

SEARCH FOR COMMON GROUND

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Juba, 31 March 2020

To: Benjamin Moore
Focal Point- The United Nations Peacebuilding Fund
South Sudan

Subject: Information about Search for Common Ground's COVID-19 response

Dear Benjamin Moore,

The worldwide spread of the novel coronavirus COVID-19 has had a global impact that will continue to play out in the coming weeks. Search for Common Ground is aware of the possibility of this pandemic impacting aspects of our programs. Prior to our meeting later this week, I am writing today to officially inform you about steps that we are taking to minimize the negative effect of the pandemic on our programs in South Sudan, and specifically on the implementation of "Strengthening Young Women's Participation in Local and National Peace Processes in South Sudan", funded by the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund.

How Search for Common Ground is affected to date

In the three countries of implementation:

As of today, no cases of Covid-19 have been officially reported in South Sudan. Yet, as you are aware the South Sudanese government has taken strong preventive measures to prevent the spread of the pandemic. These include the suspension of sociocultural events and gatherings, school and university closure, interruption of commercial flights, and restrictions of movement.

The consequences to-date for our program are as follow:

- Staff and partners operate with a reduced mobility.
- Our training and community activities are affected.
- Radio programming and profiles of inspiring young women peace leaders continue.

How we anticipate this will impact our project

Implementation of activities: We are currently anticipating medium disruptions on our ability to deliver. Our analysis and path of action is as follows:

- Goal, Objectives, and Approach: We don't anticipate needing to change our overall project design.
- Activities:
 - Training of young women in peacebuilding, and training of women mediators are postponed until the COVID-19 related measures are lifted.
 - Intergenerational forums and rural outreach activities will also only start when the measures are lifted.
 - Radio and social media activities will continue.
- Partnerships and Targets: We don't anticipate needing to change our partnerships and/or target beneficiaries.
- Implementation timeline: while this will create minor delays, so far we do not anticipate these will require a no cost extension.

Financial and programmatic consequences:

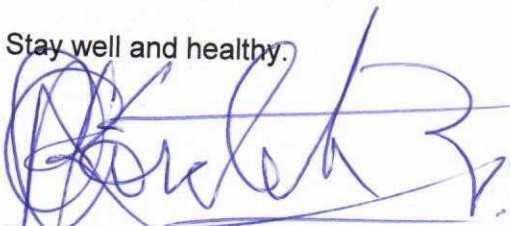
In spite of the situation, we do not anticipate that the achievement of the objectives of the project will be at risk. While we anticipate a small reduction in planned spending in the coming months, due to postponing of some activities, we are confident that this spending will pick-up once Covid-19 related measures are lifted. Yet, as the spending implications of the crisis become clearer, we may need to engage in a discussion about the project's timeline for Search to be able to finalize the project outputs.

How we can help address the pandemic

The South Sudan team has proactively engaged with the Ministry of Health to leverage the radio programming to relay key official communications and tips and prevent the spread of rumors, and to address how the Covid-19 crisis is perceived, and how some of the related measures translate in listeners' everyday life.

As the spread of the pandemic is evolving quickly, we will continue to update you on the impact of the virus on our context in South Sudan becomes clearer. We will be sure to provide updated communication as the situation unfolds. We thank you for your understanding, flexibility and collaboration. We stand ready to answer any question you may have with regards to the content of this letter.

Stay well and healthy.


Ken Ganna-Conteh
Country Manager, South Sudan
Search for Common Ground

