

# INCREASING COORDINATION FOR IMPROVED HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE IN TONJ SOUTH



## WARRAP STATE

Protection mainstreaming is critical for ensuring that humanitarian programming is conducted through a protection and conflict sensitive lens as well as that it incorporates the needs of the most vulnerable members of the community. When non-protection partners are trained on protection mainstreaming, their programming is enhanced and can better respond to the needs of all community members. As a leading protection partner in South Sudan, Nonviolent Peaceforce (NP) has been training partners from all sectors in protection mainstreaming throughout the country.



*Photo: Child protection awareness raising. Jak payam, Tonj South county/March/2021*

In March 2021, NP's Mobile Protection Response Team (MPRT), funded by South Sudan Humanitarian Fund (SSHF), travelled to Tonj South to conduct a protection assessment and provide immediate response to identified protection concerns. After NP observed that there were no static protection partners in the area, NP decided to conduct a protection mainstreaming for non-protection partners operating from Tonj Town to ensure centrality of protection in their activities.

On March 30, 2021, NP held a protection mainstreaming training for 12 participants (nine male and three female) from four partner organizations, including World Vision, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), Comitato Collaborazione Medica (CCM) and The Organization for Children's Harmony (TOCH).

During the training, NP identified two partners providing gender-based violence (GBV) case management however, there was no coordination between the partners and there was no unified referral pathway. Each partner had its own internal referral pathway that would guide their organization in responding to GBV cases. This situation sometimes caused delays in providing effective GBV response to survivors. It could be due to lack of transport to send a survivor to Wau or not knowing that a survivor could receive services in Tonj South

As a result of these findings, NP decided it was imperative to adapt its programming to respond to the lack of coordination between these GBV partners. As such, the rest of the training provided a forum for all partners to introduce their services so that partners knew what services existed in the area and duplication and gaps could be reduced. For example, during this session, it was mentioned that the health partner in Tonj Town, Tonj South had the capacity to treat GBV survivors, thereby reducing or eliminating the need for other partners to refer survivors to Wau.

After this discussion, NP guided the partners on how to establish a unified and formal referral pathway where all services were mapped with contact information. The referral pathway should also provide contacts of police and legal aid to guide case managers and survivors on how to seek these services. After the referral pathway is finalized, the pathway should be disseminated to all partners and to the community (orally and written in the local language) to improve utilization. After the trainings, the participants discussed further about how to improve coordination and acknowledged that better communication and coordination would improve service delivery and safe and immediate access of survivors to services

This situation indicates the importance of protection partners to ensure the protection of civilians even in the programming of non-protection partners. Often times, even with the best intentions of all parties, the protection of civilians can be enhanced and coordination can be improved, thereby leading to improved access to services by the community. Though NP's MPRT was only in Tonj South for a short period, it is likely that the protection programming it implemented in the area will have positive long-term and multi-sectoral impacts. NP hopes to return to Tonj South in the future and follow up on the development and dissemination of the GBV referral pathway as well as support the establishment and strengthening of referral pathways in other areas of its operation.



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