



STRATEGY
2021-2023



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Director's Note:

The 2021-2023 strategic plan is the result of a long consultation with the key stakeholders of Steward Women namely project beneficiaries, local government leaders, partners, staff and the Board of Directors of Steward Women within a span of twelve months- through January 2021 and December 2021. It is the outcome of the several dialogues, awareness campaigns, workshops and meetings held with the various key stakeholders, project reviews, including the humanitarian context of South Sudan.

The drafting of this document started in June 2020 by the Monitoring, Documentation and Research Department of STEWARDWOMEN. By Oct. 2020, the first draft was shared with the staff and the Board of Directors for additional inputs. It was finally approved during the Governing Council Meeting held in December, 2020.

The strategy provides a road map for Steward Women's program implementation in the next three years, i.e. through 1st January 2021 and December 2023. It is based on thorough SWOT analyses of the organization and the on-going humanitarian response in the country. We will continue to pursue our mission of "to develop, shape and empower South Sudanese women to advocate for policies that foster equal economic opportunity, and secure human rights for women, girls and children". We shall focus on building the capacities of the non-formal justice sectors, with the aim to enhance the provision of primary justice in the rural areas to vulnerable women and girls; provision of legal aid; promote women empowerment, including leadership; and sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR) of women and girls.

Summary:

Vision:	A South Sudanese Society free from the violations of the rights & dignity of women & children				
Impact	Eliminate all forms of violence against women and children.	Access to sexual & reproductive health services by women and girls.	Access to livelihood assistance by women & girls.	Access to leadership capacity development opportunities by women & girls.	Access to critical life saving assistance by women & children
Outcomes	Increased community awareness on the human rights of women and children	Increased awareness on SRHR	Increased involvement of women & girls in income generation	Increased involvement of women & girls in leadership and peace processes	Increased access to critical life saving assistance during emergencies and displacement.
	Increased access to sexual & reproductive healthcare				
	Increased access to legal aid by survivors				
Delivery Stream 1	Strengthening institutional response capacity of Stewardwomen	Enhancing the role of men in SGBV advocacy.	Enhancing Community based response to EVAWC ¹	Enhancing Community based monitoring mechanisms.	Enhancing, experience sharing, lessons learnt & best practices
Delivery Stream 2	Strengthening the CCORPs ² coalition.	Strengthening MHM coalition	Strengthening partnership with local women-led CSOs.	Strengthening partnership with regional and international human rights agencies.	

¹ EVAWC- Ending violence against women and children

² CCORPs- Coalition of CSOs for ratification and implementation of Maputo protocol in South Sudan

1. Crisis Context and Impact- South Sudan:

South Sudan continues to be in dire need of humanitarian assistance. The situation is exacerbated by the slow progress in the implementation of the revitalized peace agreement. In 2020, communities were hit hard by the triple shock of intensified conflict and sub-national violence, a second consecutive year of major flooding, and the impacts of COVID-19. Some 1.6 million people remained internally displaced and another 2.2 million as refugees in the neighboring countries. Insecurity, lack of basic services, and unresolved housing, land and property issues prevented people from returning home in large numbers. Overall food security worsened and some communities are facing catastrophic needs. More children are acutely malnourished than in the past three years. Women and girls continue to face extreme levels of gender-based violence and psychosocial distress. People's coping mechanisms weakened as a consequence of the cumulative shocks, leading families to adopt negative practices such as forced labour and child marriage. The economy continues to spiral downwards, pushing people to the brink, especially in urban areas. Access to essential services, including health care, education, water and sanitation, as well as protection and legal services, was already limited and much of the service infrastructure was damaged, destroyed or closed in 2020. Humanitarian assistance delivered to more than 6 million people kept many communities from falling into deeper need, however increased violence against aid workers and assets and operational interference prevented hundreds of thousands of vulnerable people from predictably accessing the support they needed. Among the most vulnerable people are newly displaced families; communities hosting large numbers of displaced and/or recently returned people; and households that are headed by a single parent or looking after older people or people with disabilities (HRP³ 2020).

People's physical and mental wellbeing, living standards and coping mechanisms are expected to further deteriorate through 2021 and 2023 due to continued conflict and violence, macroeconomic pressures, climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic. New displacements and possible sudden returns will put additional pressure on the already limited basic services and on communities' coping mechanisms. The increasing number of people in need is largely driven by the rising food insecurity. People's access to essential services, including health care, education, water and sanitation, as well as protection and legal services, remains limited and much of the service infrastructure was damaged, destroyed or closed in 2020.

2. Vision and Mission:

STEWAROWOMEN is a women-led Organization founded in March 2009 and registered with the South Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission as a not-for-profit non-governmental organization with the registration number 037. The Organization was founded to address the problems of violence against women, including sexual and gender based violence, community insecurity and conflicts, and poor governance. The mission of STEWAROWOMEN is "to develop, shape and empower South Sudanese women to advocate for policies that foster equal economic opportunity, and secure human rights for women and children", with a vision of "A South Sudanese Society free from the violations of the human rights and dignity of women and children".

³ Humanitarian Response Plan, 2020, South Sudan

3. Priority Areas and Response- 2021-2023

3.1 Priority 1: Violence against Women and Girls

Violence against women and girls is devastating; and women and girls in South Sudan experience violence throughout their lives, both as a result of the decades of conflict that the country has endured, but also due to the patriarchal norms and practices that treat women and girls, as property that can be exchanged for other forms of property, such as cattle, and whose ownership infers absolute power over their reproductive choices, their ability to study and work, and their physical and sexual integrity. Women and girls in the country experience all forms of violence- conflict-related and non-partner sexual violence, exacerbated during times of conflict.

On the other hand, Gender Based Violence (GBV) is one of the most critical threats to the protection and wellbeing of women and children in South Sudan. GBV was already rife prior to the conflict, and is now nearing epidemic proportions. Studies indicate that some 65% of women and girls have experienced physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime, and some 51% have suffered intimate partner violence (IPV). Some 33% of women have experienced sexual violence from a non-partner, primarily during attacks or cattle raids. The majority of girls and women experience sexual violence for the first time under the age of 18. Children comprise around 25% of all reported cases of conflict-related sexual violence.

Priority 1 Response Plan:



Briefing by Prosecution Team, Mobile Court, Nimule

The response will focus on Ending Violence against Women and Girls (EVAWG) including Sexual Violence and Conflict Related Sexual Violence (CRSV); GBV prevention, risk mitigation and response services in coordinated manner with GBV partners. The GBV prevention priorities include community engagement, awareness-raising activities, and primary prevention programmes that transform harmful social norms contributing to gender inequality. GBV risk mitigation interventions will focus on integrating survivor support across all programs, dignity kit programming, and conducting safety audits. The GBV response priority interventions include providing psychosocial support, GBV case management services, establishing and strengthening GBV referral systems, implementing Women and Girls Friendly Space (WGFS) programming, establishing and operationalizing safe houses, and providing capacity building training to support groups;

engagements between the military and civilians in the prevention and response to SGBV & CRSV to build trust and confidence between them to effectively address impunity and promote accountability for survivors. However, special consideration will be given to the provision of legal services to survivors through legal aid clinics and/or justice and confidence centers, mobile courts, legal aid camps, and providing capacity building training to primary justice providers and other support groups in the rural

areas. We shall continue to mobilize CSOs through coalition building, networking and collaboration to advocate for the development of the necessary legislations and reforms on the human rights of women and girls, including those related to marriage and succession rights. Particular urgency will be given to addressing the needs of adolescent girls, and gender inequality.

3.2 Priority 2: Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights- SRHR;

South Sudan has the world’s worst SRH indicators- 789 deaths per 100,000 live births; it has one of the highest maternal mortality ratios (MMR) in the world; with the contraceptive prevalence rate (CPR) of 4.7%, with only 1.7% of women using modern family planning methods. Young people’s comprehensive knowledge about SRHR is extremely low [<https://en.unesco.org/news/sexuality-education-youth-south-sudan-strengthened>]. Adolescent girls, especially those from rural and pastoral settings face diverse SRH challenges. Menstruation is surrounded by divergent religious beliefs and cultural perceptions that impact negatively on MHM practices. There is inadequate information and guidance on menses. There is lack of robust policy and strategy by local governments on MHM.

Priority 2 Response Plan: Inclusive SRHR Movement;



Distribution of Dignity Kits, Bor-Jonglei

The response will focus on MHM movement building as a driving force to the SRHR movement building. A strong and winning MHM and/or SRHR movement in South Sudan is needed. It requires building an ecosystem of groups that are strong and healthy — groups that are on the ground for the long tussle. We believe in creating smaller MHM and/or SRHR “working groups or networks” based on expertise, with well defined mission and purpose that will propel the MHM and/or SRHR movement. These shall be community based MHM and/or SRHR support groups/networks for tracking, referral and reporting. These groups will keep individuals plunged into the MHM and/or SRHR movement.

Women & youth-led CBOs, including individuals will be the main targets. There will be a well defined group leadership structure for feedback, dispute resolution and strategic direction. Civic engagement of MHM and/or SRHR stake holders for synergy and collaboration through dialogues, round table meetings etc. are significant. The social media-face book, WhatsApp, Google group etc will also be used to build the SRHR momentum. The “public space” approach, where SRHR advocates grab existing opportunities- public events or spaces- will also be adopted. There shall be media campaigns on MHM and/or SRHR, and production of IEC materials. CSOs will be trained on mainstreaming MHM and/or SRHR into their programs. We shall reconstitute the MHM coalition to review its strategy, aimed at setting-up inclusive SRHR coalition. The SRHR coalition will adopt the “thematic SRHR working group” system for advocacy, based on expertise. There shall be terms of reference for the SRHR working groups to roll-out the SRHR movement strategy.

3.3 Priority 3: Food Security;

In South Sudan, projections indicate that 6.5 million people (56%) could face acute food insecurity for the May to July 2020 lean season in the presence of planned humanitarian food assistance. This number could increase due to potential impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic hampering food imports and aid. In 2019, the cropping season was only able to meet 63% of the projected cereal needs for 2020. Since 2016,

a prolonged macro-economic crisis continues to impact food insecurity as market prices are high, and the country will depend on markets for food supply during the peak of the 2020 lean season. Due to years of conflict, South Sudan is unable to produce enough food products to support its population and currently imports half of its food needs. Recent improvements in the security situation since the 2018 peace agreement and the expected positive impact on agricultural production have been overshadowed by localized drought and presence of fall armyworm in early 2019 followed by widespread catastrophic flooding due to heavy seasonal rains.

Priority 3 Response Plan: Improving Livelihoods of Women;



Distribution of Start Up Kits- Bor-Jonglei

The response will focus on enhancing the livelihood capacities of vulnerable women. In the last couple of years, Steward Women has supported several women groups and individuals in Eastern Equatoria, Central Equatoria, Unity State, Lake State and Jonglei with livelihood assistance. This assistance will be enhanced and extended to other areas.

3.4 Priority 4: Armed Conflict and Insecurity;

More than 75% of South Sudan is reportedly engulfed in murderous violence at the local level. The country has experienced some of the most brutal attacks over the past seven years, mainly in the states of Central Equatoria, Warrap, Jonglei and the Greater Pibor Administrative Area. In Jonglei and the Greater Pibor Area, homes have been systematically and deliberately torched; murders and forced displacements have been perpetrated; women and girls have been abducted, they have been raped and gang-raped, sexually enslaved, and in some instances forcibly married off to their captors. Abducted boys have been forced to fight. The conflicts are driven by competition for power and territory; land and property as well as access to oil and other resources and the fight for political power, resulting into gross violations of human rights.

Priority Four Response Plan: Inclusion of Women in Leadership and Peace Processes;



Policy Dialogue, Jondoru-Juba, South Sudan

Women inclusion in peace processes will be the focus of our intervention. HLP programming to support HLP concerns will be an essential component of conflict-prevention and establishing of rule of law. Equitable access to HLP will be strengthened, encouraging the resolution of inter-communal land and resource conflicts rooted in access, ownership and usage of HLP. The realization of women's HLP rights will be of particular focus, including the access to ownership of land. HLP activities will focus

on strengthening community-based dispute resolution mechanisms, promoting legal awareness-raising,

and providing legal support, counseling and legal aid particularly for women and girls. These activities are aimed at creating conducive environment for returns and include responses to HLP issues that provide equal rights and responsibilities to men and women, mitigate the potential for returns to exacerbate tensions over scarce resources. It also establishes mechanisms to identify legal and/or community-based solutions to resolve HLP disputes.

3.5 Priority 5: Emergencies- floods, drought & epidemics;

During the year 2021, the people of South Sudan and the humanitarian community continue to be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and its disruptive impacts on markets, services and movements across the country. South Sudan also experienced its highest levels of devastating flooding that has affected more than 1 million people.

Priority Five Response Plan: Access to Critical Life-Saving Food & NFI Assistance;



Distribution of NFIs, Bor-Jonglei

Another immediate and key priority for STEWARDWOMEN is to prepare for the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the rainy seasons, which is forecasted to lead to major floods. Disaster risk reduction is one of the areas, alongside food security and WASH, which can make a real difference on people's lives.

4. Delivery Mechanisms:

4.1 Gender Based Violence (GBV) Male Champions;

There will be three groups of “GBV Male Champions”, through which GBV advocacy is mutually reinforced namely, GBV male Champions for dialogues on GBV risk mitigation (including dissemination of referral pathway information) with the community and the local government on GBV policy enactment and enforcement; the Family Court (Council of Traditional Authority and Leaders- COTAL) for GBV mediation⁴; and the EMAP (Engaging Men for Accountable Practices on GBV).

4.2 Survivor Support Centers (SCCs);

There will be SCCs staffed with local experts (case workers, entrepreneurs, health and legal experts) through which a well structured, coordinated and integrated PSS (inclusive of recreational activities), GBV case management, economic and critical medical assistance (for rape survivors), and legal and referral information etc will be provided to survivors.

⁴ The Family Court refer to the GBV mediation sessions instituted by traditional (male dominated) courts.

4.3 Community Based Survivor Support Groups;

STEWARDWOMEN will identify and train young women and men as volunteer survivor support groups, inclusive of watch groups for tracking survivors, provision of PSS and referral information, reporting and monitoring incidences of violence against women and girls.

4.4 Mobile Care and Support Assistance;

To enhance community access to support and care services, STEWARDWOMEN in collaboration with partners will hold tailored mobile camps namely, medical camps (fistula, cervix tear, STDs); and legal aid camps (for legal information, education & counseling) among the target populations.

Community-based project monitoring groups (inclusive of all stakeholders) for project feedback and accountability will be formed based on defined accountability criteria by the community. There will a joint stake holders' project inception workshop (project launch), focusing on the project design and role of key stakeholders; baseline and end-line surveys; regular project and protection risk assessment, field monitoring visits, & check-ins to track progress, review project design and discuss lessons learnt and address challenges, and external end of project evaluation to inform the up-scaling (if necessary) of the service delivery model. All project activities will be implemented in-line with the guiding principles of the GBV sub-cluster, the COVID-19 pandemic SOPs, the Do No Harm principle and in concerted effort with the local GBV partners. We shall document and disseminate lessons learnt, success stories and best practices with GBV partners through newsletters, workshops and cluster meetings among others.

5. Community Engagement & Learning Processes:

The MEAL department of STEWARDWOMEN will continue to take the lead in the learning process and dissemination of lessons learnt. The department will conduct project needs assessments in preparation of all projects to understand community priority needs. There will be routine field monitoring visits to project locations to ascertain the progress of project implementation and solicit community expert opinions. We conduct routine project risk assessments to help the communities in project locations to support in the identification of risk mitigation measures. The field based teams will undertake routine gender, protection and conflict analysis aimed at addressing pertinent program implementation challenges. There will be project reviews to incorporate community recommendations into program. STEWARDWOMEN will also undertake tailored research to enhance program development. An all inclusive stakeholders' community based program monitoring groups will be formed to address complaints and resolve problems. There will be weekly planning meetings for key program and finance/administration staff, and monthly and annual general staff meetings. The program activities, lessons learnt and best practices will be well documented through newsletters, video clips and reports among other and shared with key stakeholders through the media.

6. Sustainability Approach:

STEWARDWOMEN's programming shall focus on capacity development of the community on human security. The capabilities of community leaders, the vulnerable and survivors of GBV, CRSV and HLP among others will be developed to claim and defend their rights and the rights of others- all programs will

be designed to transfer knowledge and skills aimed at improving community attitudes and practices. Involving stake-holders in program design is integral part of the sustainability approach. It will help to link survivors and other vulnerable groups to potential opportunities beyond the life span of donor support. There shall be strategic partnership with relevant program stakeholders so that achievements are sustained. All trainings will be conducted based on the assumption that the training participants' responsibilities will continue thereof- training participants will be charged with the role to disseminate knowledge and skills gained from the trainings. This way, the impact of trainings is multiplied as the information imparted is disseminated through the surrounding areas. Community based resource persons (volunteers) shall be as a key component of the sustainability strategy. Efforts will be made to closely work with key stakeholders and local governments and streamline key components of programs into their development plans. Key cross-cutting issues namely human rights; SGBV, gender etc will be streamlined into donor funded programs. STEWARDWOMEN will be registered as a Company to meaningfully engage in profit making ventures, as alternative source of funding.

7. Governance and Delivery Structure:



Quarterly Coordination Meeting, Juba Office

The Governing Council- GC, which is constituted by representatives of key stake-holders, will continue to play an instrumental role in policy oversight- approval of policies, annual work-plans & budgets and community liaison- supported by Board of Directors- BoD, responsible for policy and financial monitoring and approval of quarterly plans and budgets. The BoD will have sub-committees to execute its functions. There will be a Director (appointed by the BoD) as head of the Secretariat for technical oversight supported by heads of programs, finance and administration and documentation, monitoring and

research, thereof collectively referred to as the Senior Management Committee responsible for approval of monthly work plans and budgets. There will be managers (including field location managers) for the thematic program areas- SRHR, JPS, FSL and Emergency supported by field-based staff and finance/accounts officers. STEWARDWOMEN will convene quarterly coordination meetings for heads of departments (including field location managers) to develop quarterly work-plans and budgets for approval by the BoD and sharing of lessons learnt and best practices. The staff disciplinary and procurement committees will continue to be an integral part of the delivery structure. The weekly, monthly and annual planning meetings and annual staff performance appraisals will continue to be held.

2.5 ORGANIZATION CHART:

