



South Sudan

Quarterly Newsletter
July - Sept 2022

#Musharaka4Tanmiya



European Union
Civil Protection and
Humanitarian Aid

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Message from the Representative

“You cannot clap with one hand” is a popular African proverb that stresses the importance of collaboration and coordination to address myriad challenges to deliver to the last mile.

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) South Sudan Country office is working with international and national implementing partners to address the needs of women and girls towards achieving the 3 Zeros; zero preventable maternal deaths, zero unmet need for family planning and zero gender-based violence and harmful practices such as child marriage by 2030. Millions of young women and girls in South Sudan have been able to be reached with services by UNFPA and partners amidst numerous challenges ranging from man-made to natural catastrophes.

Despite the successes and achievements scored so far, many issues keep the country office on its toes and solutions need to be arrived at through synergies to realize tangible benefits.

This newsletter covers a wide range of stories ranging from Humanitarian, Gender and Social inclusion, Integrated Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights, Youth and HIV as well as Population and Development.

UNFPA would like to thank its implementing partners, both national and international, donors, and the Government of the Republic of South Sudan for the immense collaboration to serve women, girls and the young people of the Republic of South Sudan.

#Musharaka4Tanmiya is an arabic phrase that means Partnership for Development because we believe the best partnerships are not only dependent on a shared goal but on a shared path of equality, desire and passion. Together we can change the lives of women and girls in South Sudan

Dr. Ademola Olajide
UNFPA Representative



the World Population
2022

seen: The case for action in the neglected
ended pregnancy

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Population Day 2022

In the World of 8 Billion: Towards a
re for All



South Sudan in the World of 8 Billion: Towards a Resilient Future for All



Photo: Dr. Ademola Olajide, UNFPA Representative with girls from the Girls not brides group, during the State of the World Population and World Population Day launch at Nyakuron Cultural Centre.

On the 26th of July 2022, UNFPA South Sudan in partnership with the Government of South Sudan and the support of several donors including USAID, the Governments of Sweden and Norway, launched the State of the World Population Report and commemorated the World Population Day 2022 under the theme “South Sudan in the World of 8 Billion: Towards a Resilient Future for All.” The commemoration event was graced by guest of honor, Honorable Dr. Albino Bol, Minister for Youth and Sports, and brought together key Government officials, donors, stakeholders and various partners, implementing sexual reproductive health programmes at the Nyakuron Cultural Centre. This event highlighted key messages from the 2022 State of the World Report, showcased and exhibited programmes and interventions geared towards achieving the three zeros (zero preventable maternal deaths, zero unmet need for family planning, zero gender-based violence and harmful practices such child marriage) and also raised awareness among youth, stakeholders, and surrounding communities on strategies to end unintended pregnancies.

Dr. Ademola Olajide, UNFPA Representative in South Sudan remarked that **“a society that fails to guarantee rights and choices for women and girls, will fail to optimize the contribution of 50% of its human capital to sustainable national development”**.

The State of the World Population Report noted that nearly half of all pregnancies worldwide, totaling about 121 million each year, are unintended. Moreover, over 60 per cent of unintended pregnancies end in abortion, with an estimated 45 per cent of all abortions being unsafe, and accounting for between 5 and 13 per cent of all maternal deaths recorded. In addition, nearly a quarter of all women are unable to decline sex and make decisions about their own health. With the continued growth in global population, the absolute number of unintended pregnancies is expected to keep rising and the profound conse-

quences of unintended pregnancies for women, girls, societies, and global health will continue to grow.

“Our population of 13 million people provides us an opportunity to enhance the well-being of the population through honest conversation and deliberately targeted policies to address choices and rights” said Honorable Dr. Albino Bol, Minister of Youth and Sports.

World Population Day is celebrated on the 11th of July annually, and offers a moment to celebrate human progress. The world today, despite its challenges, is one where higher shares of people are educated and live healthier lives than at any previous point in history. It is important to keep this fact in mind when, in the next few months, the total number of people in the world will reach 8 billion. This milestone will attract much attention and debate, and likely scaremongering over “too many” people. That would be a mistake. Focusing only on population numbers and growth rates often leads to coercive and counterproductive measures and the erosion of human rights. It can deepen already acute inequalities, such as policies shutting down reproductive health care or denying adequate pensions for the elderly, further marginalizing those left behind.

“Our population of 13 million people provides us an opportunity to enhance the well-being of the population through honest conversation and deliberately targeted policies to address choices and rights” said Honorable Dr. Albino Bol, Minister of Youth and Sports.

“We cannot have a nation without population and a nation’s population is linked to the national sustainable development agenda; It is not about numbers but about quality of life of the people ” Hon. Majur, Chair Parliamentary Network on Population and Development remarked during the event.

The world is fast approaching 2030, the deadline for the Sustainable Development Goals and for UNFPA’s own transformative goals — to end the unmet need for family planning, end preventable maternal deaths and end gender-based violence and harmful practices, including child marriage. UNFPA remains committed to transforming the lives of women and girls and reaching those furthest behind. Preventing unintended pregnancies is a nonnegotiable first step.



Photo:- Guests showcasing the launched State of the World Report under the theme “Seeing the Unseen” during the State of the World Population and World Population day launch at Nyakuron Cultural Centre.



UNFPA, AMREF and Government launch an in-country standard training of fistula Specialized medical teams



Following the development and launch of The National Obstetric Fistula Strategy (NOFS) 2019-2023 for South Sudan, the Ministry of Health together with its partners aim to increase access to quality obstetric fistula prevention, treatment and rehabilitation services, the move is part of the international agenda to eradicate Obstetric Fistula (OF).

Among the many poor health indicators, South Sudan has one of the highest maternal mortality ratios in the world standing at 1,150 per 100,000 livebirths[1] and a high obstetric case fatality rate of 3.5%. It is estimated that Obstetric Fistula prevalence stands at 3% of women in reproductive age group giving an estimate of about 60,000 backlogs of women living with Obstetric Fistula in South Sudan with less than 1,000 having received any surgical repairs and treatment.

The undersecretary Ministry of health Dr. Victoria

Anib, thanked UNFPA, and Amref Africa for the continued efforts in trying to address the challenges of Obstetric Fistula, “there is need to address issues of child marriage, and gender-based violence to effectively tackle the challenges of Obstetric Fistula in South Sudan.” She said

The Obstetric Fistula situation is particularly more precarious due to the high rate of teenage pregnancies estimated at 300/1000 and adolescent birth rate of 158/1000. Early marriages and teenage pregnancies have been widely associated with inability to make informed decision about contraception hence increasing the risk for obstructed labour due to an immature bony pelvis. The weak health systems and poor referral systems coupled with delays to seek professional health care have not only increased the risk of pregnancy and childbirth complications but also limited the access to caesarean sections for women previ-

ously repaired and treated for Obstetric Fistula.

On his part, UNFPA representative, Dr. Olajide Demola said,

“there is need for innovative approaches to deploy training and technical support of the diverse cadres of health workers”

Exacerbated by negative culture norms, customs, and traditional beliefs, sexual and gender-based violence alongside child marriage have undermined the health and safety of many women in South Sudan. Some studies have indicated that about a third of women and girls have experienced physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime and about half have experienced intimate-partner violence (IPV). Such contextual realities underpin the chronic stress propagated by the fear of reprisals.

The Fistula camp saw a total of 41 survivors undergo corrective repairs at Juba Teaching Hospital over the past two weeks.

Obstetric Fistula is an abnormal medical condition whereby there is an opening between the vaginal wall and the urinary bladder, urethra, or rectum of a woman that results in leakage of urine and or faeces through the vagina. During obstructed labour, the wall tissues of the bladder, vagina and rectum are hard pressed between the baby's head and the pelvis bone. This prolonged pressure cuts off blood supply to the affected tissues causing tissue death leading to sloughing and eventually a hole forms between the bladder and vagina or vagina and rectum leading to vesico-vagina fistula (VVF) and recto-vaginal fistula (RVF) respectively or even both.



Photo: Undersecretary Ministry of health Dr. Victoria Anib, hands out a dignity kit to a beneficiary at the Juba teaching hospital.

Using Art for Dialogue on Gender Equality through “Funoon4Hiwar” Creative arts competition 2022



Photo: Kicking off the Funoon4hiwar art competition with students from Juba University and the surrounding schools.

Mayen Kuol, who goes by the stage name Kayana David is one of the Winners of the Funoon4Hiwar Creative arts competition 2022 under the category of painting/ fine art , in the individual .The 24 year-old who completed high school in Kenya in 2019, from Namachanga High School in Bungoma, Western, Kuol also won under the same category last year. Calling this as a rewarding experience he says, “ it is an honor to be among the participants for this [social cause]. I am so grateful, so excited, [and] can’t thank UNFPA enough for initiating this competition ”.

David, another winner won 200\$ prize. David lives with his grandfather in Juba, and exclaimed that he could support his family through his art and gave half of the prize to to his Dad and sent the other half to support his family in Narus, a place located near the border between Kenya and South Sudan.

Another winner is 22 -year- old Cholhok Paulio Ater Kuar, a second-year architecture student at the University of Juba. Having garnered judges’ attention with her video documentary that narrates the challenges of unintended pregnancy, she expresses, “ honestly speaking I did not expect this win. But when I was notified about it, me and my team lacked words to express

our gratitude. Personally, I was overwhelmed. Me and my team had put a lot of efforts in bringing out this piece. We are grateful to UNFPA, Shaba Le Shabab and University of Juba for organizing this. Having won this prize, we are now going to embark on producing short videos to upload on different platforms with targeted messages for the youth on different topics of social cause” , said Cholhok

The creative art competition commenced in June 2022 in collaboration with University of Juba, NTLI (National Transformational Leadership Institute), and in partnership with Shabab Le Shabab, and Paranet Media Ltd. The competition focused on UNFPA’s 2022 flagship report on the State of the World Population, themed, ‘Seeing the Unseen: the neglected crisis of unintended pregnancy’. The competition ran in 5 categories of competition amongst the age groups of 10-17 years and 18-35 years age groups, (i) poetry, (ii)singing, (iii) painting/ art works, (iv) photography and (v) short videos that depict the theme. Shabab Le Shabab and Paranet Media Ltd. with support from UNFPA worked with the Juba University Committee to organize the competition, reaching to 100 schools with the messages of the report, and liaising with the University teachers and Civil Society Organizations

to constitute panels of judges for the selection of the winning entries for each category.

The competition culminated on the International Youth Day by announcing the winners, in line with the celebration of the Youth Month. This year's State of World Population Report 'Seeing the Unseen: the neglected crisis of unintended Pregnancy' puts a spotlight on how easily the most fundamental rights of women and girls are pushed to the backburner in times of peace and during war. It calls on decision-makers and health systems to prioritize the prevention of unintended pregnancies by improving the accessibility, acceptability, quality, and expanding quality sexual and reproductive health care and information. It urges policymakers, community leaders, and all individuals to empower women and girls to make affirmative decisions about their sexual and reproductive health and rights, family planning, and to foster societies that recognize the full worth of women and girls. For, if they do, women and girls will be able to contribute fully to society and will have the tools, information and power to decide about their sexual and reproductive health issues.



Photo: Dr. Ademola Olajide, UNFPA Representative awards a participant of the art competition



Photo:(L-R) Ms. Sara Beysolow Nyanti , United Nations, Resident Coordinator, Ms. Jessie Ann Brouillette Embassy of Canada Hon. Dr. Albino Bol, Minister for youth and sports and Dr. Ademola Olajide, UNFPA Representative hand over prizes to winners of the art competition

Orientation of a New Youth Advisory Panel in South Sudan



Photo: The newly formed Youth Advisory Panel members during the inauguration of the YAP with the UNFPA South Sudan Office Staff.

South Sudan gained independence in 2011 making it the youngest Republic constitutes 73.3% of the population as adolescents. Even though the youth constitute the highest number of the population, Young people are too often excluded by decision-makers – to the detriment of youth themselves and future generations. Promoting youth leadership and participation is key to UNFPA's work. With our efforts enabling young people to develop the skills, knowledge and support needed to make informed decisions about their bodies, lives, families, communities, countries and the world. The formation of the Youth Advisory panel in South Sudan creates a platform for the youth and acts as a mechanism for open dialogue and exchange between UNFPA and young people to advise UNFPA on adolescent and youth issues.

The YAP in South Sudan was established and oriented in August 2022 with a total of 18 representative of young people of which two youths per state from UNFPA targeted States of: Central Equatoria, Upper Nile, Western Bhar El Ghazal and Western Equatoria and one each from the remaining States of Lakes, Warrap, Eastern

Equatoria, Unity State, Jonglei, Northern Bhar El Ghazal and the 3 Administrative Areas (Ruweng Administrative, Pibor Administrative and Abyei). The youth advisory panels attests to UNFPA's mandate to ensure young people attain their full potential by ensuring there is nothing for the youth without the youth at the table

“I have gotten the platform and the space as a UNFPA YAP member, to inspire women and girls in south sudan to achieve their full potential” Anna Maneno Chairperson YAP

The 3 day workshop saw various youth led partners such as Shabab Le Shabab and Afriyaan South Sudan come together at Dembesh hotel to empower the 18 youth with soft skills on what it means to be an advocate of sexual reproductive health rights. Through the orientation workshop knowledge and leadership was given to youth by the country office led by Dr. Ademola Olajide, UNFPA Country Representative in South Sudan. As part of the soft skills offered by the Country office and Youth led partners included an orientation on the UNFPA mandate and how to advocate for the 3 zeros namely zero unmet need for family

planning, zero preventable maternal deaths and zero gender-based violence and harmful practices such as child marriage that are the key thematic areas of concern for UNFPA in South Sudan.

“As part of the UNFPA Youth Advisory Panel I aim to ensure that the rights of women and girls are respected in South Sudan” James Kang

The new YAP members went through a democratic process to install new leadership that includes young members who have exemplary strengths in various thematic areas that link to UNFPA’s mandate such as policy and advocacy on SRHR, GBV, mental and menstrual health, disability mainstreaming, electronic and print media engagement on reaching young people. Anna Maneno was appointed Chairperson of the new panel. UNFPA engages young people in its work, and advocates for youth engagement in the work of others. Just as importantly, UNFPA provides financial and technical support to adolescents and youth who are in the process of building networks

“I have gotten the platform and the space as a UNFPA YAP member, to inspire women and girls in south sudan to achieve their full potential” Anna Maneno Chairperson YAP

and organizations to advocate for their human rights. The inclusion of youth from diverse backgrounds and identities, particularly the disadvantaged and marginalized, is prioritized.



Photo: Participants of the newly formed Youth Advisory Panel, that was launched in August 2022.



Overcoming all odds to pursue his dream profession - the tale of a laboratory technician graduate with physical disability in Yambio



Photo: James Elisa during the graduation procession in Yambio Freedom Hall.

James Elisa Babu is physically challenged and is only mobile with the aid of his tricycle. Born into a poor family of seven, James said life has not been easy for him. James harbored the desire to become a laboratory technician, but taking the dive was not easy. Despite all odds he was not deterred. “When I was in primary 8, I drew the picture of the microscope. It came out well and I got inspired. From there, I promised myself that I would achieve this dream to become Laboratory Technician”, he said.

After completing senior 4 in 2016, when James joined Yambio State Health Science Institute in 2017, the start was not easy either. “When I went to pick the registration form, the principal told me that he will need to first consult whether I will be allowed to undertake this course [due to the disability]. I felt bad as I was being judged based on my disability”, adds James.

After a short period, the Principal returned to him with the good news that he had been cleared to pursue the course, something that gave him a huge relief. Recounting his days in the school, he said that from

the day one his life was not easy as he had to navigate through steps of the hospital and the school building to access the classrooms for lessons.

“My classmates were very helpful. They helped to wheel me in and out of the classrooms and we used to go out together for breakfast and lunch”, James recollects. “But this should not be the case. The classrooms, hospitals, and public spaces all need to be made accessibility-friendly for people like me” he recommends.

Article 19 of the UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2006, emphasizes that persons with disabilities are the rights holders. The principles of the Convention (Article 3) emphasis particularly on respect for the individual’s inherent dignity, autonomy, and independence.

The next challenge was to raise 20,000 South Sudanese Pounds (equivalent to 40\$). This gave him the idea of starting a small roadside telephone charging booth and a stall to sell

cigarettes in a nearby market. “I started with one Bako (roll); charged mobiles phones at Pozo market. I would pay some money to a businessman who runs a generator in the market to power my telephone charging booth, which helped me raise 20,000 SSP tuition fees. On my way to school, some well-wishers would give me money. I would buy something to eat and save some money for pens and books” soft-spoken James narrates.

James would like to continue studies to obtain a degree in medical laboratory technician. He appeals to the people with disabilities not to be held back. He stresses that persons with disability should fight to claim the equal spaces within society.

The principal of Yambio Health Science Institute Mr. Filbert Victor described James as a creative and hardworking student. “He moved from a private clinic to another to raise money for his stud-

ies. His condition did not make him feel vulnerable. I have hope in him.”

James is one of the 195 students who graduated from the Health Sciences Institute at an event held at Yambio freedom square. The graduates passed different disciplines such as public health, Laboratory Technicians, Nursing, and Midwifery.

The combined graduation of three batches were delayed due to insecurity and Covid-19. The Institute is operated by AMREF with support from UNFPA, financially supported by Government of Sweden and Global Affairs Canada.



Photo: The Procession kicking off during the graduation at Yambio Freedom Grounds

Surviving the jaws of death - One Stop Centre in Wau, Western Bahr El Ghazal



Rimaze*, a 17-year-old girl was raped by an old man in Bazia Jedia, one of the counties in Western Bahr El Ghazal. When Rimaze was brought to the One Stop Centre OCS in Wau teaching Hospital, she shared with the case workers, “I fear for my health and fear if I would get any diseases or pregnancy”. Rimze was traumatized by the incident and had expressed suicidal thoughts. “At the GBV One Stop Center, I received counseling and medical support, which made me feel safe and calm because I am certain there will be no diseases or pregnancy. And now nothing would hinder me from going back to school and live with dignity in my community,” Rimaze shared her hopes.

After three weeks of counseling, Rimze was supported to return to the community. The counselling sessions helped to restore her self-confidence that rape is not end of life. Her parents and community in the neighboring area were sensitized on the importance of breaking the silence around sexual violence and bringing GBV survivors to access life-saving services. They were made aware of their critical role in restoring Rimaze’s life and self-esteem. This sensi-

tization played a crucial role as Rimaze has been supported to go back to school.

Aza Khamis, the Case worker who supported Rimaze throughout the process expressed joy that she could assist her with life saving medical support and counseling. Aza stated “When Rimaze arrived at the OSC, she was distressed and expressed suicidal ideation, and she kept saying ‘that old man ended my life!’ After realizing that there are facilities and people who survivors can turn to, Rimaze became assured. Reflecting from her experience, Aza adds that on most occasions, survivors especially sexual violence survivors arrive at OSC in this state of confusion, distress and pain. Expressing her exasperation, Aza said, “I get overwhelmed by the reality that rape still persists in our community. But what gives me most satisfaction is that these survivors always come back to share with us when they become well.”

The Community Mobilizers of One Stop Centre shared that the Community Action Groups

established in the communities act as the support system for the survivors and assist the survivors by bringing them to the centre to seek timely help, and also help the survivors to deal with the initial trauma. “The group also raises awareness in the community on rape, early marriage and early pregnancy and highlights its negative effect on the girls and community, and we realise that building these community groups is the strategy to prevent the occurrence of GBV, especially sexual violence.

“I cannot imagine the shame and stigma I would have had to live with for the rest of my life. I am grateful to my parents and neighbors who took me to the One stop center, where I received counseling that has boosted my confidence and has motivated me to go back to school,” expressed Rimaze, the young survivor, ready to start the new chapter of her life.

The One Stop Centre in Wau, led by the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare and State Ministry of Health, which support with referrals and overall coordination. The OSC is managed by SIHA Network (Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa), a women’s rights organization, and supported by UNFPA and Swiss Development Cooperation Agency (SDC), where many GBV survivor like Rimaze access free and survivor-centric medical, psycho-social and legal support. The One Stop Center and safe house play a critical role in access to timely, efficient, and effective support services for the survivors of GBV.



Photo: Newly constructed women and girls friendly space in Leer that advocates for a space where women are able to engage and get empowered through social economic activities such as pot making.

Breaking social taboos on the use of contraceptives.



At the age of 18, Atong was married off to Mohammad, aged 40. After marriage, she moved to Mingkaman with her husband and settled down. In 2015, she came to learn of the Mingkaman Reproductive Health (RH) clinic as she was expecting her first child. She started to visit the clinic for regular prenatal check-ups. In time, she gave birth to a healthy baby girl and continued visiting the Mingkaman RH clinic for postnatal check-ups too.

In spite of contraception being a social taboo in their community, Atong and Mohammad decided that they did not want children for a few years. The nurse in the Mingkaman RH clinic provided information on family planning and its methods, and Atong chose contraceptive injection. This form of birth control allowed her and her husband to make the decision to delay having a second child for four years. In 2020, she became a mother to another healthy baby girl.

Atong visited the clinic for check-ups and interacted with the team to gain more knowledge about women's healthcare, which helped her as she had a high-risk pregnancy. Soon, she gave

birth to her healthy baby boy in the RH clinic. Atong and Mohammad have now decided together to continue visiting the clinic for more information on health and the number of children they desire to have. Following this, and with the support of the healthcare team in Mingkaman, Mohammad recently underwent a successful vasectomy procedure.

"Mingkaman clinic provides so much information about women and child healthcare, reproductive and family planning. With responsibilities at home, we do not have time to visit the hospitals as they are all far away. We only visit government hospitals if referred by Mingkaman RH clinic, otherwise we are totally dependent on Mingkaman RH clinic supported by UNFPA" says Atong. Atong also hopes her children receive their education and become graduates who get good jobs and help their community someday.

Provision of Integrated Lifesaving Reproductive Health and GBV Prevention and Response Services in Bentiu, Leer and Mayendit for Floods and Crises Affected Communities – Unity State.



Photo: Women leaders from Juong Temporary Protection Area, after completing a Five days training on Case management and prevention of GBV prevalence in Leer County. Received dignity kits from UNFPA as a way to mitigate GBV in the community.

The CERF project aims to support vulnerable populations who have been affected by the conflicts, floods and domestic related violence in Unity state with Sexual Reproductive Health (SRH) and Gender Based Violence (GBV) prevention and response services. The project targets a number of 60,000 beneficiaries. (23,226 men, 24,174 women, 6,174 boys and 6,426 girls) with GBV/SRH integrated services.

During the implementation period in the first quarter (1st June-31st August 2022), UNIDOR had a significant achievement and also encountered some challenges as shown in the activities' pictures below.

The project has so far served over 1,854 persons through integrated SRHiE services, 765 adolescent boys and girls benefited from integrated Sexual Reproductive Health services, 2,435 persons were reached with information on integrat-

ed SRHiE services, 157 GBV survivors benefited from various forms of GBV case management, 22 women and girls were provided with dignity kits, 2 women benefited from CASH assistance and 4,585 people were reached with GBV aware messages at the community level.

As part of GBV risk mitigation measure, UNIDOR with support from UNFPA managed to distribute dignity kits to adolescent girls in Leer County (TPA- Area). Girls exercised their enthusiasm to UNIDOR team to having shown commitment and humanity to girls whose dignity and self-esteem was lowered in school during menstrual days. They also indicated that this support has greatly impacted their lives in a way that they will not be worried anymore during their days and their performance in school will improve since they won't be missing classes and exams. They therefore urged UNFPA to continue supporting UNIDOR so as it's a national partner that they have known

for years which has supported them since the crisis elapsed.

As part of strengthening GBV prevention and response services in Dindin Payam of Leer County, UNIDOR was able to establish a women and girls friendly center. This was a challenging duty in a way that due to heavy rains in Unity state, Transportation of Construction materials from Adok Port to the last mile has been slow due to flooding. But as the UNIDOR team was committed to its work, the WGFS was completed and functional now. As the team looks forward to delivering other local materials to the site to fence it.



Photo: A successfully renovated Drug store at Bentiu State hospital by UNIDOR under CERF/ UNFPA project.



Photo: As part of GBV risk mitigation measure, UNIDOR with support from UNFPA managed to distribute dignity kits to adolescent girls in Leer County (TPA- Area)

One Stop Centre in Leer a Safe Haven for Women and Girls



Photo:- Beneficiaries in Leer, undergoing training and socio-economic training to avert them from gender-based violence at the Women and girls friendly space supported by UNFPA

The floods that occurred in Unity State affected an estimated 220,000 people and has caused massive displacements in different counties to include Rubkona and Leer Counties. In Rubkona, five new sites were created to host the affected populations.

On top of the flooding, Leer County has experienced sporadic incidents of insecurity which further aggravated the situation, many community members fled to various locations to include Leer town and Temporary Protection Area to seek refuge.

GBV is especially problematic in the context of emergencies/crisis because women are often targeted for abuse, and are the most vulnerable to exploitation, violence, and abuse because of their gender, age, and status in society.

“I am one of the GBV survivors supported at the OSC. I was impregnated by a man who then left me and never showed up again” Nyamijen narrates. This forced me to go to Leer and seek his parents intervention but ended up giving birth there.

I sought help at the Leer OSC where they taught me bread making skills. I started selling bread, the earning I saved will help me support my further studies. I do appreciate HRSS in partnership with UNFPA for providing such a tremendous capacity support through women and girl empowerment tailored on cash assistance.

In addition, women and girls faced many other challenges both for their practical and strategic gender needs. The recent crisis had a major impact on the livelihood / income generating activities for women and girls creating a tough economic situation, which further increased their vulnerabilities. Loss of property during the tough times increased the demand for food, non-food items and shelter for Internally displaced persons. The congestion in the current IDP areas compromise the hygiene and privacy and could lead to increase rates of GBV. With the flooding, women are forced to go to far areas in search of firewood and forced them to be in flood waters which brings health hazards.

Due to lack of family income to pay for school fees, girls are forced to stop their education which exposes them to child marriage. Given the situation, scaling up of GBV prevention and response interventions was deemed very crucial to address the issues and concerns of women and girls amidst the different crisis.

With such UNFPA increased its partnership with different NGO specifically with Hope Restoration South Sudan (HRSS) to implement life-saving GBV Prevention and Response in Rubkona and Leer Counties.. The project was officially launched in Leer and Bentiu in June 2022. The event brought together GBV partners, local authorities, key government officials and community members. One of the key interventions of the project is the establishment and management of Women and Girls Friendly Space (WGFS). It is “a structured place where women’s and adolescent girls’ physical and emotional safety is respected and where they are supported through processes of empowerment to seek, share, and obtain information, access services, express themselves, enhance psychosocial well-being, and more fully know their rights.



Photo: Women in Leer undergoing training on making of stoves that are used as economic buffers and items for sale

Youth Enterprise Fund can help to stop child marriage in South Sudan, says Hon. Albino Bol, Minister of Youth and Sports.



Photo: (L-R) Hon. Dr. Albino Bol, Minister for Sports and Youth, Ms. Sara Beysolow Nyanti, United Nations Resident Coordinator and Dr. Ademola Olajide, UNFPA Representative during the International Youth Day.

“The young people are supposed to guide this nation towards a positive direction, but at times the opposite is true. The young people are used to promote tribal agenda. The Ministry of Youth and Sports together with the UN, will engage the young people in sports and microfinance program and the presidency is soon rolling out the Youth Enterprise Fund, which will also act as a catalyst to end child marriage”. These were the words of Youth and Sports minister Hon. Albino Bol during the national event to mark the month-long celebration of International Youth Day 2022 at Nyakuron Cultural Center on August 24, 2022.

Hon. Albino stressed that child marriage is one of the root causes of economic hardships the country is grappling with, highlighting that it is why young girls are being auctioned in “marriage”. “The president has directed me to design the Youth Enterprise Fund for young people. This is going to be a means of empowering the girl-child” added Hon.

Albino.

The UN Resident Coordinator, Sara Beysolow Nyanti stressed that the International Youth Day should give a platform for the youth to speak about what the youth want; stressing that youth inclusivity should be about understanding what the youth want such that they sustain the nation, regardless of where they are.

“The youth of today need to reimagine the nation they want. Often times young people are shut out from making decisions. The time has come for us to look at how we can preserve culture and embrace the future” she said.

Laku Bonaparte, a youth who spoke on behalf of people living with disabilities appealed to the

government and development partners to have people with disability included in their policies, programs, and development agenda in line with United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of the year 2006.

The acting Youth Union Chairperson, Ms. Fernanda Paul Acuei urged the youth to claim their space, and speak up on issues affecting them. “Be responsible youths and work for the betterment of your country” she urged.

Hon. Bol, the Minister of Youth and Sports expressed gratitude to UNFPA for its unwavering support towards the cause of the young people in South Sudan.

The International Youth Day is globally celebrated to draw attention on the issues related to youth at international and national level. It is dedicated to shine spotlight on the role young people play in tackling global issues and achieving sustainable development goal (SDG).

In addition to raising awareness of challenges and problems facing the world’s youth and amplifying young peoples’ voices, actions and initiatives, the Day is also about their meaningful, universal, and equitable contributions in fighting global issues of concern.

Under the global theme “Intergenerational Solidarity: Creating a World for All Ages”, adapted into the national theme, Intergenerational Solidarity: Building A South Sudan for All Ages!, this year’s International Youth Day recognizes the importance of all ages in achieving SDGs and addressing global Youth challenges and issues. It also recognizes the Youth contributions in addressing global issues in different ways. UNFPA, UNICEF, IOM together with a consortium of national NGOs under Shabab Le Shabab Network offered a wide range of activities highlighting youth participation in the country.

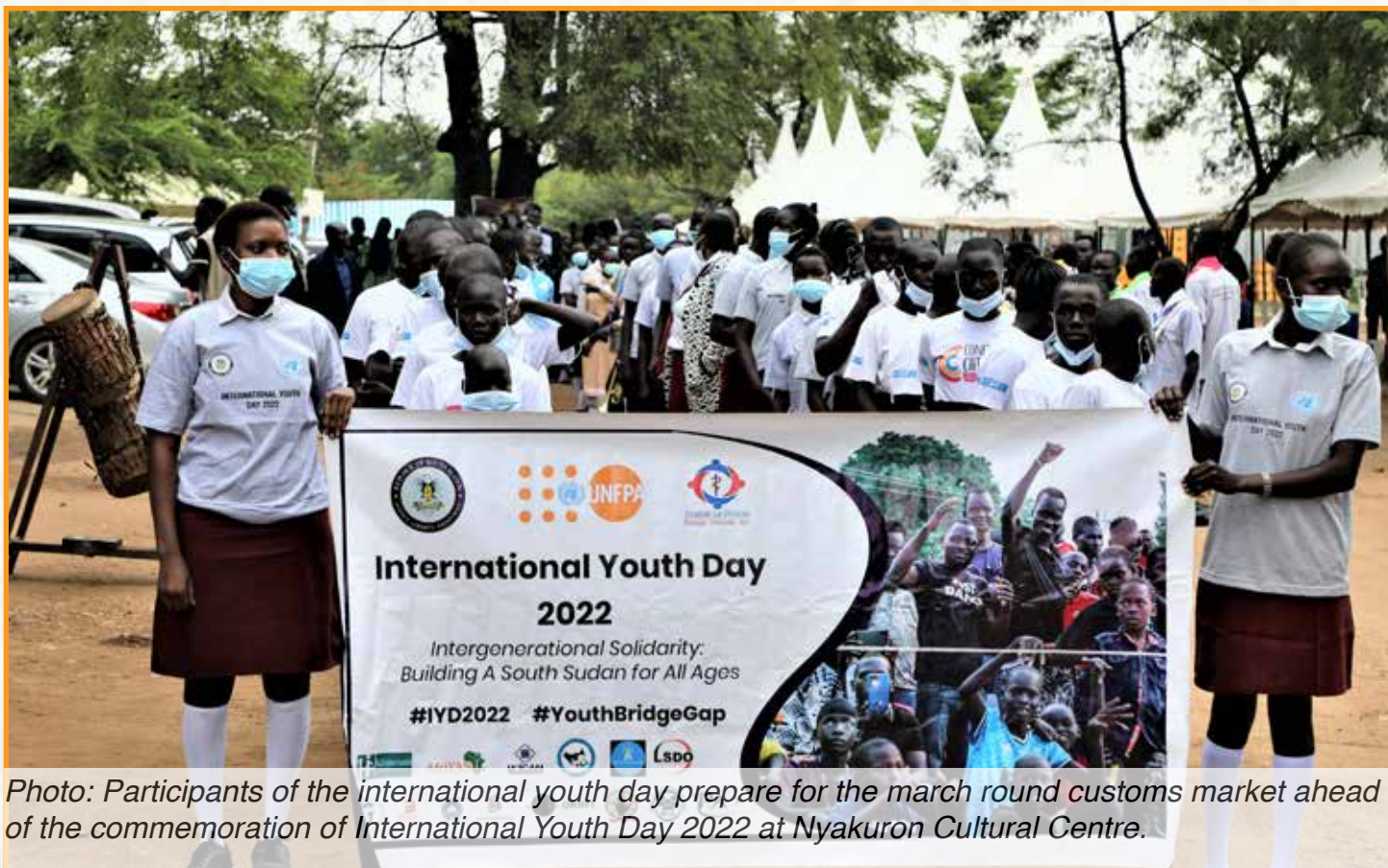


Photo: Participants of the international youth day prepare for the march round customs market ahead of the commemoration of International Youth Day 2022 at Nyakuron Cultural Centre.

“Women and Girls Friendly Space” a safe haven for victims - Jane Connors, Victims’ Rights Advocate



Photo:- : Women victims were trained on production of the Fuel-Efficient Stove.

As seen in emergencies, when the humanitarian response scales up, the risk of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) increases. The presence of large-scale humanitarian actors and peacekeepers has exacerbated incidences of sexual exploitation and abuse especially for women and girls.

With a systemwide approach and to contribute to addressing gaps in support and assistance available to victims of SEA, UNFPA is implementing a project titled “Improving Support for Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse through Provision of timely, quality and survivor-centred services in Unity, Jonglei and Upper Nile States of South Sudan. The project uses the existing UNFPA supported Women and Girls Friendly Space (WGFS) in Internal Displaced People (IDP) Site A (Power Station) for service provision such as prevention, mitigation and response activities to Victims who are sexually abused. To ensure comprehensive response services, victims are also referred to the One Stop Center for psychosocial, medical and legal services.

Ms. Jane Connors, Assistant Secretary-General, Victims’ Rights Advocate, Office of the Secretary-General on 22nd September visited the Women and Girls Friendly Space in Site A at the project location to examine the progress of the systemwide approach to SEA Victims assistance and to assess the implementation of the project. Together with Ms. Jane Connors, the Director of the Administrative Law Division, Aruna Thanabalasingam, Chief Conduct and Discipline Service New York - Matthew Sanidas, UNFPA Officer in Charge, Dr. Kidane Abraha, and Project Focal Point, MS. Catherine Baga.

Dr. Kidane Abraha expressed gratitude to host the ASG to the project site for the official Launch of the Victims Trust Fund.

“UNFPA understands the underlying risks for women and girls as relates to sexual exploitation and abuse and is committed to ensure that Victims as a priority get the assistance they need including implementing other preventive and risk mitigation measures” noted Dr Kidane Abraha

In appreciation of the Trust Fund, he welcomed opportunities for scale up of the same project to accommodate more beneficiaries as UNFPA through its existing structures for GBV and SRH was better placed to implement the project.

“Women and Girls Friendly Space is a perfect and safe place for women and girls to interact and learn skills to allow them engage in various income generating activities to rebuild their lives and enhance their resilience”. Ms Jane Connors, commends

She noted that, she was saddened by the massive flooding in Bentiu which she said had increased inequalities particularly for women and girls leading to increased vulnerabilities, reduced resilience and increased risks of sexual exploitation and Abuse.

She urged the project to increase on awareness raising to enhance knowledge on prevention and response to SEA but again emphasizing the importance of providing Victims who are mothers an opportunity to get an education by providing enabling environment for them to participate. She said that this could include a Childcare center for their children as they attend school.

She also stressed the importance of legal counseling allowing victims the option to choose to seek for legal redress as well as working with traditional leaders who deal with traditional issues to do so online with Human Rights Principles.

Ms. Aruna, the Director of the Administrative Law Division said that her office - office of Administrative Law Division manages the Trust Fund in support of SEA and that the launch of the project in the field was timely to allow her office see what practical benefits and impact the project was contributing in the lives of the Victims and all those at risk.

She commended the progress made so far in terms of assistance and the various activities the women and girls were able to participate in.

“I am looking forward to expanding support to con-

tinue the good work UNFPA is doing and the collaboration that has contributed to the Mid-term results”. Ms. Aruna, the Director of the Administrative Law Division

While Matthew Sanidas, Chief Conduct and Discipline Service NY, said that it was a fantastic opportunity to see how the mission, the Trust Fund and UNFPA was working together to address SEA but particularly ensuring that the Victims get assistance and that what they are getting can put smiles back to their faces.

The visit also allowed the ASG to interact with the vulnerable women and girls including the victims of SEA who are benefiting from the different prevention, mitigation and response, services such as; Case Management and Psychosocial Support Services (PSS), income Generation Activities/ Livelihood to economically empower the vulnerable women and victims, production of fuel-efficient Stove to minimize consumption of firewood and charcoal, and SEA awareness raising activities to enhance prevention and risk mitigation.

UNFPA remains steadfast on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in the delivery of aid to vulnerable populations mostly to protect the weak and those in need and uphold the dignity of every human being under their care.



Photo:- :Ms. Jane Connors, Assistant Secretary-General, Victims' Rights Advocate, looking at the women and girls while doing crochet of bedsheets

UNFPA rallies the boda-boda sector to promote peace and put an end to gender-based violence.



Photo: Dr. Ademola Olajide, UNFPA Representative with Abraham Jok, Chairman of the South Sudan Boda Boda Motorcycle Association launching the Boda Boda convention.

“The boda-boda sector is very important in every African country, including South Sudan, and if you are going to benefit from the sector, we must make sure that you are protected and the association grows, you have a stake in taking care of yourselves, the association, and the republic of South Sudan. You have a role to provide leadership to build peace, to respect yourselves and also respect the women and we must work together to end GBV in South Sudan”, said Dr. Olajide Ademola, the UNFPA Country representative during the flag off of the road show that saw the riders march from Freedom Hall through customs market, to freedom bridge, Konyo-konyo, melekia, muduria, ministries -Kololo stretch to Munuki-Gudele one and back to Freedom Hall

Dr. Demola thanked the leadership of the office of the First Vice President H.E. Mama Rebecca Nyan-deng De-Mabior and the leadership provided by the SSMBA and pledged to work closely with the two institutions to grow the association.

The Executive Director in the office of the Vice president, David Dau said that the safety of every pas-

senger who boards a boda-boda bike entirely lies in the hands of the bike rider. “Today we are here to talk about your safety and that of the passenger you carry, so your own safety and that of your passenger is very paramount. Every single day you interact with more people than any of us, that is why the government in partnership with UNFPA have teamed to work on the safety of boda-boda drivers and their passengers. I wish you the best”, added Mr. Dau.

“I am extremely happy with the support UNFPA has given us. They have given us helmets, reflector jackets, these are very important protective gears for safety. There is a lot that is at stake through our cooperation/ collaboration with UNFPA. And we thank our government too”, said Abraham Jok, the chairperson of the South Sudan Motorcycle Bod-Boda Association-SSMBA at the flag off or the road show on September 18, 2022.

The road show was a build -up to the Boda-Boda convention that brought together boda-boda riders from across South Sudan, including the three

administrative areas, to discuss key issues related to sexual and reproductive health promotion for positive and healthy behaviour, including positive masculinity to denounce gender-based violence against women and young girls. These were brought out during the flag off ceremony. The South Sudan commercial motorbikes also known as boda-boda plays a very important role in the transport sector across the country and is a source of income to many young people and households. The commercial motorbikes represent 80% means of transportation, and it is estimated that a total of 70,000 Boda-boda riders across the Country including the ten states and the three administrative areas. It is estimated that one boda-boda rider transports an average number of 15 to 20 people per day and most of the riders are young people under 35 years. The role of the Boda -Boda riders in national economy as well as importance in creating a safe and enabling environment in public spaces, especially for women and girls is paramount.



Photo: Gillian Garnet-Butts, UNFPA Midwifery Specialist with a boda boda rider during the flag off, of the SSMBBA Convention



Photo: Hon. David Aleu, Executive Director Office of H.E Rebecca Nyandeng and Dr. Ademola Olajide, UNFPA Representative flagging off the South Sudan Boda Boda Roadshow.

Amref – journey with the CSE-out of school master trainers



Photo: Champions of Comprehensive Sexual Education (CSE) showcase their banners during an outreach in Juba.

UNFPA with funding from Norway and Sweden supported Amref staff together with other members from various implementing partners of UNFPA received an all-inclusive training on comprehensive sexuality education for out of school to be master of trainers on comprehensive sexuality education in July 2021 for about two weeks. From that training action plans on the best strategies to create an enabling environment for CSE and create awareness on CSE were developed.

The master trainers were first involved in CSE out of school training of facilitators with Amref where they were trained about 180 facilitators from Maridi, Wau, Yambio and Juba. These members trained are from different ethnic and professional background such as health workers, youth leaders, teachers, public health workers, politicians among others. At the end of these trainings, the trained facilitators came up with different action points such as community clubs, community drama among others. The trainings since then have yielded results with the coming up of the community clubs where different facilitators created/create their groups in their zones for specific days

for discussions on CSE. As seen in figure 1 is a community club session in Wau.

In addition, CSE-master trainers are/were actively engaged in the community dialogues with local leader (chiefs, women heads, youth leaders etc) as an avenue to create an enabling environment for CSE in the community. In these discussions the CSE master trainers used different techniques to captivate the leaders such as role plays and reflection sessions. As seen in figure 2

Knowing that the CSE –out of school is having the same content as CSE-In school, Amref tapped into that and continued to work with master trainers in the secondary schools reached out and university camps. With this kind of assistance from the master trainers: CSE –Open day was a success. CSE –open days are complete days given to Amref by the schools where Amref facilitators are present in every class for the whole morning session to create awareness on CSE followed by an afternoon one-on-one session by any students as sports, debate or drama goes on. Some schools have very many students therefore, Amref staff plus the peer educators will not be enough here

the master trainers were of great help. Through this approach, Amref was able to reach so many young people in secondary schools.

For the university camps that were on going for 3 to 5 days, the master trainers were involved and they roles included CSE awareness, FP awareness, condom demonstrations among others. The presence of the master trainers in the universities enabled sessions for focus group discussions, one on one among others hence excellent deliveries.

These CSE master trainers have continued to change the mindset of many people in the county through different forms such as radio programs, parliamentary sessions, public events and sports as they use any opportunity to popularize CSE in the country. Amref on the other hand is continuing to work with this team closely to reach as many people as possible in the country.



Photo: Lead CSE Facilitators engaging with participants in Wau



Photo: CSE trainers engaging with community members

Strategic Advocacy to Achieve the Three Zeros in South Sudan



Photo: Dr. Ademola Olajide, UNFPA Representative courtesy call to First Vice President H.E Dr. Riek Machar.

South Sudan gained its independence in 2011, making it the youngest republic in Africa. Under the terms of 2018 Revitalized Peace Agreement that came into effect on 22 February 2020, South Sudan is now governed by a Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity (RTGoNU).

This government is led by a cabinet of 35 members, 5 vice presidents and the President of the nation H.E. Salva Kiir. The Vice Presidents were set to rule in the form of clusters; H.E. Dr. Riek Machar Teny, First Vice President (Governance Cluster), H.E. Dr. James Wani Igga Vice President of the Economic Cluster, H.E. Taban Deng Gai, Vice President of Infrastructure Cluster, H.E. Rebecca Nyandeng De Mabior, Vice President of the youth and gender cluster and H.E. Hussein Abdelbagi, Vice President of the Service Cluster.

Since the UNFPA South Sudan Country Representative, Dr. Ademola Olajide's, arrival in South Sudan in April 2022, he has played an active role in meeting the highest levels of Government such as Vice President H.E. Dr. Riek Machar and H.E. Mama Rebecca Nyandeng, to not only pay a formal introduction, but to lobby for the rights of women and girls in South Sudan. Engaging with the various vice presidents plays

a key role in having the highest level of governance understand the UNFPA's mandate to uphold the rights of women and girls while achieving the 3 transformative results; Zero unmet need for family planning, zero preventable maternal deaths and zero gender-based violence and harmful practices such as child marriage.

UNFPA over the years has played a very key role in supporting the government of South Sudan through various efforts such as conducting the country's first Population Estimate Survey through the National Bureau of Statics, led by the Office of the Vice President Dr. James Wani Igga, Championing the rights of women and girls through the ministry of Gender, led by the office of Vice President, H.E. Mama Rebecca Nyandeng as well as giving ample support to the humanitarian crisis in South Sudan in the various states.

UNFPA South Sudan continues being on the ground before, during and after crises, working closely with governments, local NGOs, UN agencies and other partners to ensure that sexual reproductive health and rights and responses to gender-based violence are integrated into emergency responses.



Promoting peace, gender & menstrual hygiene in cattle camps



Internal conflicts, displacements, and cultural discriminatory practices affect women and young girls to exercise their rights and hinder their access to sexual and reproductive health information.

Together with partner Shabab le Shabab, UNFPA identified a unique set-up of cattle camps to promote SRH to ensure the services and information reach the last mile. The cattle Camp project is an innovative project which seeks to reach youth and teenage Girls with an integrated Peacebuilding, Sexual Reproductive Health and rights, prevent gender-based violence, enable peaceful co-existence, break the silence of menstrual health, and mental health among youths and other community members in seven cattle Camps in Terekaka County of Central Equatoria State in South Sudan.

The area occasionally experiences conflicts among cattle keepers and pastoralists value their livestock more than anything even their own lives which leave women and girls with limited space to basics of human rights and exposes them to

too many challenges of GBV, harmful practices, and limited access to important services such as health, education, security, among others.

In the cattle camp, young girls are married at a very early age literally out of their consent because it is culture. Access to education particularly girls is not in any one's dreams, menstrual hygiene is strongly attached to traditional practices as women are isolated during their menstruation with no sanitary pads. Using sanitary pads is considered to cause barrenness or infertility.

With no health centre within, the community relies on traditional herbs. Childbirth and maternal health are not proper with no medical attendance which accounts to reasons for health-related issues such as fistula and maternal deaths.

A team from Shabab Le Shabab Health Alliance camped for fourteen days within the cattle camps to run the difference sessions including men on positive masculinity on peace-building and SRHR.

UNFPA launched a campaign with partners of Shabab Le Shabab to raise awareness of pasto-

ralists in Terekeka cattle camps. UNFPA support in peacebuilding initiatives with cattle camps with an objective to enhance menstrual health hygiene, prevention of gender-based violence, and mental health and community resilience.

“Peace is fundamental in delivering programs for the population and development. As we launch the cattle camp peace project, we all have collective responsibility in actively working to build, deepen, and maintain peace while ensuring both men and women thrive, and the potential of young people is fulfilled” said Dr. Ademola Olajide, UNFPA Representative.

Over 500 people in attendance of the launch, the chairperson of Youth Union Terekaka County, cautioned the youth of the cattle camps against violence “resolve issues peacefully” as he emphasised on the importance of behaviour change.

With UNFPA support to local partners, a big shift of mindset particularly isolation of young girls during their menstruation to acceptance to use re-usable local clothes to cover themselves during their menstruation period has been gradually achieved.

During the fourteen days of camping in the cattle camps, teenage girls and young women sessions covered training on basic skills on making re-usable pads using local materials, sensitization on menstrual health hygiene and management, and preventions of other STIs among young girls. An interactive open discussion which helped to break the silence, fears and stigma around menstruations and STIs.

Other interactive sessions on different GBV issues conducted separately for women and men as their culture demands which allows women open up about GBV issues affecting them. It is worth noting that men acknowledge the GBV issues within the cattle camps as they are root causes. Peacebuilding sessions are exclusively done with youth and elders with the cattle camp.

“Behavior change and shift of the mindset doesn’t happen in a day. UNFPA commits to continue working and supporting communities beyond cattle camps across South Sudan to ensure that SRH services and information is accessible to communities for the women and girls to have a decent life” said Dr. Ademola Olajide, UNFPA Representative



Photo: Teenage girls and young women training on reusable sanitary pads and on menstrual hygiene management



How the use of modern contraceptives has empowered Ayen and her family



As you walk in the Suk Jow Market in Wau, you note a hype of activities with a lot of merchandise being traded. One can't help noticing the stand that has garments displayed with a couple of women behind busy working with the tailoring machines.

Ayen Abraham aged 34 a mother of five is busy on one of the machines and warmly shares her story on use of contraceptives as the other women listen.

"I have been married for 10 years now. When I just got married that is before I came to know about family planning, I used to conceive so frequently that I did not have time to do any work to earn something for the family. After the birth of my third child, my husband and I decided that I should go to Wau Teaching Hospital for family planning services. This is against our tradition, but we had no choice than doing it," she said.

Ayen shared the benefits she has experienced using family planning.

"I have a friend whom we got married in the same year and now she has 7 kids. For me, my last born is now almost four years old and enrolled in Pre-School. She added that the decision by the family to use modern contraceptives has paid off the family.

"My husband is a private police officer in South Sudan police service in Wau earning less than 2500 South Sudanese pound per month (which is less than 5 USD per month) and is not even enough to provide one meal in a day and send our kids to school. However, since I started using modern contraceptive methods my life has changed."

"I was able to enroll in a tailoring course which I finished in 2019 and now I am working in Suk Jow market as a tailor and every day I can manage to earn 10,000 to 15,000 thousand South Sudanese Pounds (equivalent to 23 USD) on a good market day. This has really improved our life in the family."

She concluded with a message to other women. "My message to the other women out there is that the modern contraceptive methods are safe and can help empower women."



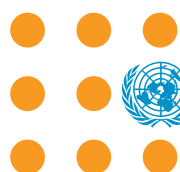
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