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Enhancing Social Protection Systems for conflict sensitive delivery in South Sudan - Grievance Redress Mechanism Assessment Report

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Abbreviations

AAH-I	Action Africa Help -International
BDC	Boma Development Committee
CCT	County Core Team
CECB	Community Engagement and Capacity Building
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FCV	Fragility, Conflict and Violence
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GRM	Grievance Redress Mechanism
IP	Implementing Partner
IPV	Intimate Partner Violence
IRC	International Rescue Committee
JCC	Juba City Council
KII	Key Informant Interview
NSPPF	National Social Protection Policy Framework
MAFS	Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security
MGCSW	Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare
MoLPSHRD	Ministry of Labour, Public Services Human Resource Development
PIU	Project Implementation Unit
QC	Quarter Council
CST	Community Supervision Team
SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
SNSDP	Safety Net and Skills Development Project
SSSNP	South Sudan Safety Net Project
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
VMG	Vulnerable and Marginalised Group

Executive summary

The World Bank has supported the Government of the Republic of South Sudan to address vulnerabilities, strengthen resilience, and promote inclusion and equity through the Safety Net and Skills Development Project (SNSDP). The Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) is a key safety net delivery tool that was established under the SNSDP to handle complaints and grievances and mitigate against social risks. The overall objective of this study is to identify options and provide recommendations on strengthening the SNSDP GRM to support inclusion of Vulnerable and Marginalised Groups (VMGs), promote community level unity and cohesion, and to address emerging social risks, most notably Gender Based Violence (GBV).

Box 1: SNSDP

The SNSDP was implemented over a five-year period and closed on February 28, 2019. During this period, the World Bank supported the Government of the Republic of South Sudan with US$ 21 million equivalent to provide access to income opportunities and temporary employment to the poor and vulnerable and put in place building blocks for a social protection system. The SNSDP was implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MAFS), in collaboration with the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare (MoGCSW) and Ministry of Labor, Public Service and Human Resource Development (MoLPSHRD). The three main components of the SNSPD were (i) Social Protection System and Project Management, (ii) Public Works, and (iii) Skills Development. A Project Implementation Unit (PIU) was set up in the MAFS to oversee and manage the project, while Implementing Partners (IP) were brought on-board to implement project activities on behalf of the MAFS in the SNSDP locations. Action Africa Help – International (AAH-I) was the IP for Juba, and United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) implemented the project in Gogrial West, Tonj South, Kapoeta East, Torit, Bor, and Pibor.

The GRM is a community-based structure that addresses grievances and mitigates against social risks, escalated tensions, disputes, and in extreme cases, violence, because of project activities. It comprises of structures at every level of project coordination and governance, from the lowest level (Group Leader) to the highest level (implementing agency). Procedures for handling grievances and appeals were established and Appeals Committees were set up in all project locations. By design, a secretary would be elected within the Appeals Committee to oversee and record the grievances reported by community members. The Appeals Committee members were elected by the community and from within the community as well-respected members who were not benefitting from the SNSDP and included community leaders and chiefs. The Appeals Committee would then meet regularly to address the grievances and provide feedback, or forward the grievance to a higher level, such as the Boma Development Committee (BDC). A chart describing the detailed GRM structure can be found in Annex 1.

Research teams travelled to a number of SNSDP targeted counties, namely Tonj South, Pibor, Kapoeta East, and Juba, to conduct interviews with community members and beneficiaries, GRM Appeals Committee members, Implementing Partners (IPs), local and national government authorities, donors, and development partners. This report presents findings from the research and concrete recommendations for strengthening the GRM for future projects.

Summarised findings

This research found that the SNSDP – overall - has made a positive impact on community welfare. All the different stakeholders of the project comprehended the objective of the project to support poor and vulnerable households through engaging them in public works, which benefited the community as well as beneficiaries directly. In addition to practical improvements to the community assets, beneficiaries believed that the project increased social unity in their communities by bringing people together to work on public works activities.

The GRM, specifically, has promoted a culture of community dialogue to mitigate conflicts in target communities. The GRM contributed to enhanced social unity and cohesion in the community by providing a platform for mediation and conflict resolution. However, the research found that there is large discrepancy in the understanding of the GRM between different stakeholders, as well as in different locations. Generally, understanding of the GRM - its purpose and processes – among Government stakeholders, IP staff, and members of various GRM structures was more advanced.

In some locations, beneficiaries had limited understanding of the GRM structures, most notably in Tonj South. Nonetheless, the research found that having Group Leaders at the grassroots level to respond to day to day grievances through dialogue has provided a platform for community mediation and supported the smooth implementation of the SNSDP, even when knowledge of the formal GRM mechanism and process was limited. The selection of the Group Leader amongst the beneficiaries was key, as s/he understood the issues and challenges faced by the beneficiaries. This provided a mechanism for effective problem-solving of day-to-day issues within the communities.

The GRM was successfully integrated with local structures and systems, which positively impacted the sustainability of the mechanism. However, this also presented challenges. Members of the Appeals Committee were often selected based on existing male dominated traditional power structures in the communities. As a result, one of the weaknesses of the GRM was that if beneficiaries wanted to report a grievance about one of their community leaders, elders, or the government, the community-driven GRM might have inhibited beneficiaries from reporting. While relying on traditional structures in the GRM can aid the sustainability of the structures and ensure decisions in the GRM are respected by local leaders and community members at large, there is a need to ensure that existing traditional power structures are sensitive to the needs of VMGs, particularly women, who are often excluded from accessing these structures.

Additionally, in all locations, members of the Appeals Committee lacked motivation to work because they did not receive any incentive, either in-kind or financial. This had an impact on the efficacy and sustainability of the GRM structures and led to the use of alternative reporting structures (e.g. through IPs), which were not always equally accessible to all beneficiaries.

The GRM did not include specific mechanisms to operationalize the principles and policies of inclusion of VMGs that were articulated in the project safeguards documents. As a result, there was limited effort to actively include VMGs in the GRM processes. A main barrier to the inclusion of VMGs in the GRM was their isolation or exclusion from existing community structures, and therefore the inability to advocate effectively for their rights and entitlements and report their grievances.

This research also found that there was a strong belief – across all locations – that family or personal problems should be addressed within the family and should be reported to family elders, and not to the GRM. Female beneficiaries especially feared that reporting GBV issues will negatively affect those who report, and both men and women reported that personal or family issues should be addressed by family elders, or appropriate context specific traditional structures (such as age groups or community chiefs).

Beneficiaries regularly indicated that they had very limited knowledge of external specialized services offered by NGOs or the Government in the region, and thus primarily relied on existing traditional structures if they wanted to report issues regarding their safety or security.

While the project had a noticeable impact on relieving financial burdens on families, it is much harder to establish the impact of the GRM on safely receiving and responding to GBV related grievances. The original design of the GRM under the SNSDP did not incorporate GBV/ Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) reporting mechanisms or referral pathways for beneficiaries to report relevant grievances. Additionally, there has been limited communication with and sensitisation of communities about risks of project related GBV incidents, most notably in Tonj South, Kapoeta East, and Pibor.

This research concludes that the GRM has the potential to be used to support VMG inclusion and address socio-cultural issues and emerging risks, such as GBV, if its functionalities are strengthened, both generally and more specifically with regards to these issues. During the SNSDP, socio-cultural issues like GBV were, to a limited extent, discussed during one-off mass mobilisation, and the GRM was not frequently used to facilitate sensitisation activities. The GRM could therefore provide an entry point for such activities, as it provides a platform for community dialogue, mediation, and conflict resolution, starting at the grassroots level.

Recommendations

This research assessed the overall functioning of the GRM, with the aim of providing recommendations for strengthening the GRM to support conflict sensitive smooth implementation of project activities, response to complaints and grievances, as well as support active inclusion of VMGs and address emerging project related GBV risks and incidents. Recommendations are divided into four categories:

- Project as a whole;
- General functioning of the GRM;
- Inclusion of VMGs in the GRM, and
- Using the GRM to prevent and respond to project related experiences of GBV

The project as a whole

- **Design targeting criteria to prioritise the inclusion of VMGs in the project** to ensure that community-based selection methods are guided by clear targeting criteria, and selection committees are adequately trained to apply the targeting criteria.

- **Consider forming groups consisting only of VMGs to minimise discrimination and create a safe environment for VMGs to carry out public work activities.** Meanwhile, considerable effort needs to be made to sensitise the wider community on the rights of VMGs. As an example, a beneficiary group solely of people suffering from Leprosy in a community where people believe that leprosy is contagious could enable this vulnerable group to still participate in the project (e.g. in various Bomas in Tonj South).

- **Increase oversight of community-based selection committees by IP staff** to ensure that those who are traditionally excluded in communities are selected as beneficiaries, and those who are in powerful positions within the community (or their associates) are not automatically selected as beneficiaries as a result of their position in the community.

- **Increase community sensitisation activities regarding selection criteria and project benefits** to ensure that all community members, including VMGs, are aware of the selection criteria,

duration of the project, and payment processes. This can be done through community meetings, radio shows etc., with a focus on inclusion of VMGs.

- **Increase sensitisation activities regarding the rights of VMGs, including women.** There is a need to sensitise communities on the rights of women to help create an environment where women feel safe, comfortable, respected, and able to report grievances. Radio shows and community meetings – with arrangements in place to ensure inclusion of VMGs – can provide opportunities to promote the rights of VMGs in the community.

- **Increase sensitisation activities regarding GBV prevention and understanding** to positively influence cultural norms and behaviours of communities. Radio shows can provide safe and impersonal channels for information on GBV prevention and understanding. However, this should be combined with other activities, e.g. community activism, and engaging multiple stakeholders, to strengthen potential outcomes, and should be evidence-based.

- **Ensure all sensitisation activities are standardised across project locations for consistent understanding by all stakeholders.** A Community Engagement and Capacity Building (CECB) Plan, with standardised communication materials and tools will ensure that all awareness raising activities, not only related to the project, but also more broadly in terms of various social issues, are consistent in frequency and content across project locations. The GRM can provide one channel of transmission/delivery of such communication to the communities.

General functioning of the GRM

- **Increase community outreach to explain the functioning of the GRM**. There is a need to provide additional information to communities on how the GRM works, its various levels, and how it interacts with existing community structures.

- **Ensure that mechanisms to appeal are in place, and communities are informed about these mechanisms.** Provide alternative channels for people to report their grievances if their grievances are not dealt with in a satisfactory way. This is especially important when using community-based reporting where grievances relate to those in power.

- **Include project staff in the GRM structure to provide alternate 'last resort' reporting mechanism**. Project staff – who do not reside in the community – can provide oversight of community-based GRM reporting structures, and offer the opportunity for community members to report to an "outsider" when they are unable to report sensitive issues through community-based structures (e.g. when the complaints is about community leaders or those within the GRM structures).

- **Ensure that communities and local authorities are involved in the development of GRM policies/procedures through workshops** to ensure policies are suitable to the local contexts, and to ensure buy-in from local authorities. For ownership and sustainability of GRM by communities and local authorities, the IP should involve local mechanisms during the design and implementation of the GRM.

- **Ensure that the GRM builds on traditional conflict resolution structures** (e.g. chiefs, church elders) to ensure that the GRM is embedded within those structures, rather than creating parallel systems in a community, to ensure ownership and sustainability. Special attention should be paid to inclusion of VMGs, as these traditional conflict resolution structures are often difficult for VMGs to access.

- **Provide incentives, financial or in-kind, for GRM Appeals Committees**. Providing Appeals Committee members - who are not beneficiaries and therefore often prioritise paid work or income-generating activities over Appeals Committee work – can help motivate Appeals Committee members to carry out their tasks effectively for the duration of the project.

- **Provide additional training for Group Leaders and Appeals Committees on their roles, responsibilities, and the functioning of the GRM.** There has been limited training for Group Leaders, who as the first responders to grievances, should receive in-depth training on the entire GRM structure and processes. This information can then also be passed on to beneficiaries and community members on a more regular basis.

- **Ensure that a strong communications campaign is in place to make sure people are aware that reporting grievances will not negatively impact their position in the project**. There is a culture where community members are hesitant to report cases due to the fear of not being selected for a follow-up project.

- **Ensure IP staff work closely with the local authorities on monitoring the GRM activities** by sharing reports to keep local authorities informed on progress and challenges faced during implementation of the GRM.

- **Provide Appeals Committees with resources (e.g. methods of communication or transportation) to proactively pursue potential grievances, especially from VMGs** to ensure that those who are unable to reach the members of the Appeals Committees, or those who are unable to speak up, are included in the GRM.

Inclusion of VMGs in the GRM

- **Promote the selection of female Group Leaders.** Given that most beneficiaries are women, and as this research shows that women are more comfortable reporting their grievances to fellow women, it is expected that having female Group Leaders will increase the level of reporting by women to the GRM.

- **Appoint gender focal points in the Appeals Committees** to ensure that women are able and comfortable to report their grievances directly to the Appeals Committee, instead of going through the Group Leader (who may not be female) or not reporting at all.

- **Appoint gender focal points in the IP field teams** to ensure a gender focus is maintained throughout the duration of the project in all activities.

- **Provide Group Leaders with additional training on the inclusion of VMGs in the GRM**. Given the important role that Group Leaders play in addressing grievances in the initial stage, Group Leaders would particularly benefit from receiving targeted training on the specific needs and challenges of VMGs.

- **Ensure that VMGs are sensitised about their rights and encouraged to use the grievance reporting process** to mitigate demand-side barriers to accessing the GRM. This can be done through community meetings and proactive outreach of Group Leaders and members of Appeals Committees who can inform beneficiaries in their groups.

Using the GRM to prevent and respond to project related experiences of GBV

- **Ensure all project staff is familiar with the World Bank's standing guidance on management of SEA/harassment (SEA/H) and other forms of GBV.** [1] Project staff should ensure recommendations in existing relevant guidance notes are followed and should be made aware of the upcoming guidance note on SEA/H-sensitive grievance mechanisms. In addition, all project staff should be familiarised with the World Bank's resource guide on Violence Against Women and Girls in SP programmes.[2] It should be the responsibility of the World Bank task team to provide project staff with the relevant and necessary resources, as identified above.

- **Ensure that gender transformative interventions are integrated in future projects** to address any potential tensions in the home that might be created through targeting of women for cash for work activities. Gender transformative activities aim to change harmful gender norms and can help to reduce violence against women and address challenging household dynamics. These interventions should be evidence based and following international best practice.

- **Increase advocacy and sensitisation efforts to improve awareness of GBV and support increased willingness to report.** The research shows that women are unlikely to report cases of GBV through community reporting structures in the current context. Advocacy and sensitisation efforts aimed at changing community norms and behaviour towards gender norms and GBV issues should be strengthened, including increasing awareness of the option of reporting possible cases through the GRM.

- **Provide training for Group Leaders and Appeals Committee members on how to respond to reported GBV cases.** Include training on supporting survivors who have willingly disclosed experiences of GBV, and how to safely refer them to specialized services, where available. All GRM staff should be aware of the protocol in place to enable access to survivor centric care.

- **Provide training for IP field staff, most importantly community mobilisers, on responding to reported GBV cases.** Include training on supporting survivors who have willingly disclosed experiences of GBV, and how to safely refer them to specialized available GBV survivor services, where available. All IP staff should be aware of the protocol in place to enable access to survivor centric care.

- **The project should link up with the South Sudan GBV sub-cluster and GBV actors within the humanitarian sector to get access to referral pathways and capacity-building on how to safely link survivors to the referral pathway**. Available referral pathways should be mapped out for each of the project locations.

- **Ensure referral pathways are known to Appeals Committee members and Group Leaders to respond to reported cases of GBV.** It is important to make sure that those who are responsible for receiving and reporting grievance know where to refer the victim, and how to do so safely.

- **Identify other potential channels for reporting to expand the range of reporting options for survivors,** including but not limited to relevant women's organisations or GBV service providers (if available in communities) in addition to gender focal points. While embedding

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[1] The 'World Bank Good Practice Note – Addressing SEA/SH in IPF Involving Major Civil Works' should be a guiding document for project staff, and is available here: http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/741681582580194727/ESF-Good-Practice-Note-on-GBV-in-Major-Civil-Works-v2.pdf
[2] This resource is publicly available on:
https://www.vawgresourceguide.org/sites/vawg/files/briefs/vawg_resource_guide_social_protection_brief_-_nov_26.pdf

gender focal points within the GRM is one option for creating an enabling environment for women to report cases, it may not be enough on its own to shift norms and perceptions around reporting and potential for retaliation or redress.

1. Introduction

1.1 Country context

1. **As a young nation, South Sudan has had to cope with decades of conflict that stretches out over 50 years with ongoing instability and development challenges.** It has some of the lowest scores on human development worldwide and has very limited physical infrastructure. The current conflict, now lasting almost six years, has impeded the development potential of the country, aggravated the humanitarian situation and magnified vulnerabilities. It has left hundreds of thousands of people dead, displaced over 4 million people and has caused over 6.35 million people to face severe acute food insecurity.[3] The economic situation is extremely volatile, with real GDP growth of -3.5% in FY 2018. Despite a modest recovery anticipated for FY 2019, inflation still remains high. Poverty rates continue to grow, having reached an estimated 88.7 percent in 2018.[4]

2. **Apart from an already-fractured country due to deep ethnic divisions, widening and deepening levels of devastation have further broken down social ties and trust among the people.** Moreover, institutions' capacity to address these issues has declined. Internal displacement, the humanitarian crisis and worsening food insecurity in the country, amongst other challenges, have hindered the nation from delivering services to its citizens and from focusing on priorities that would reduce the existing vulnerabilities.

3. **The Government of South Sudan is focusing increasingly on social protection to fight poverty and enhance economic growth.** The importance of the development of a social protection system able to 'reduce risk, vulnerability, poverty and economic and social exclusion' was first referred to in the South Sudan Development Plan (SSDP) 2011-2013. Since then, the National Social Protection Policy Framework (NSPPF, 2014) has been in place, which 'responds to and addresses the multiple vulnerabilities faced by South Sudanese citizens, with a particular focus on the poorest and most excluded sectors' However, the Government's ability to adequately do so remains constrained due to limited capacity and with inadequate financial allocation in the national budget for social services.

4. **To ensure that social protection interventions are tailored to its context, are locally appropriate and effective in addressing vulnerabilities, participatory citizen engagement needs to be enhanced in project implementation through a robust GRM.** Given the low levels of social cohesion and trust among the people in South Sudan vis a vis high social risks, it is critical that social protection activities are conflict-sensitive to ensure activities do not exacerbate conflict dynamics in project locations, but if possible, also reinforce local peacebuilding efforts. Through a robust and fully functioning GRM, early and ongoing potential tensions created by the project can be alleviated.

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[3] 6.35M (54% of the population) People facing severe acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3+). In IPC ACUTE FOOD INSECURITY & ACUTE MALNUTRITION ANALYSIS August 2019 to April 2020 Issued: 11 September 2019
[4] Poverty rate 1.90 USD a day, PPP. In IPC ACUTE FOOD INSECURITY & ACUTE MALNUTRITION ANALYSIS August 2019 to April 2020 Issued: 11 September 2019

1.2 Research Background

5.   **The World Bank supported the Government of South Sudan with US$ 21 million equivalent credit to address vulnerabilities, strengthen resilience, and promote inclusion and equity through the SNSDP.** The SNSDP was implemented over a five-year period and closed on February 28, 2019. The SNSDP was implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MAFS), in collaboration with the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare (MGCSW) and Ministry of Labor, Public Service, and Human Resource Development (MLPSHRD). The World Bank is now preparing a follow-on project, the South Sudan Safety Net Project (SSSNP), to scale up access to income opportunities and strengthen safety net delivery tools. Charlie Goldsmith Associates (CGA) has been engaged by the World Bank to conduct a study on enhancing social protection systems for conflict-sensitive delivery in South Sudan. The findings from this research study will be used to inform the design and implementation of the new SSSNP.

6.   **The SNSDP had three components: (i) Social Protection System and Project Management, (ii) Public Works, and (iii) Skills Development.** The first component included the development and launch of the social protection policy framework, the establishment of the local level oversight and coordination structures, and basic operational tools (targeting criteria, management information systems for registry of beneficiaries, and payment mechanisms). It also included a Project Implementation Unit (PIU) to support the implementation of the public works and skills development component. The public works component, the focus of this research, included seasonal transfers to poor households, linked to participation in labor-intensive public works activities, which also support the wider community. The skills development component unfortunately was never implemented due to deteriorating economic conditions in the country, and was later removed, with the funding allocated to the public works component to further expand support to the most needy and poor households in the face of worsening food insecurity following the outbreak of the 2016 conflict.

7.   **The experience of the SNSDP demonstrated that messages of peace and unity can be reinforced through social protection programs.** Especially through the public works component of the project, community members were encouraged to work together, promoting social unity and cohesion. The SNSDP beneficiary satisfaction survey in Juba for example found that nine out of ten respondents reported that the project has increased the sense of sharing within communities.[5]

8.   **The GRM is a key safety net delivery tool, that was established under the SNSDP, to addresses grievances and mitigate against social risks, escalated tensions, disputes, and in extreme cases, violence, due to project activities.** It is a community-based and participatory mechanism, which offers a safe platform for conflict mediation in the community for smooth implementation of the SNSDP. The GRM thus has the potential to play a key role in promoting messages of peace and unity and ensuring conflict-sensitive delivery. The GRM established structures at all levels of project coordination and governance, from the lowest level (Group Leader) to the highest level (implementing agency). Procedures for handling grievances and appeals were established and Appeals Committees formed. Appeals Committee members were elected by the community and from within the community, including community leaders and chiefs, to ensure sustainability of the GRM.[6] The most common grievances dealt by the GRM are related to:

- Beneficiary selection, specifically exclusion from project activities;
- Identification and implementation of public works activities and

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[5] ASSESSMENT OF THE BENEFICIARY SATISFACTION OF THE SAFETY NET AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROJECT. FINAL REPORT. Submitted to Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security. February 2019
[6] An organisational chart of the GRM structure can be found in Annex 1.

- Payment processes, specifically delay in payment.

9. **While the SNSDP GRM functioned well-enough to support project implementation, there is now a need to further enhance it given emerging social risks arising from on-going conflict and insecurity.** This research project will focus on assessing how the GRM can be strengthened for improved delivery of safety net assistance, particularly in terms of advancing effective inclusion of VMGs (i.e. women) in the project, as well as how the GRM can be used for addressing social risk, most notably GBV. In addition to the findings presented in this report, project staff should refer to the World Bank guidance note on management of sexual exploitation and abuse, sexual harassment (SEA/H)[7] and the upcoming World Bank guidance note on SEA/H-sensitive grievance mechanisms, when designing the SSSNP GRM. The World Bank resource guide on Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) can also provide useful guidance for project staff.[8]

1.3 Methodology

10. **The research methodology for this report used a variety of qualitative data collection tools, including Key Informant Interviews (KII) and Focus Group Discussions (FGD)**, and was targeted at SNSDP beneficiaries and community members. FGDs were used to rapidly gain a wide number of SNSDP and community member opinions on the GRM and associated research questions, which helped to isolate key areas for further exploration through KIIs with SNSDP beneficiaries and community members. This section provides a brief methodology. A full methodology, including a full list of stakeholders consulted, and interviews conducted can be found at Annex 2. Detailed information on research questions and sampling methods can be found in Annex 3.

11. **The research utilised mixed-sex and women-only FGDs.** In all locations, efforts were made to conduct a women-only FGD of 6-8 women facilitated by a female researcher, to allow women to share information they might not feel comfortable discussing in a group with men. These FGDs used a separate tool, with a more targeted focus on women's perceptions of safety and security. All interviews were conducted in alignment with global guidelines on ethical conduct of GBV research. Thus, all researchers were trained to never ask respondents directly about experiences of GBV and all research teams were provided with a list of dedicated GBV service providers operating in the area in case of any voluntary disclosure of GBV experiences.

12. **The research employed non-probability purposive sampling, to ensure effective targeting of the population pre-selected in the ToR and through discussions with the World Bank**. It is important to note that this sampling method is not intended to be statistically representative of the beneficiary population.

13. **The following key stakeholders were consulted for this research:**

- SNSDP beneficiaries and community members;
- SNSDP PIU in the MAFS;
- Relevant Government line ministries, including MGCSW and MoLPSHRD
- Local level Government officials;
- SNSDP IPs, including AAH-I & UNOPS

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[7] The World Bank standing guidance on management of sexual exploitation and abuse, sexual harassment (SEA/H) is publicly available on: http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/741681582580194727/ESF-Good-Practice-Note-on-GBV-in-Major-Civil-Works-v2.pdf
[8] This resource is publicly available on:
https://www.vawgresourceguide.org/sites/vawg/files/briefs/vawg_resource_guide_social_protection_brief_-_nov_26.pdf

- Humanitarian and development partners and NGOs, including organisations working on GBV.
- SNSDP community level coordination structures, including the GRM Appeals Committees, incorporating:

Urban areas	Rural areas
• Group Leader • Community Supervision Teams • GRM Appeal Committee • Quarter Council Development Committee • Block Development Committee • Municipal Council Core team	• Group Leader • Community Supervision Teams • GRM Appeals Committees • Boma Development Committees • Payam Development Committees • County Core Team

1.4 Research locations

14. **The table below shows the locations included in this research and the number of KIIs and FGDs in each location**.

FIGURE 1: RESEARCH LOCATIONS

	Time visited	Locations visited	Number of KIIs	Number of FGD
Juba	May-June 2018	Munuki, Gabat, Kator, Gwondoroki, Dar el Salaam	34	7
Tonj South	24 May – 5 June 2019	Amoth Chok, Marial Baai, lol Angool, Tiet Town, Khartoum Jedid, Malual Muok, Tonj Town	24	12
Kapoeta East	17-28 June 2019	Lolim, Loriwo, Kanachidik, Lopua, Naurus,[9] Kokoro	15	9
Pibor	21 June - 2 July 2019	Matara A, Jalaba West, Pibor town, Kondoka, Anyuak	24	8
Total			**97**	**34**

[9] Narus was removed from the project and replaced with beneficiaries from Lolim. In Narus the research team met with the County Core Team and UNOPS staff.

1.5   Limitations and challenges

Limitations to the methodology

15.   **In the design of the research and tools, assumptions were made about the level of understanding beneficiaries would have of the GRM as a separate mechanism.** However, during interviews, it became clear that communities did not always see the GRM as a separate mechanism. As such, respondents often shared their opinions about the project rather than the GRM specifically. Nonetheless, this provided a lot of useful insight into people's understanding of the project and the GRM. As a mitigation measure, research teams, together with facilitators on the ground, introduced the research and ensured the GRM was described in terms locally known by communities.

16.   **The research did not focus enough on the role of the Group Leader in the GRM.** Assumptions were made at the design stage that the Appeals Committees would be the main grievance receivers. However, this research showed that a lot of the grievances were reported at the Group Leader level, and never got reported upwards. Therefore, more focus on how Group Leaders respond to grievances may have provided additional useful insight into how the GRM works at the lowest levels. As a mitigation measure, research teams used the tool for GRM community structures also for the Group Leaders, using only relevant questions, to capture additional data on the role of the Group Leaders. It is important to note that the Group Leader is formally part of the GRM structure, see annex 1 for a chart describing the structure of the GRM.

17.   **Research teams were highly dependent on former UNOPS field staff to access all relevant stakeholders in the field.** The research teams were usually, though not always, accompanied by former UNOPS project staff.[10] While these facilitators were not involved in any of the interviews, and respondents were assured that their answers were not going to be shared with any of the former staff, the presence of former staff may have impacted the responses provided.

18.   **In some cases, the presence of UNOPS field staff gave the impression to communities that the project was returning to their location.** All research teams communicated clearly to all stakeholders in the field that the presence of the research team did not assure the return of the project, nor would participation in the research influence future selection of beneficiaries in the project. However, people's hopes for the project to return might have affected their answers and contributed to unwillingness to report anything negative about the project.

19.   **There was a general hesitation to share information, and people were often unwilling to speak out negatively about those in charge**. There was a general fear of speaking about negative impacts due to the misbelief that speaking out would result in the project not returning to their community. In Pibor specifically, the research team faced challenges of unwillingness of people to participate in the research and of minimal responses, even when carefully and repeatedly prompted. Due to the prevailing socio-cultural norms and position of women in the locations visited, it was often difficult for women in particular to speak up and share concerns in mixed-sex focus group discussions. Therefore, there was a strong focus on women-only FGDs in all the research locations to ensure women were able to share their views in a safe and confidential environment.

20.   **Most of the interviews were conducted in local languages and translated to English for data analysis.** Researchers spoke English, Arabic (Juba) and Dinka (Tonj South), but had to use translators for interviews in Toposa (Kapoeta East) and Murle (Pibor), and in the women-only interviews where

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[10] In Pibor, this included a former community mobiliser; in Tonj South the former Team Leader; in Kapoeta East the former Team Leader

only Dinka was spoken. For all the women-only interviews, only female translators were used. There are obvious challenges with translation, including the risk of misinterpretation or misrepresentation by the translator. This report includes quotes from beneficiaries in English, even if the interview was conducted in another language.

Logistical challenges

21.   **Given the weak infrastructure and difficult operating environment in South Sudan, frequent delays in conducting the research were a challenge.** The rainy season caused significant difficulties in accessing locations. Some locations were only accessible by foot, which delayed research teams significantly. For example, travel to Pibor was delayed due to humanitarian air service prioritisation, resulting in fewer days on the ground.

22.   **Since the research took place several months after the project had ended, some people had relocated or were busy with other income-generating activities, and therefore unable or unwilling to participate in the research**. In many rural locations, people were busy cultivating their land, and therefore unable to participate in the research. In Juba, people were busy with other income-generating activities, sometimes established from the cash received through the SNSDP. In some locations, researchers had to wait for respondents to finish other activities, which resulted in fewer interviews taking place.

2.   Findings

23.   This chapter presents the findings of this research. The findings are grouped in four main sections, as follows:

- **SNSPD impact**: looking at the overall project impact, under which the GRM was implemented.
- **Overall functioning of the GRM**: looking at the different stakeholders' understanding of the GRM, factors contributing to effective functioning, GRM strengths and weaknesses.
- **Vulnerable and Marginalised Groups**: looking at socio-cultural challenges for VMGs, inclusion and exclusion of VMGs in the GRM.
- **Gender-Based Violence**: looking at reporting GBV concerns through the GRM, and mechanisms in place to deal with GBV.

2.1   SNSDP impact

24.   **In general, the data offers a very positive depiction of the SNSDP's impact, even considering overstatement of positive aspects influenced by some of the research challenges detailed above**.[11] In general, the beneficiaries interviewed had good basic understanding of the project. Moreover, across all locations, beneficiaries, including Group Leaders, stated mostly positive effects of the SNSDP on communities and beneficiary households. This section will further elaborate on the findings regarding the project's impact: firstly, the general understanding of the SNSDP among the beneficiaries; secondly, its impact on the communities and families, and, lastly, looking at whether conflicts ever occurred as a result of the project.

General understanding of the SNSDP

25.   **All the different stakeholders of the project comprehended the objective of the project** to support poor and vulnerable households by engaging them in public works, which would benefit the community as well as the beneficiaries directly. A beneficiary in Juba described SNSDP as *"a project for road maintenance which registered vulnerable people and supported by giving cash money to the beneficiaries"[12]*, and a beneficiary in Tonj South described it as 'Luon agek', Dinka language for road work.[13] Similarly, in Kapoeta East, beneficiaries described the SNSDP as a project for which they worked on filling potholes on the road and establishing communal gardens.[14] When describing the project, beneficiaries focused on the public works activity they undertook and for which they received money, while government and IP respondents described the bigger picture of the project. A Juba City Council (JCC) member described SNSDP as *"a project that supported most vulnerable people who cannot meet their basic needs of life."[15]*

SNSDP impact on communities

26.   **The SNSDP's impact on the wider community was shown to have been very positive, as most beneficiaries and community members highly praised the project.** Positive effects on the community

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[11] A beneficiary satisfaction survey was conducted on the SNSDP, however, a more robust survey is currently underway by the World Bank's Poverty Global Practice with SNSDP beneficiaries that will provide more information regarding project performance, with a focus on effectiveness of the targeting mechanism, which can be used to improve the implementation of the new project.

[12] FGD (women-only) with beneficiaries and community members in Juba, on 5 June 2019

[13] FGD (mixed) with beneficiaries and community members in Tonj South, on 3 June 2019

[14] FGD with Group Leaders (beneficiaries) in Kapoeta East, on 22 June 2019

[15] KII with Tongun Albert, Director of Agriculture at Juba City Council Core Team, in Juba, on 27 May 2019

that were named included not only improved roads and drainage systems, and thus improved access of the village to markets and health facilities, but also increased hygiene, sanitation and social unity. In Juba, beneficiaries said that due to the improved drainage systems, there was less stagnant water surrounding the village, which reduced the number of mosquitos in the village and thus improved health conditions. In Kapoeta East, the improved road access as a result of the project also supported communities.

> *"When someone was sick in our community it was difficult to get to town, vehicles cannot even move, we had never seen town in our lives but when the roads opened it also enabled food supply."*[16]

27. **In addition to practical improvements to the community assets, beneficiaries also mentioned the increased social unity the project engendered.** Many stakeholders – in all locations – reported that the project had a positive impact on their communities. A Boma Appeals Committee member in Kapoeta East believed that the project created new friendships between families, sometimes leading to new marriages, and that in some cases, beneficiaries supported other group members who were facing challenges. Women in Juba believed that receiving project benefits reduced instances of early and forced marriage, due to relieving families' financial burden. All these responses show the broad positive effects the SNSDP has had on communities. A member of an Appeals Committee in Juba similarly stated:

> *"The SNSDP has positive impact on women and girls as they were the majority beneficiaries, some women were able to start businesses with the money received, there were close social ties created among the communities."*[17]

28. **Overall, very few negative impacts of the SNSDP were reported.** Those who reported negative impacts frequently expressed their sadness that not everyone could be included in the project and many were left without support. A few beneficiaries in Tonj South mentioned the volatile exchange rate, which caused uncertainty about the amount of money in South Sudanese Pound (SSP) they would receive per pay cycle, leading to suspicion and confusion. For example, two beneficiaries mentioned suspicion towards the people who made the payments in Tonj South, stating *"they would hide the names in the computer during payments so people would not get paid,"*[18] indicating general lack of understanding of the biometric payment system. Across all locations, beneficiaries complained about delayed payments, which hindered them in their everyday budgeting and household decision making.

29. **Respondents also reported negative impacts relating to public works activities specifically.** In Juba, some complaints were made regarding the drainage system that was constructed in front of houses, resulting in cars being unable to enter the gates. In Kapoeta East, in one location beneficiaries reported that community gardens meant to supply beneficiaries with food, but everything planted withered and left them without benefits from the garden.[19] In Tonj South, women in one FGD stated

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[16] FGD (women-only) with beneficiaries and community members, in Kapoeta East, on 24 June 2019.
[17] KII with GRM Appeals Committee member in Juba, on 5 June 2019.
[18] FGD (mixed) with beneficiaries and community members, in Tonj South, on 28 May 2019
[19] Some of these negative impacts were reported as grievances through the GRM and addressed. However, not all of these were reported, and therefore not all were addressed. Exact numbers on how many of these reported negative impacts were reported through the GRM were not collected.

that they worked on the public works project instead of cultivating their land, which meant they were left without crops to feed their family in the following months.[20]

SNSDP impact on beneficiaries

30.   **Almost all respondents believed that the SNSDP has positively affected beneficiary households directly.** Nearly every beneficiary responded that the SNSDP enabled them to buy basic needs like food, medication for themselves and their animals, and clothes and shelter, among others. One beneficiary in Kapoeta East said: *"it has had a positive impact as it has helped people to eat and drink and have energy for a laugh."[21]* Similarly, a beneficiary in Tonj South said: *"It has changed my life in terms of getting food, soap and those small things of the house, am really very happy about that."[22]* Other less frequent but still regularly heard positive effects were the economic empowerment of women, enabling them to open small businesses, as well as the fact that the project helped bring people together who were previously isolated in their communities.[23]

31.   **Reduction of tensions in beneficiaries' households was also commonly reported as a positive impact of the SNSDP.** One beneficiary in Pibor said: *"the level of conflicts at our homes were reduced because we no longer asked money from our husband."[24]* Participants of a FGD in Kapoeta East stated that the project reduced conflicts in households as women would involve men in decisions considering how to use the project benefits and thus promote dialogue between key household members.[25] A beneficiary in Juba said: *"women headed families have managed to improve their household levels of income through making good use of the cash received into productive areas hence promoting peace and harmony in the family."[26]*

32.   **There were several grievances that beneficiaries reported when asked whether there had been any negative impacts on their family.** A regularly-heard grievance was the delay in payments that caused inconveniences for the beneficiary and his/her family, and sometimes caused them to seek a loan from other community members. Beneficiaries also complained that the money paid was too little, the project was too short, and when it ended the community was struck by poverty again. As one beneficiary mentioned: *"Negative was its short durance, we hope it comes back as it has left us to suffer".[27]*

33.   **Altogether, the interviews created an image of widespread positive effects of the SNSDP**. It improved the living conditions of communities through the public works executed, which improved accessibility, hygiene, sanitation and health for the wider community. Moreover, engaging in the public works project increased social cohesion in the communities, through bringing people together to work. Most of all, families have been able to pay for their basic needs, such as education, food, and clothing, and in some cases started saving money.

2.2 Overall GRM functioning

34.   **Alongside this research, a literature review examining various models and experiences of GRMs in countries affected by fragility, conflict and violence (FCV) was carried out.** The literature

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[20] FGD (women-only) with beneficiaries in Tonj South, on 29 May 2019.
[21] FGD (mixed) with beneficiaries and community members, in Kapoeta East, on 20 June 2019
[22] FGD (mixed sex) with beneficiaries and community members in Tonj South, on 28 May 2019
[23] FGD (Women-only) with beneficiaries and community members in Tonj South, on 30 May 2019
[24] FGD (mixed) with beneficiaries and community members in Pibor, on 25 June 2019
[25] KII with beneficiary (female) in Kapoeta East, on 24 June 2019
[26] KII with Group Leader (female, beneficiary) in Juba, on 6 June 2019
[27] FGD (women-only) with beneficiaries and community members in Kapoeta East, on 21 June 2019

review identified several key principles that underpin accountable and effective GRMs. These principles include, protection of beneficiary/stakeholder rights, particularly against possible retribution; voice and agency for stakeholders; equity; accountability; and accessibility. While GRMs typically work to strengthen accountability to beneficiaries, they can also serve as a corrective mechanism to strengthen project management and adaptation in order to improve project outcomes. GRMs can similarly serve as an opportunity to mitigate potential harm or disputes which may exacerbate conflict, particularly in FCV contexts. In South Sudan, the GRM for the *Provision of Essential Health Services Project* (PEHSP), was reviewed as part of the literature review. This GRM uses community-based gathering of grievances and feedback due to the lack of phone network and low literacy. However, this community-based approach does not appear to rely on beneficiaries' regular self-reporting, like in the SNSDP GRM, but more on individual organisation-initiated data collection exercises.

2.2.1 Understanding of the GRM

2.2.1.1 Beneficiaries and community members

35.   **The research found that there is a large discrepancy in the understanding of the GRM between different stakeholders, as well as in different locations**. In Tonj South, many beneficiaries failed to differentiate between the project as a whole and the GRM as a separate mechanism within the project. In Pibor and Kapoeta East however, beneficiaries had a good general understanding of the goals of the GRM, and at times of its structures as well. In Juba also, beneficiaries were often able to identify their Appeals Committees and explain the functioning of the GRM. Reasons for the varying levels of understanding of the GRM across project locations include limited community mobilization/sensitization across areas due to the truncated implementation time; differing capacities of field teams across locations; and absence of a project level community mobilization and communication plan resulting in ad-hoc approach to community mobilization and a lack of standard of quality, among others.

36.   **Nonetheless, beneficiaries in all locations had a good understanding of the role of the Group Leader, and generally expressed that they would go to their Group Leader to report their grievances.** Reporting to the Group Leader is only a small element of the GRM, but for beneficiaries, this was their first point of call. In several interviews in Tonj South, beneficiaries stated they had never heard of the GRM, but when asked where they would report their grievances, they said *"we would report problems to our Group Leader."*[28] Similarly, in a mixed Gender FGD in Tonj South, one beneficiary mentioned: "*There are many groups but, I don't know their roles.*" Another said they had heard of the GRM, which they said was known for listening to grievances and solving them, and a woman added that "*I have heard the GRM at the time when we have gathered under the tree.*"[29]

37.   **The limited understanding of the GRM was evident in the fact that many beneficiaries in Tonj South did not know who to report to if they had a problem with their Group Leader**.[30] Several beneficiaries stated that they would report their problem to a community mobiliser (IP staff), or "*someone like you*", referring to the researchers that visited these communities. This shows that the next level of reporting, beyond the Group Leader, was relatively ad hoc, and not consistently used by beneficiaries in Tonj South. Several beneficiaries also mentioned they would call UNOPS staff directly if there were any issues with the project in their community. This, while being one means of seeking redress, did not follow the established reporting structures. Moreover, while potentially effective, this

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[28] Tonj KII and FGD with beneficiaries in Tonj South on 30 May 2019
[29] FGD (mixed sex) with beneficiaries and community members in Tonj South, on 28 May 2019
[30] KII with female beneficiary in Tonj South, on 28 May 2019

route was not available to everyone in the community. This also undermined the objectives of the project to establish functioning GRM structures within communities for project management and implementation, including for managing conflicts and building their capacities, so that these structures could endure beyond the project and be used by other projects and/or for local governance purposes.

38.   **In Pibor in contrast, when asked to describe the GRM, most beneficiaries described the Appeals Committee.** Respondents during a women-only FGD stated: "*It's a committee formed to help settle disputes in the community during public works.*"[31] Further, majority of the respondents reported that the GRM Appeals Committees were impartial and fairly elected by the community. They also reported that the GRM Appeals Committees did a good job and were able to handle grievances quickly and confidentially. Further, the GRM had the authority to make decisions and enforce them and did not create new conflicts and enhanced social unity.

39.   **In Kapoeta East also, there was relatively good understanding of the GRM, and most beneficiaries believed the GRM was used during the project.** Beneficiaries during an FGD said the GRM was used to "*mitigate conflicts at Group Leader levels*", and when issues were beyond what the Group Leader could solve, they were forwarded to the committee. An example was given by one of the beneficiaries: *"in my group there are certain groups of people who [were] absent for days [and] when asked they become arrogant and wanting to fight, so such a person gets forwarded to the committee."*[32] During other FGDs with beneficiaries and KIIs with Group Leaders, Appeals Committee members also confirmed that the GRM was used during the project.

40.   **In Juba, most beneficiaries were familiar with the GRM and were able to explain how the GRM worked during the project.** During an FGD, beneficiaries explained that there was a committee that resolved complaints that arose during work: "*we were mobilized and told prior the project started, we were told to raise our complaints to the Group Leader and the deputy Group Leader.*"[33] In another FGD, beneficiaries explained that there were people who were meant to solve their complaints during the public works, which included the Group Leader, Community Supervision Team (CST), and Appeals Committee. [34] Beneficiaries believed that the GRM helped them to directly solve problems on the ground: *"Is good and it helps in solving beneficiaries' grievance within short time, as most of the issues are handled by Group Leader."*[35] Participants of a mixed-sex FGD believed that the GRM was used throughout the duration of the project until the end.[36]

41.   **Knowledge about how the Appeals Committee members were selected was less common amongst beneficiaries.** In Juba, few beneficiaries knew how the selection of members was done, however, one respondent said: "*they are elected from within the community during joint gathering based on personal qualities without fear or favour.*"[37] In Kapoeta East, several respondents explained that beneficiaries selected respected people in their community to be in the Appeals Committee.[38] Similarly, In Pibor, respondents during a mixed-sex FGD stated that 'they themselves' selected the Appeals Committee members. In Tonj South, there was very limited knowledge on how the members of the Appeals Committee were selected, which is understandable given the limited knowledge of the GRM more generally.

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[31] FGD (women-only) with beneficiaries and community members in Pibor, on 27 June 2019
[32] FGD (women-only) with beneficiaries and community members in Kapoeta East, on 21 June 2019)
[33] FGD (women-only) with beneficiaries and community members in Juba, on 12 June 2019)
[34] Juba (mixed) with beneficiaries and community members in Juba, on 12 June 2019
[35] KII with CST chairperson in Juba, on 6 June 2019
[36] FGD (women-only) with beneficiaries and community members in Juba, on 5 June 2019
[37] KII with women's desk representative at QC office (beneficiary) in Juba, on 6 June 2019
[38] KII with County Core Team member in Narus, Kapoeta East, on 18 June 2019

2.2.1.2   **Government, GRM members, and IPs**

42.   **This section looks at the understanding of the GRM amongst the Government, GRM Appeals Committee members and IP staff**. While it is important that the intended users of the system fully understand how the system works, it is equally important that those who are part of the GRM structures have a good understanding of what their role is. When it comes to those who are part of GRM committees, either at the Boma level or involved at the Payam or County levels, there should be a more comprehensive understanding of the GRM.

43.   **Among members of the Appeals Committees, there was generally good understanding of the GRM and their role.** In all locations, members were generally able to explain the purpose of the GRM and describe their role in the GRM. In Tonj South, the head of a Boma Appeals Committee explained the process for escalating grievances:

> *"If Boma DC fails, it will be now forwarded to the Payam appeal committee, etc. They normally report verbally because of our closeness with them. The most grievances reported have to do with matching names, missing names, exchange rate issues, work issues like tools not enough among others."[39]*

44.   **In Juba, the different structures and functions of the GRM were generally clear for different stakeholders, including Government**. A member of the Community Supervision Team in Juba described the GRM as a "*structure or system established for the beneficiaries to channel their complaints during the implementation of the project.*"[40] At higher levels, like at the Juba City Council, there was good understanding of the GRM as well, describing the GRM as a 'transparent system of reporting grievances.'[41]

45.   **However, in Pibor, several members of the Appeals Committees saw the GRM only as a problem-solving mechanism to make sure the project ran smoothly, rather than a mechanism to give the beneficiaries a voice**.[42] A chairperson of an Appeals Committee in Pibor described the GRM as a "*mechanism in the project to supervise any activities of the project*".[43] While this does not mean there is a lack of understanding of how the GRM works, it does show that additional sensitisation of GRM Appeals Committee members on the importance of providing a voice for beneficiaries through the GRM could be beneficial.

46.   **Among government stakeholders, understanding of the GRM was mixed.** Acting Director General (DG) at MAFS in Tonj State had not heard of the GRM, while the Mayor of Tonj Town explained that the "*SNSDP GRM is a body formed to help solve disputes that would arise in the implementation process among the communities*".[44] Similarly, a DG at local MAFS in Pibor and a DG at the national MGCSW were both able to explain the GRM function but correctly stated that they were not involved in the design or implementation of the GRM.

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[39] KII with head of Appeals Committee in Tonj South, on 3 June 2019
[40] KII with CST member in Juba, on 5 June 2019
[41] KII with Juba City Council member in Juba on 27 May 2019.
[42] KII with Appeals Committee member in Pibor, on 28 June 2019
[43] KII with Appeals Committee chairman in Pibor, on 28 June 2019
[44] KII with Tonj Town mayor, in Tonj on 5 June 2019.

47.   **Of all the stakeholders, IP staff in all project locations generally had the best understanding of GRM function and processes.** IP team leaders, as well as lower level community mobilisers were able to explain in detail the purpose of the GRM. However, it is important to note that understanding of processes as they were designed did not automatically mean that these processes were followed during the project.

48.   **However, in Tonj South, one of the IP field staff described using alternative reporting channels for grievance reporting, thereby not following those that were prescribed by the project design.** A former UNOPS community mobiliser mentioned that grievances could be reported through the Community Mobilisation Assistant (CMA), or the Appeals Committee.[45] He mentioned that if the Appeals Committee was unable to solve the case, they reported it to the CMA, who then forwarded it to the UNOPS officer and finally to the UNOPS Team Leader. While this may be an effective approach to providing redress, it did not follow the agreed structures, where the Appeals Committee refers cases that they are not able to solve to the Boma Development Committee.[46] In Kapoeta East and Pibor, on the other hand, established GRM structures were more frequently followed for grievance reporting and redress.

2.2.2   Factors contributing to effective functioning of the GRM

49.   **This research identified several factors that contributed to the effective functioning of the GRM.** The most important factors identified are the role of the Group Leaders, and the integration of the GRM within local structures. The former is important because Group Leaders are the first point of access, and therefore need to be accessible and relatable. The latter is also important as integration of the GRM within existing, traditionally-used local structures will ensure that the GRM is sustainable and effective and that decisions are respected by the people in the community.

The role of the Group Leader

50.   **The Group Leader played a crucial role in the effective functioning of the GRM in all locations**. For one, having the Group Leader at the grassroots level provided beneficiaries with a quick solution to their problems, which were in many cases, relatively small (i.e. absenteeism, sickness, lack of working materials etc.), and never reached the higher levels of the GRM. As a result, these grievances were nearly always verbally reported, and not always documented.

51.   **Several beneficiaries mentioned that the selection of the Group Leader from amongst the beneficiaries was important, as s/he understood the issues and challenges faced by the beneficiaries.** In general, the majority of beneficiary respondents noted that they felt comfortable reporting grievances to their Group Leader. All beneficiaries were able to describe the role of their Group Leader. A male beneficiary in Kapoeta East mentioned that the role of the Group Leader was to advise the members of the group to do satisfactory work, so as to avoid scenarios where the work needed to be redone. In addition, he believed that the Group Leader was responsible for "*Forwarding complains that he/she cannot handle to Appeal and Boma Development Committee.*"[47]

Integration with local structures and systems

52.   **The GRM interacted closely with local and traditional leaders**. This was an essential element of the SNSDP design to ensure sustainability of the mechanism beyond the project duration.

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[45] KII UNOPS community mobiliser in Tonj South, on 25 May 2019
[46] This does not necessarily mean that IP staff had limited knowledge of GRM systems and structures but could be as a result of having to deal with limited functionality of the GRM structures on the ground.
[47] KII with male beneficiary in Kapoeta East on 22 June 2019

Integration with these structures in many cases contributed to the effective functioning of the GRM, because many members of the Appeals Committee, i.e. chiefs and elders, already had influential positions in the community. As a result, the decisions of the GRM were respected by the community. Moreover, people naturally approached these people with grievances that the Group Leaders could not address. As the MAFS Project Manager of the SNSDP said:

> *"The GRM is composed of elders and chiefs and the government in all its levels. That shows GRM is rooted in both structures. In other words, it is embedded into the country structure."*[48]

53.   **The benefit of having chiefs and elders in the Appeals Committees was that these people already have experience in addressing issues in their community.** As the head of a Boma Appeals Committee in Tonj South said, *"we are already chiefs, so those selecting us say since you already have experience in solving community issues, you can come and continue with the same role."*[49] Building on existing local governance structures also supported sustainability, as these people can, once the project is over, continue to play this role in the community, potentially with their capacities enhanced through trainings provided by the project. Beneficiary respondents stated that they thought the GRM should either continue as a government structure or be supported by an NGO that will launch a similar new project. Some respondents thought it would continue naturally, as it is already integrated as a problem-solving organ in the community. Beneficiaries in Tonj South stated: "*those in the GRM are the same people who have the responsibility in the community; in other words, they are the same chiefs and community leaders playing the same role."*[50]

2.2.3 GRM strengths

Creating social unity and cohesion and promoting community dialogue

54.   **Many beneficiaries believed that that the project brought people together and created greater social unity in their communities through both participation in public works and the GRM.** Especially in areas where communities are isolated and spread out with little interaction, the public works activities gave people a reason to come together to work together. Women in Tonj South stated that before the project they did not know their neighbours, and now they can support each other. In Kapoeta East, respondents in several FGDs mentioned that the project enabled men and women to work together, which increased household and social cohesion.

55.   **The GRM supported community members in all locations – albeit to different extents – to talk about their problems, promoting dialogue in communities**. The research asked different stakeholders whether they believed having the GRM has created greater social cohesion in the community. In all locations, respondents believed that the GRM contributed to increased social cohesion and social unity. Even in locations where there was limited understanding and use of the entire GRM structure, issues were addressed, and conflicts were prevented because people were still aware that they could report grievances to their Group Leader. For example, in Kapoeta East, women in an FGD believed that having the GRM as part of the project reduced conflicts in their community,

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[48] KII with SNSDP project manager in Juba on 13 June 2019
[49] Interview with Head of Appeals Committee in Tonj South on 3 June 2019
[50] FGD (mixed sex) with beneficiaries and community members in Tonj South, on 28 May 2019

as people had a safe platform where they could express themselves.[51] Similarly, a woman in another FGD shared:

> *"[the GRM] helped to mitigate conflicts. At Group Leader levels you find that some issues are just beyond the Group Leaders so they forward to the committee, for example in my group there are certain groups of people who are absent for days and when asked they become arrogant and want to fight, so such a person gets forwarded to the committee."[52]*

56.   **In Tonj South, despite limited understanding of the GRM as a mechanism, the concept of community dialogue to solve problems was still prevalent in the communities.** One of the beneficiaries in Tonj South said, "*through the project we got to know each other, now we first talk before we start fighting.*"[53] Several other stakeholders believed that the GRM was able to reduce conflict in the community. The Head of the County Core Team (CCT) in Tonj South stated that the GRM provided advice on peaceful coexistence. Most people reported their grievances through talking directly to their Group Leader, and sitting down and discussing their grievances together. [54] This presented the first opportunity for conflict mitigation. The GRM has given them the "*freedom of dialogue*", as one respondent mentioned.[55] UNOPS Team Leader in Tonj South also highlighted the importance of solving issues at the initial stage:

> *"Without GRM the project would have a lot of issues. It helps in solving the issues in the initial stage. If there was no mechanism in place, we would allow the community to have those issues within themselves, until it bursts. It then becomes conflict. Which may either result in fighting or killing each other. We brought them together, having this in the programmes is actually helpful, whenever someone has a problem, they know where to report and it becomes easy to come in and restore."[56]*

2.2.4   GRM weaknesses

57.   **The research identified several factors that contributed to weaknesses of the GRM, which prevented the GRM from reaching its full potential.** These weaknesses are discussed in this section, and include:

- Limited role of women in the GRM;
- Limited types of grievance that the GRM can address;
- Lack of financial incentives for the Appeals Committees;
- Limited knowledge of GRM structures;
- Sustainability;
- Lack of policy on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA)/GBV reporting;
- Dependency on community-based reporting.

Limited Role of women in the GRM

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[51] FGD with female beneficiaries and community members in Kapoeta East, on 26 June 2019
[52] FGD with female beneficiaries and community members in Kapoeta East, on 21 June 2019
[53] KII with beneficiary in Tonj South, on 31 May 2019
[54] Almost all beneficiaries said they report their grievances orally, through talking directly to their Group Leader.
[55] KII with beneficiary in Tonj South on 28 May 2019
[56] KII with UNOPS TL for Tonj South, in Tonj on 25 May 2019

58.   **Members of the Appeals Committee were often selected based on existing male dominated traditional power structures in the communities**. Cultural norms and values in South Sudan generally obstruct women from taking on central roles in the community. The fact that women often are not represented in traditional power structures contributes to this challenge, as it makes it harder to create a diverse GRM that best represents and benefits the community. In Kapoeta East, one respondent pointed out that "*because [there are] so many traditional structures, many times chiefs are chosen, who are not women.*"[57] This then limits the role women can play in the GRM, affecting the female beneficiaries, as described below.

59.   **Women and girls did not always feel comfortable approaching the Group Leader or Appeals Committee, which were male dominated in their membership.** The lack of representation and understanding of female specific issues are inhibiting factors for women to report their grievances. This is especially the case for domestic or GBV related grievances. In fact, many women indicated in the women-only FGDs that it would be easier for women to report their grievances to another woman. For example, women in Tonj South and Pibor reported that they thought the people who they had to report to might not take them seriously, or that they had no rights to report.[58] In Pibor specifically, the lack of women's involvement in the functioning of the GRM was flagged by female beneficiaries as one of the biggest challenges to reporting sensitive issues, such as GBV and SEA.[59] However, it is important to note that these findings are not representative of the whole country, there might me communities/locations in South Sudan where women feel comfortable raising complaints, including on GBV/SEA.

Limited types of grievances that the GRM can address

60.   **The SNSDP GRM was not able to respond effectively to grievances that were related to project operations beyond the GRM members' scope.** In particular, delays in payments, a frequently-reported grievance, could not be solved by the Group Leaders, Appeals Committee members, or even higher-up committees, as this was the responsibility of project implementation staff and the payment service provider. Beyond urging beneficiaries to remain patient, there was not much that could be done to provide redress. Serious cases (e.g. theft of project materials or violence in communities) beyond the scope of the GRM could be reported to the IP, who could forward them to the relevant authorities.[60] However, documentation on how often that happened during the project was not available. Further, in many cases, beneficiaries mentioned that minor issues, like lacking sufficient tools for their work, were reported and forwarded to the IP, but these were not always acted upon.[61]

61.   **There was no clear policy regarding the kind of problems that should be reported through the GRM.** Most beneficiaries understood the GRM to be only for project-related grievances and would not consider reporting personal issues to the GRM. A male beneficiary shared, "*We don't report family affairs to the GRM as they cause shame to people and spoil the family names. These grievances will only be reported to family elder like grandfather or an uncle to solve it*".[62] This is particularly relevant for reporting GBV cases, which are considered to be very personal, and therefore was generally not be reported to the GRM.[63]

Lack of financial incentives for Appeals Committees

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[57] FGD (mixed) with beneficiaries in Kapoeta East, on 22 June 2019
[58] FGD (women-only) with beneficiaries and community members in Tonj South, on 30 May 2019.
[59] This will be discussed in detail in chapter 3.4
[60] Cases such as theft or violence in communities.
[61] FGD (women-only) with beneficiaries and community members in Kapoeta East, on 26 June 2019
[62] KII with beneficiary (male) in Tonj South, on 3 June 2019
[63] Chapter 3.4 discusses GBV reporting in detail

62. **In all the project locations, members of the Appeals Committee lacked motivation to work because they did not receive in-kind or financial incentives.** This was due to difficult economic conditions and the fact that GRM members were asked to volunteer their time to the project, which could have potentially been used otherwise engaged in income-generating activities. Members of the Appeals Committee were not beneficiaries of the project, which meant that they did not receive any assistance from the project. In Tonj South, the UNOPS Team Leader said that many of the Appeals Committees only worked for a short period at the start of the project, but soon gave up. These members were not replaced, which could explain the low understanding of the GRM structures and functioning in Tonj South, as well as preference of beneficiaries there to report directly to the IP.

> *"The first week they were working, but the second week they were complaining, they were saying we are doing a full-time job, and there is nothing. We better go do something else. We tried to convince them, even the commissioner, but most of the teams did not do their work properly because there was no money."[64]*

63. **Providing financial or in-kind incentives for members of the Appeals Committee could lead to their increased commitment and productivity.** The Acting DG at MAFS in Tonj South believed that incentivising the Appeals Committees would help the GRM function better.[65] In Kapoeta East, a chairperson of the Appeals Committee also stressed the need to incentivise the Appeals Committee to strengthen the GRM, as "*working as a volunteer is not easy*".[66] The UNOPS Project Manager of the SNSDP[67] likewise mentioned the lack of incentives for members of the various GRM committees as the biggest challenge in setting up the GRM.[68]

Limited knowledge of GRM structures

64. **Limited knowledge of the GRM is an inhibiting factor to its effective functioning as people either did not know that they can report grievances, and/or did not know where they can report.** A secretary of a Juba Quarter Council Development Committees confirmed that the limited understanding among beneficiaries of the GRM prevented people from reporting their grievances, and thus additional outreach would be required to make people aware of the existence and the role of the GRM.[69] Additionally, people might have been misinformed about the consequences of reporting their grievances. Several beneficiaries mentioned that they feared that reporting grievances might negatively impact their selection for the project in the future.

65. **While some beneficiaries – mostly women – mentioned that they feared reporting grievances, backlash for reporting has not been reported.** In none of the locations had respondents ever heard of retaliation as a result of reporting grievances. While this is a very positive finding, it is important to recognize that there has been general hesitation to report grievances. Fear of backlash is an inhibiting factor and can result in more sensitive grievances to not be reported at all. A female beneficiary in Tonj South feared backlash for reporting her concerns, and stated that she would

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[64] KII with UNOPS TL for Tonj South, in Tonj on 25 May 2019
[65] KII with Acting DG at MAFS for Tonj State, in Tonj on 4 June 2019
[66] KII with chairperson Appeals Committee in Kapoeta East on 19 June 2019
[67] The UNOPS project manager for the SNSPD is speaking from personal experience, and this does not reflect the official position of UNOPS.
[68] KII with SNSDP Project Manager in Juba, 13 June 2019
[69] KII with secretary at QC in Juba, on 5 June 2019

therefore discuss her grievances with her friends but not with anyone else.[70] The fear of backlash was also shared by another woman, saying that: "*people fear our leaders might quarrel if we complain*".[71]

Sustainability

66. **In several locations, the GRM structure did not work for the duration of the project**. For example, in Tonj South, Appeals Committees did not work up to the end of the project, and in some locations they hardly even started. As some beneficiaries described it, "*we heard of the group, but have not seen them.*"[72] This was mostly due to the fact that Appeals Committee members were not incentivised to do the work, as discussed above. As a result, IP staff often responded directly to grievances, which is neither sustainable nor equally accessible. This has a direct impact on the functioning of the GRM, as well as on the communities' understanding of the GRM.

67. **There is a need for sustainable structures that are inclusive and responsive to all members of community, including VMGs**. Since the GRM mostly dealt with SNSDP-related grievances, there has been a natural shift back to existing local governance structures in the community since the project ended. This means that with the end of the project, the role of the Group Leader has become non-operational. As discussed in Section 3.2.1, many members of Appeals Committees were already community leaders or chiefs, and they continue in this capacity. However, these traditional structures are less accessible to women than the project's GRM structures. For example, it was mentioned that in some communities in South Sudan women cannot go to the chief without telling their husbands, or without informing the family elders. The Group Leaders provided more accessible channels for reporting, especially for VMGs in the community. While the GRM can continue to serve as a platform for conflict mediation in the community, without the presence of Group Leaders it might be riskier and more challenging for VMGs to report general issues within their community.

Lack of policy on SEA/GBV reporting

68. **There were no policies in place within the SNSDP for addressing project-related GBV issues through the GRM.** At the national project level (PIU), there were no SNSDP policies to guide project implementation with regard to responding to GBV cases. Appeals Committee members received no training in supporting survivors in case they wanted to disclose experiences of GBV, or in how to safely refer them to specialized services. Only in Juba where there were some efforts to raise awareness among Appeals Committee members on GBV, but these were very minimal. Neither the focal person for the SNSDP at the MGCSW nor the PIU Project Manager were aware of any policies within the SNSDP that guided the project in reporting and responding to GBV cases.[73]

69. **There is a need for additional training on GBV and SEA for IP staff and GRM structures.** All the IP staff interviewed voiced the need for additional training on GBV and SEA. In Kapoeta East, the UNOPS Team Leader believed that providing relevant GBV/SEA workshops for IP staff would further strengthen project management and implementation.[74] IPs have their own reporting systems for SEA, but these systems were not used for the project, or communicated with beneficiaries and community members. Although none of the respondents had ever heard of any cases of GBV/SEA related grievances that were reported, it does not mean that project related GBV/SEA incidents did not occur. The fact that there are no clear strategies in place within the SNSDP for handling these kinds of grievances may have prevented these grievances from being reported in the first place. It is important

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[70] KII with female beneficiary in Tonj South, on 28 May 2019
[71] KII with beneficiary in Tonj South, on 28 June 2019
[72] FGD with beneficiaries in Tonj South on 30 May 2019
[73] Interview with Director General at the Ministry of Gender, focal point for the SNSDP in Juba, on 8 July 2019
[74] KII with UNOPS TL for Kapoeta East, in Narus on 18 June 2019

for IP staff to be informed of any GBV/SEA related incidents so that they can ensure proper referral of victims to appropriate services, such as official law enforcement bodies or NGOs providing services.

Dependency on community-based reporting

70.   **The community-driven GRM may have inhibited beneficiaries from reporting grievance about one of their community leaders, elders, or the government**. In Tonj South, several respondents indicated that in these cases they would call the UNOPS Team Leader directly.[75] However, this option is not accessible to those without the means to communicate, who also are often the most vulnerable in society. In all locations, IP staff, such as community mobilisers, were also not constantly present in the communities, so direct reporting to IP staff would have been challenging, especially for VMGs. An example of a case that could not be resolved directly through GRM channels, because the grievance was regarding community leaders, was a case of informal taxation in Tonj South. Instead, this case was reported directly to the UNOPS Team Leader for Tonj South, where one of the beneficiaries called the UNOPS Team Leader to report the fact that 1000 SSP was taken from his cash transfer:

> *"I got a call from one of the beneficiaries saying 'my salary was taxed 1000 pounds'. I went there and investigated, I called all the beneficiaries, they were all taxed but they couldn't disclose to me, with the exception of only one person. The one beneficiary said 'I was told by Sultan[76] to bring the money, otherwise I will not be selected next year'. But when I asked the other beneficiaries, they said they were not taxed, some of them said 'this is our will, we just went to Sultan and give him 1000, we are happy they selected us at that time'."[77]*

71.   **In these sensitive cases, in which influential and powerful community members are involved, the most vulnerable in society will likely be particularly excluded from community-based reporting**. Involvement of chiefs and elders, as respected in the community, in the GRM reporting structures was good in ensuring that decisions are respected within the community and that people know who to report to. However, this also means that the most vulnerable may have been excluded from accessing these structures due to power relations within the community. Research teams observed in all locations that it was difficult for beneficiaries or community members to report complaints about those in charge in their area. An additional problem with community-based reporting is that even if people were able to report their grievances, the grievance may not have moved up to the next level of the GRM due to people's vested interests.

72.   **A community-based reporting structure may also make it harder for personal grievances, including project-related GBV and SEA incidents, to be reported and addressed**. In particular, women might not feel comfortable disclosing this kind of information to the community.[78] This is discussed in detail in Section 3.4.

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[75] The UNOPS TL did not reside directly in the community, and the community mobilisers, while visiting the locations more frequently, were covering large numbers of beneficiaries and were always not present in the communities.
[76] The word 'Sultan' – means 'Chief' in Arabic
[77] KII with UNOPS TL for Tonj South, in Tonj on 25 May 2019
[78] KII with coordinator of GBV sub-cluster, at UNFPA office in Juba, on 20 June 2019

2.3 Vulnerable and Marginalised Groups

2.3.1 Socio-cultural issues surrounding VMGs in the community

Understanding and main socio-cultural issues of VMGs in communities

73. **Generally, among all stakeholders, there was a good understanding of which groups are vulnerable and marginalised within the community.** While there are small differences between locations, overall the understanding is quite consistent across the areas where this research was carried out. Most commonly-mentioned examples of VMGs included the disabled, widows, the elderly, and orphans.[79] Interestingly, characteristics such as religion, ethnicity or clan affiliations were not mentioned. In all locations, general poverty or economic insecurity was considered a key characteristic of vulnerability. Beneficiaries and community members described VMGs as people without wealth, poor people, and people who are unable to take care of themselves or their family financially.[80] Economic challenges were identified as those directly resulting from disability, e.g. "*inability to work in case of amputees*"[81] or from the inability to cultivate or raise animals, or due to age, sickness, or social status in society.

74. **Identification of VMGs were found to be very context specific.** In some areas, returnees were considered vulnerable, while in other areas people with a specific disease were considered vulnerable. In Tonj South, several people considered those who had returned or arrived from Khartoum to be vulnerable.[82] Women in this community highlighted that because they only recently arrived in Tonj South, and as only land was assigned to them by the Government and they did not have cattle or jobs, they were more vulnerable. One of the women in an FGD in Tonj South mentioned that "[*VMGs] are not strong enough to go and bring something from the Government for survival, like us, we came from Khartoum and are not in the Government or working with an organisation.*"[83] Many respondents in Tonj South also identified people with leprosy as VMGs. A State MAFS representative in Tonj South specifically mentioned this group: "*They include lepers at the other side of the river and the amputees of various wars in South Sudan.*"[84]

75. **Vulnerability was also characterised by a lack of support from the community and family.** VMGs were seen to be more prone to isolation, since they were deemed to be unable to move around the community without support.[85] Beneficiaries in a FGD in Tonj South mentioned that VMGs were "*old men and women who are stuck in their huts with no coffee or tea, people affected by leprosy who nobody is caring for are also considered as vulnerable people,*"[86] Several beneficiaries stated that VMGs were "*neglected in the community*", unable to join social associations, or those with no

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[79] In Juba, groups that were mentioned specifically included blind people, the elderly, widows, orphans, street children, the unemployed and internally displaced persons (IDPs). In Kapoeta East, the most common answers included the elderly, the disabled, widows, those with physical disabilities, and the blind. In Pibor respondents mentioned the sick, widows, the elderly, orphans, the disabled, and blind people as the most vulnerable. In Tonj South the disabled, widows, people with leprosy, the elderly, and orphans were most frequently mentioned.

[80] KII with CST member in Juba on 5 June 2019 (5), FGD (mixed sex) with beneficiaries and community members in Tonj South, 29 May 2019

[81] KII with beneficiary (male) in Tonj South on 3 June 2019

[82] KII head of county Appeals Committee in Tonj on 31 May 2019

[83] FGD (women-only) with beneficiaries and community members in Tonj South, on 1 June 2019

[84] KII with Acting DG at MAFS for Tonj State, in Tonj on 4 June 2019

[85] KII with Appeals Committee member in Kapoeta East on 21 June 2019

[86] FGD (mixed) with beneficiaries and community members in Tonj South on 30 May 2019

connections.[87] In Pibor, people also frequently used the words "loneliness" and "isolation" to describe the VMGs in their community.[88]

76.   **In all locations, respondents believed that family and community support is critical for VMGs to overcome challenges of economic hardship and lack of income.** In some locations, support from projects like the SNSDP or from NGOs was also mentioned as a mechanism for overcoming challenges. By contrast, examples of the Government providing support for VMGs, besides the SNSDP, were not cited. The response of beneficiaries in Kapoeta East illustrated the importance of support from family members and the community for VMGs to survive:

> "*Community and relatives, in-laws, neighbours usually support them by providing goat, food, wild fruits, water, and their children do stay with them to provide needed support such as collection of firewood and cooking.*"[89]

2.3.2   Inclusion of VMGs in the Project and the GRM

77.   **It is important that targeting criteria for social protection project are designed to prioritise the inclusion of VMGs.** It is crucial to ensure that community-based selection methods are guided by clear targeting criteria, and selection committees are adequately trained to apply the targeting criteria.

78.   **Respondents reported issues regarding exclusion from the SNSDP, though this was mostly as a result of limited capacity of the project and did not seem to be systematic or intentional.** The limited scale of the project was often mentioned when asked about exclusion of many deserving households, including those with VMGs. These risks of exclusion can be mitigated by an improved GRM, for example by providing a platform to educate communities on targeting criteria and providing response to questions about exclusion in the programme.

79.   **While most exclusion from the project was considered unintentional, a few cases of deliberate exclusion of VMGs in the project were however reported**. An example of deliberate exclusion of VMGs was reported in Tonj South, where people suffering from leprosy were mostly excluded from activities in the community, including public works activities. The community selection committee excluded people suffering from leprosy because of the commonly held belief in Tonj South that leprosy is contagious.[90] Much more often, cases were reported of disabled people not being able to reach the project's registration location, and as a result they were also excluded from the project.[91]

80.   **A main barrier to the inclusion of VMGs in the GRM is that they may be isolated or excluded from community structures and therefore unable to participate effectively**. VMGs are often neglected in the community, due to their social status, and as a result, their participation in the project and the GRM can be affected. However, different development partners are making efforts, through for example radio shows, to increase awareness on the rights of VMGs and to improve inclusion of VMGs in communities.

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[87] Several KIIs and FGDs with beneficiaries and community members in Tonj
[88] KII with Group Leader (beneficiary, female) in Pibor on 26 June 2019
[89] KII with beneficiary in Kapoeta East on 24 June 2019
[90] KII with UNOPS TL for Tonj South, in Tonj on 25 May 2019
[91] FGD with beneficiaries and community members in Pibor, on 25 June 2019 and KII with Group Leader (female beneficiary) in Tonj South, on 27 June 2019.

81. **VMGs, more than other beneficiaries, often lacked the means to communicate their grievances**. As the Head of a County Appeals Committee said: "*Let me not also forget communication problem. They don't have any means of communicating their problems to concern bodies.*"[92] This can be physical means to communicate (e.g. possession of a phone) but can also be related to social barriers to communicate (e.g. as a result of clan affiliations or sex).

82. **Ensuring access to the GRM starts with being able to access the Group Leader or the Appeals Committee for complaints.** When there are physical barriers that can prevent someone from accessing either the Group Leader or the Appeals Committee, the responsibility is then shifted to the Group Leader or members of the Appeals Committee to actively reach out to VMGs to ensure grievances are reported. Given the challenging economic situation in South Sudan, and the fact that Group Leaders and members of Appeals Committees did not receive (additional) financial benefits for outreach and mobilization,[93] there was no reported effort to visit the VMGs by the GRM members at the local levels to enable them to report grievances.

Training and policies on inclusion

83. **There is a need for additional training for project staff in field locations on the inclusion of VMGs in the project**. Insufficient attention was paid to operationalising the principles and policies of VMGs inclusion that were articulated in the project safeguards documents at a national level. While the PIU reported training all project staff down to the community level on the inclusion of VMGs, only some people reported receiving training. In some locations, IP staff said they received training on the inclusion on VMGs, as in Kapoeta East: "*there was a training conducted on including VMGs, e.g. people with disability, widows, elderly, chronically sick.*"[94] However, in several other locations, including Tonj South and Pibor, IP staff said they had not been specifically trained on how to deal with VMGs. IP staff in several locations expressed the need for additional training on dealing with VMGs in the project.[95]

84. **The project lacked necessary policies, strategies, and focus on VMG inclusion in the GRM, beyond the focus on targeting the poorest people in the community.** While there were policies at the national level, these were not translated into actions to include VMGs in the GRM at the lower level. In none of the locations were members of the Appeals Committee aware of policies to ensure VMGs had access to the GRM. When the Group Leaders were asked whether active inclusion of VMGs in the GRM was ensured, few of them were able to provide examples of this having been done. One of the examples provided was that VMGs were appointed as the Group Leaders, so that they would not have to do heavy work.[96]

85. **There was insufficient training of Group Leaders and Appeal Committees on the inclusion of VMGs in the GRM.** In some areas, both Group Leaders and Appeals Committee members mentioned that they had been trained on including VMGs in the GRM, while others said they never received training. In Kapoeta East for example, several Group Leaders mentioned they received training on how to deal with VMGs: *"we were trained on how to care for them, especially those without children who live in isolation."*[97] The SNSDP Project Manager stated that the PIU trained Appeals Committees on how to handle grievances, and how to deal with VMGs.[98] However, while this was part of the bigger

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[92] KII with Head of County Appeals committee in Tonj on 31 May 2019

[93] A Group Leader is a beneficiary, so receives the standard project salary. However, the Appeals Committee members do not receive a financial incentive.

[94] KII with UNOPS TL for Kapoeta East in Narus, on 18 June 2019

[95] KII with UNOPS TL for Tonj South, in Tonj on 25 May 2019

[96] Interview with a beneficiary (Group Leader), in Kapoeta East on 19 June 2019

[97] KII with beneficiary (female) in Kapoeta East, on 24 June 2019

[98] KII with SNSPD project manager at the PIU, in Juba on 13 June 2019

training on handling grievances, the specific topic of dealing with VMGs might not have been discussed in great detail, and possibly forgotten.

2.4 Gender-Based Violence

2.4.1 Cultural understanding of Gender Based Violence

86.   **For this research, beneficiaries and community members were not asked about their experiences or understanding of GBV**, given the cultural sensitivities around this issue and as it could be traumatizing for GBV survivors. As a result, the understanding of GBV amongst beneficiaries and community members was harder to gauge. Instead, female beneficiaries and community members were asked about their perception of safety and security, specifically in women-only FGDs. Therefore, this section focuses more on how women engaged with the GRM, and how safety and security issues were usually reported within the respective communities. It also focuses on how addressing GBV was included in the initial design of the GRM. Further contextual background on the cultural understanding of GBV was gained through interviews with the South Sudan GBV sub-cluster, NGOs, donors and Government ministries.

87.   **South Sudan has a serious and persistent problem of GBV,** including cases of "*rape, sexual assault, domestic violence, forced and early marriage, sexual exploitation and abuse, abduction, discriminatory practices within the legal system and harmful traditional practices*".[99] A study (2017) by The Global Women's Institute and International Rescue Committee indicates that nearly 65 percent of women and girls in South Sudan have experienced physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime, and approximately 51 percent have experienced Intimate Partner Violence (IPV).[100] Additionally, 33 percent of women have experienced sexual violence from a non-partner, primarily during attacks or raids.[101] In fact, a large proportion of girls and women experience sexual violence for the first time before the age of 18.[102]

88.   **Decades of prolonged conflict have resulted in a deeply militarised environment that exacerbates gender inequalities, increases risks and realities of violence and breaks down formal and informal systems that allow perpetrators of violence, including GBV, to act with greater impunity**. Already a taboo and sensitive topic, survivors of GBV are often hesitant to seek support because they may fear stigma, retaliation, isolation or death.[103] Moreover, in South Sudan, there is a lack of safe mechanisms and services for survivors to report to and access. When survivors report experiences of sexual violence, including rape, within communities, customary law often prevails, which results in decisions and punishment being handled by male community elders and systems that can further entrench gender inequality or conflict with a survivor's needs.[104]

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[99] South Sudan GBV Sub-Cluster Strategy 2017: Available at:
https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/gbv_sub-cluster_strategy_final_1.pdf
[100] While the prevalence study had limitations due to security and access, it represents a strong picture of the experiences of women, girls and other survivors of GBV. IRC and Global Women's Institute (2017): Available at:
https://www.rescue.org/press-release/levels-violence-against-women-and-girls-south-sudan-among-highest-world-reveals
[101] ibid
[102]UNICEF (2019) briefing note on GBV in South Sudan: Available at:
https://www.unicef.org/southsudan/media/2071/file/UNICEF-South-Sudan-GBV-Briefing-Note-May-2019.pdf
[103] South Sudan GBV Sub-Cluster Strategy 2017: Available at:
https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/gbv_sub-cluster_strategy_final_1.pdf
[104] UNDP (2018) Endline report on Peace, Security and SGBV in South Sudan, available at:
http://www.ss.undp.org/content/south_sudan/en/home/library/Gender_Equality_Women_Empowerment/endline-study-on-peace--security-and-sexual-and-gender-based-vio/

2.4.2   SNSDP GRM and Gender-Based Violence

89.   **The objective of the SNSDP GRM was to address project related GBV risks and incidents only and ensure appropriate response in alignment with procedures and referral protocol established for the project.** The objective of the GRM was not necessarily to identify and address general cases of GBV and broader family problems, although those might still be reported through the system, as it was beyond the scope of the project to respond to wider experiences of GBV, or to fill the gap in the current GBV infrastructure in South Sudan.

90.   **Within the SNSDP, there has been limited communication with and sensitisation of communities about risks of project related GBV incidents**, most notably in Tonj South, Kapoeta East, and Pibor. In Tonj South, the topic of GBV was briefly introduced to beneficiaries during the mass mobilisation at the start of the project. In Kapoeta East similarly, topics such as domestic violence, rape, and early marriage were discussed during the mass mobilisation, but Appeals Committee members were not well-informed about GBV.[105] In Pibor, while a County core team member stated that addressing GBV was a top priority due to early and forced marriage, other GRM members and IP staff, such as the UNOPS community mobiliser, did not report efforts to address GBV through the GRM.[106]

> *"When we were doing mass mobilisation for all communities, including beneficiaries, we mentioned about GBV. But sometimes the communities were not that convinced, because GBV is sometimes contradicting with how the community are, a woman or a man may not know that it is GBV, they may be doing it and they don't know, because of the culture."[107]*

91.   **In Juba, the research shows that substantially more efforts were dedicated to address GBV through the project.** According to a Block Development Committee member, sensitisation efforts were undertaken to encourage people to report GBV cases to the GRM.[108] A lot of discussion took place on dealing with GBV cases and sensitising beneficiaries on these issues. AAH-I piloted proactive reporting channels, where a female volunteer acting as the GBV focal point within the GRM was trained on gender and GBV issues and went from house to house to encourage women to report their grievances. While this was a positive way to create awareness amongst people in the community and link a GBV survivor to the authorities, the project mandate was not sufficient to receive and safely refer GBV-related cases to specialized service providers.[109] Even if cases were detected, adequate services to refer GBV survivors to were often not available, or unknown to IP staff.

Reporting experiences of GBV to the GRM

92.   **There was a strong belief – across all locations – that family or personal problems should be addressed within the family and should be reported to family elders, and not to the GRM.** Most female beneficiaries stated they never considered reporting personal issues to the GRM. For one, it was not considered culturally appropriate to make such matters public, and second, because they assumed that the GRM was only meant to be used for grievances directly related to project operations and business cycles, while issues of GBV - even if linked to receiving cash from the project - were not

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[105] KII with UNOPS TL for Kapoeta East, in Narus on 23 June 2019
[106] KII with County Core team member in Pibor on 23 June 2019
[107] KII with UNOPS TL in Tonj South, on 25 May 2019, in Tonj
[108] KII with block development committee in Juba on 31 May 2019
[109] Ibid.

considered relevant for the GRM. A female beneficiary in Tonj South shared that when it comes to problems within your household, "*what makes people hesitate is the fact that you are married with cows and you fear the husband beating you, so you cannot leave him and report the matter to other people, you need to understand yourselves with him first.*"[110] Men also stated that family affairs should be discussed in the household, or when they cannot be solved there, they can be taken to the chief.[111] They believed that families, or, when it is out of their control, the chief should handle grievances related to GBV/SEA issue like rape or adultery.[112] Similarly, in Kapoeta East, according to a male respondent, local communities believe that domestic violence between a man and a woman should not be discussed in public as this will bring disgrace to the man.[113]

93.   **Besides beneficiaries, Appeals Committee members, and Government and IP staff also often stated that private matters should not be reported to the GRM**. Several members of Appeals Committees in all locations stated that personal issues should not be reported to the GRM. A member of the Juba County Core Team stressed that only directly project-related complaints were to be dealt with by the GRM: *"GBV and SEA procedures were not in place for beneficiaries to report GBV/SEA. We only handle complaints of public works and nothing else".*[114] Similarly, the CST chairperson in Dar El Salam Quarter Council (QC) in Juba believed that only project-related grievances should be reported through the GRM, while community conflict that is not related to the project should be reported through existing government and/or community structures.[115]

> *"Women are only comfortable approaching the GRM to report cases of dispute, absenteeism due to loss of a dear one and many others that happen at the place of work and should not report private matters like a fight between husband and wife. Such are solved in the house or shared with family elders, trusted friends or neighbours within the community."*[116]

94.   **There is a fear that reporting GBV issues will negatively affect those who report**. Some female beneficiaries reported that: "*If there is a quarrel with the husband no one will consider it, you might be abused in public".*[117] Women mentioned that they do not want other people to know about their problems.[118] A man in a mixed-sex FGD reported that "*Culturally, we don't report rape cases as this could spoil the name of the victim."*[119] Many beneficiaries believe that reporting such sensitive grievances through the GRM could actually do harm to people. A male Group Leader in Pibor recognised that in many cases, safety concerns could be reported, but this does not include any concerns in the domestic sphere: "*women are not comfortable approaching the GRM Appeals Committee with safety concerns, as they fear being beaten by husbands."*[120]

95.   **Some personal project-related issues were seen as things that could be reported, but that did not include any issues on a domestic level, even if it was related to the project.** A woman in Tonj South reported that she had worked on the public works project, but her husband took all the money from her, which caused conflict between her and her husband. She never reported this grievance,

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[110] FGD (mixed sex) with beneficiaries and community members in Tonj South, on 29 May 2019
[111] FGD (mixed sex) with beneficiaries and community members in Tonj South on 29 May 2019
[112] Ibid.
[113] KII with UNOPS TL for SNSDP in Kapoeta East, on 18 June 2019
[114] KII with JCC Core Team Member, Director of Agriculture and Forestry, on 27 May 2019
[115] KII with CST chairperson in Juba, on 6 June 2019 - 6 Juba
[116] KII with a women's desk representative in a Juba QC, on 6 June 2019
[117] KII with beneficiary in Tonj South, on 30 May 2019
[118] KII Group Leader (beneficiary) in Tonj South, on 2 June 2019.
[119] FGD mixed sex in Tonj South on 29 May 2019
[120] KII with Group Leader in Pibor on 28 June 2019

because she *"did not know who to tell"* and she *"feared to report to the Group Leader"*.[121] Several women in Pibor similarly feared that reporting any personal grievances, even if they were related to the project, would trigger more problems.[122] However, there were some personal project-related issues such as having to stay home to take care of sick children, or concerns about food insecurity that women believed could be shared, but these could not always be addressed by the Group Leader.

Mechanisms in place to respond to experiences of GBV

96.   **In addition to reporting to community elders, there are other traditional and community-based mechanisms in place to deal with GBV incidents**. These mechanisms are context-specific, and do not exist in all the research locations. In Pibor, women talked about "age groups," while certain communities in Tonj South stated that they report their personal and family concerns to the "women's community leader" or "counsellor." Women in an FGD in Juba also named church elders as an option to report safety and security concerns to.[123] A beneficiary from Pibor stated that:

> *''Women are comfortable only reporting project-related grievances and not safety concerns due to cultural perceptions. Safety concerns are sometimes reported to neighbours or a cultural system referred to as 'age group' in the Murle culture. These are friends of the woman or husband who are called upon to settle problems like adultery, and GBV-related cases.''*[124]

97.   **Beneficiaries often had very limited knowledge of external specialized services offered by NGOs or the Government in the region, and thus primarily relied on existing traditional structures if they wanted to report issues regarding their safety or security.** Access to specialized services for GBV survivors, especially in remote areas, was considered a big challenge, as the number of GBV services/actors operating in South Sudan is very low/small and does not cover the needs of the population by any stretch. In Pibor, researchers found that there was also a lot of distrust of NGOs. In Tonj South and Kapoeta East, when asked where women can report grievances related to their safety and security, almost none of them named any NGO or government services.

98.   **Beneficiaries and community members have mixed views on whether GBV cases that result in life-threatening and severe consequences, such as rape, can be reported to government or NGO mechanisms.** There were mixed views on whether formal structures such as police or courts are adequate mechanisms for reporting issues of GBV. One female beneficiary in Juba stated that physical violence and conflicts between a man and a woman are reported directly to the police.[125] However, in a women-only FGD in Juba, women stated that only in rare cases would survivors of GBV directly report to the police.[126] Nearly half the beneficiaries in Juba said they would not report sensitive issues to NGOs or authorities outside of the household or community level. In Tonj South, a woman explained that even if you go to Juba to open a court case against your husband for IPV, your family elders can come and withdraw the case, since there is such a strong belief that these cases should be addressed within the family.[127] Similarly in Pibor, women did not feel comfortable reporting their issues to traditional courts or chiefs because they are all men, and women felt these institutions support the

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[121] KII with female beneficiary in Tonj South on 30 May 2019.
[122] Women-only FGD in Pibor
[123] FGD (women-only) with beneficiaries and community members in Juba, 5 June 2019
[124] FGD (women-only) with beneficiaries and community members in Pibor, on 29 June 2019
[125] FGD with female beneficiaries and community members in Juba, on 12 June 2019
[126] FGD with (women-only) with beneficiaries and community members in Juba
[127] Researcher field notes Tonj South

men in their communities.[128] Women explained that *"when complaining about spouse, if ruling in favour of the wife, the husband's age group will come and attack the women because culturally they have no rights."*[129]

99.   **Reporting grievances relating to GBV was very rare under the SNSDP**. Of all the grievances reported during the GRM, a very limited number were related to GBV. Most of the GRM respondents said there had not been cases of GBV or SEA reported during the project. Nonetheless, in Tonj South, while the UNOPS Team Leader said there were no reported cases of GBV, he did mention one case where a man demanded that his wife be removed as a beneficiary after the end of their marriage, which was ultimately resolved by the UNOPS field team, together with the local leaders. However, redress for this grievance was not provided through the intended GRM structures, as the IP took the lead in providing redress instead of the GRM committees. A stakeholder explained that:

> *"Reporting on GBV issues were low, due to the cultural sensitivity…very few GBV cases were reported to the GRM over the project's lifespan. A total 800-1000 cases were reported to the GRM, of which 2-3 were GBV related, this clearly shows the disparity and sensitivity of the topic."*[130]

100.   **The original design of the SNSDP GRM did not incorporate GBV/SEA reporting mechanisms or referral pathways for beneficiaries to report relevant grievances.** This may have contributed to the low level of GBV-related grievances reported. It also explains why many people felt the GRM was not the appropriate mechanism to report such grievances. The MAFS PIU Project Manager for the SNSDP explained that:

> *"The project is very much silent about the GBV and SEA. However, during implementation we realised there was a need for a gender component, but it was already very late. We did not have special GBV/SEA mechanisms to report".*[131]

101.   **As GBV/SEA reporting mechanisms and referral pathways were not part of the original GRM design, Appeal Committee members were not trained to deal with such cases**. Respondents from all four locations frequently stated that they did not receive any training on identifying and dealing with specific safety concerns for women. Both IP project managers for the SNSPD believed that the GRM was not designed in a way to address GBV instances:

> *"The Appeals Committee were trained on their roles and responsibilities, but this did not include GVB/SEA training, we did not have time to train them on all these specific issues. We trained them on how to handle the vulnerable people, manage people, how to listen when somebody's complaining. To understand the code of conduct."*[132]

Impact of the project and GRM on GBV

102.   **While the project had a noticeable impact on relieving financial burdens on families, it is much harder to establish the impact of the GRM on safely receiving and responding to GBV related grievances.** It is difficult to differentiate the impact of the SNSDP from the impact of the GRM, since many beneficiaries did not see the GRM as a separate mechanism. In addition, many beneficiaries

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[128] Researcher field notes Pibor
[129] FGD with female beneficiaries and community members in Pibor, on 29 June 2019.
[130] KII with SNSDP project manager at UNOPS on 28 June 2019, via skype. The Project Manager speaks from his experience as the project manager of the SNSDP for UNOPS, but his opinion does not reflect the official position of UNOPS.
[131] KII with SNSDP Project Manager in Juba on 13 June 2019.
[132] KII with AAH-I Project Manager for the SNSDP in Juba on 26 June 2019

thought the GRM was either not intended for personal safety and security concerns or felt uncomfortable reporting those concerns outside of the family sphere. Therefore, there is no strong evidence that shows an impact of the GRM on the reduction of GBV cases.

103. **All women reported that receiving the benefits of the project reduced tensions in the household as a result of relieving financial burdens**. A Group Leader in Pibor believed that "*The money received brought safety to women as they could contribute to the family, buy things at any time of need thus reduced stress and tension.*"[133] Women in Pibor similarly believed that benefits helped reduce conflict because women were able to provide food for their husbands, which is often the cause of conflicts in families. Women in a Juba and Tonj South also stated that receiving the project benefits reduced tensions within the family, enabling them to pay for school fees, and uniting their families to plan on how to spend the money.[134] In some cases, women reported that they no longer had to ask their husbands for money to buy basic needs, which also reduced tensions in their household.[135]

104. **In Tonj South, Kapoeta East, and Juba, more women reported being in charge of spending the project benefits.** In Tonj South, most women reported that "*those who work spend the money*", and in many cases that was the women. However, several beneficiaries explained that the family is still involved in how the money is going to be spent: "*the first time I got the money I called a meeting with the family. I told them, this is what I got. They told me to spend it as I want.*"[136] Several other respondents noted that decisions on how the money is spent are taken collectively by the family. Respondents in a women-only FGD in Juba said that making joint decisions on what should be prioritised can lead to some disagreements, but that these are always resolved within the family, with support from the elders.

105. **However, in Pibor, more than in other locations, husbands or men in the family generally controlled how the money received from the project was spent.**[137] In Pibor, women said that for those who are married, the husbands decided how to spend the money, or that they would sit with their husbands and plan how to spend it together; other women gave the money directly to their husbands as they felt was required by their culture.[138] This shows that even though women are supposed to provide for their families – as described in previous paragraphs - they are not always in charge of spending the money. While this could potentially cause conflict, respondents believed that this never resulted in any conflicts, as the women frequently stated, "*that is our culture.*"[139].

Using the GRM to prevent and respond to project related experiences of GBV

106. **While there is no strong evidence of the effectiveness of the SNSDP's GRM to receive and respond to project-related GBV issues, there are entry points to ensure the GRM can be used in the future to address instances of such cases**. The GRM is a mechanism to deal with cases that have been reported, and can potentially raise awareness on emerging social risks, in collaboration/coordination with relevant actors. Project design and implementation, if undertaken with adequate care and consideration, can ensure that due diligence is given to preventing and mitigating project-related GBV

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[133] KII with Group Leader in Pibor on 24 June 2019
[134] FGD with female beneficiaries and community members in Juba on 12 June 2019.
[135] FGD (women-only) with beneficiaries and community members in Tonj South on 30 May 2019.
[136] FGD (women-only) with beneficiaries and community members in Tonj South on 30 May 2019
[137] FGD with female beneficiaries and community members in Juba, on 7 June 2019
[138] FGD with female beneficiaries and community members in Pibor, on 25 June 2019.
[139] FGD with female beneficiaries and community members in Pibor, on 27 June 2019.

incidents. However, it is important to note that not one project can completely alleviate all GBV risks, given the depth and breadth of the problem in South Sudan.

107.   **Most NGOs, UN organisations and development partners interviewed believed that a GRM could be a good entry point to raise awareness more broadly of GBV/SEA issues and promote women's rights**.[140] Due to the GRM's ability to create a culture of dialogue, advocacy through it can contribute to highlighting cultural perceptions and beginning the conversation on changing communities' behaviour regarding GBV. Several stakeholders expressed the importance of advocacy:

> *"Changing cultural perceptions and behaviours through advocacy messaging is the strongest tool GBV/SEA advocates have, as women/girls can only demand to uphold their rights, once they are aware of it."*[141]

> *"The GRM can definitely be used as a tool for advocacy, to raise awareness around sensitive topics in the communities and to make sure people are more willing to come forward. It is a mechanism where you are in touch with the beneficiaries on a day-to-day level."*[142]

108.   **Many stakeholders believed that empowering women and girls and giving them information to seek support in a confidential manner are important first steps in changing community norms and behaviours.** CST chairperson from Juba stated: *"I think women are not aware that they have right to report their safety concerns through GRM, to improve this, females must be educated on their rights."*[143] Increased sensitisation on GBV prevention is therefore necessary to make sure that all community members and beneficiaries are aware of their rights and feel empowered in reporting grievances. Specifically, there is a need to make beneficiaries and community members aware that these project related cases can be reported through the GRM, in order for the GRM to make an impact. The SNSDP focal point at MAFS suggested that in future projects, radio shows can be used to urge people to report GBV or SEA grievances to the GRM.

> *"Domestic issues such as GBV/SEA will most likely not be addressed in such mechanisms, therefore GRM should be used as an entry point to change community norms and behaviours. Advocacy is an important tool in the fight against GBV.''*[144]

109.   **More importantly, there is a need for a supportive environment with adequate specialized services for survivors of GBV across South Sudan that allow women and girls to safely seek support.** Simply encouraging women to report is not enough, since the end goal is to support a survivor, not to report for reporting sake. Therefore, a supportive environment would partially shift the burden away from women and girls, and puts the burden, rightfully, on systems and services that are currently inappropriate or unsafe for women and girls to share their experiences and get support.[145] Building a system that is focused on specialized services is of key importance, since there is a lot of distrust and hesitation in the communities to report to formal structures and authorities, as these Government mechanisms are often considered to be unsafe or consisting of perpetrators themselves.

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[140] KII with South Sudan GBV sub Cluster coordinator at UNFPA in Juba on 20 June 2019.
[141] Ibid.
[142] KII with UNOPS project manager for the SNSDP, via Skype on 28 June 2019
[143] KII with CST chairperson in Juba, on 6 June 2019
[144] KII with GBV sub-cluster coordinator, at UFFPA in Juba, on 20 June 2019
[145] Instead of only encouraging survivors to report, without adequate services in place, there should be more focus on providing adequate services, to take on some of the burden from GBV survivors.

110.   **A survivor centred approach to reporting and redress should respect the rights of GBV survivors and ensure they are treated with dignity and respect.**[146] There should be robust referral systems and pathways for GBV/SEA to link survivors of GBV or SEA to appropriate services, and adequate training for non-GBV specialists to whom the GBV/SEA incident may be reported. The project can link up with the GBV sub-cluster and GBV actors[147] to get information and access to referral pathways and capacity-building on how to safely link survivors to the referral pathway.

111.   **To ensure women are encouraged to report cases of GBV outside of the family structures, many respondents suggested having a gender focal point within the GRM.** As an Appeals Committee member mentioned: "*To promote willingness for women to come report safety concerns...there is need to have a Gender Focal Person within the GRM who is trained.*"[148] A gender focal point can ensure that women feel safe reporting their issues, and that issues can be adequately responded to. It is important to make this available at the lowest level of the GRM directly in the community to ensure there are fewer barriers to accessing the gender focal point. An IP staff member in Pibor similarly stated that having a woman representative will enable women to report their grievances, because women in Pibor are not allowed to talk about some issues.[149] However, simply including more women in the GRM will not lead to fewer cases of project related GBV in communities, as those that receive these complaints will need to be trained on how to handle them and be able to refer people to appropriate services, where available.

112.   **More specifically, a female Group Leader would particularly help women report their grievances.** When asked how women and girls can be encouraged to report safety concerns to the GRM, it was commonly cited in women-only FGDs that women would feel more comfortable reporting safety concerns if the Group Leader was female. Women mentioned that a woman would be more understanding of their issues and that family problems are difficult to report because people are afraid, but that having a female Group Leader would help them report.[150] However, some women suggested having both a male and a female Group Leader, for the men to report to a man, and the women to report to a woman, as some women in Tonj South believed that men might not listen to a female Group Leader.[151]

3. Conclusion and recommendations

3.1 Conclusion

113.   **Due to the context of South Sudan, traditionally based (or other types of) conflict resolution mechanisms have been greatly weakened by the decades of war, insecurity and humanitarian crisis**. As such, and aligned with the principles set out in the World Bank's FCV Strategy (2020), there is a critical need to strengthen endurable conflict resolution mechanisms that can support peaceful resolution to grievances and tensions within a community through participatory dialogue. This is expected to be even more relevant as the peace process moves forward, enabling conditions for

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[146] SEE for example: http://www.endvawnow.org/en/articles/652-survivor-centred-approach.html
[147] The GBV sub-cluster has established referral pathways documentation, providing information on specialized services for GBV survivors in many areas in South Sudan, although not all. At the time of writing, sub-cluster coordination is done by United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and International Rescue Committee (IRC)
[148] KII with Appeals Committee member in Juba, on 7 June 2019
[149] KII with UNOPS community mobiliser in Pibor, on 26 June 2019
[150] FGD (women-only) with beneficiary and community members in Tonj South, on 30 May 2019, and KII with female beneficiary in Tonj South, on 27 May 2019.
[151] FGD (women-only) with beneficiaries and community members in Tonj South on 28 May 2019

medium term recovery and longer-term development. This is done through project interventions to ensure accessibility and responsiveness to marginalised groups and respond to any *project-related* GBV risks, as much as possible, while supporting activities (i.e. through community awareness building) to change behaviours and mind-sets to promote inclusion and GBV risk mitigation

114.   **The overall functioning of the SNSDP GRM varied across the different project locations that were included in this research.** This is mostly a result of different levels of understanding of the GRM structures amongst beneficiaries and community members. In some locations, like Tonj South, there was very limited understanding of the role of the GRM Appeals Committees. In Kapoeta East and Pibor on the other hand, most respondents were able to explain how the GRM works and were aware of the different GRM structures. Understanding of the GRM however was best in Juba, among all the stakeholders. In some locations, limited knowledge of the GRM contributed to ineffective functioning of the GRM, as people were unaware of structures beyond the Group Leader.

115.   **One of the main strengths of the GRM was its ability to create social unity and cohesion, and to promote community dialogue.** In all locations, the project through the GRM managed to create a culture that promotes community dialogue to address grievances and prevent conflict. This was achieved in all areas, despite limited understanding of the GRM in some locations. Beneficiaries in all locations were aware that grievances could be reported to the Group Leader, which provided a platform for mediation at the grassroots level to solve day-to-day challenges, and ultimately supported the smooth implementation of the SNSDP.

116.   **The GRM has successfully included traditional channels for grievance redress and structured the GRM to triage up, instead of creating parallel systems.** The GRM actively sought to include traditional power structures that are already used for grievance redress in communities. These are however context-specific: in certain areas, chiefs or religious structures are well-respected and traditionally used for grievance redress, while in other locations, like Pibor, generation/age-group structures are traditionally used and trusted to provide redress. In the GRM, Appeals Committees were usually made up of chiefs and community leaders. These people were elected or selected to serve on the Appeals Committees because of their influential position in the community. As a result, the decisions of the Appeals Committees were generally accepted in the community.

117.   **However, there is a need to ensure that existing traditional power structures are sensitive to the needs of VMGs, who are often excluded from accessing them.** VMGs can face exclusion from activities in the community due to physical ability or their position in the community. In patriarchal communities, women are also often excluded from decision-making bodies in the community. As a result, Appeals Committees were often male dominated in membership. This was an inhibiting factor for many VMGs, in particular women, to report their grievances.

118.   **There was also a lack of adequate training and policy guidance regarding the inclusion of VMGs in the GRM**. Initial training of Appeals Committee members focused on the structures of the GRM, and on how to report, register, and address grievances, but did not specifically focus on the inclusion of VMGs in the community. Even among IP staff, there was insufficient training on how to include VMGs in the project and the GRM. While the project focused on targeting VMGs, the GRM did not include specific mechanisms to operationalize the principles and policies of inclusion of VMGs that were articulated in the project safeguards documents.

119.   **The GRM, a reactive channel, is dependent on beneficiaries and community members reaching out to report their grievances**. Proactive channels, where grievances are actively sought out by project or GRM members can encourage people – especially women – to report grievances. An example of a proactive reporting channels is the system AAH-I introduced in Juba, where a female volunteer acting as the GBV focal point within the GRM was trained on gender and GBV issues and

went house to house to encourage women to report their grievances. Especially when committees are made up of powerful people in the community, depending on reactive channels for people to report their grievances can pose barriers, especially for VMGs.

120.   **Issues of safety and security, especially at the domestic level, are particularly difficult for women to report in public settings**. Women frequently stated that they would not feel comfortable reporting IPV or private family matters to anyone outside their family. Fear, shame, and cultural norms prevent women from sharing cases of GBV to the GRM. These issues, people believe, should be addressed by the family elders. Due to the position of women in many communities, it is extremely difficult for them to report GBV-related cases to community structures. However, the GRM can be used for sensitising communities regarding the rights of women and VMGs in general, and advocate to change community norms and behaviours. Ultimately, efforts should be made to create a supportive environment with adequate specialized services that allow women and girls to safely seek support.

121.   **Finally, insufficient incentives to Appeals Committee members hindered the effective functioning of the GRM even when grievances were reported.** The Appeals Committee members did not receive project benefits since they were not beneficiaries. As a result, members of the Appeals Committee often prioritised income-generating activities instead of volunteering their time to the project. In some locations (e.g. some parts of Tonj South), Appeals Committees never started their work after the initial training. In other locations, lack of motivation resulted in the ineffective functioning of the GRM.

122.   **Nonetheless, the GRM has the potential to support VMG inclusion and address socio-cultural issues and emerging risks such as GBV if its functionalities are strengthened, in general, and with regards to these issues.** During the SNSDP, socio-cultural issues, such as GBV, were discussed during mass mobilisation to a limited extent, but the GRM was not frequently used to facilitate sensitisation activities. The GRM therefore can provide an entry point for these activities, as it provides a platform for mediation and community dialogue. However, any prevention activities are strictly limited to changing mindsets and behaviours through focused community engagement and communication.

3.2   Recommendations

123.   **The overall objective of this study is to identify options and provide recommendations in the delivery of safety nets and grievance redress mechanisms to support inclusion, community level unity and cohesion and to address emerging social risks, namely GBV**. This research assessed the overall functioning of the GRM, with the aim of providing recommendations for strengthening the GRM to support conflict sensitive smooth implementation of project activities, response to complaints and grievances, as well as support active inclusion of VMGs and address emerging project-related GBV risks and incidents. Recommendations are divided into the following categories:

- Project as a whole;
- General functioning of the GRM;
- Inclusion of VMGs in the GRM, and
- Using the GRM to prevent and respond to project related experiences of GBV

The project as a whole

- **Design targeting criteria to prioritise the inclusion of VMGs in the project** to ensure that community-based selection methods are guided by clear targeting criteria, and selection committees are adequately trained to apply the targeting criteria.

- **Consider forming groups consisting only of VMGs to minimise discrimination and create a safe environment for VMGs to carry out public work activities.** Meanwhile, considerable effort needs to be made to sensitise the wider community on the rights of VMGs. As an example, a beneficiary group solely of people suffering from Leprosy in a community where people believe that leprosy is contagious could enable this vulnerable group to still participate in the project (e.g. in various Bomas in Tonj South).

- **Increase oversight of community-based selection committees by IP staff** to ensure that those who are traditionally excluded in communities are selected as beneficiaries, and those who are in powerful positions within the community (or their associates) are not automatically selected as beneficiaries as a result of their position in the community.

- **Increase community sensitisation activities regarding selection criteria and project benefits** to ensure that all community members, including VMGs, are aware of the selection criteria, duration of the project, and payment processes. This can be done through community meetings, radio shows etc., with a focus on inclusion of VMGs.

- **Increase sensitisation activities regarding the rights of VMGs, including women.** There is a need to sensitise communities on the rights of women to help create an environment where women feel safe, comfortable, respected, and able to report grievances. Radio shows and community meetings – with arrangements in place to ensure inclusion of VMGs – can provide opportunities to promote the rights of VMGs in the community.

- **Increase sensitisation activities regarding GBV prevention and understanding** to positively influence cultural norms and behaviours of communities. Radio shows can provide safe and impersonal channels for information on GBV prevention and understanding. However, this should be combined with other activities, e.g. community activism, and engaging multiple stakeholders, to strengthen potential outcomes, and should be evidence-based.

- **Ensure all sensitisation activities are standardised across project locations for consistent understanding by all stakeholders.** A Community Engagement and Capacity Building (CECB) Plan, with standardised communication materials and tools will ensure that all awareness raising activities, not only related to the project, but also more broadly in terms of various social issues, are consistent in frequency and content across project locations. The GRM can provide one channel of transmission/delivery of such communication to the communities.

General functioning of the GRM

- **Increase community outreach to explain the functioning of the GRM**. There is a need to provide additional information to communities on how the GRM works, its various levels, and how it interacts with existing community structures.

- **Ensure that mechanisms to appeal are in place, and communities are informed about these mechanisms.** Provide alternative channels for people to report their grievances if their grievances are not dealt with in a satisfactory way. This is especially important when using community-based reporting where grievances relate to those in power.

- **Include project staff in the GRM structure to provide alternate 'last resort' reporting mechanism**. Project staff – who do not reside in the community – can provide oversight of community-based GRM reporting structures, and offer the opportunity for community members to report to an "outsider" when they are unable to report sensitive issues through community-based structures (e.g. when the complaints is about community leaders or those within the GRM structures).

- **Ensure that communities and local authorities are involved in the development of GRM policies/procedures through workshops** to ensure policies are suitable to the local contexts, and to ensure buy-in from local authorities. For ownership and sustainability of GRM by communities and local authorities, the IP should involve local mechanisms during the design and implementation of the GRM.

- **Ensure that the GRM builds on traditional conflict resolution structures** (e.g. chiefs, church elders) to ensure that the GRM is embedded within those structures, rather than creating parallel systems in a community, to ensure ownership and sustainability. Special attention should be paid to inclusion of VMGs, as these traditional conflict resolution structures are often difficult for VMGs to access.

- **Provide incentives, financial or in-kind, for GRM Appeals Committees**. Providing Appeals Committee members - who are not beneficiaries and therefore often prioritise paid work or income-generating activities over Appeals Committee work – can help motivate Appeals Committee members to carry out their tasks effectively for the duration of the project.

- **Provide additional training for Group Leaders and Appeals Committees on their roles, responsibilities, and the functioning of the GRM.** There has been limited training for Group Leaders, who as the first responders to grievances, should receive in-depth training on the entire GRM structure and processes. This information can then also be passed on to beneficiaries and community members on a more regular basis.

- **Ensure that a strong communications campaign is in place to make sure people are aware that reporting grievances will not negatively impact their position in the project**. There is a culture where community members are hesitant to report cases due to the fear of not being selected for a follow-up project.

- **Ensure IP staff work closely with the local authorities on monitoring the GRM activities** by sharing reports to keep local authorities informed on progress and challenges faced during implementation of the GRM.

- **Provide Appeals Committees with resources (e.g. methods of communication or transportation) to proactively pursue potential grievances, especially from VMGs** to ensure that those who are unable to reach the members of the Appeals Committees, or those who are unable to speak up, are included in the GRM.

Inclusion of VMGs in the GRM

- **Promote the selection of female Group Leaders.** Given that most beneficiaries are women, and as this research shows that women are more comfortable reporting their grievances to fellow women, it is expected that having female Group Leaders will increase the level of reporting by women to the GRM.

- **Appoint gender focal points in the Appeals Committees** to ensure that women are able and comfortable to report their grievances directly to the Appeals Committee, instead of going through the Group Leader (who may not be female) or not reporting at all.

- **Appoint gender focal points in the IP field teams** to ensure a gender focus is maintained throughout the duration of the project in all activities.

- **Provide Group Leaders with additional training on the inclusion of VMGs in the GRM**. Given the important role that Group Leaders play in addressing grievances in the initial stage, Group Leaders would particularly benefit from receiving targeted training on the specific needs and challenges of VMGs.

- **Ensure that VMGs are sensitised about their rights and encouraged to use the grievance reporting process** to mitigate demand-side barriers to accessing the GRM. This can be done through community meetings and proactive outreach of Group Leaders and members of Appeals Committees who can inform beneficiaries in their groups.

Using the GRM to prevent and respond to project related experiences of GBV

- **Ensure all project staff is familiar with the World Bank's standing guidance on management of SEA/harassment (SEA/H) and other forms of GBV. [152]** Project staff should ensure recommendations in existing relevant guidance notes are followed and should be made aware of the upcoming guidance note on SEA/H-sensitive grievance mechanisms. In addition, all project staff should be familiarised with the World Bank's resource guide on Violence Against Women and Girls in SP programmes.[153] It should be the responsibility of the World Bank task team to provide project staff with the relevant and necessary resources, as identified above.

- **Ensure that gender transformative interventions are integrated in future projects** to address any potential tensions in the home that might be created through targeting of women for cash for work activities. Gender transformative activities aim to change harmful gender norms and can help to reduce violence against women and address challenging household dynamics. These interventions should be evidence based and following international best practice

- **Increase advocacy and sensitisation efforts to improve awareness of GBV and support increased willingness to report.** The research shows that women are unlikely to report cases of GBV through community reporting structures in the current context. Advocacy and sensitisation efforts aimed at changing community norms and behaviour towards gender norms and GBV issues should be strengthened, including increasing awareness of the option of reporting possible cases through the GRM.

- **Provide training for Group Leaders and Appeals Committee members on how to respond to reported GBV cases.** Include training on supporting survivors who have willingly disclosed experiences of GBV, and how to safely refer them to specialized services, where available. All GRM staff should be aware of the protocol in place to enable access to survivor centric care.

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[152] The 'World Bank Good Practice Note – Addressing SEA/SH in IPF Involving Major Civil Works' should be a guiding document for project staff, and is available here: http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/741681582580194727/ESF-Good-Practice-Note-on-GBV-in-Major-Civil-Works-v2.pdf
[153] This resource is publicly available on:
https://www.vawgresourceguide.org/sites/vawg/files/briefs/vawg_resource_guide_social_protection_brief_-_nov_26.pdf

- **Provide training for IP field staff, most importantly community mobilisers, on responding to reported GBV cases.** Include training on supporting survivors who have willingly disclosed experiences of GBV, and how to safely refer them to specialized available GBV survivor services, where available. All IP staff should be aware of the protocol in place to enable access to survivor centric care.

- **The project should link up with the South Sudan GBV sub-cluster and GBV actors within the humanitarian sector to get access to referral pathways and capacity-building on how to safely link survivors to the referral pathway**. Available referral pathways should be mapped out for each of the project locations.

- **Ensure referral pathways are known to Appeals Committee members and Group Leaders to respond to reported cases of GBV.** It is important to make sure that those who are responsible for receiving and reporting grievance know where to refer the victim, and how to do so safely.

- **Identify other potential channels for reporting to expand the range of reporting options for survivors,** including but not limited to relevant women's organisations or GBV service providers (if available in communities) in addition to gender focal points. While embedding gender focal points within the GRM is one option for creating an enabling environment for women to report cases, it may not be enough on its own to shift norms and perceptions around reporting and potential for retaliation or redress.

Annex 1: GRM structure
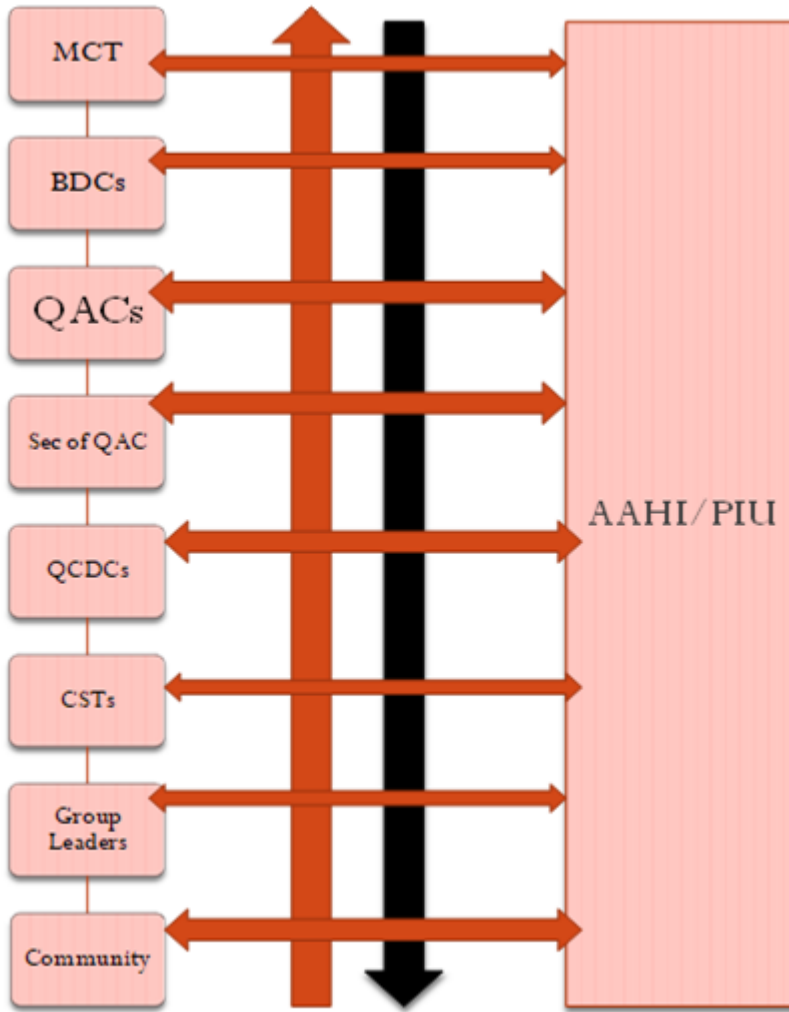
GRIEVANCE HANDLING MECHANISM – JUBA

Annex 2: Overview of Interviews

Juba Stakeholder Interviews							
No.	Type	Organisation	Role	Gender	No. of respondents	Location	Date
1	KII	SIDA	National Programmes Manager	Female	1	Swedish Embassy	26-06-19
2	KII	USAID			2	US Embassy	24-06-19
3	KII	DFID	Head of Education and Health	Male	1	The Nest, British Residence Juba	17-06-19
4	KII	GBV sub-cluster (UNFPA)	Lead Coordinator for the National GBV Sub-Cluster	Female	1	UNFPA Country Office	20-06-19
5	KII	Canadian Embassy	Development Officer	Male	1	Canadian Embassy	18-06-19
6	KII	Action Africa Help-International	Project Manager	Male	1	AAH Country Office	26-06-19
7	KII	UNOPS	Project Manager	Male	1	Skype, Juba	28-06-19
8	KII	Ministry of Gender	Director General	Female	1	Ministry of Gender Office	08-07-19
9	KII	Ministry of Agriculture, Project Implementation Unit (PIU)	Project Manager	Male	1	National Ministry of Agriculture, Project Implementation Unit	13-06-19
Total					**10**		

Juba Interviews							
No.	Type	Role	Gender	Age	No. of respondents	Location	Date
1	KII	Core group member	female	34	1	JCC	27-05-19
2	KII	Focal Point	male	45	1	MAFS	30-05-19
3	KII	Focal Point	male	54	1	MoLPSHRD	31-05-19

4	KII	Group Leader	male	44	1	Buluk QC	03-06-19
5	KII	CST member	male	38	1	Gbongoroki QC	05-06-19
6	KII	CST Chairperson	male	55	1	Dar salam QC	06-06-19
7	KII	Core group member	male	70	1	JCC	27-05-19
8	KII	Block focal team	female	50	1	Munuki Block	31-05-19
9	KII	Block focal team	male	60	1	Kator Block	03-06-19
10	KII	GRM appeal committee	male	40	1	Buluk QC	05-06-19
11	KII	GRM member	female	45	1	Gwongoroki	07-06-19
19	KII	JCC Core Team Member	male	-	1	Juba city council	27-05-19
20	FGD	Beneficiaries	female	35-45	8	Gabat	12-06-19
21	KII	Group leader	female	-	1	Dar el-salaam	06-06-19
22	KII	Appeal committee member	male	48	1	Gwongoroki Quarter councils	07-06-19
23	KII	Block assistant Engineer	male	-	1	Munuki Block	31-05-19
24	KII	Appeal committee member	male	35	1	Gabat QCs	11-06-19
25	KII	Secretary Quarter Council	male	36	1	Gwongoroki QC	05-06-19
26	KII	Women Desk Representative	female	33	1	Dar Salam QC	06-06-19
27	KII	Clerical	female	38	1	Juba Block Council	30-06-19
28	KII	Engineer	male	37	1	Kator Block Council	03-06-19
29	KII	Group leader	male	55	1	Gabat QCs	11-06-19
30	KII	Clerical	female	38	1	Kator Block Council	03-06-19
31	FGD	Beneficiaries	female	35-45	7	Buluk QC	05-06-19
32	FGD	Beneficiaries	female	35-45	8	Dar Salam QC	10-06-19
33	FGD	Beneficiaries	mixed sex	35-45	8	Gabat QCs	12-06-19
34	FGD	Beneficiaries	female	35-45	6	Gwongoroki QC	07-07-19
35	KII	CST	male	47	1	Gwongoroki QC	05-06-19
36	KII	CST	male	52	1	Dar Salam QC	14-06-19

37	KII	Appeal committee member	male	38	1	Gabat QCs	11-06-19
38	FGD	Beneficiaries	mixed sex	35-45	8	Dar Salam QC	10-06-19
39	FGD	Beneficiaries	mixed sex	35-45	8	Hai Gabat QC	12-06-19
Total:					**78**		

Pibor Interviews							
No.	Type	Role	Gender	Age	No. of respondents	Location	Date
1	KII	AG DG MAFs	male	35	1	Pibor	21-06-19
2	KII	Core team members	male	35-45	2	Pibor	22-06-19
3	KII	Group Leader	male	20	1	Kondako	23-06-19
4	KII	Kondako block chair	male	42	1	Kondako	23-06-19
5	FGD	Beneficiaries	female	30 - 45	9	Kondako	25-06-19
6	KII	Group Leader	female	40	1	Hai matara	26-06-19
7	KII	Appeal committee	male	39	1	Hai matara	26-06-19
8	FGD	Beneficiaries	female	30 - 45	8	Hai matara	27-06-19
9	KII	Group Leader	male	45	1	Jalaba West	28-06-19
10	KII	GRM chairman	male	55	1	Jalaba West	28-06-19
11	FGD	Beneficiaries	female	30-45	8	Jalaba West	29-06-19
12	KII	Anywaak block chair	female	49	1	Anywaak block	01-07-19
13	KII	Group Leader	female	40	1	Anywaak block	01-07-19
14	FGD	Beneficiaries	female	30-45	9	Anywaak block	01-07-19
15	KII	Project Officer - CIDO	male	38	1	Pibor	01-07-19
16	KII	Chairman core team Municipal council	male	65	1	Pibor M C	23-06-19
17	FGD	Beneficiaries	Mixed Gender	45	8	Kondoka, Pibor	25-06-19
18	KII	GRM	Male	60	1	Kondoka, Pibor	24-06-19

19	KII	Group Leader	Male	30	1	Kondoka, Pibor	24-06-19
20	KII	GPL	Male	37	1	Anyuak	01-07-19
21	KII	GRM	Male	65	1	Anyuak	01-07-19
22	KII	Humanitarian & Development Partner (GBV)	Female	35	1	Pibor	01-07-19
23	KII	Community Mobiliser	Male	37	1	UNOPS Office	26-06-19
24	KII	GRM	Male	35	1	Pibor	29-06-19
25	FGD	Beneficiaries	Mixed Gender	35-45	8	Jalaba West, Pibor	29-06-19
26	KII	GRM	Male	38	1	Hai Matara Pibor	26-06-19
27	KII	MoPSLHRD	Male	30	1	MoPSLHRD	24-06-19
28	FGD	Beneficiaries	Mixed Gender	30 - 45	8	Anyuak	01-07-19
29	KII	Chief Matara	Male	62	1	Matara	26-06-19
30	KII	Group Leader	Male	47	1	Jalaba West.Pibor	28-06-19
31	KII	GRM	Male	55	1	Jalaba A	28-06-19
32	FGD	Beneficiaries	Mixed Gender	25 - 45	8	Matara	27-07-19
Total:					**91**		

Kapoeta East Interviews							
No.	**Type**	**Role**	**Gender**	**Age**	**No. of respondents**	**Location**	**Date**
1	KII	Kapoeta East county core team	male	51	1	County office	18-06-19
2	KII	Chairperson Appeal committee	male	47	3	Lolim Boma	19-06-19
3	FGD	Group leaders and beneficiaries	mixed sex	30- 49	10	Lolim Boma	20-06-19
4	KII	Appeal committee members	male	29- 57	8	Lowriwa Boma	21-06-19
5	FGD	Group leaders and beneficiaries	mixed sex	28-47	8	Lowriwa Boma	21-06-19
6	KII	Appeal committee members	male	36-70	4	Kokoro Boma	22-06-19
7	KII	Beneficiaries	male	25-48	4	Loolim Boma	19-06-19
8	FGD	Beneficiaries	female	35-48	8	Loolim Boma	20-06-19
9	KII	Group leaders	mixed sex	35-48	4	Lowriwa Boma	21-06-19

10	FGD	Beneficiaries	female	39-40	8	Lowriwa Boma	21-06-19
11	FGD	Group leaders	female	35-48	8	Kokoro Boma	22-06-19
12	KII	Group leaders	female	35-48	4	Kokoro Boma	22-06-19
13	FGD	Beneficiaries	female	36-48	8	Lopua Boma	24-06-19
14	KII	Beneficiaries	female	35-48	8	lopua boma	24-06-19
15	FGD	Beneficiaries	female	35-48	13	Kanachidik Boma	26-06-19
16	KII	Beneficiaries	female	35-48	5	Kanachidik Boma	26-06-19
17	KII	Core team member, Narus county HQS	male	30	1	Narus County HQS	18-06-19
18	KII	TL UNOPS-SNSDP	male	35	1	Narus County HQS	18-06-19
19	FGD	Group leaders and beneficiaries	mixed sex	30- 50	8	Kokoro Boma	22-06-19
20	KII	Appeal committee members	male	46-54	6	Kokoro Boma	22-06-19
21	KII	Appeal committee members	mixed sex	40-60	6	Lopua Boma	24-06-19
22	FGD	Beneficiaries	mixed sex	25-50	8	Lopua Boma	24-06-19
23	KII	Boma Appeal Committee Chairperson	male	34- 45	8	Kanachidik Boma	26-06-19
24	KII	Beneficiary	male	25	1	Loolim Boma	19-06-19
Total					**143**		

Tonj South Interviews							
No.	Type	Role	Gender	Age	No. of respondents	Location	Date
1	KII	Community mobiliser	male	35	1	Tonj Town	25-05-19
2	KII	Town Mayor	male		1	Tonj Town	05-06-19
3	KII	MAC	male	32	1	Amethchok	03-06-19
4	KII	Coordinator	male	-	1	RRC Tonj	05-06-19
5	KII	Community Tracking Officer-ADRA	male	-	1	ADRA Tonj	06-06-19
6	KII	World Vision Team Lead	male	-	1	Tonj Town	06-06-19
7	KII	MAC	male	71	1	Bakdeer-Tonj town	28-05-19

8	KII	Head of Appeal committee-payam level	male	34	1	Malualmuok payam	19-05-19
9	FGD	Beneficiaries	mixed sex	30-45	9	Angol Payam- Tonj	30-05-19
10	KII	Payam Appeal committee Head	male	70	1	Angol Payam- Tonj	30-05-19
11	KII	Beneficiaries	male	30	1	Mabior Yar	31-05-19
12	KII	Tools Keeper	male	70	1	Kalkeu-Tonj	27-05-19
13	KII	MAC	male	32	1	Amethchok	03-06-19
14	FGD	Beneficiaries	mixed sex	32-50	6	Mabioryar	03-06-19
15	KII	Head of AC	male	32	1	Warjiir Boma Tonj	03-06-19
16	KII	Acting Director General	male	-	1	Tonj Town – state ministry of Agriculture, Animal R. & Fisheries	04-06-19
17	FGD	Beneficiaries	mixed sex	35-50	10	Warjiir payam - Tonj	03-06-19
18	FGD	Beneficiaries	mixed sex	35-50	12	Bakdeer boma - Tonj	28-05-19
19	KII	Beneficiary	male	26	1	Amethchok	03-06-19
20	FGD	Beneficiaries	female	35-45	8	Kalkeu-Tonj	27-05-19
21	FGD	Beneficiaries	mixed sex	30-50	15	Khartuom Jhadit - Tonj	01-06-19
22	KII	Beneficiary	male	48	1	Khartuom Jhadit – Tonj	01-06-19
23	KII	Head of County Appeal Committee (HCAC)	male	30	1	Mabioryar Tonj	31-05-19
24	KII	County Core team Head (CCTH)	male	29	1	Thiet town - Tonj	30-05-19
25	FGD	Beneficiaries	mixed sex	30-50	12	Malualmuok payam	29-05-19
26	KII	AC head Boma	male	65	1	Marialbai	28-05-19
27	KII	UNOPs Team Lead	male	34	1	Tonj	25-05-19
28	FGD	Beneficiaries	female	35-45	6	Marial-Bai	28-05-19
29	KII	Beneficiary	female	40	1	Marial-Bai	28-05-19
30	KII	Beneficiaries	Male	-	1	Lol-Angool	30-05-19
31	KII	Beneficiary	male	33	1	Lol-Angool	30-05-19
33	KII	FGD	female	35-45	8	Tiet Town	30-05-19
Total					**109**		

Annex 3: Research Methodology

Research questions

This research aimed to answer five main questions, which have been broken down into sub-questions. Rather than answering each question individually, these questions are grouped thematically, and addressed in different sections in this report. An overview of which questions are addressed in each section is presented below:

FIGURE 1: RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Main research questions	Sub-questions	Section of report in which the question is discussed
How well did the GRM function overall?	What are the relative strengths and weaknesses of the GRM?	3.2.4
	What factors led to the effective functioning of the GRM?	3.2.1
	What were the main challenges to effective functioning of the GRM?	3.2.3
What risks linked to exclusion and discrimination exist that could potentially be mitigated through an improved GRM as well as increased community dialogue and sensitization?	What forms of exclusion and discrimination are identified in the communities, and how prevalent is this?	3.3.3
	What are the main causes of exclusion and discrimination of VMGs in the communities, and who are those typically excluded?	3.3.1
	What mitigation strategies are currently in place in the GRM to address exclusion and discrimination?	3.3.3
How effective was the GRM at preventing and dealing with instances of GBV?	What cultural understandings surround GBV?	3.4.1
	What mechanisms are in place to deal with instances of GBV?	3.4.2
	Did community members feel comfortable reporting instances of GBV to the GRM?	3.4.2
	Did the GRM reduce instances of GBV?	3..4.2
How can the current GRM be strengthened to actively include VMGs, who may otherwise not be on the basis of gender, age, ethnicity, religion, or IDP status?	What provisions are currently included in the GRM to ensure inclusion of VGMs?	3.3.2
	What are the main barriers to the inclusion of VMGs in the GRM?	3.3.2
	How effective are any current strategies in place within the GRM to overcome these barriers?	3.3.2
	Are there other approaches not yet used which could address some of these specific barriers?	3.3.2

How can the GRM be used to facilitate community dialogue around difficult socio-cultural issues in order to advocate for the rights of VMGs, as well as reinforce messages of inclusion, cohesion, and unity?	How does the GRM currently facilitate community dialogue and sensitization around difficult socio-cultural issues?	3.3.4
	How much community awareness is there around the rights of VMGs?	3.3.1
	What are the main socio-cultural issues for or surrounding VMGs in the community?	3.3.1
	What kind of messages of inclusion, cohesion and unity are currently communicated in the community?	3.3.4
	How are messages of inclusion, cohesion and unity currently communicated in the community?	3.3.4

Sampling

This research employed non-probability purposive sampling, to ensure effectively targeting of the population pre-selected in the Terms of Reference and through discussions with the World Bank. It is important to note that this sampling method is not intended to be statistically representative of the beneficiary population. Since the SNSDP was concluded at the time of research, access to SNSDP beneficiaries was challenging due to beneficiaries being engaged in other activities, or beneficiaries having relocated after the project ended. Conducting purposive sampling ensured that our approach was flexible, and adaptive to these constraints.

Amongst SNSDP beneficiaries and community members, the research team used purposive snowball sampling based on the availability of, and access to, beneficiaries and community members. In all locations, the research teams received initial referral from the Team Leader. In many cases, the TL introduced the team to the chief or community leader, who then mobilized beneficiaries and GRM Appeals Committee members. The research teams have actively attempt to include VMGs, and specifically focused on women, in the sample, as their experience is crucial to this research study.

Amongst other stakeholders this research employed purposive sampling to ensure all important stakeholders are included in the study. the researcher team has actively attempted to ensure the sample has an equal gender ratio.