

Evaluation of UK Government Support to the implementation of Action Plan for Peace of South Sudan Council of Churches

Terms of Reference

1. Programme background

1.1 Context

The civil war in South Sudan has resulted in extreme humanitarian suffering, profound economic and political turmoil, and widespread violence as the social fabric of the country has been torn apart. Seven years on from the outbreak of conflict in December 2013, the context remains fragile, as the implementation of the RARCSS is delayed and the revitalised transitional government is still yet to fully form at the state and county level, training and commissioning of unified forces as well as drafting of permanent constitution yet to be completed. It is important to continue to situate the R-ARCSS in the context of the need for long-term transformation beyond any one agreement – a multi-level and long-term approach will be critical for achieving sustainable peace. Intercommunal conflict cannot be viewed in isolation to national conflict dynamics, and support for local peacebuilding and national level reconciliation must go hand in hand.

The church has been consistently identified as one of the few (possibly only) South Sudanese institutions with the ability and credibility to address the root causes of conflict in a multi-level approach to peace. Church leaders still retain influence over political and military leaders, shored up by the support of the global church (including the Pope and the Archbishop of Canterbury), and the church continues to be called upon to build trust between the parties and provide moral guidance through amplifying the voices of grassroots communities to build political will for peace (which will also contribute to helping to lessen the risk of the agreement collapsing). This has proven pivotal at certain moments over the past few years, when the actions of the Church have proven catalytic at critical junctures (e.g. IGAD convened talks in Addis in April 2018 and May 2019). The church reaches across the nation through deep local networks and has played an important role in local peacebuilding for decades, while striving to ensure that local voices and concerns are reflected in the national level process.

1.2 Action Plan for Peace

The Action Plan for Peace (APP) is a church-led multi-year strategy for peace and reconciliation, comprehensively addressing the root causes and long-term effects of conflict. The outbreak of violent conflict in South Sudan on 15th December 2013 prompted the church to raise its voice within 48 hours in demand for peace and reconciliation. In June 2015 - during a spiritual retreat in Kigali, Rwanda - church leaders developed a vision and a call to clearly contribute to solving the conflict in South Sudan. The Kigali Statement of Intent provides the framework of engagement for the church for resolving the conflict, building peace, and reconciling the people of South Sudan. Building on grassroots engagement and decades of church experience, the APP was formally launched in August 2015 with the aim of ending violence and promoting peace in South Sudan, hence. The APP recognizes the need for a long-term peace process to resolve not only the current conflict but also the unresolved effects of previous conflicts, the APP process is envisaged to continue for ten or twenty years from periods of conflict through recovery to development.

The APP identifies three areas of action that directly contribute to and complement implementation of the peace agreement and community peace processes. These have been formulated and implemented through three programmatic pillars and one organizational development pillar as described below:

- *Advocacy*: For the End and the meaningful Resolution of conflicts in the short term and in the long term, peaceful and harmonious co-existence among the people of South Sudan. Advocacy provides a means to influence opinions and policies towards peacefully resolving conflict, changing the narrative from one of conflict to one of peace.
- *Neutral Forum*: Offer stakeholders an opportunity and guarantee in the presence of church leaders, of a free environment which is less politically charged, to talk and dialogue freely amongst themselves without mistrust and fear. Neutral Forums provide a safe space for stakeholders to discuss root causes of conflict and envision a peaceful future through dialogue.
- *Reconciliation*: Spearhead Reconciliation and forgiveness amongst the people of South Sudan. Reconciliation to restore and heal relationships within the nation; only through forgiveness and reconciliation can we live as one nation.
- *Institutional capacity strengthening*: In addition to the three strategic pillars, the institutional capacity strengthening was added as a horizontal pillar whose value is linked to enhancing technical capacity strengthening for all three APP pillars as well as the overall institutional capacity of SSCC to build a credible legacy that will continue to serve longer term purposes in the rehabilitation, recovery and development while changing implantation strategy to keep context relevance.

Support for the APP is a multi-donor and multi-partner effort, and in that regard is also unique. This multi-donor approach has important advantages, including increased coordination, sharing of tools and analysis, and lessening both the likelihood of duplication and the risk of undermining the integrity of the APP with individual donor driven agendas. Donors fund the SSCC through Core Group partners (NCA, FCA, PAX, CA, CTP), who coordinate and ensure financial accountability. However, donor funding remains modest as part of a deliberate policy to not overwhelm the SSCC and to focus on a sustainable long-term approach. During 2020, Norway and the EU plan to renew their funding, the Dutch will finish their inception period, the US continues to assess its contribution based on the anticipated launch of its major peacebuilding and governance funding (up to \$75 million dollars over 3-5 years, from which some support for the churches is expected), and the Swiss continue to support the APP in the form of accompaniment and technical support – all alongside the SSCC's own funding to 20% of the APP budget.

2. Organizational background

Christian Aid South Sudan (CASS) Christian Aid has been operating in Sudan and South Sudan since the 1970s, working closely with local partners and in collaboration with the ACT Alliance. Christian Aid exists in South Sudan to bring lasting change for all people of South Sudan, so they can live in peaceful coexistence, with dignity and security, taking a full part in the society and economy; irrespective of their identity. Globally, Christian Aid is a registered charity that works in 40 countries across the globe, primarily working with and through local civil society organizations,

including NGOs, faith-based organizations and social movements. We work globally for profound change that eradicates the causes of poverty, striving to achieve equality, dignity and freedom for all, regardless of faith or nationality. Our aim, as outlined in Christian Aid's global strategic plan, Partnership for Change, is to expose the scandal of poverty, to help in practical ways to root it out and to challenge and change the systems that favor the rich and powerful over the poor and marginalized.

Christian Aid has received a significant funding from the UK government to support critical aspects of the APP, mainly advocacy and monitoring and evaluation. The UK support since 2017 has made an extremely valuable contribution towards enabling the APP to increase its geographic reach and grassroots engagement, improve Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) and technical skills, and significantly strengthen its national and international advocacy, and (with the UK playing a key enabling role) support the SSCC's increasingly prominent role in high-level reconciliation.

Furthermore, this role has enabled the UK to sensitively support the church (regarded as complementary to the political process) with technical and diplomatic responsiveness e.g. during the Vatican retreat. More specifically, in 2019/20 UK support strengthened the church's local capacity to address conflict by: forming and activating ICCs (Inter-Church Committees) in key areas; enabling the SSCC devise a core methodology; providing local churches with opportunities for key skills and capacity strengthening, developing their own actions plans for local peacebuilding, and initiating their implementation; helping to reach communities in conflict prone and remote areas through innovative technological approaches. At the national advocacy level, UK support enabled senior church leaders to continue to play a critical high-level role, such as: convening the Presidency designate in order to build trust and reaffirming their moral duty for peace with Pope Francis, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the former Moderator of the Church of Scotland; responding to requests to mediate and build trust; accompanying the high-level political process with spiritual and moral guidance; and engaging in solidarity visits to support the mediation of local church leaders in key conflict hotspots.

3. Purpose

This evaluation aims to assess the impact and analyze the effectiveness UK support to the implementation of the Action Plan for Peace (APP) in South Sudan. The purpose is to understand the extent to which the UK funding contribution to the APP has made towards peace and recovery in South Sudan, and learn lessons that can shape a wider knowledge for better peace interventions in South Sudan.

Christian Aid is committed to gathering evidence of project impact and documenting lessons and best practice to inform immediate and future programming in South Sudan.

4. Objectives

Specific objectives of the evaluation are:

- To assess the impact of UK supported components of APP on the lives of people affected by conflict in South Sudan.
- To assess the extent to which the overall goal, objectives and specific results of Christian Aid support for the APP are still valid or relevant in addressing the drivers of conflict at local, sub-national and national levels in South Sudan.

- To identify and document the lessons learned and best practices of the APP programme to support broader organisational learning and future programming improvement.

With a focus on the UK supported components, the consultant will assess the impact of the APP against the programme's objectives and theories of change and analyse the sustainability of results. The consultant will also analyze the factors and constraints that influenced programme implementation, including technical, managerial, organisational, institutional, and policy issues, in addition to other external factors unforeseen during design. This will involve assessment of the partnership approach and provide lessons learned in relation to sustainability of results. The consultant is expected to capture and document lessons and best practices identified during the implementation of the APP more broadly to support organisational learning and future APP. Lessons that can benefit future programming, taking into consideration community/partner and government perceptions of the programme; how to better integrate women, youth and how the programme can have a greater level of impact.

5. Focus

While the evaluation will focus on the UK supported components of the APP, mainly through support for core technical capacities and functions, expanding the reach of APP and strengthening SSCC's advocacy and high-level reconciliation and trust building engagement, lessons shall be gathered on the wider scope of APP.

6. Key Evaluation Questions

With a focus on UK supported components of APP, the evaluation will answer the following key evaluation questions:

- To what extent were the results (impacts, outcomes and outputs) of UK supported components of APP achieved?
- How relevant was the APP programme relevant to the identified needs?
- How appropriate does the overall project design, resourcing and management facilitate the achievement of the APP objectives in addressing the drivers of conflict in South Sudan?
- To what extent are the programme results likely to be sustained in the long-term?
- What key lessons can be learned from the implementation of APP as a church-based intervention in a long-term conflict setting?

7. Timeframe

The evaluation is expected to be completed within 2 weeks, starting early December 2020.

8. Qualifications of the Consultant

- Master degree in relevant field of evaluation and conflict
- At least 5 years' experience of leading evaluations and in designing and administering evaluations
- Demonstrable practical experience in monitoring and evaluation approaches including understanding of qualitative, quantitative and participatory approaches
- Practical knowledge of the OECD DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance;
- Experience managing or evaluating projects in complex and dangerous environments;
- Knowledge of Action Plan for Peace (APP) programme for South Sudan and working knowledge of South Sudan is desirable;

9. Application procedure

Application should include technical and financial proposals that demonstrate the capacity and experience of the consultant in addressing the requirements of this ToR, and the CVs, and sent to email: jubarecruitment@christian-aid.org

The deadline for submission is 5th December 2020. Your e-mail must have the subject heading indicating “APP Project Evaluation”

Note: Please note that only selected evaluator(s) will be contacted about the outcome of their applications.

10. Institutional arrangements

The consultant will report directly with the Programme Manager – From Violence to Peace, Head of Programme, South Sudan Advisor based in London. He/She will receive relevant background documents necessary for the assignment including reports