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**NAVAL  
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**MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA**

**THESIS**

**POST-CONFLICT RETURNEE REINTEGRATION: A  
CASE STUDY OF SOUTH SUDAN AND THE  
LIVELIHOOD APPROACH**

by

Ashley S. Dusenbury

September 2013

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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE			Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188
Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instruction, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188) Washington DC 20503.			
1. AGENCY USE ONLY (Leave blank)	2. REPORT DATE September 2013	3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED Master's Thesis	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE POST-CONFLICT RETURNEE REINTEGRATION: A CASE STUDY OF SOUTH SUDAN AND THE LIVELIHOOD APPROACH		5. FUNDING NUMBERS	
6. AUTHOR(S) Ashley S. Dusenbury			
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Naval Postgraduate School Monterey, CA 93943-5000		8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING /MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) N/A		10. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER	
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES The views expressed in this thesis are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of Defense or the U.S. government. IRB Protocol number ____N/A____.			
12a. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited		12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE A	
13. ABSTRACT (maximum 200 words) Post-conflict societies emerging from protracted violence often struggle in the critical transition from short-term oriented emergency relief assistance—functioning as an immediate stabilizing mechanism during decades of protracted conflict—to longer-term solutions intended to rebuild the nation. This post-conflict evolution is complicated by the potentially destabilizing reintroduction of returning refugees and internally displaced persons. Using South Sudan as the case study, this thesis analyzes the short and long-term tradeoffs and implications of immediate versus durable repatriation strategies for stabilization and reconstruction of post-conflict societies. I argue that reintegration strategies must provide a long-term development approach; a long-term approach directly contributes to the future prospects and viable stability of a post-conflict environment. This thesis concludes that while there have been concerted efforts towards contributing to the reintegration of returnees in South Sudan, the critical element lies in the ability of such post-conflict nations to provide long-term sustainable opportunities—livelihoods—in order to obtain and sustain peace and stability.			
14. SUBJECT TERMS Post-conflict reintegration, livelihood recovery, South Sudan		15. NUMBER OF PAGES 91	16. PRICE CODE
17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT Unclassified	18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE Unclassified	19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT Unclassified	20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT UU

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**POST-CONFLICT RETURNEE REINTEGRATION: A CASE STUDY OF  
SOUTH SUDAN AND THE LIVELIHOOD APPROACH**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF ARTS IN SECURITY STUDIES  
(STABIIZATION AND RECONSTRUCTION)**

from the

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## **ABSTRACT**

Post-conflict societies emerging from protracted violence often struggle in the critical transition from short-term oriented emergency relief assistance—functioning as an immediate stabilizing mechanism during decades of protracted conflict—to longer-term solutions intended to rebuild the nation. This post-conflict evolution is complicated by the potentially destabilizing reintroduction of returning refugees and internally displaced persons. Using South Sudan as the case study, this thesis analyzes the short and long-term tradeoffs and implications of immediate versus durable repatriation strategies for stabilization and reconstruction of post-conflict societies. I argue that reintegration strategies must provide a long-term development approach; a long-term approach directly contributes to the future prospects and viable stability of a post-conflict environment. This thesis concludes that while there have been concerted efforts towards contributing to the reintegration of returnees in South Sudan, the critical element lies in the ability of such post-conflict nations to provide long-term sustainable opportunities—livelihoods—in order to obtain and sustain peace and stability.



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## LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
DFID	Department for International Development
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FSMS	Food Security Monitoring Systems
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoNU	Government of National Unity
GoS	Government of Sudan
GoSS	Government of South Sudan
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IDMC	International Displacement Monitoring Centre
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
IOM	International Office of Migration
IRD	International Relief and Development
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
MHADM	The Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NCP	National Congress Party
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OXFAM	Oxford Committee for Famine Relief
RI	Refugees International
RoSS	Republic of South Sudan
SL	Sustainable Livelihoods
SPLA	Sudan People's Liberation Army
SPLM	Sudan People's Liberation Movement
SSRRC	South Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program

UNHCR	United Nations Office of the High Commission for Refugees
UNMISS	United Nations Mission in South Sudan
UN OCHA	United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

This effort would not have been possible without the support of many. I would like to say a special thanks to Professor Piombo and Professor Baylouny for all of their advice, guidance, and efforts on my behalf. Truly, I cannot thank them enough for their help in this process. I would also like to thank Professor Mabry, Robert Lucius, and Matthew Vaccaro for their endless patience and support in this effort; achieving this degree while also having the chance to work with such amazing people has been an incredible opportunity for which I will always be grateful. Additionally, I do not know how I would have made it through this process without the endless support of my dear friends and family—especially my parents, brothers, and dear friend, Holly Hatlo. Most importantly, I thank my fiancé, Al Woodson, whose unwavering love and support has cheered me on through this process more than I can count.

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# I. INTRODUCTION

## A. MAJOR RESEARCH QUESTION

This thesis analyzes the challenges associated with the reintegration of returning refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) in post-war society, and determines the sustainable approach for confronting these challenges in order to successfully obtain conflict transformation and stabilization. A durable solution to refugee crises requires recognition of the potential impact of key socio-economic issues in each post-war environment. This recognition, both in analysis and in practice, is imperative for a broader and long-term approach to sustainable peace building. I argue that sustainable reintegration of returning refugees as a solution to protracted conflict and forced displacement is essential. From this lens, the research argues that a post-conflict society devoid of a long-term reintegration strategy leaves the particularly vulnerable populations—the returnees—in a cycle of aid dependency, and contributes to the re-ignition of violence and armed conflict.

Using the emerging post-conflict nation of South Sudan as a case study, this research analyzes a crucial element of successful reintegration programs for returnees in a post-conflict society. Contrary to the standard short-term emergent aid and reintegration approach of many relief agencies and policies, this thesis argues that the sustainability of repatriation programs for returnees is achieved by a long-term—livelihood—strategy. I conclude that reintegration programs rely on the livelihood element as the vital component towards stabilization and reconstruction. Furthermore, this research argues that the livelihoods approach provides returning South Sudanese the means to economically sustain themselves whereby minimizing aid dependency and fostering an environment of community integration—essential components for ending the re-ignition of violence. Finally, I conclude that a livelihood approach not only ensures sustainable reintegration for returnees, this approach also directly contributes to the peace and stability of this new nation.



## **B. IMPORTANCE**

This thesis uses South Sudan as a case study for analyzing short-term versus long-term strategy approaches to reintegrating refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). Refugee crises constitute at once a humanitarian issue, a security issue, and a development issue. Michael Gabaudan argues, “In a country like South Sudan, where the national government is challenged by conflict, international donors are in the driving seat when it comes to providing aid and meeting the changing needs of people.”<sup>1</sup> Gabaudan argues for the need of relief agencies to bridge this humanitarian and development gap.<sup>2</sup> While South Sudan is not a unique case highlighting a state suffering from a refugee and IDP crisis, every crisis is unique and may yield valuable lessons.

The consequences of war have been profound for large numbers of South Sudanese and their neighbors. The immense displaced crisis in Sudan is inevitably linked to the country’s internal challenges. Furthermore, South Sudan’s independence has been accompanied by the challenges of building a new nation. The viability of this new nation is tested in the fragile environment it inherited after a long war of liberation. The most vulnerable populations, the refugees and IDPs, have been slowly returning to their homeland—and, they remain vulnerable with little to return to and to a setting of insecurity and often-persistent violence. The case of South Sudan highlights the importance of post-conflict societies to plan and implement a long-term development strategy in order to establish stability and sustainable return.

## **C. PROBLEMS AND HYPOTHESES**

While South Sudan provides an important platform for exposing the need for long-term reintegration programs, it also proves to be difficult to determine concrete results, as the country is just two years old at the time of writing. Most data derives from humanitarian agencies that have produced reports from the field on current programs and

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<sup>1</sup> Michel Gabaudan, “From Emergency Aid to Development Aid: Agencies Failing to Connect,” *The Guardian*, January 19, 2012, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/globaldevelopment/povertymatters/2012/jan/19/humanitarian-aid-development-assistance-connect>.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

possible outcomes. This research does, however, provides an opportunity to analyze the dynamics of refugee assistance as they unfold, highlighting the gap between providing short-term and sustainable long-term opportunities for returnee management in South Sudan. Additionally, this thesis analyzes the linkages of security and protection—especially related to returning refugees and IDPs—with long-term economic growth contributing to stabilization. More than ever, it is imperative that this new nation make strides towards future stability and provide protection and opportunity for its most vulnerable population—the returning displaced groups.

#### **D. METHODS AND SOURCES**

Using the case study approach, this research reviews the origins and evolution of the new nation of South Sudan and traces the roots of its refugee crisis while analyzing the strategies leveraged to mitigate the outcomes of the crisis. Through this approach, this thesis concurrently analyzes the multifaceted causes of the conflict in South Sudan and the lifecycle dynamics of forced displacement and reintegration. This analytical framework is based on qualitative research and is bolstered by theories of state building and the established concepts of “failed state” and “sustainable livelihood.” This model focuses not only on the underlying and far-reaching causes of the conflict, but also on the dynamics of forced displacement in South Sudan, as an example of an emerging post-conflict nation. This study relies on scholarship surrounding reintegration in post-conflict societies—and, humanitarian reports analyzing the more recent on-the-ground facts and data. Provided this context, the subsequent sections will briefly summarize the view of literature surrounding the conflict leading to the independence of South Sudan and define the key terms used in this study.

#### **E. LITERATURE REVIEW AND DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS**

The return of refugees to their homeland is a noble achievement in the aftermath of protracted violence and civil war. However, a return to a country of origin is not enough for breaking the cycle of violence, conflict, and forced displacement. In order to mitigate the potential threat to stability that returnee reintegration entails, it is important to understand the implications of reintegration programs. Experts in peace and security

studies consider reintegration of returning refugees as a part of peace building, which aims at preventing war-torn countries from relapsing into violence.<sup>3</sup> The increasing awareness and engagement in the challenges of return has grown by government and refugee and migration policy-makers, and return increasingly has been viewed as having implications for not just individuals, but also for communities of origin and the wider process of redevelopment.<sup>4</sup>

However, the literature reveals that return is not enough to promote peace; rather, return needs to be sustainable.<sup>5</sup> In this case, return is ‘sustainable’ if the returnee is not forced back into displacement again; therefore, sustainability relies on peace and security of the environment.<sup>6</sup> Thus, UNHCR states in its Dialogue on Voluntary Repatriation and Sustainable Reintegration in Africa, “Experience shows that if the issue of sustainability or reintegration of refugee and displaced populations is not addressed properly, the countries concerned will almost inevitably slide back into conflict.”<sup>7</sup>

Short and long-term reconstruction and development strategies in emerging post-conflict environments require defining the distinction between these two approaches. The literature reveals that post-conflict emergent aid strategy must be distinguished from that of longer-term development aid strategy. Post-conflict aid objectives include providing short-term immediate emergency relief and reconstruction efforts such as rebuilding infrastructure and roads.<sup>8</sup> Fulvio Attina, a prominent analyst, argues that while conflict is the main driver of insecurity in fragile environments, a short-term strategy remains rooted

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<sup>3</sup> Charles Webel and Johan Galtung, *Handbook of Peace and Conflict Studies* (New York: Routledge, 2007).

<sup>4</sup>Richard Black and Saskia Gent, “Defining, Measuring and Influencing Sustainable Return: The Case of the Balkans,” *Development Research Centre on Migration* (Brighton, United Kingdom: Sussex Centre for Migration Research, 2004).

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, “Sustainable Reintegration of Returnees and Displaced Populations in Africa,” Discussion Paper No. 2 (Geneva, Switzerland: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2004).

<sup>8</sup> Graciana Del Castillo, *Rebuilding War-Torn States: The Challenge of Post-Conflict Economic Reconstruction* (England: Oxford University Press, 2008).

in conflict whereby limiting the framework to the “conflict-oriented narrative,” rather than promoting sustainable outcomes beyond this simple “intervention horizon.”<sup>9</sup> A short-term, or humanitarian aid, strategy in a post-conflict society primarily focuses on providing immediate needs with the sole goal of saving lives.<sup>10</sup> Much of the literature argues that the short-term emergent aid strategy prevents a holistic and sustainable framework for reconstruction to be implemented<sup>11</sup>—further adding to the dependence on aid thereby stunting opportunities for internal growth and stabilization. Additionally, Fulvio argues that the primary concern of this immediate-focused approach is to “...contain or halt violence (‘conflict management’) and tackle short-term emergency needs in order to create favorable conditions for the parties to negotiate a peace agreement (‘conflict resolution’).”<sup>12</sup>

In contrast, the literature reveals that long-term, or reconstruction aid, aims at improving and preserving the living conditions of the populations.<sup>13</sup> The focal point of development aid is long-term growth, often with a focus on economic development.<sup>14</sup> Graciana Del Castillo argues:

Many of the civil wars and other forms of internal conflicts of recent decades resulted from economic and political underdevelopment, were often triggered by ethnic, religious, or ideological factors, and involved failed states or breakaway provinces or territories.<sup>15</sup>

Additionally, much of the literature determines that the longer-term reintegration and reconstruction approach is especially challenged in a stagnant economic environment.<sup>16</sup> The literature also reveals that a key element in a long-term development

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<sup>9</sup> Fulvio Attina, *The Politics and Policies of Relief, Aid, and Reconstruction* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Graciana Del Castillo, *Rebuilding War-Torn States: The Challenge of Post-Conflict Economic Reconstruction* (England: Oxford University Press, 2008).

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 9.

strategy includes the participation of the locals.<sup>17</sup> In fact, as determined by the study of South Sudan, this approach allows returnees to participate in their own development opportunities, rather than continuing the dependence on the aid. In addition, a long-term strategy—focused on livelihoods—empowers struggling post-conflict societies whereby involving them in the nation’s path of stabilization and reconstruction.

The elements confronting forced displacement and returnee reintegration in a post-war context is a complex task. Many analysts agree that successful reintegration is imperative for national reconciliation and for the prevention of reoccurring violence.<sup>18</sup> Elizabeth Colson has argued that ethnographic methodology on forced migration and refugee studies must acknowledge the complexity of forced displacement and not solely limit the examination to a single aspect.<sup>19</sup> She argues that discreet factors spanning multiple disciplines fundamentally influence the nature of refugee dynamics.

Given the multitude of analytical orientations and prisms of analysis suggested by Colson, various theoretical approaches to refugee studies highlight the convergence, divergence of, and difficulties in conceptualizing refugee return and reintegration.<sup>20</sup> One such scholarly camp posits that comprehensive responses to post-war challenges are critical to addressing issues of failed states,<sup>21</sup> broken bonds between state and society,<sup>22</sup> socio-economic problems, as well as human rights.<sup>23</sup> According to some experts, larger issues such as security, economic development, and human rights are at the origin of

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<sup>17</sup> Peter Oakley, *Projects with People: The Practice of Participation in Rural Development* (Geneva: International Labor Office, 1991).

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>19</sup> Elizabeth Colson, “Linkages Methodology: No Man is an Island,” *Journal of Refugee Studies* 20, no. 2 (2007): 320–333.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> Constance Anthony, “Africa’s Refugee Crisis: State Building in Political Perspective,” *International Migration Review* 25, no.3 (1991): 574–591.

<sup>22</sup> Robert I. Rotberg, *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004).

<sup>23</sup> Anne Hammerstad, “Making or Breaking the Conflict Cycle: The Relationship between Underdevelopment, Conflict and Forced Migration” (Oxford, England: Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford, 2005).

conflicts that generate millions of refugees.<sup>24</sup> In post-conflict situations, the sustainable reintegration of refugees depends mostly on the solutions to these same broad issues. It is further argued that the risk of renewed armed conflict is generally high and that unless typical post-war challenges are properly met; hard-earned stability is easily jeopardized in post-war contexts.

## **1. Conflict in South Sudan Defined**

The objective of this section and the subsequent definition sections is to analyze existing scholarship on the historical progression of South Sudan's independence, the resultant refugee and IDP crises, and the challenges to reintegration through the lens of four key topical areas. Specifically, existing scholarship on refugees, returnees and reintegration, livelihoods, and protection, enhance understanding of the central elements that shape the character of the post-conflict return of displaced populations. The protracted conflict in South Sudan reflects a diverse set of drivers. According to much of the literature, the conflict is often viewed as: conflicts within Sudan, conflicts within South Sudan, and the outstanding political and economic issues between the two countries.<sup>25</sup> The root causes of the conflicts vary in scope, from religious tensions to communal, inter-, and intra-tribal regional conflicts or competition over dwindling natural resources and political power positions.<sup>26</sup> Persistence of conflict has remained modern Sudan's defining characteristic. From the outside, the delineations of conflict in Sudan may seem obvious given the ethnic and religious complexity of the predominantly Arab and religiously Muslim population living mostly in the north and the African

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<sup>24</sup> Constance Anthony, "Africa's Refugee Crisis: State Building in Political Perspective," *International Migration Review* 25, no. 3 (1991): 574–591.

<sup>25</sup> Matthew LeRiche and Matthew Arnold, *South Sudan: From Revolution to Independence* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).

<sup>26</sup> Anne Hammerstad, "Making or Breaking the Conflict Cycle: The Relationship between Underdevelopment, Conflict and Forced Migration" (Oxford, England: Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford, 2005).

Christians mainly residing in the south. Internally, however, the country is much more complex, with sharp cleavages that manifest along ethnic, racial, tribal, geographic, and religious lines.<sup>27</sup>

Sudan has represented small kingdoms and principalities from the beginning, when Egypt conquered and unified the northern portion of the country, while the British colonized the southern region.<sup>28</sup> Together, they ruled the territory known as “Sudan” in a co-dominion arrangement. Egypt’s control in the north contributed to the spread of Islam in the north, while British influence in the south prevented Islam from gaining converts there. In the south, the non-Arab tribes retained a mix of traditional religions and some converts to Christianity.<sup>29</sup> In order to properly frame this discussion of conflict in South Sudan with the key factors and challenges shaping the refugee and IDP crises, it is important to examine how the literature defines the terms: refugees and internally displaced persons, returnees and reintegration, livelihood, and protection.

## **2. Refugees Defined**

According to the United States Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, a refugee is someone who flees from one country to another and thereby crosses an international border.<sup>30</sup> This conceptualization draws its meaning from Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that not only recognizes the right of a person to seek refuge from persecution in another country but expands upon that notion by stating that a refugee is one who:

...owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that

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<sup>27</sup>Douglas H. Johnson, *Causes of Sudan’s Civil Wars* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2006).

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup>Matthew LeRiche and Matthew Arnold, *South Sudan: From Revolution to Independence* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).

<sup>30</sup> United States Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, United States Committee for Refugees World Refugee Survey (January 1, 1999), <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3ae6a8ccc.html>.

country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.<sup>31</sup>

This definition has subsequently formed the cornerstone for how refugees are assigned their legal statuses. Refugee status is determined and defined by the 1950 Statutes of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the 1951 UN Convention on the Status of Refugees and its 1967 protocol, and the 1969 Convention Governing Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa of the Organization of African Unity (OAU).<sup>32</sup> Refugee status designation is a state level activity; however, in the absence of formalized or functional national refugee status determination systems, UNHCR exercises its international mandate to assign refugee status through its administered processes.<sup>33</sup> These processes are used to differentiate the refugee from asylum seekers and thereby afford them the benefits associated with their newly received legal designation. Of note, the processes can be tailored to suit the individual or scaled to meet the needs of a group and may vary in implementation between UNHCR offices.<sup>34</sup>

In contrast to these expansive definitions of refugees, British human rights activist Andrew Shacknove argues, “refugee status should only be granted to persons whose government fails to protect their basic needs, who have no remaining recourse other than to seek international restitution of these needs, and who are so situated that international assistance is possible.”<sup>35</sup> Most South Sudanese refugees fit Shacknove’s preconditions as they can be found in bordering countries such as Chad and Kenya and are living in precarious living circumstances. Many of their shelters are made of fabrics or sticks,

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<sup>31</sup> United Nations General Assembly, “Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees,” *United Nations Treaty Series*, 189 (1951, July): 137, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3be01b964.html>

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Policy on Refugee Protection and Solutions in Urban Areas* (September 2009): 11–12.

<sup>34</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Procedural Standards for Refugee Status Determination Under UNHCR’s Mandate* (November 20, 2003): 1–2, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/42d66dd84.html>

<sup>35</sup> Andrew E. Shacknove, “Who is a Refugee?” *Ethics*, 95, no. 2 (January 1985): 274–284.



which are very poor protection against extreme weather conditions often found in this region of Africa. The rainy season further exacerbates the humanitarian situation, making their settlements even more inaccessible to international humanitarian agencies. Internally displaced persons (IDPs) are characterized by the same conditions as refugees, but have not actually crossed an international border. In many ways, IDPs can find themselves in a particularly vulnerable position, as they are still close and prone to the violence that they fled from. In addition, many IDPs are not as likely to receive relief assistance as those who crossed the international border. Relief agencies are often unable to reach IDPs due to security risks.

### **3. Returnees and Reintegration Defined**

The term “returnee” covers a broad spectrum of people, with different reasons for returning and very different economic and social prospects.<sup>36</sup> According to a few experts, Sara Pantuliano et al, there are three main groups, comprising both men and women, of a yet undetermined size:

1. Well-educated returnees, many of whom were part of the Southern Diaspora during the civil war, living as far afield as the US and Cuba as well as neighboring Kenya and Uganda. Some also returning from Khartoum.
2. Semi-skilled returnees, both IDPs and refugees, many of whom gained their skills and experience during their displacement.
3. Unskilled returnees who had no chance to develop skills during displacement, especially if they ended up in rural areas.<sup>37</sup>

Officials of the GoSS and international agencies in the field stress the importance of reintegration of returnees. However, beyond this broadly stated concern, ‘reintegration’ seems to mean different things to different individuals and organizations.

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<sup>36</sup> Sara Pantuliano, Margie Buchanan-Smith, Paul Murphy and Irina Mosel, *The Long Road Home: Opportunities and Obstacles to the Reintegration of IDPs and Refugees returning to Southern Sudan and the Three Areas* (London, England: Humanitarian Policy Group, Overseas Development Institute, 2008).

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

The social instability caused by conflicts and people's movements in search of human security and livelihood opportunities seem to have added to the complexity of reintegration.

Reintegration implies a reunion or a coherent regrouping of a community that disintegrated due to war and displacement. South Sudan is an interesting case, though, as the return process also involves integration of different groups for the first time. UNHCR, which actively engages in contributing to reintegration, defines reintegration as “the progressive establishment of conditions which enable returnees and their communities to exercise their social, economic, civil, political and cultural rights, and on that basis to enjoy peaceful, productive and dignified lives.”<sup>38</sup> The GoSS offers the following definition of reintegration in the Land Act of 2009, “Reintegration means the re-entry of formerly internally displaced persons into the social, economic, cultural and political fabric of their original community.”<sup>39</sup>

South Sudanese returning to their homeland after the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), and after independence, particularly face challenges in the setting of a lack of basic infrastructure and means of living. Due to the harsh conditions of the environment and the measure of destruction that took place to the overall land of South Sudan in the aftermath of decades of civil war, resources crucial for human survival and creation of viable livelihoods are severely limited or have been completely destroyed. This setting can be especially difficult for returnees and those in their home communities to re-build their lives.

#### **4. Livelihoods Defined**

According to an expert in approaches to sustainable livelihoods for the rural poor, Diana Carney, the concept of ‘livelihood’ is analytically defined as “comprising the capabilities, assets and activities required for a means of living,” and has been identified

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<sup>38</sup> Mark Duffield, Khassim Diagne and Vicky Tennant, *Evaluation of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Returnee Integration Programme in South Sudan* (Geneva: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Policy Development and Evaluation Service, 2008).

<sup>39</sup> Government of South Sudan, *The Land Act of South Sudan* (Juba, South Sudan: 2009).

as a framework or approach to poverty reduction, rather than just components of social policy.<sup>40</sup> Of note, livelihood strategy promotes involvement and ownership from South Sudanese in managing their own economic status, rather than having to rely on relief aid packages for survival. The concept of livelihoods became prominent in the mid-1980s, particularly with work by Robert Chambers and the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex.<sup>41</sup> Chambers and Conway defined a livelihood as “the capabilities, assets and strategies required for a means of living.”<sup>42</sup> At its most basic, a ‘livelihood approach,’ according to Chambers, is one that takes as its starting point the actual livelihood strategies of people; it looks at where people are, what they have and what their needs and interests are.<sup>43</sup>

Livelihood activities may range from agriculture support, market and income support or influencing policies on land rights. Livelihood strategies according to another expert:

...encompass what people do, such as agriculture and wage labor, and what they have, including their natural (land, forest, products, water), physical (livestock, shelter, tools, materials), social (extended family and other social networks), financial (income, credit, investments) and human assets (education, skills, and health).<sup>44</sup>

Livelihoods in South Sudan have often been cited as linked to both rich and abundant natural resources and the terrible consequences of violent civil conflict.<sup>45</sup> The conflict also took a devastating toll on livelihoods. Farmers reduced their plantings,

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<sup>40</sup> Diana Carney, *Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: What Contribution Can We Make?* (London, England: Department for International Development, 1998).

<sup>41</sup> Robert Chambers and Gordon Conway, *Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: Practical Concepts for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Discussion Paper 296 (Brighton, UK: Institute of Development Studies, 1992).

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Robert Chambers, *Poverty and Livelihoods: Whose Reality Counts?* Discussion Paper 347 (Brighton, UK: Institute of Development Studies, 1995).

<sup>44</sup> Sorcha Callaghan and Susanne Jaspars, *Challenging Choice: Protection and Livelihoods in Conflict, Case Studies from Darfur, Chechnya, Sri Lanka, and the Occupied Palestinian Territories* (London, England: Humanitarian Policy Group, Overseas Development Institute, 2010).

<sup>45</sup> United States Agency for International Development (USAID), *Southern Sudan Livelihood Profiles* (Washington, DC: USAID: 2006), [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PNADH322.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADH322.pdf).

especially on land distant from their homes; access to markets and social facilities was disrupted; and diversified livelihood activities, such as fishing and hunting, were constrained.<sup>46</sup> Livelihood systems in South Sudan are highly dependent on mobility and trade. Continuous fighting over the past 20 years and its attendant consequences have continually undermined access to markets and migration, and denied households the opportunity to effectively address structural seasonal food deficits.<sup>47</sup>

It is important to note that livelihoods are also shifting, as many households—especially those of returnees—are settling in urban areas in South Sudan in the hope for more opportunity than in rural areas.<sup>48</sup> While there are no overall statistical trends on urbanization in South Sudan, there is clear evidence that cities and towns are growing rapidly.<sup>49</sup> Reasons for migrating to urban areas (especially the new capital city, Juba) include a combination of better economic and employment prospects owing to the presence of regional government, international organizations and private businesses;<sup>50</sup> perceptions of better access to health and social services; the location of SPLA headquarters in Juba, attracting soldiers and their families;<sup>51</sup> having relatives in town; drought in rural areas; and insecurity owing to Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) attacks and cattle raiding in the southernmost regions of South Sudan.<sup>52</sup> The literature provides limited evidence of specific examples of successful livelihood recovery, and few insights

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<sup>46</sup> Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) and World Food Programme (WFP), *Crop and Food Security Assessment Mission to Southern Sudan* (Rome, Italy: FAO and WFP, 2010), <http://www.wfp.org/content/south-sudan-fao-wfp-crop-and-food-security-assessment-mission-february-2013>.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Sarah Bailey and Simon Harragin, “Food Assistance, Reintegration and Dependency in Southern Sudan” (London, England: Humanitarian Policy Group, Overseas Development Institute, and World Food Programme, 2009).

<sup>49</sup> Daniel Maxwell, Kristen Gelsdorf, and Martina Santschi, “Livelihoods, Basic Services and Social Protection in South Sudan,” Feinstein International Center, July 1, 2012, <http://www.odi.org.uk/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/7716.pdf>

<sup>50</sup> Ellen Martin and Irina Mosel, *City Limits: Urbanization and Vulnerability in Sudan, Juba Case Study* (London, England: Humanitarian Policy Group and the Overseas Development Institute, 2011).

<sup>51</sup> Jason Matus, “The Future of Food Security in the Three Areas of Sudan,” *Disasters* 31 (2007): 91–103.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 50.

into the processes that have helped bring this about. However, in general, analysts agree that livelihood recovery in South Sudan has been especially rapid in areas that have been least affected by conflict and where populations have gained greater access to arable land, infrastructure and services.<sup>53</sup> Livelihood recovery has also been rapid for IDPs who return home with skills and are able to access land. Some specific conditions for and trends of livelihood recovery include the following.

## **5. Protection Defined**

In addition, people's rights are protected in conflict and post-conflict zones by a variety of international and national laws, including international humanitarian law (IHL), international human rights law, refugee law and national legislation.<sup>54</sup> According to an ICRC report, the most commonly accepted definition of protection is, "all activities aimed at obtaining full respect for the rights of the individual in accordance with the letter and spirit of the relevant bodies of law."<sup>55</sup> Susanne Jaspars states that protection is related to seeking assurance for the safety of civilians from acute harm, while also being concerned with preventing or mitigating the most damaging effects of violence on a civilian population.<sup>56</sup> Protection is an essential element to encourage the return of refugees and IDPs back to Sudan. Furthermore, protection helps to establish stability and the confidence for the population to resume to life as it was before the interruption of conflict.

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<sup>53</sup>Ellen Martin and Irina Mosel, *City Limits: Urbanization and Vulnerability in Sudan, Juba Case Study* (London, England: Humanitarian Policy Group, and the Overseas Development Institute, 2011).

<sup>54</sup> Sorcha Callaghan and Susanne Jaspars, *Challenging Choice: Protection and Livelihoods in Conflict, Case Studies from Darfur, Chechnya, Sri Lanka, and the Occupied Palestinian Territories* (London, England: Humanitarian Policy Group, Overseas Development Institute, 2010).

<sup>55</sup>Gioffi Caversazio, *Strengthening Protection in War: A Search for Professional Standards* (Geneva: International Committee of the Red Cross, 2001).

<sup>56</sup> Susanne Jaspars, Sorcha O'Callaghan and Elizabeth Stites, *Linking Livelihoods and Protection: A Preliminary Analysis Based on a Review of the Literature and Agency Practice* (London, England: Humanitarian Policy Group, Overseas Development Institute, 2007).

## **F. CONCLUSION**

The need for a broad method to the reintegration approach requires a re-constructing about the external factors affecting the possibility for durable and sustainable strategies, as well as the focus on the immediate surface needs of the returnees. The aid and food rations received by humanitarian agencies are often the principal source of initial livelihoods for returnees, perhaps the only for some. Furthermore, it has been noted that the supply of relief can create a dependency condition, further stunting the economic growth of local communities. The continuous lack of peace and security in South Sudan has made life particularly harsh for those who are either living as internally displaced persons or as refugees. Refugee experience and livelihoods are key factors affecting their access to basic services and land for cultivation and establishing homesteads upon return. This thesis argues that without returnees' access to key livelihood opportunities, the reintegration of returning refugees might fail to the extent that it may jeopardize the South Sudan's hard-won independence.

This thesis is organized into an introduction and four chapters: Chapter II provides the context of conflict in the case study of South Sudan, from independence in 1956 until independence on July 9, 2011, and introduces the refugee and internally displaced person crisis (IDP). Chapter III examines short and long-term returnee reintegration programs of this case study and analyzes the links to livelihood strategies. Chapter IV addresses opportunities for growth and possible livelihood prospects for returning refugees. Finally, Chapter V provides conclusions and recommendations from the study.

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## II. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF REFUGEE CRISIS IN SOUTH SUDAN

The case study of South Sudan provides a clear example of the challenges an emerging post-conflict society faces in confronting root causes of conflict to ensure a sustainable reintegration of returnees, and not revert to the cycle of decades of violence. Persistence of conflict and civil wars has remained modern Sudan's defining characteristic. From the outside, the origins of strife may seem obvious given the ethnic and religious complexity of the predominantly Arab and religiously Muslim population living mostly in the north and the African animists and Christians mainly residing in the south. The protracted conflict is frequently presented as either the continuation of "an age-old confrontation between varying 'cultures' defined by blood lines (i.e. 'Arabs' vs. 'Africans'), or the consequence of an artificial division imposed by colonial powers."<sup>57</sup> Internally, however, the country is much more complex—and, ethnic and religious differences alone do not explain the cause of conflict.

According to a prominent historian of this region, Douglas Johnson, Sudan's recurring civil wars have been a product of several historical factors, including: the pattern of governance, the introduction to a particular brand of militant Islam, inequalities in economic, educational and political development, and a nationalist movement among the northern elite. While all of these features are components and cause for hostility, not one single issue solely encapsulates it. While there are endless angles from which to explore the causes of this protracted conflict, the emphasis for the purposes of this paper will briefly focus on the following issues related to the conflict: geography and natural resources, ethnicity and religion, the historical context including the two civil wars, and finally, the independence of South Sudan. Highlighting these prominent elements in the Sudanese conflict will illustrate this young nation's challenge in determining long-term sustainable approach to reintegration.

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<sup>57</sup> Douglas H. Johnson, *The Root Causes of Sudan's Civil Wars* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2003).



## A. BRIEF HISTORY OF SOUTH SUDAN

The Sudan, pre-2011, was a collection of small, independent kingdoms and principalities from its beginning when Egypt conquered and unified the northern portion of the country, while the British colonized the southern region.<sup>58</sup> The South Sudan conflict erupted in the seventeenth century when kingdoms based along the Nile River fought against the people of inland Sudan.<sup>59</sup> The Ottoman-Egyptian rule from 1820–1898 invading forces extracted some two million slaves from the “land of the Blacks” while the Anglo-Egyptian era from 1899–1955 isolated and marginalized the southerners.<sup>60</sup> The British viewed the south as a buffer that could preserve English values and beliefs, such as Christianity, and eventually be developed and segregated into a separate political entity or integrated into British East Africa.<sup>61</sup> In the north, Egypt encouraged Islamic values and political control of the country. Consequently, as the overwhelming disproportionate economic and political power came to be centered in the north, the two regions’ cultural and religious identities became greatly divisive.<sup>62</sup> Since the days of the Anglo-Egyptian ruling, Sudan had been officially divided into two areas: the north and the south and many divisions have surfaced from the legacies of colonialism in Sudan.

In 1953, the United Kingdom and Egypt concluded an agreement providing the Sudanese self-government. The first civil war, also known as the “Anyā-Nya” meaning the “snake venom,” formed the southern Sudanese military movement in order to fight

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<sup>58</sup>Sarnata Reynolds, “South Sudan Nationality: Commit Now Avoids Conflict Later,” *Refugees International Field Report* (May 29, 2012), [http://www.refugeesinternational.org/sites/default/files/052912\\_South\\_Sudan\\_Nationality%20letterhead.pdf](http://www.refugeesinternational.org/sites/default/files/052912_South_Sudan_Nationality%20letterhead.pdf).

<sup>59</sup> Ministry of Agriculture, “Post-Conflict Development Agriculture in South Sudan: Perspective on Approaches to Capacity Strengthening” (Juba, South Sudan: Cooperative and Rural Development, Directorate of Research, Extension and Training, 2011).

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> International Crisis Group, “God, Oil and Country: Changing the Logic of War in Sudan,” Brussels, Belgium: International Crisis Group Press, January 2002, <http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/africa/hornofafrica/sudan/God%20Oil%20and%20Country%20Canging%20the%20Logic%20of%20War%20in%20Sudan.pdf>.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

against being underrepresented and discriminated against.<sup>63</sup> From 1955 to 1972, this violent civil war was centered on the Sudanese government and southern rebels who demanded greater sovereignty for southern Sudan. Southerners were outraged by their exclusion from the bureaucracy and the security sector and the increasingly racial, the religious persecution by state institutions, and the developing disparity in economic development.<sup>64</sup> As the government in the north refused to acknowledge the lack of southern political and economic power, the war intensified and over half a million southerners fled as refugees.<sup>65</sup>

The southerners were wary of increased marginalization by the north, on the basis of the “Sudanisation” process, which was seen as favoring the better-educated northerners over the peripheral populations.<sup>66</sup> The war was further fuelled by the “Islamization” policies of subsequent post-independence governments. According to one expert, Matthew LeRiche, this fighting resulted in an estimated 500,000 casualties, 180,000 refugees and up to one million internally displaced civilians.<sup>67</sup> The war ended with the 1972 Addis Ababa Agreement, which granted significant regional autonomy to southern Sudan on internal issues.<sup>68</sup> However, many southerners felt that this peace agreement was weak and unclear and that Khartoum did not adequately adhere to the provisions.

The Addis Ababa agreement that ended the first civil war failed to completely dispel the tensions that had originally caused it, particularly in view of the south, and

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<sup>63</sup> International Crisis Group, “God, Oil and Country: Changing the Logic of War in Sudan,” Brussels, Belgium: International Crisis Group Press, January 2002, <http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/africa/hornofafrica/sudan/God%20Oil%20and%20Country%20C hanging%20the%20Logic%20of%20War%20in%20Sudan.pdf>.

<sup>64</sup> Matthew LeRiche and Matthew Arnold, *South Sudan: From Revolution to Independence* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Ministry of Agriculture, “Post-Conflict Development Agriculture in South Sudan: Perspective on Approaches to Capacity Strengthening” (Juba, South Sudan: Cooperative and Rural Development, Directorate of Research, Extension and Training, 2011).

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Robert O. Collins, *A History of Modern Sudan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

when Shari'a, or Islamic law, was introduced, the north-south conflict was reignited.<sup>69</sup> The second civil war, fought between the central Sudanese government and the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA), began in May 1983 with the collapse of the Addis Ababa Agreement. Matthew LeRiche et al described that the "resumption of war fed off historic southern resentments over the continuous underdevelopment, political marginalization and religious discrimination," which were the main drivers of the first civil war.<sup>70</sup>

The northern desire to control southern resources also significantly increased the tensions of the second civil war, which has continuously been a source of conflict and animosity. Many analysts agree that the expansion of oil wealth greatly contributed to the second phase of Sudan's civil wars, and that the sharing of oil revenue was a key component of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). These two periods of civil war brought great suffering particularly to the population in the discriminated south where an estimated 1.5 million people have perished.<sup>71</sup> The United States Committee for Refugees (USCR) reports put that figure that as many as 1.9 million people have died since 1983 due to conflict in Sudan.<sup>72</sup>

## **B. INDEPENDENCE OF SOUTH SUDAN**

In the signing of the CPA, the Sudanese People's Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M) had "come closer to achieving the goals of self-determination, Southern autonomy, independence or radical national transformation."<sup>73</sup> The CPA offered guarantees to secure the people of southern Sudan with an option for succession within six years. Additionally, this peace agreement established a new Government of National Unity in the north and an interim Government of South Sudan (GoSS). This agreement

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<sup>69</sup> Robert O. Collins, *A History of Modern Sudan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

<sup>70</sup> Matthew LeRiche and Matthew Arnold, *South Sudan: From Revolution to Independence* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> United States Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, U.S. Committee for Refugees World Refugee Survey (1 January 1999), <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3ae6a8ccc.html>.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

included a permanent ceasefire and accord on wealth and power sharing. Furthermore, it called for a six-year interim period, during which the National Congress Party (NCP) and the southern-based SPLM share control of a Government of National Unity (GoNU) and at the end of which southerners have the right to vote on whether to remain part of a united Sudan or secede.<sup>74</sup> Concluding a set date of 2009 for democratic elections, the CPA was followed by a referendum on self-determination for South Sudan. Elections were eventually held in April 2010 and the referendum in January 2011, when the majority of the people voted in favor of independence.<sup>75</sup> Millions of Southern Sudanese exercised their hard-won right to self-determination by voting for ‘separation’ in a historic referendum to secede from Sudan. On July 9, 2011, the Republic of South Sudan (RoSS) officially declared independence; almost all who voted were in support of seceding from Sudan.

South Sudan’s declaration of independence in July 2011 marked the end of the peace agreement, and subsequently, the SPLA became the new country’s army. Ideally, allowing South Sudan to become a newly independent nation would have eased tensions between the deeply divided regions. However, several dynamics continue to underpin the years of civil war, most principally disputes over religion, resources, governance and self-determination.<sup>76</sup> In addition, unresolved border disputes and tension over natural resources in the Blue Nile and South Kordofan states has resulted in a spiral of violence that has sent hundreds of thousands of Sudanese into neighboring countries as refugees.<sup>77</sup>

As Matthew LeRiche describes, “South Sudan, previously referred to as Southern Sudan, is less a result of a deliberate process of asserting the differences between

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<sup>74</sup> Matthew LeRiche and Matthew Arnold, *South Sudan: From Revolution to Independence* (new York: Columbia University Press, 2012).

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> International Crisis Group, “God, Oil and Country: Changing the Logic of War in Sudan,” Brussels, Belgium: International Crisis Group Press, January 2002, <http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/africa/hornofafrica/sudan/God%20Oil%20and%20Country%20C hanging%20the%20Logic%20of%20War%20in%20Sudan.pdf>.

<sup>77</sup> Sarnata Reynolds, “South Sudan Nationality: Commit Now Avoids Conflict Later,” *Refugees International Field Report* (May 29, 2012), [http://www.refugeesinternational.org/sites/default/files/052912\\_South\\_Sudan\\_Nationality%20letterhead.pdf](http://www.refugeesinternational.org/sites/default/files/052912_South_Sudan_Nationality%20letterhead.pdf).

northern and southern peoples, and more the result of a twentieth-century struggle over power, framed by the various geopolitical forces that defined the time.”<sup>78</sup> As the newest nation in the world, the Republic of South Sudan (RoSS) is undertaking the immense and challenging task of building a nation state. This task is difficult in and of itself, but RoSS also faces the “challenge of millions of displaced people, internal and external conflict, widespread food insecurity, a stagnant economy, and a population that includes dozens of tribes, ethnicities, indigenous communities and identities,” as Sarnata Reynold describes.<sup>79</sup>

### C. POST-INDEPENDENCE CHALLENGES

South Sudan remains fragile in the interim period between post-war and the pre-stabilization phase that it currently straddles. Especially in this interim period, experts suggest that stabilization efforts must seek the balance of adequate security and necessary development.<sup>80</sup> In order to achieve this balance, the driving forces behind the war need to be determined and analyzed so as to not revert back to the same cycles of violence. Chei Mareng echoes this point in his statement, “In many cases [of post-conflict societies], reversions occur because the conditions are not ripe in the immediate fragile post-war environment...”<sup>81</sup> The main post-independence challenges that South Sudan confronts have also been causes of war between the now divided Sudan. This section expands on two dominant drivers of the war, including: ethnic and religious tensions, and natural resources. Additionally, these components are integral to establish sustainable conditions for the return of refugees and IDPs and enhances the ability of the population to resume to life as it was before the conflict.

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<sup>78</sup> Matthew LeRiche and Matthew Arnold, *South Sudan: From Revolution to Independence* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).

<sup>79</sup> Chuei D. Mareng, “The Sudan’s Dimensions: A Country Divided by Ethnicity and Religion,” *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations*, 3, no.12 (2009): 532–539.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 78.

## 1. Ethnic and Religious Tension

This subcategory seeks to understand the ethnic and religious differences that pose a constant threat to peace and stability in South Sudan. Chuei Mareng, suggests, “There is a sense that all conflicts in the country [former Sudan] have a political basis in which also has been acquired an ethnic dimension, with civilians being deliberately targeted on their basis of ethnicity.”<sup>82</sup> The disorder of political structures relating to ethnic groups has been a significant contributor to the power struggle among the Sudanese communities.<sup>83</sup> Sudan has two distinct cultures, the Arab and Black-African, with hundreds of tribal divisions and language groups, which make effective collaboration among them a major problem.<sup>84</sup>

The historical process that has separated the Arab Muslim north and the African south have its roots in the Arabization and the Islamization of the north in the resistance to those forces in the south.<sup>85</sup> The assimilation processes have favored the Arab religion and culture over the African race, religions, and cultures, which remained prevalent in the south.<sup>86</sup> Sudanese contact and interaction with the Middle East via Egypt date back thousands of years, taking the form of trade in ivory, gold, and other commodities. Arab traders settled among the indigenous population and integrated themselves; they had the advantage of wealth, with which the Sudanese wanted to associate, and eventually the Sudanese identified with the Arabs. The process intensified after the advent of Islam in the seventh and ninth centuries, and concluded with peace accords with the northern peoples of Nubia and Beja. These accords established remote Arab control over the country, opened the channels of communication with the Arab world, guaranteed

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<sup>82</sup> Chuei D. Mareng, “The Sudan’s Dimensions: A Country Divided by Ethnicity and Religion,” *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations*, 3, no.12 (2009): 532–539.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Global Security Organization, “Darfur Liberation Front, Sudan Liberation Movement” (Juba, South Sudan: Sudan Liberation Army, Justice and Equality Movement, 2004), <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/para/darfur.htm>.

<sup>85</sup> Matthew LeRiche and Matthew Arnold, *South Sudan: From Revolution to Independence* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).

<sup>86</sup> Francis Mading Deng, *War of Visions: Conflict of Identities in the Sudan* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1995).

freedom of movement for the Arabs, protected Arab trade. In addition, they safeguarded Arab settlement, but otherwise left the Sudanese in relative peace, autonomy, and independence. Robert Collins argued that the “central issue” for the Sudanese was their “quest for identity whereby African indigenous cultures could peacefully co-exist with an imported Arab culture in a Sudan dominated by neither.”<sup>87</sup>

Arab migration and settlement in the south, in contrast to the north, were discouraged both by natural barriers, and by the difficult living conditions. The few Arab adventurers who engaged in slave raids were not interested in Arabizing and Islamizing the southerners, as that would have taken their prey from the land of war, and placed them in the category of land of Islam, thereby protecting them from slavery. The relationship between religion and the state, in particular the role of shari’a, or Islamic Law, which broadly imposes the upright path for the Muslim community in public and private affairs. Such religious and race relations have been intertwined, since Islam in the Sudan has been closely connected with Arabism as a racial, ethnic, and cultural phenomenon. The spread of Islam eventually changed the nature of Sudanese society and facilitated the division of the country into north and south.<sup>88</sup> Islam also fostered political unity, economic growth, and educational development among its own adherents; however, these benefits were restricted largely to urban and commercial centers.

Inter- and intra-tribal tensions leading to violence and conflict have been compounded by the diversity of ethnic and linguistic groups. The population of the former Sudan, pre-2011, totaled over 25 million people divided among approximately 19 major ethnic groups and 597 sub-groups.<sup>89</sup> While Arabic was the official language and mother tongue of the majority of the Sudanese; English was the language most used by the educated population in the South.<sup>90</sup> Additionally of note, Sudanese citizens speak

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<sup>87</sup> Robert O. Collins, *A History of Modern Sudan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

<sup>88</sup> LB Lokosang, *South Sudan: The Case for Independence and Learning from Mistakes* (Bloomington, IN: Xlibris Publishing, 2010).

<sup>89</sup> Martha Wegner, “Sudan: Politics and Society,” *Middle East Report*, No. 172, Sudan Finding Common Ground, Middle East Research and Information Project (1991, September–October).

<sup>90</sup> L. L. M. Mohamed Fadlalla, *Short History of Sudan* (Lincoln, NE: Universe Inc, 2004).

more than a hundred other languages, many of which divide further into several dialects. Further dividing complicated ethnic and religious divides has been the differing standards of living and varying levels of economic, social, and cultural development further characterize the north and south, increasing the potential for tension and conflict. Islam, primarily prevalent in the north, due primarily to its geographical location of residing closer to Egypt and the Persian Gulf, and thus had centuries of contact with Arab nomads and traders, while British influence in the south prevented Islam from gaining converts there. The non-Arab tribes retained a mix of traditional religions and some converts to Christianity in the south.<sup>91</sup>

South Sudan has been a country torn apart by the very factors that have woven it a microcosm of Africa and a strategic bridge between Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East. A result of the development is a polarization that has complicated the process of creating a national identity. This crisis has in turn led groups, factions and parties to adopt extreme positions, which are now represented by Islamic fundamentalism in the north and a rejectionist counterforce in the south, while the Islamists have dominated the government since it came to power.<sup>92</sup> As Francis Deng argues that the issue of religion and its implications for the distribution of power and national wealth has continually remained one the most serious obstacles to the resolution of the conflict.<sup>93</sup>

Many authors agree that what southerners resist and resent is not so much assimilation into the Arab-Islamic mold as it is the domination associated with its imposition. This resistance has proved to be the most formidable barrier to establishing an Islamic state in the Sudan.<sup>94</sup> Advocates of shari'a argue that the non-Muslim minority should accommodate themselves to the will of the Muslim majority. Francis Deng argues, "Northern Sudanese, seeing Arabism and Islam as historic symbols of elevation to a

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<sup>91</sup> Matthew LeRiche and Matthew Arnold, *South Sudan: From Revolution to Independence* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).

<sup>92</sup> Francis Mading Deng, *War of Visions: Conflict of Identities in the Sudan* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1995).

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.



higher order of existence, whether racially, ethnically, or spiritually, see a more Africanized secular Sudan not only as a threat of demotion, but indeed an insult by a presumptuous, but not harmless aspirant.”<sup>95</sup> The former Sudan has been known for its varied and complicated historical cultures, ethnicities, and religious groups. The varying ethnicity and religious groups represent one of the most controversial of all the forces driving conflict in Sudan. Islamists have consistently dominated the representation in government, primarily representing the north, resulting in a divergence between the interests of the government and the secular groups, further complicating north and south divisions.

## **2. Natural Resources**

Before the division of the country in 2011, the Republic of Sudan was the largest country by area on the African continent. Sudan shared borders with nine countries, all of which have their own internal stability issues, including: Ethiopia, Egypt, Kenya, Chad, Central African Republic, Uganda, Libya, Eritrea, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The instability of the surrounding countries has contributed to their own challenge of fleeing displaced persons, and many sought refuge in South Sudan.

The majority of Sudan’s natural resources, including: oil, water, fertile soil, and various minerals are found in the south.<sup>96</sup> Provided this, natural resources have been a central reason the north has strongly resisted southern separatism in dividing resource wealth. Water is also one of South Sudan’s greatest natural resources, relying on the Nile river system dominated by the Blue and White Nile rivers. Additionally, the discovery of oil in the south has been one of South Sudan’s richest resources, and also one of the most evident causes of strife between the north and south, mainly over its economic gains.

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<sup>95</sup> Francis M. Deng, “The Sudan: Stop the Carnage,” *The Brookings Review*, 12, no.1 (1994): 6–11.

<sup>96</sup> Ministry of Agriculture, “Post-Conflict Development Agriculture in South Sudan: Perspective on Approaches to Capacity Strengthening” (Juba, South Sudan: Cooperative and Rural Development, Directorate of Research, Extension and Training, 2011).

Some experts estimated that oil reserved in Sudan are more than eight hundred million barrels, while other projections are as high as four billion barrels, making oil an evident cause for competition and violent disputes.<sup>97</sup>

In one of their reports, the International Crisis Group (ICG) noted, “The expansion of oil development has complicated the search for peace, raised the stakes of war and given both sides an increased commitment to the battlefield.”<sup>98</sup> Corruption and greed has become a pressing issue since the discovery of oil, as it proves to be one of the most main resources fueling the economy, furthering the cycle of tension and violence over wealth sharing and natural resources. According to a United Nations report from consolidating the organization’s agencies assistance work in South Sudan in 2012, the current economic outlook remained fragile as oil production immobilized 98 percent of the government’s revenue.<sup>99</sup>

South Sudan’s abundance of natural resources provides a major advantage over many emerging post-conflict countries. In addition to South Sudan’s wealth of natural resources, land has also been a constant theme related to the cause of Sudan’s civil wars, and has continued to be an issue of largely unresolved strife. Northerners have driven local populations off productive agricultural land, which can primarily be found within the south, adding to the population of IDPs. Abundance of resources has also been its nemesis—people for slaves and land, water and forests for wealth accumulation and oil. The vast geographical landscape with a diverse mix of cultures, languages, religions, and ethnicities, combined with competition for resources, has directly affected regional unpredictability and has posed significant challenges towards achieving anything even remotely resembling peace and security as a modern nation-state.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> International Crisis Group, “God, Oil and Country: Changing the Logic of War in Sudan” (Brussels, Belgium: International Crisis Group Press, January 2002), <http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/africa/hornofafrica/sudan/God%20Oil%20and%20Country%20C hanging%20the%20Logic%20of%20War%20in%20Sudan.pdf>.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> United Nations, “South Sudan: Consolidated Appeal 2013 Report,” Office of the Coordination for Humanitarian Affairs, South Sudan, 2012, [http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/South Sudan Consolidated Appeal 2013.pdf](http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/South%20Sudan%20Consolidated%20Appeal%202013.pdf)

<sup>100</sup> Robert O. Collins, *A History of Modern Sudan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

While South Sudan has an abundance of natural resources and arable land, providing means for economic gain, it has also been a cause for the cycle of violence before and since the separation of the former Sudan. Cynthia Arnson argues,

...the income from natural resource commodities such as diamonds and oil [have] appeared to play a unique role not only in financing ongoing and ever-higher levels of violence by rebel and state forces but also in redefining the very purposes of struggle.<sup>101</sup>

Arnson further argues that often such economic resources have been a central component sustaining civil wars, as especially seen in Africa. David Keen warned that conflict resolution strategies need to address the ways in which “contending forces” often have more to gain from a “continuation of conflict than from peace,” providing a deeper element than just simply winning a civil war.<sup>102</sup> Furthermore, Paul Collier, a prominent economist argues, “...natural resource endowments, population size, and ethno-linguistic fractionalization, were powerfully linked to the risk of civil war.”<sup>103</sup> Thus, the connection of resource wealth, and the pursuit of economic gains prove to be a key motivation for civil war. Other experts in the field of the political economy of war suggest that more economic opportunities through job creation will reduce conflict, as insurgent groups are less likely to engage in violence if provided other opportunities.<sup>104</sup>

The separation of Sudan and South Sudan quite evidently occurred due to continuous conflict and civil wars, as described above. The root causes of these wars are complex and involve many different aspects of Sudan’s diversity, including its fight over natural resources, and its history of colonialism which isolated the south, concentrated

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<sup>101</sup> Cynthia Arnson, “The Political Economy of War: Situating the Debate,” In *Rethinking the Economics of War: The Intersection of Need, Creed, and Greed*, by Cynthia Arnson and William Zartman, 1–22 (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 2005).

<sup>102</sup> David Keen, *The Economic Functions of Violence in Civil Wars*, Adelphi Paper 320 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1998): 11.

<sup>103</sup> Paul Collier and Anke Hoefler, “On Economic Causes of Civil War,” Oxford University: Oxford Economic Papers 50 (1998): 563–573.

<sup>104</sup> International Crisis Group, “God, Oil and Country: Changing the Logic of War in Sudan” (Brussels, Belgium: International Crisis Group Press, January 2002), <http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/africa/hornofafrica/sudan/God%20Oil%20and%20Country%20C hanging%20the%20Logic%20of%20War%20in%20Sudan.pdf>.

political and economic gains in the north, and increased the tensions and perceived divisions of different religious and ethnic groups. Echoing this point, a report concludes, “Concentration of power in a small group of competing elites has not granted the majority of Sudanese broader economic and political rights [and] has only deepened the country’s considerable geographic, religious, cultural, and ethnic divides.”<sup>105</sup>

While most authors agree that Muslim/non-Muslim and Arab/African divisions are not simply the answer to Sudan’s unrest, they do seem to agree that the root cause is unequal distribution of power between the dominant Muslim north, and the marginalized Christian south; Islamic fundamentalism is not the main source of tension and conflict in Sudan, nor is it the main reason for the division of the country. Martha Wenger, states:

Arab vs. African, Muslim vs. non-Muslim—these ethnic and religious differences alone do not explain the tensions that underlie Sudan’s ongoing civil war. It is because these ethnic and religious cleavages often coincide with the divide between rich and poor, power and weak, that they become explosive.<sup>106</sup>

#### **D. RESULT OF PROTRACTED CONFLICT IN SOUTH SUDAN: REFUGEE AND INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSON CRISES**

As a result of Sudan’s protracted civil wars—due primarily to the division of power within its varied ethnic and religious groups and the fight over economic gains from natural resources—South Sudan lost many innocent lives in the brutal conflict and faces one of the world’s largest refugee and internally displaced person (IDP) crises in the world today. An estimated two million people have died as a result of the fighting over the past several decades, with victims primarily represented from the south.<sup>107</sup> One report suggests, “Although the precise scale of death and destruction resulting from the civil war will never be known; it has been one of the deadliest conflicts since World War

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<sup>105</sup> International Crisis Group, “God, Oil and Country: Changing the Logic of War in Sudan” (Brussels, Belgium: International Crisis Group Press, January 2002), <http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/africa/hornofafrica/sudan/God%20Oil%20and%20Country%20Changing%20the%20Logic%20of%20War%20in%20Sudan.pdf>.

<sup>106</sup> Martha Wenger, Sudan: Politics and Society, *Middle East Report*, No. 172, Sudan Finding Common Ground (1991, September–October): 3–7.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, 105.

II.”<sup>108</sup> Half a million displaced have sought refuge in the neighboring countries, mainly in Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Kenya, and roughly four million people have been displaced and driven from their communities, primarily to northern cities such as Khartoum.<sup>109</sup> The displaced population in Khartoum has been primarily dispersed among four IDP camps, particularly in the most undeveloped areas of the city.<sup>110</sup> Marc Vincent et al., argued that the displaced in Khartoum have been in an environment of chronic vulnerability due to the suppression from the northern-dominated government of the Sudan. They continually faced discrimination based on their ethnicity, religion, and geographic origin.<sup>111</sup>

According to an Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) report from the latter part of 2010, 4.5 million people were internally displaced in the region of Darfur, the greater Khartoum area, South Kordofan, and the 10 states of South Sudan.<sup>112</sup> Additionally, there were unknown numbers of IDPs in other northern and eastern states.<sup>113</sup> Many predict that at least hundreds, if not thousands, more exist but have not yet been documented—thus, these figures may be unreliable as there are many restricted access to areas where many IDPs live, such as in eastern Sudan, Abyei and parts of Darfur.<sup>114</sup> In addition, determining an accurate number is difficult due to the ongoing population movements occurring daily. Since the beginning of South Sudan’s independence in 2011, reports suggest that approximately 330,000 southerners have been

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<sup>108</sup> Martha Wenger, Sudan: Politics and Society, *Middle East Report*, No. 172, Sudan Finding Common Ground (1991, September–October): 3–7.

<sup>109</sup> Paul Collier and Anke Hoefler, “On Economic Causes of Civil War,” Oxford University: Oxford Economic Papers 50 (1998): 563–573.

<sup>110</sup> Marc Vincent and Birgitte Sorensen, *Caught Between Borders: Response Strategies of the Internally Displaced* (Sterling, VA: Library of Congress, Norwegian Refugee Council, 2001).

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, “Sudan: Durable Solutions Elusive as Southern IDPs Return and Darfur Remains Tense” (Geneva, Switzerland: Norwegian Refugee Council, 2010), [http://www.internaldisplacement.org/8025708F004BE3B1/\(httpInfoFiles\)/246575AD2147601DC125780200526DA9/\\$file/Sudan+-December-2010.pdf](http://www.internaldisplacement.org/8025708F004BE3B1/(httpInfoFiles)/246575AD2147601DC125780200526DA9/$file/Sudan+-December-2010.pdf).

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

displaced by violence within South Sudan alone.<sup>115</sup> After living in harsh conditions in refugee or IDP camps with some 34,000 people in some cases, these displaced groups long to return home.<sup>116</sup> Hundreds of thousands of former refugees and IDPs have been making the treacherous journey back to their homeland since the signing of the peace agreement, and particularly since independence. The logistical strains for return are enormous, as many returnees must travel for weeks through areas of armed conflict in neighboring countries, while also exhausted from dehydration and malnutrition.<sup>117</sup> Reports suggest that at least 20,000 returnees are in Upper Nile State of South Sudan, putting a substantial strain on the limited resources of the host communities.<sup>118</sup> In addition, these returnees often lack the skills, experience and social networks needed to manage the challenges upon return.

When South Sudan was created, citizens of that nation as well as members of the international community had much confidence that this would finally mark the end of decades of violence between northern and southern Sudan. The elation of independence has been accompanied by the challenges of building a new nation. Yet, the most vulnerable populations remain vulnerable with little to return to and with an environment of persistent violence. Without the resolution of the internal tension over religious, ethnic, and economic divides or the disputes over natural resources, there is little optimism for refugees to return to a peaceful homeland of Southern Sudan. These post-independence challenges create difficult circumstances for the reintegration of returnees to South Sudan.

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<sup>115</sup> Peter Orr and Takawira Kapikinyu, "South Sudan: Displacement Plagues the World's Newest Nation," *Refugees International* (December 2011), [http://www.refugeesinternational.org/sites/default/files/121511\\_South\\_Sudan\\_Displacement%20letterhead.pdf](http://www.refugeesinternational.org/sites/default/files/121511_South_Sudan_Displacement%20letterhead.pdf).

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> United Nation Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "South Sudan: Humanitarian Agencies Respond to Refugee Crisis," July 2012, <http://www.unocha.org/top-stories/all-stories/south-sudan-humanitarian-agencies-respond-refugee-crisis>.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

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### **III. THE CHALLENGE OF REINTEGRATING RETURNEES TO SOUTH SUDAN**

This chapter will provide an overview of the challenges confronting returnee reintegration—using South Sudan as the case study—after being displaced by decades of protracted conflict. It is imperative to determine these challenges, as they have also been cause for protracted violence. Therefore, sustainable long-term solutions must focus on a holistic approach to effectively address the root causes of violence in order to ensure successful reintegration so as to not revert back to the same cycles of conflict. In addition to the logistical constraints in coordination of their return home, returnees confront many challenges upon arrival—especially related to possible stirring of ethnic differences and tensions, the lack of infrastructure this new nation possesses, the strain over land rights and the drastic levels of food insecurity.

South Sudan represents an emerging nation from Africa’s longest civil war. In the aftermath of its independence, millions who were refugees in neighboring countries and those who were internally displaced during the war have been reintegrating to their homeland. This strong sense of people returning home is often driven by a desire not only to rebuild their future but also to contribute to the building of a viable and peaceful South Sudan. Estimates from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) suggest that hundreds of thousands of returnees have increased since 2010, particularly in the months before and just after independence.<sup>119</sup> International humanitarian organizations, such as the IOM, predict that hundreds of thousands more returnees will continue to flee back to South Sudan in the coming months and years.

#### **A. CHALLENGES OF REINTEGRATION TO SOUTH SUDAN**

The Republic of South Sudan (RoSS) has strongly encouraged southerners to return to South Sudan, particularly in the initial months following independence. There has seemed to be a rather limited provision, however, of the required practical means to

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<sup>119</sup> International Office of Migration, “South Sudan Annual Report,” 2012, [https://www.iom.int/files/live/sites/iom/files/Country/docs/IOM\\_South\\_Sudan\\_Annual\\_Report\\_2012.pdf](https://www.iom.int/files/live/sites/iom/files/Country/docs/IOM_South_Sudan_Annual_Report_2012.pdf).



assist these returnees. In addition, the logistical constraints for return are numerous, from the lack of available barges to cross the border to provision constraints of assisting humanitarian organizations.<sup>120</sup> Ultimately, the RoSS has had to heavily rely on the international humanitarian community for assistance to support returnees as they confront issues related to: short-term focused relief, social reintegration and reconciliation, security and protection, lack of infrastructure, land rights, and food insecurity.

### **1. Challenges to Reintegration: International Response, Short-term Relief Focus**

Humanitarian aid organizations have been active in developing post-conflict nations for decades. South Sudan has relied on these agencies as key stakeholders providing emergency aid during conflict and now in the transition since independence. According to a United Nations report from 2012, 30 separate relief operations have been underway in 59 of the nation's 71 counties.<sup>121</sup> Considering the countless organizations involved in assisting South Sudan, and the ever increasing number of organizations, this section will highlight the aid strategies of four prominent agencies that have both direct and residual impacts on reintegration, including: the Norwegian Refugee Council, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), The World Food Program (WFP), and the International Office of Migration (IOM). To date, there is an evident gap in the available literature on specific data outcomes from these organizations' current strategies; therefore, this section summarizes their reported efforts.

As a prominent humanitarian and emergency relief organization, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) has been operating in South Sudan since 2004, just before the signing of the CPA.<sup>122</sup> They seek to provide assistance to IDPs, returnees, refugees and host communities, particularly in areas of most return. Their 2010 report concludes that

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<sup>120</sup> Richard Black and Khalid Koser (eds), *The End of the Refugee Cycle? Refugee Repatriation and Reconstruction* (Oxford: Berghahn, 1999).

<sup>121</sup> United Nations, "South Sudan: Consolidated Appeal 2013 Report," 2012, [https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/CAP/MYR\\_2013\\_South\\_Sudan.pdf](https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/CAP/MYR_2013_South_Sudan.pdf).

<sup>122</sup> Ingrid Macdonald, "Southern Sudan 2010: Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Displacement and Reintegration in Post-Referendum Southern Sudan" (Geneva: Norwegian Refugee Council, 2010).

their efforts have been focused on emergency relief. Echoing this point, their 2010 report states, “Planning for the longer term response, especially considering South Sudan’s high susceptibility to shocks and the potential for protracted conflict with the north and internal conflict within Southern Sudan, has been limited.”<sup>123</sup> According to another Norwegian Refugee Council report, through its Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, the international response to South Sudan’s emerging crises has further been limited by the country’s insecurity.<sup>124</sup> They note, “Many areas affected by displacement remain difficult to access, preventing vulnerable groups from obtaining urgently-needed assistance and making its delivery extremely expensive.”<sup>125</sup> Therefore, improving infrastructure access is a key priority for humanitarian agencies.

In addition, the United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is one of the key players in South Sudan’s reintegration process and has been entrusted with the responsibility of organizing return and reintegration operations, despite that assistance for returnees upon arrival to their homeland goes beyond their core mandate.<sup>126</sup> Since 2005, UNHCR has facilitated the return of more than 334,000 refugees from exile in Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda.<sup>127</sup> According to a recent report, they have been focused on the protection of returnees and supporting the reintegration of returnees in areas of high return.<sup>128</sup> For instance, the agency provides returnees with a return package providing food rations for a limited time, typically for three months, and non-food items such as

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<sup>123</sup> Richard Black and Saskia Gent, “Defining, Measuring and Influencing Sustainable Return: The Case of the Balkans,” *Development Research Centre on Migration* (Brighton, United Kingdom: Sussex Centre for Migration Research, 2004).

<sup>124</sup> Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, “Sudan: Durable Solutions Elusive as Southern IDPs Return and Darfur Remains Tense” (Geneva, Switzerland: Norwegian Refugee Council, 2010), [http://www.internaldisplacement.org/8025708F004BE3B1/\(httpInfoFiles\)/246575AD2147601DC125780200526DA9/\\$file/Sudan+-December-2010.pdf](http://www.internaldisplacement.org/8025708F004BE3B1/(httpInfoFiles)/246575AD2147601DC125780200526DA9/$file/Sudan+-December-2010.pdf).

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> Finn Stepputat, “Dynamics of Return and Sustainable Reintegration in a Mobile Livelihoods Perspective,” Danish Institute for International Studies, 2004, [http://www.diis.dk/graphics/Publications/WP2004/fst\\_dynamics.pdf](http://www.diis.dk/graphics/Publications/WP2004/fst_dynamics.pdf).

<sup>127</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, “South Sudan: 2013 Country Operations Profile,” 2013, <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/4e43cb466.html>.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

seeds and domestic tools in the hopes that returnees will soon take up their own ways of living.<sup>129</sup> In addition, a report assessing UNHCR's reintegration processes states that the agency's focus in South Sudan has also been on community based reintegration programs (CBRPs) with the assistance in construction of schools, medical facilities and community boreholes, as well as sanitation.<sup>130</sup>

The World Food Program (WFP) has been another long-standing relief organization with a presence in South Sudan for many decades. Until the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005, the main objectives were primarily to save lives and provide a nutritional status.<sup>131</sup> As a leading organization in food distribution, the WFP has been a central organization to provide returnees with food relief packages. Reported in late 2012, the World Food Program has distributed food packages to some 123,000 conflict-affected people in the state of South Kordofan alone.<sup>132</sup> The 2008 guidelines for WFP support to returnees state that all returnees should have access to food assistance during their return and reintegration and that, "... support to returnees should be considered fundamental to and consistent with a peaceful political transition."<sup>133</sup> The same report suggests that returnees may need support for the first several years as they develop self-sufficient livelihood opportunities.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> Finn Steputat, "Dynamics of Return and Sustainable Reintegration in a Mobile Livelihoods Perspective," Danish Institute for International Studies, 2004, [http://www.diis.dk/graphics/Publications/WP2004/fst\\_dynamics.pdf](http://www.diis.dk/graphics/Publications/WP2004/fst_dynamics.pdf).

<sup>130</sup> Mark Duffield, Khassim Diagne and Vicky Tennant, *Evaluation of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Returnee Integration Programme in South Sudan* (Geneva: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Policy Development and Evaluation Service, 2008).

<sup>131</sup> Daniel Maxwell and John Burns, "Targeting in Complex Emergencies: South Sudan Country Case Study" (Boston, MA: Feinstein International Center, Tufts University, 2008), [http://wikis.uit.tufts.edu/confluence/download/attachments/14553677/TCE\\_Sudan\\_08\\_05\\_01\\_V2.pdf](http://wikis.uit.tufts.edu/confluence/download/attachments/14553677/TCE_Sudan_08_05_01_V2.pdf).

<sup>132</sup> United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Sudan Humanitarian Update: Third Quarter 2012," 2012, <http://www.unocha.org/top-stories/all-stories/south-sudan-humanitarian-agencies-respond-refugee-crisis>.

<sup>133</sup> World Food Program. "Guidelines for Support to Returnees, 2008. World Food Program Report, South Sudan: Annual Needs and Livelihoods Analysis." February 2012. <http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/ena/wfp245820.pdf>.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

Another prominent relief agency involved in assisting South Sudanese refugees is the International Office of Migration (IOM). Their reintegration strategy for the current year aims to assist returnees by primarily improving access to basic and social services through the construction roads and economic opportunities through vocational training and infrastructure projects.<sup>135</sup> According to a current report, IOM is currently responding to the needs of about 223,000 refugees registered across South Sudan.<sup>136</sup> This report suggests that their recent focus has been to increase water supply while also promoting sanitation and hygiene.<sup>137</sup> In addition, they have played a key role in relocating up to almost 20,000 refugees since 2011.<sup>138</sup> While the IOM is especially recognized for their efforts in improving the living conditions of refugee camps and assisting returnees across the border to their homeland, they are also supporting ex-combatants in acquiring vocation skills such as sewing.<sup>139</sup>

In general, plans to facilitate long-term reintegration of returnees have not been reliable and, in fact, many international organizations fear that the plan for the return of hundreds of thousands of people tends to place much emphasis on the short-term resolution approach (i.e., only addresses emergent needs while lacking a long-term goal for the returnees to take ownership and decrease the reliance on aid). According to a Refugees International field report, this is due in part to shortages in food reserves and in addition to a result of an attempt by humanitarian agencies to reduce what some have characterized as South Sudan's "chronic hyper-dependency on outside food."<sup>140</sup> While

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<sup>135</sup> International Office of Migration, "South Sudan: 2013 Country Program," 2013, [https://www.iom.int/files/live/sites/iom/files/Country/docs/IOM\\_South\\_Sudan\\_2013\\_Country\\_Programme.pdf](https://www.iom.int/files/live/sites/iom/files/Country/docs/IOM_South_Sudan_2013_Country_Programme.pdf).

<sup>136</sup> International Office of Migration, "South Sudan: Refugee Response Update," May 2013, <http://www.iom.int/files/live/sites/iom/files/Country/docs/IOM-South-Sudan-Refugee-Response-Update-May-2013.pdf>.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> International Office of Migration, "South Sudan Annual Report," 2012, [https://www.iom.int/files/live/sites/iom/files/Country/docs/IOM\\_South\\_Sudan\\_Annual\\_Report\\_2012.pdf](https://www.iom.int/files/live/sites/iom/files/Country/docs/IOM_South_Sudan_Annual_Report_2012.pdf).

<sup>140</sup> Richard Black and Khalid Koser (eds), *The End of the Refugee Cycle? Refugee Repatriation and Reconstruction* (Oxford: Berghahn, 1999).

the provisions of basic needs upon returnees' arrival are valuable in the immediate term, the longer-term development and sustainability for returnees is not adequately addressed. Sustainable solutions need to be considered in parallel of this initial phase of reintegration.

Although the return of displaced persons are generally viewed as an encouraging sign of peace, it is important to note that returnees also present new challenges for the already scarce services, as seen in the case of South Sudan. In addition, the influx of a growing population increases the competition for scarce resources and increases the competition for economic self-sufficiency in an already limited employment opportunity situation.<sup>141</sup> The coordination of resources and programs among multiple agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) can further challenge this transitional post-conflict environment. In addition to temporary relief aid presenting a gap in durable solutions for sustainability, returnees' also face adversity upon their return predominantly with respect to possible ethnic tension, lack of infrastructure, disputes over resource scarcity, and a disrupting and shifting source of livelihoods. These intricate elements have the potential to disturb the delicate contentions that have yet to be resolved and therefore can send communities back into violence.

As described above, reintegration programs in this new post-conflict nation are dominated by short-term interventions. These short-term responses do not address the longstanding issues underlying vulnerability. The need, then, is to implement a long-term in order to confront the current emergency development-programming gap in South Sudan from short-term emergency relief to long-term sustainable reintegration.<sup>142</sup> This research reveals that there are a few long-term reintegration programs that have begun to be implemented. While these organizations acknowledge the importance of securing livelihoods for returnees in their available reports, there remains limited expansion on

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<sup>141</sup> Daniel Maxwell, Kristen Gelsdorf, and Martina Santschi, "Livelihoods, Basic Services and Social Protection in South Sudan," Feinstein International Center, July 1, 2012, <http://www.odi.org.uk/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/7716.pdf>.

<sup>142</sup> Luca Alinovi, Gunter Hemrich and Luca Russo, "Addressing Food Insecurity in Fragile States: Case Studies from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia and Sudan, Rome: Agricultural and Development Economics Division," Working Paper No. 7-21 (July 2007), Food and Agriculture Organization, <ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/010/ai028e/ai028e00.pdf>

these specific efforts or their outcomes as of yet.<sup>143</sup> Evidently, their primary focus has been concentrated on the logistics of return and relief packages for the early stages of returnees' reintegration.

The return of displaced groups has far-reaching implications on the ability of the post-conflict nations, as seen in the case of South Sudan, to provide immediate access to basic services and provide longer-term solutions that ease the transition and create opportunities for self-sufficiency. The influx of returnees further strains the existing dynamic while also in parallel hinders the emergence of a revitalization effort leading to self-sufficiency and sustainability. The record of humanitarian assistance in South Sudan emphasizes that a range of strategic and agency partnerships are needed as the reintegration process evolves. Not one agency is able to provide all that South Sudan requires in relief or development methods. Various evaluations by these humanitarian organizations indicate that returnees face significant challenges upon their return to their homeland, including a lack of sustainable infrastructure and basic services, land right issues, food insecurity, as well as a lack of livelihood opportunities.

## **2. Challenges to Reintegration: Social Reintegration and Reconciliation**

Another challenge facing post-conflict societies recovering from protracted conflict is the social reintegration of new and existing communities. The case of South Sudan provides evidence of this challenge in this particularly varied ethnic country. Perceived drastic differences between ethnic groups have been one of the root causes of recurrent violence—further emphasizing the inadequacy of immediate short-term solutions. The short-term emergency relief aid approach ignores the complicated dynamics of ethnic and religious divisions thereby further stunting sustainable stabilization in a post-conflict environment. Supporting this position, one humanitarian report reveals that about 170,000 additional displacements occurred between January and October 2012 in South Sudan due to persisting inter-communal violence, after

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<sup>143</sup> Nadarajah Shanmugaratnam, "Resettlement, Resource Conflicts, Livelihood Revival and Reintegration in South Sudan: A Study of the Processes and Institutional Issues at the Local Level in Magwi County," Noragic report 58 (Oslo: Department of International Environment and Development Studies, Noragic, Norwegian University of Life Sciences, 2010).

independence.<sup>144</sup> This report further estimates that up to 200,000 new displacements will occur this year due to ongoing inter-, and intra-tribal tensions.

The complexity of its population, and the diverse social and economic setting in which people live and are returning to, is of particular vulnerability of returning populations to South Sudan. Julie Brethfeld notes, “One of the main challenges facing returnees and IDPs has been their unfamiliarity with traditional practices in their [new] communities.”<sup>145</sup> She further suggests that many feel alienated and are perceived as strangers, often resulting in community tensions. Especially in a post-conflict environment, the reintegration of returnees with existing residents poses a delicate challenge, as different ethnic groups must learn to live together, often for the very first time.<sup>146</sup> Additionally, there is potential for political opposition between those who lived in government-controlled areas during the war, usually in the southern capital of Juba or in the northern capital of Khartoum, and those who lived in the SPLA-controlled areas.<sup>147</sup> A sense of community and involvement, however, is essential for the long-term sustainable reintegration of returnees and for ensuring peace and security.

### **3. Challenges to Reintegration: Security and Protection**

The effective and long-term oriented reintegration strategy of returnees to a war-torn country is crucial for maintaining a viable and functioning security environment that enables stability to persist. Post-conflict returnee re-introductions are often complicated by a lack of basic socio-economic infrastructure and an absence of opportunities essential for returnees to address sustenance requirements beyond immediate needs. As seen in

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<sup>144</sup> United Nations, “South Sudan: Consolidated Appeal 2013 Report,” 2012, [https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/CAP/MYR\\_2013\\_South\\_Sudan.pdf](https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/CAP/MYR_2013_South_Sudan.pdf).

<sup>145</sup> Julie Brethfeld, “Unrealistic Expectations: Current Challenges to Reintegration in Southern Sudan,” *Small Arms Survey* (Geneva: Small Arms Survey, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, 2010).

<sup>146</sup> Sara Pantuliano, Margie Buchanan-Smith, Paul Murphy and Irina Mosel, *The Long Road Home: Opportunities and Obstacles to the Reintegration of IDPs and Refugees returning to Southern Sudan and the Three Areas* (London, England: Humanitarian Policy Group, Overseas Development Institute, 2008).

<sup>147</sup> Nadarajah Shanmugaratnam, “Resettlement, Resource Conflicts, Livelihood Revival and Reintegration in South Sudan: A Study of the Processes and Institutional Issues at the Local Level in Magwi County,” Noragic report 58 (Oslo: Department of International Environment and Development Studies, Noragic, Norwegian University of Life Sciences, 2010).

South Sudan, these challenges can undermine delicate post-conflict peace and lead to a re-ignition of violence due to the complex relationship of competing interests, priorities, and needs. Evidence of protection and security in this fragile environment is fundamentally informed by the nature and character of the return and the reintegration of displaced populations. Additionally, many experts in peace and security studies argue that the successful and planned reintegration of returnees is essential to preventing war-torn countries from relapsing into violence.<sup>148</sup>

#### **4. Challenges to Reintegration: Lack of Infrastructure**

Another considerable challenge facing the reintegration of returnees is the limited infrastructure found in most emerging post-conflict societies, such as in South Sudan. Primarily, South Sudan lacks essential road infrastructure. Inadequate transport infrastructure, for example, isolates about 60 percent of the country from gravel road access due to heavy rains, mine presence, and damage to bridges.<sup>149</sup> Deficient and unreliable transport capacities further complicate humanitarian agencies' access to provide assistance to remote areas. Additionally, it limits the population's movement to markets, impeding on economic growth and opportunity. Since independence in 2011, the rehabilitation of basic services and infrastructure has not improved to expected levels.<sup>150</sup> Additionally, up to 15,000 returnees were stranded during their return to South Sudan in 2012 largely due to the impassibility of roads.<sup>151</sup> Up to 30,000 of the remaining 95,000 South Sudanese refugees in neighboring countries as predicted to return home in the next

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<sup>148</sup>Roland Paris, *At War's End: Building Peace After Civil Conflict* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

<sup>149</sup> United Nations, "South Sudan: Consolidated Appeal 2013 Report," 2012, [https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/CAP/MYR\\_2013\\_South\\_Sudan.pdf](https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/CAP/MYR_2013_South_Sudan.pdf).

<sup>150</sup>Julie Brethfeld, "Unrealistic Expectations: Current Challenges to Reintegration in Southern Sudan," *Small Arms Survey* (Geneva: Small Arms Survey, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, 2010).

<sup>151</sup> Julie Brethfeld, "Unrealistic Expectations: Current Challenges to Reintegration in Southern Sudan," *Small Arms Survey* (Geneva: Small Arms Survey, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, 2010).



year, and will also be requiring transport to return.<sup>152</sup> These obstacles also present more difficulties to food security and traditional livelihood sources—revealing that lack of infrastructure poses immense difficulties to all sectors. The emergent needs of temporary shelter, food, or medical services upon return need to be accompanied by activities aimed at longer-term social and economic recovery particularly in local infrastructure and agricultural development.

## 5. Challenges to Reintegration: Land Rights

Access to land is an additional challenge for social and economic reintegration for returnees, particularly after protracted conflict situations where land has been destroyed. The issue of land allocation has proven to be an additional challenge for the process of reintegration. The case of South Sudan highlights the central importance of land to a predominantly rural dwelling nation. The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) mandated the establishment of the Southern Sudan Land Commission (SSLC) to address the concerns of land tenure and property rights.<sup>153</sup> According to a USAID report, the customary system and traditional authorities are capable of dealing with indigenous returnees who seek to access their ancestral land.<sup>154</sup> They are not, however, well equipped to deal with the influx of people who are not indigenous to their communities.<sup>155</sup> As is often the case in conflict and post-conflict situations, uncertainty over land ownership presents a variety of challenges. For returnees, many of whom have

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<sup>152</sup> Julie Brethfeld, “Unrealistic Expectations: Current Challenges to Reintegration in Southern Sudan,” *Small Arms Survey* (Geneva: Small Arms Survey, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, 2010).

<sup>153</sup> Peter Orr and Takawira Kapikinyu, “South Sudan: Displacement Plagues the World’s Newest Nation,” *Refugees International* (2011, December), [http://www.refugeesinternational.org/sites/default/files/121511\\_South\\_Sudan\\_Displacement%20letterhead.pdf](http://www.refugeesinternational.org/sites/default/files/121511_South_Sudan_Displacement%20letterhead.pdf).

<sup>154</sup> United States Agency for International Development, “Land Tenure Issues in Southern Sudan: Key Findings and Recommendation for Southern Sudan Land Policy,” December 2010, [http://www.internaldisplacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/B21530C92D8C25D3C125791100458FCE/\\$file/Land+tenure+issues+in+Southern+Sudan++Key+findings+and+recommendations+for+Southern+Sudan+land+policy.pdf](http://www.internaldisplacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/B21530C92D8C25D3C125791100458FCE/$file/Land+tenure+issues+in+Southern+Sudan++Key+findings+and+recommendations+for+Southern+Sudan+land+policy.pdf).

<sup>155</sup> Sara Pantuliano, Margie Buchanan-Smith, Paul Murphy and Irina Mosel, *The Long Road Home: Opportunities and Obstacles to the Reintegration of IDPs and Refugees returning to Southern Sudan and the Three Areas* (London, England: Humanitarian Policy Group, Overseas Development Institute, 2008).

been living outside the area for years, and likely dwelling in urban areas where many of the camps were placed, it can be difficult to acquire the right kind of land.<sup>156</sup> This is especially true where there are ethnic tensions among communities, as well as in urban areas such as the state capitals.

Furthermore, access to land affects prospects for returnees' recovery. Many agree that humanitarian agencies neglect the key role in the recovery and reintegration phase of post-conflict reconstruction as this important issue has direct impact on settlement patterns and thus on the future prospects of the people affected.<sup>157</sup> In the case of South Sudan, land is one of the most valuable of rural people's assets and forms the center of their livelihood strategy.<sup>158</sup> In fact, the issue of land and land ownership in South Sudan was a significant factor behind the war between the GoS and the SPLA, and it continues to be a major driver of ongoing inter and intra-tribal conflicts. The land shortages in urban areas are especially limited, thus the growing population in urban areas does not provide viable opportunities in the long-term. The major factor that influence post-war livelihood in rural areas is people's access to land for cultivation and for establishing homesteads. Alex De Waal argues that a humanitarian response has an impact on land tenure and settlement patterns both during and in the recovery phase.<sup>159</sup> Consideration of land issues is in this regard an essential way of preserving and rehabilitating people's livelihoods strategies.

## **6. Challenges to Reintegration: Food Insecurity**

One of the main challenges returning refugees and IDPs confront on a daily basis is the prevalence of food insecurity. The comprehensive definition for food security was adopted at the World Food Summit in 1996: "Food security exists when all people, at all

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<sup>156</sup> United Nations, "South Sudan: Consolidated Appeal 2013 Report," 2012, [https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/CAP/MYR\\_2013\\_South\\_Sudan.pdf](https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/CAP/MYR_2013_South_Sudan.pdf).

<sup>157</sup> Alex De Waal, *Why Humanitarian Organizations Need to Tackle Land Issues: Uncharted Territory: Land, Conflict and Humanitarian Action* (United Kingdom: Action Publishing, 2009).

<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

<sup>159</sup> Sudan Cultural Digest Project: Office of African Studies, "Coping with Dynamics of Culture and Change: Sudanese Refugees in East Africa and Internally Displaced Persons in Southern Sudan," The American University of Cairo, 1998.

times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.”<sup>160</sup> According to a report related to South Sudan’s annual needs and livelihoods assessment from 2008, some 4.1 million people were estimated to be at risk of food insecurity and about 10 percent of the population, around one million, have been severely food insecure.<sup>161</sup> Moreover, it provides exposure to the structural factors leading to drastic food insecurity through South Sudan’s low agriculture production and productivity, limited infrastructure, and poor access to basic social services—all of which undermine their ability to adequately feed themselves.<sup>162</sup>

Another report consolidating UN agency efforts in South Sudan suggests that 2.3 million people will need food assistance as increasing numbers of returnees arrive, contributing to the high levels of food insecurity.<sup>163</sup> It concludes that 2.1 million people received food assistance in 2012. Their estimates reveal that 3.85 million people in rural host communities are moderately to severely food insecure. In addition, it is predicted that some 750,000 returnees will require food assistance in the next year.<sup>164</sup> Over 300,000 returnees have been supported with farming inputs to re-enter agricultural production. However, this report notes, “...for the most part, this assistance is not accompanied by support to people’s livelihoods and their capacity to produce their own food.”<sup>165</sup>

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<sup>160</sup> Government of South Sudan, “The Southern Sudan Food and Agriculture Policy Framework,” 2010.

<sup>161</sup> World Food Programme, “South Sudan: Annual Needs and Livelihoods Analysis 2012/13,” March 2013, <http://reliefweb.int/organization/fao>.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> United Nations, “South Sudan: Consolidated Appeal 2013 Report,” 2012, [https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/CAP/MYR\\_2013\\_South\\_Sudan.pdf](https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/CAP/MYR_2013_South_Sudan.pdf).

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

<sup>165</sup> Roland Paris, *At War’s End: Building Peace After Civil Conflict* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

## B. CONCLUSION

In addition to the monumental task of rebuilding a post-conflict society, long-term sustainable reconstruction strategies must concurrently focus on the reintegration of returnees. As described above, reintegration can also contribute to a spiral of decline through re-igniting tensions due to ethnic divisions, lack of infrastructure and opportunity, destroyed means of historical livelihoods, or the fight for limited resources land rights, and food insecurity. The case study of South Sudan concludes that these issues have been root causes for violent conflict throughout history of civil wars and cannot be addressed simply through short-term relief or strategies. Therefore, these fragile issues pose significant confrontations to the newly emerging nations, such as South Sudan, to avoid levels of forced displacement in the future. In this sense, it is not only a question of how to make reintegration sustainable, but how to make it sustainable on a community-wide basis, particularly for the re-development phase of the post-independent South Sudan.

This chapter on South Sudan has shown how existing unresolved socio-economic and political issues, such as limited resource sharing, ambiguous land rights, and ethnic and religious tensions, have tarnished the security environment. The result is continued violence and relative instability, as shown by continuing local level conflicts and population displacement in the new country. As one expert describes, “Many communities say that independence has only ended a certain kind of war, but has left sources of insecurity most relevant to them unmitigated...”<sup>166</sup> Further complicating this fragile dynamic, destroyed and/or underdeveloped infrastructure has prevented access to goods and services thereby stunting productive economic development. As such, sustained peace is not a given in post-conflict South Sudan, nor can it be sustained by immediate relief aid; and social stability remains delicate. These challenges have been exacerbated by the influx of returnees and thus highlight the increased importance of a long-term holistic returnee reintegration focus that addresses possible threats to the stabilization process. As a report from the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) reveals,

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<sup>166</sup> Madut Jok, “Mapping the Sources of Conflict and Insecurity in South Sudan,” The SUDD Institute (January 2013), Special Report No.1.

“...some villages have more than doubled in size since the arrival of the returnees, putting tremendous pressures on resources, food and shelter in particular.”<sup>167</sup>

Viewed through this lens of the South Sudan case study, the scale of returnees and the consequent demands of resettlement, reintegration, and livelihood building pose many logistical, political and socio-economic challenges to the newly established governments, local communities and institutions, and the international agencies concerned. In many instances, the spatial movements of the returnees have been complex due to local and inter-communal conflicts. While some experts may generally consider the preferred solution to refugees’ plight to be repatriation, it is important to consider their return to a changed environment without adequate access to livelihood resources which could mean that returning may be as traumatizing as forced migration itself. Providing development assistance in such situations requires a different approach than the traditional emergency and relief based approach that was not designed to revise or support livelihoods for the long-term. Providing opportunity for returnees’ thus spurs economic growth and long-term development. This will also ultimately reduce the likelihood of conflict reemergence and subsequently mitigate the potential risks of future displacement of people.

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<sup>167</sup> Sara Pantuliano, Margie Buchanan-Smith, Paul Murphy and Irina Mosel, *The Long Road Home: Opportunities and Obstacles to the Reintegration of IDPs and Refugees returning to Southern Sudan and the Three Areas* (London, England: Humanitarian Policy Group, Overseas Development Institute, 2008).

## **IV. LIVELIHOOD DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY: SOUTH SUDAN CASE STUDY**

As evidence from this research determines, long-term security and stability are closely linked to the large-scale livelihood planning for people affected by conflict. The capacity to overcome social and economic vulnerabilities means that the humanitarian community must make greater efforts to increase stabilization by enhancing security and protection through livelihood analysis and action. Sustainable peace for communities involved in conflicts as well as regional security depends on people having access to viable and self-sustaining opportunity for the long-term. This section will provide a brief example of what is currently being done to address long-term livelihood opportunities in the case of South Sudan, and will expand on South Sudan's agricultural sector—perhaps the largest area of potential for growth for livelihood opportunities for this new nation.

### **A. LIVELIHOOD DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH SUDAN: CURRENT APPROACH**

Presently, many experts agree that government and agency support around livelihood reintegration in South Sudan has been gradual at best, revealing a gap in coordination among the stakeholders; at worst, this approach has been non-existent, lacking a broader integrated strategy to revive the rural economy.<sup>168</sup> Interventions are dominated by the supply of seeds and tools for short-term aid and 'relief', and have yet to adequately integrate the complex mix of longer-term strategies for livelihood development. Inadequate recovery reflects weaknesses in coordination mechanisms between the various stakeholders.<sup>169</sup> Given the limited capacity of the still fragile and developing government, international cooperation partners and NGOs have been heavily relied upon. Implementation of a livelihood management approach, however, has faced enormous challenges because the conflict has destroyed crucial components necessary for

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<sup>168</sup> Sara Pantuliano, Margie Buchanan-Smith, Paul Murphy and Irina Mosel, *The Long Road Home: Opportunities and Obstacles to the Reintegration of IDPs and Refugees returning to Southern Sudan and the Three Areas* (London, England: Humanitarian Policy Group, Overseas Development Institute, 2008).

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*

sustainable development. Many humanitarian relief practitioners agree that “Coordination around return, reintegration and recovery needs to be strategic and rooted in in-depth analysis of the situation to guide planning, including the prioritization and sequencing of interventions...”<sup>170</sup> They also recognize that there remains a great recovery and implementation gap. Although these organizations have been primarily focused on providing emergency assistance, the incorporation of a long-term development assistance focus is the crucial next step.

One aid agency in particular has begun to focus projects on developing South Sudan’s agricultural sector, however. In 2010, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), in partnership with the Government of South Sudan (GoSS), inaugurated a \$55 million program aimed specifically at helping farmers in South Sudan to develop their agricultural potential.<sup>171</sup> This USAID five-year initiative, called the Food, Agribusiness, and Rural Markets (FARM) program has a focus on select counties in South Sudan’s ‘green belt zone’ spanning Western, Central, and Eastern Equatoria states, and where conflict destroyed much of the local capacity for agricultural production during the civil wars.<sup>172</sup> The USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah mentioned:

USAID is proud to work with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry on this innovative and promising project. The FARM program marshals a variety of resources in a re-emerging agricultural area and will inspire others to join as partners in reducing hunger in South Sudan. This is a solid high-impact use of U.S. support that will save lives and develop livelihoods.<sup>173</sup>

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<sup>170</sup> Sara Pantuliano, Margie Buchanan-Smith, Paul Murphy and Irina Mosel, *The Long Road Home: Opportunities and Obstacles to the Reintegration of IDPs and Refugees returning to Southern Sudan and the Three Areas* (London, England: Humanitarian Policy Group, Overseas Development Institute, 2008).

<sup>171</sup> “U.S. Kicks off Agricultural Program in South Sudan,” *Sudan Tribune*, May 2010, <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article35110>

<sup>172</sup> Ibid.

<sup>173</sup> “United States Agency for International Development Launches Food, Agribusiness, and Rural Markets Program in Southern Sudan,” United States Agency for International Development, May 2010, <http://www.usaid.gov/news-information/press-releases/usaaid-launches-food-agribusiness-and-rural-markets-farm-program>.

It has been recognized that this area has high agricultural potential and has been in the process of being connected through new road construction to fast-growing markets for farm goods.<sup>174</sup> The program seeks to increase long-term farm productivity, trade, and the capacity of people engaged in the agricultural sector in South Sudan. The focus is primarily on commodities such as groundnuts, sorghum, rice, cassava, maize, sesame, tomatoes, cabbage, onion and okra.<sup>175</sup> USAID's FARM program provides a potential model for other humanitarian organizations to follow and help build on. USAID has felt confident in their assessment and implementation in this program with the GoSS that it will help empower vulnerable communities and assist in expanding its agricultural sector.

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations has also begun to recognize and act on South Sudan's immense agriculture sector potential. It has begun accumulating about \$50 million to build an Interim Assistance Plan (IAP) that focuses on building capacity ministerial and state agricultural extension offices. This interim plan also includes, "...establishment of a seed and production sector and an urban and peri-urban agriculture component as many returnees arrive in the capital of Juba and other major towns in South Sudan will need to produce as much of their own food as possible."<sup>176</sup> FAO's support includes training young farmers and building administrative capacity. The FAO's donors represent worldwide support in this venture as they have received funding from Canada, France, Spain, and Switzerland.<sup>177</sup> These beginning efforts support the argument for need towards a shifted focus from emergency relief aid to the crucial element of a long-term strategy containing a livelihood approach. As such, humanitarian agencies are establishing such programs in order to successfully revive and reconstruct a newly post-conflict nation.

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<sup>174</sup> "United States Agency for International Development Launches Food, Agribusiness, and Rural Markets Program in Southern Sudan," United States Agency for International Development, May 2010, <http://www.usaid.gov/news-information/press-releases/usaid-launches-food-agribusiness-and-rural-markets-farm-program>.

<sup>175</sup> Government of South Sudan, "The Southern Sudan Food and Agriculture Policy Framework," 2010.

<sup>176</sup> "FAO Land Cover Survey Shows Just 4.5 percent Currently Used for Farming," Food and Agriculture Organization, United Nations, 2011, <http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/81693/>.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid.



## **B. LIVELIHOOD DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH SUDAN: OPPORTUNITIES**

While the provision of sustainable assistance that supports development in post-conflict situations is fraught with many challenges, opportunities often coexist in parallel. These opportunities, rooted in long-term strategies, are capable of improving the overarching security environment by easing resource strains. As previously discussed, protracted conflict often destroys or degrades the vast majority of the economic infrastructures necessary for self-sustaining growth and development.<sup>178</sup> Former refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), largely poor and previously dependent upon agriculture for their living, find themselves returning to devastated local economies lacking foundational elements.<sup>179</sup> The study of South Sudan determines that its historical agricultural roots have the potential, at its core, to serve both as an economic and security driver—while directly contributing to sustainable stabilization and reconstruction of the nation. An agriculturally oriented approach leverages existing skills and abilities and overcomes the potential issues associated with limited technical expertise and the learning curve needed to engage in non-agricultural activities. As Jules Pretty suggests, “...instead of having to rely on costly external inputs...the improvements are based on improved configurations and use of natural, social, and human capital assets.”<sup>180</sup> Pretty further argues that these components are abundant in seemingly poverty stricken regions of Africa such as South Sudan.

## **C. AGRICULTURE SECTOR IN SOUTH SUDAN: POTENTIAL FOR LONG-TERM GROWTH**

South Sudan provides an example of a post-conflict nation containing considerable untapped potential for long-term agricultural growth and a sustainable long-term livelihood opportunity. Many agree that the country has abundant land with ideal

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<sup>178</sup>Joseph D. Malual, *Sustainable Livelihoods Analysis of Post-conflict Rural Development in Southern Sudan* (Ames, IA: Iowa State University, 2008).

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>180</sup>Jules Pretty, “Can Sustainable Agriculture Feed Africa? New Evidence on Progress, Processes and Impacts,” *Environment, Development and Sustainability*, 1, no. 3–4 (1999), 253–255.

climatic and soil conditions suitable for crop production.<sup>181</sup> The Ministry of Agriculture in South Sudan recognizes the significant potential for agriculture growth, according to its statement that “...there is a strong consensus in the Government of South Sudan (GoSS) that agriculture could be a vehicle for broad-based non-oil growth and economic diversification.”<sup>182</sup> The agriculture sector is also featured as a high priority in South Sudan’s 2011–2013 development goals.<sup>183</sup> Currently, it is estimated that 90 percent of land in South Sudan is arable,<sup>184</sup> only four percent of which is actually cultivated.<sup>185</sup> Agriculture in South Sudan is primarily subsistent, consisting mainly of small-scale agriculture and livestock-raising.<sup>186</sup> Subsistence agriculture accounts for about 80 percent of employment in South Sudan.<sup>187</sup> And approximately 53 percent of food consumed at household levels in South Sudan comes from their own production agriculture.<sup>188</sup> Agriculture constitutes about one-third of the country’s gross domestic product (GDP), with potential for growth.<sup>189</sup>

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<sup>181</sup> Xinshen Diao, Liangzhi You, Vida Alpuerto and Renato Folledo, *South Sudan: A Spatial Analysis Method Institute* (New York, Intech, 2012).

<sup>182</sup> Ministry of Agriculture, “Post-Conflict Development Agriculture in South Sudan: Perspective on Approaches to Capacity Strengthening” (Juba, South Sudan: Cooperative and Rural Development, Directorate of Research, Extension and Training, 2011).

<sup>183</sup> Government of South Sudan, *South Sudan Development Strategy, 2011–13: Realizing Freedom, Equality, Justice, Peace and Prosperity for All*. Juba: Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, 2011.

<sup>184</sup> United States Agency of International Development, “South Sudan Transition Strategy 2011–13,” June 2011, [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PDACR770.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PDACR770.pdf).

<sup>185</sup> Daniel Maxwell, Kristen Gelsdorf, and Martina Santschi, “Livelihoods, Basic Services and Social Protection in South Sudan,” Feinstein International Center, July 1, 2012, <http://www.odi.org.uk/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/7716.pdf>

<sup>186</sup> “South Sudan, Investing in Agriculture for Food Security and Economic Transformation,” United Nations Development Program 2012, <http://www.undp.org/content/dam/southsudan/library/Reports/southsudanothertools/Investing%20in%20Agriculture%20for%20Food%20Security%20and%20Economic%20Transformation%20-%20November%202012.pdf>.

<sup>187</sup> Luca Alinovi, Gunter Hemrich and Luca Russo, “Addressing Food Insecurity in Fragile States: Case Studies from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia and Sudan, Rome: Agricultural and Development Economics Division,” Working Paper No. 7-21 (July 2007), Food and Agriculture Organization, <ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/010/ai028e/ai028e00.pdf>.

<sup>188</sup> “South Sudan Naturally Endowed For Sustainable Growth Through Agriculture,” Food and Agriculture Organization, United Nations, 2011, <http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/81693/>.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid.

Subsistence level agriculture is not South Sudan's only option, however. Soil and climate conditions allow for a wide range of food and cash crops, with the latter posing a potential engine of economic growth and employment.<sup>190</sup> Among the main crops produced are sorghum, maize, cassava and millet, produced in the rainy, fertile areas that include the Nuba Mountains and the area surrounding the regional capital of Juba.<sup>191</sup> Livestock products, including meat and milk, are the most important food sources for households in the arid southeastern region.<sup>192</sup> Other crops grown include groundnuts, cassava, green grams, cowpeas, beans, sesame, and pumpkins.<sup>193</sup> UNDP research has shown that crop production is mainly rain fed and relies almost exclusively on manual means of production with "rudimentary basic tools," meaning that with irrigation, growth is possible in this sector.<sup>194</sup>

While several NGOs and humanitarian agencies are aware of the opportunities presented by agriculture, few have been able to fully capitalize on its unrealized long-term benefits.<sup>195</sup> According to a World Bank (WB) report, experience has shown that GDP growth from agriculture has been twice as effective at reducing poverty compared to GDP growth originating from other sectors.<sup>196</sup> "Greater agricultural production increases demand for related sectors, such as rural transformation and services: infrastructure, agro-business, trade and tourism, transport, and communication," according to this World Bank report.

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<sup>190</sup> "South Sudan Naturally Endowed For Sustainable Growth Through Agriculture," Food and Agriculture Organization, United Nations, 2011, <http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/81693/>.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid.

<sup>192</sup> Government of South Sudan, *South Sudan Development Strategy, 2011–13*, August 2011.

<sup>193</sup> United States Agency of International Development, "South Sudan Transition Strategy 2011-13," June 2011, [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PDACR770.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PDACR770.pdf).

<sup>194</sup> Ibid.

<sup>195</sup> Ministry of Agriculture, "Post-Conflict Development Agriculture in South Sudan: Perspective on Approaches to Capacity Strengthening" (Juba, South Sudan: Cooperative and Rural Development, Directorate of Research, Extension and Training, 2011).

<sup>196</sup> "World Development Report: Agriculture for Development," World Bank, 2007, <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTWDR2008/Resources/2795087-1192111580172/WDROver2008-ENG.pdf>.

Provided that South Sudan relies primarily on such a specific sector for livelihoods, it is especially important to ensure protection and a peaceful environment in order to prevent reverting back to conflict and violence, greatly disrupting this delicate cycle once again. The capacity for development of its undeveloped agriculture sector provides significant implications for the prospects long-term sustainability through economic growth. Each of South Sudan's agro-ecological zones, from its Greenbelt Zone to the Arid Zone, is capable of producing more subsistence needs.<sup>197</sup> Reducing the cost of relying on food imports would also assist in profitable expansion. Furthermore, the agriculture sector is essential to increasing food security whereby producing long-term and self-sufficient provisions.

### **1. Agriculture Growth: Contribution to Economic Gains**

Several experts identify that while public revenue and government spending depend primarily on the oil industry in South Sudan, this provides very limited employment opportunities.<sup>198</sup> They further conclude that household incomes and employment are generated primarily by crop production and livestock rearing, thus, growing the agriculture sector would provide more opportunities for the South Sudanese to sustain themselves.<sup>199</sup> Additionally, the World Bank estimates that increasing cropland from the current four percent of total land area would greatly increase the per capita yields and would significantly increase the value of agricultural production.<sup>200</sup> As a United Nations Development Program report on South Sudan states, "The agriculture sector has the potential to be an additional engine of growth to the oil sector that would allow the country to diversify its economy to achieve transformational development and

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<sup>197</sup> "World Development Report: Agriculture for Development," World Bank, 2007, <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTWDR2008/Resources/2795087-1192111580172/WDROver2008-ENG.pdf>.

<sup>198</sup> Ministry of Agriculture, "Post-Conflict Development Agriculture in South Sudan: Perspective on Approaches to Capacity Strengthening" (Juba, South Sudan: Cooperative and Rural Development, Directorate of Research, Extension and Training, 2011).

<sup>199</sup> Ibid.

<sup>200</sup> Luca Alinovi, Gunter Hemrich and Luca Russo, "Addressing Food Insecurity in Fragile States: Case Studies from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia and Sudan, Rome: Agricultural and Development Economics Division," Working Paper No. 7-21 (July 2007), Food and Agriculture Organization, <ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/010/ai028e/ai028e00.pdf>

reduce poverty and food insecurity.”<sup>201</sup> Expanding the agriculture sector in South Sudan would increase potential economic gains by diversifying growth opportunities, rather than relying on the oil industry for their primary fiscal means. Some experts note that revenues from known oil reserve levels and production plans in South Sudan could dry up in 20 to 30 years.<sup>202</sup> Considering this, it is imperative for the long-term viability of South Sudan to vary economic opportunities and not solely rely on the oil industry for profit growth.

## **2. Agriculture Growth: Potential for Restoring Community**

Agriculture also provides an avenue for restoring communities through working together to rebuild their neighborhoods and reviving the nation’s economy, particularly important for emerging post-conflict societies. This level of social reintegration is an important element to connecting communities, re-connecting returnees with residents, and providing ownership in their long-term integration and recovery towards stabilization and reconstruction. While culturally most of the returnees share the same heritage as residents,<sup>203</sup> the agriculture sector creates opportunity for reunification and strengthened social aspects of the community.

## **3. Agriculture Sector: Immediate Challenges**

Of note, agricultural production in the case of South Sudan is deficient and the current environment presents few market opportunities for sustainable and long-term

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<sup>201</sup> “South Sudan, Investing in Agriculture for Food Security and Economic Transformation,” United Nations Development Program 2012, <http://www.undp.org/content/dam/southsudan/library/Reports/southsudanotherdocuments/Investing%20in%20Agriculture%20for%20Food%20Security%20and%20Economic%20Transformation%20-%20November%202012.pdf>.

<sup>202</sup> World Bank, Sudan: *The Road toward Sustainable and Broad-Based Growth, Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Unit Africa Region*, World Bank, 2009, [http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2010/05/27/000334955\\_20100527064142/Rendered/PDF/547180ESW0P07610public0distribution.pdf](http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2010/05/27/000334955_20100527064142/Rendered/PDF/547180ESW0P07610public0distribution.pdf).

<sup>203</sup> Sara Pantuliano, Margie Buchanan-Smith, Paul Murphy and Irina Mosel, *The Long Road Home: Opportunities and Obstacles to the Reintegration of IDPs and Refugees returning to Southern Sudan and the Three Areas* (London, England: Humanitarian Policy Group, Overseas Development Institute, 2008).

livelihoods.<sup>204</sup> Poor roads and infrastructure present added restriction for access markets, which limits the potential for agriculture to contribute to economic growth.<sup>205</sup> Thus, in order for South Sudan to achieve its agricultural production potential, it is crucial that the government invests in improving road and infrastructure between production and consumption areas. Experts agree that improved access to markets would yield economic gains for farmers, allowing them to increase their opportunity to compete with food imports in the short run, and would also assist in providing a platform to conquer cross-border markets in the medium to long-term.<sup>206</sup>

Another challenge that South Sudan faces in expanding its agricultural potential pertains to land rights to ensure access. According to experts within South Sudan's Ministry of Agriculture, a revised Land Act has been in process and is being prepared to create an appropriate policy environment for peace, successful conflict resolution, and private investment especially in agriculture.<sup>207</sup> Especially important is that this new policy addresses access to land for returnees, which would lessen the pressure for conflict, and would also expand rural growth.

In addition, the GoSS acknowledges that the lack of skilled human resources has been a considerable factor in low capacity as the country transitions from dependence on foreign aid to development support.<sup>208</sup> A key strategy will be to strengthen training

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<sup>204</sup> "World Development Report: Agriculture for Development," World Bank, 2007, <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTWDR2008/Resources/2795087-1192111580172/WDROver2008-ENG.pdf>.

<sup>205</sup> Paul Dorosh, Hyoung-Gun Wang, Liang You, and Emily Schmidt, "Crop Production and Road Connectivity in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Spatial Analysis" (Washington, DC: IFPRI and the World Bank Spatial and Local Development Team, 2008), [http://www.wds.worldbank.org/servert/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2010/07/28/000158349\\_20100728133128/Rendered/PDF/WPS5835.pdf](http://www.wds.worldbank.org/servert/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2010/07/28/000158349_20100728133128/Rendered/PDF/WPS5835.pdf).

<sup>206</sup> Ministry of Agriculture, "Post-Conflict Development Agriculture in South Sudan: Perspective on Approaches to Capacity Strengthening" (Juba, South Sudan: Cooperative and Rural Development, Directorate of Research, Extension and Training, 2011).

<sup>207</sup> Ibid.

<sup>208</sup> Luca Alinovi, Gunter Hemrich and Luca Russo, "Addressing Food Insecurity in Fragile States: Case Studies from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia and Sudan, Rome: Agricultural and Development Economics Division," Working Paper No. 7-21 (July 2007), Food and Agriculture Organization, <ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/010/ai028e/ai028e00.pdf>

programs and on-the-job training. Considering the transition from a war-torn country, it will take considerable time to be trained and it will be difficult for local farmers to initially produce at a standard to compete and trade with surrounding regional markets.

However, laying the foundation of subsistence farming could eventually provide greater economic gains as they build this sector into the commercial agriculture capacity for the long-term. Agricultural production may require more of a robust rural economy before it can create and sustain the opportunities necessary for livelihood security, let alone commercial agriculture. A survey conducted by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and the World Food Programme (WFP) in 2006, point out a few limitations for improved crop production and concluded that pests and crop diseases, along with the shortage of seeds, were among the main hindrances in agricultural growth in South Sudan.<sup>209</sup> Innovation through adopting new technologies is needed in order to move beyond the traditional techniques used at present towards higher productivity farming.<sup>210</sup> Eventually, policies and programs around the development of market infrastructure can advance the proper technologies and skills to enhance the agricultural production in South Sudan, and launch the longer-term foundations of recovery.

#### **D. CONCLUSIONS**

A long-term reintegration strategy for post-conflict nations must take into account the resources that are available at hand to ensure sustainability, rather than strictly relying on outside aid. It is imperative to incorporate, and bring to surface, elements that the nation already bestows to ensure sustainability in its reconstruction efforts. The study of South Sudan concludes that the agricultural sector affords the most opportunities to be incorporated in a long-term strategy for the successful reintegration of returnees. Agriculture not only presents sustainable livelihood options, but it also has the potential

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<sup>209</sup> “Crop and Food Security Assessment Mission to South Sudan,” Food and Agriculture Organization, February 2012, <http://www.fao.org/docrep/015/al984e/al984e00.pdf>.

<sup>210</sup> Ministry of Agriculture, “Post-Conflict Development Agriculture in South Sudan: Perspective on Approaches to Capacity Strengthening” (Juba, South Sudan: Cooperative and Rural Development, Directorate of Research, Extension and Training, 2011).

to increase economic growth, improve food security and self-sufficiency and create an environment whereby encouraging and fostering community reintegration and ownership in the development process of this fragile new nation. Therefore, developing a long-term reintegration strategy including a livelihood component directly confronts the root causes for war to begin with. Rather than temporarily burying these issues through the guise of temporary relief aid, this long-term approach establishes community participation and sustainable stability.

Unstructured and unguided resettlement presents additional complications to an already tenuous security environment by placing additional strains on the resource-restricted environment. Should the security and protection situation deteriorate, this will affect the return and reintegration of returnees and cause further displacement.<sup>211</sup> The potentially destabilizing effects of the return of displaced populations highlight the central importance of proactive and effective management of reintegration to post-conflict recovery, which is of particular importance for newly independent South Sudan. Echoing this position, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA) declared:

Internal displacement cannot truly be said to be resolved until the people affected have secured a source of livelihood. Without it, they may be forced to move again in order to survive. In the aftermath of conflict that has caused displacement, particularly if the conflict has been protracted, people who are returning or settling in new communities find themselves thrust from one artificial economy into another. The displaced persons' plight is not resolved until the transition has been made into a normal economy of productive assets. Only then can a development process get under way.<sup>212</sup>

Highlighting the importance of establishing a long-term reintegration—livelihood—strategy, the United Nations and Partners Work Plan of 2013, “Improved access to sustainable livelihoods is key to reducing reliance on aid, increasing self-

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<sup>211</sup> Ministry of Agriculture, “Post-Conflict Development Agriculture in South Sudan: Perspective on Approaches to Capacity Strengthening” (Juba, South Sudan: Cooperative and Rural Development, Directorate of Research, Extension and Training, 2011).

<sup>212</sup> “No Refuge: The Challenge of Internal Displacement,” United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Geneva, Switzerland, 2003.



sufficiency and supporting durable solutions to displacement.”<sup>213</sup> While traditionally reintegration of returnees has largely relied on the provision of relief aid from various humanitarian organizations, the transition from this immediate relief to longer-term development must be cultivated. Furthermore, Richard Black states that by far the most serious challenge for return and sustainable reintegration is the limited possibilities for establishing sustainable livelihoods, as livelihood options are generally more limited in post-conflict economies than they otherwise would be.<sup>214</sup> Livelihood revitalization, therefore, is essential for the achievement and implementation of a viable long-term development process that reduces the likelihood of conflict and strife while.

Many experts agree that developing the agriculture sector is pivotal for peace and security and also that, “...sustained stabilization of the new nation will be support for the successful social and economic reintegration of the large numbers of returnees in the agriculture sector.”<sup>215</sup> Further developing and advancing South Sudan’s agriculture sector will also decrease its reliance on foreign aid. Moreover, it will provide the government its citizen’s the capacity to rebuild their nation together. Thus, advancing and expanding South Sudan’s largely untapped agricultural sector directly addresses all of the challenges discussed throughout this paper. While it is recognized that rebuilding this sector will take several years and significant dedication from the government and agencies involved, the investment into South Sudan’s sustainable future will be worth the wait. Provided its abundance of natural resources, South Sudan has an advantage over other developing nations and the fruit of this potential must be more sufficiently utilized.

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<sup>213</sup> United Nations, “Sudan: UN and Partners Work Plan,” 2013, [http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/SUDAN\\_HWP\\_2013.pdf](http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/SUDAN_HWP_2013.pdf).

<sup>214</sup>Richard Black and Khalid Koser (eds), *The End of the Refugee Cycle? Refugee Repatriation and Reconstruction* (Oxford: Berghahn, 1999).

<sup>215</sup> “World Development Report: Agriculture for Development,” World Bank, 2007, <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTWDR2008/Resources/2795087-1192111580172/WDROver2008-ENG.pdf>.

## V. CONCLUSION: EFFECTS OF A LONG-TERM REINTEGRATION LIVELIHOOD STRATEGY

In conclusion, it is imperative to obtain a long-term reintegration strategy—with a livelihood component—for emerging post-conflict environments to achieve sustainable stabilization and reconstruction. This approach requires a different strategy than the traditional emergency relief focus that has not been designed to rebuild or support livelihoods from the perspectives of returnees. The latter approach has the potential to contribute to the creation of attitudes of powerlessness and dependency, the main ingredients for vulnerability, rather than providing protection and security to promote peace and security by assisting to create self-reliance through livelihoods production. Additionally, without sustainable access and opportunities for livelihood production within the local sector, such as in agriculture for example, the reintegration of returning refugees may lead to increased levels of instability and disruption. There are a number of ways in which livelihoods activities contribute to enhancements of a sustainable environment, by “...reducing exposure to threats or the need to engage in risky strategies, addressing the humanitarian consequences of exposure to threats, promoting access to markets and land and ensuring that livelihoods activities do not put conflict-affected people at additional risk.”<sup>216</sup> Essentially, incorporation of livelihood considerations can create an economic and social equilibrium.

The processes facilitating the return of the displaced, accompanying aid packages for returnees, and initial provision of basic services are components of the initial phase of stabilization for returnees. In parallel with this initial effort, the focus must be on the long-term processes to assist sustainable reintegration and stabilization. Agencies focused on assisting returnees, such as UN organizations, are in an optimal position to assume a higher profile in advocating for greater awareness and an improved response from the GoSS and the international community to meet the long-term needs of the returnees

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<sup>216</sup>Sorcha Callaghan and Susanne Jaspars, *Challenging Choice: Protection and Livelihoods in Conflict, Case Studies from Darfur, Chechnya, Sri Lanka, and the Occupied Palestinian Territories* (London, England: Humanitarian Policy Group, Overseas Development Institute, 2010).

through livelihood improvements.<sup>217</sup> In addition to providing the capacity and implementation for long-term approaches through promotion of sustainable livelihoods, it is essential for assisting agencies to understand the intricacies related to the skills of the returnees and the environment in which they are returning to. Understanding the underlying risks at large, particularly in relation to potential sources of conflict, is imperative to meet local community needs and maintain an environment of peace and stability. To achieve this, external intervention must ideally be aimed at primarily advancing livelihood-focused economic development.

The study of South Sudan analyzed evidence of an emerging post-conflict nation struggling to transition from the pattern of short-term emergency aid to long-term sustainability. Despite the euphoria, sense of freedom, and the high hopes that came with independence, the people of this young nation continue to confront challenges associated with the return of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). In light of the existing socio-economic deficiencies that have emerged from years of conflict and unrest, changes in the human landscape and demographics have, in part, fueled unresolved ethnic tensions, contributed to economic stagnation, and undermined development efforts. Ultimately, this changing dynamic contributes to a cycle of insecurity for returnees and existing residents alike. Not only does this resulting instability create limited immediate opportunities for returnees, it has long-term implications on the ability of South Sudan to emerge from its stage of post-conflict development and adopt a sustainable growth pattern towards stabilization and reconstruction.

#### **A. SETBACKS: CHALLENGE OF REINTEGRATION AND INADEQUACIES OF SHORT-TERM STRATEGY**

The process of effectively reintegrating returnees is a daunting undertaking for a post-conflict nation with underdeveloped/underutilized resources, infrastructure, and governance capabilities. It is further complicated by the inherited challenges of protracted conflict. Several experts express this position by noting:

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<sup>217</sup>Sara Pantuliano, Margie Buchanan-Smith, Paul Murphy and Irina Mosel, *The Long Road Home: Opportunities and Obstacles to the Reintegration of IDPs and Refugees returning to Southern Sudan and the Three Areas* (London, England: Humanitarian Policy Group, Overseas Development Institute, 2008).

Not only is it difficult for refugees and other migrants as individuals to simply go ‘home,’ but also return to countries of origin can contribute to a spiral of decline, whether through re-igniting conflict, through perpetuating inequality or abuses of rights or through economic hardship, which could stimulate greater levels of forced displacement in the future.<sup>218</sup>

The perpetuation of inequity and the potential re-ignition of conflict pose an immense challenge to emerging post-conflict nations and its individual inhabitants, as described in the case of South Sudan. The central issue is how the return of the displaced can be managed to overcome the spiral of decline outlined above. Specifically, reintegration must largely be prepared to address economic hardship and other factors that could lead to further destabilizing forced displacement, violence, and underdevelopment.

Consequently, support of the reintegration process demands a two-fold approach. Immediate humanitarian needs must be supplemented by a sustainable long-term strategy. The case study of South Sudan showed that while the international community and the Government of South Sudan (GOSS) have paid particular focus on the provision of aid to address imminent humanitarian needs, a longer-term strategy has not fully been developed yet (though the beginnings are there). As a result, South Sudanese continue to experience instability and violence in their daily lives.

Experts in the field of reintegration in post-conflict societies recognize that “Reintegration is of necessity a gradual process; given the destruction of infrastructure and social capital in the south [Juba], it is impracticable to expect that all requirements for return will be met evenly and on time.”<sup>219</sup> Many stakeholders have been striving towards supporting mitigation of the conflict, and the provision of emergent aid.

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<sup>218</sup> Richard Black and Saskia Gent, “Defining, Measuring and Influencing Sustainable Return: The Case of the Balkans” (Brighton, United Kingdom: Development Research Centre on Migration, Sussex Centre for Migration Research, 2004).

<sup>219</sup> Sara Pantuliano, Margie Buchanan-Smith, Paul Murphy and Irina Mosel, *The Long Road Home: Opportunities and Obstacles to the Reintegration of IDPs and Refugees returning to Southern Sudan and the Three Areas* (London, England: Humanitarian Policy Group, Overseas Development Institute, 2008).

According to a report by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, however, food shortages continue even in regions in which assistance has been provided by international agencies.<sup>220</sup>

While the immediate needs of returnees have been the focal point of many humanitarian organizations, mainly in the form of relief aid package of food rations, there remains a gap in the assistance to establish longer-term sustainable opportunities. The question remains whether the current process is proceeding in a manner that will provide returnees the best chance of future success. This, however, is not to say that no efforts have been made toward enhancing the future self-sufficiency and viability of post-conflict societies; rather it highlights the central importance of a long-term strategy for returnee management processes.

In addition, the study of South Sudan shows that security and protection conditions in post-conflict societies cannot be addressed through short-term relief strategies. This study also showed that because the refugees and IDPs returned without sufficient planning or support, their return has contributed to greater levels of instability. As part of a comprehensive and long-term repatriation strategy, this case emphasized the need to confront historical conditions and root causes leading to violent conflict. Pre-existing conditions of insecurity led to the inadequate protection or opportunity for the exceptionally vulnerable returnees, who then contributed to a decline in security. In essence, resource strains were amplified by the increase of a population that had limited ability to provide for itself or contribute to community and national development.

In light of this backdrop, it is evident that these components combined directly contribute to the unstable situation that continues to haunt this fragile new nation. Ultimately, an atmosphere of insecurity risks further destabilization and raises the possibility that the cycle of violence may reemerge. Prospects for advancing development in South Sudan rely on achieving stability and security. Devoid of longer-term resolutions resulting in sustainable opportunities, security—a central element to the progression of post-conflict society (e.g. South Sudan) development—remains weak.

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<sup>220</sup> “Sustainable Reintegration of Returnees and Displaced Populations in Africa,” United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees, Geneva, Switzerland: 2004.

However, this research concludes that a long-term strategy containing a livelihood component directly confronts the security and protection dilemma in post-conflict societies. This long-term strategy establishes stability whereby fostering community and providing economic opportunities and sustainable growth.

## **B. LOOKING AHEAD: OPPORTUNITIES FOR LONG-TERM SUSTAINABLE GROWTH**

This research concludes that returnee management is strengthened by the incorporation of a broader community-based approach that establishes an environment that brings together the needs of residents and returnees under a joint recovery and sustainment framework. As discussed in previous chapters, the South Sudan case study supports the argument that development of livelihoods for returnees has profound implications on this process; the re-development of returnees' livelihoods cultivates a sense of ownership, creates opportunities, and promotes conditions where individual economic viability collectively improves the broader community and by extension, the nation. The South Sudan case study supports the assumption that limited livelihood opportunities currently exist in this post-conflict nation. Reliance on areas that are ripe for development, however, may help a viable path for livelihood development. More specifically, agriculture has been the foundation of South Sudan's historical economy and offers the most promising source of sustainable livelihoods, economic growth, and community development. South Sudan's abundant and largely untapped arable land presents sustainable solutions for the transition from the relief phase to long-term growth, while also empowering returnees and creating community development. Thus, livelihoods not only provide the means for returnees to be self-sufficient but also encourage community through which stability is fostered. All of these outcomes are essential elements for the sustainability of emerging post-conflict nations. The pressures of reintegration in post-conflicts environments are constantly mounting; therefore, it is essential to focus more effectively on supporting the determinants for successful return, through long-term reintegration and recovery strategies—only then can post-conflict reintegration programs ensure sustainable stabilization and reconstruction.

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