



Final Evaluation Report



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Cover photo: Members of local peace network created by young women in Torit.

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Abbreviations

AP	Agency for Peacebuilding
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease
CRN	Catholic Radio Network
CRW	Crown the Woman
EM	Eye Media
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
KII	Key Informative Interview
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NCP	National Congress Party
NWERO	National women empowerment and rehabilitation organization
R-ARCSS	Revitalized Agreement on the resolution of conflict in South Sudan
R-JMEC	Reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission
Search	Search for Common Ground
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Executive summary

This report presents and discusses the findings from the final external evaluation of the “Strengthening Young Women’s Participation in Local and National Peace Processes in South Sudan” project (January 2020-September 2021), which was funded by the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund (UNPF).

After ten years since its independence, South Sudan has continued to suffer the brunt of violent conflicts that have lasted until today. Tensions between President Salva Kiir and his Vice President Riek Machar erupted shortly after independence. The 2018 *Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS)* has offered a political resolution to the conflict, but the Agreement is far from being fully implemented. Against this backdrop, women, and young women in particular, play a central role because they are not only more likely to be victims of violence but are also connected to the mentioned drivers of inter-communal conflict.

In this framework, Search for Common Ground (Search) South Sudan, in partnership with Ana-Taban, Crown the Woman (CTW), National Women’s Empowerment & Rehabilitation Organization (NWERO), Catholic Radio Network (CRN), and Eye Radio with funding from the UN Peacebuilding Fund (UNPBF) have been implementing the 18-month project aimed to equip and empower young South Sudanese women with knowledge, skills and opportunities to contribute to the peace process at the local and national level, reinforce their collective power, and challenge the social stereotypes and barriers that hinder their equal participation. The project seeks to achieve three main objectives: (1) To strengthen the ability of young women leaders and groups to lead local and national-level peace efforts collaboratively; (2) To transform attitudes and behaviors about women and youth (and young women in particular) and their role in peace and security; and (3) To contribute guidance, best practices, and lessons learned to the global field of youth engagement in peace and security.

This final evaluation was carried out by the Agency for Peacebuilding (AP) with the support of Search’s South Sudan team. This study used a mixed approach that combined qualitative and quantitative data collection methods.

Quantitative tools included two surveys: one that targeted randomly selected beneficiaries in intervention areas (283 respondents overall); the other that targeted project participants (69 respondents). The qualitative tools consisted of desk review (approximately 40 documents), 32 key informative interviews and 16 focus group discussions.

Despite the excellent support of Search’s team in South Sudan, the exercise encountered the following challenges and limitations. Firstly, floods and heavy rain affected the data collection of the beneficiary survey and limited the numbers of the respondents. Yet, the overall number of respondents has allowed reliable quantitative analysis and statistics. Secondly, institutional changes created a high turnover in key institutions. Finally, some limitations were, however, 0 841.92 | tools

security matters in the country. This result was also possible because the activities were designed according to the needs collected in the baseline. Furthermore, NWERO, CRN, Eye Radio and other organizations were able to involve young women from different contexts and areas, also from remote ones and among IDPs. The activities remain relevant despite the COVID-19 challenges due to the ability of the project's partners to adapt and to transform constraints into opportunities. For instance, in addition to the original project locations, Search and its partners were successful in extending the implementation of the project to six relevant new locations.

Regarding effectiveness, the project's expected results have been achieved against almost all the ambitious indicators. The project's most positive results are represented by activities related to strengthening the ability of young women leaders and groups to collaboratively lead local and national-level peace efforts and young women-led mediation and peacebuilding initiatives. The increase in confidence experienced by participants attending training and mentorship activities is very clear and the follow-up local peacebuilding activities show increased self-confidence, knowledge and skills. The main challenges were represented by transforming attitudes and behaviors about women and youth (and young women in particular) and their role in peace and security, especially on a large scale and at the national level. Changing perceptions has emerged from this evaluation as a slow process that deserves specific programming and close attention to cultural dynamics and constraints. In order to finalize all the planned activities, a key factor was the ability of Search and partners to adapt the activities to the enormous ongoing challenges. For instance, COVID-19 has particularly affected the mobility of the participants, the outreach activities and the overall project's timeline. An important adaptation was to target the COVID-19 emergency itself through target initiatives led by young women to contain the pandemic.

Concerning impact, the project achieved several intended changes, as presented in this report. These changes were present mainly at the local level, while achieving changes at the national level was more challenging, also due to mobility limitations. Some stories of change, partially reported in this document, deserve close attention and are to be shared in future activities. Young women-led mediation and peacebuilding initiatives had a significant impact because brave young women were able to implement initiatives rapidly in different locations, also involving men in their communities. Yet, the collaboration between young and older women is improved only in some locations and needs more nuanced and specific attention in the future. Significant examples of collaboration between young and older women were observed in Bor and Aweil. In Bor, the Jonglei State Women Association (JSWA) regularly convened trainings for the girls' network and women in the IDP camp and jointly participated in radio programmes aired by the Jonglei State radio. In Aweil, the membership of two radio listeners groups is composed of both young and older women. The intergenerational nature of the listeners' group demonstrates improved interactions between young and older women. In Juba, intergenerational bonds were established between older and younger women throughrovetiatives aetwou28 Tm[(n)1(e)1(t)-4(w)4(o)1(u2r)-3(a)1, Eyeattr0 gq0ye4(,)-Now

The overall sustainability of the project presents some limitations. While acquired skills and publications will last beyond the project itself, the monitoring of activities already captured that “though 80% of the respondents see added value when collaborating with young women in peacebuilding initiatives, only 62% still believe CSOs have plans to carry on and sustain the young women programs beyond the end of the project.” Sustainability could also have been better built during the project. For instance,

Introduction

This report presents and discusses the findings from the final external evaluation of the “Strengthening Young Women’s Participation in Local and National Peace Processes in South Sudan” project, which has been funded by the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund (UNPF).

The project – implemented by Search for Common Ground (Search) South Sudan in partnership with Ana-Taban, Crown the Woman (CTW), National Women’s Empowerment & Rehabilitation Organization (NWERO), Catholic Radio Network (CRN), and Eye Radio – aimed to equip and empower young South Sudanese women with knowledge, skills and opportunities to contribute to the peace process at the h1(t)6()16(t)-4.12 ttation t4(e)1(d2(vet)-4.12,4()16(&)

1. Background information

Context background

The January 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between the Sudan ruling National Congress Party (NCP) and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) paved the way to the South Sudan referendum in 2011 and the country's consequent independence from Sudan. Tensions between President Salva Kiir and his Vice President Riek Machar erupted shortly after independence. Yet, after ten years, South Sudan has continued to suffer the brunt of violent conflicts that have lasted until today.

Rising tensions within the South Sudan ruling party, the SPLM, were evident throughout 2013. In July 2013, Kiir dismissed his cabinet and unveiled his new cabinet without Riek Machar. After two years of violence and missing multiple deadlines set by regional leaders to sign a deal, and under threat of international sanctions, including a proposed arms embargo, the Government of South Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army-in-Opposition (SPLM/A-IO) signed the *Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (ACRSS)* in August 2015. The power-sharing peace deal brokered by IGAD in August 2015 lasted, however, only until July 2016.

The youth, making about 70% of the total population, have not been spared the adverse effects of the recurrent conflicts, despite their role in the liberation struggle and leading the self-determination campaign that led to independence in 2011. After independence was attained, meagre financial resources were allocated for youth. Platforms for youth to express themselves, make contributions in all sectors have equally shrunk. From 2013, political elites have increasingly exploited the vulnerability of the youth to further fuel political tensions to strengthen their political influence. As it stands now, the youth are divided along ethnic lines and often manipulated by the political elites to fight wars. They also have little to nothing opportunities to participate in peacemaking or peacebuilding. The situation is dire for young women and girls who have to deal with limited access to resources and are more often susceptible to physical and sexual violence, economic deprivation and customary norms that perpetuate inequality. Despite the effects of conflict on young women and girls, they have barely been accorded the chance to participate in both local and national peacebuilding processes.¹

The 2018 *Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS)*

especially women and children, who are the main victims of the crisis.² Indeed, the current conflict has exacerbated the human rights situation in the country. The Parties have engaged

The theory of change underpinning the logic of this project is that: *if* a diversity of young women have skills and opportunities to actively contribute to peacebuilding at the national and local levels, collaborating across gender and generational-based divides, and *if* young women's positive contributions are acknowledged, accepted, and celebrated by the community-at-large, *then* young women will play a more significant role in advancing the underlying peacebuilding principles of the R-ARCSS, solidifying their vested interest in upholding the peace agreement *because* they will have a greater sense of ownership of the peace process.

2. Methodology

2.1 Evaluation Objectives

The terms of reference identify the following objectives for the evaluation:

- To assess the project in accordance with the criteria of relevance, effectiveness, impact, efficiency and sustainability;
- To assess the extent to which the project achieved its objectives with emphasis on the outcomes and impact, including the most significant and indirect changes

The **project participants’ survey** reached a total of 69 respondents from different groups: religious leaders, civil society organizations, farmers, businesspersons, media, youth leaders and public officers. Below the respondents disaggregated by age, sex and geographic coverage. This survey allows some quantitative analysis as requested by the indicators.

Respondent category	Number	Percentage of sample
Total	69	100%
Women	61	88%
Men	7	10%
Urban locations	57	83%
Rural locations	12	17%
Youth (15 to 35 y.o.)	30	43%
Non-youth (36 and older)	39	57%

The **qualitative tools** consisted of desk review, Key Informative Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs).

For the **desk review**, the team reviewed approximately 40 documents, including those produced in the context of the program (proposal narrative, logframe, reports, evaluations, etc.) and those produced by other institutions, which are relevant to the project’s focus issues.

The team conducted 32 **KIIs** (15 men and 17 women) in Juba (11) Bor (3), Aweil (8), Maridi (5) and Torit (5). Informants included: Search’s staff in South Sudan, representatives from partners (Ana-Taban, Crown the Woman (CTW), National Women’s Empowerment & Rehabilitation Organization (NWERO), Catholic Radio Network (CRN), and Eye Radio), national/state peace commissions and project participants. The large majority of interviews were conducted in person (27).

FGDs involved five distinct groups, as presented below. **16 FGDs** (13 female and 3 mixed groups with 86 women and 6 men in total) in Juba (4), Bor (3), Aweil (2),

Secondly, institutional changes – such as merging the states from 32 to 10 – created a high turnover in key institutions (e.g., the Relief and Rehabilitation and Commission and the state Ministry of Gender in Bor). Yet, we had the opportunity to conduct both FGDs and KIIs with other institutional representatives both in Bor and other locations.

Thirdly, some limitations affected the interviews but were properly mitigated. Some of the key people were travelling during the data collection, but they were interviewed by phone. Some other people were not fully aware of the project and we asked the local focal points in Aweil and Bor to provide new contacts, as they did. However, the overall number of interviews was higher than planned and these limitations did not significantly affect the quality of findings.

3. Research findings

This section presents the key findings of the final evaluation. The findings of the evaluation are organized around the project's three objectives. Overall, the project was conducted in a context of massive needs and upheaval: the COVID-19 pandemic, multi-layered violent conflicts, floods in 2020 and 2021, and severe food insecurity in different regions of the country.

Project's Adaptation

COVID-19 has particularly affected the mobility of the participants, the outreach activities and the overall project's timeline. In spite of this challenging situation, Search and its partners

or older), which was 90%—still overwhelmingly positive, but lower than what was recorded for youth respondents and, as such, indicative of intergenerational differences in the perception of the project’s effectiveness.

Output 1.1: Targeted young women have the skills to lead peace efforts at the local and national levels

Under this output, the project had identified two indicators to track and understand progress towards success. These were measured both for the project’s baseline and for the final evaluation, and the measurements are presented in the table below.

Indicator	Target	Measurement	
		Baseline	Endline
Output Indicator 1.1.1: % of participants who can explain at least two specific peacebuilding concepts they learned as a result of project trainings	65%	0%	80%
Output Indicator 1.1.2: % of participants who describe themselves as confident in their ability to lead peacebuilding efforts as a result of project trainings	75%	0%	91%

The measurements show that the project was effective in delivering the planned training and mentorship activities: from March 2020 to February 2021, Search and partners conducted peacebuilding skills training and mentorship for over 240 young women leaders in the ten project locations. Notably, the project also involved joint activities with IDPs and participants from other groups.. As described by a facilitator in Bor, this choice worked very well: “Some of the women participants were from the IDP camp and when they came out they were afraid and they were not mixing freely, after the first day of the training, they started to interact freely.”

Indeed, under both indicators, targets were comfortably exceeded, with a preponderant number of respondents to the endline survey indicating that they felt more knowledgeable about peacebuilding and confident in taking part in such efforts. The endline survey provides additional data in support of the success achieved by the project under this output. The endline participants’ survey found, for example, that the work done with young women specifically was effective in increasing their capacity and confidence to lead peacebuilding efforts, as shown in

leading peacebuilding efforts as a result of project trainings?”, nearly all respondents answered either “very confident” or “confident.” As for other indicators, the number is highest for young people aged 18 to 35 (97%)—and in fact significantly higher than that recorded for non-youth respondents (87%). It is also worth noting how the highest level of “not confident” responses was recorded among respondents from rural areas (17%).

Answers to the question: Do you feel confident about leading peacebuilding efforts as a result of project trainings? (By respondent type)



This result is also confirmed through qualitative evidence. All the participants interviewed declared that training and mentorship activities strengthened their skills. Many of them declared that they felt “empowered” by the program. Or, as shared by a woman in Juba, “Crown the Woman taught us about our rights”. Some of the participants also had the opportunity to implement the acquired skills straight after the program. The project therefore had a rapid impact, chiefly at the local level. A young woman trained by NWERO in Juba, for instance, completed her mentorship and then became a mentor herself, speaking to young women at the university and in the community:

“I had no space to engage in peacebuilding and I had no space to discuss my problems”

that the acquired skills and knowledge will always be with them for future actions. However, at the same time, several – especially from IDPs groups and remote areas – mentioned limitations related to financial constraints, lack of logistics support, difficulties related to mobility and limited connections with other civil society organizations (CSOs).

Finally, from the interviews and focus groups, it emerged that the involved young women have **acquired skills to lead peace efforts** more at the local than at the national level. In the majority of the interviews and FGDs, the participants presented their skills in a family or community context and their aspirations and first actions seem indeed to have targeted those levels. In several interviews, women shared that the project helped them in dealing with GBV. For instance, a woman in Juba declared: “Actually girls fear to report cases, but they [NWERO] encouraged the young women to report. If one is raped, it’s not her choice; it was a force used.

said: “There is a good collaboration here and before this project the former minister of gender, who is a woman, was helping to mentor the girls.” More on local dynamics, a student in Juba shared that “Women and young girls fought at water points and sometimes the conflicts escalated to levels that police and the army had to be called in. After receiving the knowledge and skills, I was able to speak with the older women about the skills in addressing the conflicts at the water points. They agreed with the suggestion that we should volunteer as supervisors to ensure that there is order at the water points. The plan is now working well because of the training we received from NWERO.”

Concerning the **mentorship programs**, they were implemented and have largely been appreciated by the CSO partners and the mentees of both Crown the Woman (CTW) and NWERO. Both project partners demonstrated significant capacities to mentor and empower young women. Some sessions took place online due to mobility restrictions or to the presence of mentees abroad. Mentorship was fully relevant because it allowed the young women peace builders to connect the skills and knowledge learned during the trainings to their desired implementation for each participant. This connection between training sessions and the implementation of the acquired skills and knowledge also increased the sustainability of the project.

Several participants declared to have learned a lot on the R-ARCSS and some of them made efforts to reach out on it at the local level or on social media. During a FGD in an IDP camp, participants shared their appreciation: “we have gained a lot and we have understood the provisions of the peace agreement. We have learnt about peace building and women’s participation in governance. We are also able to resolve the little conflicts that occur at the family level in the IDP camp”. However, at the same time, cultural and social constraints and perceptions limited their actions significantly, especially outside of Juba. This limitation was due, for instance, to restrictions from their husbands or by the negative consideration of older women. A student in Juba highlighted during a FGD the relevance of meeting stakeholders: “The mentorship was so great, because we were able to meet with influential women who told us how they were able to influence both governance and peacebuilding processes in the country”.

A very positive example of reaching out on the R-ARCSS and related peace efforts was represented by **Alith Cyer Mayar, a writer and a poet mentored by CTW. She created a series of online videos on the R-ARCSS** to generate discussions around governance issues addressed by the Agreement and the youth and women-specific roles in it. The short videos (each three- to ten minutes long) are informal and effective and were watched by hundreds of people and shared by dozens of fellows.⁵ Among the ten videos, one is dedicated explicitly to the Covid-19 implication on the R-ARCSS.

Overall, **reaching the national level was also complex** in these activities. This limitation was firstly due to Covid-19 limitations to bring participants to Juba and to organize meetings throughout the whole project. The limited trust in young women and the limited space for political participation was mentioned during the data collection as a significant barrier for the project’s participants, especially if combined with other financial and mobility constraints. More specific work on the national level could be the objective of a follow-up project capitalizing on the work done during this project.

Another factor that might help to explain findings under this output is about the trust that communities have for women and young people as agents for peace. Despite some progress on this front, the evaluation also found that there still exist doubts, among community members, for the role that women and young people can play as “valued contributors to peace and security”. These findings are further discussed under Objective 2 below.

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Output 1.3: Targeted young women collaborate with diverse CSO groups to implement initiatives promoting peace

Under this output, Search and partners implemented four activities: Mapping of Interlocutors & Bridge-builders, Intergenerational CSO forums, Information Sessions on R-ARCSS Progress and Advocacy Visits to R-ARCSS & Corresponding Mechanisms' Representatives

In this framework, the project had identified two indicators, which, as before, were measured both for the project's baseline and for the final evaluation, as summarized in the table below.

Indicator	Target	Measurement	
		<i>Baseline</i>	<i>Endline</i>
Output Indicator 1.3.1: % of CSOs who report they see added value in collaborating closely with young women to promote peace in their communities	70%	95%	91%
Output Indicator 1.3.2: % CSOs respondents who report they have a plan for activities that improve young women's participation in peace efforts beyond the project's end	70%	88%	73%

For both indicators, the measurements at endline exceed the targets set by the project, yet in both cases they are lower than those recorded during the baseline survey. In the case of indicator 1.3.1 the difference (around 4%) falls within the margin of error and could therefore indicate that in this case there was no change. With indicator 1.3.2, however, the change is significant and might also be due to differences in the methods and samples used for the two surveys.

In this framework, Search and partners were able to map interlocutors and to create an impressive database composed of 700 names of "interlocutors and bridge builders" (186 in Torit, 272 in Aweil, 112 in Juba and 130 in Bor). This document can certainly support future activities in these areas.

The Information Sessions of R-ARCSS Progress and the Advocacy Visits to R-ARCSS & Corresponding Mechanisms' Repre

in. After receiving the knowledge and skills, I was able to speak with the older women about the skills in addressing the conflict raising their

Answers to the question: Do you think that women are listened to as valued contributors to issues of peace and security? (By respondent type)



For indicators 2c and 2d the measurements at endline are higher than at baseline, which would be a positive finding albeit the same caution (i.e. about the difficulty of comparing results) should apply as before. The findings are similar, if slightly more positive, when respondents were asked the same question, but in relation to youth, as per the chart below. A comparison with the baseline measurements for the same questions is, unfortunately, not useful, as those were far higher (86% for women and 84% for youth), confirming that the methods or samples used for the two surveys were different. For 2c, there are significant differences between younger and older participants (93% said yes vs. 79%) and between urban and rural respondents (88% vs. 75%). Similarly, for 2d there is a significant difference between younger and older participants (90% said yes vs. 77%).

Answers to the question: Do you think that youth are listened to as valued contributors to issues of peace and security? (By respondent type)



Comparing endline measurements with project targets, progress under the first

is analyzed outcome by outcome in an attempt to provide further clarity about where the project worked and where it did not work as n100.i8.08 Tsrkp1(vi)4(d)1(e)1()2srk (fco.68 Tm[-3(e)12()49(iw 42TQ0 g

Many times, the radio programs had a direct impact. For instance, as shared by a program manager in Bor, “The issue of child abduction has been rampant in Jonglei state and this affects mostly women and girls. The women from Jonglei Women Association and other panellists were hosted here and they appealed to those who are practicing child abduction to stop. And because of the calls by women, some of the perpetrators have returned the children abducted – this was one of the initiatives of the women that has had a great impact in the community here.” Another example presented by a female student during a focus group in Juba highlights the relevance of the programs: “After our participation in the radio programmes, all FM stations are now reaching to me to speak about the role of young women in peacebuilding, the role of young women and girls and GBV issues. I have several platforms on which I speak about such issues and that is a result of the project.” All the topics selected were fully relevant and based on the needs highlighted in the baseline.

Furthermore, the programs also received some high-level guests, such as South Sudan Vice President Rebecca Nyandeng and Minister of Defence Angelina Teny. These guests were important to gain space and to create dialogue and engagement with policy-makers. As explained by a radio producer: “Key decision-makers listening in are sometimes triggered to do something about issues affecting women’s participation in peacebuilding... The Minister of Gender and the female Vice president promised that once the legislative assemblies were reconstituted, they would introduce bills related to family law and GBV in parliament for discussion.”

This declaration is a positive indicator and points to the potential of using radio to promote more engagement, by communities, on peace and security issues. However, on this aspect, the project was also limited, as achieving advocacy objectives needs several follow-up activities and this could be considered as a first step that needs several others to have an impact. Having important guests also created some challenges, as explained by the same radio producer: “It was not smooth and the radio had to find a way of coordinating with the partners. Some guests or panellists would drop off at the last minute and the radio would struggle to find replacements. Some panellists requested to be transported and there was no money to facilitate the movement of the panellists to the radio station.” Overall, these challenges appear rather common when important guests are involved.

Other challenges faced under this output relate to relevance. One was that the radio programs were not always context-related, as stated by a program’s producer: “The radio broadcasts are the same for all states and for all the radio stations that we send the recordings to. Sometimes this means that some of the broadcasts are not relevant in certain contexts and not relevant in some states.” From the interviews the relevance of working on cultural aspects also emerged. An informant in Jonglei state shared, “sometimes listeners call in and tell us not to bring issues of human rights and women’s rights that are for white people to South Sudan.” Similar dynamics were mentioned on wedding, dowry and other family issues. Additionally, flexibility should be allowed for partners wishing to design unique radio broadcasts that respond to their specific audiences and not necessarily airing ant

Answers to the question: Have you listened to radio shows like Sergeant Esther, Nuswan Salaam or Hagana? (By respondent type)



Overall, the data above sheds positive light on the project's media components, suggesting that the investment in radio programming was both relevant and effective. However, the data also point to some areas for improvement. For example, a breakdown of answers by respondent's location indicates that whereas 52% of respondents from Juba said that they had listened to the programs, the number is only 30% for respondents from Bor (where an additional 32% said that they were not sure whether or not they had listened to the programs).

The evaluation found that external factors also affected the listening, as it happened in Yei during challenging security situations. Another limitation was related to the use of Arabic and English. The last 216.72 ref63.24 520.08 .96 .96 ref63.24 520.08 .96 .96 ref64.2 520.08 452.64 .96 ref516.84

identified two indicators of progress, which were again measured for the project's baseline and for the final evaluation. The measurements are summarized in the table below.

Indicator	Target	
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Young women trained by NWERO impressed a local chief in Kapuri for their confidence during outreach activities. He said that “NWERO is an eye-opener. I can say I was one of those who were rigid, when young women raised their hands to speak, I would think they were disrespectful, but after they organized the outreach and told us the importance of the participation of young women in local peacebuilding, I was able to see the points clearly and the importance of their participation”. He also moved from personal transformation to action, as he shared: “in this area, we have so many “niggas”, a group of young men that wait for the girls on the way as they go to collect water or firewood, and attack them. But because the young women feared to tell us the problems they faced, we as chiefs were unable to help them. After the outreach, we started to listen to the complaints the young women brought to us and now the niggas are afraid to attack the girls.” A limpid example showing how the activities were relevant and they haTm[(A)3()38(l)4(i)4(m)6(p)1(i)4(d)1()38(e)1(xa)1(m)-3(p)1(l)4(e)1()38(sh)1(o)1(w)4(i)4(r

strengthening women and youth participation in local and national peace processes. These studies could be shared with other local and international organizations.

Output 3.1 Concrete evidence of the effectiveness of in-country youth support to peace efforts is fed into the global field

This output foresaw two activities: an analysis on the impact of youth-led efforts to influence the R-ARCSS; and the “What Works” Podcast to share project and case study findings. Under this output, the project had identified two indicators of progress. However, only one of these could be measured for the final evaluation, as summarized in the table below.

Indicator	Target	Measurement	
		<i>Baseline</i>	<i>Endline</i>

Outcome Indicator 3a: % of targeted national, regional, and international-level policy-

In order to further facilitate the dissemination of the case study findings, two other activities were implemented in the final phase of the project. Firstly, two policy briefs were published in July 2021, respectively on youth and on women participation in the Peace Process in South Sudan. The two policy papers are well-structured, but they have limited references to the many successful stories and case studies implemented by the project participants. These publications could certainly benefit more from concrete and tangible examples and narratives. Otherwise, the risk is to have a limited impact on stakeholders due to the general consideration already present in similar documents.

According to Search staff, policy briefs and mediation documents were shared by a group of 25 young women who formed up the network for young women peace mediators in South Sudan. Search has shared the policy briefs with some of their partners including the Ministry Gender, Youth and Social Affairs, Ministry of Peacebuilding, RJMEC, and IGAD respectively.

Furthermore, during the final phase of the project, Search elaborated good practice guidance material for peace mediators. These documents appear concise, well-structured and informative

5. Critical lesson learned and recommendations

This evaluation helps to formulate a series of critical lessons learnt and recommendations mainly for Search and its partners to inform follow-up projects and activities.

In terms of **relevance**, as widely presented the intervention's objectives and design fully responded to the young women's needs and priorities in terms of their role in peace and security matters in the country. This result was also possible because the activities were designed according to the needs collected in the baseline. Furthermore, NWERO, CRN, Eye Radio and other organizations were able to involve young women from different contexts and areas, also from remote ones and among IDPs. The activities remain relevant despite the COVID-19 challenges due to the ability of the project's partners to adapt and to transform constraints into opportunities. For instance, in addition to the original project locations, Search and its partners were successful in extending the implementation of the project to six relevant new locations.

Regarding **effectiveness**, the project's expected results have been achieved against almost all the ambitious indicators. The project's most positive results are represented by activities related to strengthening the ability of young women leaders and groups to collaboratively lead local and national-level peace efforts and young women-led mediation and peacebuilding initiatives. The increase in confidence experienced by participants attending training and mentorship activities is very clear and the follow-up local peacebuilding activities show increased self-confidence, knowledge and skills. The main challenges were represented by transforming attitudes and behaviors about women and youth (and young women in particular) and their role in peace and security, especially on a large scale and at the national level. Changing perceptions has emerged from this evaluation as a slow process that deserves spec

participation in the peace processes in some locations, while in others the collaboration was limited or absent. The project was not fully able to create adequate advocacy platform(s). This was due to external conditions – especially due to Covid-19 limitations – but also because advocacy at the national level needs more specific attention and programming in the complex South Sudanese political landscape. Due to the fact that achieving advocacy objectives needs several follow-up activities, in this regard the project could be considered as a first step that needs several others to have an impact at national level.

The overall **sustainability** of the project presents some limitations. While acquired skills and publications will last beyond the project itself, the monitoring of activities already captured that “though 80% of the respondents see added value when collaborating with young women in peacebuilding initiatives, only 62% still believe CSOs have plans to carry on and sustain the young women programs beyond the end of the project.” Sustainability could also have been better built during the project. For instance, some participants were involved in a single activity, sometimes lasting just one day, without specific follow-up activities. Beyond these two components, the enmeshment of project activities within interventions of partner organizations could only materialize if they manage to mobilize external funding. It should be said that, while financial resource constraints appear to limit the overall sustainability of interventions beyond the lifespan of the project, the interventions were implemented in a context of massive needs and extreme economic vulnerabilities experienced by young women.

Based on these findings and analysis, further action should include the following areas:

- **Target men specifically to transform social attitudes and behaviors about young women.** Some project’s activities highlighted the relevance of involving men – young, but also fathers, local chiefs, etc. – to change the perception of

- **Dedicate more attention to strengthening the local partners at the State levels with the needed capacity on peacebuilding initiatives** so they would continue to engage and create awareness on the local community members. At the same time, follow up visits by Search to the formed groups in the States could further boost the continued engagement of the young women at the State level and underpin the sustainability of the achieved results.
- **Help women groups to develop their small economic activities so they can**12 0 0 .12 176.0

ANNEXES

I. Indicator measurement

	Performance Indicators	Indicator Baseline	EOP Indicator Target	EOP indicator progress	Notes
Outcome 1	Outcome Indicator 1a: % of participants who can cite one concrete example of how the project has improved their ability to lead peacebuilding efforts (Disaggregated by age, sex, location, stakeholder group)	0%	75%	78%	Percentage is even higher (97%) for young people (15 to 35 years old).
	Outcome indicator 1b: # of young women participants who participate in the local or national peace efforts	0	40	90	
	Outcome Indicator 1b: % of participants who report participating in at least one women-led peacebuilding initiative as a result of this project (Disaggregated by age, sex, location, stakeholder group)	0%	70%	94%	
	Outcome Indicator 1c: % of participants who state that their role as peacebuilders has been strengthened as a result of project activities (Disaggregated by age, sex, location)	0%	80%	94%	Percentage is higher (100%) for young people (15 to 35 years old), and lower (90%) for non-young people (36 and older).

Output 1.1 Output Indicator 1.1.1: % of participants who can explain at least two specific peacebuilding concepts they

Output Indicator 1.2.2: % target participants who report improved collaboration between younger and older women involved in peacebuilding

84%

65%

54%

Measurement at endline is lower than that at baseline. This could be due to a small number of respondents from Bor in the endline where the question was often

Output Indicator 1.3.2: %
CSOs respondents who
report they()6(.1.2 507(e)1(n)4

Output 2.1	Output Indicator 2.1.1: % of listeners who can cite at least one instance of positive leadership by women from one of the radio programs (Disaggregated by age, sex, location, stakeholder group)	0%	65%	A613 T 14
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	Output Indicator 2.2.2: % of community members who believe that youth are prepared to lead peace initiatives in their communities (disaggregated by age, sex, location)	88%	70%	69%	Measurement is lower compared to baseline (but in line with target). This could be due external factors, to methodological differences or differences in the samples used for the two surveys (e.g. the “Manganteen factor”, as presented for output indicator 2.2.1.).
	Output Indicator 2.2.3 # of young women-led peacebuilding initiatives	0	30	31	
	Output Indicator 2.2.4: # of rural outreach activities conducted (disaggregated by location and activity type)	0	30	12	
	Output Indicator 2.2.5: # of peace festivals held	0	2	3	
	Output Indicator 2.2.6: # of viewers that interact with content produced as a part of the social media campaign	0	2000	232,414	
Outcome 3	Outcome Indicator 3 a: % of targeted national, regional, and international-level policy-makers who report access to improved information on the role of youth engagement in peace process as a result of materials produced from this project	0	50%	n/a	

	Outcome Indicator 3b: % increase in access to information and collaborative platforms on youth engagement in peace processes	51%	50%	85%	
Output 3.1	Output Indicator 3.1.1: # of case studies produced on the influence of youth in the R-ARCSS process	0	1	1	
					Search organized other two activities to substitute the podcast. Firstly, a meeting with a US Youth Peace and Security Group that provided both a chance for presenting the tools and advocating with US YPS supporters and policy makers. In September 2021, Search also organized an informal meeting between some young women peace mediators involved in the project and members of FEMWISE.
	Output Indicator 3.1.2: # of What Works Podcast produced and broadcast	0	1	0	
Output 3.2	Output Indicator 3.2.1: # of policy briefs on participation of women & youth in peace processes produced	0	2	2	
	Output Indicator 3.2.2: # of good guidance materials produced for peace mediators	0	2	2	

II. Lines of Inquiry

Criterion/ Aspect	Main line of inquiry	Sub-
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Efficiency	4. Has the project been able to establish efficient relations among CSOs to achieve its key objectives?	4.1. Have the CSOs worked collaboratively with the young women networks/youth groups to ensure equal participation in the peace processes? 4.2. What is the networking and/or coordination level achieved by the project with its stakeholders? 4.3 Has the project been able to create adequate advocacy platform (s) for the young women towards advancing their equal participation in peace efforts in South Sudan?
Sustainability	5. To what extent are the achieved results likely to be sustained after the project close out?	5.1 To what extent can beneficiaries make use of skills and knowledge acquired during the project? 5.2 What enables or impedes the sustainability of results? 5.3. What changes has the project brought about policies (at national or subnational level)? 5.4. To what extent will collaborative platforms or mechanisms set up by the project continue to exist after its completion?
Recommendations and lessons learned	6. Which are the critical lessons learned to draw concerning the project's activities and results?	