

South Sudan Country Office

Terms of Reference for conducting a vulnerability assessment on the impact of climate change on gender equality, sexual and reproductive health, and gender-based violence in South Sudan

Background

The cumulative and compounding effects of years of conflict, inter-communal violence, displacement, food insecurity, and infectious disease outbreaks continue to worsen the humanitarian situation in South Sudan, negatively impacting resilience and the vulnerability of populations. Recurrent droughts and floods have negatively impacted food security and livelihoods by contributing to resource scarcity, which in turn increases competition between pastoralists and farmers who depend on pasture and water resources, ultimately leading to intercommunal fighting.

As almost 95 percent of South Sudan's population depends on climate-sensitive livelihoods, such as rain-fed agriculture, pastoralism, and livestock, floods, and droughts significantly disrupt livelihoods, leading to food insecurity and weakening the resilience of communities while increasing the vulnerability of women, men, boys, and girls.

Furthermore, South Sudan is currently facing one of the world's worst food crises, attributed to ongoing violence, climate shocks, and a widespread economic crisis. According to 2023 Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) figures¹, 6.6 million (54% of the population) are facing acute food insecurity (IPC phase 3+). Of these, 2.2 million are in severe food insecurity (IPC phase 4+), these climatic shocks exacerbate unforeseeable gender-based violence (GBV) and devastate the sexual and reproductive health (SRH) of women and girls. In addition, unpredictable floods in the greater Nile region, including Jonglei and Unity states, have destroyed livelihoods as agricultural lands were suddenly submerged in water. Health facilities in urban and pre-urban areas were overwhelmed, increasing the urgent needs for maternal and SRH services. The repeated exposure to conflict and climate change events is eroding households' coping mechanisms and the resources needed for recovery. The most vulnerable groups in society are the hardest hit, with women and girls experiencing harm such as injuries, death, forced displacement, hunger, and trauma resulting from extreme weather events.

In Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps, Protection of Civilians (PoC) sites as well as reception and transit centers for returnees and refugees fleeing conflict in Sudan, displaced families, returnees, and refugees could abruptly be cut off from SRH services, blocking their access to maternal and reproductive health services, including access to safe childbirth.

¹ https://www.ipcinfo.org/ipc-country-analysis/details-map/en/c/1155997/?iso3=SSD



In March 2024, a heatwave that ravaged East Africa forced schools to close for two weeks in South Sudan, forcing the government to resort to emergency security measures. According to the IGAD Climate Prediction and Application Center (ICPAC), at least 15 people were killed by extreme heat in South Sudan between early March and April 2024. Service providers at health facilities and GBV service delivery points endured the heat without electric fans. Increased demand has led to power outages leading to disruption of regular access to essential health services as well as GBV prevention and response services.

In general, women and children have limited access to health care in South Sudan, resulting in maternal and child mortality rates are among the highest in the world. Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR)² have shown a very minimal reduction between 2000 and 2020- 1686/100,000 live births to 1223/100,000 live births. Malaria is a significant risk for pregnant women and children whose antimalarial treatment is incomplete, resulting in severe and unpredictable recurrence. Similarly, inadequate sanitation facilities in PoC sites, IDP camps, reception sites, and transit centers led to an unpredictable risk of an outbreak of diseases that have compromised the health and well-being of IDPs, returnees, and refugees.

The South Sudan Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan (HNRP) forecasts an increase in the number of people in need compared to the previous year. According to the HNRP, 9.4 people are in need of humanitarian assistance, which is 76 percent of the country's population. Of these, 337,000 are refugees; 2.2 million are women and 4.9 million are children. Of the total number of people in need of humanitarian assistance, 2.7 million, the majority of whom are women and girls, are at risk of GBV. Protracted conflict, insecurity, and climate change overwhelmingly affect vulnerable people, and high levels of GBV are reported across the country. This includes rape and sexual assault; abductions of women and children, particularly during cattle rustling; forced sexual favors; domestic violence; psychological and emotional abuse; and child marriage.

According to the GBV Information Management System (GBVIMS), the high caseload of people in move residing or transiting in overcrowded and strained environments has heightened vulnerabilities, particularly for women and girls with limited resources and stretched support. Their protection risks are exacerbated by food insecurity, economic instability, unemployment, school closures, lack of equal opportunities, high illiteracy rates, high maternal mortality, and limited access to means of subsistence.

The GBVIMS 2022 annual report confirmed that 76% of GBV incidents were perpetrated against adults, while 13% were perpetrated against minors under the age of 11. According to the report, 1,129 incidents of child sexual abuse were reported in 2022, representing 43% of total GBV incidents affecting children. The report also stated that 3% and 2% of GBV incidents were perpetrated against disabled survivors and unaccompanied minors, respectively. The main types of GBV incidents reported in 2022 were physical assault (37%), psychological violence (25%), sexual violence (21%),

² https://mmr2020.srhr.org/data



denial of resources and services (10%), and forced marriage (7%). Nearly half of reported GBV incidents were perpetrated by intimate partners, followed by family members and caregivers. Unemployed crime perpetrators accounted for 18% of perpetrators.

The GBVIMS 2022 report is consistent with the 2023 data with its preliminary data showing that 97% of survivors are women and girls, with physical violence being the most reported type of GBV incident. In 2023, sexual violence and sexual assault represented 19% and 5% respectively. South Sudan continues to face challenges in accessing justice for survivors with a high backlog of cases due to limited judicial institutions, legal aid, and prosecution, leading to delays in justice and a culture of impunity.

UNFPA has committed to the three transformative results by 2030: ending preventable maternal mortality, ending unmet need for family planning, and ending GBV and other harmful practices. If left unaddressed, climate change will make the three transformative results and the overall achievement of the International Conference on Population Development (ICPD) agenda and thereby the sustainable development goals difficult, if not impossible, to achieve.

UNFPA is positioned to promote climate adaptation response and climate resilience of the individuals, communities, and systems we serve through evidence-informed programme and policy response.

In 2021, UNFPA put forward a multi-pronged programme of action outlined in the Value Proposition on Climate Change that articulates the following four key programmatic areas of work:

- 1. Investing in a healthy empowered population including women, girls, and young people.
- 2. Strengthen and build more climate-resilient health and protection systems.
- 3. Ensure better preparedness and response in emergencies.
- 4. Build stronger data systems for climate vulnerability.

UNFPA believes that national policies and strategies as well as climate related vulnerability assessments must consider overall impacts on SRH and GBV risks and protective measures as well as humanitarian response services. To successfully do so, more evidence on the SRH and GBV vulnerabilities in a climate change context is needed to aid national policy makers in enhancing climate sensitive actions recognizing the links between climate change, SRH and gender equality, specifically its impact on women's socio-economic opportunities, well-being and protection from violence and the linkage between sectors is critical for effective adaptive responses. To this end, UNFPA is commissioning this study to assess the vulnerability of women and girls and to explore the impact of climate change on gender equality and SRH In South Sudan. The study will assess the policy and institutional gaps and identify opportunities for strengthening gender-responsive climate action that includes SRH and GBV in adaptation and resilience efforts.

Objectives

The objective of the vulnerability assessment is to strengthen the evidence base and assess vulnerabilities on climate change impacts on gender equality, SRH and GBV in South Sudan to inform a more targeted, gender-responsive policy and programme for climate action.

The study will be guided through four specific objectives:



- 1. Identify hotspot areas for the vulnerability assessment according to the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) for climate change and the Second Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) of South Sudan.
- 2. Outline the climate change situation, program, and policy context on climate adaptation in states and counties impacted by climate change.
- 3. Examine the impact of climate change on selected Gender Equality, SRH and GBV issues in hotspot areas.
- 4. Recommend strategic actions for a strengthened policy response to ensure more gender sensitive climate action that mitigates the negative impacts of climate change on SRH and GBV.

The findings of the study will be used to enter evidence-based policy dialogue to strengthen gender-responsive climate action that addresses the negative impacts of climate change on SRH and GBV. While the main target audience of the study is national policy makers, the study can be useful for providing practitioners, researchers, international organizations, and communities with guidance in their climate action efforts. The results of the study can be used in collaboration between local stakeholders and UNFPA to develop innovative interventions that address the most pressing needs and vulnerabilities of women and girls in a climate change context.

Scope of work

The assessment team is expected to present the following deliverables:

- 1. Inception report: Outlining refined research questions based on preliminary literature search, selection of primary and secondary data sources including identification of key stakeholders and key indicators, selection of analytical framework, methodological implications, and timeline.
- 2. Development and share draft study report for review and inputs from all stakeholders.
- 3. Produce the final study report after accepting all inputs from all stakeholders.
- 4. Organize a dissemination workshop for the validation and dissemination of the findings.

The vulnerability assessment will be implemented in close coordination with the Ministry of Environment and Forestry; Ministry of Water and Irrigation; Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Risk Reduction; Ministry of Gender, Child, and Social Welfare; Ministry of Health; Ministry of Youth and Sports and National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) to present the following deliverables:

Task	Number of days
Conduct literature review that comprehensively summarizes the available body of the	7 days
literature and draws conclusions pertinent to the vulnerability assessment areas of	
coverage.	
Develop assessment methodology and protocol and present them along with an	10 days
inception report that outlines refined research questions based on preliminary	
literature search, selection of primary and secondary data sources including	



identification of key stakeholders and key indicators, selection of analytical framework,	
methodological implications, and timeline.	
Develop assessment tools for collecting primary and secondary data. The tools should	5 days
be shared in a timely manner with UNFPA for review and inputs.	
Recruit data collection teams (enumerators) and train them on assessment protocols	5 days
and ethical considerations. The training will be followed by a pre-testing exercise.	
Deploy the data collection teams to the field. Given the sensitivity of GBV data, the	28 days
consultancy firm will ensure 60% of the field data collections teams are female	
enumerators with the understanding of GBV sensitivity. The enumerators must	
understand and speak local language in their areas of deployment and have basic	
understanding on key terminologies of GBV.	
Conduct data entries, data cleaning and data analysis to answer to the objectives of the	10 days
survey objectives.	
Draft final report that comprehensively present the study findings and	12 days
recommendations. The report will be reviewed by UNFPA, and line ministries involved	
in the vulnerability assessment.	
Finalize the report based on the findings of stakeholders and conduct a validation	7 days
workshop.	
Submit the final report to UNFPA.	5 days

All team members of the vulnerability assessment are expected to adhere by humanitarian principles, the do-no harm principle, recognized principles of research ethics and procedures, GBV Guiding principles (confidentiality, respect, ensuring safety and security, and non-discrimination) including research in humanitarian settings and with vulnerable populations, and to obtain ethical approval for the study ahead of initiation of work from relevant authorities at national and state levels. The timelines are not flexible, and the consultancy firm is expected to adhere to the scope of the work and the respective timelines.

Methodology and approach:

UNFPA will partner with a national consultancy firm that will recruit well experienced survey team. The data collection team must be able to travel to/from and within all areas covered by this assessment. The national assessment team will be assisted by two international climate change expertise from the University of Tokyo who will provide overall technical support throughout the vulnerability assessment.

The assessment team will employ innovative and proven survey methodology; the data collection team will adopt an approach that ensures the field data collection is conducted with care, ensuring safety and confidentiality. Data collection will be organized in safe, private, and neutral locations. Different modalities for engagement will be adopted based on the context while ensuring effective engagement including those marginalized groups and hard-to-reach places/populations.



The vulnerability assessment will employ both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection. The quantitative methods will focus on answering the following survey questions under the relevant objectives:

Study objective 1 - Climate change context

Under this objective, the assessment will answer the following questions:

- ➤ What are the main climate hazards experienced in South Sudan?
- ➤ What implications do climate change have for sustainable development in South Sudan now and in future?
- ➤ What are the main sectors impacted by climate change in South Sudan?
- Which population groups are mainly affected by climate change impacts?
- ➤ What are the key stakeholders in climate change policy and what other sectors are addressing climate change?
- ➤ What are the main national policy frameworks addressing climate change?

The approach to this objective should be a desk-based study using available data sources.

Study objective 2 - Study on impact of climate change on SRH and GBV

Under this objective, the assessment will answer the following questions:

- ➤ How do climate-related disasters strain the capacity of health systems and hinder access to SRH and GBV services in South Sudan?
- ➤ How is climate change and disasters influencing women and girls' control over their own bodies and what SRH needs do they define as most impacted by climate change?
- ➤ How do women and girls experience climate change impacts on their sexual and reproductive health and rights and prevention from GBV?
- ➤ What are the interventions, services, and information available to support women and girls in coping with and adapting to climate induced disruptions of their SRH and risk of GBV?
- ➤ How do the occurrence of extreme weather events and climate change impact on the selected SRH and GBV outcomes regarding service utilization, access to information, and impact on bodily autonomy?
- ➤ What are the research gaps that need further investments to fill the evidence and data gaps on climate change impacts on SRH?
- Examine the impact of climate change on access to and quality of SRH and GBV prevention and response services.
- Assess how climate change affects gender roles, responsibilities, and opportunities in South Sudan.

Study objective 3 - Vulnerability assessment of gender and SRH vulnerabilities in climate change context

Under this objective, the study will answer the following questions:

➤ What specific impacts do environmental changes and climate disasters have on women including their safety, social structures, health and well-being, and economic empowerment?



- ➤ What are the most important livelihood resources to different groups within the community and how are these vulnerable to climate variability and disasters?
- ➤ What knowledge and capacities do women hold in their livelihood activities and what assets and services are available for women to employ strategies to buffer shocks and adapt to environmental changes and climate disasters?
- ➤ How do women perceive and use available disaster risk information, climate and weather forecasting, early warning systems, and community programs?
- ➤ What are the existing and future strategies women including female-headed households adopt to diversify livelihoods and manage climate risks and what socio-economic factors define their ability to adapt?
- ➤ How do local planning processes engage communities and allow women and vulnerable groups to have their interests represented in decision-making on climate adaptation plans, resource distribution, and access to and allocation of natural resources?
- ➤ How is gender equality articulated in local climate action plans and programs?
- ➤ What are the aspirations that women and girls articulate for themselves and future generations in the context of climate change and what are the needed changes to social structures, environmental, and resource availability to make this happen?

Study objective 4 - Policy recommendations for more gender-responsive climate action addressing SRHR and GBV risks.

Under this objective, the study will answer the following questions:

- ✓ How are issues of gender equality, SRH, and GBV reflected in the NAP and NDC and institutional arrangements? Where are the main gaps to gender-responsive climate action?
- ✓ How have policy commitments been translated into tangible actions addressing gender vulnerabilities in climate change and addressing negative impacts on SRH and GBV?
- ✓ What is the institutional capacity of the health, gender, and other sectors to manage the risks of climate sensitive SRH and GBV outcomes?
- ✓ Which are the key context-specific indicators that should be considered in the policy response to track progress on reducing engendered vulnerabilities and building resilience?
- ✓ What is South Sudan's commitment to global climate action processes and how have gender equality, SRH, and GBV been articulated in NDC?
- ✓ What are the windows of opportunities for UNFPA and other partners to engage in policy dialogue for more gender-responsive climate action?
- ✓ What are the needed policy changes to create gender-transformative climate action that addresses linkages between climate change and SRH and an enabling environment for adaptation for women and girls?
- ✓ How can health system resilience to climate change be strengthened to ensure continuity of quality of services for SRH and address underlying causes of vulnerability?
- ✓ How can preparedness and emergency response in emergencies be strengthened to ensure continuity of services and protection of women and girls SRH?



- ✓ How can gender-responsive policy responses towards climate change be better mainstreamed across sectors including the social protection system, health services and education, among others?
- ✓ How can climate change adaptation efforts improve health systems, and women's socioeconomic empowerment can indirectly provide benefits to SRH?
- ✓ What are the socio-economic benefits for the country in responding to SRH needs, building resilient health systems and investing in girls' and women's resilience and adaptive capacity as part of climate action?

Key indicators

The vulnerability assessment will consider the key indicators of interest drawing from the table below. The selection of indicators of interest will be informed by background research on current gaps in evidence and government policy priorities on SRH, gender equality and climate change. The final selection will be done in a consultative process with key stakeholders from UNFPA and other line ministries.

The vulnerability assessment can include the following type data in its assessment:

Domain	Suggested data	Suggested indicator
Health	Maternal health, family planning, HIV, menstrual health, SRHR knowledge, and teenage pregnancy.	 Antenatal care visits Postnatal care visits Skilled birth attendance Uptake of modern contraception HIV incidence rate ARV treatment compliance Women aged 15-19 who have given birth. Met need for emergency obstetric care (EmOC) services or availability of basic EmOC services
Environment	Major Crop, livestock resources, market prices, rainfall patterns, temperature patterns, seasonality analysis, occurrence and intensity of extreme weather events, future climate projections	Rainfall season performance (start of season, rainfall amounts, spatial and temporal distribution compared to normal) Occurrence of dry spells, droughts, floods, and heat waves (Standardized Precipitation Index; Vegetation Condition Index) Proportion of area affected (e.g. locust, armyworms) (ha)
Livelihood	Food availability and access	The proportion of households directly



		engaged in main livestock production – current compared to average five years (%) The proportion of households directly engaged in main Food Crop Production-current compared to average five years (%)
Demographic	Age structure, rural/urban divide, population size, future population growth, aging, urbanization	1 1
Socio- economic	Economic situation and trends, GDP, employment, inflation trends and key drivers, poverty situation and income disparities, unemployment rates, conflicts and stability, food safety data,	 Per capita income levels Inflation trends and key drivers Income disparities – GINI coefficient
Gender	Division of labor, power structures, workload, female headed households, access and control of assets, participation in decision making, social protection systems., gender analysis.	head of householdAverage number of livestock species by type of species and sex of head of
Adaptation	Public awareness Early warning systems Health system capacity	 Existence of climate-resilient infrastructure in the health system Extent of public awareness of and actions to address health risks of climate change. Status of climate change integrated into financial planning and guidelines for line ministries. Effectiveness of enhancing early warning systems
Governance	Climate policies, plans, and	Integration of climate change and



strategies
Other sectoral policies and strategies
Local response on climate change and SRHR

SRHR and gender in strategies and action plans

- Existence and effectiveness of collaborative mechanisms for addressing climate change with other sectors e.g. gender and health.
- Extent of local, subnational, and national government commitments to climate change adaptation for SRHR and gender
- Incorporation of climate, gender and SRHR into national adaptation plans, water safety plans, and infectious disease control programmes

Data sources

The assessment team will use qualitative approaches using primary and secondary data to conduct the study. The primary data should be built on qualitative data including participatory research. The data collection should be based on a thorough scanning of relevant key informants and the selection of data collection methods that are feasible, acceptable, and affordable for the selected context and study design. The key informants should include a mix of national and local stakeholders that play a critical role in supporting or constraining climate resilience and adaptive capacity. Data collection from local communities is crucial to get women's perceptions of climate change risks and SRH impacts, adaptive capacity, and resilience.

The secondary data can be drawn from epidemiological, demographic, and health data and national policies and strategies collected from available national and international sources. The study should reflect on issues of data availability, relevance, accuracy, sufficiency, and ethical use of data in the collection of secondary data and the implications of these factors for the quality of the results.

Expected Deliverables

The national consultancy firm is expected to deliver the following outputs to UNFPA in line with the objectives and scope of work of the survey:

- An inception report with a survey protocol, literature review report, and a detailed plan of implementation.
- Quantitative and qualitative data collection tools.
- Authorization letter from the concerned authorities at national and state level.
- Draft report answering to all objectives of the study.
- Final report after incorporating comments and inputs of all stakeholders.



Required expertise, qualifications, and competencies, including language requirements.

Skills

The national consultancy firm interested in this assignment is expected to identify and propose competent and with strong expertise on the field of climate change, GBV and SRH with planning, writing, and communication skills. The national consultancy firm selected for the assignment will have the following mix of skills:

Team leader (survey coordinator) with a minimum of 10 years of experience in conducting empirical research and analysis that involve both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection including protection related surveys. S/he should have master's degree in environmental science, social science, public health specializing in environmental health, gender, or related fields. S/he will be responsible for providing overall managerial and technical leadership of the survey. S/he must have a track-record in working professionally with policy and institutional analysis and collaboration with government authorities with solid communication and writing skills, with documentation and dissemination of high quality.

Demographer with experience in quantitative data collection, management, analysis, and reporting. S/he should have, to a minimum, a masters' degree in biostatistics. S/he will be responsible for providing leadership for the quantitative component of the study.

Environmental Scientist with extensive experience in managing climate change related qualitative research projects and a proven record of accomplishment of qualitative research publications. S/he should have a masters' degree in humanities or anthropological studies. S/he will be responsible for providing leadership for the qualitative component of the study.

Furthermore, the consultancy firm is expected to have the following experience as an institution:

- At least 5 years' experience in conducting studies, assessments, and surveys in the field of protection, preferably GBV, humanitarian, development and peace keeping contexts for the UN and / or international organizations in South Sudan.
- Extensive knowledge on mainstreaming GBV, gender and human rights in humanitarian and development projects and programs in South Sudan.
- Extensive knowledge and experience on results-based management/reporting with hand-on-monitoring and evaluation experience on protection, preferably GBV.
- Evidence of having carried similar assignments in the past in South Sudan.

Research assistants with extensive experience in both quantitative and qualitative research.

Languages

All research team members including data collection teams should be fluent in written and spoken English. For the data collection team members in the field, knowledge of the relevant South Sudanese local language is a requirement.

Reporting



The study Team will report to the South Sudan National Bureau of Statistics' Principal Statistician and UNFPA's Project Lead.

Consultant Reporting Lines

The assessment team will report to the study coordinator (Team Leader) of the consultancy firm who will maintain direct contact with international coordinators at the University of Tokyo and UNFPA South Sudan Country Office. UNFPA Emergency Coordinator will oversee the implementation of the study in close coordination with the UNFPA monitoring team. The findings of the study will be presented to all stakeholders after the approval of the final report by UNFPA.

Criteria for Proposal Evaluation

Technical Proposal (50 points)

1) Proposed survey team, including:

- a. Knowledge and experience of the proposed local consultants by sharing their resumes and/or CVs.
- b. Experience of the consultancy firm in conducting similar studies and assessments in South Sudan in the past.
- c. Plans for South Sudan's statistical system support, including data quality control and data sharing.

2) Proposed data collection and analysis methods:

- a. Details of the training to be provided to enumerators. This will involve assessing the content of the training agenda which must be attached as annex to the proposal.
- b. Ethical considerations and process for informed consent.
- c. Adherence to timelines for carrying out the data collection in all sites.
- d. Logistical considerations, limitations, and mitigation strategies to limitations.
- e. Submission of a letter of commitment to adhere to the timelines without comprising the quality of the study.

Past Performance (30 Points)

3) Prior Experience and References

- a. Past performance with UN and NGO research projects preferably in GBV, Gender and other protection related fields.
- b. Past performance in implementing field assessments and/or survey in South Sudan.
- c. At least three references that were involved in past work in the supervision of the consultancy firm's work and qualitative and quantitative data collection activities.

4) Financial Proposal (20 points)

The financial proposal will be judged on value for money, and how well the budget is linked to the scope of the survey. The proposed costs will be evaluated for realism, reasonableness, allocability, allowability, and cost-effectiveness.



Proposed Budget and budget narrative, including:

- a. Personnel, including the level of effort for each activity in the proposed timeline.
- b. Data collection travel/logistical costs, and any other related costs.
- c. Data analysis and management costs, including, translation, transcription, and any other related costs.
- d. Communications such as airtime and internet data.
- e. Other costs as necessary such as conducting training for the data collection team and producing banners to be displayed during the training.

Financial Proposal

Potential consultancy firms shall submit cost proposals as a separate section, which is not subject to the page limitation of the proposal. The financial package shall include an overall detailed budget as well as a detailed budget defined by milestones and a budget narrative. The budget should relate to deliverables while also showing a type of cost for each activity, outlining the costs of the proposed activity/project to be realistic and reasonable for the work in accordance with the activity description.

To support the proposed costs, potential consultancy firms are expected to provide a detailed budget narrative for all costs that clearly identifies the basis of all costs, such as market surveys, price quotations, current salaries, historical experience, etc. The combination of the cost data and breakdowns specified above, and the budget narrative must be sufficient to allow a determination of whether the costs estimated are reasonable and realistic.

How to Apply

Please send your proposal in response to the RFA by email to southsudan.procurement@unfpa.org no later than 5th July 2024 South Sudan Time by 04:30 p.m. local Time.