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Final Evaluation of IOM-UNDP Project: “Beyond Bentiu Protection of Civilian Site (POC) Youth Reintegration Strategy”

Final Report

December, 2019

**International Organization for Migration (IOM) and;
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP),
Juba, South Sudan**

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACR	Action for Conflict Prevention
BBR	Beyond Bentiu Response
CHADO	Community Health and Development Organization
CHC	Community High Committee
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DG	Director General
DTM	Displacement Tracking Matrix
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
GBV	Gender Based Violence
HACO	Human Aids for Community Organizations
HRSS	Hope Restoration South Sudan
ICT	Information and Communion Tchnology
IDIs	In-depth Interviews
IDO	Integrated Development Organization
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
INGOs	International Non-governmental Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPs	Implementing Partners
KII	Key Informant Interviews
NGOs	Non-governmental Organization
NP	Nonviolent Peace Force
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PB	Peace building
PBF	Peace Building Fund
PBSO	Peace Building Support Office
POC	Protection of Civilians
RCDI	Rural Community Development Initiative
SMS	Short Message Service
SPLA	Sudan People's Liberation Army
SPLA-IO	Sudan People's Liberation Army in-Opposition
JCC	Justice and Confidence Centre
TOR	Terms of Reference
TJ	Transitional Justice
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNIDOR	Universal International and Development Organization
UNMISS	United Nations Mission in South Sudan
UNPBSO	United Nations Peace Building Support Office
UNYMPDA	Upper Nile Youth Mobilization for Peace& Development Assistance

o.o EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The United Nations (UN) agencies, IOM and UNDP, implemented a joint project "Beyond Bentiu Protection of Civilian Site (POC) Youth Reintegration Strategy: Creating Conditions for Peaceful Coexistence between Youth Internally Displaced Persons, Returnees and Host Community Members". The project was funded under the competitive Youth Promotion Initiative of the PBF in support of UN Security Council Resolution 2250. The project was designed to strengthen foundations for peace by creating platforms for youth dialogue, rehabilitation and construction of key community infrastructure and fostering positive economic and social interdependencies between youth internally displaced persons (IDP), returnees and host community members.

This project followed the launch of the "Beyond Bentiu Response" by humanitarian players in early 2016 to establish a durable alternative to the Protection of Civilians through expanded service provision and enhanced quality of life outside of the POC. The project intended to achieve the above by conducting continuous analysis to understand conflict drivers, return patterns and immediate interventions to solidify sustainable return of youth IDPs; strengthening mediation and reconciliation mechanisms in Bentiu POC and between IDPs and host communities and strengthening economic and social inter-dependencies for the IDPs, returnees and host community through livelihoods and rehabilitation of critical community infrastructure.

The evaluation had four specific objectives including: determining the relevance and strategic positioning of the project to the peace building needs in Bentiu and Rubkona communities and in South Sudan as a whole; assessing the progress made towards project results, whether there were any unintended results and what can be derived in terms of lessons learned for ongoing and future UNDP and IOM support towards peace-building initiatives in South Sudan; reviewing the frameworks and strategies that IOM, UNDP and partners devised to deliver the project and whether they were well conceived for achieving planned results; and analyzing the extent to which the project enhanced application of a rights-based approach gender equality and women's empowerment, social and environmental standards and participation of other socially vulnerable groups including the children disabled youths¹.

The findings of this final evaluation can be grouped into sustaining peace and conflict prevention. The evaluation found that sustaining peace was directly related to rehabilitation and construction of key community infrastructure and fostering of positive economic and social interdependencies between youth internally displaced persons (IDP), returnees and host community members.

- The project supported a number of activities that gave youth from different backgrounds opportunities to work together, interact closely and overcome prejudices and stereotypes associated with different groups.
- Project activities gave the youth employment opportunities, even if only, on a voluntary basis in some cases, and transformed their focus and energies from crime and violent activities to building bridges and being agents of positive change. Through provision of life skills and opportunities for establishing relevant business start-ups, such small beginnings could be the building blocks for sustainable livelihoods.

The project overall strategy was to promote interventions that prevent conflict and sustain peace. The evaluation confirmed that this strategy ensured that the project remained relevant to the specific needs and interest of the different beneficiaries, as well as being effective and sustaining itself against the shocks in the fragile environment. The assumptions on which the Theory of Change

¹ TOR-the final evaluation objective iv

(TOC) is built best illustrates the conditions for achievement of the intended outcomes, and ultimately the goal. The TOC, as presented, is a step by step process through which the project identifies the undesired (conflict) situation through situational analysis and assessments, project designs and implements interventions to transform the undesired (conflict) situation to the desired situation (peace).

The evaluation adopted a consultative and participatory approach with project stakeholders. The approach combined the use of quantitative and qualitative techniques and participatory processes to ensure that the variables under investigation were relevant to the evaluation. Both in design and implementation, care was taken to ensure methods and approaches used 'Do No Harm' to the target groups. The consultant used a practical approach that included use of an evaluation matrix to specify data source and how it was collected. The evaluation followed the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria in assessing the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and potential sustainability of the project. The final evaluation covered the period of September 2017 to June 2019 in Bentiu POC, Bentiu and Rubkona towns. The evaluation covered project conceptualization, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of results focusing on extent to which the various indicators were met and contribution towards social inclusion and gender equality.

The evaluation methodology included design and planning, document review, consultations, data collection, analysis and reporting. The qualitative design was used to represent the participants' reality as accurately as possible. Quantitative methodologies were used to determine pre and post intervention levels by use of statistical data and thus produced quantifiable results. Qualitative methods served to provide a more in-depth analysis of project issues, which were difficult to measure through quantitative methods.

To collect reliable information, fieldwork was conducted through participatory a process, female research assistants were included in the evaluation team to ensure gender balance and sensitivity in the entire process. Gender balance was a key consideration in the selection of respondents. The data collection process was consultative, interactive, transparent and participatory taking into consideration all the key project stakeholders. The data was collected from secondary and primary data sources. Preliminary data collection tools/guidelines were developed, shared with IOM and UNDP Project Managers and M&E officers for approval before commencement of data collection. The evaluation team worked closely with the IOM and UNDP evaluation focal points throughout the process.

The targeted audience for the evaluation included the youth who were the project beneficiaries, the international implementing agencies, local implementing CSO partners (IPs), government representatives, local administrative leaders and stakeholders from in the POC and host communities. The execution of this work was solely along the lines of the set objectives anticipated in the TOR. An Evaluation matrix was developed; individual and group interviews including checklists or semi-structured interview protocols for each type of interview; and briefing and debriefing sessions were conducted with the IOM and UNDP field and Country offices in Juba.

The evaluation found that conflict prevention was directly related to creating platforms for youth dialogue and cohesion.

- The project supported a number of activities that built the capacity of the youth and gave them mandate to be directly involved in leadership and decision-making in conflict prevention and mitigation processes.
- The formation and strengthening of platforms such as peace committees, unity forums and advocacy groups transforms their roles from actors in conflicts to "champions of peace" and positive change agents with skills to transform conflicts.

- The majority (90%) believed the project was either very relevant or relevant, 8.8% indicated that the project was somehow relevant, while only 1.2% felt that the project was not relevant. Those that believed the project was relevant explained that due to the design and implementation strategies of the project it ensured specific targeting that addressed needs and interests of the beneficiaries.
- The interventions were effective and made commendable progress towards anticipated outcomes and outputs for all activities including building the youths' human, social, physical and financial capital thereby empowering the youths.
- The project surpassed the target number of male and female participating in social cohesion platforms by 650 (108%) and the target percentage of females by 5%.
- Through the project, social cohesion and peaceful co-existence was believed to be slowly and gradually being achieved. 58% of the youths interviewed reported reduction of violence among the youth and communities in the POC and host community due to behavior change approaches, conflict prevention and mitigation mechanisms. This indicates the effectiveness of the project.
- The project establishment of inter-ethnic gender inclusive peace committees was part of its uniqueness. The committees increased awareness levels of the human rights and case reporting pathways by the youth -70% would report cases of abuse to the UN police at the POC and 65% would do so at the Community High Committee, while outside POC 62% would report cases to the police and the local leadership at 34%. This also indicates that the project relevant and effective.

The successful collaboration and coordination of partners increased benefits for the project because of shared expertise, skills and resources and capitalized on the synergies to achieve impact within the constraints.

Key lessons from the project implementation included;

- a. Effectiveness of indirect approaches to engage youth as peace builders - Through joint trainings in basic entrepreneurial and livelihood skills, these young people became more comfortable working together thus developing initial cohesion.
- b. Creation of employment offers youth incomes and self-esteem and increases the chance for peace within the communities.
- c. Youth can be powerful as peace builders and agents of positive change when given space and capacity to lead and make decisions on issues affecting their own lives.
- d. Multi-stakeholder partnerships can be effective if they collaborate and coordinate their efforts towards a common goal. The UN agencies, local civil society organizations, local authorities and community groups, each playing different roles according their capacities and comparative advantages strengthened the capacity of the project and interventions to broaden its reach, engage more stakeholders and achieve shared objectives.
- e. Research products can be effective in informing the design of integrated peace building programmes that result in greater impacts to the beneficiaries. Agencies supporting or implementing reintegration and social cohesion programs in fragile environments where accurate information is critical could replicate the use of data tracking tools such as DTM to generate monitoring reports. Monitoring reports were important for programming decisions throughout the project implementation. The survey indicated that more than 90% of implementing partners found DTM reports useful for programming.
- f. Integrated and comprehensive approaches to peace building that include development initiatives, entrepreneurial skills and peace education capacity development are appropriate

in creating social and economic inter-dependencies so crucial for re-integration of returnees and IDPs into the mainstream.

- g. Formal non-formal education programs are powerful innovations through which knowledge and skills are passed to the youths to influence their attitude which would further lead to change in practice.

The evaluation came up with the following recommendations based on the findings;

- a. Upscale and replicate, in conflict hot spots in the country, the concept of a neutral Youth Centre as a social platform and space to promote integration and social cohesion among the communities.
- b. The youth have become respected mediators of conflict prevention and there is a need to continue building youth capacity in conflict resolution and leadership skills, and more practical-focused areas such as advocacy and project management.
- c. Break the culture of gender inequality among young people is a critical key component to forging peaceful futures. Development professionals can help achieve this, by identifying local partners and creating platforms to amplify young women's voices.
- d. Livelihoods and resource access can both connect and divide youth. It is important to find creative ways to bring youth together through entrepreneurship engagement. These interventions should seek, where possible, to build on youth' own capacities and coping mechanisms in such a way that promotes self-reliance and helps them to be able to better manage shocks related to conflict, livelihood loss and food insecurity.
- e. Youth also need to be supported to develop their own priorities for peace, which is yet another way to help to combat feelings of exclusion and disenfranchisement and provide youth with a sense of empowerment outside of violence and crime. Youth programming should enhance the voices and perspectives of the youth who are actually implicated in ongoing violence, whether in the form of criminality² (youth gangs), or rural insecurity.
- f. To ensure sustainability and knowledge management, the youth should be supported and encouraged to form local peace networks across the country and join the existing local or international youth-led networks for peace building initiatives focused on international advocacy for youth participation in peace building and strengthening the capacity as youth peace building organizations in the form of training series, long-term partnerships and publications.
- g. The development actors should embrace continued participatory mentorship, capacity building and strengthened monitoring and evaluation systems for the participating youths.
- h. Peace building activities need to consider how to link local-level and national-level processes so that grass roots peace efforts effectively reinforces developments at the national level, while at the same time providing a buffer against the negative impacts of elite competition.³
- i. Just as reconciliation and social cohesion are important moving forward, so too is broader transitional justice that acknowledges and addresses peoples' grievances.⁴

² Youth gangs in the POC and towns

³Christian Aid. 2018. *In it for the long haul? Lessons on Peacebuilding in South Sudan*

⁴Christian Aid. 2018. *In it for the long haul? Lessons on Peacebuilding in South Sudan*

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

Displacement weakens governance structures, security and justice system all over the country, exacerbating poverty and youth unemployment, resulting in several groups of militias and armed youth groups who pursue their needs and interests through violence. Since December 2013 South Sudan has experienced violent outbursts across the nation due to political tensions in Juba. The outbreak of conflict interrupted fledgling development and state-building, which was initiated in 2005 when the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement signed the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. Due to the crisis, the government of South Sudan and humanitarian agencies has grappled with significant displacement and urgent humanitarian needs in most regions of the country. The conflict reached levels of violence towards civilians that many have sought protection by the UN. POC sites have been established across the country to provide security and protection for civilians.

Studies^{5,6} have shown that displacement destroys household livelihoods and assets, and/or separates them from means of survival, and worse still, from loved ones. Further, regardless of the displaced youth settlement status, households which have experienced displacement are more likely to be poor and food insecure compared to the rest of the population in the host community. With limited options for education and employment, young people remain potential recruits to various armed militia groups and thus destabilization of peace in the society.

The main focus of the project was that the national conflict that broke out in 2013 in South Sudan has reinforced conflict dividers thus weakening bonds for peace and stability both at the local and national levels. The resultant displacements, struggle for survival and safety, and need for reintegration have exposed civilians to discrimination, exclusion and marginalization based on gender, ethnicity and political affiliations. The youth make up majority (73%) of the population in South Sudan, majority of them under age 30 (South Sudan Population Census Estimates, 2018). The humanitarian crisis that has engulfed parts of South Sudan as a result of the conflict has affected the youth especially young girls and children more than any other gender or age set.

These numbers alone justify the inclusion and consideration of youths in policymaking and planning. But in practice, the meaningful participation of young people in peace building has been hindered by attitudes that overwhelmingly depict youths as victims or villains. In South Sudan, discrimination, exclusion and incidents of violence meted out to minority or powerless groups create tension and, at times, desire for revenge. As explained above, the youth, more than any other group, are involved and understand the causes, effects, impacts and underlying dynamics of these conflicts. The project has strategically positioned the youth in the "driver's seat" to find sustainable solutions to issues affecting their lives. Through specific and targeted capacity building trainings, the project hopes to transform the role of the youth from victims and/or villains to active peace actors or 'Champions of Peace' for the benefit of their families, communities and South Sudan.

⁵Building Assets and Promoting Self Reliance: The *Livelihoods* of Internally Displaced Persons. IDP experience of the economic crisis –<http://reliefweb.int> Full report 2837 and Building Assets and Promoting Self Reliance: The *Livelihoods* of Internally Displaced Persons. IDP experience of the economic crisis

⁶ Uprooted by Climate Change (Oxfam International)-Responding to growing risk of displacement.

1.2 Project Background and Context

In establishing the POC sites, the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)⁷ was exercising its protection of civilian mandate. Since 2013, continued conflict across the country has led to POC sites becoming long-term fixtures of the communities that host them and leading to responsive strategies for the implementation of services and programmes funded by international humanitarian assistance.

Early 2016 humanitarian agencies unanimously agreed that there was a need to scale up humanitarian services in conflict-affected areas of Unity State outside of towns and camps, particularly in rural areas of Rubkona County. It was such efforts that inspired The Beyond Bentiu Response (BBR). The core objective of (BBR) was to establish more durable alternatives to Protection of Civilians (POC) sites. About 60% of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) residing in Bentiu POC and the residents of adjacent areas indicated that expanded service provision outside of the POC was necessary to enhance quality of life of returnees. In order to address the matter, the BBR and humanitarian partners opened up registration points in Bentiu town and neighboring host communities.

For most communities living in POC sites, the outbreak and continued conflict has resulted to economic hardship and reduced opportunities for development. It is in this context and acknowledging that the POC site cannot be a long-term solution to meet the basic needs of affected populations that the Beyond Bentiu Strategy was drafted and implemented in 2016. Since POC sites were created in the aftermath of displacement and protection needs resulting from the 2013 outbreak of conflict, a discourse has emerged on the future of such sites, and whether they are sustainable. Humanitarian and development agencies developed the Beyond Bentiu Strategy in 2016 to address the needs for basic services outside of the POC sites.

The purpose of the project was ensuring support for peaceful co-existence between groups in conflict, as a possible alternative to Bentiu POC site for some IDPs. The project rationale is that through expanded service provision and enhanced quality of life outside of the POC, there would be a pull factor for IDPs to return. Strengthened foundations for peace through creating platforms for youth dialogue, rehabilitating and constructing key community infrastructure, would foster positive economic and social interdependencies between youth IDP returnees and host community members.

The project was also informed by results of IOM's consultations in Bentiu POC which, together with studies⁸ from other agencies revealed that:

- 97 percent of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Bentiu Protection of Civilian (POC) sites were displaced because of lack of security in their communities.
- 80% of IDPS state their intention to return to their communities of origin if there is security.
- Access to services and livelihood opportunities influence where IDPs will choose to resettle.
- Improving community security and providing livelihood opportunities is important for the return and reintegration of IDPs.
- Creation of local income generating opportunities, self-employment and other agricultural and commercial-based livelihoods are key preventative and mitigating measures for youth recruitment into criminal gangs and involvement in violent conflict.

⁷ Dr. Tarnjeet K. Kang, DTM IOM South Sudan Displacement Tracking Matrix Unit, IOM, South Sudan

⁸ Amnesty International, 2017, UNHCT Key notes May 2017

The “Beyond Bentiu Response” implemented by humanitarian players in early 2016 was intended to establish a durable alternative to the POC through expanded service provision and enhanced quality of life outside of the POC, with three components:

- Creating a strong evidence base and analysis to understand conflict drivers, return patterns and immediate interventions required to solidify sustainable returns of youth IDPs;
- Strengthened mediation and reconciliation mechanisms in the Bentiu POC and between IDPs, returnees and host communities; and
- Strengthened economic and social interdependencies for the IDPs, returnees and host community through livelihoods and rehabilitation of critical community infrastructure.

The BBF, on the other hand, is a strategy for:

1. POC site by UNMISS for security.
2. BBR to create lasting solutions outside POC.
3. BPF to consider youth peace building mechanisms to ensure peaceful coexistence.

A few factors made this project unique and innovative:

- The design and implementation of the project was based on situational analysis and research evidence⁹ by DTM.
- The project focuses on inclusivity of different youth genders and inter-ethnic communities as well as inter-generational mix from IDP, returnees and host communities, as a major strategy.
- The project, through wide range of interventions, addresses the needs and interests of different groups while building bridges for social cohesion and peaceful coexistence.
- With some degree of success, the project has made efforts to catapult the youth to the driver’s seat of peace building interventions as opposed to the exclusion, marginalization and tokenism that characterize the participation of youth in the peace building processes in South Sudan.

This report presents the Final Evaluation of International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) project “Beyond Bentiu Protection of Civilian Site (POC) Youth Reintegration Strategy: Creating Conditions for Peaceful Coexistence between Youth Internally Displaced Persons, Returnees and Host Community Members” In Juba, Bentiu POC, Bentiu town and Rubkona in Unity state of South Sudan from 24th September to 10th October 2019.

1.3 Theory of Change, Project Outcomes and Outputs

In order to achieve the intended results (outcomes), the project came up with a theory of change that starts with creating prerequisite (**IF**) conditions that would cause positive change (**Then**) leading to desired effect (**Because**). In the TOC, the prerequisite condition creates positive change when such conditions are enhanced through interventions resulting into the desired transformation.

Outcome 1: Improved understanding of the differential dynamics of male and female youth displacement, return and reintegration.

⁹ Intention, Perception and Mapping Surveys

Theory of Change:

*IF we have relevant data and analysis on male and female youth displacement, return, reintegration and conflict context, **Then** there will be better understanding of the context of male and female youth displacement, return and reintegration dynamics, including how they relate to drivers of the crisis; and better support can be provided to strengthen inclusive and gender sensitive peace committees and social cohesion between male and female youth in the POC and host communities, **Because** improved ability to understand the context of male and female youth displacement, return and reintegration dynamics including the impact and drivers of the crisis, will lead to more effective and sustainable return and reintegration support towards social cohesion/transforming drivers of conflict.¹⁰*

Theory of Change: Outcome 1.

Prerequisite Created (IF)	Condition	Desired Positive Change (Then)	Desired Effect (Because)
(IF)relevant data and analysis on male and female youth displacement, return and reintegration and conflict context made available		(Then)better understanding of context of male and female youth displacement, return and reintegration dynamics leading to better support – strengthen inclusive and gender sensitive peace committee and social cohesion between male and female youth in POC and host communities.	Improved ability to understand context of male and female youth displacement, return and reintegration dynamics – impact and drivers of crisis leading to more effective and sustainable return and reintegration support towards social cohesion/transforming drivers of conflict.

Outcome 1: Project achievements

The project generated strong evidence-based information which helped optimize project design and impact geared to promote sustainable youth IDP return and reintegration to communities outside of the POC. This information became a reference point for the larger humanitarian intervention in the Unity region in general and in targeted locations in particular.

In September 2018, DTM IOM South Sudan conducted a host community perception survey in Bentiu and Rubkona towns during which 546 households were surveyed (266 in Bentiu and 280 in Rubkona), with the result of 90 percent confidence level. In both towns, households surveyed were seeing both returnees and IDPs moving to the area. Some of the key findings of the survey were:

- 71 percent of households in Bentiu and 89 percent in Rubkona reported a perceived increase in the number of returnees. The rate was higher for IDPs, as 76 percent of Bentiu respondents and 91 percent of Rubkona respondents reported that IDPs were moving to their locality.
- 88 percent of households indicated that they are separated from family members, with schooling in other locations being the most cited reason.
- 88 percent reported that they have nuclear families living outside the POC, and of those residing in displacement sites 60 percent were in Bentiu POC and 29 percent in UN House POC 3 in Juba.
- 80 percent of households in Bentiu town and 57 percent of households in Rubkona reported no perceived additional pressure on resources due to returning populations.
- Households in Rubkona town reported higher levels of inadequate infrastructure compared to Bentiu town.

- Sharing food distributions is the primary way host communities support IDPs and returnees.

The context analysis undertaken by IOM revealed that:

- Male youths were predominantly divided along socio-cultural lines based on prevailing political inclinations of their ethnic and clan identities.
- Appetite for quick wealth derived from dowry continues promotes a socio-cultural situation that promotes early marriage and thus limits the chances of girls to pursue education and other opportunities.
- While the poor economic situation continues to affect both male and female youth in the target areas, an inter-group trade was flourishing between the POC population and host communities during the day. However, each group retreats to their zones of safety at nightfall.

Outcome 2: Strengthened foundation for social cohesion between male and female youth IDPs, returnees and host communities.

Theory of Change

(IF) interethnic gender inclusive youth peace committees are established and capacitated in addressing community and male and female youth grievances, power structures, and community cohesion initiatives promoted at the local level, (Then) a culture of dialogue and tolerance will develop and a conducive environment for peaceful return of the displaced male and female youth and coexistence with host communities will be created, (Because) communities and genders will better understand each other and prefer cooperation to conflict; the male and female youth will be empowered and engaged in more peaceful and gender differential activities because conflict will be less attractive¹¹.

Theory of Change: Outcome 2.

Prerequisite Condition Created (IF)	Desired Positive Change (Then)	Desired Effect (Because)
(IF)inter-ethnic gender inclusive youth peace committees established and capacitated to address community and gender grievances, power structures and community cohesion promoted at local level,	(Then)culture of dialogue and tolerance develop, a conducive environment for peaceful return of displaced male and female youth will be created, and coexistence with host communities will enhanced	(Because) communities and genders better understand each other and prefer cooperation to conflict, male and female youth will be empowered to engage in more peaceful and gender differential activities because conflict will be less attractive.

Outcome 2: Achievements

1) Increased cohesion between the youth groups in the POC, Bentiu and Rubkona town.

Based on outcome of the DTM assessment, UNDP designed activities that ensured inter-ethnic, gender inclusive youth peace committees composed of IDPs and members of the host community. Two key groups (Youth Union and Youth Forum) identified as youth champions of peace. The joint trainings paved the way for culture of dialogue among IDPs and hosts communities. This integrated approach for youth to form “Youth and Partners Peace Coordination Forum” in Bentiu Town, where youth from POC and host communities jointly led the forum, having local ownership of the process. The Youth and Partners Peace Coordination Forum, as a peace structure, has the potential to

sustain peace efforts beyond the lifespan of the immediate project. It may also provide impetus and catalytic effect for partners interested in supporting emerging aspects of the project.

2) Skills trainings and rehabilitation of the Youth Centre.

Several trainings helped develop youth capacity to resolve local conflicts, including: i) Training on Transformational leadership, Sexual and GBV and PB, conducted in partnership with Juba University, and based on findings of capacity gap assessment; ii) the above training brought together 51 youth, 26 from POC (7 females, 19 males) and 25 from Bentiu town (14 females and 11 males) and; iii) a follow-up 10-day joint conflict resolution training conducted for 44 participants (19 females, 25 males) from the three targeted areas. These trainings helped to develop the capacity of youth to resolve local level conflicts. The youth and stakeholders peace committee resolved 54 out of 60 reported conflicts as a result of these capacity building trainings.

UNDP constructed a youth center to provide a peace dividend and enhanced social cohesion among the youth in the POC and those in Bentiu and Rubkona. This has provided young men and women an active outlet for educational, recreational, social exchange and a space to re-invigorate mutual understanding and tolerance. The youth center provided a neutral space to foster engagement and exchange between the youth in the POC and outside. It contains an ICT training center, conference hall, Youth office and a cafeteria. Through the center, the youth have made income which has contributed to the sustainability of the Youth Peace Center. So far, 1,780 youths (908 females, 872 males) have attended youth center events and, among these 30 (9 females, 21 males), attended a three-month basic computer training. The youth have become peace champions in the community. The centre has become a neutral social platform and physical space where the youth from POC and outside come together to carry out activities of common interest. As the youth from hitherto opposing groups interact and work together they have been able to overcome barriers, mostly, based on prejudice and stereotypes of their perceived political, cultural and socio-economic inclinations. The Youth Center is thus one of the structures and concepts this project can bank on to promote and sustain peaceful coexistence beyond the lifespan of the project.

Outcome 3: Enhanced sustainability of youth IDP returns through balanced involvement of returnees and host communities in local economy, livelihoods, infrastructure and basic services.

Theory of Change

*IF young men and women from IDP, returnee and host communities are brought together through skills training and livelihoods opportunities, and if key community infrastructure is rehabilitated and operationalized in a collective effort by IDPs, returnees and host communities, Then youth in the host, displaced and returnee communities will have enhanced opportunities for socioeconomic reintegration, **Because** such interactions and interventions can establish a foundation to build trust and peaceful coexistence among youth IDPs, returnees and host community members, mitigate drivers of displacement and improve access to services, and make people feel less compelled to be drawn into the conflict.¹²*

Theory of Change: Outcome 3.

Prerequisite Created (IF)	Condition	Desired Positive Change (Then)	Desired Effect (Because)
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<p>(IF) young men and women from IDP, returnee and host communities are brought together through skills training and livelihoods opportunities, and if key community infrastructure is rehabilitated and operationalized in a collective effort by IDPs, returnees and host communities,</p>	<p>(Then) youth in the host, displaced and returnee communities will have enhanced opportunities for socioeconomic reintegration,</p>	<p>(Because) such interactions and interventions can establish a foundation to build trust and peaceful coexistence among youth IDPs, returnees and host community members, mitigate drivers of displacement and improve access to services, and make people feel less compelled to be drawn into the conflict.</p>
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Outcome3. Project achievements

The project enabled the integration of 1,065 beneficiaries (56 percent female) into the local economy in Bentiu, Rubkona and Bentiu POC. The project provided livelihood opportunities, including small-scale business enterprises, agri-business vegetable farming, and assorted vocational training such as bakery, carpentry, masonry, tailoring and driving.

The following businesses were developed through support of the following partners. HACO: Small-scale business-100 females, 50 males; RCDI: Small-scale business; 63 females, 37 males, vegetable farming/agribusiness; 76 females, 24 males; CHADO: agribusiness; 200 females, 200 males; small-scale business; 30 females, 10 males; masonry training; 5 females, 15 males; driving course; 5 females, 10 males; baking/bakery course; 15 females, 15 males; IDO: Agribusiness; 45 females, 15 males, Baking; 51 females, 9 males, Carpentry; 39 females, 21 males, Tailoring; 21 females, 9 male.

The renovation of Liech Primary School provided an opportunity for education access to school drop-outs who were at risk of being recruited to join militias groups, which engage in violent activities – thus the school helped in conflict prevention by reducing the organizational resources for inter-community conflicts. During the rehabilitation work, the youth were employed to provide labor thus earning incomes and helping to provide alternative source of livelihood away from risky means of livelihoods and other criminal engagements that fuel conflicts. More importantly, youth from opposing sides, for the first time, got chance to work together, interact and build bridges for social cohesion and peaceful coexistence. Local jobless graduates not only got teaching internships but opportunity to provide a service so critical for reconciliation and reintegration into society. Those with secondary school level education are more employable in the formal or informal sector and are less likely to engage in activities that create inter-community tensions and conflicts.

Accelerated learning program was specifically designed to meet specific needs of youth IDPs and returnees and as well as host community members. Peace building and conflict resolution training was integrated in the learning programs to transform the youth from violence to being champions of peace. Liech Primary School rehabilitation was a best practice in line with the South Sudan government national policy of transformation through dialogue and reconciliation. The market stalls not only provided opportunities for business enterprises and increased incomes but closer interaction and building bridges that eventually lead to social cohesion and peaceful coexistence between the different youth groups and society.

2.0 EVALUATION PURPOSE, SCOPE, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

2.1 Purpose of the Evaluation

The final evaluation of “Beyond Bentiu Protection of Civilian POC Site (POC) Youth Reintegration Strategy” project which ended on 30 June 2019 was called for by the project stakeholders - IOM, UNDP and PBSO. The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the project’s contribution towards “strengthening foundations for peace through creating platforms for youth dialogue, rehabilitating and constructing key community infrastructure, and fostering positive economic and social interdependencies between youth IDP returnees and host community members.” The final evaluation approach focused on assessing the extent to which the outcomes (intended and unintended) have been achieved, elaborating on lessons learnt and best practices, recommending strategies to enhance programmatic effectiveness for current and future peace-building projects. The evaluation followed the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria in assessing the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and potential sustainability of the project.

2.2 Scope of the Evaluation

The final evaluation covered the period of September 2017 to June 2019 in Bentiu POC, Bentiu and Rubkona towns. The evaluation covered project conceptualization, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of results; focusing on extent to which the various indicators were met (performance indicators), at the same time assessing the project’s relevance, efficiency, sustainability, partnership and contribution to peacebuilding and towards gender equality and socio-economic inclusion.

2.3 Specific Objectives of the Evaluation

The specific objectives of the evaluation are fourfold:

- i. Determine the relevance and strategic positioning of the project to the peacebuilding needs in Bentiu and Rubkona communities and in South Sudan as a whole.
- ii. Assess a) the progress made towards project results and whether there were any unintended results and b) what can be derived in terms of lessons learned for ongoing and future UNDP and IOM support towards peace-building initiatives in South Sudan.
- iii. Review the frameworks and strategies that IOM, UNDP and partners devised to deliver the project and whether they were well conceived for achieving planned results.
- iv. Analyze the extent to which the project enhanced application of a rights-based approach, gender equality and women’s empowerment, social and environmental standards and participation of other socially vulnerable groups such as children and the disabled.

3.0 EVALUATION APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Study Approach and Design

The evaluation adopted a consultative and participatory approach where all the stakeholders were involved in the process. Combined approaches of quantitative and qualitative methodology were applied using participatory techniques to ensure data triangulation and maximum participation. The consultant used a practical approach that included an evaluation matrix to conceptualize the theme, data source and how it was collected.

The report is developed secondary and primary data collected through local fieldwork conducted by the Evaluator September to October 2019 in Bentiu POC, Bentiu Town and Rubkona Town. A sample of stakeholders and project's direct beneficiaries of female and male youth; community leaders; customary chiefs; local government ministries; humanitarian and development partners; and most importantly, male and female youth.

Qualitative approach to data collection was used to sought to emphasize the stakeholders own perceptions where participants were given the space to share their perspectives on issues related to the peacebuilding project interventions and peace issues in general. This enabled the collection of more fine-grained and contextualized information from those most interacted with the project and those impacted by violence and crisis in Bentiu and Rubkona. It also ensured that the priorities and opinions of beneficiaries, themselves, were placed at the forefront of analysis respecting the political, economic and social situation in their areas making research participants the primary source of information.

The quantitative phase encompassed around 309 youth participants who were relatively equally distributed across gender and residence inside and outside of the Bentiu POC site (see 3.3 Sample Size distributions). Key informant interviews¹³ were also carried out with the UN implementing agencies, IOM and UNDP local government ministry representatives, IPs, humanitarian and development partners and the community leaders.

3.2 Data collection techniques

Qualitative and quantitative techniques were used in the assessment of the "Beyond Bentiu Protection of Civilian (POC) Site Youth Reintegration Strategy". The qualitative design was used to represent the participants' reality as accurately as possible from their own point of views. The technique was also used to ensure an in-depth exploration of respondents' social and economic aspects of their lives in regard to the program interventions. The quantitative technique was useful in determining pre and post intervention levels by use of statistical data and therefore produced quantifiable results, qualitative methodologies served to provide a more in-depth analysis that explain the finding of the quantitative approach.

To collect reliable information, the evaluator paid special attention to the fieldwork phase where data was collected through participatory processes. For the purposes of ensuring gender balance and sensitivity in the entire process, female research assistants were included in the evaluation team. Gender balance was also a key consideration in the selection of respondents although this could not apply in key informant interviews, which mostly required those with authoritative information.

¹³ Annex 4

The data collection process was consultative, interactive, transparent and participatory taking into consideration all the key project stakeholders. The data was collected from secondary and primary data sources including: Literature reviews¹⁴; Surveys with the project target youth in POC and host community; Observation, Impact/Success stories; Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with the youths trained on peacebuilding, livelihood and entrepreneurial skills; Key Informant Interviews (KII) and In-depth interviews (IDIs) with implementing agencies and partners.

The targeted audience for the evaluation included the youth who were the project beneficiaries and primary stakeholders, the international implementing agencies, local implementing CSO partners (IPs), government representatives, local administrative leaders and stakeholders from where the project interventions were implemented in the POC and host communities. The execution of this work was solely along the lines of the set objectives set in the TOR.

3.3 Sample size distribution

From a sampling frame of 1065 of the direct youth beneficiaries, the evaluation planned to select a sample size of 300 (28.17%). This percentage was adequately representative of the population. In conducting the evaluation, a sample size of 309 (29.01%) was used. Best practice requires between a sample size of between 27% and 30% of the frame. The findings are based on the analysis, interpretation and triangulation of data collected through literature reviews of various relevant documents; face to face interviews with the direct youth beneficiaries in POC and host community covering a total of 309 respondents (55% female and 45% male) from a population frame of 1065¹⁵; 53 key informants interviews carried out with those with insights on the project, a total of 9 FGDs with purposively selected participants of youth both female and male – three groups in Bentiu town; four groups in POC and two groups in Rubkona communities. This comprised of 60 female and 48 male youth participants; observations were done through the use of observation checklists to ascertain what the youth did in real life situation without them realizing that they are being observed and the case study used to identify the most significant changes in the community. The evaluation exercise mostly applied purposive sampling method because the consultant knew what information was needed from which category of informants. So, the respondents were selected according to the type of information required. The selection of interviews was also guided by availability of respondents and their ability to answer the questions.

3.5 Limitations of the Evaluation

The challenge of language barrier in the evaluation hindered the communication between the evaluator and the local targeted population for the study. This did not make it easier to collect first hand expressions by the participants. However, through probing questions, the consultant ensured that the translators were as accurate as possible.

¹⁴ Documents reviewed are annex – appendix 3 of this report

¹⁵ Narrative report and Monitoring data of the targeted and trained youths by the project interventions

4.0 EVALUATION FINDINGS

Due to facilitation by IOM and UNDP and the cooperation from the implementing partners, key stakeholders and respondents themselves, the success rate for the interviews was quite high. All the 12 focused group discussions (FGDs) planned were held; 53 key informant interviews (KII) were held against 45 planned. In total the evaluation conducted 309 surveys against 300 planned.

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

All the face to face interviews were carried out in Bentiu and Rubkona in Northern Liech of Greater Unity State, Host community comprised majority (50%) of the respondents followed by Youth IDPs (48%) and Returnees at 2%. Majority, 55% of the respondents were female while males were 45%, this could have been attributed to the deliberate effort by the project design to include majority of youth female in the activities.

Majority (86%) of the respondents were married, 12% were single, widowed (1%) and divorced were each 1%. The respondents' level of education was very low since majority (59.0%) had not completed primary education, 13.0% of the respondents completed primary and (13%) secondary education, 5.5% completed primary but did not complete secondary education, and 7.5% completed college while 2.0% did not complete college. In regard to the source of income, majority¹⁶, (53.1%) of the respondent's the informal employment, 35.3% were self-employed, and 8.6% were in formal employment while 3.0% were not employed. Other sources of income included; farming (53.6%), remittance from relatives (17.6%), spouse/parent provision (13.7%), collecting firewood (3.9%) while 11.2% of the respondents had other sources¹⁷ attributed to the project interventions.

4.2 Key Strategies of Peace

Through design and implementation, the project endeavored to promote interventions that address the overall goal of preventing conflict and sustaining peace. The evaluation assessment observed that this strategy ensured that the project remained relevant to the specific needs and interest of the different beneficiaries, as well as being effective and sustaining itself against the shocks in the fragile environment. It's important to note that preventing conflict and sustaining peace are two interrelated concepts and sometimes one strategy can do both. Find below (in 4.2.1 and 4.2.2) how IOM and UNDP, and the implementing partners employed various strategies and interventions to ensure the goal and twin themes of conflict prevention and peace sustenance were emphasized thus enhancing the continued relevance, effectiveness and potential sustainability of the project

4.2.1 Conflict Prevention

- By forming strong integrated youth peace committees, which were inclusive, aimed at 50% gender balance and were composed of youth representation from the IDP, returnees and host communities as well senior and experienced community members, the project effectively prepared the committees to be accepted as legitimate actors with mandate to prevent conflict and sustain peace.

¹⁶ These were the direct youth beneficiaries who had been train on various employability and entrepreneur skills.

¹⁷ Carpentry, Business, Tailoring and Bakery

- The peace committees ensured a constant consultative process and ownership by male and female youth on the design, implementation and sustainability of the project activities thus promoting the project goal.
- Through continuous situational analysis by the implementers, the project monitored emerging security situations and recommended appropriate interventions – thus generating strong evidence base that enhanced informed decision-making on youth IDPs and returnees and their relations with host community. This approach helped to prevent conflict or escalation during the project period.
- The project integrated a gender lens – thus ensuring that all outputs have gender –specific activities that promote the participation, capacity building and ownership of youth women and men IDP and Host community. This approach not only prevented potential conflicts between the IDPs and Host community but mitigated against the risk of sexual and GBV, particularly among the IDP women and girls.
- Through a strong evidence base design, the project prepared to adapt different implementing options in different security situations and geographical contexts thus increasing potential for efficiency, effectiveness, relevance and sustainability. The design prepared the project to use conflict sensitive mechanisms and “Do No Harm”.
- The documentaries produced on the lives of young male and female IDPs and Host community members to build knowledge and mutual understanding on gender-specific basis for groups created more awareness on gender and ethnic /clan sensitivities thus helping to prevent sexual and GBV, and inter-ethnic conflicts.
- The provision of gender diverse business start-up kits intended to stimulate income generation and economic growth for IDP and Host community members gave the youth opportunities to engage in self-employment re-directing their energies and predisposition to engage in crime or be recruited by militia groups. This intervention had the potential not only to prevent conflicts but sustain peace as well.
- By youth from the POC and host communities forming business and entrepreneurship groups, participating in joint sports and cultural activities effectively ensured breaking of barriers and tension.

4.2.2 Sustaining Peace

- Through constant consultations and close interaction during capacity building trainings and other project interventions, the peace committees were able to bring conflicting youth groups to find a common ground – thus building and sustaining peace.
- The project was designed and implemented in a dynamic and flexible approach, often getting tailored to specific security situations thus increasing buy-in and ownership of the beneficiaries. This approach not only made the project relevant but helped to build and sustain peace between the various groups participating in the project.
- Through holistically targeting the multi-dimensional components required to create conducive conditions for IDPs to return home, the project attempted to address the reality that return of IDPs to their original homes is not a one-off event but a process of carefully mitigating risks and slowly building confidence in a life outside the POC areas. This is not only a risk mitigation mechanism but a plan to strategically build and sustain peace between IDPs and Host community during the return process. This confirms that the project design and plan was well conceived to achieve the intended outcomes.
- The knowledge and understanding generated through analysis and data tools (such as DTM Intention and Perception surveys) enabled the young women and men to design context specific peace building solutions – thus increasing potential for relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of the project.

- The rehabilitation and construction of critical community infrastructure (such as rehabilitation of Liech Primary School, Market stalls, construction of Market toilets and construction of a Youth Centre) in gender and ethnic inclusive way gave youth from opposing sides opportunity to work together in an activity of common interest. As they worked and interacted closely, they were able to overcome social and cultural barriers, which often divide them. The project was organized in such a way as to promote social, cultural, educational and recreational outlets for young men and women. This intervention helped to build bridges among youth of different gender and ethnicity thus building and sustaining peace.

4.3.1 The project relevance, appropriateness and strategic positioning

The project partners (IOM and UNDP) strategically positioned the project since the conceptualization and design was based on the outcome of the consultation with the youth in and out of the POC, community leaders, and local authorities in Bentiu and Rubkona. The planning, design and implementation of the interventions considered local context which made the implementing partners to understand and support the peacebuilding, livelihoods and capacities of the affected population thereby promoting relevance and appropriateness of the response. Furthermore, the activities were geared towards empowering the youths, transform their perceptions towards aid dependencies and encourage self-reliance through creativity and innovation since the youths are the most at risk of violence and exploitation, including recruitment to organized social groups often aligned around a destructive goal.

This project was not only timely but relevant to the government of South Sudan's national policy of transition from war to peace and development. In a pilot way, the project strove to create conditions and opportunities that encourage citizens particularly the youth to return to normalcy, return and peaceful reintegration of IDPs in the community. The project worked to establish a positive uptake of the Transitional Justice as in the Revitalized Agreement for Resolution of Conflicts in South Sudan (R-ARCSS) Chapter IV by the communities. The truth, justice and reconciliation efforts in the country, through education, awareness creation, and creation of space for dialogue between generations were eminent for this project. In line with the R-ARCSS, this project strove to create conducive conditions for the return of IDPs and refugees, and their reintegration into the mainstream society without necessarily causing tensions or conflicts with the host community. The project, through a series of specific and well-targeted interventions, identified and made efforts to transform situations of conflicts into peaceful coexistence thus encouraging return to normalcy outside the POC site.

The project used a number of mechanisms to engage young people, improve their understanding of history and to become involved in transitional justice. The execution of project activities embraced participatory approaches where ownership and initiatives from local youth were encouraged and supported. The designed activities included workshops on understanding, remembrance and change; community dialogues; cultural art performances, sports and radio talk shows which were all relevant to the target groups. The participatory approaches used enhanced ownership by the beneficiaries and primary stakeholders and were very relevant for peace building and social cohesion results. As participants from different groups came together during project implementation activities, they interacted closely, increased their understanding of one another and were able to start building bridges for conflict prevention and sustainable peace. All the activities were planned and carried out in a manner that enhanced social cohesion and peace building even if their immediate focus addressed other needs or sectors.

The project design and support were in line with the policy and procedures of the donor (PBSO/PBF) and the implementing agencies (IOM and UNDP) as well as the dynamics of post conflict settings. The 2030 Agenda contains the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the resolutions on the

UN's *Guiding Principles on Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding* and UN's peace building architecture which calls for the dissolution of silos and the advancement of a strongly coherent and integrated approach, recognizing that development, peace and security, and human rights are interlinked and mutually reinforcing and thus peace-building and development are linked. The SDG 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions recognizes that in the absence of peace, stability, human rights and effective governance, based on the rule of law there can be no sustainable development. It is cognizant to the fact that armed violence and insecurity have a destructive impact on a country's development, affecting economic growth, and often resulting in grievances that last for generations. Sexual violence, crime, exploitation and torture are also prevalent where there is conflict, or no rule of law, and countries must take measures to protect those who are most at risk.

The SDGs aim to significantly reduce all forms of violence, and work with governments and communities to end conflict and insecurity. Promoting the rule of law and human rights are key to this process, as is reducing the flow of illicit arms and strengthening the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance. It is on this premise that the Beyond Bentiu project becomes relevant to IOM and UNDP as the UN agencies.

In regards to the relevance of the project intervention to the needs of the youth and the general populace, majority (90%) said the project was either very relevant or relevant, 8.8% indicated that the project was somehow relevant, while only 1.2% felt that the project was not relevant as presented in Figure 1 below.

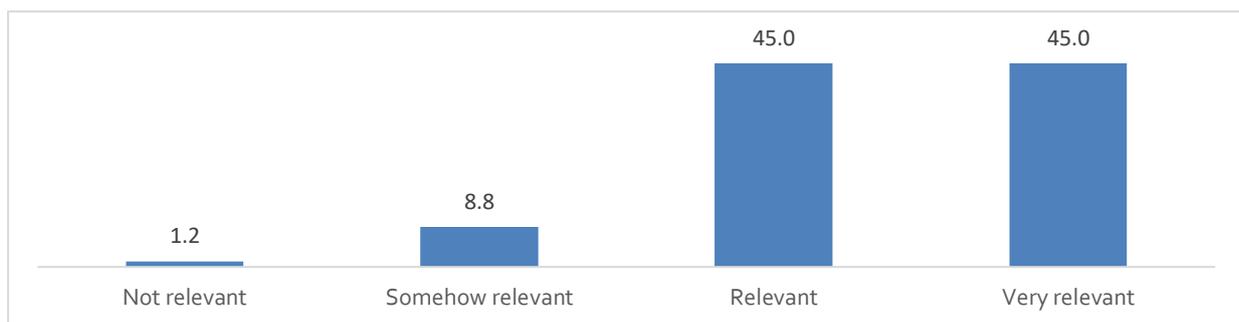


Figure 1: Relevance of the project to the needs of the youth

On probing further, it turned out that for some the project was 'relevant' because it addressed their immediate concerns and needs for safety, security and acceptance; for others it was 'relevant' because it gave hope for employment and livelihoods; yet for others it was relevant because it built their capacity to once again play important roles in society and regain self-worth. This shows the relevance and strategic positioning of the project in meeting the safety and security needs of the beneficiaries by creating a peaceful condition in a fragile environment.

The relevance for this project from the perspectives of the project beneficiaries was based on the fact that the project, unlike many other peace projects, did not attempt to exclusively address their immediate security and safety concerns but was broad enough to integrate their physical, social and economic needs. Through inclusion inter-community interests and the use of gender-disaggregated data, the project was able to respond to the specific needs of different groups thus making the peace deepening and making peace messages more relevant. The project was alive to the fact the intermittent civil strife in South Sudan has disorganized and uprooted families and communities thereby destroying family assets and livelihoods, and that the worst hit group are the youth, particularly young women and girls, who have suffered a double tragedy of being excluded, discriminated and marginalized even when it's accepted that they are victims and villains of the war. For most individuals and groups, peace and reconciliation begin when a most pressing need is met. While for some the project gave opportunities for livelihood, for others it was a platform and a

voice to air concerns yet for others it was the hope for peaceful coexistence and return to normalcy. The relevance of this project, like any other, can only be analyzed on how it addressed the identified needs of the target groups for which it was initiated, in the first place.

Through collaboration and capacity building of local IP organizations¹⁸– that enhanced the creation of enabling environment for youth employment opportunity, provision of life skill training and building community resilience through income generating activities, the project addressed the needs of target communities. The engagement of youth in livelihood activities (groups) and market ready skills training in small business, mechanics, driving, carpentry, agri-business, bakery business modeled youth centre in the POC, Bentiu and Rubkona towns empowers the youth by providing new opportunities to engage in alternative and constructive source of livelihood and therefore they would not resort to risky activities which are always triggered by lack of income generating activities. Youths had a chance to lead peace process (Youth Forum and Youth Union) and were able to chart own peace agenda.

The establishment of youth centers in Bentiu town by UNDP and Bentiu POC by Mercy Corps further made the project strategically placed in attracting the youth with activities like sports, arts and culture, as an entry point to get a platform for youth dialogue and peace building initiatives. The social cohesion approach adapted by the project has strengthened the connecting factors between the youth in the POC, Rubkona and Bentiu towns who are divided by national politics and helped to reconcile them. The youth outside the POC perceived as supporters of the national government while those in the protection of civilian (POC) sites are considered to support the SPLA in-Opposition. Assessments¹⁹ have identified youth center, sports, livelihood initiatives, joint skills training, training for peace and culture as major connectors through which both youth groups are brought together to dialogue and make peaceful co-existence a reality. A multi-sectoral initiative factored in cross-sectoral youth considerations for integrated, holistic approaches to peace-building.

4.3.2 Effectiveness of the Project

Overall, the project was successful and effective in achieving its objectives/results and has made commendable progress towards anticipated outcomes and outputs for all activities. Through assessments, mapping exercises, trainings and cultural interventions, the key youth groups in the Bentiu Protection of Civilian (POC) site and youths in Rubkona and Bentiu towns were brought together. The project design was holistic thus addressing the needs, concerns and interests of different youth while creating platforms for dialogue and opportunities for building bridges and nurturing cohesion. The project was effective in building the youths' human, social, physical and financial capital²⁰thereby empowering the youths. The project was effective through the use market appraisal and assessment studies²¹in building the capacity of Local Service Providers in the market place.

The project established inter-ethnic gender inclusivity –integrated youth peace committees from youth IDPs and host community. The 45% women participation among youth peace committees is

¹⁸ ACR-Action for Conflict Resolution, IDO – Integrated Development Organization, CHADO - Community Health and Development Organization, HACO – Human Aids for Community Organizations, RCDI – Rural Community Development Initiative and HRSS – Hope Restoration South Sudan.

¹⁹ Monitoring reports, Focus Group Discussions and Key Informant interviews.

²⁰ Human capital - a combination of skills training (usually non formal education), literacy, life, or work skills development, mentoring, and guidance, combined with helping credit ready young entrepreneurs gain access to financial capital; social capital –combines self-confidence, mentors, peer support/networks; Financial capital – employment schemes, access to capital; physical capital – outright grants or start up kits.

²¹ IOM study on Market Assessment

a significant transformation towards gender equality. The equal representation of females has a distinct advantage as a real human impact as one of the female member noted:

"...I feel empowered, I feel it lies on our shoulders to promote peace for development, now we realize how important is the role of women for peacebuilding..." One of the Women Peace Committee Member

When increased participation of or enhanced voice of women is reported in the project, there are higher chances that that specific gender issues such as GBV and sexual abuse could be discussed and addressed. The gender composition of the trained Peace committees is presented in Figure 2 below;

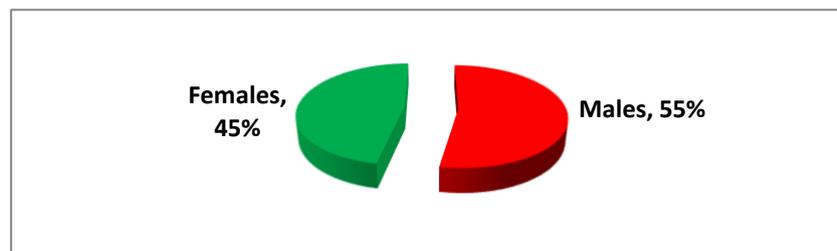


Figure 2: Percentage of Gender of the Trained Peace Committee members

The trained peace committees were engaged and regularly reported on the resolution of local conflicts. The project has facilitated the formation of Youth and Partners Peace Coordination Forum which meets once a month with the youths from politically hostile communities being their member. The project has developed an ICT lab and a Youth Centre in Bentiu which has since been handed over to the youths who have now started indigenous projects such as Youth United for Green and Clean Bentiu. A number of youth engaged through cultural, sports and music activities now show a positive attitude towards peacebuilding. This is evident in a number of short videos produced by youths in Bentiu now showing a positive aspect of life. The use of video documentaries to narrate success stories of peace champions not only informs and educates audiences but is innovative, entertaining and inspiring. This approach could easily influence the youth to emulate the role models they watch in the documentaries.

The project facilitated the formation and/or strengthening of a number of peace structures and platforms for building cohesion and sustaining peace. These structures not only provided avenues for youth participation but also ensured that the opinions, needs and interests of the different groups are included. For instance, facilitating women to form their own peace committee to address female gender specific issues such as GBV. This was an example of the project 'giving a voice to the voiceless' since women, and in particular girls, may often feel shy to discuss certain issues in the presence of men.

The Youth Center as an interdependency project has triggered the formation of Peace Working Group in Bentiu to make informed decisions on behalf of all peace-building actors in the State. Female representation in the peace committees has significantly increased and demand for peace-building activities has increased. This multi-stakeholder approach is usually low-cost and high impact. It coordinates the peace building actors while leveraging on their different competencies and comparative advantages thus building synergy. These type of platforms and peace building structures can be effective in sharing information about emerging situations and possible conflict scenarios and helps initiating processes that not only prevents or mitigates conflicts but sustains peace.

Youth representatives have voiced the effectiveness of this projects in the following words,

"The engagement of youth at this scale would not have been possible without UNDP and support of PBF, now we feel all youth are united and we have our own space to provide solutions for youth challenges in the State".

The project was effective in the establishment of social cohesion mechanisms in Bentiu POC, Bentiu and Rubkona towns where 5 (100%) peace committees were established. The percentage of cases presented to the youth peace committees that were resolved surpassed the target by 14% while the percentage of the trained committees demonstrating increased knowledge on conflict management surpassed the target by 23%.

The project surpassed the target number of male and female participating in social cohesion platforms by 650 (108%) and the target percentage of females by 5%. It is however noted that the project only collected, documented and disseminated 16 out of the targeted 25 positive narratives that support integration of IDPs, returnees and host communities in Bentiu and Rubkona towns. The survey, however, confirmed that majority (89.6%) of the youth IDPs (52% female) were willing to return to their original homes, an indication that they believe in the peace process and co-existence with other community members as presented in the Figure 3 below.

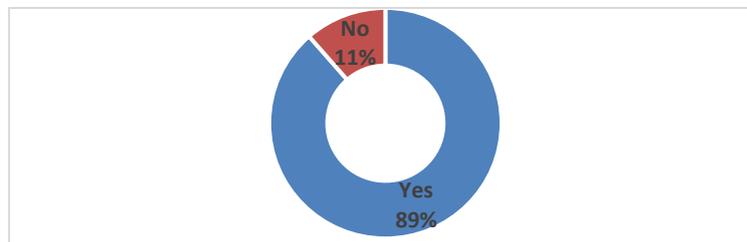


Figure 3: Willingness of to return to your original home

The willingness to return has been informed or influenced by social cohesion and interdependencies created by the project interventions. However, other than peace and cohesion, it may have been informed by factors between the different community groups. It could, for instance, be informed by reduction in the activities of armed militia groups and availability of basic services and livelihood opportunities in their homes of origin and desire for family reunion.

Conflict Analysis²² by IOM found out how the different groups of youth including women, girls, poor and disabled among the clans of Nuer were affected by the conflict in Unity State. The main findings of the study, which could be relevant to this final evaluation is that reduction in reported incidents of conflicts could be due to dynamics at the national level i.e R-ARCSS. The evaluation established that there is reported reduction of violence among the youth and communities in the POC and Host community due to behavior change approaches and conflict mitigation mechanisms. Through GBV and Conflict resolution trainings, youths are able to solve cases within the community. This also became evident when the youths were asked if they had witnessed conflict in their area in the past 18 months, majority (58%) said they had not witnessed any conflict in the past 18 months while 42% said they had witnessed conflict in their area in the past 18 months as presented in Figure 4 below:

²² Youth Conflict and Displacement Analysis - Critical Reflections on Youth, Conflict and the Prospects for Peace in Rubkona and Greater Unity State, South Sudan October 2019

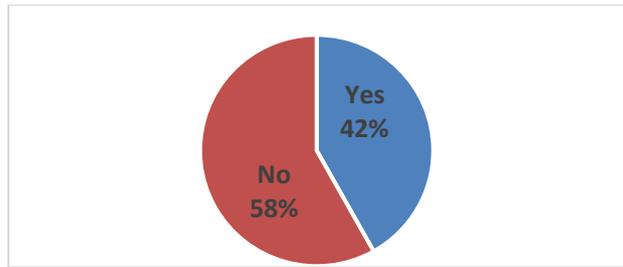


Figure 4: Representation of those who witnessed conflict in their area in the past 18 months

Further, 67% of the youths who indicated that they had witnessed a conflict in their areas in the last 18 months said that they were solved while only 1.8% indicated that the conflicts could not be resolved as presented in Figure 5 below:

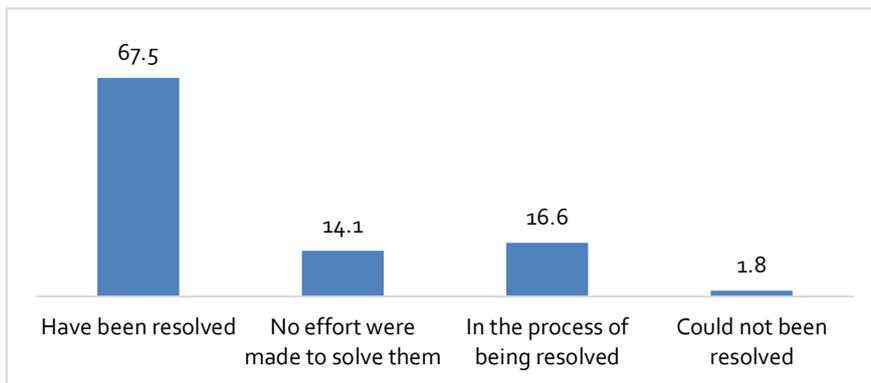


Figure 5: Representation of conflicts that have been resolved or not resolved

The evaluation established that the major causes of conflict in Bentiu and Rubkona communities were unemployment and inadequate resources at 33.4% and 32.2% respectively while 22.5% of the respondents indicated that political differences based on clan affiliations and emerging out of the national peace process was one of the major causes of conflict. The major causes of conflict is presented in Figure 6 below.

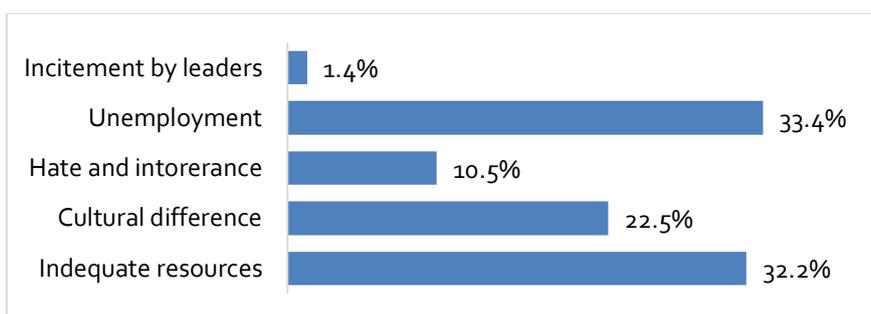


Figure 6: Major causes of conflict in the POC and Host Communities

Creation of employment increases the chance for peace while lack of employment opportunities increases the chance for violence and conflict. Bringing together divided groups to engage in training or work beneficial to them is an approach used by the implementing NGOs - IOM and UNDP. Youth having been trained on the employment skills and the youths working together in businesses, sports and being trained together, the tensions are reduced if not eliminated. The youth are no longer idle and are a source of inspiration and provisions for their families. Their commitment into the livelihood activities draws them away from risky behaviors and vulnerability to participate

in conflict. The evaluation established that out of school, unemployed and civically unengaged and idle youth is dangerous to the society. Here is what he had to say as a warning to the development partners and the society at large:

"...if the youths are unemployed, not civically engaged and out of school disillusioned and hopeless.... there is a bigger problem waiting..." KII with respondent in Bentiu

With participating beneficiaries reporting increased incomes as a result of the project activities, this explains the project contribution to transformation and return to peaceful coexistence as youth disengage in crime and violent activities as a source of livelihood.

The evaluation established that the major driver (motivations and choices) for youths to engage in violence/conflict in the community, school, family, workplace or nation is income/payments involved (53.3%) and peer pressure (27.1%) while the major motivation for the youths to engage in peacebuilding are own responsibility (42.5%), income /payment involved (34.4%) while peer pressure only motivates 19.1% as presented in Figure 7 below.

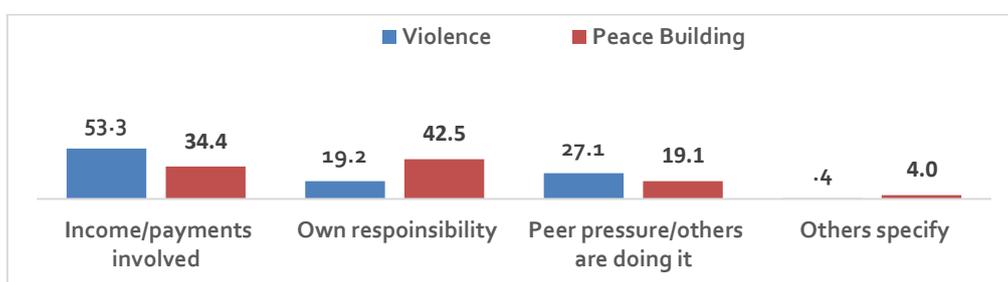


Figure 7: Drivers of violence or peacebuilding

However, the study also established that the youth could be manipulated or incited by elites to engage in violent conflict supposedly to 'fight for a cause' with promises of improved life' once the war is won. Improved life may include services, resources, job or business opportunity all leading to better life. Conversely, the youth would take responsibility to engage in peace building, reconciliation and mediation efforts after being convinced that peace will bring more benefits than violence.

Assessment of the Project outcome and output indicators

As discussed in the previous section, the project achieved its intended objectives and was implemented effectively notwithstanding the unforeseen rainy seasons which interfered with implementation of certain activities leading to a no cost extension of six (6) months . The variance in the collected, documented and disseminated positive narratives that support intergration of IDPs, returnees and host communities was due to delayed procurement of equipments. The outcome and output indicators are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Project Outcomes and Output indicators

Performance Indicator	Baseline Indicator	End of Project Indicator (Target)	Final Evaluation Indicator	Comments
Outcome 1: Improved understanding of the differential dynamics of male and female youth displacement, return and reintegration.				
Outcome Indicator 1a: % of beneficiaries that feel secure after returning disaggregated by sex and age and IDP/host community	0%	70%	89.6% (F 52%)	

Outcome Indicator 1 b: # of female and male youth which have been consulted in the return peace process (disaggregated by sex and age).	1,235 individuals ²³	1,500 youth (750 female and 750 male)	1348 (687F)	Of the interviewed 1500 youths, 1348 reported that they were consulted enough
Outcome Indicator 1 c: % of actors in Bentiu reporting that they used displacement tracking matrix data to inform response	0%	75%	100%	
Output 1.1: Increased awareness of the intentions, perceptions and needs of returnees and host communities including difference between young women and men.				
Indicator 1.1.1: # of surveys produced, disaggregated by IDP / host community that inform skills training interventions.	0	8	9	
Indicator 1.1.2: % of business start-up kit models ²⁴ based off survey findings.	0	100%	100%	
Output 1.2: Return dynamics are quantified through flow monitoring analysis.				
Indicator 1.2.1: % of Flow Monitoring Analysis reports used to target geographical areas of intervention.	0	100%	100%	DTM findings informed the movement of population.
Output 1.3: Gaps in basic services and infrastructure including practices and risks for women, men, boys and girls are identified.				
Indicator 1.3.1: % of Village Assessment Survey (VAS) reports produced that inform basic social services and critical infrastructure interventions.	0	100%	100%	DTM findings enabled the effective design and implementation of the project.
Output 1.4: Youth conflict and displacement analysis is conducted to map economic social and cultural interdependencies that connect and divide the different youth communities, taking into consideration gender.				
Indicator 1.4.1: # of humanitarian partners aware of economic, social and cultural interdependencies.	0	TBD	6	
Outcome 2: Strengthened foundation for social cohesion among male and female youth from IDPs, returnees host communities				
Indicator 2.1: % of targeted male and female youth male and female that feel a higher level of trust towards each other at the end of the project.	0	70% (50% male)	80% (52.3% female)	Surpassed the target (The youth centre, which is the key area for youths to come together for various activities, started providing service at the last quarter of the project and this didn't affect the achievement.)
Indicator 2.2: Number of social cohesion mechanisms in place in Bentiu POC, Bentiu and Rubkona towns.	0	5 ²⁵	6	Surpassed the target
Output 2.1: Local inter-ethnic and gender inclusive youth peace committees are enabled to anticipate, manage and resolve conflicts in Bentiu POC, Bentiu and Rubkona towns.				
Indicator 2.1.1: % of cases presented to the youth peace committees that are resolved.	0	70%	90%	Surpassed the target by 29% (The youth peace committees facilitate the resolution of 54 cases. They conclusively resolved 17 cases and referred 37 to the appropriate body for further action)
Indicator 2.1.2: % of trained committee demonstrating increased knowledge on conflict management.	0	80% (50% female)	96.3% (51% females)	Surpassed the target
Output 2.2: Independency initiatives create a platform for peaceful coexistence among male and female youth IDPs, returnees and host communities in Bentiu POC, Bentiu and Rubkona towns				
Indicator 2.2.1: # of male and female youth participating in social cohesion platforms.	0	600 (30% female)	5,900 (41% female)	Surpassed the target (The youth center has proven to be a success as

²³Bentiu Youth Intentions Survey

²⁴Business start-up kits contain sector-specific components to include business space rental and supplies for 3 months

²⁵Sport, market systems, cultural performances, peace committees, conflict management

				providing space for youths to interact and participate in recreational and skill training activities.)
Indicator 2.2.2: % of targeted female and youth perceiving interdependency initiatives as a vehicle for peaceful coexistence.	0	60% (50% female)	59%(64.6% female)	Achieved the gender target
Output 2.3: Youth peacebuilding initiatives produce positive narratives on integration of young male and female youth IDPs, returnees and host communities in Bentiu and Rubkona towns				
Indicators 2.3.1: Positive narratives ²⁶ that support integration of IDPs, returnees and host communities in Bentiu and Rubkona towns are collected, documented and disseminated.	0	25	24	Less than the target by 1 (4%) due to delayed procurement of equipment
Indicator 2.3.2: % of targeted male and female youth involved in dialogue and reconciliation processes.	0	60% (30% female)	67 (45.1% female)	Surpassed the target
Outcome 3: Improved sustainability of youth IDP returns through balanced involvement of returnees and host communities in local economy, livelihoods, and infrastructure and basic services.				
Outcome Indicator 3 a: % of targeted male and female youth with increased average household incomes.	0	60% (40% female)	96% (55% female)	Surpassed the target (Targeted youth reported increased average household incomes because the Group model adopted enabled them to enjoy economies of scale by ordering in bulk also complement each other capacities by operating joint businesses).
Outcome Indicator 3 b: % of targeted male and female youth engaged in livelihood activities.	0%	60% (40% female)	92.4%(56% female)	Surpassed the target (790 of 855 youth targeted, trained and supported with start-up kits are actively engaged in livelihood activities. Group model adopted by project has enabled complementarity of skills and strengthened sustainability of livelihood activities).
Output 3.1: Youth IDP returnees and host community members benefit from skills training priority rehabilitation / construction of youth-centric community infrastructure.				
Indicator 3.1.1:% of targeted male and female youth utilizing skills gained from skills training.	0	50%	46% (50%)	Variance occasioned by delayed issuance of licence for beneficiaries skills training on driving motor vehicle. Also beneficiaries trained on brick making were not supported with start-up kit due to budget fluctuations as a result spiked inflation during project implementation.
Indicator 3.1.2:% of youth skills centre graduates benefitting from immediate job placement disaggregated by sex and age.	0	70% (30% female; 40% male)	46%(50% female)	CHADO trained 15 beneficiaries in driving but government issued driving licenses had not yet been obtained by the time of reporting and the masonry trainees had not yet received start up kits as spike inflation pushed prices of items beyond budget limits.
Indicator 3.1.3:# of youth-centric infrastructure	0	-	-	

²⁶Positive narratives – videos, artworks, drama that speak positively about peace in South Sudan

rehabilitation/construction projects.				
Output 3.2: Youth Sustainability Groups are established to maintain infrastructure, build resilience and promote community ownership.				
Indicator 3.2.1:# of youth Sustainability Groups established disaggregated by sex and age.	0	4	5	Youth centre that contains training centre, meeting hall, cafeteria and cooking room have been built for the youth in Bentiu town. This structure gives hope for the youth as they engage themselves in various activities. They are currently undertaking computer training -
Indicator 3.2.2:% of infrastructure maintained.	0	100%	100%	
Output 3.3: Livelihood opportunities are provided to male and female youth IDPs returnees and host community members in Bentiu POC, Bentiu and Rubkona towns.				
Indicator 3.3.1:# of businesses reinvigorated or established following provision of training and start up kits.	0	New: 20 Reinvigorated: 30	60 (40 new and 20 reinvigorated)	Youth trained in small business and supported with start-up kit chose to form joint business ventures as groups instead of working individually. Leveraging on favourable economies of scale, project was able to support more business than projected.
Indicator 3.3.2:% of male and female youth graduates running successful businesses 6 months after receiving the kits, disaggregated by sex and age.	0	75%	96%(55% female)	Most of the businesses established by male and female youth trained on business and provided with start-up kit have continued running successfully beyond 6 month period.

4.3.3 Efficiency of the Project

The project got off to a slow start due to some management constraints and unavoidable²⁷ circumstances (rainy season and bad roads). The implementing organization and local partners' high staff turnover at the CSOs project management levels slightly affected the timely implementation of the project as new personnel had to be recruited and trained resulting in delays. At the start of the project implementation, one of the key partners, UNDP, did not have a physical presence in the project area at the start of the project. This somehow led to delays in the implementation of the project. This issue was addressed in mid-2018 when UNDP established an office in the area.

In regards to hard components of the project, supplying construction material to Bentiu became a challenge due to impassable roads caused by heavy rains. As a result of the heavy rains, the contractor requested and was granted permission to suspend the project activities for two months thus dragging the project behind schedule. The selection of beneficiaries took longer than had been planned as it required the inputs of all key stakeholders including IOM, UNDP, implementing partners, community representatives and local authorities. This delay consequently affected the schedules of subsequent project activities including training and delivery of start-up kits.

²⁷ Rainy seasons in the months of May to September that made the roads in accessible

The project requested and was granted a six-month no-cost extension to address the delay cost by bad weather and impassable roads. Despite the challenges, and with the six month no extension, the project was implemented as per the schedule.

4.3.4 Real Human Impacts of the Project

Many of the youth in the POC and in Bentiu and Rubkona towns were believed to have engaged in criminal activities due to lack of income-generating opportunities. The project activities have provided new opportunities for the youth in the POC and in Bentiu town to engage in alternative and constructive activities, such as market ready skills training, business modeled youth center, and renovation of schools. The spokesperson for the Youth Union stated: "When youths are not engaged, they will be involved in cattle raiding and gang activities. Engaging youths is preventing criminal activities from spreading in the state. This is a way to reduce violence in the state and in South Sudan."

Coordination among the youths in the POC and towns has also helped the national security agencies to apprehend criminals who engaged in robberies in the POC. The project has shown that crime rate within the POC can be significantly reduced through concerted efforts.

The project has generated conditions for real human impacts on the lives of the beneficiaries (both young women and men) in the target locations – Bentiu town, POC site and Rubkona. To some extent, the project has laid foundation for mobility and reintegration of communities from the POC and other regions to host communities. Through dialogue, the project brought both youth groups together during joint training for peace, sports, skills training and livelihood initiatives. The social cohesion approach has strengthened the connecting factors between both youth groups with the major connectors being youth center, sports, livelihood initiatives and culture. This approach is very important because it identifies and uses a wide range of interventions to strengthen connectors and weaken dividers thus building cohesion and foundations for sustainable peace within a previously polarized and antagonistic community groups.

58% of the youths interviewed reported reduction of violence among the youth and communities in the POC and Host community due to behavior change approaches and conflict mitigation mechanisms. Through GBV and Conflict resolution trainings, youths are able to solve cases within the community. Though for a more stable peace, the hard to reach youths too needs to be targeted and disarmed²⁸.

From the recruitment of youth participants, joint trainings, participation in the intervention activities, the project distinguished itself with inter-ethnic and gender inclusivity –thus forming integrated youth peace committees bringing together members from youth IDPs and host community. These committees form the building blocks for conflict prevention and sustainable peace in the target area. In particular, the increased participation of women in these committees enhances their potential for effectiveness

A 47% women participation among youth peace committees is a significance transformation towards gender equality. The following quotation from one of the participants in the assessment summarizes the transformation towards gender equality:

....in the peace committee, the leadership of the groups is 50-50 for both female and male...KII with Youth Forum

²⁸ KIIs with government representatives, IPs and Youth leader representatives

There is an increased empowerment and improved income at household levels among the youths. 1065 young people both in POC and Host communities received livelihood and entrepreneurial skills training. An additional 650 young people received business startup kits, with 91% of those interviewed reporting the kits have improved their businesses and incomes. 67% of those who received the support and interviewed said that the entrepreneurial trainings and the start-up kits received helped them to generate more income or establish a sustainable income.

Through their improved economic status and training opportunities, participants said their self-confidence and autonomy had increased. All involved agreed that the project has provided opportunities for young people to improve their livelihoods. The project created a ripple effect by supporting business and (market place expanded²⁹) market related activities thus giving opportunities for more youth to create employment in the business sector. More un-targeted youths are getting engaged too. The market expansion is an example of inter-dependency facility that will play economic and social role - bringing closer interaction and reduce long held stereotypes and prejudices as traders from the different groups pursue their income generating activities. As a result of the interventions which supported youth strategies and programs, there is promotion of youth-led initiatives fostering intergenerational dialogue and collaboration through sports, arts, culture and the activities at the youth centers that attracts children, youth and the elderly too.

The rehabilitation of Liech primary school is reported to have provided opportunities for more out-of-school pupils, including girls affected by negative cultural beliefs, to enroll and pursue education in the target area. The school has also provided opportunities for youthful graduates to teach on a voluntary basis thus a chance to acquire the much-needed experience. Liech Primary School Deputy Head teacher reported that the school has to deal with the sudden increase in number of pupils since the school was rehabilitated³⁰ by UNDP.

*"we are now able to buy uniforms and buy learning materials for our children to learn without interruptions"...
women FGD participants.*

The youths have taken lead in determining their destiny through youth leadership, which is an explicit process of youth development that focuses on their individual and development of their personal skills³¹ (such as self-awareness, self-esteem, confidence, motivation) and social skills (including building relationships, working in groups, and organizational capacities) to guide, direct or influence others and serve as a role model.

In this conflict-affected setting, youth leadership has taken on additional dimensions; the youths have gained essential personal skills such as empathy, tolerance and non-discrimination, as well as more societal and political skills in reconciliation and negotiation³². Hope and confidence have been built among the youth and community at large and they are taking meaningful roles - leadership structures in government, leading Peace Coordination Forums, taking up jobs in NGOs. Among those who participated in job placements, a number of youths found permanent employment by the end of the project interventions. Youth are gradually seen as assets – at the community and other levels. Indeed, youth across board youth are finding innovative ways to shape their lives and surroundings.

²⁹ Construction of Market stall, provision of Toilets for the traders and training of youth on business skills and provision of startup kits to the youths

³⁰ Rehabilitation of 3 classrooms and school toilets paintings of walls and roof, provision of desks, office furniture, learning materials

³¹ Survey, FGDs and KIs

³² Number of cases handled by the youths

...I am an example of a youth leader in the government, this was possible through the trainings and capacity building by the agencies through the Youth Union which I was a chairperson then... says the KII participant

When inclusion of different communities, genders and age is promoted in the participation of peacebuilding activities, it may lead to specific targeting and tailor made solutions to issues affecting different groups within the population. If youth are capacitated to assume leadership and decision making roles within the peace project, they bring their experiences as victims and perpetrators understand of the issues and better solutions are found.

A number of youths and women can now freely give their success stories attributed to the effects of the project intervention. Nyalatni Yang Thong is one of such women, whose life and that of her family the project totally changed with the bakery skills and start-up she got from the project as narrated in *"the power of a woman as a peace-building change agent"*.

The youths have far reaching real human impacts that are attributed to the project interventions. Thom is one such youth whom the project has totally changed his life and destiny. With no education and skills, the youths have no option or alternative but to turn to criminal activities and conflicts as a means of livelihood. The youths in POC site, Bentiu town and Rubkona were all empowered through dialogue, peace-building and livelihood skills trainings. The youths were trained on vegetable farming and vegetable kits (seeds) and farm inputs supplied to them. Through facilitation and supervision of the project staff and extension workers, the youths practiced the gained farming skills and now real impacts are evident as can be seen from Thom's impact story: *"Hope in the face of gloom – The Change Narrative"*.

The Power of a woman as a Peace-building change agent: Nyalatni Yang Thong, Bentiu POC Site

Nyalatni Yang Thong, she was affected by the long mass violence in the area that claimed the lives and properties of thousands across South Sudan. Experiencing the devastation caused by this deadly conflict first-hand, she decided she had to make a change – but how? She quips. It was a difficult endeavor in the face of insufficient skills and financial capability. She longed for a day where all the warring communities shall stop the fight, embrace peace and engage themselves in income generating activities other than war.

After benefiting from the peace and livelihood integrated activities through the local and International NGOs, she wanted to help her vulnerable and unemployed husband to find an alternative to violence in a similar way. So she talked to him and encouraged him to join her in the bread making business in the market in Bentiu.

With her skills from the trainings, she gradually taught him. She had longed for *"an activity where they could find common ground..."* and *"...here he can learn the difference between fighting and beneficial work with a meaningful gain to the family...if we can use what is available to us and change those whom we can, one person changed at a time, am certain of peace and a better future for South Sudan"* Rose concludes.

Thom is currently in Bentiu POC established in December, 2013 from where he has lived since the emergence of the conflict in South Sudan. For him, peace means the absence of violence and freedom from fear of uncertainties in life. He tells his Story to us:

In 2016, Thom watched as his family and neighbors were being brutally beaten by the soldiers with no and little protection. All the properties and livelihood means were lost. With lack of a safer ground and no hope for tomorrow the only option was the POC that were put up by the UN for the protection of the vulnerable civilians like Thom.

"With lack of formal education, sadly, joining armed groups is the only option for many young people living in poverty in conflict affected regions like South Sudan", Thom says. He continues, "...my friends and I were always idle due to un-employment that was made worse with lack of education and basic life skills. Life had been tough for me to feed my family and even educate my two children – son and daughter...."

Grassroots peace initiatives implemented by local CSOs with support from IOM and UNDP is helping in changing the narrative in the Bentiu POC and Bentiu and Rubkona town.

With the trainings on the peace dialogues and livelihood skills trainings, Thom and fellow youths in the programme benefited and their lives is gradually changing. *"...We were trained together with those in Bentiu*

Town and Rubkona on farming where vegetable seeds and farm inputs were given to us. Initially we could not meet and see eye to eye ... Land was located to us within the POC and to our peers in Rubkona”.



Thom elaborates on his experiences from POC site in Bentiu

The family income and nutrition have improved since then. *“Am now working in my farm, am no longer idle and stay away from risky activities. The produce from the farm – Okra vegetables, tomatoes and pumpkins are sold in the market by my wife who has in turn become a small trader in the market. We combine our efforts to provide for our children who now are able to attend school”* says Thom.

From his activities Thom has become a role model to many, peers and parents, in the POC whom have joined in gainful activities. *“Today I don’t see myself as a victim of violence, I see myself as an agent of peaceful change in this community.”* Thom finally laments.

The success of the youth centers has led to community requests for similar opportunities in other sectors, as demand outpace resources. Youth Center has been seen to potentially expand programmes to youths and the business community. Young people became a source of positive change within their communities, and community leadership alike noted this.

Livelihood component’s intended results relate to vulnerability reduction and behavioral change, and are medium to longer term outcomes though realized, they require longer duration to implementation for greater and impact. Traditional justice and reconciliation - Traditional approaches to justice and reconciliation often focus on the psycho-social and spiritual dimensions of violent conflicts. Traditional approaches are also often inclusive, with the aim of reintegrating parties on both sides of the conflict into the community. An important component is public cleansing ceremonies, undertaken as an integral step in healing community relationships.

The use of both formal non-formal education programs is a powerful innovation through which knowledge and skills are passed to the youths to influence their attitude which would further lead to change in practice. The gradual change in attitude and practice has led the youths to participate fully in peace building and conflict resolution initiatives, non-violence environment, peer and community leadership and civic participation.

Establishment of inter-ethnic gender inclusivity in the youth peace committees from youth IDPs and host community which have culminated into 47% women participation among the integrated youth peace committees is a significance transformation towards gender equality. Equally improved is the increased awareness levels of the human rights and case reporting pathways by the youth -70% would report cases of abuse to the UN police at the POC and 65% would do so at the Community High Committee, while outside POC 62% would report cases to the police and the local leadership at 34%.

The South Sudan States have generally continued to have the two systems of formal and customary law operating. The formal courts are located mainly in towns with none in Bentiu and Rubkona except for the occasional mobile court. The role of the formal courts is not well understood by the public. Public access to the courts in Bentiu is practically non-existent due to: high user charges, lack of sufficient and well-trained attorneys and lawyers to represent citizens, cumbersome formal procedures, and their long distances from the citizen, especially poor rural communities. Limited operational budgets prevent courts from hearing cases in rural areas or for judges/legal administration officers to monitor and guide traditional courts on points of law and procedures.

Customary Law or tribal courts are the expression of the customs, beliefs and practices of the people of Bentiu and Rubkona and South Sudan. Customary law is weak in terms of human rights protections for women and children. Judgment is carried out in open communal spaces, often under a tree or in dilapidated community structures made of local materials as no investment or resources is channeled to improve customary law courts or their judges who are most often the male traditional leaders. Despite the challenges³³ and with improved interventions by the actors in rights awareness creation on GBVs, creation of gender desks and provision of *probono* services by NGOs in the region access to justice is reported by 67% of the youths who indicated that they had witnessed a conflict in their areas in the last 18 months, 67.5 of those cases having been resolved and 16.6% of those cases are in the process of being resolved. Nonetheless, individual interventions by actors, increased literacy and rights awareness, and stronger statutory justice system can serve to slowly improve and strengthen customary laws.

4.3.5 Social Inclusion, Human Rights and Gender Equity

The youths have always been socially excluded group from the necessary opportunities to be active in society. Social inclusion therefore is the extent that individuals, families, and communities are able to fully participate in society and control their own destinies, taking into account a variety of factors related to economic resources, employment, health, education, housing, recreation, culture, and civic engagement. To empower the poor and marginalized people to take advantage of opportunities, the intervention employed a multi-dimensional process aimed at creating conditions which enable full and active participation of both female and male in all aspects of life, including civic, social and economic activities, as well as participation in decision making processes within the youth groups.

The social inclusion was depicted in the project when youth took part in different social activities, like for example drama, football matches, different forms of communication through songs, and acting, video recordings and radio talk shows among others.

There was a deliberate effort by the project to include all youth regardless of the dividing factors to the social fabric of life through full, partial and mainstreaming inclusion. These efforts were exerted to close the gap between the different social segments (IDPs, returnees and host community) in society with respect to social and economic aspects. Through the selection process, youths were provided with equitable opportunities of participation, among them, females, males and persons with special needs. The strategy used to bring the youth of different segments together inducted them, in a practical way, to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitude required in conflict prevention and peaceful co-existence.

³³Delay in case handling, weak evidence presentation and lack of witnesses, high cost in accessing the courts and attorneys

Social inclusion was depicted in the project when the youths took part in different social activities, for example drama, football matches, different forms of communication through songs, acting, video recording and radio talk shows, among others. Social inclusion ensured that the youth had a voice in decisions affecting their lives, and that they enjoy equal access to markets, legal services or assistance, social and physical spaces through the Youth Center. Social inclusion was also the moment when the youth, both male and females within the targeted area felt valued and important through the provision of certain rights to all individuals and groups in society, such as employment, skills training, and legal assistance to GBV survivors. Social inclusion can be interpreted as the process by which the youth strengthened foundation for social cohesion between male and female youth from IDPs, returnees and host communities.

4.3.6 Partnerships and collaborations

While most partnerships may need formal agreements, such as a contract or a memorandum of understanding, others may only need simple records of commitments and agreements made. It is essential to identify the most appropriate documentation to support the partnership. In this project, partnerships existed at different levels – this was determined by how much resources and information are shared, and the willingness to change activities and increase capacity for a common purpose, or for mutual benefit. The implementing agencies (IOM and UNDP) partnered with local CSOs as IPs, relevant government ministries and departments and other NGOs in order to implement the project.

The evaluation finds the collaborations and coordination were contractual, mutual and voluntary agreements and simple records of commitments, at intervention implementation levels. Formal written agreements and contracts between two or more stakeholders existed for the partnerships. Transparency and accountability of partners contributed to the achievement of their potential, partnerships based on agreed ethical principles, mutual understanding, commitment and respect for the capacity of all partners.

The actors working in partnership benefitted at an organizational and an individual level through the synergies and knowledge sharing. Partnerships among stakeholders achieved increased benefits because they shared expertise, skills and resources. There was a strategic partnership among the actors that concerned with the broad program concept, scope, planning and implementation and concerned with resources, engagement and implementation of activities. These collaborations between interventions were critical to the success of working in project promoting ways; the importance of this is recognized³⁴ by actors across all levels of beneficiaries, local implementers, INGOs, donor and the Government. The close collaborations among individual youth also played an important role in peaceful co-existence. The acts of collaboration between youths, local leaders, the police and families to reduce violent acts and relate peacefully led to significant benefits of the peace outcomes.

However, the partnerships were not without a few challenges. Certain interventions or processes were either delayed or not undertaken due decisions made by some partners. There were also issues reports that were not on track nor accurate. Part of the reason why the project took off to a slow start was that some partners took time learning how to play their roles. However, the project coordination forum and commitment by individual partners mitigated these challenges as much as was possible.

4.3.7 Sustainability of the Impacts Gained

³⁴ KII with stakeholders

As in other programs, there is a challenge to sustaining the level of these efforts, as expectations have been raised in terms of infrastructure, trainings, and social opportunities. Project sustainability is ensuring that the institutions or communities supported through projects and the benefits realized are maintained and continued after the end of the project. Ensuring sustainability means making sure that the goals of the project continue to be met through activities that are consistent with the current conditions and development needs of the region, including the needs of the community. In this section, this evaluation reviews sustainability on the basis of four factors attendant to the sustainability of community projects:

i) Political Sustainability

Political sustainability includes government commitment, an enabling policy environment, stakeholder interests, strong lobby groups and political influence/pressure to maintain the objectives of the project. The political sustainability is a challenge for the project because of the delayed and earlier division surrounding the National Reconciliation process which further delays the implementation of re-vitalised peace agreement signed in September of 2018. When these processes are further delayed, it leaves a gap with a potential to widen the rift between the youth groups in the POC, Bentiu and Rubkona towns. The delayed formation of Government of National Unity also leaves the youths susceptible to any external forces that may lead to deterioration of the gains already made. This political standstill, despite the high mobility, has made the return of IDPs to be low and the project, therefore continues to avoid engaging youth on issues related to the political dispensation. A respondent indicated that with good will of local government and support from humanitarian agencies measures can be taken to prevent violent conflicts and sustain peace even during turbulence at the national level. The youth groups and forums formed under this project could be capacitated to form to lobby the government and other actors to support conflict prevention and peace sustenance.

On a positive note, the Northern Liech State Ministry of Information, Culture, Youth & Sports, whose portfolio the youth project falls, has shown strong commitment to the youth activities. The ministry had swiftly facilitated the allocation of land for the planned community infrastructure projects for the development of a Youth Centre in Bentiu town and Liech Primary School. This was a good indication of political sustainability as they are also strongly advocating for exchange with the youth in the POC through the planned activities. The formation of Peace Working Group owned and led by State Peace and Reconciliation Commission is another element of political sustainability of the project.

ii) Social Sustainability

Social sustainability is the social support and acceptability, community commitment, social cohesion; ownership. It involves communities, local government and households' capacity to accept and own the outcomes of the project in ways that are sustainable. There is a good component of social sustainability in this project – social cohesion – the project capitalises on the unifying factors, including community peaceful co-existence through sports, arts and trainings, jointly targeting youth groups inside and outside the POC. One of the good examples of the unifying factor which would ensure social sustainability is the Youth United for Green and Clean Bentiu. Formation of community structures are key to social sustainability of this project.

The community structures formed include: The construction of Youth Centers which is a beehive of activities by the youths, rehabilitation of Liech Primary school, market stalls, Peace Working Group in Bentiu to make informed decisions on behalf of all peace-building actors in the State, the Youth Forum in the POC and the Youths Union in Bentiu. The formation of Community High Committee (CHC) as a leadership structure within the POC is an indication of a strong commitment that has

enabled youth from POC to go out. The youth round tables and partners equal enagement in insulation before and during the projects increased trust and local ownership.

iii) **Economic and financial sustainability**

Economic and financial sustainability is the resilience of a project to economic shocks, financial viability, reduced household vulnerability and increased capacity to cope with risk and shocks. The ability of the youth individual and businesses groups to re-invest their profits into the business will ensure sustainability of their business. Additionally, the linkages with the established business men in the market place and group purchases will ensure the youth benefits from the economies of scales.

The newly built toilet will be managed by the youths at usage at a cost to help in the maintenance and in return providing the youth with livelihood too. The Youth Center currently provides hall hire services to government and NGO conferences and trainings. In addition, it offers computer trainings at a cost and all these interventions provide income generation to the youth.

Generally, because this project was fully funded by United Nations Peace-building Support Office (PBSO) / Peace-building Fund (PBF), it does not have the economic and financial viability to be resilient in the absence of external support. In addition, the Government of the Republic of South Sudan does not have the capacity to sustain such a cost in the villages that were supported and in the rest of the country.

iv) **Technical sustainability**

Technical sustainability denotes the technical soundness, appropriate solutions, technical training for operations and maintenance, access to and cost of managing, spare parts and repairs of a project. There are areas where the project offered the beneficiaries technical and skills training that should be sustained. The various capacities built and skills training impacted to the youth will last and be applied in their life time. However, as some of the stakeholders view it, the traders/business people still lacked group management skills and the necessary business skills training to run their businesses and therefore the technical sustainability is still in the verge. This is what one of the stakeholders had to say:

"....all partners supporting traders in Bentiu and Rubkona towns are not doing enough because they are not providing skill training to traders before lending them any loans. Traders have been misusing the fund simply because they were not given necessary business skills to run their business as expected.....people are just returning out from the POC to Bentiu and Rubkona towns to starts rebuilding their live, thus making the markets re-starting its normal functions..." KII with a respondent in Bentiu

4.4 Challenges

Limited impact of the trainings and civic education - skills capacity, knowledge, understanding and awareness of rights and civic duties increased significantly through the training, to ensure sustained impact on socio-economic gains, citizen identities and social reintegration, training must be extended and expanded to reach more people and embed attitudinal changes already achieved.

Inexperienced youths in small group management - The group model approach for the livelihood components of the project was effective though the size of the groups were large for their lack of experience to maintain the business momentum. Suggestively the groups should be small units to enable effective and efficient management of group affairs and meaningful sharing of gains.

In regards to area context –there was a need to understand the context of the localities of operation by the implementers is key. The rainy season affected the implementation of the project leading to the 6 month no cost extension period.

4. 5 Best Practices

For the implementing organizations to leverage youth engagement to shun violence inherent in their communities and to promote reintegration and peaceful co-existence, IOM, UNDP and the IPs (Implementing Partners) employed some best practices through program design and management that gave young people the opportunities they need to become agents of peace. This was through;

- a. **The design of the program by IOM and UNDP based on researched evidence through knowledge production** was a best practice in programming. It guides the implementers in the planning activities from an informed position, tracking and monitoring the outcomes and outputs effectively and maximizes the impacts of gains.
- b. The deliberate efforts in developing Peace-building strategies for and with youth, ensuring consistent **attention to gender equality and young women’s participation**. This ensured implementation of and complementarily with the gender-responsive building within the project.
- c. **Enhanced peace-building knowledge and skills of youth** - Through the provision of trainings on Conflict Resolution mechanisms, Dialogue, Conflict Management, Case reporting channels and livelihood and entrepreneurship skills training, youth were able to become more effective change-makers in their communities creating positive impact albeit with the minimal resources. “The youth trainings were content-based on topics such as conflict, peace building, gender,”
- d. **Use of sports and culture** - some of the most successful interventions³⁵employed also found ways to leverage youth interests — arts, sports, media, informal learning and personal relationships — to teach peace-building skills. These activities enabled to draw together not only the youth but communities as a whole regardless of their differences.
- e. **Creation of spaces for youths to express their opinions and be listened to**- rather than simply acknowledging youths as victims or perpetrators of violence, the youth were engaged as social actors with their own views and contributions as evidenced in joint meetings and activities³⁶. In practice, this was done by encouraging and training of the youth in the formation of youth groups both at the POC and Host communities that offer young people a chance to formulate their opinions. The Youth Centers in BentiuPOC and Bentiu Town offered an incredible space for both children, youth, community members and government officials to interact and build trust with each other and thus social cohesion built through such initiatives.
- f. The joint workshops, community projects or platforms helped in bridging the divide between youth themselves and local government officials.
- g. **Trust building between youths, community and governments** - Youths mobilization in peace-building efforts is more likely to be successful if young people are given the capabilities and opportunities to work with local and national governments. With non-existence or few constructive avenues³⁷to influence local and national politics, young people tend to view governments as beset by corruption. Conversely, governments often fail to take into account the views of youths in policymaking, and may have different priorities for peace.

³⁵ Football and Volleyball tournaments that brought the youth from POC and Bentiu together for the first time since the conflict broke out. A number of Radio talk shows were held in Miraya FM, Joint Skills trainings and group workings.

³⁶ Implementers reports and KII/FGD interviews

³⁷ Existence of South Sudan National Action Plan 2015 and Strategy on Youth Policy

- h. To close the gap, the actors held joint trainings for the youth with local government representatives in attendance. Through the youth groups in the POC and the Host communities, the youth are able to channel their concerns and the issues to the government and be listened to.

"The youth have strong and active groups³⁸ through which they share with us their opinions concerning issues that affect them" Top Ministry of Education Official, Liech County. The activities aided in promotion and the legitimization of youths and foster their representation in local and national policymaking processes are crucial, according to DG Ministry for Youth, Sports and Culture, himself a former Youth Union leader "We as youth are now recognized by the government and due to our trainings and capacity, we are being absorbed into leadership of the country".

- i. Other best practices - The **integration of hard components such as infrastructure projects** - school, youth center and market stalls which bring diverse community groups together to work towards common outputs and results as a means of reducing conflict as was used in this project is a best practice in peace building projects. Follow up activities by implementing agencies and **continued mentoring of the beneficiaries and monitoring of project activities** past the implementation period is essential for sustainability of the impacts gained.

4. 6 Key Lessons Learnt

The following are some of the learning from the design, conceptualization and implementation of the project:

1. Use of indirect approaches to engage youth as peace builders

In providing startup kits, trainings on livelihood and entrepreneurship to a diverse group of youth from the POC and host communities of Bentiu and Rubkona towns, although they were from different ethnic, religious communities, and political divide most came from economically marginalized backgrounds and faced similar challenges in their communities. Through trainings in basic entrepreneurial and livelihood skills, these young people became more comfortable working together. Initial tensions melted off and cohesions formed. What starts as some little comfort working together are the foundation and building blocks of peaceful coexistence between different groups and communities. In addition to supporting local residents, they provided a positive example of coexistence and resilience in the face of intolerance and violence. Showing them how to foster peace in their communities through action and shared experiences was more effective.

2. Creation of employment increases the chance for peace

Bringing together divided groups is an approach used by the implementing NGOs - IOM and UNDP. Youth having been trained on the employment skills and the youths working together in businesses, sports and being trained together, the tensions are reduced if not eliminated. The youth are no longer idle and are a source of inspiration and provisions for their families. Their commitment into the livelihood activities draws them away from risky behaviors and vulnerability to participate in conflict.

KII participant "If the youth are unemployed, not civically engaged and out of school disillusioned and hopeless," he warns, "there is a bigger problem waiting"

³⁸ Youth Forum in the POC and Youth Union in Bentiu town

3. **Creating space for youth to lead.**

From the youth led Forum and Union, Youth Center and youth livelihood groups, it is evident that given young peoples' openness, energy and creativity, they are especially well-positioned to come up with new ideas to address community problems. They can play a vital role in the peace-building process by modeling alternatives to violence and showing that change can be made peacefully. Youth need to be empowered to lead community development and advocacy initiatives so that they can inspire others to action.

"Our voices and action in peace building are heard and within the community" KII Youth Forum, "The creation of spaces for youth to express their opinion to decision-makers and broader society ensures that they have the opportunity to be heard too."

In addition to trainings on theories of conflict resolution, youth were actively engaged in youth in activities that highlight the values of civic activism and peace building. Youth have the drive and capacity³⁹ to truly effect change given the chance.

4. **Successful partnerships strengthen the capacity of projects and interventions to broaden their reach, engage more stakeholders and achieve shared objectives.** Partnerships can achieve greater outcomes than individuals or organizations acting alone. Partnerships achieve increased benefits because of shared expertise, skills and resources exhibited.

5. **Knowledge products through comprehensive situational analyses are key to inform the design of integrated peace building programmes that result in greater impacts to the beneficiaries.** Use of reliable data to inform project designs results in effective and efficient implementation of interventions with both short and long term impacts to the beneficiaries. An understanding of motivations of young people who do not engage with conflict or deal with conflict in a non-violent manner and a more nuanced and in-depth understanding of the motivations and drivers for young people who do engage in violence. The types of basic education, skill-building and employment opportunities required/available to youth, how youth deal with unemployment and how this may drive youth to conflict-based income and how migration influences youth livelihoods opportunities, or vice versa.

6. The blending of peace-building or social stability interventions in post-conflict setting with sector-specific programs in livelihood, agriculture, infrastructure development, entrepreneurial skills and capacity development, basic education, economic growth and work skill development and access to justice is more **cost effective than investments in stand-alone prevention or mitigation efforts.**

7. Both formal non-formal education programs are powerful innovations through which knowledge and skills are passed to the youths to influence their attitude which would further lead to change in practice. The gradual change in attitude and practice has led the youths to participate fully in peace building and conflict resolution initiatives, non-violence environment, peer and community leadership and civic participation. Gradually, a more responsible youth is being realized.

³⁹ The Youth Forum and Youth Union are able to solve a number of cases weekly thus averting occurrences of conflicts within the communities.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

In order to have a significant peacebuilding impact, it is important that training is part of a broader approach to providing sustainable alternatives, which includes developing an understanding of non-violence and rights and responsibilities as citizens. Conflict-sensitive approach to peacebuilding is crucial, particularly within a polarized context with history of historical justice and unresolved issues.

Similarly, seeing youths as assets – at the community and national levels – opens up new perspectives and strategies to support them as agents of peaceful change. Indeed, across the board, youth are finding innovative ways to shape their lives and surroundings. Governments and the international community should do more to reach out to them and learn from their highly creative and adaptive efforts. Participation should not always mean that youth come to the adults; it should also mean that the adults go to them.

Donors and international organizations play a crucial role in influencing not only the debate over youth in conflict-affected settings, but also the lived realities of youth in these settings. A highly consequential first step to taking a more evidence-based and strategic approach to supporting youth in peace building is actors to recognize that, overwhelmingly, youth are peaceful and remarkably resilient in light of their predicaments. The Peace-building initiatives should be approached from their own perspective or lens. This much is known, however, more understanding and research is needed, particularly for marginalized and excluded youth in conflict-affected settings like those in cattle camps.

5.2 Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on the findings of this evaluation:

1. The impact of the project is great and with the availability of funds, the project should be up scaled and replicated in conflict hot spots in the country with the concept of Youth Centre as a focus to promote integration and social cohesion among the communities. Youth centers are often the most local arm of national youth policy implementation. With regards to the gaps and factors that exists, the diversity across the 3 regions of South Sudan (Upper Nile, Equatoria and Bar el Ghazal), as well as across urban and rural areas. This should be coupled with a synthesis research and analysis of youth in South Sudan. In addition, the Development actors in close collaboration with the Government, or vice visa, should make a more deliberate effort in targeting the hard to reach youths in the cattle camps with the peace messages, behavior change communication and life skill trainings as this will help in getting into dialogue with these category of youths in order to influence the disarmament process which is a key to a relatively stable peace.
2. The youth have become respected mediators of conflict prevention and there is a need to continue building youth capacity in conflict resolution and leadership skills, and more practical-focused areas such as advocacy and project management.
3. Break the culture of gender inequality among young people is a critical key component to forging peaceful futures. Peace-building and conflict resolution initiatives at both National and local levels are predominantly led by men while women are disproportionately represented. Development professionals can help achieve this, by identifying local partners and creating platforms to amplify young women's voices. Target the grass roots and top-level policymakers simultaneously, and implementing organizations to work in partnerships

so that each plays to their strengths. Longer-term, process-based initiatives are needed to transform power structures, particularly patriarchal moral and social orders and notions of “hyper-masculinity,” which in South Sudan are heavily impacted by bride wealth-based local economies to reduce on the drivers of conflicts.

4. Livelihoods and resource access can both connect and divide youth. It is important to find creative ways to bring youth together through entrepreneurship engagement. These interventions should seek, where possible, to build on youth’ own capacities and coping mechanisms in such a way that promotes self-reliance and helps them to be able to better manage shocks related to conflict, livelihood loss and food insecurity.
5. Youth also need to be supported to develop their own priorities for peace, which is yet another way to help to combat feelings of exclusion and disenfranchisement and provide youth with a sense of empowerment outside of violence and crime. Youth programming should enhance the voices and perspectives of the youth who are actually implicated in ongoing violence, whether in the form of criminality (youth gangs), or rural insecurity (cattle youth militia). Involving armed and criminalized youth is imperative to ensuring ownership over norms and processes that encourage peace and wider societal transformational, which is particularly critical when considering their exclusion from national-level agreements, as well as political and community structures.
6. To ensure sustainability and knowledge management, the youth should be supported and encouraged to form local peace networks across the country and join the existing local or international youth-led networks for peace building initiatives focused on international advocacy for youth participation in peace building and strengthening the capacity as youth peace building organizations in the form of training series, long-term partnerships and publications. Ensure the framework for youth engagement focusing on organizational factors, physical space, mobilization and exposure. The young people should also be encouraged to learn about national or regional peace priorities while helping them work toward their own peace priorities. Use of modern avenues of communication and networking. The development agencies should collaborate with relevant authorities and communication organizations to embrace the use of information and communication technology (ICT)⁴⁰ In peace-building initiatives. Most youths in South Sudan, own mobile phones and easily access internet⁴¹ and pass messages through these phones. A free SMS-based platform through which youths can express their views on what is happening in their communities can also offer some promising spaces of expression for meaningful youth participation in peace building.
7. There is need for more support for the youths by the International NGOs and effective and well established local CSOs to create greater impact in peace building. There is a need to give the youth access to the mentors, facilitators, educational programs and networks that can hone their conflict resolution and leadership skills, and more practical-focused areas such as advocacy and project management. Provision of training and mentorship programmes to the existing in-country youth networks and facilitating youth connections at individual and organizational levels, ideas, challenges and best practices in peace-building can be shared to enhance individual and youth group capacities to handling conflicts. Further, as recognition of the positive role youths play in peace-building grows, the government and development actors should help in the operationalization of guidelines on the UN Guiding Principles on Young People’s Participation in Peace-building, South Sudan National Action Plan 2015 and Strategy on Youth Policy in peace and help the youth to apply the principles
8. The development actors should embrace continued participatory mentorship, capacity building and strengthened monitoring and evaluation systems for the participating youths.

⁴⁰ UNICEF’s U-report

⁴¹ <https://www.internetworldstats.com/africa.htm#ss>

The low literacy levels by most of the youths demand for regular and continued skills mentorship and empowerment for peace building impacts and sustainability of the livelihood gains. Coupled with lack of financial support, the youth peace-building activities often have very limited provision for evaluating the effectiveness and impacts of their work and therefore impeding the visibility and sustainability of their initiatives. But beyond increased financial support, innovative approaches that encourages youth active role to evaluate the impact of youth engagement in conflict resolution must be used – particularly those that build on qualitative evidence and participative approaches.

9. Peace building activities need to consider how to link local-level and national-level processes so that grass roots peace efforts effectively reinforces developments at the national level, while at the same time providing a buffer against the negative impacts of elite competition.⁴² As other research on peacebuilding in South Sudan has pointed out, mapping the connections between national and local interests can provide windows into the kind of longer-term change that is needed, allowing people to overcome long-standing grievances,⁴³ many of which stem to previous episodes of civil war in what is now South Sudan. In this project, dynamics at the national level remain a big threat to the peace building gains made.
10. Just as reconciliation and social cohesion are important moving forward, so too is broader transitional justice that acknowledges and addresses peoples' grievances.⁴⁴ This entails thinking about linking youth and peacebuilding programmes to access to justice programmes, as well as other processes that serve as a form of recognition for the harm done, such as symbolic reparations
11. Longer-term, process-based initiatives are needed to transform power structures, particularly patriarchal moral and social orders and notions of "hyper-masculinity," which in South Sudan are heavily impacted by bride wealth-based local economies. Significantly, inclusivity is key to countering the otherwise exclusionary and discriminative processes that have been characteristic of attempts to broker peace in South Sudan. Inclusivity cannot be done simply by bringing people together. Peace activities must, of necessity, seek to bring together youth from different clans/communities, as well as female and male genders and also focus on the power structures that inhibit meaningful participation in different processes in the first instance. Engaging men and community leaders through both gender and inter-generational dialogues can help in dismantling some of the structures that exclude both male and female youth.

Finally, the development agencies should collaborate and develop working partnerships with the government and all peace-building stakeholders to promote intergenerational exchange. Rather than working with youths in isolation, peace-building projects seeking the engagement of youths should also include children, parents and elders as this will ensure continuity through sharing of rich information and experiences.

⁴²Christian Aid. 2018. *In it for the long haul? Lessons on Peacebuilding in South Sudan*

⁴³Christian Aid. 2018. *In it for the long haul? Lessons on Peacebuilding in South Sudan*

⁴⁴Christian Aid. 2018. *In it for the long haul? Lessons on Peacebuilding in South Sudan*

Appendix 1: Summary of Evaluation Terms of Reference (ToR)

Terms of Reference (TOR)

Consultant for Final Evaluation of IOM-UNDP project: "Beyond Bentiu Protection of Civilian Site (POC) Youth Reintegration Strategy: Creating Conditions for Peaceful Coexistence between Youth Internally Displaced Persons, Returnees and Host Community Members"

1. Background and context

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) secured funding under the 2017 *United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) / Peacebuilding Fund (PBF)* for the joint project "Beyond Bentiu Protection of Civilian (POC) Site Youth Reintegration Strategy: Creating Conditions for Peaceful Coexistence between Youth Internally Displaced Persons, Returnees and Host Community Members". The project aims to strengthen foundations for peace through creating platforms for youth dialogue, rehabilitating and constructing key community infrastructure and fostering positive economic and social interdependencies between youth internally displaced persons (IDP), returnees and host community members.

The project was developed following the successful launch of the "Beyond Bentiu Response" by humanitarian players in early 2016 to establish a durable alternative to the POC through expanded service provision and enhanced quality of life outside of the POC. The project has three components:

1. Creating a strong evidence base and analysis to understand conflict drivers, return patterns and immediate interventions required to solidify sustainable returns of youth IDPs;
2. Strengthened mediation and reconciliation mechanisms in the Bentiu POC and between IDPs, returnees and host communities; and
3. Strengthened economic and social interdependencies for the IDPs, returnees and host community through livelihoods and rehabilitation of critical community infrastructure.

2. Purpose of the Evaluation

The "Beyond Bentiu Protection of Civilian (POC) Site Youth Reintegration Strategy" project ends on 30 June 2019^[1]. This end-line evaluation is being conducted at the request of the project stakeholders; IOM, UNDP, PBSO to assess the project's contribution towards "*strengthening foundations for peace through creating platforms for youth dialogue, rehabilitating and constructing key community infrastructure, and fostering positive economic and social interdependencies between youth IDP returnees and host community members.*" The evaluation is summative in nature, forward looking and utilization focused, and will assess the extent to which the outcomes (intended and unintended) have been achieved, elaborate lessons and best practices and recommend strategies to enhance operational and programmatic effectiveness for current and future peace-building projects. As per the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria, the evaluation will assess relevance, effectiveness and efficiency, potential sustainability of the project.

3. Evaluation scope and objectives

a. Scope

The end-line evaluation will cover the period of September 2017 to June 2019 in Bentiu and Rubkona. The evaluation will cover project conceptualization, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of results; focusing on extent to which the various indicators were met (performance of indicators), at the same time assessing the project's relevance, efficiency, sustainability and contribution towards human rights, social inclusion and gender equality.

b. Objectives

The specific objectives of the evaluation are as follows:

- i. Determine the relevance and strategic positioning of the project to the peace-building needs in Bentiu and Rubkona communities and in South Sudan as a whole.
- ii. Assess a) the progress made towards project results and whether there were any unintended results and b) what can be derived in terms of lessons learned for ongoing and future UNDP and IOM support towards peace-building initiatives in South Sudan
- iii. Review the frameworks and strategies that IOM, UNDP and partners devised to deliver the project and whether they were well conceived for achieving planned results.
- iv. Analyze the extent to which the project enhanced application of a rights-based approach, gender equality and women's empowerment, social and environmental standards and participation of other socially vulnerable groups such as children and the disabled.

4. The Evaluation Questions

Evaluation questions define the information that the evaluation will generate. This section proposes the questions that, when answered, will give intended users of the evaluation the information they seek in order to make decisions, act or add to knowledge. Questions will be grouped according to the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria: (a) relevance; (b) effectiveness; (c) efficiency; and (d) sustainability and include human rights, social inclusion and gender dimensions. Evaluators will suggest the questions, and these will be agreed to by IOM and UNDP.

5. Methodology

The evaluation will be carried out in accordance with; IOM and UNDP evaluation guidelines and policies, United Nations Group Evaluation Norms and Ethical Standards; OECD/DAC evaluation principles and guidelines and DAC Evaluation Quality Standards.

The evaluation should employ a combination of both qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods and instruments including:

- a. Document review of all relevant documentation. This would include a review of inter alia; project document (contribution agreement); theory of change and results framework; annual workplans; consolidated quarterly and annual reports; highlights of project board meetings and technical/financial monitoring reports.
- b. Semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders including key government counterparts, donor community members, representatives of key civil society organizations, UNCT members and implementing partners.
- c. Field visits and on-site validation of key tangible outputs and interventions. Other methods such as outcome mapping, observational visits, group discussions should be employed as necessary.
- d. Data review and analysis of monitoring and other data sources and methods should ensure maximum validity, reliability of data (quality) and promote use; the evaluation team will ensure triangulation of the various data sources.

The evaluators are expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach that ensures close engagement with the evaluation managers, implementing partners and direct beneficiaries. The final methodological approach including interview schedules, field visits and data to be used in the

evaluation should be clearly outlined in the inception report and be fully discussed and agreed between IOM, UNDP, stakeholders and the evaluators.

6. Expected Deliverables:

The Consultant will support the International Consultant in ensuring timely and quality delivery of the following:

- a. Evaluation inception report
- b. Evaluation debriefings
- c. Draft evaluation report
- d. Evaluation report audit trail.
- e. Final evaluation report and
- f. Presentations to stakeholders

7. Timeframe for the Evaluation Process.

The evaluation is expected to begin in June 2019 with an estimated 40 working days timeline.

8. Evaluation team and competencies required

8.1 Team

The evaluation team will comprise one international consultant (Team Leader) and national consultant who were, at no point directly associated with the design and implementation of any of the activities associated with the outcomes.

8.2 Competencies

- Minimum Master's degree in Law, Public Policy and Management, Public Administration, Development studies, International Development, or any other relevant university degree;- Extensive expertise, knowledge, and experience in the fields of community security, conflict prevention, peace building and reconciliation, governance, inclusive participation, gender mainstreaming and human rights promotion- Minimum 5 years of professional experience preferably in development, humanitarian aid, peace-building and related fields, including field experience, gender equality and social services.
- At least 2 years professional experience in conducting evaluations (of similar nature) in development, humanitarian aid, peace-building and related fields, including field experience.
- Knowledge on the political, economic and/or social affairs in South Sudan a strong advantage
- Excellent writing skills with a strong background in report drafting;
- Demonstrated ability and willingness to work with people of different cultural, ethnic and religious background, different gender, and diverse political views;
- Ability to use critical thinking, conceptualizes ideas, and articulate relevant subject matter concisely.

9. Implementation arrangements

IOM and UNDP will select the evaluators through an open and competitive process. UNDP and IOM will be responsible for the management of the evaluators and will in this regard designate focal persons for the evaluation and any additional staff to assist in facilitating the process (e.g., providing relevant documentation, arranging visits/interviews with key informants, etc.)

The designated project focal points will assist the evaluators in arranging introductory meetings with the relevant parties in UNDP and IOM, partners and government and civil society. The evaluators will take responsibility for setting up meetings and conducting the evaluation, subject to approval of the methodology submitted in the inception report. UNDP and IOM will develop a management response to the evaluation within two weeks of report finalization.

10. Duty Station

The duty station of the evaluation is Juba, South Sudan. However, the evaluators will be required to travel to Bentiu and Rubkona as part of the evaluation. Office space and limited administrative and logistical support will be provided. The consultant will use her/his own laptop and cell phone.
[1] Project duration was extended by 6 months to June 2019 to allow for project completion

How to apply:

Interested applicants may send their application letter together

Appendix 3: List of Documents/Literature Reviewed

Appendix 4: List of Evaluation KII Participants

	Name	Organization	Designation
1	EllimanA.Jagne	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	Deputy Representative South Sudan Resident Operations
2	Benjamin Moore	United Nations (UN)	RCO
3	John	Min. of Youth, Sports	Director General – Youth
4	DolDol	Min of Education –North Liech State	Minister
5	Stephen Gatdet	Lich Primary School	Deputy Head Teacher
6	Judy Wakahiu	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	Programme Manager
7	NaveedUlhaq	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	Peace & Cohesion (Community) Officer
8	Mary Kiratu	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	Reporting, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer
9	Solomon Yimam	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	M&E Officer
10	David	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	HDIGu Officer
11	Daniel	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	HDIGuProgramme Manager
12	Baudino Gaia	International Organization for Migration (IOM)	Programme Officer -TRU
13	Roy Mutandwa	International Organization for Migration (IOM)	M&E Officer - TRU
14	Emmanuel Sayiorri	International Organization for Migration (IOM)	Conflict Mediation Specialist
15	Regina Mawar	International Organization for Migration (IOM)	Programme Assistant - TRU
16	Joyce LotongaLiong	International Organization for Migration (IOM)	Programme Assistant - TRU
17	Stella Vellendi	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	M&E Officer
18	Stephen Wani	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	Programme Manager (Access to Justice)
19	ZerihunZewdieHurissa	International Organization for Migration (IOM)	Project Officer (DTM)
20	Evance	International Organization for Migration (IOM)	Finance Officer
21	Pascal Akincho	United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)	Civil Affairs
22	Peter Biech Khan	Mercy Corps	Senoir Child Protection Officer
23	Chan Chon	Nonviolent Peaceforce (NP)	Youth BBI Manager
24	Mayor Kuol	Nonviolent Peaceforce (NP)	Protection Officer
25	Michael	Youth Forum	Chairperson
26	Yien Chuo Tut	Upper Nile Youth Mobilization for Peace (UNYMRDA)	Executive Director
27	Mosses Ambio	Upper Nile Youth Mobilization for Peace (UNYMRDA)	Project Manager
28	Isaac John Yourmoon	Rural Community Development Initiative(RCDI)	Executive Director
29	Stephen Weu	Rural Community Development Initiative (RCDI)	Head of Programme
30	Richard Mwaka	Rural Community Development Initiative (RCDI)	Head of Operations
31	Stephen Gai	Rural Community Development Initiative (RCDI)	Youth Project Manager
32	GedionDabo	Community Health and Development Organization (CHADO)	Programme Executive
33	Miriam	Community Health and Development Organization (CHADO)	Grant Manager
34	Peter Oyat	Community Health and Development Organization (CHADO)	Project Manager
35	James Chuol Jock	Community Health and Development Organization (CHADO)	Project Assistant
36	Both Gatkuoth	Human Aids for Community Organizations (HACO)	Executive Director

37	Benn	Human Aids for Community Organizations (HACO)	Programme Coordinator
38	AbudiGilbart	Human Aids for Community Organizations (HACO)	Programme Assistant
39	Ainea	Human Aids for Community Organizations (HACO)	Project Manager
40	William Jieth	Human Aids for Community Organizations (HACO)	Project Assistant
41	Tain Kula	Hope Restoration South Sudan (HRSS)	M&E officer
42	War Isaac	Action for Conflict Resolution (ACR)	Programme Coordinator
43	Gabriel Sebit	Action for Conflict Resolution (ACR)	Project Assistant
44	Pitok Peter	Action for Conflict Resolution (ACR)	Project Assistant
45	Charles Alfred	Universal International and Development Organization (UNIDOR)	Project Manager
46	Wuor Tut Bath	Universal International and Development Organization (UNIDOR)	Finance Officer
47	Peter Bol	Integrated Development Organization (IDO)	Community Outreach Officer
48	Gabriel So Gai	Trade Union	Chairperson -Bentiu
49	JuoyGengGaluok	Trade Union	Deputy Chairperson -Bentiu
50	RiekMaliarMaliar	Trade Union	Chairperson – Rubkona
51	Makur Michael	Trade Union	Member
52	RebbecaJok	BentiuPayam	Assistant Chief
53	NyayupDieth	BentiuPayam	Assistant Chief

Appendix 5: Evaluation Questionnaire

QUANTTTATIVE -EVALUATION QUESTIONNARE

Questionnaire Number:

FOR THE SELECTED YOUTH BENEFICIARIES

Hello. My name is _____ and I am collecting data on behalf of IOM/UNDP. We are conducting a Final Evaluation of the program “*Beyond Bentiu Protection of Civilian Site (POC) Youth Reintegration Strategy*” implemented by the IOM/UNDP and the local CSO/CBO in this area. The questionnaire will approximately take 25 minutes to complete. As part of the evaluation we would first like to ask some questions about you, about how you participated in the project, your awareness of the project implementation. All the answers you give will be treated with utmost confidentiality. The information you provide will be strictly utilized for the purpose of statistical data presentation of this evaluation only (evidence for project performance). Participation in the survey is completely voluntary. However, we hope you will participate in the evaluation since your views are important for the successful evaluation of the project in this area.

Do you agree to take part in this evaluation interview? Yes No.

General Information

Name of respondent _____
 Respondent CSO/CBO attached to _____
 Enumerator’s Name: _____
 Survey Date ____/____/____ (day/month/year),
 State: _____ County: _____ Location/Payam: _____
 Gender : Male _____ Female _____
 Respondents Status: 1. Youth IDP 2. Returnee 3. Host Community
 Place of Interview: 1. POC 2. Host Community
 Start: _____ Stop _____ Interview duration (in minutes): _____

No	Question	Response	Skip Pattern
1.1	Marital Status	Married.....1 Single not yet married.....2 Widowed.....3 Divorced.....4 Separated.....5 No response.....6	
1.2	Level of education	Primary not completed.....1 Primary completed.....2 Secondary not completed.....3 Secondary completed.....4 College not completed.....5 College completed.....6	
1.3	Employment Status	Informal employment.....1 Formal employment.....2 Self employment.....3	

		Not employed.....4	
1.4	Other sources of income	Farming.....1 Spouse/parent provision.....2 Remittance from relatives.....3 Other (Specify).....4	
1.5	Which of the following do YOU own?	Land.....1 House.....2 Business.....3 Cattle.....4 Any other property.....5	
1.6	How long have you lived in this area?	Under 18months.....1 Over 18months.....2	
	b. For IDPs, are you willing to return to your original home?	Yes.....1 No.....2 If why?.....	
1.7	What are the major causes of conflicts in this area if any?	Inadequate resources.....1 Cultural differences.....2 Hate and intolerance.....3 Unemployment among the youth.....4 Incitement by leaders.....5	
1.8	What are your personal motivations and choices to engage in peacebuilding or violence in your community, school, family, workplace, or nation?	<i>Violence Peacebuilding</i> Income/payment involved.....AA Own responsibility.....BB Peer pressure/Others are doing itC C Other(specify).....D D	
1.9	What informs youth decision on the type of livelihood you engage in?	My capacity and skills.....1 Availability of opportunity.....2 Other (specify).....3	
2.0	Have you seen any conflict in your area in the past 18 months?	Yes.....1 No.....2	
	ii.) If Yes, have it/they been resolved?	Have been resolved.....1 No efforts were made to resolve them resolve.....2 In the process of being resolved.....3 Could not be resolved.....4	
	iii.) If a, b, c above; by whom?	Youths.....1 Community leader.....2 Other actors (indicate).....3	
2.0	b. If your right is violated by anyone, to whom would report to?	Family member.....1 Community leader/Chief.....2 Police.....3 Youth committee or group.....4 Don't know.....5 Other (specify).....6	
	c. Where are cases solved or handled in this area?	Courts/Mobile court.....1 Traditional court.....2 Don't know.....3 Others (Specify).....4	
2.1	a. Whom would you say are most accountable for the success of	INGOs and CSOs.....1 CSOs.....2	

	the peace process and reintegration of the youth in this area?	Youth, youth networks and youth peace committees.....3 Government agencies.....4 Security personnel.....5 Media.....6 Community leaders.....7 Othersactors(Specify).....8	
	b. Whom would you say are most trusted by the youth and the community for conflict resolution and peace dialogue and reintegration of the youth in this area?	INGOs and CSOs.....1 CSOs.....2 Youths, youth networks and local youth peace committees.....3 Government agencies.....4 Security personnel.....5 Media.....6 Community leaders.....7 Othersactors(Specify).....8	
	c. What are the most efficient and effective way of conflict resolution? Explain?	Negotiation and Dialogue.....1 Reconciliation.....2 Arbitration.....3 Mediation.....4 Collaborative law.....5 Others (Specify).....6	
2.2	Do the youth from your community work with youth from across dividing lines?	Political lines..... 1. Yes 2. No Religion..... 1. Yes 2. No Ethnic..... 1. Yes 2. No Gender.....1. Yes 2. No Geographical line.....1. Yes 2. No	
2.3	Do you hold/have you ever held any leadership position in the community (Group, CBO, Church, School, e.t.c.)?	Yes.....1 No.....2	
2.4	a. Are you normally consulted on issues of peacebuilding by the community or the government?	Yes.....1 No.....2	
	b. On what other issues are your opinion sought or listened to?	_____	
2.5	What was your role in conflict transformation and peacebuilding in this area?	Don't Know/ Can't Say.....1 My participation does not make a difference.....2 I participated actively.....3	
2.6	How effective were the peacebuildingactivities in this community?	Yes.....1 No.....2	
2.7	Was the projects' income generating activities and employment empowerment initiatives in this community effective?	Yes.....1 No.....2	
2.8	What training did you receive from the project?	Leadership.....1 Conflict resoluition.....2 GBV curriculam.....3	

		Skills trainings.....4 Conflict resolution mechanisms.....5 Others(specify) _____6			
2.9	Did you find this training/s helpful?	Yes.....1 No.....2			
3.0	Based on your opinion how has these forms of gender discrimination been in the last 18months in this area?	Reduced	Remained the same	Increased	Can't tell/DK
	Rape.....1 Sexual abuse.....2 Forced prostitution.....3 GBV.....4 Early Marriages.....5 Other (specify).....6				
3.1	What do you think is the reason for reduction in.....above?			
3.2	What do you think is the reason for increase in.....above?			
3.3	Are you aware of the transitional justice?	Yes.....1 No.....2			
	b. If YES, do you support it?	Yes.....1 No.....2			
3.4	Based on its activities, how relevant were the project interventions to the youth and people of this area?	Not relevant	Somehow Relevant	Relevant	Very relevant
3.5	Did your life improve as a result of project assistance provided by the IOM/UNDP/CBO? Please explain.			
3.6	a. How have YOU or the community benefited from the project?			
	b. How do you intend to ensure the benefits last longer?			
3.7	What are the negative effects brought by the project in the society? <i>If any</i>			
3.8	Are you aware of an existence of the government's <i>national youth policy framework or strategy</i> ?	Yes.....1 No.....2			

END