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i. Introduction;

This document summarizes key issues and findings from research conducted by CEFoRD on socio-economic, political and cultural issues of youth in Yei, Lainya and Morobo Counties of Central Equatoria state. Among other issues, lack of meaningful youth involvement and participation within the governance structures and at different levels of government, unemployment and poor education system were key challenges highlighted by the youth. My edit.

It is been said all times that youth are pillars of the society theoretically. In many events youth were only used as mobilizers during big events like 2010 Sudan's election, 2011 Sudan's referendum and other local and national rallies that the government organizes.

However, youth are not fully involved in the nation building through participation in forums of intellect, used without wages, not offered scholarships, there's high sectarianism etc.

The research was done through a focused group discussion in Lainya County, Morobo County and Yei Municipality respectively. The report is being designed in percentage based on the actual data.

ii. Objective/ purpose

- a. To get the views of young people on the current political crisis in South Sudan.
- b. To find out the level of Youth participation on governance, formal structure and decision making processes.
- c. Identify ways of addressing youth concern and how to improve youth participation in governance.
- d. To organize issue-based youth fora to enhance the capacity of youth public presence and presentation.

iii. Facts of the data;

Youth participation in governance

Questions for Discussions: Who is a youth to you in South Sudan?

As a young person, what are the biggest challenges that are facing YOU right now?

What do you think are the 3 biggest challenges facing South Sudan Youth right now?

How do you feel about South Sudan politics today?

Are youth fully involved in the decision making process?

Do you think it is important to involve youth in decision making processes?

How can young people best participate in decision making processes?

How can you best describe South Sudan society today?

Do you think youth have a role to play in stabilizing the country? If yes, how

How can youth best influence the constitutional making process?

How do you feel in general about your own future?

There is a growing evidence that youth participation in decision making and democratic process in the country is considerably very low. With the current political and security situation in the country the research shows that youth are likely to either be excluded in all democratic processes or voluntarily distance themselves from formal established political structures and democratic process as they are subjected to tokenism and manipulation by their masters. As such, we developed some key questions to get views of young people in Central Equatoria on their involvement in meaningful participation in decision making process, democratic process and formal established institutions as part of their social and political rights

Below are the voices of the youth.

From the approach used and the question used, it shows that youth have no proper knowledge on transitional Constitution of South Sudan

In the survey it shows that;

- a) 95% defines youth as people aged between 18-40, 3% talked about a youth being from 15-45 while, 2% defined youth as of 15-18 years old. Yet the South Sudan transitional constitution 2011 has not defined the youth age clearly and also it's not clear whether South Sudan domesticated the international instruments or not. This explains why there is a need for youth involvement in the Transitional Constitution review process.
- b) 100% expressed lack of technical skills to benefit from the local jobs, and also identified jobs in South Sudan offered on the basis of technical know who not on technical knowhow.

As being expressed by the youth in Lainya County that

- The government has not taken the issue of involving and empowering youth into their plan of operations.
- The government is not allowing nongovernmental organizations to operate in the County, and yet these NGOs always comes with different programs most of them are youth and community based empowering programs

While in Morobo County said,

- *the local government is more of their own relatives and under looks the youth generally in the county, while the youth leaders lack vision and skills of directives at the county.*

The youth in Yei expressed,

- *indifferences caused by the leaders who are both politicians and members of parliament.*
- *The politician and members of parliament also assumes to be youth leaders among the youth, and there is no objective personnel who will always take lead in the county or the municipality.*
- *Lack of visionary youth leaders and capable Politicians compared to some other countries. Due to such there are lots of inaccurate and inconsistent service deliveries by the leaders regardless of the state or local.*
- *Nepotism and sectarianism at the places of work both in the government and NGOs*

- c) 100% expressed lack of employment and underpayment on the available jobs. There seem to be no clear policies of recruitment given by the labor office whether at the local or state level to define exactly the procedures of employment against payment.
- d) 100% felt the government of South Sudan is one sided i.e. a state or a tribe
- e) 100% said youth are being neglected from being involved in the decision making process both at the local and state even to the national government and yet the youth are called the future or pillars of the society.
- f) Youth also believed that they (Youth) would have been the most used one in the government offices then, the elders would be advising and supporting them in other technical things that are not there with them. The youth are active and sharp in picking things and always acts immediately according to the situations.
- g) The youth describe South Sudan as a field of bloodshed and a state of tribalism which needs a lot of restructuring and positioning to favor every citizen of the new nation.
- h) Further more, the youth believed that they play a key role in bringing a stable nation like south Sudan, since they are the most used ones in the fights, in the discos and in the prisons they are the majority any where they take a key responsibility. This is an indication that youth can play a genuine role to bring stability in the country by playing a polite game with the situations they are in.
- i) In all our finding the youth expressed that, if they are given the opportunity to give their views to the current laws of South Sudan, they would create an environment of ownership of the laws both locally and nationally as well. It's also their call to be considered in all matters affecting them.
- j) Its shocking to see how desperate the youth feel about South Sudan, others describing it as a doom future because the circumstances they are involved in are hazardous one, characterized with poor Education system, lack of scholarship for the youth, vocational schools are not there so youth feel like there is no future for Youth in South Sudan.

Employment & source of income

Questions for Discussion: *What is your current employment status? (Optional)*

Are you currently studying?

What is your main source of income?

With the fact that 70% population of the republic of South Sudan are youth, it also indicates that 70% of the youth in South Sudan are illiterate characterized by a spirit of dependency from their parents, guardian and government based Jobs for livehood and social well being. This presents a crucial challenge in employment opportunities in the labour market. As such our finding indicates that;

- a. 99% of the youth met are not employed, and expressed bitterness about acute unemployment that is currently in the country. Some time the work can be there but then, the employer need a person with experience of 2 or 5 years. Moreover there is no school of experience. For such a reason that is why there is rampant crimes been committed in the country and when you go to the police most of the prisoners are youth.
- b. Youth hardly come up with their own business initiative because of limited entrepreneurial skills that can make them manage their business initiative. Secondly Youth mostly ignore some business initiatives like making Chapati, opening up a Salon and other live sustaining initiative.
- c. Most of the youth are not going to school i.e. 99.9% of the youth are just roaming in the communities looking for what they can do but finds nothing at end of the day they involve themselves in early marriage unwanted pregnancy, and drugs which are very dangerous to their health.
- d. 0.1 % of young people are been paid by their mothers to the schools, with a lot of hardships. Because of that, there is high school dropout from studies and joins the fellow colleagues who are already in the community.

Safety

Have you ever felt unsafe in the streets or in a public place?

Have you ever been subjected to harassment, assault or abuse?

Did you report it? If yes to whom

In regards to safety and security assurance in the country following the spark of violence mid December 2013, most of the youth subjected to numerous harassment and assault and abuse in the streets. In this survey we are able to realized that;

- e. 45% of the youth say that always at certain moments the security of the streets are not safe, they feel unsafe more especially during big days like in the months of December, and January, July and May and recently the 15th December crises some of them were involved in carrying the wounded soldiers in the villages.
- f. About 30% being harassed on the streets, others like the boda-boda riders, the bikes ended up being taken and are assaulted and abused as well. At the police some are are tortured in humanly without any prove of your crimes committed and abused.
- g. Youth also find it very hard to report some of these cases and abuses, because sometimes if it is reported and not serous step will be taken against the act and also people are asked to pay something for a case to be processed very first at the police.

Media & News

*What are the top 2 sorts of media that you follow?
 What are the top 2 sorts of content you are interested in?
 Do you know about social media? Can you mention some examples of social media? (If the respondent does not know, the facilitator should mention some; e.g. twitter, face book, google+, twoo, etc
 If yes, please tell us how you use social media?
 Do you feel that young people's voices are adequately represented in the media?
 What impact do you think the media has had on your body image and self-confidence as a young person?*

Media being the medium for exchange of information, we have also developed some question to find out how the youth get access to informations and how they use the media as well. In our finding we noticed that;

- h. The most used sorts of the media in Lainya, Morobo and Yei are Radios and Telephone with low used of the news papers in Yei, and the most used/listened radios are Radio Easter in Yei, Radio Spirit fm in Yei and Miraya Fm in Juba.
- i. While the most preferred contents of the listened programs are; the politics of South Sudan during talk show and news at Miraya fm including the beats program with Moro lokombo in Juba. And the sports program in radio Easter in Yei while spirit fm with our parliament program every Saturdays.
- j. About 10% uses Facebook for sports, charting with friends and post other interesting topics that targets the youth and the Facebook users. And others like Google +, twitter and Twoo are not used with the youths of Morobo, Lainya and Yei respectively, this is because its yet new and even the Facebook is yet getting introduced to the community of the youth in the

Country. In this case the youth express lack of exposure to the growing technology due to the continuous growing illiteracy in the Country.

- k. The voices of the youth are not fully represented in the media. this is because in the media, the most voiced people and interviewed are the Bishops, spokes person of the governments, ministers and other key position holders and this are old people ad also what is broadcast are not something in relation to the youth but only blames on youth. In parliaments youth who are sent to represent the voices of the people are been silenced to a level where they cannot be seen or hard in the Media.
- l. The youth also believed that the Media is good for building the image and confidence of the youth, because it's always the media has wider coverage and whenever the right message is passed about youth it reaches over many people at the same time. Some might be people who like youth programs and support in different angles. and also some of the programs are so educative to the youth, for example out parliament, the topics discussed are of value to the youth, sports are other things that keeps the youth busy, by making more concentration on sport activities, there could be low crimes committed by the youth.

Education

*What is your feeling about the education system in South Sudan?
Do you believe funding for schools needs to be improved as a priority? If yes, why
Are the high costs of university fees impacting on your choices of study? How?*

The system of education in South Sudan had not been rectified since South Sudan gain its independence in 2011. There are different syllabus thought in different parts of South Sudan. For example Uganda Syllabus is widely thought in Greater equatoria, Sudan Syllabus being thought in parts of Greater Bar-el-Galzal and greater Upper Niles. So CEFoRD feel its very important to get more views from the youth who are beneficiaries of Education in South Sudan. In our finding we realize the followings;

- l. The education system in South Sudan is becoming more complicated in way, simply because most the schools used Ugandan syllabus for many years now and still some of schools or colleges using it as a result many Youth are studying in Uganda. For example in Yei, Lainya and Morobo all the schools use Ugandan syllabus. But the challenge is the ministry of Education Science and Technology has announced that senior four candidates will not be sitting for Uganda syllabus. ***(we are told the current S4s will not sit for the Uganda certificate of education (UCE) now you can imagine someone brought up to the final level and lastly you hear stop this, you may feel embarrassed. Taban Evans scops-Lianya)*** However the youth expect slow process of the change. The ministry of education science and technology should know.

- II. Youth are hoping that funding for schools should be much improved for them to move forward because number of drop outs is increasing. Which is not because young people are stubborn but the payment of the school fees is high. Going from primary schools to secondary and the worst experience is the university where sometimes Universities are closed and private Universities are very expensive. Though the government did well during the interim period by providing scholarships in universities in South Sudan and Sudan for South Sudanese but the universities are with a lot of irregularities which might not be a problem, but it's stopped now. They call the government to do a lot to fight illiteracy in South Sudan because as youth are the next leaders of the country. ***(If we have not gone to school how will we hold those positions? A participant put in question. Emma Palpes-Morobo)***
- III. Some parents have the resources support young at school, but may not be to the expectation, the course might be dictated by the resources one has. As been said by a participant. ***(You see many youth are going to do these courses like business, and management, this is because the cost of the course likes law, politics etc are much expensive These require the intervention of the government to support such committed parents and students to make the sequence on the country go without gap. A participant in Yei)*** According to the Youth better education will reduce the high rate of the crimes that are been committed by the youths in the communities as youth dominates in the prisons most of them are youth of 20 years.

Health

As a young person, how do you feel about the services offered at the health centers/hospital or referral hospital? Are they satisfactory? If yes, how If not, how Which health centers are close to your residential area and how are the services offered there?

Do you think it is important to improve the health facilities in South Sudan? If yes why?

Whit increase in rates of HIV and AIDS infections among young people in South Sudan and deteriorating health conditions generally in South Sudan where patients buy their own drug in public hospital, It presents a significant Challenge to the government and the youth themselves as young people who can not afford medical fees always suffers in public hospitals. For examples the Boda-Boda if they got accident little attention is paid to. In our research we found the following;

- a. The health services are as poor as they were in the bushes in those days, there are no drugs in the health centers, there are either few workers or even not there. One participant put it as follows ***As a young person we feel bad, embarrassed, and neglected by the current regime of the government simply because the hospital is live and where you don't supply or support the services offered in health centers it means you need to do away with the lives of the citizens.*** In

the hospitals/ primary health centers charges are being levied so much on the patient and at the end of the day patients are sent to buy their drug even a minor paracetamol at the clinics around which is at high cost.

- b. there are many primary health centers for example, Loka PHCC, Lainya PHCC, Morobo PHCC, Yei civil hospital, Martha clinic, St. Bakita PHCC and of course there are clinics which are business oriented with high charges for a common person who can not afford.
- c. Youth feel that It's very important to improve the health facilities, because the child mortality rate is very high in the country, even malaria this days can kill in the hospitals. So the government needs to do a lot to make continuous supply of the drugs to the primary health centers and train more midwifery to increase performance at the health services. The government should take into account that these are his people without them without him (government).

Recreation and entertainment.

Question for discussion: *Do you play or participate in community sports?
If you don't play or participate in community sports, what is stopping you?
What recreational activities are more preferable to you?
Are there facilities? If not, how can they be availed?
What you do think would most assist young people to have good sexual health?
Are drugs and alcohol used in your immediate friendship group?
Mention 2 drugs which are more likely to be used in your friendship group?*

Recreational Initiatives are relatively Low in South Sudan in general and Central Equatoria in particular. Most of the recreational activities are football, volley ball and limited athletics only in schools. We took time to look at the side of recreational activities in Central Equatoria and we have got the followings;

1. Sports in the communities are essential, youth participate fully, this is because youth want to ensure that they are kept away from the immoral actions of this days, and also youth want develop talents, like those Christian Ronaldo, Van Persie, Drogba among others. The youth have high ambitions and dreams to make different skills as they make live comfortable.
2. The most challenging thing is that, youth lack sports materials like balls, playing boots, uniforms and first aids. All these make their participation so hard in the sports, but in most cases youth contribute to raise some of these materials.

3. The most recreational activities are sporting, hunting and fishing are the major activities they are so much involved in their various communities around south Sudan.
4. They lack facilities, of which they needed to be supported so that they are committed in building up their talents, and keep them busy as well.
5. The youth demand being involved in recreational activities to ensure proper and creation of good relationship among themselves. Another thing that would make a good sexual health, can be through a use of condom, going for Voluntary counseling and testing and abstain from sex.
6. Most drugs used in the groups are Gomba, (marungi), Sisa and alcohol. While taking time with Dominus and playing cards, the most mentioned drugs are used. But sometimes these drugs makes brain confused, youth get involved in unwanted and unprotected sex in the communities which is risk of sexual transmitted diseases or sexual transmitted infections. Otherwise even youth are sometimes in danger of HIV.
7. Most videos and songs composed by the youth are all about love, it generally lacks edutainment components on Youth participation on formal institutions and decision making that will influence or change youth attitudes

Homophobia

Question; What do you think about gay marriage?

With strong cultural values rooted in the minds of young people in South Sudan, Many youth have hardly experienced Homophobia in South Sudan accept in the social media. However, to be comprehensive enough we developed some questions also to get the undersatanding of Homophobia among young people in Central Equatoria State and below are the finding

- a. The man to man marriage or woman to woman marriage, is not the culture in South Sudan, they (Youth) don't accept it to come to their communities. (***This is an insult of Gods purpose of marriage; we are to subdue the earth after death we account to God what had happened in earth. If we marriage is between man and man or woman and woman how will procreation be?-Ruba James in Moroo Stressed***) according to the youth, the government should look into this very critically so as to not invite foreign cultures to South Sudan. (***We condemn this act comes from one participant***)
- b. The constitution review process in this case is very paramount so that as youth's voices are included to eliminate such foreign culture (***barbaric actions! according to the youth***), since

the constitution is the supreme document of the Country, then it must be handled with a lot of transparency in this process of gathering the views of the people/citizens.

We have heard about gay marriage in other countries like Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania and the far nations i.e. USA etc, this is not correct in the way to do it; it's shameful when recalling our cultures. A participant stressed in a condition of anonymous.

The 10 Key recommendations from the Youth

1. The youth are urging the government to take into consideration the youth programs to ensure that the Country is moving forward in any matter. In the transitional constitution of the Republic of South Sudan 2011, article 40, section (a) it says all levels of Government shall; Adopt policies and provide facilities for the welfare of the children and youth and ensure that they develop morally and physically, and are protected from moral and physical abuse and abandonment. Should these policies be adopted, then the crimes and the cries of the youth will not be so much loud as it is now. It is a sole responsibility of the government and the local non government organizations to ensure there's complete engagement of the youth in all the matters of the country to create stability.
2. The government have a role in ensuring that individuals or youth or group of youth are been given a focus. Article 35 section 2 of the transitional constitution says; This Constitution shall be interpreted and applied to advance the individual dignity and address the particular needs of the people by dedicating public resources and focusing attention on the provision of gainful employment for the people, and improving their lives by building roads, schools, airports, community institutions, hospitals, providing clean water, food security, electric power and telecommunication services to every part of the country.
3. The security of the citizens lays on the hands of the government whether local, state or national government as article 12 of the transitional constitution says; Every person has the right to liberty and security of person; no person shall be subjected to arrest, detention, deprivation or restriction of his or her liberty except for specified reasons and in accordance with procedures prescribed by law. We urge the government to play its role of protecting the youth, though there are no clear and specific articles in the transitional constitution 2011 specifying the importance of youth in the Country.
4. The youth also call upon the government to ensure that the youth are given some percentages like any other person in the constitution. I.e. 30% or something considerate like the 25% for the women. It's not the women who are vulnerable in south Sudan but the youth expected as well. The elderly people take an advantage of the youth in their various levels of jurisdiction.

5. It's the role the every citizen to have access to information. The government of the new nation is being described as a person with big head and tiny limbs in the "citizen's news paper" in 2013. While article 32 of the transitional constitution 2011, says; Every citizen has the right of access to official information and records, including electronic records in the possession of any level of government or any organ or agency thereof, except where the release of such information is likely to prejudice public security or the right to privacy of any other person.
6. The school going citizens are the youth in the different levels, therefore Education is a right for every citizen and all levels of government shall provide access to education without discrimination as to religion, race, and ethnicity, health status including HIV/AIDS, gender or disability. Article 29 section 1. This also calls for the government to ensure that proper system of education is being laid for the young people to benefit and excel in their career.
7. The youth call upon the government to ensure that health services are provided to the entire citizen without compromise to secure lives. Article 31 of the transitional constitution says all levels of government shall promote public health, establish, rehabilitate and develop basic medical and diagnostic institutions and provide free primary health care and emergency services for all citizens. And this has been an audio not practical. The government should prioritize its plans.
8. The youth are left redundant to commit crimes which are beyond their capacities and yet tortured, harassed in the prisons. The prison yard is full of young people now and no finding to the root causes of the crimes is been done. Article 40 (b and c) says it's the responsibility of the government to promote recreational facilities and sports for all the citizens and empower the youth to develop their potentials; and Establish, protect, and support popular sports institutions, indigenous games and their sustainability. This is done to keep the youth engaged to reduce crimes that are committed due to idleness by the youth in the society. What has the government done to reduce crimes in the country? We call upon the government to get stern with its duty and get committed with what is stipulated in the supreme document.
9. In the mandate given to the constitution review commission, in article 202 section 6 The Commission shall review the Transitional Constitution and collect views and suggestions from all the stakeholders including any changes that may need to be introduced to the current system of governance. In the previous review process only few people are involved and is was done only at the county headquarters, and yet the setting of the Country is right from Boma. We call upon the government to ensure that voices of the youth are also gathered on how they want the constitution may look like because as youth " we condemn gay marriage, it is not in our culture"
10. The youth confirm with article 3(1) which says; This Constitution derives its authority from the will of the people and shall be the supreme law of the land. It shall have a binding force on all persons, institutions, organs and agencies of government throughout the

Country. Surely the will of the people shall be the foundation of the functioning of the government of the national, state and the local governments.

Appendix

1. Transitional constitution of South Sudan 2011
2. **Human Rights Watch** news@hrw.org
3. www.gurtong.net/.../ConstitutionLaws/LawsSouthSudan/.../Default.asp
4. www.loc.gov › [Law Library](#) › [Research & Reports](#) › [Guide to Law Online](#)
5. www.sslawsociety.org/

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