

**Concept Note for Commemoration of 16 Days of Activism against GBV campaign**

**Global Theme: "Orange the World: Fund, Respond, Prevent, Collect!"**

**South Sudan: Proposed theme “Keep the Promise: Invest, Prevent and Respond to GBV”**

**November – 10 December 2020**

## Background

Gender-based violence (GBV) is deeply entrenched in South Sudan, where women and girls continue to experience the high risk in both public and private spaces. Gender based-violence is not only manifested in the physical and sexual violence, but also through overall lack of equal opportunities for women and girls to lead a fulfilling life. High rate of illiteracy amongst girls and women, high rate of child marriage, high maternal mortality due to preventable causes, limited access to livelihood opportunities, are some of the indicators that highlight the dire need to address the gender inequality at the root causes to end gender based violence. According to the Gender Based Violence Information Management System (GBV IMS) annual report of 2019, 41% of the reported incidents were physical violence, 24% were emotional violence and 16% were sexual violence. Government data shows that about 40% of girls are married before age of 18. Clearly, there is a need for urgent and scaled up action against GBV in South Sudan.

GBV in particularly, sexual violence, is widespread and one of the largest crises emanating from the protracted conflict in South Sudan. The use of sexual violence and the brutalisation of women and girls have been well documented. Even in displacement settings, threats and risks of GBV against women and girls persist particularly sexual violence, growing levels of intimate partner violence (IPV), sexual exploitation, harassment and early and forced marriage*.* Anecdotally all forms of GBV such as rape, sexual harassment, physical violence, psychological violence, denial of resources, and others, remain prevalent. In most cases, some GBV survivors experience multiple forms of GBV.

### 2020 CONTEXT

Since the onset of COVID-19 pandemic, gender based violence, particularly domestic violence against women and girls, teen-age pregnancies and other violations of women’s rights have witnessed an upsurge in South Sudan and around the world. Civil society organizations and women’s rights groups and the frontline responders have all anecdotally highlighted the rising risk factors such as food insecurity, economic insecurity and unemployment, school closure related risks such as increased child marriages, high teenage pregnancies, sexual violence and harassment in public spaces. While South Sudan faces challenges with regards to credible evidence base and data to ascertain the scale of the issue, all stakeholders agree on the increased risk of gender based violence, including sexual exploitation and abuse, harassment, domestic violence, sexual violence, emotional violence and economic violence fueled through the food and income insecurity risks.

As the already fragile health system of South Sudan struggles to meet the overwhelming demand for COVID-19 response, there is a great risk of deprioritizing the needs related to addressing gender based violence and its devastating impact on the health and wellbeing on the women and girls and the whole community. Limited physical mobility, suspended transport, and closed or stretched capacity of specialist support services endangers a ‘shadow pandemic’ of gender based violence and devastating impact on the sexual and reproductive health rights of women and girls. Therefore, this year’s 16 Days’ Activism calls for all the stakeholders to continue prioritizing the collective actions for financing, prevention and response to GBV.

While adequate financing is required so that gender equality commitments made by world leaders translate into action, the global evidence suggests that the financing gaps for the national action plans are usually as high as 90%. In view of the COVID-19, this challenge is only likely to exacerbate. Building on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda[[1]](#footnote-1) of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa Action Agenda), 2015, this year’s 16 Days’ Activism is a Call for Attention to the State, development partners, UN and other multilateral actors as well as civil society to continue prioritizing addressing GBV in spirit, letter and corresponding financing.

## Rationale

The 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence is an international campaign originating from the first Women’s Global Leadership Institute sponsored by the Center for Women’s Global Leadership (CWGL) at Rutgers University in 1991. Participants chose the dates November 25, International Day against Violence against Women, and December 10, International Human Rights Day, in order to symbolically link violence against women and human rights and to emphasize that such violence is a human rights violation.

South Sudan started commemoration of 16 days of Activism against Gender Based Violence since 2007 and has continued since then. The commemoration is carried out in all the 10 States of the Republic of South Sudan. The Ministry of Gender Child and Social Welfare and partners organize activities to make people aware of the negative impact of violence on women and children, what the available services, legal are and policy framework and prevention of violence against women and girls.

Under the 2020 international theme: ***“Orange the World: Fund, Respond, prevent, collect!”*** South Sudan will commemorate the day with the theme **“Keep the Promise: Invest, Prevent and Respond to GBV”** This national theme recognizes the need to ensure sustained funding and concrete actions to prevent and respond to GBV in South Sudan.

The 16 days period offers an opportunity to raise awareness and scale up advocacy for effective initiatives to prevent and respond to GBV. The Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare will lead the Campaign with focus on the following;

* To create awareness on GBV prevention and available services for the response
* To advocate for enactment of Anti-GBV Bill
* To call on all the stakeholders to prioritize financing for GBV prevention and response programmes
* To empower vulnerable women and girls through GBV information and services
* To bolster the collective efforts by government, the UN, donors and traditional leaders in addressing GBV, including child marriage
* To engage the youth, i.e. adolescent girls and boys, various stakeholders and media at the national and state levels

## Proposed Activities

Considering the COVID-19 restrictions and to comply with government directives on physical distancing and suspension of public events, most of the activities will be done virtually and the few physical events will be conducted with minimum participants**.** All the physical events will be live-streamed to allow maximum attendance while adhering to guidelines.

In addition to limiting the participants of the face to face event, COVID19 compliance Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) such as use of thermos gun to measure temperature, jar and water for hand washing facilities, use of sanitizer, masks and spacing on the sitting arrangement will be employed.

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| **Date** | **Activity** | **Responsible institution** | **Budget estimate** |
| Tuesday 24th Nov | Joint Press releases by Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare and United Nations Agencies. | Ministry of Gender, UNCG, UNFPA and SRSG Office | 1000 USD (Refreshments, banners and transport reimbursement for journalist) |
| Wednesday 25th Nov | Highly level dialogue on ‘Addressing the shadow pandemic of Gender-based Violence in South Sudan: From commitment to action’ with key stakeholders (50 max)  (VP on Gender and Youth, Key Ministers, Heads agencies of UN, Donor representatives and CSO Representatives)  Palm Africa Hotel big conference hall  Time : 10:00 to 1:00 PM (3 hours event)  1:00 to 2:00 PM Lunch  Event will be streamed live for other participants and public | UN, GRSS, Donors and Civil Society | 10,000 USD (Venue hire, lunch and visibility materials, transport reimbursement for journalists, internet cost ) |
| Thursday 26 Nov |  |  |  |
| Friday 27 Nov | Film Festival (100 participants) and the rest to join virtually including from the states  An outdoor event, in a big tent and big screen to project the film  Time: 3:00 to 5:00 PM | UNFPA and partners, Ministry of Gender | 5,000 USD (Venue, Snacks, transport reimbursement and IEC materials) |
| Saturday 28 Nov |  |  |  |
| Sunday 29 Nov |  |  |  |
| Monday 30th Nov |  |  |  |
| Tuesday 1st Dec | (World AIDS Day) Media discussion on multiple exclusions suffered by HIV positive GBV survivors | AIDS-Commission, Line Ministries and UN-Agencies and CSO |  |
| Wednesday 2nd Dec |  |  |  |
| Thursday 3rd Dec | (Intl Day of Persons with Disabilities) Media discussion on GBV survivors who are PWDs and their right to services | MGCSW, ICRC, HI, Light for the World and others |  |
| Friday 4th Dec |  |  |  |
| Saturday 5th Dec | (International Volunteer Day) Forum on the role of health and social workers in providing survivor-centered services to GBV survivors | UNFPA, MOH, Midwives |  |
| Sunday 6th Dec |  |  |  |
| Monday 7th Dec |  |  |  |
| Tuesday 8th to Wednesday 9th Dec | National level dialogue with traditional leaders on child marriage to follow up and review the 2019 chiefs’ conference  30 participants inclusive of states representatives | Ministry of Gender, UNFPA and UNICEF | 15,000 USD, (Flights, DSA, Venue, meals, transport reimbursement and IEC materials) |
| Dec 10 | International Human Rights Day  Grand Finale of Girls’ Football tournament | SSHRC, MGCSW, UNDP, UCHAR and CSOs  Ministry of Gender, MY&S UNFPA, UNICEF | 5,000 USD (IEC materials ) |

# Communications Support/ UNCG:

* Media coverage for key events
* Press conference
* Media outreach (arrange interviews with print, radio, TV)
* Special advertorial in 2 newspapers
* IEC materials (flyers, posters, banners, ribbons, wrist bands, face mask with GBV message, Anti-GBV Bill summary booklet printing) for awareness-raising
* Human interest stories in of activists and survivor advocates and how organizations are supporting them.
* Sharing of existing short advocacy videos via digital media platforms
* Stimulate public conversations and educate the public through social media on what individuals and organizations can do to raise awareness of the increase in violence against women during the COVID-19 pandemic.
* Hold virtual seminars

# 5. Key Messages

1. Despite the recognition of the need, financing for GBV response and prevention remains under-funded. This must change if we wish to end GBV and fulfill SDGs
2. The persistent failure to prevent and punish violence against women and girls leads to the continued violation of their rights and stunts the contribution that women and girls can make to international development, peace and progress. Passing the anti-GBV Bill is one giant step towards changing the situation.
3. Addressing the structural barriers of discrimination, including challenging discriminatory laws, social norms and stigma that perpetuate inequality and disparities, should be an essential part of the work of government and partners in responding to the needs of GBV survivors.
4. Fear of stigmatization are the main barriers for women and girls to access GBV services.The shame and stigma surrounding sexual violence contributes to survivors not talking about violence when it happens.
5. We will strive to uphold the inherent dignity and human rights of GBV survivors, while working for their empowerment as active partners in our efforts to achieve universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights.

## Virtual Planning Meetings Schedule:

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| **MEETINGS** | **DATES** | **TIME** |
| 1st Meeting | Friday 23rd October 2020 | 2:00 to 3:00 PM |
| 2nd Meeting | Friday 6th November 2020 | 2:00 to 4:00 PM |
| 3rd Meeting | Friday 13th November | 2:00 to 4:00 PM |
| 4rd Meeting | Friday 20th November 2020 | 2:00 to 4:00 PM |

1. <http://www.undocs.org/A/RES/69/313>, last accessed on 20 October 2020 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)