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Policy Paper

Investing in Women, Peace and Security in South Sudan: Strengthening Financing Mechanisms for Sustainable Peace

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Abstract

Women's meaningful participation in peace and security processes is essential for achieving sustainable peace and inclusive governance. However, despite South Sudan's commitments to the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda through United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, national policy frameworks, and the Second South Sudan National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (SSNAP II: 2024–2029), implementation continues to face significant financing challenges. This policy brief examines the current financing landscape of the WPS agenda in South Sudan, highlighting gaps in domestic resource allocation, donor dependency, institutional capacity, and the translation of policy commitments into practical investments. Evidence shows that limited and unpredictable financing has weakened the implementation of women's participation, protection, and leadership initiatives in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. While public financial management reforms and gender-responsive budgeting provide important opportunities for strengthening financing, challenges remain in ensuring that gender priorities are reflected in annual budgets and actual expenditure. The brief argues that investing in women's peace and security initiatives is not only a gender equality obligation but also a strategic investment in national stability and recovery. Sustainable financing requires stronger government ownership, the integration of WPS priorities into national budgets, improved coordination among development partners, predictable funding for women-led organisations, and strengthened accountability mechanisms. The brief recommends increasing domestic financing for WPS commitments, adopting gender-responsive budgeting across government institutions, improving tracking of WPS-related expenditures, and creating flexible financing mechanisms that enable women's organisations to contribute effectively to peacebuilding efforts.

Keywords: Women, Peace and Security (WPS); Financing for Peacebuilding; Gender-Responsive Budgeting; Public Financial Management; South Sudan; Women's Participation; Peace and Security

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KEY MESSAGES

- Women's participation strengthens peace outcomes, but financing remains inadequate.
- South Sudan has made strong WPS commitments, but funding gaps limit their implementation.
- Gender-responsive budgeting can help align policy commitments with available resources.
- Sustainable peace requires predictable domestic financing, not only donor support.

Policy Problem

South Sudan has developed important WPS frameworks, including SSNAP II (2024–2029), but financial implementation remains limited. The disconnect between policy commitments and available resources restricts women's participation in peace processes, weakens protection mechanisms, and reduces the sustainability of peacebuilding interventions.

What is the issue?

Despite a growing body of evidence that women's participation leads to more sustainable peace, financial and political support remains woefully inadequate. Issues with women, peace and security (WPS) investments include severe underfunding, lack of data, deeply entrenched structural barriers, increasing violence against women and girls, and a mismatch between donor funding and the needs of grassroots organisations. These problems create a vicious cycle where cuts hinder implementation, making it hard to track progress, and allow violence to continue despite evidence showing that investing in women's participation improves peacebuilding outcomes. Investment and financing for the women, peace and security agenda are critical for supporting women's leadership, participation and protection in conflict prevention, peacebuilding and recovery.

Financing through public investments involves a multi-faceted approach, including national governments allocating domestic budgets, international donors meeting gender equality targets in their aid, and utilising innovative financing mechanisms. Major financing mechanisms include the UN Peacebuilding Fund, the Women Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF), funding for women's organisations and country-based pooled funds (UN Women, 2020).

Why now?

Despite the evidence that investing in women improves peace outcomes, overall funding is insufficient and decreasing, especially for conflict prevention and peacebuilding. This is coupled with limited funding allocated for the national and state gender machineries. Many donors have reduced their financial support towards the WPS agenda due to funding cuts, e.g., USAID policy. Thus, undermine institutional ability to implement and sustain programmes. In addition to the above, donor funding is often short-term and activity-based, which leaves local women's organisations weak, dependent, and unable to build sustainable capacity. There are significant gaps in gender-disaggregated data, which makes it difficult to accurately track violence, ensure women's representation in peace processes, and allocate appropriate resources. Inadequate investment in women's leadership and organisations also leads to a misallocation of resources and a rise in violence against women.

Why is it important?

i. Investing in Women, Peace and Security (WPS) is crucial because it leads to more sustainable peace, as peace processes are more durable when women are involved

ii. Investments in women, peace and security agenda are not an option; they are a necessity for preventing conflict and achieving sustainable and inclusive peace.

iii. It is important because women are not just victims of conflict but also essential agents of change, bringing unique perspectives for reconciliation and justice, addressing specific needs in crisis, and preventing future violence.

iv. Country's investments on WPS are crucial for strengthening women's participation in peace talks, and all peace agreements must include gender equality provisions, e.g. South Sudan engagement in the peace talks in 2015-2018. Example of Liberia 's country's investment of more than $1 million over the last three years in training women officers and creating military gender advisers for peacekeeping operations.

v. **Policy-to-Practice Disconnect:** There is a significant gap between high-level political rhetoric and policy commitments (such as National Action Plans on WPS) and the actual implementation and financial allocation on the ground.

National budgets:

Inclusion of women's perspectives ensures that peacebuilding efforts have greater legitimacy and are more reflective of the needs of the entire population. Investment empowers women to take on leadership roles in areas like disarmament, reintegration, and post-conflict recovery. Governments should increase domestic investment in gender equality and women's empowerment within their peacebuilding and security sectors, aligning their national budgets with the WPS agenda, as the SSNAP II is align to annual budgets from 2024-onwards. The Overall objective of SSNAP-2 is penetrating the peace and security sector, though in the past interventions have largely dwelt on the traditional social sectors**.**

- Increasing participation of women in the security sector and establishing of women networks with the security sector and the Umbrella Body-South Sudan Women's Network in Security Sector
- SGBV protection, Codes of conduct, Investigation + prosecution (role of different security + justice institutions)
- The Role of the Military Justice in the protection of SGBV and CRSV, addressing recruitment and use of children(SSNAP II, 2024-2029)

"We need long-term financial support—not driven by donor priorities for projects—in order to build our capacity to participate and address the structural inequalities which drive conflict in our region."
(Participant at the Asia-Pacific regional civil society consultation for the Global Study, 2015)

Past allocation: In fiscal year 2017/18, allocations for social sectors (education, health, and social and humanitarian affairs) combined made up just five percent of the total budget, a decrease from the previous year. For context, in the **FY 2017/2018 budget**, the MGCSW was allocated a "symbolic amount" of **0.07 percent** of the total national budget. In 2019/2020 2019, budget increased to 00.68%. This budget is not actualized due to limited financial flows and liquidity issues.

South Sudan Approved Budget for 2024/2025

South Sudan's approved budget for the 2024/2025 fiscal year is 4.2 trillion South Sudanese Pounds (SSP), which is approximately $1.651 billion USD. This budget is 22% lower than the previous year and includes a 46% deficit, planned to be funded through grants and external borrowing. A key objective for this year's budget is to significantly increase revenue from non-oil sources.

- Budget amount: 4.2 trillion SSP (approx. $1.651 billion).
- Budget deficit: 1.9 trillion SSP (approx. $758 million), or 46% of the budget.
- Funding the deficit: The government plans to use a combination of grants and external borrowing to cover the deficit

Source (Budget book, 2024/2025)

The latest data for the FY 2024/2025 budget shows that the MGCSW is included in the larger "social and humanitarian affairs" category, which, along with health and education, only got 11.2 per cent of the total budget (SSP 4.2 trillion). The social and humanitarian affairs component specifically increased from 0.4 per cent in 2023 to **4.5 per cent** in 2024. This data suggests that, historically, the South Sudanese government has prioritised administrative and security spending over social services, with the Ministry of Gender, Child, and Social Welfare likely receiving a small portion of the overall budget.

The development of the second National Action Plan (NAPII), 2024-2029, was premised on the reflections and lessons learned from the implementation of the first NAP (2015-2020) with a new focus on investing in rigorously confronting and addressing the challenges that prevail in achieving lasting and inclusive peace through women's meaningful participation and leadership in conflict prevention, resolution and peacebuilding. SSNAPII offers additional tools for successful implementation, namely, detailed operational plans for key MDAs and civil society organisations (CSOs); a communications plan; a costed resources plan, including the specific human resource, technical and financial resources needed for implementation; a monitoring and evaluation framework; terms of reference for coordination structures; and well-explained reporting and accountability measures.

Objective of Costing the SSNAPII (2024-202()

The main objective of costing and financing UNSCR 1325 plans is to further assess the financial resources available for the implementation of National Action Plans on UNSCR 1325.On another hand the Government of South Sudan introduced budget baseline costing techniques in the South Sudan budget process by strengthening tools and techniques in the early phase of the budget preparation calendar. South Sudan (SSD) has made strong efforts to strengthen the budget preparation process**.** Following the issuance of a budget circular with indicative budget ceilings, MDAs are requested to complete budget preparation templates for each major budget item both for the recurrent budget and development projects, which are consolidated through the budget preparation system (BPS) or Data collection tool.

1. **Summary Budget Estimates 2024-2029**

YR 2023-2028	Fiscal Year	Cost in USD	Cost in SSP
1	FY 2024-2025	4,749,976	4,797,476,063
2	FY 2025-2026	4,414,850	4,458,998,803
3	FY 2026-2027	4,383,328	4,427,161,583
4	FY 2027-2028	4,383,328	4,427,161,583
5	FY 2028-2029	4,383,328	4,427,161,583
GRAND TOTAL		**22,314,812**	**22,537,959,615**

Source: Costed plan for the SSNAPII, 2024

The costed plan of SSNAP II covers a period of five years for government financing. Annually, within the plan, for example, 2024-2025, an amount of 4,797,476,063 SSP, equivalent to 4,749,976 USD, is allocated for Women, Peace and Security activities in the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare, but the ceiling set for budgeting by the Ministry of Finance does not allow for the amount to enter into the system set. Also, even if part of the above amount enters the system, still obtaining actual transfers for implementation of activities poses another challenge. Coupled with economic crisis and lack of liquidity, it becomes unbearable.

Gender-Responsive Budgeting (GRB)

Gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) is a strategy that finances the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda by ensuring public resources are allocated to address the unique needs of women and girls in peace and security contexts. By examining budgets through a gender lens, GRB helps identify and correct funding gaps in areas like prevention, participation, protection, and recovery, ultimately working to achieve gender equality and better integrate the WPS agenda into national and local policies. This approach involves a whole-government strategy with political will, robust data, and strong institutional frameworks to achieve its goals (Commission for gender equality, 2022). Responsive Budgeting (GRB), which has become a key initiative adopted by various countries in seeking to address challenges around gender equality and women's economic empowerment.

> Gender Responsive Budget can be defined as “diverse initiatives or efforts that are aimed at making government’s planning, budgeting and auditing contribute [towards] gender equality”.2 GRB ultimately explores the differential impact of policies and budgets on women and men, as well as on other facets of social discrimination.
>
> Beyond GRB being a key initiative that has been implemented by various countries, the United Nations (United Nations, 2015)

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which were adopted in 2015, also refer to GRB, which is meant to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls and includes key provisions such as the following:

• Undertake reforms to provide women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.

• Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels. (SDGs, 2030)

These provisions speak directly to gender-responsive budgeting and therefore strengthen the argument of why GRB is a key initiative that must be implemented globally. In support of GRB. By exposing gender disparities, GRB enables governments to address systemic underinvestment in programmes for women and girls.

Why gender-responsive budgeting?

Gender-responsive budgeting is a strategy for accelerating institutional transformation to eliminate structural inequality between women and men. Like gender mainstreaming, upon which it is rooted, gender budgeting involves targeting mainstream budgeting and resource deployment processes to ensure that women and men are given a fair share of the budget and related resources. The rationale for GRB initiatives is that they help bridge persistent inequalities between women and men and facilitate development by integrating gender issues into macroeconomic policy and budgets.

> Gender Responsive Budgeting focuses on the entire budget, ensuring that women and men benefit equally from every aspect of the budget and consequent expenditure or resource utilisation, including paid time for personnel or consultants. It moves from the premise that the current budgets are gender biased in favour of men and sets about to transform this reality so both women and men may benefit equally. The result is a gender balanced budget.

R-ARCSS (2018) CHAPTER IV: RESOURCE, ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

In summary, chapter IV outlines general principles designed to promote transparency and accountability.

• RTGONU is transparent and accountable.

• RTGONU is committed to fighting against corruption.

• It shall develop a code of ethics and integrity for public officials.

• Establish a high-level, competent and effective oversight mechanism that shall control revenue collection, budgeting, revenue allocation and expenditure.

• Ensure that the wealth of South Sudan shall be shared equitably.

PR-ARCSS, 2018, Chapter IV calls for public financial management (PFM) reforms by strengthening systems and structures and building technical capacities. 'PFM' refers to the set of laws, rules, systems and processes used by governments and subnational governments.

· To mobilise revenue
· Allocate public funds,
· Undertake public spending, account for funds and audit results.

Why is it important?

• It is an essential part of the institutional framework for state building.

• Because it ensures effective delivery of public services, and such delivery is closely associated with poverty reduction and growth.

• It allows for fair taxation and responsible spending.

• It should ensure that aggregate levels of tax collection and public spending are consistent with targets for the fiscal deficit and do not generate unsustainable levels of public borrowing (BUDGET).

• A PFM system should ensure that public resources are allocated to agreed-upon strategic priorities (budgets linked to the R-National Development Strategy (R-NDS)).

Doha declaration and action plan

In a nutshell, headline indicators paint a stark picture, and the hope for graduation is evidently remote. South Sudan's GNI per capita (USD 395) remains far below the USD 1,306 threshold, the HAI (35.4) is critically low, and vulnerability remains extremely high (54.5). These trends indicate that without sustained peace, accelerated investment in human capital, economic diversification, climate resilience, improved governance and institutional capacity, South Sudan's path toward LDC graduation will remain distant and uncertain. Furthermore, the DPoA review underscores that without financial support in the form of grants, technical assistance to integrate DPoA targets into the South Sudan Development Plan 2026-2036 and sectoral policies, and institutional capacity-building support for the national statistical system and the focal points on the DPoA monitoring framework, South Sudan will most likely experience further challenges meeting its DPoA implementation, monitoring, and reporting obligations, let alone achieve substantive progress over the next five years.

Priority Recommendations for accelerated DOHA implementation

1. Secure DPoA Delivery through Sustained Financing, Capacity Enhancement, and Accountability

South Sudan's immediate priority is a revitalised focus on effective DPoA implementation, monitoring, and reporting. This requires sustained financing, institutional strengthening, and political commitment.
§ Key **priorities:** Mobilise financing for coordination, monitoring, and reporting; integrate DP oA targets into the South Sudan Development Plan 2026–2036 and annual budgets; strengthen capacity of Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and DPoA focal points in DPoA monitoring frameworks; invest in the National Statistical System (especially the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS)) to close SDG & DPoA data gaps; and ensure a stable enabling environment through sustained security, improved governance, and structured engagement with the private sector, development partners, civil society, and academia.

2. Rebalance Public Spending toward Strategic Investment in Human Capital and Social Protection

Inclusive recovery depends on rebalancing over-expenditure from administration and security toward social sector investments.
§ Key **priorities:** Reprioritise national spending toward education, health, nutrition, and social protection; operationalise the National Social Protection Policy and establish a Social Security Fund; implement durable solutions for IDPs; establish a National Disability Inclusion Fund; stabilise education delivery through teacher welfare reforms, elimination of hidden school costs, and improved retention and quality; scale alternative and accelerated education programmes; and invest in climate-resilient school infrastructure.

3. Strengthen Health, Nutrition, and WASH Systems through Sustainable Financing

Health system reform must transition from aid dependence to predictable domestic financing.
§ Key **priorities:** Update and implement a national health financing strategy and increase domestic health spending; scale the Boma Health Initiative nationwide; invest in water safety planning and household water treatment; promote nutrition-sensitive agriculture through local food systems; integrate nutrition, WASH, and agriculture interventions; and transition NGO-led nutrition services sites into the Basic Package of Health and Nutrition Services.

4. Build Productive Capacity, Jobs, and MSMEs – Especially for Youth and Women

Inclusive productive enhancement for youth and women is essential for stability and peace.
§ Key **priorities:** Revive and fund TVET institutions, including mobile TVET for pastoralist and fishing communities; operationalise youth and women enterprise development funds; rehabilitate feeder roads; and promote youth and women upskilling along prioritised value chains (e.g., UNDP (2023)).

5. Strengthen Agriculture, Food Systems, and Climate Resilience

Food security requires decentralised, climate-resilient production systems.
§ Key **priorities:** Invest in high-potential value chains and micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) (e.g., UNDP (2023)); establish seed multiplier hubs and decentralised extension services; promote group-based commercial production and stronger agricultural value chains; scale community-managed irrigation and water harvesting; reduce post-harvest losses through collectively owned storage and processing facilities; link farmers to markets and school meals; and integrate early warning systems with anticipatory social protection and agricultural responses.

6. Mobilise Sustainable Domestic and Hybrid Financing

Declining ODA necessitates stronger domestic and innovative financing.
§ Key **priorities:** Strengthen the South Sudan Revenue Authority (SSRA) to improve revenue administration and harmonise multi-layered taxation regimes; formalise and track remittances through the Bank of South Sudan (BOSS); establish an Oil-for-Education and Health Pooled Fund; and introduce community matching grants for local health, social and skills infrastructure.

7. Strengthen Data, Digital Governance, and Development Partnerships

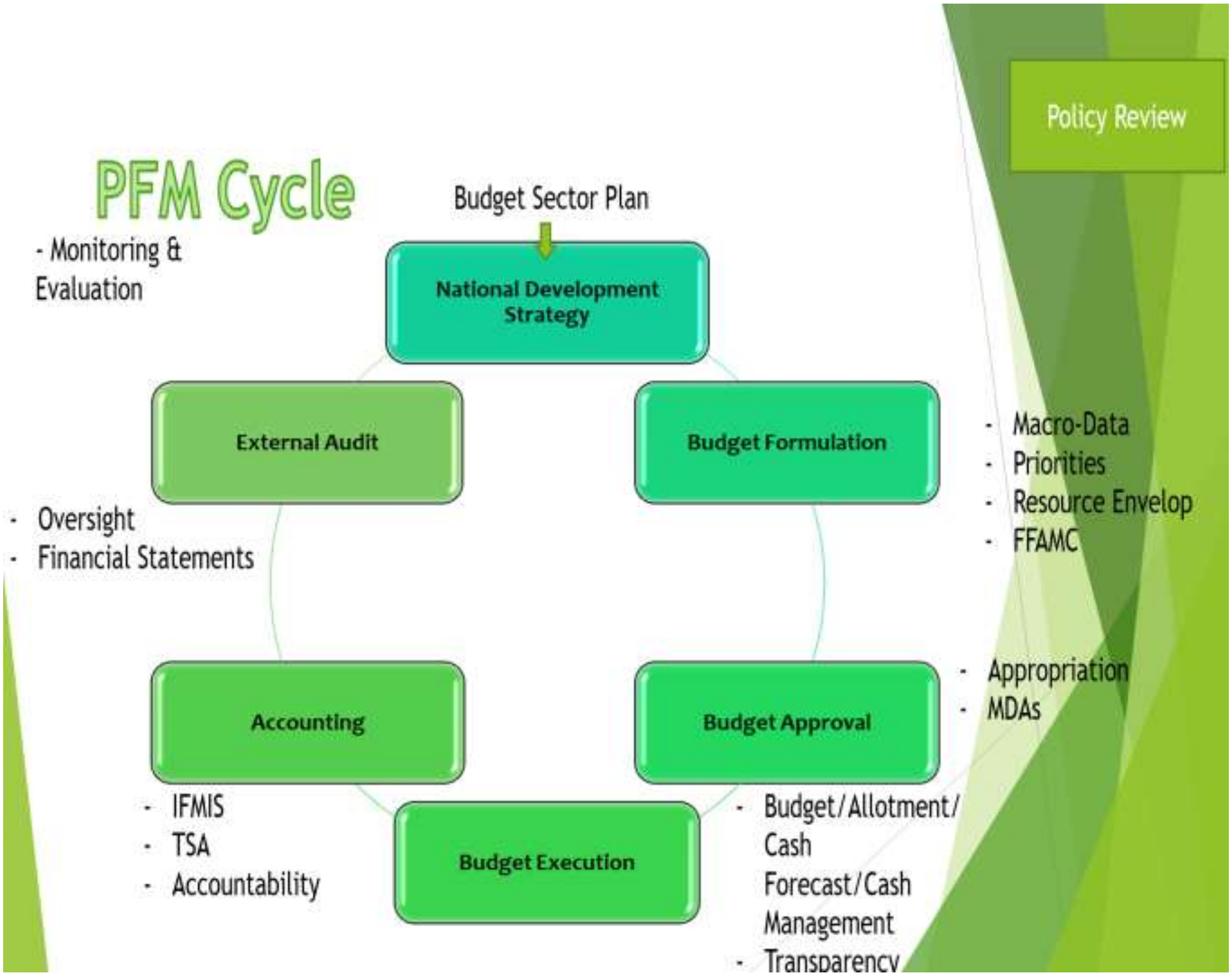
Implementation and accountability depend on credible data and digital systems.
§ Key **priorities:** Empower NBS to implement NSDS II, including priority censuses (population & housing, establishments, agriculture); integrate early warning systems into national anticipatory action frameworks; accelerate digital public infrastructure, digital transformation, biometric ID and payroll, and digital payments; expand affordable connectivity; strengthen STEM education, research, and innovation ecosystems; operationalise the National Research Council; and invest in ICT integration in schools, focusing on child protection.

8. Transition from Humanitarian to Development Financing

Long-term resilience requires redesigning humanitarian intervention strategy, shifting focus from emergency aid to development finance.
§ Key **priorities:** Pursue targeted bilateral/diplomatic development partnerships; fully implement the peace agreement as a prerequisite for attracting development capital; advance PFM reforms and budget rebalancing toward social sectors; finalise and adhere to the National Development Plan (2026–2036); and leverage transparent public–private partnerships, particularly in TVET, agritech, energy, and infrastructure.

9. Foster Effective Development Partnerships and an Enabling Environment

Effective delivery on development goals depends on trust, security, improved governance and national ownership.
§ **Key priorities:** Ensure security and humanitarian access; protect and maintain development assets; promote CSO consortiums and pooled funding mechanisms; strengthen government-CSO dialogue through sector working groups and joint monitoring; and create an enabling environment for sustainable, locally led development.



Source; (MF&P, 2022)

Public Financial Management Reform under the Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS), 2018

The R-ARCSS (2018) introduced key Public Financial Management (PFM) reforms aimed at strengthening transparency, accountability, institutional capacity, and effective management of public resources in South Sudan. The reforms focused on improving financial governance systems, strengthening oversight institutions, and establishing new mechanisms to support responsible public expenditure management.

1. Institutional Reforms

The agreement emphasised strengthening existing institutions responsible for public financial management, including:

a. Bank of South Sudan (BoSS)

Strengthening monetary governance, financial oversight, and accountability in public financial management.

b. Ministry of Finance and Planning (MoFP)

Enhancing budget preparation, public expenditure management, revenue administration, financial reporting, and coordination of national planning processes.

c. Anti-Corruption Commission

Strengthening mechanisms for preventing, investigating, and addressing corruption in the management of public resources.

d. National Audit Chamber

Improving independent oversight, auditing of public finances, and accountability for government expenditure.

2. Establishment of New Institutions

The R-ARCSS also provided for the creation and strengthening of new institutions to improve financial governance and service delivery, including:

- **Public Procurement and Asset Disposal Authority**

To strengthen transparency, efficiency, and accountability in public procurement and management of government assets.

- **Salaries and Remuneration Commission**

To support fair, transparent, and standardised remuneration systems in the public sector.

- **Health Care Support Fund**

To improve financing mechanisms for health sector priorities and service delivery.

- **Students Support Fund**

The goal is to support education financing and improve access to learning opportunities.
These reforms are intended to strengthen public financial management systems, improve budget credibility, enhance accountability, and ensure that public resources are aligned with national development priorities.

iii. National Legislation Review

A wide range of national legislation has been reviewed for improvement, including

- Public Finance Management and Accountability Act 2011,
- Petroleum Revenue Act 2012.
- National Audit Chamber Act 2011.
- Anti-Corruption Commission Act 2009,
- Public Finance Management and Accountability Act 2011.
- The Mining Act 2012.
- Petroleum Revenue Management Act 2012.
- National Pensions Fund Act, 2012.
- Revenue Authority Act 2017.

Currently, most of the anticipated reviews on the above legislations had been completed.

Chapter 4 of R-ARCSS requires the R-TGoNU to enhance the radical PFM-Reforms Strategy, which similarly encompasses transparency and accountability in public resources management, strengthening and capacity building for institutions, legislative review of vital legal frameworks, and enhancement of their basic functions in reinforcing the good management of public resources. As part of the Gender Mainstreaming and PFM-Reform implementation, while resulting from IMF and World Bank advice to the GRSS, the R-TGoNU through the Ministry of Finance and Planning took the initiative to establish the Public Finance Management Reform Strategy, including the PFM-Reform Governance Structure. Alluding to this, one of the PFM reform strategies is to engage the donor community and development partners for technical and financial support. To support the ongoing implementation of the R-ARCSS, including the PFM-Reform programme's priorities in the Republic of South Sudan, through enhancing gender mainstreaming, women's and youth empowerment, and participation of women and youth in leadership and decision-making.

PFM-R PRIORITIES

Priority Area No. 12: Strengthen the budget process and budget credibility crosscutting: Institutional reforms and legislative reviews. Under these priority areas, the PFM Governance Structure is to support the current Government's Policies in the gender responsive budgeting in all MDAs that are equally tasked by the Law to adhere to their mandate and ensure that the implementation of the PFM-Reforms under Gender Mainstreaming in the Republic of South Sudan is Safeguarded including their program's priorities through Gende Mainstreaming, Women and Youth empowerment, participation of women and youth in leadership and decision making.

I. To help all the MDAs consult potential donors and development partners about the projects they need to be supported on, especially in the gender-responsive budgeting.

II. To establish a gender mainstreaming strategy in all the MDAs and other concerned government institutions to effectively implement and address gender issues in budgeting.

III. To inform all the MDAs about the gaps that need to be addressed to prevent any delays in the progress of gender-responsive budgeting.

IV. The goal is to enable the MDAs to advance gender-responsive budgeting and gender mainstreaming, ensuring the efficient and effective implementation of credible budgeting and accountable budget execution based on the PFM-Cycle.

V. To draw up all the potential gender-responsive budgeting strategies that are related to the implementation of the R-ARCSS on gender mainstreaming, gender equality, women and youth support and the PFM reforms.

VI. To help the MDAs implement all the gender-responsive policies and plans as part of appropriate budget planning, including the South Sudanese public, and to promote greater ownership of PFM reforms by the MDAs as part of the gender mainstreaming.

VII. To help all the MDAs incorporate their budget planning and execution in line with the PFM reforms on gender-responsive budgeting.

VIII. To ensure that all the deployed strategies considered effective are upheld in all MDAs for improvement in the advocacy for gender equality through the institutions tasked with PFM reforms and all the gender-identified programmes being implemented under the Gender Cluster.

Roles and responsibilities for reporting: National Treasury/Ministry of Finance and Planning

ROLES	RESPONSIBILITIES
Custodian of the financial performance reporting system	Establish systems for monitoring implementation of government budget allocations
Guidance on annual reporting	Issue guidelines on preparing Annual Reports
Oversight of reported Information	Analyse government expenditure reports and provide feedback; and participate in structures to provide oversight of government performance information
Support for the utilisation of monitoring findings	Support government institutions to use monitoring findings during the budget process

Source: (Ministry of Finance &planning, 2022)

CONCLUSION

South Sudan has made important commitments toward advancing the Women, Peace and Security agenda through policy frameworks such as SSNAP II (2024–2029). However, the success of these commitments depends on the availability of predictable, adequate, and sustainable financing. Strengthening investment in women's participation, leadership, and protection is essential for transforming peace commitments into measurable outcomes. Financing women's participation is financing peace. Without adequate resources, WPS commitments risk remaining political statements rather than practical mechanisms for sustainable peace.

Key Recommendations

1. Institutionalise WPS Financing Within National Budget Processes

The Government of South Sudan should integrate the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda into national planning and budgeting frameworks to ensure sustainable implementation of National Action Plans (NAPs). The Ministry of Finance and Planning should:

- Establish dedicated budget lines for SSNAP II (2024–2029) implementation across relevant ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs);
- Ensure WPS priorities are reflected in annual sector budgets and medium-term expenditure frameworks;
- Strengthen parliamentary oversight and budget scrutiny to ensure approved WPS allocations are protected and effectively implemented;
- Require MDAs to define costed WPS actions, including specific targets on women's participation, protection, and leadership.

2. Strengthen Gender-Responsive Budgeting as a Financing Mechanism for WPS

Gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) should be fully integrated into public financial management reforms to bridge the gap between policy commitments and available resources. The government should:

- Align WPS financing with the Public Financial Management Reform Strategy;
- Apply gender analysis throughout budget planning, allocation, implementation, and monitoring processes;

- Establish mechanisms for tracking WPS-related expenditures and assessing their impact on women and girls.

3. Reduce Donor Dependency and Promote Sustainable Financing

While donor support remains important, financing for the WPS agenda should gradually shift toward predictable and sustainable national financing. Development partners should:

- Support SSNAP II implementation and monitoring beyond initial policy development;
- Provide multi-year, flexible financing that strengthens institutional capacity rather than short-term project-based interventions;
- Improve donor coordination through WPS coordination mechanisms to reduce duplication and ensure balanced support across all pillars of the agenda.

4. Strengthen Subnational Implementation and Resource Mobilisation

The Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare should accelerate the development and implementation of state-level action plans aligned with SSNAP II. These plans should:

- Include costed priorities and resource mobilisation strategies;
- Identify short- and medium-term financing requirements;
- Support sector-specific implementation plans across key areas, including economic empowerment, protection, and social services.

5. Increase Gender-Responsive International Financing Commitments

International partners should exceed the UN's recommended target of dedicating at least 15 percent of relevant funding to gender equality and women's empowerment in peacebuilding. This should serve as a minimum benchmark rather than a ceiling.

6. Expand Flexible Financing for Women-Led Peacebuilding Organisations

Women's civil society organisations play a critical role in conflict prevention, mediation, and community peacebuilding. Donors and financing institutions should:

- Increase predictable, accessible, and flexible funding for women-led organisations;
- Support dedicated financing mechanisms for women, peace and security and humanitarian action;
- Invest in institutional strengthening to enable local organisations to sustain their peacebuilding roles.

Priority Actions for the Ministry of Finance and Planning

The Ministry of Finance and Planning should:

- Allocate dedicated resources for SSNAP II implementation;
- Integrate WPS priorities into national budget guidelines and expenditure frameworks;
- Track WPS-related spending through gender-responsive budgeting tools;
- Require annual reporting by MDAs on WPS budget allocations, expenditure, and outcomes;
- Strengthen coordination between financial planning institutions and gender institutions to improve accountability.

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