

the sustainable and continuous access to sanitary pads has positive outcome on their chances to improve their position as well and menstrual hygiene was not seen as discriminatory to girls engagement in social life and education anymore.

Eve has established a training center aimed at creating awareness and boosting women's participation in women-empowerment issues. Despite funding constraints, a positive step was taken to contribute toward the psychological and economic recovery process of women affected by the conflict in the Payam.

PAX has worked with women parliamentarians, civil society actors in representatives of the ministry of Gender and other legal institutions through radio talk shows/ meetings and trainings on lobby and advocacy which provided our programme a wider reach. Prominent stakeholders have participated in the radio talk shows including a director from the ministry of Gender, child and social welfare, former woman judge and legal advisor from the office of the president Judge Ajonye who is currently the Acting chairperson of the South Sudan Law society as well as a judge in the GBV court.

6. Foster an enabling environment where all stakeholders work together to support children and youth on their journey towards gender equality.

Through result area 3 particularly, the programme aims to strengthen societal structures, systems and civil society to foster gender equality and inclusion (e.g. in legislation/policy, access to and delivery of MHPSS services, representation of women and girls in decision making processes, capacity building and commitment, as well in budget allocations). Contribution to this was the participation of (young) women in international and national fora to lobby for equal participation and decision making and create wider support for their participation and needs. HNTPO engaged with local stakeholders, both informal and formal authorities to ensure women and girls rights are protected and respected in the community. This was done through trainings and mentorship sessions that were provided to them on regular basis. The project also supported development and dissemination of referral pathway where women and girls can turn to and access for services. The programme will continue to work with both local authorities from county and state level to ensure that a protective environment for women and girls prevails.

Youth

Youth are key stakeholders in the programme. Due to protracted insecurity and economic hardship, youth in South Sudan continue to face forced recruitment into military activities, lack of participation in political, civic decision-making, high unemployment, lack of business opportunities, lack of access to education, inadequate access for health-related information and services (including SRHR). Young people continue to be marginalized from effectively participating in the peace process despite their numerical strength (70% of the population is below the age of 30). Limited civic and political opportunities for youth empowerment and inclusion, stemming from lack of political will at the top leadership level, are barriers to youth engagement. Sustained engagement and dialogue between youth and duty bearers remains a critical driver of future inclusion and participation. It is from this understanding that LoP is aiming to contribute to youth's capability to become agents of transformation. The COC modules and training sessions are a valuable tool as they target young girls and boys in schools, to help young adolescent youth

acquire skills and competences needed to live a healthy and responsible life and shape them to become change agents, promoters of gender equality and women human rights.

The LoP consortium has built upon the recommendations and intentions as mentioned in the 2021 annual report and translated these into the following interventions and actions:

- Working with youth in CYPP to influence the youth in decision making processes and their participation in public decision-making processes.
- Activities are including out of school and in school youth and youth in cattle camps. Young people have been very active in advocacy and instrumental in resolving the conflict between the cattle camp youth and the local government authorities in Payinjiar county.
- Women and Youth led L&A groups have been established and capacitated to mobilize resources and have systems in place. These groups are linked to other national movements, networks and coalitions.

Climate change

Climate change continues to affect South Sudan causing a real threat to the communities where the LOP program is being implemented.

In 2022, not much flooding was experienced in Yirol, Nyal and Ganyliel, although the effects of previous flooding were still felt.

Payinjiar county was 90% flooded for the past 2 years and this affected mobility, cost of implementation.

AMA together with South Sudan Coalition in Natural Resources had an Integrated Risk Management Intervention about dealing with flooding and how it is likely to affect communities. Unfortunately, most of the interventions and recommendations require concerted efforts and long-term plans. Also, due to climate change, prolonged droughts have been experienced within East Africa for the past two consecutive years. This has resulted to high cost of food items within the regions including in South Sudan which mostly depends on food from Uganda and Kenya which exacerbated food insecurity.

In Juba and other main towns in South Sudan waste management remains a big challenge as streets and drainages are littered with waste (plastic and polythene). This is a big threat to the environment.

The LOP program ensures environmental protection by integrating environmental awareness activities to its programme. During the women annual (National) conference in Juba and other regular activities in the community, environmental awareness was included as a key topic for discussion.

6. Partnership Reflection and Collaboration within the Leaders of Peace Consortium

Based upon the partnership survey of 2021 and its recommendations afterwards, each partner's strength was converted in a specific (technical) role in the LoP programme. This appeared to work out well in 2022.

The LOP consortium members have been building the capacity of each other, e.g., Plan trained the consortium on Safeguarding, finance compliance and COC, AMA trained the Consortium on male engagement, Eve trained the consortium on sub-granting, HNTPO trained the consortium on MHPSS self-care and Pax trained the consortium on L&A. The learning agenda was divided amongst partners and progress discussed regularly.

Consortium desk had regular meetings with all partners to improve coordination and field visits were conducted to field locations to check and discuss progress, align activities, exchange learnings and visit stakeholders at that location for clarification. Validation workshops and consortium quarterly meetings made the consortium partnership and collaboration stronger. The good coordination and communication between the consortium members have helped in identifying of gaps as well as cutting down on duplication of resources. The disbursement of funds, which delayed in the past project implementation was changed into twice a year instead of four times per year.

Although PMEL capacity building by the LoP Desk and the PMEL working group has been assessed as highly effective during the partnership satisfaction survey, further PMEL support was given through webinars and trainings, to ensure the PMEL system is implemented as intended.

Plan AULO – responsible for the regional component of LoP – participated virtually during the annual reflection meeting for the consortium partners. This was an opportunity to interact with consortium partners and getting to understand their programming experiences. The participation during the meeting enabled Plan AULO to be able to strategically position the peace building agenda at continental platforms following an understanding of some of the challenges and achievements in country level programming.

The Dutch embassy was involved especially during advocacy activities like the launch of the Consortium L&A strategy document and during the Annual women gathering. The Dutch embassy also organized various meetings with the partners of different consortia and civil society funded by the Dutch government, which aimed amongst others at identifying areas of synergy where the different consortia can work together.

The annual Conference brought together the Dutch Embassy and National and State actors (government, CSOs, WRS, etc) to deliberate WPS agenda in South Sudan. The stakeholders gave inputs for the development of NAP 2.

The LoP sought linkages with other civil society organizations operating in South Sudan through the 1325 South Sudan Country Group in the Netherlands. The group is chaired by the desk coordinator of the LoP alliance in the Netherlands and encourages the NAP community to collaborate, support, learn and inspire each other in order to increase our collective strength and effectiveness in the planning and implementation of the WPS agenda in South Sudan. A strong link with a South Sudanese Platform is supposed to feed, support and learn from each other. The group has made a mapping of activities and geographical coverage and collaboratively prepares whenever meetings come up in the Netherlands related to WPS issues.

7. Sustainability and Exit Strategy

- ▶ The target for the training and on the job coaching of CBOs/CSOs was achieved. In this activity, leaders of the women groups, youth groups, ABC court chiefs, Peace committee, the police and prison staff are trained on group registration modalities, financial reporting and developing advocacy action plans. The groups were also encouraged to register with the relevant ministries at the local level. This aimed at building their capacity for sustainability purposes after the end of the project. Sub-granting of the groups also promotes sustainability as it gives them an opportunity to learn by doing which will enable them to continue working even after the project has ended.
- ▶ Linking the CBOs with policy makers and other departments of the government during events such as the chiefs' forum and the annual women gathering promotes sustainability through building relationships which are important in influencing changes the groups are advocating for even after 2025.
- ▶ The Champions of Change program for in schoolboys and girls promotes sustainability because it is likely to strengthen their values on gender equality and fairness at a tender age after which they are likely to influence their peers and the generations to come.
- ▶ Training of the ABC courts (customary courts) and the police and prison staff on the formal laws and GBV laws is likely to lead to sustainability as they will continue implementing the GBV laws even after the end of the project.
- ▶ Girls and young women who participated during the GIMAC platform convenings are always encouraged to work with their partner organisations to have feedback sessions with their counterparts to build a strong movement of advocates at grassroots level in South Sudan. To add on, participants of the GIMAC platform convenings are expected to join the continental GIMAC Young Women Network platform which will further assist participants in their various advocacy initiatives.
- ▶ In continuation with the previous year, consortium partners have continued developing strong partnerships with local government and state authorities in implementation areas.
- ▶ GYW-led organizations' organizational capacity is strengthened, including their ability to raise sufficient resources for their operations.

First discussion about the exit strategy started but were not yet materialized into a strategy. The proposed policy dialogue with the Ministry, in which further discussion and dialogue would be on the agenda, did not yet take place. Details will be developed in 2023.

8. Safeguarding

Leaders of Peace is committed to ensure safe involvement for GYW into the programme, and that our programme structure provides an enabling environment for their safe and meaningful engagement. Our safeguarding practices should eventually contribute to a culture of safeguarding, where everyone can have an open conversation on safeguarding and that goes beyond a compliance approach.

Safeguarding and Integrity policies are endorsed and monitored by all partners, supervised by the SS-CC to ensure partners can prevent and respond to protection breaches, including CS.

All the organizations/groups that joined the Leaders of Peace network as a partner, worked with a safeguarding checklist to assess their internal safeguarding policies and procedures. This checklist is part of the Leaders of Peace safeguarding protocol, and based on the rigor safeguarding policy of the consortium Lead Plan International. New colleagues within the consortium are trained or refreshed on the safeguarding protocol.

In 2022, no safeguarding incidents (or suspicion of incident) were reported to the Leaders of Peace desk.

In 2022 13 LoP staff received the 2-days safeguarding and PSHEA refresher training with the objective to build capacity and skills of LoP partners and ensuring the understanding of Safeguarding and PHEA Policy. Furthermore full understanding of the different reporting procedures and the roles and responsibilities of each partner were trained upon.

HNTPO organized and facilitated a 2-day safeguarding training for psycho-social points (PFPs). A total of 13 PFPs and 1 community member completed the training on safeguarding with focus on prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA). The overall objective was to provide PFPs and community groups with a thorough knowledge, awareness and understanding of all aspects of safeguarding issues including promoting the welfare of beneficiaries and protecting children, women, and girls from significant harm or abuse. Additional supportive supervision visits were done also to provide support to PFPs who are themselves struggling with MH and psychosocial problems or overwhelmed and stressed in due course of providing PSS in the communities. All the PFPs are taken through self-care trainings where self-care techniques are discussed, and tools provided. Also the other partners made sure that all their staff, contractors and volunteers have signed safe guarding policies and PSEA protection against sexual exploitation and abuse policies.

9. Risks

As all risks related to the programme assumptions have been covered by activities in the programme. Partners observed during the ARPM in September 2022, that many of the risks are interrelated. Sometimes the risk did not occur or mitigation strategies worked out to be successful. These are described in the annual plan 2023.

Increased violence and conflicts leading to insecurity for staff and delay in project implementation, was tackled by strong monitoring of local media sources to remain alert of security-related developments and adhere to any directives issued by local authorities INSO / security forum updates, liaising with security chiefs and local authorities to reduce the risk of harm to local populations (especially physical and sexual harm to women and girls) and adherence to Safety & Security protocols, SOPs, and guidelines.

Close collaboration, relationship and strong L&A networking with key stakeholders around local authorities and new officers prevented relapse or delay in implementation of LoP activities which might happen due to the ever-changing structure of government. As well the regular updates through cluster meetings and informal meetings contributed to continuation of activities and good relations with authorities. Strong collaboration with other key stakeholders and male agents of change reduced resistance against norm change and allowed LoP addressing and challenging the patriarchal structures.

The risk analysis related to COVID-19 did not show any new or other risks compared to last year and mitigation strategies were proven to be successful.

Risks that are expected to change in probability, impact, and mitigation approach or new risks were included in the matrix in annex 3 of the annual plan 2023.