Peace in South Sudan

Research Repository Guide

This Research Repository has been compiled by the CSRF to assist donors and aid workers in South Sudan to better understand the context in which they work. The repository is searchable by key words, and is also organised into eight categories to enable easier exploration of specific topics. The CSRF has conducted a meta-analysis for each of the eight categories, analysing a selection of relevant, key literature and extracting some of the most salient questions for donor-funded programming.

Understanding the Literature

The literature on peace in South Sudan tends to focus on internationally-brokered peace processes including the process leading to the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005, post-2005 peace building engagement, and the Resolution on the Conflict in South Sudan (ARCSS) in August 2015. The literature also explores opportunities and limitations of local level conflict mitigation and peace building mechanisms in which traditional authorities and church leaders often play a key role. The Wunlit peace process that led to a conference in 1999 is one

> **Go to the source**
> Bradbury, Mark et al. (2006). Local Peace Processes in Sudan: A Baseline Study.
> De Vries, Lotje & Schomerus, Mareike (2017). South Sudan's Civil War Will Not End with a Peace Deal.
> Rift Valley Institute (2016). Instruments in both peace and war: South Sudanese discuss civil society actors and their role.

of the most well-known local level peace processes. In practice, local conflict resolution, peace building and local justice are deeply intertwined and difficult to disentangle. The questions below were developed with the aim of exploring past and current peace building processes and activities and thereby providing a better understanding of the opportunities and limitations of local level and high level peace processes and peace building activities.

1. **What is the legacy of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA)?**
2. **Why has international peace mediation in South Sudan failed to end conflict?**
3. **Why did previous attempts at disarmament, demobilisation, and reintegration (DDR) fail?**
4. **What other conflict mitigation mechanisms exist in South Sudan, and what are their limitations?**

1. **What is the legacy of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA)?**

The most well-known and most important of South Sudan's formal peace agreements, the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) set the roadmap for South Sudan's secession from Sudan in 2011, and established the political institutions that South Sudan inherited at the time of independence. Its limitations in design, process, and implementation, remain relevant today, in both Sudan and South Sudan.

As a bilateral agreement between the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) and the National Congress Party (NCP), the CPA set the pattern for exclusive, non-representative, high-level political processes. Although providing a comprehensive reform agenda, it was largely seen in terms of its power

and wealth sharing protocols, which gave the vast majority of political representation in Southern Sudan to the SPLM, and excluded other political forces.

The CPA provided the template for security arrangements in Sudan and South Sudan – the one country, two armies model. In then-Southern Sudan, this required militias that had been fighting independent of the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), to formally align with one of the two legal armies. Most militias active in Southern Sudan chose to affiliate with the SPLA, and were formally integrated in the SPLA.

More recent peace negotiations have largely drawn on the same models, even though the context has evolved significantly.

2. Why has international peace mediation in South Sudan failed to end conflict?

Externally-led peace mediation brokered the Agreement on the Resolution on the Conflict in South Sudan (ARCSS) in August 2015. While ARCSS contributed to a short-term reduction in the level of violence, conflict has since resumed across large parts of South Sudan, including areas previously largely unaffected by violence, such as the Equatorias.

Different models of explanations for the limited success of the peace agreement exist. Theorists of the political marketplace argue "no peace agreement in Sudan or South Sudan has been implemented without an expanding budget," which implies that the collapse of the oil price and shrinking national budget undermine ARCSS (De Waal 2016). These theorists contrast with other voices suggesting that the parties lacked the political will or that the peace process or the agreement itself was flawed in how it shaped incentives. It is also clear that the actors to the conflict had concluded that military victory could yet be achieved, or that the costs in returning to conflict would be less than those of working for peace. It is apparent that the mistrust between political elites ensured that any agreement reached would be fragile. International mediation typically succeeds where there is an alignment of interests between internal and external actors – third parties cannot want peace more than the South Sudanese signatories and the parties to the conflict themselves.

3. Why did previous attempts at disarmament, demobilisation, and reintegration (DDR) fail?

The 2005-2011 DDR programme in Sudan constituted an important dimension of the post-conflict peace building endeavour, and was expected to be the largest ever implemented.[1] Massive resources were allocated to the effort, but to little effect. The programme's mid-term review found that the support offered "was more of an expensive livelihoods support program for a limited group of people than a

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[1] Stone, Lydia (2011). Failures and opportunities: rethinking DDR in South Sudan. Geneva: Small Arms Survey.

relevant contribution to peace and stability in Southern Sudan…and was not effective in terms of contributing to the reduction of military capability, military expenditure, nor to confidence building measures" (UNDP 2013). The situation had not improved by the project's completion, as the final review found: "the programme did not achieve its objective of downsizing the army and releasing resources from defence to peaceful developmental activities….the contribution…towards reducing threats to human security was also minimal" (Ibid.).

Despite official acceptance of the DDR process, the SPLA was not committed to it, as there were fears that the war with Khartoum could reignite before independence was achieved, and the army would be needed. The target caseload of ex-combatants was determined through a bargaining process that bore little relation to the genuine capacity or needs of the SPLA. Further, despite concerns that many global DDR 'best practices' were inapplicable to the South Sudanese context, lessons from other DDR programmes remained largely unadapted to local circumstances.

4. What other conflict mitigation mechanisms exist in South Sudan, and what are their limitations?

From traditional authorities to faith-based actors, there are many other mechanisms for conflict mitigation in South Sudan. The Anglo-Egyptian Condominium government introduced meetings between communities who annually met in the dry season because of livestock migration, which were mediated by traditional leaders.

The most famous inter-communal peace conference was held in Wunlit in 1999, which "established a model for subsequent local peace conferences in the south" (Bradbury et al. 2006). Wunlit demonstrated the following characteristics: adequate preparation; community investment in the conference and community mobilisation; a secure venue; pre-conference confidence building; the use of traditional ritual practices; he legitimacy of the conference delegates; a commitment to peace through truth telling; the dissemination of the meetings' outcomes and follow-up; he support if not presence of the SPLM/A. However, the goodwill of chiefs and churches may not necessarily overcome the instrumentalisation of violence, nor does it follow that local institutions can stop large scale interethnic conflict.

Further publications on peace in South Sudan are available in the CSRF repository