

South Sudan:

Supporting returnee and host communities to restore their livelihoods, create income, and improve and manage natural resources peacefully for short-term relief and long-term food security (Triple Nexus)

Name of Organisation	Caritas Switzerland (CACH)
Project number	p230001
Location	Magwi and Torit counties in Eastern Equatoria State and Yei River County in Central Equatoria State, South Sudan (exact target locations to be decided during the inception phase)
Duration	01.07.2023 – 30.09.2025 (27 months) July-September 2023: inception period
Objectives of the project	The livelihoods and resilience of returnees and host communities in selected counties in Eastern and Central Equatoria has improved through increased food security as a result of more sustainable management and governance of natural resources, through alternative income opportunities, and through non-violent conflict resolution and GBV prevention
Target groups	<p>General target group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vulnerable returnee and host families <p>Specific target groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Innovative advanced farmers - Vulnerable farming households benefitting from increased food security through increased and diversified production and improved natural resource management practices. - Vulnerable households (with a focus on women and youth) benefitting from alternative income generating activities - Community structures (Peace Committees, GBV Committees, Environment Committees, green patrols) benefitting from improved NR management and governance. - Local authorities and community leaders benefitting from understanding and practising sustainable NRG, peaceful conflict resolution skills and measures for prevention of violence against women and girls. - Women and girls (as well as male community members) benefitting from prevention of GBV measures. - Safe houses and one-stop centers benefitting from input and support
Estimated outcomes	<p>Outcome 1: Through improved agricultural and NRM practices, communities (with focus on returnees and host communities) are able to meet their immediate needs, increase food production and sustain long-term food security.</p> <p>Outcome 2: With the support of loans and VSLAs, communities adopt sustainable and profitable income-generating activities.</p>

	Outcome 3: Local authorities, leaders and communities improve GBV and conflict prevention measures and apply non-violent conflict resolution practices in regard to NRM
Implementers	Caritas Switzerland (CACH) Organic Farming Advisory Organisation (OFAO) Caritas Torit, Catholic Diocese of Torit Justice and Peace Commission Torit, Catholic Diocese of Torit (JPC-CDoT) Caritas Yei & Justice and Peace Commission, Catholic Diocese of Yei

Introduction

Food, water, construction material and firewood: the local population of Yei River County in Central Equatoria State and Magwi and Torit Counties in Eastern Equatoria State strongly relies on the locally available natural resources for food supply and livelihood. Especially Yei River County and Magwi County are considered high-return areas of returnees, and since the livelihoods of most returnees also directly depend on the use of natural resources, the pressure on soil, vegetation, water sources, and biodiversity will increase significantly in the future, continuously increasing the potential for conflict with the host populations. Sustainable management of the natural resources is of central importance for food-insecure, vulnerable smallholder families as well as for farmers interested in strengthening the productivity, sustainability and resilience of their land use, both among returnees and host communities. To break the current cycle of advancing natural resources degradation which contributes to a further deterioration of *local land use systems, water supply and livelihoods*, an integrated concept is required that addresses the underlying root causes of the problems. This Triple Nexus project promotes sustainable agricultural land use concepts to address immediate food security needs and to secure long-term agricultural productivity as well as the diversification of income strategies for both, host community members and returnees. Since access to and management of natural resources in the face of scarcity and increasing population due to returnees has an enormous potential for conflict, a central component of this project is also the communication of non-violent concepts for conflict resolution. As women and girls in particular are disadvantaged in their economic development and often experience sexualised gender-specific violence, women, girls and men are supported to develop concepts that contribute to a peaceful and non-violent life in the communities.

By linking humanitarian, development and conflict resolution activities, this Triple Nexus project addresses immediate needs and supports the sustainable livelihoods, resilience and peaceful coexistence of returnees and members of the host communities in targeted locations in Central and Eastern Equatoria states of South Sudan. By emphasizing the interlinkages between the (humanitarian, development and peace) actors, the project requires actors to invest resources in their specialized areas of intervention while working in a synergistic way towards achieving collective outcomes over multiple years. The strategy is in line with the UNHCR “Pockets of Hope” initiative which aims to promote the sustainable (re)integration of those affected by forced displacement by addressing the obstacles to integration and social cohesion and to enhance protection for all¹.

¹ Humanitarian Response Plan 2023, Refugee Response Plan, 64/65

South Sudan Context Analysis

South Sudan continues to face major challenges in its journey to democracy. At present, the country is experiencing high levels of social, political and economic instability due to continued violent conflict at the macro- and micro-levels of society, high levels of inflation and rising prices as well as unpredictable extreme weather causing droughts and flooding.² This has led to “a **deterioration in the humanitarian context**”³ and the continued movement and displacement of people. Additionally, overuse and misuse of natural resources compounded by increased flooding and droughts have also contributed to severe food insecurity across the country. The World Bank Group (WB) estimates that in 2023, 9.4 million (76%) of South Sudan's population will be in need of humanitarian assistance, an increase of approx. 500'000 people compared to 2022.⁴ The United Nation's (UN) Secretary General report from June 2022 stated that “The security context in South Sudan continued to be defined by tensions and violence driven by clashes between government forces, opposition-aligned forces and other non-signatory armed groups, competition over land and other resources, as well as grazing rights, and economic and climate-related livelihood pressures.”⁵ In terms of development, the Human Development Index from 2020 ranks South Sudan 185 out of 189.⁶

The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification analysis from October 2022 states that “expected 7.76 Mio. people (62.7% of the population) across South Sudan will face crisis (IPC Phase 3) or acute food insecurity”⁷. In addition, “climatic shocks, including floods and droughts, conflict, economic downturn, displacement, and disrupted livelihoods are driving the worsening trend.”⁸ Two-thirds of South Sudan's population are affected by the precarious food security situation, making the country one of the worst food insecurity emergencies in the world with an estimated 8 million people or 64% of the population expected to experience food insecurity in 2023⁹.

Climate change is already exacerbating negative impacts on ecosystems, vulnerable communities, and the natural resource base upon which most of the population in South Sudan depends for livelihoods and food security. As a result of rising temperatures and a shift in rainfall patterns towards more concentrated precipitation events since the mid-1980s, an increase in intensity and frequency of floods and droughts have been observed in South Sudan¹⁰. These changes are adversely affecting agricultural productivity through declines in yields, generating increasing levels of poverty, food insecurity and famine. This has forced local communities into unsustainable land-use practices such as intensified and expanded cultivation in forests, wetlands, and grassland ecosystems. To account for declining yields, communities become engaged in perpetuating cycles of unregulated agricultural expansion for crop production and grazing of livestock, as well as unsustainable land use practices such as deforestation for charcoal production, firewood, and construction of shelters. This intensifies ecosystem degradation which, in turn, contributes to decreasing agricultural yields and augmenting negative impacts on

² Humanitarian Response Plan, South Sudan, Humanitarian Programme Cycle (OCHA on behalf of the Humanitarian Country Team and partners, March 2022), 9

³ Humanitarian Response Plan 2023, 9

⁴ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/southsudan/overview>, accessed 1 April 2023.

⁵ ‘Situation in South Sudan: Report of the Secretary-General’ (United Nations Security Council, 9 June 2022), 3.

⁶ UNDP, ed., *The next Frontier: Human Development and the Anthropocene*, Human Development Report 2020 (New York, NY: United Nations Development Programme, 2020).

⁷ Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, November 2022

⁸ Situation in South Sudan: Report of the Secretary-General, 5.

⁹ Humanitarian Response Plan, 9

¹⁰ USAID, 2016: Climate change risk profile: South Sudan.

<https://www.climatelinks.org/sites/default/files/asset/document/2016%20CRM%20Fact%20Sheet-%20Sudan.pdf>

ecosystem service provisioning with each round of the cycle. Under future climate change conditions, these impacts are expected to become increasingly severe¹¹.

This combination of conflict, economic crisis, climate extremes, the degradation of land and overuse of natural resources, and **inadequate access to food** has eroded the ability of the population to cope with everyday life. Despite the signing of the peace agreement in September 2018, peace remains elusive and the government's ability to ensure basic infrastructure and deliver services is non-existent in most rural areas. Given that a very high percentage of the population depends on agricultural and pastoralist activities for their livelihoods, the drastic reduction of food production and the disruption of the local markets has exponentially increased the **vulnerability** of a large portion of the populations.

Current figures from OCHA show that there are still more than 2.3 million South Sudanese refugees living in neighbouring countries. Another 2.2 million are internally displaced persons across the country. With a total population of about 12 million, an estimated 36% of South Sudan's population is thus directly affected by **displacement**, mainly triggered by the civil war and the critical food situation. While the UNHCR non-return advisory remains in place¹², and despite flooding, inter-communal violence, and economic instability, there are clear signs that refugees and IDPs are seeking solutions for a return despite limited support or assistance. Since the Revitalized Peace Agreement (R-ARCSS) in 2018, over 627,000 South Sudanese refugees have returned home to build their country and create peaceful communities until December 2022¹³. Returns have concentrated in areas with a low risk of conflict, relative economic stability, food security, and some access to basic services.

While it is difficult to assess the exact extent of **gender-based violence** (GBV) in South Sudan, UNICEF in 2019 estimated that "65 percent of women and girls have experienced physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime. Some 33 percent of women have experienced sexual violence from a non-partner, primarily during attacks or raids. The majority of girls and women experience sexual violence for the first time under the age of 18."¹⁴ Additionally, it is estimated that the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) on women and girls led to an increase in GBV and early childhood marriages in part due to the closure of schools and the economic crisis.

The Project

Since South Sudan's independence in 2011, humanitarian aid has focused primarily on delivering food aid and non-food items. However, this continually *treats short-term symptoms* without *addressing the root causes* of food insecurity. This project seeks to break the cycle of persistent food insecurity of vulnerable communities through an approach that works on short, medium and long-term activities using a humanitarian-development-peace Nexus (HDP or Triple Nexus) approach.¹⁵ It is distinguished from the "resilience" models that have sought to graduate households from assistance to independent livelihoods in the sense that, rather than exclusively using the humanitarian entry point of individual vulnerability typically used in resilience programming, it also applies the development entry point.

With the chosen activities the project seeks to reduce aid dependency and promote community self-sufficiency while at the same time addressing humanitarian needs. Immediate food security needs shall be addressed, and the livelihoods and peaceful coexistence of returnees and members of the host

¹¹ WFP, 2023 in GCF documentation: Enhanced resilience to floods and droughts in the Kinneti basin, South Sudan, through climate-resilient Integrated Land and Water Resources Management (ILWRM)

¹² UNHCR Position on Returns to South Sudan – Update III: October 2021

¹³ South Sudan, Pockets of Hope – UNHCR document

¹⁴ 'Gender-Based Violence: December 2019', South Sudan Country Office (Unicef, December 2019), 1.

¹⁵ OECD/DAC, 'DAC Recommendation on Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus', OECD/LEGAL/5019 (The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2020), 3, <https://legalinstruments.oecd.org/public/doc/643/643.en.pdf>.

communities supported by driving systematic change in an integrated way to improve natural resource management and farming practices; to increase income-generating activities; and to support the prevention of GBV and non-violent resolution of conflicts. To do this, the project will not only work with vulnerable farming communities, but also with farmers and groups who are interested in and see the advantage of restoring the land and other natural resources; business groups who are able to take initiative (and manage risk) to build their businesses; and leaders and groups who see the advantages of creating a more peaceful society where gender-based violence is prevented (especially for returnees), where conflicts are managed without violence and where the more vulnerable members of society are supported. In addition to the traditional humanitarian assistance provided directly, the project will seek to work with models that promote initiatives and sustainable commitment on the side of the beneficiaries, such as for example revolving funds for small-scale businesses or collective initiatives. In order to address humanitarian needs, a “crisis modifier” project component will be included. This component will provide the flexibility and capacity to react to unpredicted crisis situations and will allow to safeguard the resilience outcomes of the project while at the same time enabling a timely response to immediate emergency needs.

Elements from previous projects such as seed fairs, business start-ups, support of VSLAs, focus on improving NRM to ensure short and long-term food security, the direct involvement of the local authorities to improve NRG, etc. will be combined with new innovative activities such as:

- the crisis modifier approach to ensure the capability of the project to react to emerging humanitarian issues.
- the integration of sustainable NRM practices into the agricultural training of vulnerable farmers in order to not only address short-term food insecurity but also to enhance longer-term resilience (as very few other humanitarian actors in South Sudan focus on securing and maintaining long-term agricultural viability)
- the introduction of improved cooking stoves to contribute to a reduction of the currently high demand for firewood and thus reduce the pressure on remaining forest resources.
- the development of community based environmental action plans and the introduction of green patrols to contribute to long-term food security through securing the ecosystem carrying capacities.
- shift from direct unconditional distributions to the provision of revolving funds for business start-ups and VSLA support to increase local ownership.

The project will be implemented over a 27-month period and will be led by CACH in close partnership with Caritas Torit (CT), the Justice and Peace Commission (JPC-Torit) of the Catholic Diocese of Torit, the Caritas Catholic Diocese of Yei (CCDY) including the Justice and Peace Commissions (JPC-Yei) of Yei, and Organic Farming Advisory Organisation (OFAO).

Together, CACH and partners cover a broad range of technical expertise, experiences and networks. These include project implementation through and partnerships with government line ministries, local leaders, communities, churches and women or other civil society groups. Through long-term investment in both EES and CES which have led to established strong and trustful relationships with authorities at the state, county, payam and boma levels, the project is expected to achieve a high-level buy-in of all stakeholders, contributing to its sustainability.

The Project Problem

CACH is an active member of the State Task Force in EES on Durable Solutions, which is led by the State RRC and is particularly dedicated to the reintegration of returnees. During the Task Force meetings, government representatives regularly complain about the exclusive short-term humanitarian response

in high-return areas such as Magwi County and the lack of a combination of addressing immediate humanitarian needs and long-term development strategy that engages communities. Communities in both target areas CES and EES face similar challenges that, even before independence in 2011, have traditionally been treated primarily through the delivery of short-term emergency relief. A new approach is needed to break the cycle of humanitarian aid in the context of frequent violent conflict, declining agricultural production and lack of livelihood opportunities. Community-based support is important to enhance the coping capacities of the population in areas of high return, to build resilience and to promote sustainable solutions to displacement¹⁶.

Between November 2021 and March 2022, CACH conducted a “In-depths needs assessment of South Sudanese refugees in Uganda and returnees and host communities in South Sudan” in the two refugee settlements Adjumani and Palabek in Uganda and the returnee areas of Ikwoto, Magwi and Torit County in South Sudan.¹⁷ The aim of the assessment was to understand the perception of the situation in South Sudan by South Sudanese refugees prior to their planned return and the needs and opportunities of returnees and host communities in South Sudan itself.

Further, within the framework of the cross-border Triple Nexus Project "Building Peace through Access to and Management of Natural Resources in West Nile and Central Equatoria State" (PAMANA) implemented by CACH and partners in South Sudan and Uganda¹⁸, a baseline study was conducted in July 2022 with the objective to provide contextual information about the livelihoods and food security of host and refugee communities, IDPs and returnee communities in South Sudan's Central Equatoria State (CES) and Uganda's West Nile, including information about the pressure on natural resources (NR) and conflicts around access to and management of NR. The baseline provided a gender analysis in the context of persistent conflict and insecurity and investigated the situation of women and girls in refugee settlements in Uganda and the return areas in CES.

Mainly due to the deteriorating living conditions for the South Sudanese refugees in the refugee settlements in Uganda, but also due to the slightly improving security situation in EES and CES, more and more refugees decide to spontaneously return to South Sudan, although, in October 2021, the UNHCR issued no-return advisory to any location in South Sudan because the conditions were evaluated to be not conducive for return and reintegration. However, more than 80% of the respondents in the refugee settlements stated that they wish to **return to their places of origin**.

The primary needs of the communities are threefold: They need (1) improved and sustainably managed natural resources to meet their immediate and future food needs; (2) access to livelihood opportunities and markets to generate income to move beyond a day-to-day existence; and (3) more peaceful and secure foundations - particularly also for women and girls - so that they can easefully engage in activity 1 and 2.

The needs assessment conducted by CACH suggests that three of the four “Key Fears” of the host communities will be addressed with the project. These fears are related to a) the depletion of communally shared resources; b) varying land-use strategies, such as cattle herding versus crop farming; and c) Returning youth without livelihoods.¹⁹ In both EES and CES, conflicts related to the access to and control over NR are some of the most prominent factors negatively impacting people's ability to meet their immediate needs and pursue sustainable livelihood opportunities. This is especially the case for women and other vulnerable groups amongst the host, returnee and IDP communities. While there are traditional dispute mechanisms in place, these are primarily at the

¹⁶ Humanitarian Response Plan, Refugee Response Plan, 65

¹⁷ The assessment was financed by SDC as part of project 190052.

¹⁸ The project is financed by ADA (Austrian Development Agency).

¹⁹ The fourth fears mentioned was conflict over occupied property.

community level and less so to resolve conflicts between communities. Therefore, including the government officials and getting their buy-in, engagement and input in decisions is crucial for: a) supporting their work in sustainable Natural Resource Governance (NRG), policy development, knowledge, and skills in areas of conflict resolution and gender and b) contributing to the long-term sustainability of the project's impact.

South Sudan ranks among the five countries in the world that are most vulnerable to the effects of climate change.²⁰ **Climate change** is often mentioned as the main cause of prolonged droughts, increased flooding, low levels of land productivity leading to food insecurity in CES and EES states. However, an assessment conducted by an external consultant in early 2022 for the project "Restoration of Livelihoods for rural and semi-urban Communities in Eastern Equatoria State/ South Sudan" showed that current unsustainable NRM practices play a major role in the deterioration of local resources. For instance, the burning of organic material and soil erosion contribute to the decrease of the soils' water infiltration and storage capacity and increased surface water run-off and erosion rates during precipitation rich periods. This in turn leads to decreasing water availability during dry seasons. These all contribute to increased flood risks during the rainy seasons and prolonged and intensifying aridity during dry spells. Hence, the topics of (i) rising surface water run-off rates/ flood risks during the rainy season and (ii) decreasing water availability/ increased water scarcity during dry periods are closely interrelated.

Rural families in CES and EES are mostly engaged in **subsistence farming** and agro pastoralism. They enhance their food supply through hunting and gathering activities in nearby forests and wetlands. Fire is frequently used to clear land for the creation/extension of agricultural, horticultural and grazing lands, for charcoal production and hunting purposes. The immediate negative effects of frequent fires include a decrease of biodiversity, nutrient loss and the reduction of soil humus content. As mentioned above, such practices destroy and degrade the land and its original vegetative cover. Most of the agricultural land in these states can be described as having been degraded by poor land use practices. The urgently needed sustainable increase in agricultural productivity can only be achieved through climate-resilient agricultural techniques, improved land and water resources governance and management, and awareness among national and local bodies for harmful environmental practices. Together, such interventions will reduce the need for communities to expand agricultural areas into wetlands, grasslands, and forests to improve yields, consequently enhancing food and livelihood security, specifically in the high-return areas in the country.

Magwi County in EES and Yei River County in CES are both regarded by UNHCR as high return areas which will probably continue to witness spontaneous returns in the coming months or years. Spontaneous returns to these areas are accelerated by reduced services in the refugee camps (push factor) and/or improving perspectives in South Sudan (pull factors). Such big-scale return movements with vulnerable families will require a coordinated humanitarian response. Following consultations with humanitarian actors on the ground (i.e. RRC and UNHCR in Torit and Yei, Care International and GIZ in Torit and Magwi, Finn Church Aid and Voice Change in Yei), CACH and its partners decided to implement the project in eight (8) bomas of the two payams Imurok Payam (Torit County) and Magwi Central Payam (Magwi County) in Eastern Equatoria State, and additionally in eight (8) bomas of Yei Town Payam (4 bomas) and Otogo Payam (4 bomas) in Yei River County of Central Equatoria State.²¹ Certain activities of the project will also be conducted in Torit town (Torit County), such as the support to the Safe House and support to existing micro-businesses from the previous projects, depending on the needs.

²⁰ Humanitarian Response Plan 2023, 9

²¹ States are divided into counties which are further divided into payams (or sub-counties). Payams are made up of several bomas which are made up of a number of villages.

According to the RRC in Yei, both Yei Central Payam and Otego Payam were very badly affected by the conflict that broke out in 2016. With the security situation now slightly improving, many returnees are returning to both payams²². While some humanitarian actors are present in the sub-urban/urban Yei Central Payam, humanitarian needs remain high and mostly unmet. Otego Payam is so far completely underserved with no humanitarian actor being active on the ground. This has been confirmed by the Food Security Cluster in Yei, whose lead is held by the consortium partner OFAO.

RRC in Magwi county as well as UNHCR in Torit confirmed the high needs of Magwi Central Payam in agricultural production, income generating activities and peaceful conflict resolution. Also, Imurok Payam in Torit County is so far completely underserved, according to information from RRC in Yei (April 2023). Project Outcomes: Humanitarian, Development and Peace

The project's overall objective is to improve the livelihoods and resilience of returnees and host communities in selected counties in Eastern and Central Equatoria through increased food security as a result of improved agricultural production and more sustainable management and governance of natural resources, through alternative income opportunities, and through non-violent conflict resolution and GBV prevention. With the Triple Nexus approach, the various components will complement and support one another as much as possible: Outcome 1 (Humanitarian) will on the one hand support the most vulnerable in responding to their basic needs so that eventually they can also engage in more long-term activities contributing to a higher income (outcome 2). On the other hand, specific activities of outcome 1 (such as the introduction of cooking stoves or the protection of natural resources) will mitigate negative coping mechanisms (such as overexploitation of NR, unsustainable land use) and thus contribute to long-term food security and thus eventually also create higher income opportunities. By encouraging non-agricultural income opportunities under outcome 2 (Development), the high dependency on agricultural activities can be reduced and the direct link between income and climate change disrupted, thereby contributing in the mid- and long-term to increased food security. Further, the VSLAs of outcome 2 as well as the other committees of the project (GBV Prevention Committees and Environment Committees) can serve as a platform for sensitising and learning on other topics of the various project outputs (for example peaceful resolution of conflicts) and can be an important element to foster social cohesion and increase trust within the communities, thereby contributing to outcome 3. The component of outcome 1 to improve NRM within the communities and the objective of outcome 2 of creating more income opportunities will contribute to less conflictual communities (outcome 3), while in the opposite direction the aim of outcome 3 to create community cohesion and resolve conflicts peacefully is a pre-condition for enhancing short and long-term food security and enabling the population to meet their basic needs (outcome 1) as well as laying the conditions for creating new income opportunities (outcome 2). Also, stable HHs with healthy women (outcome 3) are more capable of creating income (outcome 2) and contributing to the food security of the whole family (outcome 1). On the other hand, women and girls from HHs which are food-secure (outcome 1) and have secured income (outcome 2) are less exposed to GBV (outcome 3). Within outcome 3, the two focus areas of GBV and peace are also interrelated, since GBV-prevention and sensitisation contributes to social cohesion and peace, while social cohesion contributes to GBV prevention. Hence, all three outcomes and the activities within the outcomes are interconnected: each outcome is important for the other two outcomes to lead to successful results.

The three components (outcomes) are described more in detail below. Throughout the project cycle and in community meetings, the project teams will continuously look for opportunities to link and support each other as well as the various project components to ensure complementarity. The type and extent of the intervention and community engagement may vary depending on need. For example, in one community there may be a stronger need for community cohesion, hence this might be a

²² RRC Yei reported 72'398 returnees to Yei Central payam and 6'583 to Otego payam between 2018 and March 31st, 2023

community with focus on the conflict resolution component. In another community there might be a stronger focus on reforestation than in other locations due to the local agricultural practices. And in a different community there could be a greater need for prevention of GBV.

The importance that the project teams and representatives of all implementing organizations need to be convinced about the content of the trainings and act as role models by applying the methods themselves was stressed by the Triple Nexus consultant who consulted CACH on the PAMANA Triple Nexus Project (financed by ADA). Workshops and meetings with and for the partner organizations are therefore planned during the inception period.

Outcome 1 (Humanitarian)

Through improved agricultural and NRM practices, communities (with focus on returnees and host communities) are able to meet their immediate needs, increase food production and sustain long-term food security

Outcome 1 will contribute to the following goals of the SDGs: Goal 1 (No poverty), Goal 2 (Zero hunger), Goal 10 (Reduced inequalities), Goal 13 (Climate action), and Goal 15 (Life on land).

This outcome will focus on increasing food security for the target population in areas of high refugee returns through the restorative and sustainable management of natural resources beyond only agricultural farming practices. It will contribute to strengthening the coping strategies of HHs and breaking the cycle of food insecurity caused by climate and environmental shifts by helping the population to manage their natural resources and the environment in an ecologically sound and climate-sensitive manner to sustain long-term food security. The sensitization of local authorities on NRM and NRG was strongly advised by a consultant who visited the previous SDC-financed project, reason for which this component is included in the project under Output 1.2.

Due to the importance to properly address food insecurity and degrading NR practises at different levels, the project intends to work with an integrated three-level approach including (i) individual families, (ii) communities and (iii) representatives from public administration and traditional chiefdom structures.

This outcome will be implemented by CACH in EES and OFAO in CES²³ and will be achieved through three specific outputs and related activities:

- **Output 1.1 Farming households benefit from increased food security and resilience through training in agro-ecology, improved storage and pest management and ecological NRM practices.**

The objective of this project component is to support vulnerable rural families in increasing their agricultural production and empowering farming communities to sustainably manage their natural resources for enhanced food production at short-/mid- and long-term. A careful management of the natural resources is of central importance for food-insecure, vulnerable smallholder families, both among the returnees as among the host families. This output's main activities will consist of training and learning on improved farming techniques and ecologically sound land management practices.

The first entry point for this component will be small-scale subsistence farmers who are already practicing sustainable NRM or who are open to changing their practices and supporting the improvement of their lands and the environment (so-called "**advanced farmers**"). **Demonstration plots** for agro-ecological cultivation methods will be established on the land of the advanced farmers

²³ In CES, the activity related to the improved cooking stoves (ICS) will be implemented by Caritas Yei and not by OFAO.

to ensure that someone takes ownership and is responsible for sustainability of the plot. It was one of the lessons learned from the previous SDC-funded project that farmer field schools (working on communal fields) lacked ownership and therefore many members lost interest in the agricultural training.²⁴ The new approach with demonstration plots set-up on land cultivated by advanced farmers will ensure plot ownership, contributing to a long-term commitment to maintain the plots which is needed to demonstrate the potential of agroecological farming methods.

Opportunities will be created for the advanced farmers to exchange with one another and to discuss and share new techniques and approaches to NRM and improved practices for the cultivation of land. There will also be opportunities created in conjunction with Outcome 2 for advanced farmers to exchange and sell seeds and seedlings at the seed fairs. In response to one of the biggest needs of the farmers which is access to seeds (information from UNHCR YEI June 2023), the project will also establish **seed production plots** in 10 bomas (4 in Yei county and 6 in Magwi/Torit counties) where the advanced farmers will be trained in seed production, seed storage and potential marketing to achieve a seed sovereignty and decrease the community's dependence on externally provided seeds. These plots will be on communal land which will be provided for the project by the communities, in consultation with the local boma authorities.

The second entry point for this output will be directly through **most vulnerable farmers** whose understanding of and sensitization for NRM will be promoted through workshops and sharing of the agro-ecological farming efforts of the advanced farmers. Based on the best practices learnt in the **seed fairs** which were applied in the previous SDC-funded project and which were highly appreciated by both the "buying" and "selling" farmers, the vulnerable farmers will receive vouchers for seeds and tools to start their agricultural production.²⁵ The main lessons learned concerning this generally very successful activity are the importance of a) an early implementation several weeks before the planting season, b) wide and clear information of all beneficiaries to ensure their timely access to the fairs and c) the distance to the seed fair locations should be as short as possible for the households in the catchment area. Besides providing a market and extra income for the seed farmers, seed fairs also create opportunities for the purchasing farmers to select seeds of their choice and quality. Further, local seeds sourced locally have a high acceptance, are highly viable and generally have a high germination rate. While a diversification with shallow, middle-rooted and deep-rooted plant species is generally the advised approach, in the context of vulnerable families severely affected by food insecurity, the first step will be to focus on promoting the cultivation of nutritious and robust/resistant annual and semi-perennial species such as millet, cow pea, pigeon pea, cassava, sweet potato and local papaya.

Through regular **practical trainings** on the demonstration plots of the advanced farmers, knowledge will be transferred to the vulnerable farmers to apply improved agricultural techniques and understand the importance of diversified agricultural production as an important prerequisite for their food security. The trainings and sensitization sessions in agro-ecological practices will include methods such as intercropping, erosion control, the importance of deep-rooted plants and trees, mulching, water and soil conservation. One lesson learnt from the previous project was the need to closely follow the farmers to ensure that the techniques learnt are applied in their own fields. Therefore, **agricultural extension workers** from the county will regularly visit the vulnerable farmers and provide feedback on the extent to which the training content is being implemented. Further, the existing training material

²⁴ Apart from ensuring that somebody has the clear responsibility and ownership over the plot, other lessons learnt from the previous SDC-funded project were not to have a too high number of demonstration plots/gardens and not to have too large size plots.

²⁵ 77% of participants in the seed fairs of the previous SDC-funded project reported to be very satisfied or satisfied with the seed fair. 93% of the vendors said that selling seeds had a positive impact on the economic situation of their household.

will be revised during the inception period and adapted to the local context.²⁶ The county extension workers (10 in EES and 6 in CES, depending on the size of boma and number of beneficiaries) will be seconded from the County Department of Agriculture. They have a background in agriculture, will be trained by CACH and the partner OFAO and will be equipped with the newly revised training material for training the vulnerable farmers.

A lesson learnt from the previous SDC-funded project was that trainings on **integrated pest management** and the production of bio pesticides as well as trainings on preventive measures to foster the resistance of cultivated crops are an important way to reduce harvest loss. In addition to trainings on natural pest management, the project will therefore also invest in improved seed storage with the construction of **seed drying cribs**, made out of local materials, near each of the seed production plots. All 10 seed production plots will receive one seed drying crib (6 in EES and 4 in CES). Using seeds from their own stores means that a) farmers can sow seed varieties whose quality and management requirements they know well; b) can access seed without having to lay out cash (in contrast to spending for seed purchased from agro-dealers and local markets); and c) the stored seed is always available on time and nearby. The baseline study of the previous project also showed that about 30% of the harvest is lost due to poor crop storage. This strongly implies that improved storage plays an extremely important role in alleviating food insecurity alongside the production aspect. Because of this, vulnerable farmers will be supported in **improving their granaries** as per need.

CACH will also engage with individual farmers and advanced farmers on **training on NRM practices** through trainings in improved agricultural cultivation methods, land management and land restoration activities. This will include the promotion of (fruit) tree planting for erosion prevention, wind breaks for gardens/ fields etc. as well as supporting existing tree nurseries or, where required, establishing new tree nurseries with the local ministries of agriculture and farmers. Training materials developed will focus on the practical steps needed to improve the environment in the short and long-term which will in turn increase crop yields and food security.

In line with the plan of the South Sudan government to plant 100 million trees in South Sudan, existing **tree nurseries** will be identified and possibilities for their support explored. In case of need, new tree nurseries can be established with motivated advanced farmers.²⁷ The farmers overseeing the nurseries will be trained in sapling management and reproduction, so in the long-term trees are produced locally as opposed to being purchased in Uganda or Kenya. Tree planting and tree management training as well as follow-up workshops will be held for those planting and growing the trees as well as with the wider community. In order to avoid duplications and ensure a coordinated approach, CACH will conduct regular exchange meetings with FAO and other actors on the ground when planning the support to the government initiative of planting 100 million trees. New tree nurseries or tree farms will only be established where there is need and where there are no nurseries already existing in the community.

The project will also explore the potential of introducing small, mobile, energy-efficient **improved cooking stoves (ICS)** on household level to reduce the required amount of firewood and thus ease the pressure on the forest resources. Such stoves have a high potential to contribute to a reduction of the currently high demand for firewood, however it will be necessary to evaluate carefully previous experiences in the project region and to select the most suitable model. For this, practical tests with different models will be carried out with selected beneficiaries. Once agreed on a model, boma-based trainings on how to build the fuel-efficient stoves with locally available material will be provided to in. Key messages will be communicated to the beneficiaries regarding the utilization and benefits of the

²⁶ This was one of the lessons learned from the FSL activities in the previous SDC-funded project.

²⁷ There are already two tree nurseries in Yei town and Otego. In Yei, UNHCR is looking for a partner to establish a new tree nursery. This will be looked into for the project.

fuel-efficient stoves. It is intended that some of the women will be involved as "field promoters" and will contribute to the active dissemination of the selected improved cookstoves. With these improved cooking stoves, the need for firewood will be significantly reduced, thereby contributing to an ecologically sounder cooking approach as well as to a time reduction for the collection of firewood. The latter is a task done usually by women and children. The time reduction on firewood collection will free up time for women to engage more in agricultural activities and thereby contribute more to food security and quality nutrition.

- **Output 1.2 Community representatives, traditional leaders and authorities are trained and sensitized in NRM and support measures for improved NRG**

It is planned to actively engage the communities in the reflection about natural resource development trends and their impact on water supply, food production and disaster risks. Based on identified areas of priority concern, pro-active and committed communities will be supported in the planning and implementation of community based environmental restoration activities. At project start, **community-based Environment Committees** will be established to conduct environmental community assessments for determining the ecological status of the community and identifying existing degradation risks. Based on the results, the committees will be supported in developing a **community action plan** and will receive a grant to implement degradation risk mitigation activities in their communities which have been set out in their action plan. The committees will be responsible for the implementation of their action plans.

Further, persons with good leadership skills will be selected by the community as **green patrols** with the task to sensitize community members on ecological matters.²⁸ These community members will be trained on agroecology, NRM, existing policies and regulations, and conflict prevention and resolution. The objective is for these green patrols to monitor the implementation of the community action plans and be able to 1) advise community members on ecological NRM practices; 2) discuss violations of sound NRM practices with the community leadership. Additional tasks from the community action plan might be assigned to them. The green patrols will also be the link between the respective communities and the state line ministry, respectively the forest protection guards of the government. By creating the linkage between the project's green patrols and the local authorities respectively the County Department of Forestry/Environment (as identified for output 1.2), governmental support of the green patrols and the realization of the community action plans as part of community development initiatives will be encouraged. At the same time, local authorities shall be strengthened in their understanding of ecological concerns in the communities so that a direct coupling effect is created through confidence-building measures, contributing to Outcome 3 (Peace).

The efforts of individual families and communities interested to improve NRM are (in-)directly threatened by widespread unsustainable land use practices from other farmers and the high incidence of uncontrolled fires respectively by ongoing deforestation. In order to increase the chances for successful land restoration, it is essential that **public administration and local authorities** play an active role to **promote ecologically sound land use practices** and curb forest fires and the ongoing destruction of remaining forest resources. Therefore, local government and traditional leaders will be involved in this output through awareness raising of national and local policies and practices that are in place that support sustainable NRM. The inclusion of the local authorities in the NRM/NRG activities is even more important as the local policy and implementation of policies for NRM and NRG are the responsibility of the local authorities. CACH and OFAO will organise workshops for government representatives and community leaders to review the existing policies and regulations in place and

²⁸ For Torit/Magwi, 8 green patrols will be identified. As this is considered a test/pilot component, it remains to be decided whether there will be one green patrol in each of the 8 bomas, or 2 green patrols in only 4 bomas in EES.

discuss what is working and what is not working. Communal dialogues shall help to review existing land use practices and their impact on the natural resources. Awareness raising sessions and/or radio talk shows shall ensure that there is a wider discussion on specific land management practices with focus on soil and water resource conservation, improved forest protection, and application of suitable cropping systems for sustainable rural development. A session will also be conducted to address issues such as tree cutting and/or burning. Here also, training material will be revised during the inception period and adapted to the context.

Government leaders will be encouraged to develop **NRG action plans** mid-way through the project that focus on implementing the learnings from the thematic trainings. OFAO and CACH will regularly monitor and report on the implementation of these plans as well as provide coaching to the concerned authorities. Both CACH and OFAO have already gained experience from the “Cross Border Triple Nexus PAMANA Project” in Central Equatoria State in regard to the direct involvement of the local authorities to improve NRG and intend to build on this knowledge. The planned activities of this project will strongly contribute to increased capacity building of the local authorities in NRG.

- **Output 1.3 Immediate lifesaving needs of crisis-affected most vulnerable households are met by use of crisis modifier resources (through in-kind or multipurpose unconditional cash transfers)**

Given the context of South Sudan where there is often rapid onset of crisis leading to unexpected emergencies, planning anticipated response action is essential. Crisis modifier funds are designed to enable early action and rapid response to new humanitarian needs that might manifest themselves in the project areas where a project delivery approach is more of resilience building other than emergency response or humanitarian. Crisis modifiers offer a practical means to avert or reduce the impact of a crisis on beneficiaries and protect resilience trajectories. In consultation with SDC, CACH and partners will trigger the use of the crisis modifier response fund when emergency occurs in the project area. In essence it's an earmarked budget line specifically meant to be triggered once disaster or crisis occurs (such as sudden displacement, influx of returnees, sudden onset of drought, floods etc) in the area. The amount per HH and month will be determined with data from the Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMIMI) which is collected and published monthly by the South Sudan cash working group.

This crisis modifier resource will be needed to respond to upcoming needs, as for example in Magwi where there has been a request for food distributions for the returnees and for addressing the water crisis in the area and other humanitarian needs. In Yei, currently there is an influx of returnees from both Uganda and Congo who are in need of assistance. In the partner meetings organized by OCHA, partners were encouraged to develop an emergency response plan for the returnees and IDPs.

Outcome 2 (Development)

With the support of loans and VSLAs, communities adopt sustainable and profitable income-generating activities

Outcome 2 directly links to SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth) and SDG 10 (Reduced inequalities). This outcome focuses on the lasting empowerment of local farmers and small business holders (individuals or groups) through 'productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment'.

The intention of this outcome is to diversify the income opportunities for community members, especially women, and create alternative means of income. In order to encourage ownership and commitment on side of the beneficiaries and to move away from a “hand-out mentality” and

relationship of dependency between NGO and beneficiary, the inputs will be offered as start-up loans instead of grants, either in form of financial loans, equipment or for vocational training. The loans may be for individuals or also for collective/groups. Links may be made with beneficiaries from Outcome 1 and as well as with business opportunities from the tree nurseries in Outcome 1. This activity builds on the knowledge gained from the successful business start-up model of previous SDC and GIZ-funded projects and is now being adapted based on the experience gained.

This outcome will be implemented by Caritas Torit in EES and Caritas Yei in CES. External consultants will be hired for the professional business trainings. For the monitoring of the businesses and VSLAs, both Caritas Yei and Caritas Torit will work with community-based extension workers or parish volunteers. CACH will have a VSLA/income advisor for the first year of the project to support both partners in establishment of the businesses/VSLAs and provide coaching during the initial phase component. The outcome will be achieved through two specific outputs:

- **Output 2.1 Farmers, youth and women are trained and supported to strengthen and create micro-businesses**

Selected vulnerable HHs, groups and associations will have the opportunity to improve their livelihoods through conditional **revolving loans** for small **business start-ups** or top-off loans in the case of existing businesses. They will have to elaborate their business ideas and apply for the support from the project to start their business or to enrol in a vocational training class in Torit or Yei town. Instead of two payments of 400 USD, the selected business start-ups will receive a one-off amount of 400 USD, which, according to the evaluation of previous CACH projects, is sufficient to successfully establish a business on a sustainable basis. In order to increase local ownership and move away from a broad free distribution of inputs, the activity involves the payment of a revolving fund instead of a grant, i.e. 50% of the amount received must be repaid by the business start-up within 12 months of receiving the payment (around 16,6 USD per month). The project budget is therefore reflecting only 50% of the amounts to be paid to the business start-ups and VSLAs respectively. If the recipients are not able to pay back the loan, the project team will analyse the situation and work out a proposal together with the recipient. The repaid funds will be used for activities yet to be planned to further support the economic empowerment of the communities in the project region. Selected small businesses will also benefit from trainings which will focus on business management, budgeting, pricing and selling. There will also be trainings on conflict resolution with a focus on business issues as well as the business challenges in the wider context (link to Outcome 3). While the majority of businesses are focused on agriculture, there will be a prioritisation of viable ideas that focus on alternative income-generating activities.²⁹ In EES, there will be radio talk shows on themes related to savings and investment in order to sensitize the population about these issues.

The evaluation of the micro-businesses of the previous SDC-funded project showed that this project component was very much appreciated by the beneficiaries. Creating business opportunities for communities gives them the chance to participate in economic activities which will enhance their self-reliance by increasing HH income and thereby removing the constant threat of food and nutrition insecurity. Potential options for small-scale businesses include mill grinding, poultry production, seed and seedling sales, post-production storage space, apiculture, soap production, oil seed processing, small scale product transport networks, to name a few. It is interesting to note that in the previous project, several businesses consisted of partnerships of 3-4 owners who put their shares together in order to be able to buy larger, more expensive machines.

²⁹ Businesses that received support in the previous projects in Torit County might continue to receive training and support, in case the assessment conducted during the baseline identifies a need.

The establishment of collectively managed **tree seedling businesses** is also an option. The project foresees to promote the establishment of four tree seedling businesses as a source of income for community members in Yei County. Each tree seedling business group (with around 10 members per group) will receive 750 tree seedlings of different varieties, thus the number of tree seedlings in total will reach around 3'000. However, where tree nurseries already exist, the project will choose to support them and not establish new ones. The level of support to existing nurseries will be elaborated during the baseline study but will in any case be needs-based and might be through hardware/software and training and not necessarily through the provision of seedlings. In a current CACH project co-funded by GIZ, CACH gained good experience with the involvement of the beneficiaries in establishing such community-based businesses as income strategies. CACH will however make sure to only support new tree seedling businesses where there is no duplication with other actors.

Given the high prevalence of illiteracy within the rural population, the approach of skills transfer needs to be done on a very hands-on level with tight supervision at all stages of the production, mentoring and practical on-the-job-learning, leading the beneficiaries towards commercial production and produce marketing. In case beneficiaries choose to invest in vocational training, CACH has identified **vocational training** institutes in both Yei and Torit. In Yei, there are two functional training centres (South Sudan development Organization and the Immanuel Christian Vocational College) which offer trainings in tailoring, hair dressing, catering, construction/masonry, carpentry, driving, mechanics, plumbing and electrical installation. In Torit, the Torit Vocational Institute offers training in mechanics, electrical wiring, solar repair, plumbing, tailoring, carpentry / joinery, building and construction, basic computer application, hair dressing, bakery and hospitality, and welding and fabrication.

- **Output 2.2 Women groups and farmer groups benefit from VSLAs to overcome financial barriers.**

This project component consists of the establishment of new **Village Savings and Loan Associations** (VSLAs) so that beneficiaries are able to become independent of CACH support. VSLAs with women and farmer groups respectively can bring a modest structure of cash availability in a rural environment where any kind of banking system is non-existent. CACH has already gained experience with VSLAs in the previous SDC-funded project where the VSLAs did extraordinarily well, with most of them now already being in the third savings' round. With the approach building on a direct individual benefit, the motivation of the participants is high, and the groups are well-versed in the management procedures. In contrast to the previous SDC project, instead of direct monetary contributions, the VSLAs of this project will be offered **revolving loans** for being able to invest in production and/or equipment agreed by the groups, an approach which was recommended and welcomed by local and state authorities. Subsequently, the VSLAs will also receive training in business development and management. Both partners who will be implementing this component (Caritas Torit and Caritas Yei) have experience in working with VSLAs in previous projects with positive results.

This component of the project will enhance the integration of women into more profitable value chains. Women are often constrained within production and processing areas of a value chain because they lack access to information, capital, technical skills and the confidence needed to engage in more complex activities such as bulk marketing or higher value-adding activities. By forming common interest groups for income generating activities or VSLAs, woman can pool their resources, share experiences and provide support to one another allowing them better access to higher-value markets. Through improved production and marketing efficiency in vegetable gardens and various income generating projects, they can increase their economic participation and contribute to the HH income.

The VSLAs will also be used as a platform for sensitising and learning on other topics including NRM (Outcome 1), GBV and peaceful resolution of conflicts (Outcome 3). Additionally, when appropriate, members of VSLAs will participate in the activities under Outcome 3.

Outcome 3 (Peace/community cohesion)

Local authorities, leaders and communities improve GBV and conflict prevention measures and apply non-violent conflict resolution practices in regard to NRM

This outcome directly links to SDG 5 (Gender equality) and 16 which focuses on the promotion of “peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development,” and ending all forms of violence.³⁰ Overall, this outcome should unite community members to productively and positively contribute to their communities and beyond, with the ability to address conflicts without violence. The GBV related output of the outcome (output 3.1) is based on key recommendations (i.e. capacity building & training and support of safe houses, One-Stop-Centers and women/girl friendly spaces) of the “Joint Gender Protection Needs assessment and Gaps Analysis and Recommendations in selected villages of Bor, Juba and Magwi” report. This UNMISS supported assessment was conducted by three women-led organisations³¹ and the draft report published on February 15th, 2023. Both, GBV and conflict resolution in relation to NRM activities will be flanked by regular radio broadcasts in local languages to engage with the population through radio talk shows and to provide education and sensitization through frequently broadcasted jingles.

This outcome will be implemented by the Justice and Peace Commission Yei in CES and the Justice and Peace Commission Torit in EES and will be achieved through the following two specific outputs:

- **Output 3.1: Communities, local leaders and authorities are sensitized and trained in GBV prevention and existing structures are supported**

The entry point of this output will be sensitisation campaigns and awareness raising addressing gender-based violence (GBV) on community level, including the local authorities. These campaigns will be conducted by trained Justice & Peace Commission members consisting of parish-based volunteers (Caritas Yei) or internal staff (Caritas Torit). The focus will be on assessing the GBV needs in the communities and the formation of community based GBV Prevention Committees. By identifying adequate **GBV prevention measures and response mechanisms** to fight against the perpetuating violence on family and community level, the GBV Prevention Committees will develop **GBV action plans** and receive grants to put the action plans into practice, in coordination with other actors on the ground. Hereby, women and community members will be supported in developing advocacy strategies to mitigate GBV and will participate in resolving GBV-related conflicts in the communities. In addition, women efforts to become economically empowered and women participation in leadership roles (link to Outcome 2) will be given attention.

Engaging Men and Boys (EMB) will also be part of activities for addressing GBV prevention and will be included in the the design of the community-based action plan which will be formed/strengthened after the consultation meetings in the targeted payams and bomas. EMB will be key in the community-based GBV committees for disseminating GBV-prevention messages and conducting GBV-prevention

³⁰ <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal16>, accessed 1 August 2022.

³¹ Federation of Women Lawyers South Sudan, The Female Journalist Network and South Sudan Women in Governance Organisation (SWIGO)

actions within the communities. The partners will work with already existing GBV committees, if available, and only create new GBV committees in case of need.

Both implementing partners (Justice & Peace Torit and Justice & Peace Yei) have experience in conducting such activities:

EMB experience of Justice & Peace Torit:

- Targeting of male youth for awareness sessions on positive masculinity, peace building and human rights in Kapoeta South, Torit, Magwi and Nimule
- Women groups targeting male politicians in forums to end negative gender norms and practices including girl child marriages, forced marriages and girl child compensation in Kapoeta South, Torit, Magwi and Nimule
- Targeting men and women in outreach mentorship activities in leadership, peace building and trauma healing for women in villages

EMB experience of Caritas Catholic Diocese of Yei (CCDY):

CCDY has so far not implemented an independent activity for EMB in GBV prevention but has already recruited a GBV specialist for the project who was a former staff of Voice the Change, an organization which was a GBV cluster lead in Yei and implemented a full GBV program. With this person, CCDY has the experience to include also EMB activities in schools and communities. Further, CCDY participates in the GBV cluster meetings where lessons learnt are shared and best practices discussed.

In coordination with the State Ministries of Gender, Child, and Welfare and other GBV actors in the project areas (i.e. Care International In Torit and Magwi and UNHCR and Voice Change³² in Yei), the project also seeks to support two women centers in Torit and Magwi, a safe house in Torit, and the One-stop Centre in Yei (managed by Yei Civil Hospital Administration) and the One-stop Centre in Torit (managed by Torit hospital), all protective locations for GBV victims. The support to these centers and the provision of training for the respective decision makers was one of the key recommendations in the discussions with other actors. Through in-kind support to the centers (food, hygiene material, clothing, agricultural inputs), existing gaps will be addressed so that the centers can improve their service capacities for the GBV victims. GBV-affected girls and women can also be supported directly with in-kind support or with vocational trainings and/or business start-up loans (linkage to Outcome 2) or by linking them to legal advisory services or other GBV actors who work in the target locations. The type of assistance will be determined based on gaps identified in discussions with other actors, relevant authorities and the concerned women.

In Torit, the safe house is managed by CARE International (with SDC funds). Both CARE and the Director General of the State Ministry of Gender, Welfare and Child Care stated the high needs cannot be covered and requested CACH for support. CACH is already in contact with CARE and will make sure that there is coordination with them particularly concerning the support to the women- and girl-friendly spaces (WGFSs) as well as the community engagement activities which SDC is supporting. During the inception phase, CACH will discuss more in detail with CARE the areas of gaps or challenges in relation to the work at the shelter and WGFS to avoid duplication. Based on these discussions, CACH and its partners will define in the logframe what specific activities will be undertaken (for example

³² Voice Change is the GBV Cluster lead organisation in Yei

livelihood support, legal support services if the local partners have some expertise in legal support, or local policy influencing work to improve access to justice for survivors).³³

The CACH project team also learned that UNMISS in Yei is currently constructing a new One-stop Centre in Yei Civil Hospital and expressed their need for partners to support the newly constructed safe house. The CACH partner Caritas Catholic Diocese of Yei (CCDY) is already in contact with UNHCR to discuss ways in which the project could provide support to this centre. CCDY is also in contact with other actors such as Women for Women and CIGPJ (Centre for Inclusive Governance, Peace & Justice)³⁴ to assess what they are doing in terms of GBV and to get a better grasp of the GBV landscape in CES. Both Women for Women and CIGPJ are partners of the GBV sub-cluster in Yei and have been participating actively in the monthly GBV cluster meetings together with CCDY.

- **Output 3.2: Communities and local leaders are sensitised and trained in community cohesion and peaceful conflict resolution, especially in regard to NRM.**

Community trainings and workshops on community cohesion and peaceful conflict resolution methods will be on two levels. The first level will focus on general training and skills-building including how to address conflict issues in peaceful ways and how to mitigate and manage conflict peacefully. There will be a focus on nonviolent communication and action and community cohesion. In the initial project stage with the communities and **local Peace Committees**, potential conflict issues will be discussed, and focus areas pinpointed with a prioritisation on NRM issues. The members of the Peace Committees will be trained in conflict prevention and mediation skills to provide early warning conflict response in the communities. During the consultation meetings in the inception phase, the partners will assess whether there are already functional Peace Committees and if yes, will build on them for the project. New Peace Committees will only be formed if none exist in the area. GBV discussions and trainings will also be included in the discussions of the Peace Committees – in addition to peacebuilding and conflict-resolution – as they are interlinked to social cohesion.

The second phase will consist of community discussions on actual thematic issues of conflict (including GBV) and how those might be addressed in a non-violent way. Community dialogues will focus on challenges and issues raised by the communities themselves and how they might be resolved. Peace Committee members will conduct needs based inter/intra-communal/clan/resource-based conflict resolution dialogues/peace meetings to reduce conflict (EES only). Whenever possible, success stories will be brought in as well as diverse members of society including women, girls, advanced farmers, local and traditional leaders, youth and people with disabilities. This will provide the opportunity for discussions with a wide range of viewpoints and experiences.

Local government and traditional leaders will be involved in this output through awareness raising and practices that are in place that support peaceful resolution of conflict. Trainings will be held with leaders for raising awareness on what is in place, what is working and what is not working. They will then be involved in workshops on addressing conflicts without violence in their communities, between individuals and intra-community conflict or insecurity.

³³ According to SDC, there is also a One-stop Centre in Torit which only has one legal advisor which is not sufficient to ensure proper follow-ups. CACH will discuss this with CARE during the inception phase. The proposed activities will be submitted to SDC after the inception phase.

³⁴ According to CCDY, Women for Women does not do direct GBV programming however they do indirect GBV activities through women economic empowerment (cash support to women and men-engagement groups to avoid domestic violence as a result of the financial support to women). CIGPJ mostly provides legal guidance for the survivors of conflict-related SGBV.

Outcome/Output		Individuals/ Households (HH) 50-60% women	Devison CES and EES	Comments beneficiary identification
1.1	Farming HHs benefit from increased food security and resilience through training in agro-ecology, improved storage and pest management and ecological NRM practices	1'030	518 in Magwi & Torit (500 vulnerable and 18 advanced farmers) 512 in Yei (500 vulnerable and 12 advanced farmers)	Farmers will be identified by Mid-September 2023
1.2	Community representatives, traditional leaders and authorities are trained and sensitized in NRM and support measures for improved NRG	80	40 in Magwi & Torit 40 in Yei	
1.3	Immediate Lifesaving needs of crisis affected most vulnerable HH are met by use of crisis modifier resources (through in-kind or multipurpose unconditional cash transfers)	Approx. 1'100 HH	Final number and location depending on the need	Identification when a crisis respond is agreed on
2.1	Farmers, youth and women are trained and supported to strengthen and create micro-businesses	480 benefit from training of which 140 will be supported with loans and 40 in tree seedling businesses	240 in Magwi & Torit (80 loans) 240 in Yei (200 beneficiaries benefitting from training plus 40 tree seedling group members; 60 loans)	Identification after the baseline
2.2	Women groups and farmer groups benefit from VSLAs to overcome financial barriers	360	200 in Magwi & Torit (8 groups) 160 in Yei (8 groups)	Principle of free entry and free exit
3.1	Communities, local leaders and authorities are sensitized and trained in GBV prevention and existing structures are supported	680 Plus, people reached through the support of safehouses and one-stop centres	Trained 320 in Magwi & Torit and 360 in Yei Sensitization of all beneficiaries of output 1.1, 1.2, 2.1 and 2.2 (1'950)	Committees might already exist; if not, the formation is planned for Nov 2023
3.2	Communities and local leaders are sensitised and trained in community cohesion and peaceful conflict resolution, especially in regard to NRM	420	Trained 320 in Magwi & Torit and 100 in Yei Sensitization of all beneficiaries of output 1.1, 1.2, 2.1 and 2.2 (1'950)	Committees might already exist; if not, the formation is planned for early 2024
Total	NB: some beneficiaries might be reached by more than one activity which is intentional for triple nexus projects. Therefore, not all were counted for the totals	Approx. 1'950 individuals/ HH Ca. 1'100 HH benefitting from crisis modifier	998 in Magwi & Torit 952 in Yei Ca. 1'100 HH benefitting from crisis modifier in any project location Indirect beneficiaries: ca. 18'000	Potentially every community member of the targeted bomas is reached through the NRM and NRG restoration activities and community outreach under several components