Date: 17 April 2020

TO: The United Nations Secretary-General’s Peacebuilding Fund

THROUGH: Benjamin Moore, South Sudan Peacebuilding Fund Coordinator

 and the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO)

FROM: United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations (FAO)

SUBJECT: Reassessment to PBF Project “*Enhancing Women’s Access to Land to Consolidate Peace*” - UNJP.SSD.014.PF

In April 2020 the recipient organisations (UN-Habitat and FAO) convened a number of meetings to assess the impact of the current world wide pandemic of the Corona Virus Infectious Disease (COVID-19) on the project “*Enhancing Women’s Access to Land to Consolidate Peace in South Sudan*”, to review its work plan, and re-evaluate the feasibility of planned activities.

On 13 March 2020, the Government of South Sudan (GoSS) introduced its first restrictions to avoid the spread of (COVID-19) in South Sudan. The restrictions started with a screening of arriving passengers into South Sudan and were progressively expanded, resulting in the closing of Juba International Airport, land borders, and the suspension of domestic flights. In addition, the GoSS restricted working hours of public institutions and prohibited meetings and gatherings, including training activities and workshops.

In light of this new situation, the lead agencies were briefed by the South Sudan Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) Coordinator on the guidance issued by the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) on the possibilities to request for ano-cost extension (NCE) of the project, re-purpose funds designated to outstanding activities, suspend certain activities altogether, or consider a combination thereof.

**Summary**

The impact Covid-19 has in general resulted in the downscaling and/or postponement of activities that involve travel or meetings of beneficiaries, government officials, or other stakeholders. The new situation has furthermore delayed the reconstitution of the government at national and at state levels. At the national level, the Transitional National Legislative Assembly has not yet been (re-)constituted, resulting in a delay of the adoption of the Land Policy. At the state level, key officials, including the Wau state governor, government, and the state Minister of Physical Infrastructure, have not been assigned, resulting in further delay to re-engage authorities to obtain political will and support for the project. As a result, delivery of targets of outstanding activities will in general not be achieved within the next 3 months (April-June). The reassessment of outcomes is further outlined below and a review of activities is detailed in the attached work plan. The adaptions aim at maintaining the objectives and relevance of the project in the new context.

**Reassessment of Outcomes**

**Outcome 1 – Enhance Women’s capacity to secure their land rights**

**Achievements:** Increasing awareness among communities and leaders on women’s rights to land and gender responsive land dispute resolution has progressed reaching approximately 1500 people.

**Adjustments:** Activities under this outcome have been scaled down. The outbreak of COVID-19 has led to re-adjustment of awareness campaigns to radio talk shows and spot messaging on radios. Likewise, five Information centres have been set up within existing institutions and seven mobile centres established which are to be scaled down to 3 mobile centres.

The awareness campaigns can be integrated with COVID-19 messaging to increase impact on awareness to the pandemic. At the information centres, the information shared on women’s rights to land can incorporate messaging on the pandemic. Likewise, handwashing and use of sanitizers can be installed at the institutions housing the information centres as well as form part of the activities at the mobile centres.

**Outcome 2 - Improved Land Management and Administrative Systems**

**Achievements:** Enhancing skills and understanding on gender sensitive land management, land administration and land dispute resolution has been achieved through capacity needs assessment and development of curricula.

**Adjustments:** Programming for the trainings on land dispute resolution and land management has been scaled down and preparatory activities, i.e. preparation of training manuals, identification of participants and venue of training, budgeting ongoing during the lockdown and the actual training to take place afterwards. Terms of reference for a Technical Committee on Land Governance are in the process of being finalized and partners are in the process of identifying beneficiaries to land allocation. Implementation of community-based mapping and documentation of tenure rights through the Social Tenure Domain Model (STDM) is also proceeding with preparatory activities i.e. preparation of training manuals and questionnaires. Other than being a key activity in the project, the implementation of STDM will be instrumental in responses during the post COVID-19 phase and future interventions as it will avail crucial information that will be used in the COVID-19 and post-conflict recovery phase

**Outcome 3 - Policy Makers provide effective and strategic support for gender-responsive land policies**

**Achievements:** Support to policy makers to ensure they provide effective and gender responsive policies is a crucial outcome for the project as South Sudan undertakes steps in delivering its first Land Policy which will impact land governance and tenure security. Since the inception of the project, extensive support has been provided through various workshops and write-ups with more awareness campaigns and workshops for different groups of stakeholders planned.

**Adjustments:** Delays in the finalization of the policy process due to formation of a new government and the impact of COVID-19 have resulted in awareness campaigns, workshops and conferences not proceeding as scheduled and will thus be postponed. Nevertheless, some preparatory activities will continue, specifically in preparation of the implementation of the Land Policy, including preparing outreach and awareness materials. The delays to the adoption of the Land Policy, as well as COVID-19 restrictions, further offer an opportunity to shift the focus of Outcome 3 to more analytical activities, to ensure continued policy support to national level actors, including the Undersecretary in the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development and the Chair of the Parliamentary Land Committee. Partners are in the process of developing a strategy to determine how best to ensure continued policy support and what exact changes to Outcome 3 of the project would be required. To that extent, partners will provide the PBSO with a detailed analysis and request for realignment of funds and resources, as soon as the strategy is finalised