

FOOD SECURITY THROUGH AGRIBUSINESS IN SOUTH SUDAN (SSADP II)



Kingdom of the Netherlands



spark



SSADP II: 2020 OUTCOMES AND RECOMMENDATIONS



Johan te Velde, 23 February 2021

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Acronyms

A2F	Access to Finance
AR	Action Research
BDA	Business Development Advisor
BPC	Business Plan Competition
BSA	Business start-up accelerator
BSO	Business Support Officer
BST	Business Skills Training
C&D	Church & Development
CDOT	Catholic Diocese of Torit
CMDRR	Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction
CRA	Conflict Risk Analysis
CRR	Conflict Risk Reduction
CSRF	Conflict Sensitivity Resource Facility
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EU	European Union
F2FE	Farmer-to-farmer Extension
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
FCS	Food Consumption Score
FEMA	Farmer Economy and Market Association
FF	Field Facilitator
FFS	Farmer Field School
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GAP	Good Agriculture Practices
HP	Loan Hire Purchase Loan
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IPC	Integrated Phase Classification
KII	Key Informant Interview
LANA	Loan for Agricultural Non-Production Actors
LAPA	Loan for Agricultural Production Actors
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
LTO	Long-Term Outcome
M4P	Making Markets Work for the Poor
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MFI	Microfinance Institution
MSMEs	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (Existing Business)
MSP	Multi-Stakeholder Platform
MTO	Medium-Term Outcome
NAS	National Salvation Front /Army
NCA	Norwegian Church Aid
NPA	Norwegian People's Aid
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NNGO	National NGO
OECD/DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development/Development Assistance Committee
PDRA	Participatory Disaster Risk Assessment
PfRR	Partnership for Recovery and Resilience
PMEL	Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PWGT	Project Working Group Team
R-ARCISS	Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan
RDAA	Rural Development Action Aid
RRC	Relief and Rehabilitation Commission
RUF1	Rural Finance Institution
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises

SSADP	South Sudan Agribusiness Development Programme
SSADP II	Food Security Through Agribusiness in South Sudan
SSAPU	South Sudan Agricultural Producers Union
SSP	South Sudan Pounds (exchange rate USD 1 = SSP 290)
SSPDF	South Sudan People's Defence Forces (formerly: SPLA)
SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary-General
STO	Star Trust Organization
TOR	Terms of Reference
ToT	Training of Trainers
TT	Technical Team
UN	United Nations
UNMISS	United Nations Mission in South Sudan
UNOCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
VCA	Value Chain Analysis
VESA	Village Economic and Social Association
VEMSA	Village Economic Market and Social Association
VSLA	Village Savings and Loans Association
WFP	World Food Programme
YWE	Youth and Women's Entrepreneurs (Start-up Business)

1. Introduction and background

1.1 The SSADP II (South Sudan Agribusiness Development Programme II)

From 2013 - 2018 the South Sudan Agribusiness Development Programme I (SSADP I) was implemented. Mainly, as a consequence of political unrest, armed conflict and corresponding insecurity, the objectives of the SSADP I were only met partially.¹

Against this background, in 2018, the South Sudan Agribusiness Development Programme II (SSADP II) 'Food Security Through Agribusiness in South Sudan' was formulated. The SSADP II is an ambitious five-year programme (16 August 2018 to 31 July 2023), funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands.² The programme is implemented by a consortium of Cordaid (lead agency), SPARK and Agriterra.

The overall goal of the programme is to improve food security, increase income and to create employment for 10,000 farmer households in the three South-Sudanese (former) states: Yambio, Torit and Bor. In order to achieve this, the project works directly with farmers and agribusinesses. The project proposal mentions that the project will support farmer groups, Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), Cooperatives, Village Economy, Market and Social Association (VEMSA) with access to organization, technology, to markets and finance.

The Making Markets Working for the Poor (M4P) approach is used in order that poor people also benefit from the planned agricultural growth.³ Part of the philosophy of the programme is that agricultural growth can be achieved, even in the tough South Sudanese context, through the market orientation of private sector/traders.

SSADP II activities are: support for Farmer Economy and Market Associations (FEMAs), support for Village Economy Market and Social Associations (VEMSAs), improving the performance of cooperatives, support for climate smart food production as improved post-harvest storage, improved agribusiness marketing, value chain development, secure farmers' access to and the availability of quality inputs, development of the producers/entrepreneurs' technical and business skills, and access to finance, and better preparation for natural and conflict related hazards. Conflict sensitivity/do no harm-principle - based on prior experience of the SSADP I -, and a gender lens including concomitant gender transformative-activities are key.

Besides the three international partners, local partners are involved as presented in the table below. Each international and local partner is responsible for a specific aspect (and approach) of the SSADP II. In section 3 the outputs of these approaches are explained in depth.

Activities of the South Sudan Agricultural Producers Union (SSAPU) and Agriterra are linked to support cooperatives in South Sudan and SPARK has engaged the South-Sudanese consultancy firm Agro-Premium Consult for agri-business development trainings. Cordaid is the main international partner of Rural Finance Institution (RUFi), also in the SSADP II, but RUFi has also linkages with SPARK and Agriterra.

Table: Partners involved in the implementation of the SSADP II

Consortium partner	Organisation
Agriterra	SSAPU

¹ SOUTH SUDAN AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME II (SSADP II) FINAL BASELINE REPORT, 2019

² Decision grant Food Security through Agribusiness Project South Sudan, 8 Aug. 2018

³ Food Security through Agribusiness in South Sudan (SSADP II), Inception Report Final, February 2019

CORDAID, (SPARK, Agriterra)	RUFI
SPARK	Premium Agro Consult
SPARK, (CORDAID)	Premium Agro Consult

There are selected 17 Payams⁴ in the three counties (Yambio, Torit and Bor). These are in resp. the states Gbudue, Torit and Jonglei:

County	payams selected	Names of selected payams
Yambio	4	Gangura, Yambio, Bazungua and Ri-Rangu
Torit	8	Nyong, Bur, Kiyala, Himodonge, Imurok, Ifwotu, Ikoto and Irye
Bor	5	Makuach, Anyidi, Baidit, Jalle and Kolnyang

The planned outcomes of the SSADP II are presented in the table.

Table: Long-term outcomes (LTOs), medium-term outcomes (MTOs) and indicators of the SSADP II

Level	Description	Indicator	Explanation/Calculation	Overall Target
LTO A	Farmers and Agri-businesses more resilient to shocks and hazards – both natural and conflict	# of HHs better prepared and able to cope with shocks and hazards	HHs who prepared and demonstrate coping mechanisms at household level for shocks & hazards	8.000 of HHs
MTO A1	Enhanced disaster risk reduction (DRR) and trust in targeted communities	# of Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction (CMDRR) Plan implemented by target Communities	Through the Participatory Disaster Risk Assessment, CMDRR Plan will be discussed and endorsed at communities. This captures the number of communities that put their prioritized DRR plans into action. These communities originate from targeted FEMAs	105
MTO A2	Continued Action Research Supporting Informed Decision Making	# of lessons learnt incorporated in Project Implementation through evidence-based action research	Lessons learnt per each long-term outcomes and recommendations adopted for fine-tuned action plan of the next year	4
LTO B	Enhanced sustainable production and productivity	Volume of yields per hectare cultivated increased in % by farmers (crops, vegetable & fruit)	Compare the production difference in weight of produce per hectare with baseline, breakdown by a) Crops b) vegetable, c) fruit	30% in yields
		# of hectares cultivated increased in % by farmers (crops, vegetable & fruit)	Compare the cultivated hectare difference with baseline, breakdown by a) Crops b) vegetable, c) fruit	50%
MTO B1	Availability of and Access to Agricultural Inputs (seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, tools) ensured	# of farmers accessed the available improved agricultural inputs (disaggregated by sex)	Number of farmers benefited access the available agricultural inputs by a) Crops b) vegetable, c) fruit	8.000 farmers
MTO B2	Good Agricultural Practices Enhanced and Extension Services Improved	# of trained farmers applying good and climate smart agricultural practices including nutrition education, gender, and	Good and climate smart agricultural practices are based on the needs identified during the FEMA. 10.000 farmers, adoption rate 65% makes 6500 farmers trained	6500 farmers

⁴ Governance in South Sudan is organised as follows: National level, State, County, Payam, Boma (usually a boma is made up of several villages).

		resilience (disaggregated by sex)		
		# of farmers who joined cooperatives (disaggregated by sex)	Because of SSAPU extension services farmers show willingness to join existing Cooperatives or to form new cooperatives	4,750 farmers
LTO C	Improved inclusive agri-business market functioning	# of farmers access the available improved formal markets outlets (disaggregated by sex)	Access to markets means the capacity of farmers to buy, to sell and to bargain in the improved formal market. Availability means the physical presence of an improved formal market outlets (which farmer/ group/VEMSA/ Cooperative can access).	8.000 farmers
MTO C1	Adequate and relevant Market Information Accessible and Available for Farmers and Agri-businesses	# of farmers using market information as part of their decision making (disaggregated by sex)	HHS who reports to have received market info from our channels, and applied in their decision making to expand their market outlets	8000
		# of Agribusinesses owners using market information as part of their decision making (disaggregated by sex)	Agribusiness who reports to have received market info from our channels, and applied in their decision making	750 of agribusiness
MTO C2	Improved post-harvest handling and physical market infrastructure	# of farmers that make use of the available post-harvest facilities (disaggregated by sex)	Post-harvest facilities include storage bags and warehouses	8.000 farmers
MTO C3	Market Linkages Enhanced through Cooperatives/ Associations/ Farmer Organizations	# of Value Chains developed/ upgraded/ updated	Value chain means counting the marketing channels linked in the value chain (crops and vegetables) Developed means strengthen the value chain actor's linkage in a win-win relation and make functional. Upgraded means new channel created from existing value chain Updated means it was not identified/ linked/ aware of, but now it is.	7
		# of farmers adding value to their commodities (disaggregated by sex)	Adding value on a commodity means reducing costs of inputs, reducing transaction costs, improving quality of inputs used or bulking, packing, sorting, or present in different form and selling for higher prices compared with non-supported individually selling farmers	5.000 farmers
LTO D	Improved performance of cooperatives and Agri-MSMEs and new jobs are created	# of Cooperative and Agri-MSMEs owners having improved income performance	Comparing income of Cooperative and Agri-MSMEs between first year of establishment and final year. Performance is measured by turn over and benefits of the members	120 of Cooperative and Agri-MSMEs
		# of jobs created in agribusiness across the value chain (disaggregated by sex)	A new job created due to developed value chain (30 per county)	90 Jobs
MTO D1	Cooperatives have adequate organizational and financial management capacity	# of cooperatives which have improved performance on organizational and financial management	Cooperative assessments are done at the starting point of advisory support and after 2 years of training and follow-up again. Cooperative assessment is an Agriterra tool.	135 of Coops
MTO D2	Women, youth, MSMEs are capable and equipped with skills to start and grow their business	# of Business grow after one year	A business in relation to value chain and agribusiness. It could be an input supply, trading, processing, exporting and other function because of the value chain or agribusiness	500 of business

MTO D3	Availability of- and Access to Appropriate Financial Products and Services Ensured	# of farmers, VEMSA, Coops and MSME's that have access to and received an appropriate loan products and financial services	The VESAs (Village Economic and Social Associations)/VSLAs (Village Savings and Loans Associations), coops and MSMEs linked with RUFi and other finance service providers who applied for access to finance (A2F) and received an appropriate loan product and financial services we can also report the value of loan provided by RUFi and other finance service providers	3.895 of VSLAs, Coops and MSME's
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The proposal was approved by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in August 2018. The Inception phase covered August 2018 to January 2019 (Inception Report ready January 2019).⁵ Per January 2019 gender assessment/plan of the SSADP II was prepared.⁶ After the baseline report,⁷ implementation started in Feb. 2019.

1.2 Purpose and objectives of the Research

Due to COVID19 and internal reasons, this year's Action Research (AR) was changed into a survey on medium- and long-term outcomes.

The objective of the outcome survey is to provide insightful information about whether the project is achieving the medium- and long-term outcomes (section 3 and 4).

Next to that, emphasis is put on the 'Gender dynamic in the SSADP II project: General gender roles at household level, gender roles in farming, ownership of assets, decision making (see section 5)'.

The aim is that the research provides recommendations for project implementers (section 6).

1.3 The Research team

The consultancy contract was signed on 26 November 2020. Field visits could not take place due to COVID-19. At the start of the assignment, there were a number of telecommunication contacts with Teshale Endalamaw (Senior Project Manager) in the first place. Amule Robert (Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning - Manager) contributed until 1 Dec. 2020, when he left for his annual leave.

The questionnaire was prepared jointly. The consultant developed four formats for the different Focus Group Discussions (see annex three: research tools used).

The implementation of the field research in Torit, Yambio and Bor would not have succeeded without the engaged help of Cordaid field coordinators Mark Okongo (Torit), Aloro Babanju (Yambio) and Alier Arem Deng - the latter was replaced at instances by Ghai Kuch (Project Officer – Bor). The field coordinators hired enumerators to do the questionnaires and did the focus group discussions themselves.

⁵ Food Security through Agribusiness in South Sudan (SSADP II), Inception Report Final, February 2019

⁶ GENDER ASSESSMENT AND PLAN FOR THE FOOD SECURITY THROUGH AGRIBUSINESS PROJECT IN SOUTH SUDAN JANUARY, 2018, BY JULIE NDWIGA

⁷ Baseline SSSADP II report, 2019

2. Methodology

2.1 The methodology

As requested by the management of the SSADP II, this survey:

- collects data about medium-term and long-term outcome indicators and analyses these,
- analyses the gender dynamics,
- comes up with recommendations to improve the implementation.

A strategic and conceptual framework of a programme should lead to guidelines for implementation. In the case of the SSADP II this is not always the case. The SSADP II full proposal document has many methods, approaches, theories of change and intervention strategies, as indicated in the figure below. In practise, along the way, choices have been made.

Figure: Summary of the methods, approaches, theories of change and intervention strategies proposed in the SSADP II programme.



The research followed a mixed method approach: regular quantitative data collection tools (questionnaires) are used to measure progress against MTO and LTO indicators; subsequently qualitative data collection tools are used to put these data in perspective and investigate other specific research questions. The Focus Group Discussions were done by the field coordinators themselves in Yambio, Torit and Bor. Cordaid engaged in each county a female researcher to conduct focus group discussions about gender aspect (in the FEMA groups).

Because COVID-19 made a field visit impossible in 2020, the consultant did interviews using telecommunication tools as Skype, Teams and WhatsApp.

The consultant used his personal experience as a reflexive practitioner based on (other) programmes in South Sudan and his experiences of last year's action research, which included field visits in Nov./Dec. 2019 to Torit and Yambio.

In order to be able to follow the logic of the interventions leading up to the MTOs and LTOs, the outputs of the activities are described in section 3.

The intervention strategies and the consortium member are mentioned in the table below.

Table: Intervention strategies and implementing partners

Intervention strategy	Consortium member responsible
FEMA	CORDAID
VEMSA	CORDAID
CMDRR/peace dialogue	CORDAID
Value chain analysis and MSP and Private sector development fund (grant)	CORDAID
Cooperatives	Agriterra, SSAPU
A2F Yambio Torit Bor	CORDAID, SPARK, Agriterra, RUFi
YWE	SPARK, Premium Agro Consult
MSME	SPARK, CORDAID, Premium Agro Consult

In this study, due to the limited time available for the study and the limitations as a result of COVID-19, further choices had to be made to have a clear focus. For example, there was a strong gender focus (see section 5).

2.2 Research Tools

The Questionnaire (SSADP II Survey questionnaire)

The questionnaire was designed to make possible a comparison with data collected earlier, during the AR 2019. The questionnaire has different sections, corresponding to the research questions.⁸

Section	Contents of specific section
Section 01 – 16	Background on respondents
Section 17 – 21	Gender division, gender ownership
Section 21 – 25	Economic status and nutritional status of the household
Section A 1.1 – 1.4	Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction, conflict sensitivity
Section B1 – B11	Production and productivity data, effects of SSADP II-activities on production
Section C1 – C9	Market information and market access, storage, value addition
Section D1 – D3	Improved performance of cooperatives and Agri-MSMEs and new jobs created

Sample size

Using a specific calculation,⁹ the sample size of the questionnaire should at least be 341 respondents (in reality 347 questionnaires were done). The sample size per county, based on the number of beneficiaries per county is described in the table below.

Table: Number of questionnaires per county.

County name	No of respondents
Torit	126
Yambio	117
Bor	104

⁸ The AR questionnaire of 2019 was used as a basis. We added questions about gender and skipped those questions which had not lead to sensible results in 2019 (meeting 17 November 2020 with Amule Robert and Teshale Endalamaw).

⁹ See: <https://www.calculator.net/sample-size-calculator.html?type=1&cl=95&ci=5&pp=50&ps=3000&x=45&y=8> ; (margin of error is 5% , 95% confidence interval)

Total	347
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Selection criterion on whether to include a person as a respondent in the survey was based on whether a person is a SSADP II beneficiary, i.e. a member of a FEMA, or a cooperative, etc.

The online KoBo Toolbox statistical package¹⁰ was used to record data. The analysis was done in Excel.

Focus group discussions

FGDs were organised with FEMA groups, Cooperatives, CMDRR committees, and a FGD with some female members of a FEMA group. The Cordaid field coordinators did the FGDs of the FEMAs, Cooperatives and CMDRR groups. A (female) facilitator was hired separately to do the female FEMA members FGDs. A specific format was developed for each FGD (see as attached in annexes five – eight).

After some introductory notes and some questions related to the background of a group, the FGDs focus on the opinion of the respondents on the trainings, whether they thought the trainings were useful or on the conflict and natural hazards and on prospects for future upgrading to agribusiness. The FGDs were also used to get some general background on the groups supported. Next to that, gender issues and conflict sensitivity were discussed. Finally, issues as aid dependency and the potential for Agribusiness were touched upon.

A practical position was taken at field level. Initially, the boma in which the focus group discussions (FGD) would be held was randomly selected. Arriving at the boma, the supervisor of the enumerators randomly selected 5 members of the FEMA group or cooperative for the enumerators to interview.¹¹

Key informants' interviews

A few key informant interviews (KIIs) were conducted: one member of the Catholic Church, and interviews with staff of Cordaid, Agriterra, SPARK, RUFU, SSAPU.

Introduction, training and debriefing

Introduction meeting with three field facilitators, 25 November (guided by power point)
Training sessions with three field facilitators and approx. 14 enumerators. This includes exercises and questions with field facilitators, 12 Dec. (guided by power point)
Debriefing for SSADP II staff, 9 feb. 2021 (guided by power point)

Research activities and their number

Questionnaires: Yambio: 117; Bor: 104; Torit: 126
4 FGDs among FEMA groups, Cooperatives, women's group of FEMA group, CMDRR committee, Yambio
4 FGDs among FEMA groups, Cooperatives, women's group of FEMA group, CMDRR committee, Bor
20 FGDs among FEMA groups, Cooperatives, women's group of FEMA group, CMDRR committee, Torit
Interviewing staff involved Cordaid, SPARK, RUFU, SSAPU
Interviews with A2F, YWE and MSMEs participants (in Torit and Yambio)

¹⁰ <https://kobo.humanitarianresponse.info/#/forms/aP9yZWCf85q4DQt4aYWhrm/edit;..>

¹¹ The fact that this would lead to an underrepresentation of respondents of remote FEMA groups and cooperatives was taken for granted.

2.3 Limitations of the research and constraints

- Despite COVID-19 and other setbacks, the consortium embarks on the implementation with sustained enthusiasm and excellent mutual cooperation. Such enthusiasm is needed in the still fragile South-Sudanese circumstances.
- COVID-19 had repercussions on this research: it made a visit to South Sudan impossible.
- In South Sudan there are frequent natural and man-made hazards. In this respect, Bor was worst off among the three counties in 2020. At the beginning of 2020, Bor suffered from intercommunal violence, then there was flooding (some areas were not accessible in Bor), and in the meantime the COVID-19 epidemic had kicked in.
- A barrier to conducting research in South Sudan is that, under the current political conditions, some people do not feel free to answer questions with absolute honesty, given the widespread pervasive fear and uncertainty.
- The rearrangement of 10 states into 28 states into 32 states and then back to 10 states and concomitant changes in lower levels of governance (counties, payams and bomas) causes conflicts about turf among South Sudanese authorities. It is also bringing about confusion. For instance, whereas the SSADP II uses the UNOCHA classification, some interlocutors use the old classification, others the new, and again others use just other (traditional) names.
- The consultant also thinks that respondents sometimes just answer what they think is appropriate to say, they would say anything what you want to hear. It is good to remember that many households are dependent on humanitarian aid or free seeds and tools. Such a dependency raises the stakes when they answer the survey (they often think they might receive aid based on the survey, even if you say they do not get this). Because of these biases and others, the interpretation of the data needs extra care.
- Data on production/productivity in the questionnaire and data on income (interpretation is made worse due to the high inflation) was not reliable and could not be used. In another frame the project collected harvesting and marketing data which can be used for reporting on these MTOs and LTOs.
- Some field staff interviewed would like to have the results of this report be discussed with them more in depth as compared to last year. One interviewed persons said: We need a meeting to explain the highlights and discuss recommendations (at field level).¹²
- During this assessment it was in some instances difficult to find the exact number of outputs as the number of functioning FEMAs. Are there FEMAs, cooperatives that no longer function, and if so, how many? Are FEMAs that were established in 2019 still functioning in 2020? Some FEMAs are also cooperatives (are they counted as output twice?). Are the flooded FEMAs in Bor still included in the statistics?
- In general, only data sources available during the research were used. The MDS 2020 was obviously not yet ready during the research. However, the author received these data 1 Feb 2021. If in this report, the data of the MDS 2020 is used instead of the MDS Oct 2020 data, this is mentioned in a footnote.

¹² Interview staff member Cordaid, 7 Dec. 2020.

3. Findings

3.1 Context

The ceasefire agreement that accompanied the Revitalised - Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCISS) peace agreement put an end to five years of war, pitting the Kiir-government, dominated by a Dinka majority (the largest ethnicity) against the SPLA-IO dominated by the Nuer (the second ethnicity) factions of Machar and other rebels. The R-ARCISS has at least reduced the fighting and South Sudanese enjoy more freedom of movement and have better access to their agricultural fields and humanitarian aid.¹³

But it is clear that parties struggle to live up to the terms of the agreement. The head of the UN's South Sudan mission, David Shearer, told the security council in December 2020 that progress on the peace deal continues to stagnate while violence affected much of the country. Around 2000 people have been killed in intercommunal violence during the past year, including at least 600 deaths in Jonglei state.¹⁴ Shearer warned that a surge in violence was likely during the approaching dry season.

James Wani, Christian Aid's South Sudan country director, said: "Floods, conflict and Covid-19 have entwined to deliver devastation and fuel the food crisis; the combined result is the destruction of crops, livelihoods, houses and dwellings, roads have become impassable, markets have stopped, supply chains have been crippled and food prices have soared."¹⁵

A joint statement by the UN agencies, including the World Food Programme, said 6.5 million people in South Sudan were facing severe food insecurity and the number could increase by almost a million by July (2021). A recent review of six counties in South Sudan by the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification concluded that parts of Pibor county, in Jonglei state, were probably already experiencing famine.

Before, President Kiir surprised many observers by announcing a reorganisation of the local governance structure: the old governance system has been largely reinstated. This again raises problems, because local government officials - between the two systems - reverted to opportunistic extortion (asking for additional fees and taxes) now they know they are leaving.¹⁶

Gender constraints remain high. To give a few examples: Cordaid reports on Bor, Yambio, Torit (2018-19) show that the average annual income of households with a female head is almost three times lower than that of households with a male head. While the education rates for adult men is 40%, it is 16% for women. Domestic violence is common: 82% of the women interviewed and 81% of men agreed that "women should tolerate violence to keep her family together". Women-headed households and women who have been exposed to conflict-related, gender-based or domestic violence are particularly vulnerable.¹⁷

¹³ Déjà Vu: Preventing Another Collapse in South Sudan, Crisis Group Africa N°147, 4 November 2019.

¹⁴ The effect on the project is clear: Bor, an intervention area in the SSADP II is the capital of Jonglei state.

¹⁵ <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2020/dec/18/south-sudan-faces-catastrophic-famine-unless-conflict-ended>

¹⁶ Interview with NGO forum director, June 2020.

¹⁷ Assessment reports from the Upper Nile Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Technical Working Group, 2017–2019.

Hubs of Stability approach

The SSADP II is financed by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Key in the Dutch policy for South Sudan is the Hubs of Stability Approach which aligns with the Partnership for Resilience and Recovery (PfRR)¹⁸. This approach is followed by UN Agencies, donor agencies (USAID, Netherlands, Japan, Canada, and Germany), NGOs and business leaders.¹⁹ 5 Hubs in South Sudan are selected among which Yambio and Bor and Torit (and also Rumbek and Juba).

The Netherlands adopted this approach to promote resilience in stable regions in a coordinated way. A Hub of Stability is a place where the security, social and economic situation allows for aid beyond immediate emergencies. There are good longer-term relations with local authorities and non-state stakeholders in that area. The Dutch funded programs in the fields of peacebuilding, water, agriculture, private sector development and climate adaptation complement each other. Conflict resolution, peacebuilding and reconciliation are important aspects, and so are sustainable investments in conflict sensitive food security, water, private sector development, skills training, and job creation.

The main pillars are: 1) Rebuild trust in people and institutions 2) Re-establish access to basic services, 3) Restore productive capacities, 4) Nurture effective partnership.

Everyday peace in the communities

The everyday peace²⁰ in the communities is as much troubled by the diverse local community conflicts as it is by the national conflict. There is a host of often discrete conflicts that are the product of escalating, pre-existing local tensions.

The combination of reinforcing national and local conflicts and violence resulting in large scale displacement, and the economic crisis, characterized by rising prices and worsening conditions for cereal cultivation and horticulture, has driven food insecurity to high levels.²¹ Affected communities are still adopting negative coping strategies by reducing meals, going without food or selling their last animals. This is reflected in food consumption gaps, reduced dietary diversity, limited access to land, reduced harvests, fear of violence preventing cultivation of new fields, loss of livestock, loss of assets, and limited investments in market-based employment opportunities, ever-deepening poverty, vulnerability and food insecurity making it increasingly difficult for affected populations to recover.²²

The phenomenon of cattle raiding is widely practised in Torit and Bor. In some areas young men need cattle to be able to pay for marriage, which they raid from other communities, leading to reprisal attacks and cycles of violence.²³ Data from 2016 until the end of 2018 demonstrates that cattle raiding incidents and resulting casualties increased more than twofold in 2018.²⁴ These increasing numbers and intensity of cattle raids amount to a serious obstacle to achieving sustainable peace in South Sudan, issues that are left out of the R-ARCSS.

¹⁸ The two approaches were developed more or less at the same time: The PfRR approach also includes Aweil and Wau (Interview with Embassy official, July 2020).

¹⁹ The Netherlands in South Sudan, Multi annual country strategy, 2019 –2022, Min. of Foreign Affairs.

²⁰ Internationale veiligheidsstudies: een zaak van oorlog en vrede, Prof. Georg frerks, NDA, Fac. Militaire wetenschappen, 2018; p.19: when analysing the local reality of everyday we must use specific research methods including anthropological/ethnographic methods (translation JtV)

²¹ Other problems include the increase in disease outbreaks, seasonal and climatic shocks such as floods, drought spells and crop and livestock diseases and pests. This has undermined people's resilience by depleting household assets.

²² OCHA 'Humanitarian Needs Overview 2018'

²³ 'Defining Complementary Roles for VNG, Cordaid and PAX in Interlinking Peacebuilding, Decentralisation and Development in Budi, Ikwoto [Ikotos] and Torit Counties, Eastern Equatoria, South Sudan', Simonse , 2014.

²⁴ UNMISS Joint Mission Analysis Centre (JMAC), 'Cattle Raiding Assessment', January 2019.

3.2 CMDRR approach

The CMDRR approach is to make ‘Farmers and agri-businesses more resilient to shocks and hazards – both natural and conflict’.²⁵ Part of the approach is that CMDRR committees are formed. A CMDRR committee comprises not only of the local farmers of the FEMA groups and cooperatives, but also of other key stakeholders in the communities.

The CMDRR approach follows a certain order: after the formation of the committee, there is a Participatory Disaster Risk Assessment (PDRA), subsequently a community action plan is made, followed by the monitoring of the implementation of the action plan.

Up to 30 Oct 2020, the project formed 57 committees and conducted 48 PDRA in the three locations. Per 30 Oct 2020, 23 Community Led Actions plans were prepared (target was 19 for 2020).

Besides local conflicts that will be discussed in this section, there are a few major events that impacted on the targeted populations.

General hazard	Reaction of SSADP II
The implementation of the R-ARCISS led to a spike in intercommunal violence. And there was increased uncertainty due to a reorganisation of the public administration ²⁶	To cope with this inter-community violence, the SSADP implemented the Conflict Risk Analysis (CRA) and Conflict Risk Reduction (CRR) training for 163 staff members of the Consortium. ²⁷ The staff has subsequently implemented recommendations of this training in Bor and Torit. ²⁸
The occurrence of the COVID-19	In collaboration with UNICEF and the State Ministry of Health, CMDRR committees were trained to raise community awareness on COVID-19 and prevention. Subsequently, the committees organised awareness raising campaigns during market days, in churches, at funerals and during other community gatherings. In total 200 ‘communities’ were reached by the CMDRR committees. ²⁹
The flooding in Bor and in Torit (to a lesser degree)	The CMDRR committees are engaged in strengthening the secondary dykes (primary dykes are outside the scope of the project) and (another department of) Cordaid is engaged in emergency relief, facilitated by the already established presence in Bor.

Different meetings were held with the Early Warning Department of the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management, Meteorological Department, as well as the United Nations. The challenge is to translate received information into meaningful messages to the farmers: A solution could be that they harvest early or shift to other crops. The floods in Jonglei could not have been

²⁵ Long-term Outcome A of the SSADP II

²⁶ Situation in South Sudan, Report of the Secretary-General UN, 8 September 2020.

²⁷ Based on two reports: 1) Enhancing resilience in fragile and conflict affected contexts – linking DDR with conflict risk analysis and conflict risk reduction: Cordaid experiences and recommendations, May 2019, and 2) Cordaid policy document on ‘Enhancing Resilience in Fragile & Conflict Affected Contexts, Draft Cordaid policy document, no date

²⁸ Report of Conflict Risk Analysis and Conflict Risk Reduction Training, 16 Oct 2020

²⁹ Based on 201006 SSADP Project Update, per Sep 30, 2020 ; SSADP Annual Report 2019; 201103 SSADP Project Update As of Oct 2020 update FINAL.

predicted, also because of the politics involved (other countries upstream have changed how they handle the water flows causing a downstream effect).³⁰

Yambio

A summary of the recurring hazards and risks identified in Yambio (pre-COVID19) through the PDRA is: risk of a fire outbreak, fall army worm and poor-quality drinking water.³¹

Obviously, COVID-19 absorbed a lot of attention in the second and third quarter of 2020. As a matter of ToT, in cooperation with the Ministry of Health,³² 60 CMDRR committee members were trained by UNICEF trainers on prevention and control measures and social distancing. The trainers reached an estimated 11,000 person in 49 locations. There were radio programs to raise awareness and promote COVID-19 prevention. An awareness raising campaign on the risks of the outbreak of a fire reached 8,625 persons. In 2020, no fire incidences were reported as a consequence of the awareness raising campaign or otherwise.

Cordaid (CMDRR committee), UNICEF (technical knowledge) and the Ministry of Health joined forces to face the drinking water problem, by constructing boreholes.

Although, at the moment, ongoing conflict are not reported in Yambio, conflict analyses remain crucial to ensure that the SSADP II does not violate the do-no harm principle. Risks identified are:³³

- Pastoralists in Yambio county who destabilize the farming community
- There are fears that the armed group, National Salvation Front (NAS), now operating elsewhere in Western Equatoria, will expand its operations to Yambio
- Ethnic conflicts of two ethnic groups in Tambura might spread to Yambio
- The power vacuum stemming from the latest local administration reform and the changing of positions might lead to security incidents
- Hate speech spread through social media could flare up existing antagonisms
- Unequal and unfair allocation of resources might lead to resistance
- Unrest created during political campaigns and elections can add fuel to the fire

Torit

Despite the national truce (R-ARCISS), at community level, violence did not diminish in Torit. The impact of this violence jeopardises project accomplishments (it affects more market-based farming than subsistence farming).

Hazards and risks identified pre-COVID19 through the PDRA were: child abduction, fire outbreaks and flooding in some locations.³⁴

As in Yambio, COVID19 demanded attention and led to similar activities and results as in Yambio, in cooperation with the Ministry of Health and UNICEF.

Although the flooding in Torit did not affect as many households as in Bor, also in Torit the consequences were huge.³⁵ Especially those farmers were affected that had planted late in the

³⁰ Interview with Enkas Chau, 9 Dec. 2020.

³¹ SSADP-II CMDRR UPDATE, 2020 , without date.

³² Interview Aloro Babanju Sila, 7 Dec. 2020.

³³ Based on CRA CRR Training Proceeding Report, Summary of the training event; Conflict Risk Analysis and Conflict Risk Reduction Training, 30.9.2020 – 1.10.2020.

³⁴ SSADP-II CMDRR Update, 2020 , without date.

³⁵ For instance, Cordaid project staff could not reach Bur payam for one month.

season and whose agricultural land is in a low place.³⁶ In Torit, the flooding has become a recurrent yearly affair (due to climate change).

Child abduction is regarded as a major problem. Conflicts between the communities from which the child abductors originate and the local community might flare up. In Kudo payam mediation activities are proposed involving chiefs, local community leaders, payam administrators, police, teachers, youth, and the community.³⁷ The SSADP II project organised radio talk shows on child abduction. Recently three children were abducted.³⁸

Another major problem is land grabbing. Land ownership rights and policies are unclear. People are afraid that their ancestral land will be taken by others. Returns of those who had fled the area add to the land problem - half of the population of Eastern Equatoria had fled the area only two years ago.³⁹ And there is ongoing migration from other areas because of conflict and flooding. This is particularly apparent in Nyong, Himodonge and Bur payams. Here mediation is proposed between community leaders, landlords, community elders, youth, and local authorities.

Mainly in Hyala, cattle raiding, and road ambushes are identified. This was confirmed by the CDOT.⁴⁰ A peace dialogue (conflict resolution workshop) is proposed, involving community leaders, cattle owners, community elders, youth, and local authorities.

Cordaid supported the planting of seedlings and provided tools to combat deforestation in Torit county.⁴¹

Bor

The hazards and risks identified pre-COVID19 through the PDRA were: flooding, fall armyworm and drought.⁴²

In the first quarter of 2020, CMDRR committee members were trained on flood control measures, including the construction of local dikes to prevent flooding of farmland, the use of more resistant sorghum varieties, and methods of control of fall army worm.

In June 60 CMDRR committee members were trained to prevent and mitigate the spread of COVID - 19 pandemics. There were also radio programs to raise awareness and promote COVID-19 prevention.

Bor suffered heavily from the floods: More than 1 million people across half of South Sudan have been affected by devastating flooding since July 2020 (OCHA),⁴³ with the majority (76%) being from Jonglei.⁴⁴ The effect on Bor town was disastrous: 'Most of Bor Town is submerged under water, destroying infrastructure and property, and damaging livelihood'. And 'Farming fields have been submerged and gone with tons of crops.' People 'have no food, no shelter and no other basic human necessities such as clean and safe water and sanitation.'⁴⁵

³⁶ The bulk effects of the inundations on the harvest will be clear at the 2020 harvest survey (interview Mark Okongo, 3 Dec. 2020).

³⁷ Based on CRA CRR Training Proceeding Report, Summary of the training event; Conflict Risk Analysis and Conflict Risk Reduction Training (30.9.2020 – 1.10.2020).

³⁸ Interview Teshale Endalamaw: 14 Dec. 2020.

³⁹ 'People are still not coming back. And if they do it is only for reconnaissance visit' (interview John Opi, 23 Nov.)

⁴⁰ 'The Catholic Church has done mediations in this areas for almost a decade' Interview John Opi 24 Nov.

⁴¹ Interview Teshale Endalamaw, 14 Dec. 2020.

⁴² SSADP-II CMDRR Update, 2020, without date.

⁴³ South Sudan, Pooled fund complementarities in the 2020 flood response, Nov. 2020.

⁴⁴ South Sudan Flooding Snapshot OCHA.

⁴⁵ Weekly Review November 23, 2020; South Sudan's devastating floods: why there is a need for urgent resilience measures, Nhial Tiithamer

In Bor alone, the floods displaced 26.000 people. There are around 12.000 IDPs in Bor due to flooding from the countryside (Jalle and Baidit).⁴⁶⁴⁷ Cordaid, already present in the area reacted quickly: In 45 days Cordaid delivered life-saving aid to 20.500 people in Bor.⁴⁸

Consequences for the SSADP II are:

- 11 FEMA groups (360 farmers) - 6 in Jalle and 5 in Baidit -, were severely affected by the flooding.⁴⁹ A recovery program is needed to rebuild livelihoods in these areas: 'we need active engagement', the Cordaid coordinator called it.⁵⁰
- Anecdotal evidence exists that some CMDRR committees used the acquired skills to respond to the crisis:
 - o After the flooding in Oct 2020 one CMDRR committee occupied itself with water treatment - the water quality was poor after the flood -⁵¹
 - o CMDRR committees in the payams Makuach, Anyidi and Kolnyang contributed to reconstructing existing smaller dykes - the bigger dykes are beyond the capacity of the project - .⁵²

Despite the truce at national level (R-ARCISS) the community level violence in Bor did not diminish. As we have seen, communal violence jeopardises directly or indirectly project accomplishments. Particularly Bor suffers from communal violence. 'Insecurity is still rampant in parts of Bor counties'⁵³ and Bor Dinka, Lou Nuer and Murle are involved in tit for tat attacks with increasing levels of escalations'.⁵⁴

Cattle Raiding is regarded as an important problem, particularly in Makuach, Anyidi and Kolnyang payams.⁵⁵ At the moment, the risks are less, but when the water has receded in the dry season, it is likely that the cattle raiding will restart as well. The CMDRR action plan foresees a mediation involving boma chief, women leaders, youth leaders, peace commissions representatives, and payam administrators.

Another, major issue is child abductions in which allegedly the Murle tribe is involved. This leads to escalating levels of violence between communities. Other major issues are forced marriages, land issues (competition over grazing land and access to water resources for livestock), the proliferation of arms. This creates food insecurity, and many leave the unsafe rural areas.

⁴⁶ Interview Arem Deng 14 Dec 2020. Data are from RRC.

⁴⁷ 'We helped 1500 Households (WFP provided food); we focused on Wash and other stuffs', interview Arem Deng 14 dec 2020)

⁴⁸ <https://www.cordaid.org/en/news/fast-humanitarian-responses-in-south-sudan-and-afghanistan/>
FAST HUMANITARIAN RESPONSES IN SOUTH SUDAN AND AFGHANISTAN, 12 October 2020:

⁴⁹ PPT 14 Nov 2020: 'Flood in Bor –' Transition from Subsistence Farming to Framing for the Market Teshale Bor; Interview Arem Deng 14 Dec. 2020.

⁵⁰ Interview Arem Deng, 14 Dec. 2020

⁵¹ Interview with Enkas Chau 9 Dec 2020.

⁵² Interviews with Teshale Endalamaw 14 Dec. 2020, Enkas Chau 9 Dec. 2020 and Arem Deng 14 Dec.

⁵³ Minutes of the project team meeting held on 16th July 2020. Present: Margot Loof, Enkas Chau, Godfrey Omondi, Yenenesh Regassa

⁵⁴ Situation in South Sudan Report of the Secretary-General UN, 8 September 2020.

⁵⁵ Based on CRA CRR Training Proceeding Report, Summary of the training event; Conflict Risk Analysis and Conflict Risk Reduction Training; 30.9.2020 – 1.10.2020

3.3 FEMA

The FEMA group approach is an elaboration of the Farmer Field School (FFS) group approach. These groups, together with the cooperatives, are the entry point for the project's production and productivity interventions. Each member has his/her own plot and learns how to optimize his/her agricultural practices. An FFS consists of a maximum of 25-30 members, facilitated by FFS Facilitators.⁵⁶

The SSADP II chose to change the name of FFS to FEMA to mark a change in the approach. In addition to the FFS approach, the SSADP II-support to the FEMA groups also includes 'to promote input and output marketing systems, to facilitate market-oriented production, to promote value addition, to enhance farmers marketing skills and bargaining power and to promote partnerships.

This is worked out in the 'market-oriented extension - service delivery guideline'.⁵⁷ Lead farmers and demonstration plots, progressive farmers, radio talk shows, and the organisation of farmer field days are key in this guideline.

Due to COVID-19, the project increased its farmer to farmer extension and the extension through radio talk shows.

Lead farmers

Two lead farmers are selected per FEMA. The setup is to train the lead farmers following the training modules of the project. Then, the trained lead farmers together with the project extension workers coach and mentor FEMA members at the site of the demonstration plots.

Demonstration plots

Improved technologies and good agricultural practices are demonstrated at the site of the demonstration plots. The project provides seeds, farm tools and extension aid materials for the demo plot. During 2020 the number of demo sites decreased: from one per FEMA to one per boma: reducing the total number to 45.

Progressive farmers

Next to the lead farmers, progressive farmers are selected for farmer-to-farmer extension (F2FE). The progressive farmers support the lead farmers and the extension workers. Selection criteria are: to minimally have two feddan⁵⁸ and willingness to disseminate the knowledge acquired at the training. In return, progressive farmers are supported with additional seeds in 2020.

Besides Cordaid and SSAPU, staff of the Ministry of Agriculture renders extension services to the farmers.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ FULL PROPOSAL SSADP II, March 2018, CORDAID, March 30, 2018, p.14

⁵⁷ Food Security Through Agribusiness in South Sudan (SSADP II) Project, "Market-Oriented Extension", Service Delivery Guideline, September 2020.

⁵⁸ Also criteria of one feddan is heard (Interview Mark Okongo, 3 Dec. 2020).

⁵⁹ Interview Mark Okongo, 3 Dec. 2020.

Radio shows

Radio talk shows, through local FM radio stations are used to reach farmers, mostly in local languages.⁶⁰ The first round of the radio shows were sessions on good agronomic practices (GAP), integrated pest management (fall army worm and desert locust), climate smart agriculture cooperative development, access to Finance (A2F) and COVID – 19 prevention; the second round on harvesting maize, sorghum and ground nuts and post-harvest handling practices and methods, value addition, marketing, and again cooperative development, access to Finance (A2F) and COVID – 19 prevention.

Some progressive farmers shared their experiences during the radio talk shows and extension workers were available to answer questions of those who called in.⁶¹

The setup is that the effects of the radio programs are monitored through farmers interviews including its gender sensitive outreach and farmers adoption rate. It is important to know the coverage and the farmers access to the broadcasted information.⁶²

Farmer Field days

A field day is meant to demonstrate improved production techniques to a large number of farmers at a demonstration plot or research station. Demonstrating the performance and profitability motivates farmers to adopt a new practice. A field day sometimes removes doubts or an unfavourable attitude about a new practice.

The number of participants per field day is maximally 20 to 25 farmers. A field 'day' generally last not more than an hour. A special brand of the field days, the market farmer field days, were attended by farmers, buyers, input suppliers and government extension workers.

State of affairs

The FEMA activities are on schedule: the outputs planned are reached. Per 30 October 2020, the number of FEMA members are 5775 farmers⁶³ (adding those started in 2019 and those in 2020) in 190 FEMA groups.⁶⁴

Table: Number of FEMA participants (male and female) in 2019 and 2020

County	# Participants 2019			# Participants 2020		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
Bor	448	452	900	446	454	900
Torit	563	518	1081	456	444	900
Yambio	522	516	1038	473	483	956
Total	1533	1486	3019	1375	1381	2756

As explained, the extension strategy involves both lead farmers and progressive famers. Details are explained below.

⁶⁰ In Torit: Lotuko and Juba Arabic; in Yambio Azande; some messages in other local language (interview Nancy Lumeit 7 Dec. 2020)

⁶¹ SSADP II Annual plan 2021

⁶² This information was not available at the moment of this assessment.

⁶³ In fact, the number of FEMA farmers is less: there are less FEMAs in Bor due to the floods; there are FEMAs that in the meantime have become cooperative (so they are counted two times); There must be FEMAs that ceased to exist.

⁶⁴ It is unclear whether the 11 FEMA groups in Bor that were completely flooded will continue (6 in Jalle and 5 in Baidit).

Table: Number of FEMA groups, demonstration plots and number of Lead Farmers and Progressive/Model Farmers (male and female) 1 Jan - 30 Oct 2020

County	# FEMA	# demo plots	Nr o# Lead Farmers			# Progressive Farmers/Model Farmers		
			Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
Bor	30	15	30	30	60	90	100	190
Torit	30	15	15	45	60	119	181	300
Yambio	30	15	24	36	60	134	173	307
Total	90	45	69	111	180	343	454	797
			38%	62%		43%	47%	

- The number of lead farmers and progressive farmers is according to the planning.
- The sex distribution of lead farmers in Bor is balanced, whereas in Yambio and Torit the lead farmers are preponderantly male.

How the farmers are distributed over the maize, sorghum and ground nuts value chains is presented in the table hereunder.

Table: Number of FEMA farmers divided per value chain (maize, sorghum, ground nuts), period 1 Jan - 30 Oct 2020.

County	total	Maize VC		Sorghum VC		Gnuts VC	
	# Farmers	# Farmers	Feddan	Nr of Farmers	Feddan	Nr of Farmers	Feddan
Bor	900	-	-	660	918	240	288
Torit	900	47	55	358	388	495	573
Yambio	956	956	1273	-	-	-	
Total	2756	1003	1328	1018	1306	735	861
Average		36%	38%	37%	37%	27%	25%

- The number of farmers in the maize and sorghum value chain is almost even; the groundnuts value farmers are less in number (27%)
- The average number of feddan per farmer used is 2.5 feddan/farmer

Table: Number of FEMA members, demonstration plots and number of farmers provided with seeds (male and female) 1 Jan - 30 Oct 2020

	Nr of FEMA members in 2020			Nr of Farmers provided seeds per VC		
	Female	Male	Total	Maize	sorghum	Gnuts
Bor	446	454	900	-	660	240
Torit	456	444	900	47	358	495
Yambio	473	483	956	956	-	
Total	1375	1381	2756	1003	1018	735
Average	50%	50%		36%	37%	27%

- Also, in 2020 seeds were distributed to the new farmers and the demo plots.
- All 2020 farmers were provided with seeds.

- Most seeds provided are Maize (Yambio) and Sorghum (mostly in Bor but also in Torit) and finally ground nuts (mostly in Torit and in Bor).

3.4 Cooperatives

The cooperatives are governed (board) and owned (shares) by farmers. The core activity of a cooperative is a business aiming at the highest benefit for the members/shareholders.⁶⁵

Baseline research reveals that the main challenges of the cooperatives are:⁶⁶

- lack of market for members' produce
- high level of illiteracy among cooperative members
- lack of capacity by cooperative officers in terms of management, logistics and trainings
- most cooperatives officials do not understand business development
- lack of mechanization
- fall Armyworm, striga and weed infestation affecting the production
- lack of funds to upscale operations

The baseline recommends the following activities:⁶⁷

- membership mobilization: because most of the cooperatives had a low level of active members
- governance: capacity building on governance
- financial management: capacity building cooperatives boards
- marketing (train the boards and develop new market links, WFP can purchase more grain)
- internal capitalization

The approach is to first do a scoping of an interested cooperative (this includes developing an action plan). Hereafter a training is given on financial management and governance. The financial management training deals with planning, M&E, reporting, good bookkeeping, accountability, and stock control. The good governance training focuses on structure, legislative responsibilities, and human resources aspects of governance (skills and competences of the board members and involvement of youth and female leaders). Attention is paid to the ethical basis for governance. Agriterra and SSAPU have adapted the standard training modules to the local circumstances. The female leadership training is explained in section 5 (Gender).

Cordaid and SSAPU cooperate when giving trainings of FEMAs and cooperatives in the field to improve their quality and economise through scale advantages.

State of Affairs

Per October 2020, there are 119 cooperatives⁶⁸ and 3890 members (52 % of the members is female).⁶⁹ There are 22 cooperatives that have received a loan from RUFU (17 in Yambio, 2 in Torit and 3 in Bor).

⁶⁵ FULL PROPOSAL SSADP II -MARCH 2018, CORDAID

⁶⁶ Baseline SSSADP II FINAL BASELINE REPORT, 2019

⁶⁷ Baseline SSSADP II FINAL BASELINE REPORT, 2019

⁶⁸ Comments of Agriterra on draft report : per 31 Dec 2020 there were 124 cooperatives and in total 3993 members, 52% female members, 57% youth (35 years of age or below) - unspecified per county -.

⁶⁹ Gender issues are discussed in the section 5.

Table: Number of cooperatives and cooperative members, accumulative 2019 and 2020⁷⁰

County	Number	Beneficiaries
Yambio	50	1849
Bor	18	527
Torit	51	1484
Total	119	3860

In 2020 the number of additional cooperative members is 1371 as presented below.

Table: Number of new cooperative members in 2020 (male/female)

County	Female	Male	Grand Total	No of coops
Yambio	59	71	130	5
Bor	284	262	546	14
Torit	327	368	695	21
Total	670	701	1371 ⁷¹	40

- 56% of the members of the cooperatives is 35 years or younger.⁷²
- 49% is female and 51% is male.

Extension has used radio talk shows. SSAPU has invited farmers to these radio shows to share their experiences.⁷³

Table: Outputs of radio talk shows in 2020⁷⁴

Number of sessions	73
Number of farmers that share their experiences	34
Estimated number of farmers that listened to the radio talks shows ⁷⁵	8586

3.5 VEMSA

Initially, the Village Saving and Loan Association (VSLA) system was planned to be used for the lowest amounts of credit demand. However, this approach was broadened. The name VSLA was changed to Village Economy, Market and Social Association (VEMSA).

A VEMSA is based on mutual savings and group solidarity. The aim is to encourage production, and productivity, and improve access to credit. VEMSA membership of a farmer could be a first step towards a link with an MFI. The aim is to promote resilience and food security and to train VEMSA groups on gender issues, nutrition, and climate change.

So far, 60 groups are established: Bor (20 groups), Torit (20) and Yambio (20). There are 1683 VEMSA-members (61% female). The management committees of the VEMAs have 237 female (54%)

⁷⁰ Data handed by Festo Ayiga Amunda, SSAPU, 5 Dec. 2020 (data are for 2020, until 30 Oct 2021)

⁷¹ For the entire year 2020 this reached 1504 - unspecified per county -.

⁷² The choice for this age category is in conformity with the 'Charter de Jeunesse' of the African Union; African Union definition of youth: 15 – 35 years https://au.int/sites/default/files/treaties/7789-treaty-0033_-_african_youth_charter_e.pdf ; In South Sudan the demographic composition of the population is very young, hence it might be sensible to have a lower limit for a youth. For instance, the ILO uses the United Nations' definition of youth as a person between the ages of 15 and 24 years old.

⁷³ Annual plan 2021

⁷⁴ Based on project data outputs (Jan – 30 Oct 2020)

⁷⁵ Cordaid's own data.

and 200 male (46%) board members. An average VEMSA-group has 28 members. Most groups have started up among FEMA groups members and/or a cooperative members.⁷⁶

The VEMSA's combined savings are SSP 2.352.100; the contribution to the social fund was SSP 155.160; 26 members (14 female and 12 male) received a loan (total of SSP 203.000). Repayments were not done so far.⁷⁷

3.6 Access to Finance (A2F)

In South Sudan, there is hardly any MFI. Micro-finance is however an indispensable component of a project that helps households to step out of subsistence farming, upscale production and bring products to the market. The SSADP II and the Rural Finance Institution (RUFII) established a Revolving Loan Fund scheme to farmers and agribusinesses to improve access to finance. By the end of the project, the aim is to have created Access to Finance (A2F) for 3000 progressive individual farmers and 850 agribusiness (MSME, cooperatives, VEMSA, YWE) through the Rural Finance Initiative (RUFII). The loans are disbursed in those value chains that are supported by the SSADP II.

RUFII requires a monthly repayment of individual farmers or, if applicable, a repayment directly after the harvest period. Smaller agribusiness/enterprises are also required to repay on a monthly basis, big enterprises have a semi-annual term. The interest rate is at the moment fixed at 21% per annum⁷⁸ (1.75% per month) and there are some fees to be paid (2% of the total loan amount).

There is an inherent challenge to the repayment of loans in South Sudan. South Sudanese are used to receive free humanitarian handouts rather than meeting standards to obtaining a loan or repaying a loan.

An imminent concern is that RUFII is subject to a negative public opinion and the spread of rumours, especially when RUFII decides not to grant loans to people who have gone to great lengths to prepare business plans.

In 2020, banks have started functioning again in South Sudan. So instead of delivering itself the finances in cash, RUFII uses in Torit the Eden Bank, in Yambio the Kush Commercial Bank, which they will use in the future as well in Bor, when it opens.

Due to the outbreak of COVID-19, RUFII was not able to make field visits from March – June 2020. In May, only a few off-field appraisals were done.

In general, things went well in Yambio. The office in Yambio has 2 staff members.⁷⁹ In Torit (there is an office, but the two staff members have left), RUFII did not grant loans because the border with Uganda was closed (until Oct / Nov 2020) and the investments of the cooperatives (paid by the loan) have to come from Uganda. Hereafter, when the border reopened, the submitted business plans were outdated and had to be adjusted to the massive inflation during 2020.⁸⁰ In Bor, the appraisal process of 7 cooperatives/ FEMAs was stopped after the spread of the COVID-19. Then the flooding made further appraisals impossible, - NB: 4 of the cooperatives that had been considered for a loan

⁷⁶ MDS data until 31 Dec 2020.

⁷⁷ The hyperinflation in South Sudan can have a negative effect on the success of VEMSA groups.

⁷⁸ Some interlocutors say the interest rate might grow higher than 30% in 2021.

⁷⁹ Interview Lokule Yengi 2 Dec. 2020 and interview Mark Okongo, 3 Dec. 2020, Interview Arem Deng 14 Dec. 2020, interview Aloro Babanju Sila 7 Dec. 2020. In Torit there is a sign post and occasionally prospective client phone Lokule.

⁸⁰ Roughly, from SSP 300 - 330 in the beginning of 2020 to 500 - 600 SSP for one USD towards the end of 2020.

in the first phase were flooded -. Towards the end of 2020, the loan requests of 3 other FEMAs and 3 cooperatives were approved in Bor.⁸¹

The state of affairs

In total 28 cooperatives (3 FEMA) with 932 members (47% female), 3 individual loans to ‘progressive’ agro entrepreneurs, 6 YWEs (2 female) and 1 MSME received loans of in total 125,909 USD⁸². The borrowers’ repayment performance is 94% per 2 Dec 2020.⁸³ Details are presented in the tables.

Table: Loans to cooperative and FEMA groups members⁸⁴

County	No of cooperatives/ FEMA groups	Total	Male	Fem.	Total Loan in SSP (principal)	Type of agro-entrepreneurs
Bor	Cooperative (3)	52	26	26	2.000.000 SSP	Agro produce sale; Sorghum post-harvest processing
	FEMA (3)	51	29	22	2.250.000 SSP	Sorghum Post-harvest; Processing; Sorghum production
Torit	Cooperative (2)	60	28	32	1.700.000 SSP	Sorghum/Ground Nuts production
Yambio	Cooperative (18)	766	405	361	8.150.000 SSP	Maize/Ground Nuts Production
Total	28	929	488	441	14.100.000 SSP; Equivalent to 85.454.000 USD	

Table: Loans to MSMEs and YWEs⁸⁵

County		Tot	Male	Female	Total Loan in SSP	Type of agro-entrepreneurs
Bor	-	-	-	-	n/a	n/a
Torit	MSME	2	1	1	1.150.000 SSP	Agro produce sale
	YWE	2	1	1	1.200.000 SSP	Vegetable production
Yambio	Individual Farmers	3	3	0	475.000 SSP	Maize Processing: maize and maize/Veg production
	YWE	5	4	1	5.000.000 SSP	Agro inputs; Juice processing Maize processing; Vegetable production
TOTAL		12	9	3	7.825.000 SSP; Equivalent to 47.424 USD	

Compared to project goals, loans to individuals (youth and women, and MSMEs) are behind schedule. The number of approved loans to FEMAs and cooperatives is much better, but also behind on schedule.

Table: Achievements against the goals

Access to Finance	Target 2023	Status (31 Dec 2020)	Achievement
Farmers (group and individual)	3000	941 (47% female)	31%
Agribusiness/MSME	895	38	5%

⁸¹ Interview Lokule Yengi 2 Dec. 2020

⁸² Based on the exchange rate of SSP 165 to a USD.

⁸³ Interview Lokule Yengi 2 Dec. 2020.

⁸⁴ Per 31 Dec. 2020

⁸⁵ Per 31 Dec. 2020

Even though the number of approved business plans is not very high – particularly not for Agribusiness/ MSME -, the number of business plans that will be submitted will increase in 2021. The 2021 plan foresees that more individual farmers and agribusinesses will prepare ‘bankable’ business plans and receive a loan from RUFU’.⁸⁶

In Torit and Yambio, persons trained by SPARK/Agro Premium were interviewed.⁸⁷

Interviews Torit⁸⁸

A.⁸⁹ (32 years) has a diploma in public health administration and management. He studied in Uganda. He lives near Torit town, he is originally from Nimule (Eastern Equatoria). His project is to increase poultry production: now he has 40 chicken and in one year from now he wants to have raised the number to 900. He applied to RUFU: he did not yet get the loan (yet); he does not know why it takes so long (one or two years).⁹⁰

B. (MSME) is originally from Magwi and she has finished high school. She has left for Uganda (Gulu) and has recently returned to South Sudan; she is an agro-produce dealer (maize and sorghum seeds/grain), buying from Uganda and selling in South Sudan. She received a loan from RUFU (600.000 SSP; 10.500 first month interest, through Eden bank; she received the loan last month). She says that the inflation does not pose a problem to her: If there is inflation, she increases the price: ‘People are not happy with this, but they pay in the end’. The quality of her seeds and those of FAO is similar (‘both seeds come from the same source in Uganda anyway’); She does not feel competition from the FAO: ‘there is enough demand’. She employs three persons in her business (one woman and two boys). Before Covid-19 she used to go herself to Uganda, now a Ugandan driver delivers the seeds in South Sudan (and goes back).

Interviews Yambio⁹¹

C, a YWE, has a bachelor’s degree in business administration. He used to travel to Uganda; He is from Western Equatoria. He started in 2019 with the ‘SPARK innovation sessions’. His business is juice processing. He received a loan of 700.000 SSP. he sells juices bottles from guava, passionfruit, advocates, bananas, oranges, mango, depending on the season; The market price of one bottle is 200 SSP (current exchange rate is 590 SSP in one dollar). He sells some 50.000 bottles per year. He employs two persons– one man for processing and bottling and one woman for cleaning, washing, and selling. His plan for the future is to import empty bottles and use these in Yambio.

D, (24), YWE, is a maize processor. He is from Tambura (Western Equatoria). He emphasizes a few times that ‘he produces first class maize flour’. He received a loan from RUFU in Dec. 2019 of 3 million SSP. In Jan. 2020 he was in Uganda for buying equipment. He has employed 6 persons. Before, his father worked for the NGO RDAA. He has repaid 99% of the loan already.⁹²

⁸⁶ Annual Plan 2021

⁸⁷ Two trainees in Torit and three in Yambio were interviewed (selected by the local representative of SPARK)

⁸⁸ 4 Dec. 2020

⁸⁹ Names made anonymous, known to researcher.

⁹⁰ RUFU points to the he closing of the border between South Sudan and Uganda, making it impossible to do investments because they needed to be bought in Uganda. That is why the loan was not given.

⁹¹ 4 Dec. 2020

⁹² Comments of RUFU 4 Feb 2021: This client was given a long grace period and only started paying interest 2 months back. The whole loan is still outstanding. The assertion of 99% payment is therefore not correct.

A., YWE, (37) has a degree in public administration. She has a loan (700.000 SSP - obtained in March 2020) for input supplies (seeds, agro-pesticides) and tools, which she imports from Uganda and Nairobi; the loan helped to build a shop and to buy inputs. She is originally from Yambio town. Her father was a civil servant. she has children (they are in Uganda). A gender issue, that she did not like, is that her husband had to countersign for her to receive the loan.⁹³ Now her husband has taken a share of the money. She employs 6 persons. She says she has repaid 80% already. She thinks that RUFU (or Cordaid) should add a small grant to the loan, because of the high inflation.

3.7 Support to Agri-MSMEs and YWEs

The aim of SPARK and Agro-Premium is to improve the performance of Agri-MSMEs and to create jobs: existing MSMEs are supported to start and grow businesses. Important aspects are to prepare bankable business plans and to increase access to finance.

SPARK employs business support officers in Yambio, Torit and Bor. SPARK has engaged the consultancy firm Agro-Premium to do trainings in situ. Before, business support officers organised business plan competitions. But this approach is changed into an Innovation and Business Start-up Acceleration Process. This change emphasises the fact that the one who wins a business plan competition

is not automatically entitled to a loan (it is RUFU that decides about this), and that the support of SPARK is (only) meant to accelerate the growth of a business.⁹⁴ Another change is that SPARK/Agro Premium now do the assessments themselves, not local business people anymore (the new practice works better).⁹⁵

The Innovation and Business Start-up Acceleration Process has the following steps:

Innovation session and selection	Advertisements and radio sessions and describe a business idea
Training and coaching to write a business plan	Participants are trained, and coached to write and pitch their business plan
Preparation for potential funding	Coaching, final business plan approval and submission to RUFU
Business start-up and ongoing coaching	Continued coaching by BDAs and loan repayment

Training materials are adapted to support the business skills development. The training covers six modules: entrepreneurship and business management skills, business plan writing, marketing plan, operational plan, financial management and human resources including presentation skills, and facilitation skills for BDA. Training materials are adapted to be understandable to semi-literate entrepreneurs.

SPARK trained some MSMEs and a selection was admitted to the next round for coaching and mentoring. Existing MSMEs cannot participate in any Business Start-up Acceleration Process. The agribusinesses of women and youth enterprises are invited to a business acceleration process.

For hands-on support in the counties, Premium Agro Consult has engaged BDAs (Business Development Advisor).⁹⁶ The BDAs support the entrepreneurs to prepare loanable and profitable business plans and give training, coaching, and mentoring. The BDAs support illiterate entrepreneurs by summarizing the business plan in writing.

⁹³ Comments of RUFU 4 Feb. 2021: RUFU requires a guarantor and a husband does not qualify as a guarantor.

⁹⁴ SPARK flow chart 'Innovation and Business Start-up Acceleration Process'

⁹⁵ Interview Pieter de Vries, 27 Nov. 2020.

⁹⁶ There is an ongoing discussion about a plan to offer to some BDAs permanent employment as opposed to the current contracts per task. Such employment might be through AgroPremium or SPARK.

An overview of the outputs is presented hereunder.

Table: Number of BDAs and number of YWEs and MSMEs

Category	Description	Target	Bor	Torit	Yambio	Total
BDA	Identified BDAs	30	10	8	8	26
	Trained BDAs	30	10	8	7	25
	Complete the cycle/pass the Competency exam	30	0	0	0	0
YWE	Identified YWE	350	70	116	147	333
	BSA participants YWE	100	52	69	18	139
	BST participants YWE	100	33	34	11	78
	Coached to write business plan YWE	100	27	15	34	76
	Ongoing coaching to start/grow business YWE	300	9	22	87	118
	Nr of bankable BP prepared YWE	45	0	2	5	7
MSME	Scouted and validated MSME	260	40	112	139	291
	Approved or conditionally approved MSME	150	5	39	40	84
	BST participants MSME	150	0	66	78	144
	Coached to write business plan MSME	150	14	16	13	43
	Ongoing coaching to grow business MSME	300	0	53	1	54
	Nr of bankable BP prepared MSME	90	0	2	1	3

- None of the BDAs have yet passed their exam!
- There is some criticism on the performance of the local BDAs who are still developing their expertise.⁹⁷ 'Most of the local BDAs in the project locations have not been serious in doing their work'. 'They do not meet deadlines when given an assignment, especially with the BP development'. 'Some of the BDAs have taken up jobs which makes them unavailable, even unreachable on phone when needed for some information.'⁹⁸ One explanation could be that COVID-19 made impossible field visits during Q 2 and the first half of Q 3.⁹⁹ The BDAs are paid and trained at the same time.
- Many YWEs were identified, but few did receive a loan,
- Bor is underrepresented in the MSMEs: 'Because of flooding, the cycle of scouting and validating MSMEs could not be completed because most of the MSMEs that were originally scouted could either not be reached or they abandoned their farms'¹⁰⁰

Some remarks

- The performance is best in Yambio in terms of delivery, closely followed by Torit; Bor is not good (mainly due to the flooding).¹⁰¹
- Live meetings in the innovation sessions and BST (Business skills Training) for MSMEs were replaced by radio talk shows, due to COVID-19.
- There are big differences in experience and education among the participants,¹⁰² - some participants cannot read or write.
 - o the choice of training methods is complicated by these differences

⁹⁷ Premium Agro-Consult - FSA/SSADPII Quarterly Activity Report, July,1st – September, 30th ,2020

⁹⁸ Premium Agro-Consult - FSA/SSADPII Quarterly Activity Report, July,1st – September, 30th ,2020

⁹⁹ Premium Agro-Consult - FSA/SSADPII Quarterly Activity Report, July,1st – September, 30th ,2020

¹⁰⁰ Comments on draft report Pieter de Vries, SPARK, 12 Jan. 2021

¹⁰¹ Interview Pieter de Vries, SPARK, 27 Nov. 2020.

¹⁰² Premium Agro-Consult - FSA/SSADPII Quarterly Activity Report, January, 1st – March, 31st, 2020

- it became clear that some business plans are not written by the applicants themselves,
- The bottleneck between the high number of business plans drawn up and the low approval rate by RUF1 is a problem that requires urgent attention (see 3.6 Access to Finance and Conclusions and 6.4 Strategic discussion on RUF1). In the same vein, internal reporting refers to the importance of expectation management of the YWEs and MSMEs.¹⁰³
- It is not clear whether business plans were rejected completely or only temporarily in the sense that they can be adapted; so far none have been definitively rejected.

3.8 Value chain analysis and development

VCA seeks to enhance the functioning of the value chains in the market system by analysing the market system and addressing key weaknesses that can contribute to development or improvement of the value chains.

To support VCA, the consortium applies a strategy that has three main components:

- Conduct thorough value chain analysis to identify market opportunities as well as barriers for smallholder farmers and agri-businesses, youth and women entering and/or participating in the value chain
- Support for improving the participation of smallholder farmers in value chains by building their capacity, and facilitate access to and availability of inputs, information, technology, and finance
- Support value chain actors to address barriers that prevent the growth of value chains¹⁰⁴

After these major crops were identified, a subsector analysis matrix was used to prioritize the crops for Value Chain Analysis and Development in each county from production to marketing.

- Yambio County – Maize, Groundnuts and Cassava
- Torit County – Sorghum, Maize and Groundnuts
- Bor County – Sorghum, Maize and Groundnuts¹⁰⁵

The VCA report of SSADP II¹⁰⁶¹⁰⁷ reconfirms that sorghum, maize, groundnut, and cassava are priority value chains with great potential in terms of production, value addition, employment, income, and marketing. Others include local poultry and tomato, honey, pineapple, goat, vegetable and fish.

The key elements of the strategy are:

Process/Product Upgrading:

- a. sell of high-quality certified seeds to increase agricultural productivity and production,
- b. upgrade the value chain product, i.e. that FEMA approach works on production but also on value addition,
- c. reduce farming risks for diseases,
- d. procure seeds in bulk and these should be distributed to farmers via farmer organizations. seed samples from suppliers should be subjected to germination and other purity tests,
- e. development actors to provide seed capital to serious VEMSAs,

¹⁰³ SSADP II Bi-Weekly Update and Plan: Bi-Weekly Progress ((February 1st – 14th 2020)

¹⁰⁴ FULL PROPOSAL SSADP II –March 2018, CORDAID

¹⁰⁵ Food Security through Agribusiness in South Sudan (SSADP II), Inception Report Final, February 2019, p 8:

¹⁰⁶ Agricultural Value Chain Analysis Report, Teshale Endalamaw, Godfrey Omondi, Lokule Yengi October 2019

¹⁰⁷ This is an elaboration of the recommendations done in the report ‘Food Security through Agribusiness in South Sudan (SSADP II) - Inception Report, p 13, 14.

- f. a mix of grant and loans (RUF) package would need to be availed to the agricultural MSME on case-by-case basis,

Functional Upgrading

- g. establish bulking and primary-level processing at farmer-level to reduce post-harvest and other transaction losses,
- h. have the farmer cooperatives as a centre for bulking of farm produce and centres for primary value addition,

Upgrading of Coordination and Business Models

- i. use of platforms and radio programs to make public information on crucial agricultural production and season, harvesting and post-harvesting,
- j. build the capacity of value chain actors (especially the farmers),
- k. monitor sub-sector performance,
- l. foster trust and long-term relationships among value chain stakeholders through quarterly Multi-Stakeholder Platforms (MSP) where critical issues such as project implementation, crop production and market price are discussed in detail, and challenges facing farmers are identified and sorted out, and opportunities are tapped in to by the respective value chain players,

Improving Business Enabling Environment

- m. support the GOSS in the development and implementation of Agricultural policies,
- n. standardize units of measurements,
- o. Reduce multiplicity of taxes, market licenses and fees.

4. Findings outcomes

4.1 Introduction

Hereunder the outcomes of the questionnaire are discussed.

Background of respondents 2020

South Sudan has suffered from conflicts and natural disasters in recent years. For example, many Equatorians went to Uganda in the aftermath of the conflicts of 2016-2017. These groups have since come back bit by bit.

Table: residential status of respondents in the three counties

County	Host community	Internally Displaced Person (IDP)	Returnee	Total
Bor	119	3	22	144
Torit	118	2	8	128
Yambio	133	5	3	141
Total	370	10	33	413

With the above problematic history in mind, the fact that only 8% of the respondents state they are returnee¹⁰⁸ seems low.¹⁰⁹ This could partially be a definition question: the definition of returnee implies that a household that came back before Dec. 2019 is already considered 'host community'.

Respondents were selected randomly among the beneficiary groups of the SSADP II: CMDRR, VEMSA, Cooperatives, FEMA groups. When interpreting the data, it should be borne in mind that in Yambio almost all respondents are members of a cooperative and in Torit only less than a quarter.

Table: Percentage of respondents that is a member of a cooperative

Bor	58%
Torit	23%
Yambio	99%
Overall	61%

In the original SSADP II - proposal the assumption is that the average household size is 6 persons.¹¹⁰ Subsequent calculations (about the number of indirect beneficiaries) are based on this. Therefore, it is important to know the average size of a household of a beneficiary.

Table: Household size and percentage of children per household in the three counties

County	Average households' size ¹¹¹	Percentage of children (less than 18 years)
Bor	10	45%
Torit	7	53%
Yambio	10	59%
Total average	9,2	57%

¹⁰⁸ Internally displaced Person (IDP) are members of the community who have been forced to move to this community from elsewhere in South Sudan over the last year; Returnee are member of the community who have returned (spontaneous or assisted) to this community from either a refugee or an IDP-situation over the last year).

¹⁰⁹ Last year's focus group discussions in Torit and Yambio demonstrated that every group (at least some members) had a history of fleeing their village during the conflict.

¹¹⁰ FULL PROPOSAL SSADP II, March 2018, CORDAID, March 30, 2018, p. 7

¹¹¹ Determined as 'number of people eating from the same pot'.

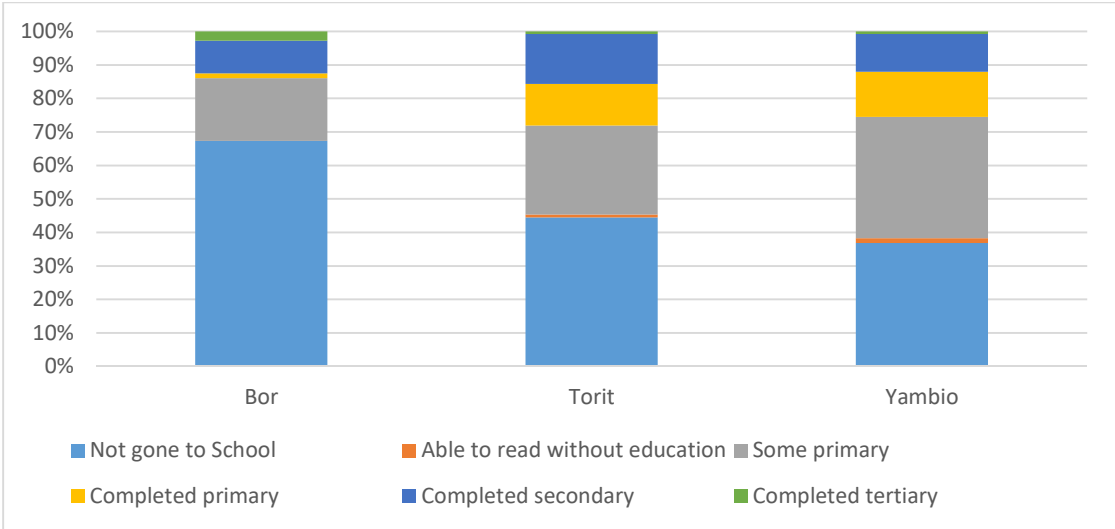
It appears that the average household size is 9.2.¹¹² This is over 50% higher than the original assumption. Calculations based on the number of household members should take this into account.

36% Of the respondent’s state that there was at least one person¹¹³ with a disability in their household as shown in the following table. 28 households (7%) have 2 persons or more with a disability.

Table: Frequency disability in the household (N is 413)

County	% of households with at least one person with a disability
Bor	42%
Torit	23%
Yambio	41%
Average	36%

Figure: Education level of the respondents



As known, the education level is very low in South Sudan: 77% of the respondents (318 of the 413) did not go to school at all or had attended only some years of primary school. There are few which have a significant higher level of education: 55 respondents (17%) have completed the secondary school or achieved a higher level. In Yambio, the level of education is slightly higher than in Torit and Bor.

Hence, the beneficiaries of the SSADP II consist of a mix of many very low educated and few highly educated. This is relevant information to take into account when designing trainings. It should be realised that when a member of a FEMA or cooperative cannot read and write (which most cannot), he/she they cannot have a good overview of the financial accounting and cannot control the running of a FEMA or cooperative.

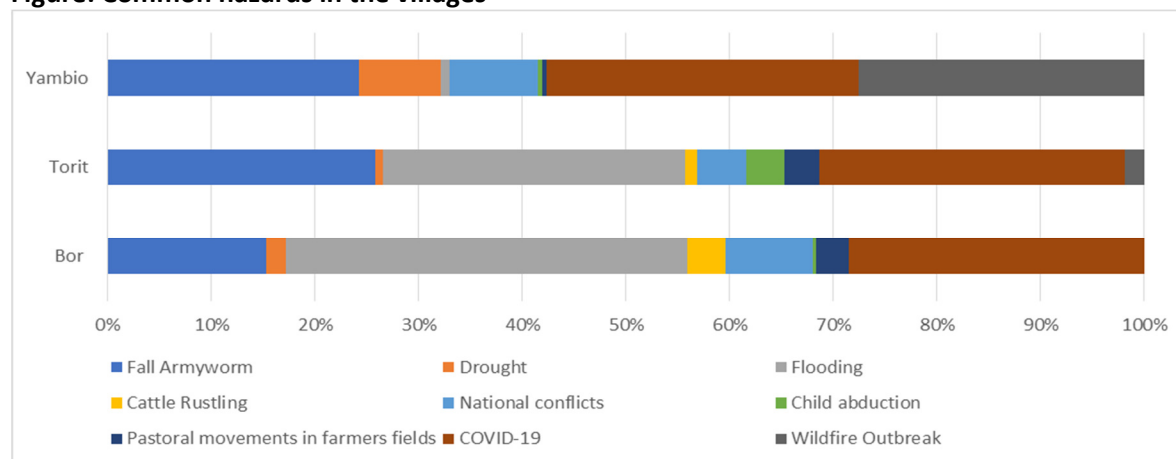
¹¹² In the AR 2019 the average household size in the three counties was 8,1.

¹¹³ 6% (25 persons) did not answer this question (all from Torit).

4.2 Resilient to conflicts and natural hazards

The perception of the respondents on what they see as the most common hazards during the last year is described below

Figure: Common hazards in the villages



The respondents see COVID-19, fall army worm and flooding as the most common hazards in their areas. Of course, the flood in Bor springs out and also in Torit there were flooding's in some degree (not at all in Yambio); The most common hazard in Yambio is the fall army worm. Conflicts (Cattle rustling, child abduction, national conflicts) score relatively low. But the effects of these conflicts, when they occur, are high.

Table: Presence of a CMDRR committee in the community to support

County	NO	YES	I Don't know	Total
Bor	26	112	6	144
Torit	31	80	17	128
Yambio	55	68	18	141
Total	112	260	41	413

Two thirds of the respondents state that there is a CMDRR committee in their community. In Bor, this percentage is highest (78%). This high percentage might be explained by the higher need for a CMDRR committee in Bor, due to a higher incidence of disasters (communal violence and floods). A subsequent question was whether the respondents received any training on how to cope with hazards?

Table: Degree to which the respondents received a training (awareness raising) how to cope with the hazards

County	NO	YES	I Don't know	Total
Bor	3	139	0	142
Torit	38	78	7	123
Yambio	7	132	2	141
Total	48	349	9	406

86% of the respondents (349) state they received a training (awareness raising),

4.3 Enhanced sustainable production and productivity¹¹⁴

The occupations of the respondents are described in the table hereunder.

Table YY: Primary and secondary occupations of the respondents

		Primary occupation (N=409)	Secondary Occupation (N=411)
Bor	Crop farming	72%	23%
	Cattle keeper	10%	47%
	Poultry	8%	4%
	Business	6%	19%
Torit	Crop farming	56%	41%
	Vegetable farming	22%	23%
	Business	2%	9%
	Poultry	2%	1%
Yambio	Crop farming	96%	8%
	Vegetable farming	1%	4%
	Business	1%	53%
	Poultry	0%	13%

75% Of the respondents say that they see themselves in the first place as crop farmers. Crop farming is by far the most dominant occupation in Yambio, in Torit vegetable farming is second and in Bor cattle keeping. In Yambio, it is almost exclusive crop farming.

Data about income are notoriously unreliable,¹¹⁵ even more so in the South Sudanese context. Crude estimations can only be made, as in the table below.

Table: Income categories of the households in the three counties - 2020 and 2019 compared¹¹⁶

Income in SSP	2019			2020		
	Bor	Torit	Yambio	Bor	Torit	Yambio
<30.000	97,1%	100,0%	89,7%	58,3%	72,7%	12,2%
30.000-50.000	2,9%	0,0%	11,8%	28,0%	9,1%	29,0%
>50.000	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	13,6%	18,2%	58,8%

- There is a huge rise in income, when last year is compared with this year. But any comparison is complicated by the inflation of approx. 100% over 2020.
- Yambio has a significantly higher income level (2019 and 2020), among the three counties
- The distribution of income over the categories in Torit are least equal, in Bor and Yambio the income distribution is more even (2020).

In table below the food consumption score (FCS) is displayed. The survey question was: ‘How many times have you and your household members eaten the following food items in the last 7 days?’ Following a specific calculation and a scale, the Food Consumption Score status can be calculated. The results of 2020 are presented.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁴ Harvest production data which will become available in the first months of 2021.

¹¹⁵ To name just a few factors: income is a difficult concept in subsistence farming: it not calculated by the respondents if they eat what produce themselves. There has been an inflation of almost 100% in 2020. Respondents sometimes seem to make unrealistic guesses.

¹¹⁶ The survey questions are comparable, but not the same: Question 2019: what is your household income in total before the harvest of your produce in SSP? Question 2020 : What is your household income this year (2020) In SSP? It was assumed that this year’s harvest is not yet sold.

¹¹⁷ <https://index.nutrition.tufts.edu/data4diets/indicator/food-consumption-score-fcs#:~:text=Determine%20the%20household's%20food%20consumption,Borderline%3B%20%3E35%3A%20Acceptable.>
Food Consumption Score (FCS)

Comparing the three counties, using a WFP calculation method,¹¹⁸ the calculations as follows:

County	Food security index ¹¹⁹
Torit	41,7
Bor	57,0
Yambio	47,7

These (high) scores are not in conformity with the picture of the WFP data on South Sudan,¹²⁰ in which Bor is reported as 'in crisis' in December 2020, as is Torit. Yambio is a bit better off and is labelled as 'stressed'. An explanation of this bias between the results of the questionnaire and the UN-data would require a more thorough investigation, which is beyond the scope of this report.

Nevertheless, a closer look from a different perspective reveals the following per food item.

Table: Food Consumption Score of respondents - 2019 and 2020 compared per crop

County	2019	2020
Fruits	Poor	Poor
Milk & Milk products	Acceptable	Poor
Cereals	Borderline	borderline
Vegetables	Poor	Poor
Meat	Acceptable	Borderline
Roots	Poor	Poor
Eggs	Poor	Poor
Sugar	Poor	Poor
Beans	Acceptable	Borderline
Oil/Fats	Poor	Poor

The result is that the score of the households of the respondents is poor for most crops (fruits, milk & milk products, vegetables, roots, eggs, sugar, oil/fats), and for some products (cereals, meat and beans) borderline. The overall FSC score was lower in 2020 than in 2019.¹²¹

In this table the degree to which respondents receive seeds is presented.

Table: Degree to which respondents received seeds from Cordaid or other partners in 2020¹²²

	Yes, Cordaid	Yes, Other Partner	No	Not Sure	Total
Bor	99	22	22	1	144
Torit	100	14	11	2	127
Yambio	52	33	51	5	141
Total	251	69	84	8	412

¹¹⁸

<https://fscluster.org/sites/default/files/documents/FSC%20Food%20Consumption%20Score%20Guideline%20%202014.docx#:~:text=For%20each%20household%2C%20the%20household,scores%20into%20one%20composite%20score>

¹¹⁹. WFP finds the following thresholds to be applicable in a wide range of situations: Poor food consumption: 0 to 21 ; Borderline food consumption: 21.5 to 35 and Acceptable food consumption: > 35

¹²⁰

https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/c44a73a9be3d4470942225ac63d621e5/download/?_ga=2.175658725.699682324.1612559805-1766274667.1607598390

¹²¹ Any interpretation is inconclusive so far. Most (other) indicators point in the opposite direction of higher yields and incomes. Did the belief that a low score would lead to an increased assistance play a role?

¹²² This is the perception of the beneficiaries; in reality almost all FEMA farmers (2756 farmers) received seeds.

In the frame of a market system approach, there is a discussion whether it is opportune to hand seeds for free to the beneficiaries (and to which category of farmers and for which period, etc.). The majority say they received seeds (320 respondents, 77%). In Yambio they say they received least seeds from Cordaid, but that they received from others.

It seems that there are several organisations that give seeds. This puts the question whether Cordaid should give seeds to the beneficiaries in another perspective. If Cordaid does not give seeds maybe other organisations give them seeds (or do they receive seeds multiple times?).

We continued to ask (N = 165) if you did not receive (all) seeds (for free) how did you obtain the (other) seeds: 58% said 'Used my own stored seeds from my farm' and 30% said: 'bought in the market'.

Among the SSADP II trainings there is the 'good and climate smart agricultural practice training'. When asked, more than 90% (N=412) said they had attended this training.

The participants are overwhelmingly satisfied with the training: 88% is satisfied, 5% not satisfied – those who are not satisfied are mainly from Torit –. The reason why they are satisfied is because the training led to an increase in their production, they say.

The training model, as we have seen, involves farmer-to-farmer extension. The table below explains whether this farmer-to farmer extension takes place (yes it does) and with whom.

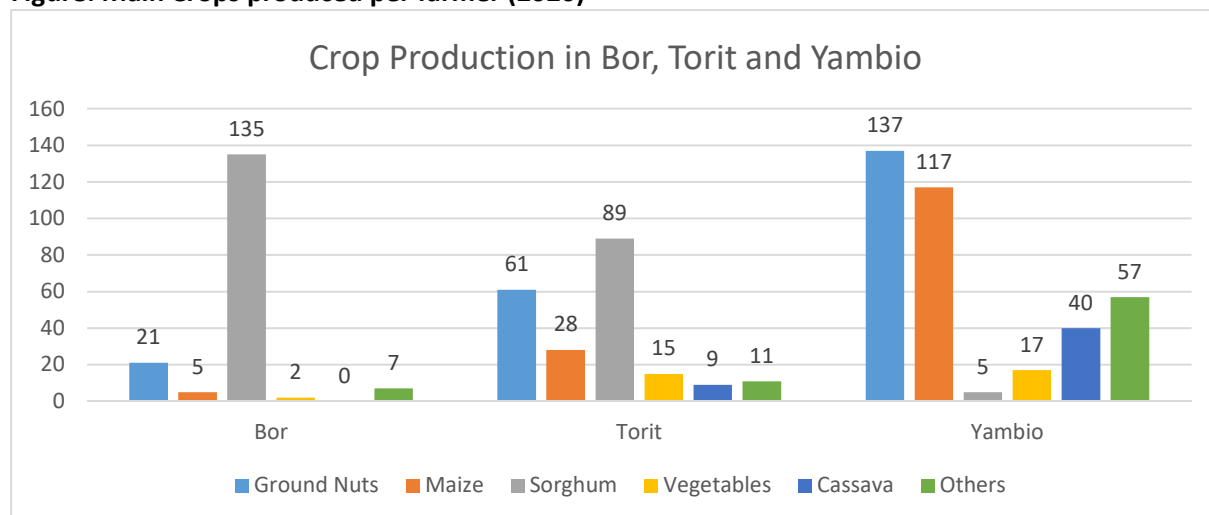
Table: Degree to which what is learnt in GAP training is shared and with whom?

	YES with:				No or I do not know
	relatives	Neighbours	Friends	Others	
Bor	38	43	15	53	16
Torit	43	39	38	24	8
Yambio	108	67	57	41	5
Total	189	149	110	118	29

- 93% of the respondents in 2020 said they had shared the Gap knowledge and skills
- In 2019 only 63% said they shared what they had learnt, with a similar division over the categories 'relatives', 'neighbours', 'friends' and others'.

In the figure below, the types of crops that are produced are displayed (in 2020)

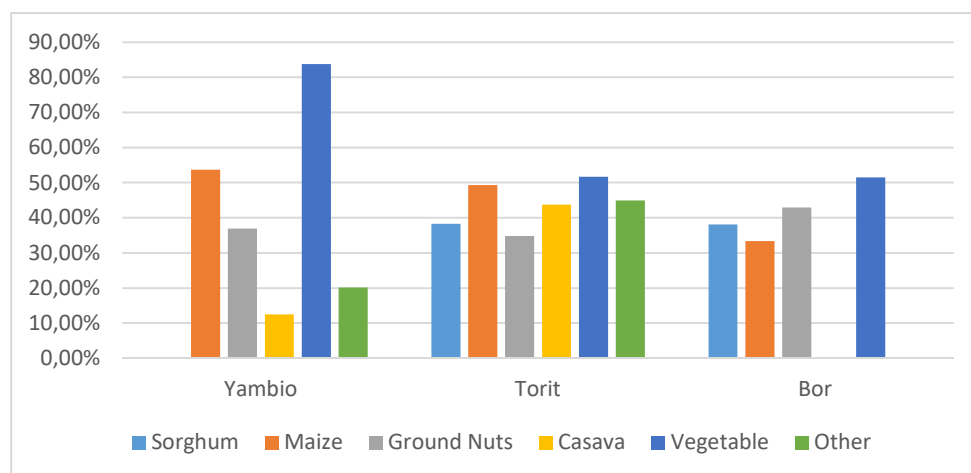
Figure: Main Crops produced per farmer (2020)



- In Bor the main crop is sorghum, in Torit sorghum and ground nuts and in Yambio ground nuts and maize.

In figure below the percentage of the crops harvested that is designated for sale (not for consumption) is presented.¹²³

Figure: Percentage designated for sale per crop (not for consumption)



The degree to which the three most produced crops (sorghum, maize, and groundnuts) are sold (and not consumed), varies between 35% - 54%.¹²⁴ It appears that vegetables are most sold, but this is only 'a minor crop'.

4.4 Improved inclusive agri-business market functioning

An important component of the SSADP II is to improve the availability of the market information about crops and about essential farm inputs. More than 90% says they have access. Only in Torit 25% of the respondents say that they do not have access.

¹²³ The answers of the respondents did not give a conclusive answer on production data in absolute terms. However, the relative distribution over 'for own consumption and 'designated for sale seemed to be reliable.

¹²⁴ Except for Sorghum in Yambio, which is a minor crop in Yambio.

When asked to which kind of information they have access to, 82% says they have access to market prices (other categories were hardly mentioned as early warning systems, market demand for agricultural commodities, new buyers and sources and prices of farm inputs and prices).

The way they receive the market information is displayed in the table hereunder.

Table: The way the market information is received by the respondents

	Extension workers	Farm group leaders	Local Leaders	Newspapers	Radio	Other	Total
Total	73	93	41	2	127	70	406

In summary, 31% by radio, reflecting the increase in the use of the radio in times of COVID-19 (The score is highest in Torit: 52%), 23% says through farm group leaders (this is highest in Bor: 46%) and 18% through the extension workers (highest in Bor: 38%).

Despite the access to market information, still a majority (71%) has issues to access the market to concretely sell a crop. This difficulty has increased over the past year: at the Action Research of 2019 this was 'only' 57%.

Storage facilities

Storage facilities are important to reduce post-harvest losses. As displayed in the table below, most popular is the granary (51%), followed by ordinary bags (29%). The hermetic bag is not yet introduced by the project.

Table: Storage facility used to store crops

	Granary	Hermetic bags	Ordinary bags	Pot or Drum	Store (Concrete building)	Total
Bor	54	0	86	3	1	
Torit	43	1	17	54	13	
Yambio	115	0	17	4	5	
Total	212	1	120	61	19	413

Most respondents (57%) received some kind of storage facility: of these 234 provided storage facilities 'only' 65 (27%) came from Cordaid (mainly in Bor and Torit).

Table: Storage facility received and provided by whom (only the 234 respondents who say they have received assistance in storage facilities)?

	Cordaid	FAO	Government	Form others	Total
Bor	31	24	0	38	93
Torit	29	0	0	32	61
Yambio	5	0	1	74	80
Total	65	24	1	144	234

4.5 Improved performance of cooperatives and Agri-MSMEs and new jobs created

As explained above, 61% of the respondents is a member of a cooperative. Nearly all respondents in Yambio are a member of a cooperative.

Table: number of respondents that are a member of a cooperative

	No	Yes	Total
Bor	61	83	144
Torit	99	29	128
Yambio	2	139	141
Total	162	251	413

57% (235 persons) of the respondents state they received a training on business plan development.

Table: Degree to which the respondents state they received training on business plan development

	No	Yes	Total
Bor	45	98	143
Torit	80	34	114
Yambio	45	96	141
Total	170	235	398 ¹²⁵

130 of the respondents state that their business plan was financed (by RUFi).¹²⁶

Table: Degree to which the business plan was financed

County	No	Yes	Total
Bor	77	65	142
Torit	80	13	93
Yambio	89	52	141
Total	246	130	376 ¹²⁷

¹²⁵ 15 answered 'no answer' or 'other' .

¹²⁶ These are not representative data, in the sense that among the whole population the percentage of beneficiaries whose business plan is financed is much lower than 35% (130 out of 376). Probably, those who received a loan were more eager to be respondent.

¹²⁷ 37 answered 'no answer' or 'other' .

5 Gender

5.1 Introduction

The basis of a gender policy is to have a contextual understanding of gender roles and intra-household dynamics. Part of this research is to look at the 1) gender roles at household level, 2) gender roles in farming, 3) the ownership of assets and 4) decision-making and present recommendations for a gender policy and practice.

The role of women in value chains and gender equity are incorporated into the design of the SSADP II.¹²⁸ With the aim of having gender as a mainstreamed objective, the 'SSADP II Project Gender Assessment and Action Plan'¹²⁹ was prepared with key recommendations and a gender action plan.

Action Research of 2019

One key recommendation of the 2019 action research was to improve gender transformation in the SSADP II by implementing simple, gender-transformative activities. This recommendation is repeated in this report. Other recommendations of the Action Research were:

- Build staff capacity on gender-transformative strategies.
- Appoint a gender focal point for the SSADP II and investigate the possibility of working together (e.g. on gender-based violence in Torit).
- Collaborate with players who have capacity on gender and gender-based violence within agribusiness projects (NGOs, donors, international organisations, churches, etc.).
- Analyse gender roles in SSADP II activities (FEMAs, cooperatives, businesses, CMDRR groups, etc.) and identify obstacles to women's participation in training (transport, children, unwillingness of husband).

Following a specific classification,¹³⁰ the SSADP II can be considered gender-sensitive (better than gender-blind or gender-aware, but not yet gender-responsive or gender-transformative). The main obstacle for not yet being gender-transformative was that 'the underlying structural factors such as norms and power relations that contribute to gender inequalities were not yet addressed.'

This section means to overcome this, since 'interventions that are not grounded in sound gender analysis may risk doing more harm than good.'¹³¹

Gender distributions in the SSADP II

The gender distribution of the FEMA beneficiaries of the SSADP II is equal: 50% of FEMA members are women (total is 2756 persons); women make up the majority of the VEMSA-members. The CMDRR committees have more male members. At the end of 2020, 49% of those who have received loans are men and 51% are women (N=674);¹³² 49% of the member of the cooperatives are men (total number of members is 1371). However, only 29 % of the board members of a cooperative are women (each cooperative has around 7 – 9 board members).

¹²⁸ Full Proposal, SSADP II, 30 March 2018, p.7

¹²⁹ SSADP II Project Gender Assessment and Action Plan – January, 2019

¹³⁰ Guijt, I. and Parvaz Butt, A. (2019) 'How to Integrate Gender in Research Planning', Oxfam Action Research Gender Blog, 8 March, <https://views-voices.oxfam.org.uk/2019/03/gender-research-planning/>

¹³¹ Developing gender-sensitive value chains A guiding framework, FAO, 2016

¹³² Dat from MDS 2020 final, presented by Teshale Endalamaw on 1 feb 2021

5.2 The vicious circle of gender inequalities

Some think that abiding by quota for male/female participants to trainings, loans schemes etc. is sufficient for doing justice to gender equality. This disregards the toughness and the integrated nature of gender inequalities. Indeed, more is needed to make gender mainstreaming a success. Even from a purely economic point of view, any agribusiness project must pay attention to gender: Systematic integration of gender equality dimensions into value chain development programmes and projects (Closing the “gender gap”) in agriculture can result in major production gains.¹³³

Before we look at the gender roles in the SSADP II project we look at the conceptual underpinning of gender in agribusiness. The FAO report ‘Developing gender-sensitive value chains’¹³⁴ introduces two concepts to understand gender inequality and provides a conceptual basis for future interventions: ‘access to productive resources’ and ‘power and agency. These two concepts show the interrelatedness. This framework is useful for the SSADP II.

As presented in the table which the author made based on the above FAO report, access to productive resources is subdivided into 1) assets 2) agricultural services and 3) financial services and power. The different components reinforce each other and relate to each other.

Table: Components of productive resources

Access to assets	Land	Women are consistently less likely to own or operate land and less likely to have access to rented land.
	Equipment	However, while use of mechanical equipment among smallholders tends to be low for both males and females, a large gap exists between male-headed and female-headed households.
	Networks/ Social capital	networks are male-dominated; Participation in cooperatives and business associations can enable women to reach more scale in their enterprises and have greater influence on decision-making in a particular agricultural sector.
Access to agricultural services	Training and information	There is a bias towards designing trainings for male farmers and processors, based on the flawed perception that men are farmers or entrepreneurs and women are not, or the assumption that male farmers will inform the female members of their households on matters concerning productive activities.
	Technology	In addition to limited access to technology, women also tend to have a lower rate of technology adoption due to time constraints, educational disparities and greater risk aversion
	Inputs	Women have less access to agricultural inputs and are less likely than men to use inputs such as improved seed varieties, fertilizers, pest control measures and mechanical tools.
Access to financial services		Women generally have less access to financial services than men; and sometimes a male co-signer is required

¹³³ Comparative studies have already established that gender inequalities tend to be costly and inefficient (World Bank, 2001; World Bank, IFAD and FAO, 2009).

¹³⁴ Developing gender-sensitive value chains A guiding framework, FAO, 2016 (There is a companion publication, Developing gender-sensitive value chains: Guidelines for practitioners, which provides specific tools to support value chain practitioners).

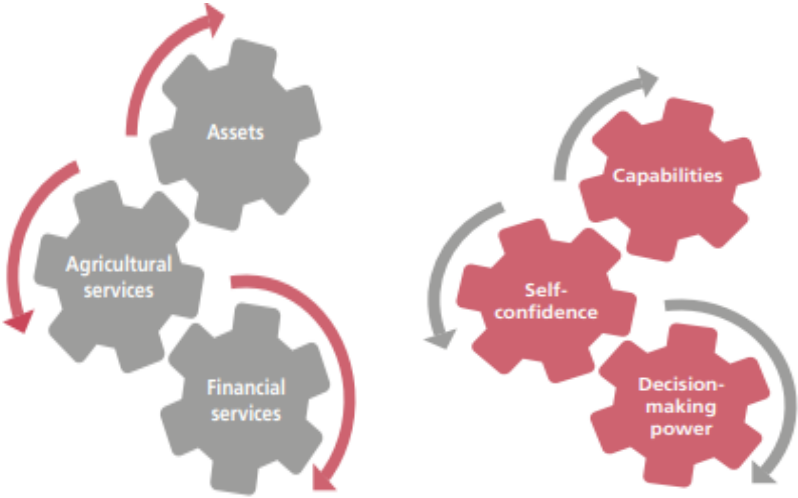
The other concept ‘power and agency’ refers to the ability to make autonomous choices and transform those choices into desired outcomes. Control over resources and profits, or power, goes hand in hand with the ability to exercise agency. The concept is subdivided into 1) capabilities, 2) self-confidence and 3) decision-making power.

Table: components of power and agency according to FAO report

Capabilities	Women often have fewer capabilities relevant to participating in and benefitting from value chains. As we have seen above, they frequently receive less education and training than men and often have less experience participating in important market transactions.
Self-confidence	As a result of prevailing sociocultural norms, women might lack the self-confidence necessary to exercise agency as participants in the value chain. Their Behaviour is often regulated both from without and from within.
Decision-making power	As we have seen, women often do not have the power to make decisions about how to use their time or how to allocate their income and resources. Nevertheless: “When women control additional income, they spend more of it than men do on food, health, clothing and education for their children”

Hereunder the figure shows that women can be part a positive (virtuous) as well as struck in a negative (vicious) circle.¹³⁵

Figure: Components of access to productive resources and components of power and agency



5.3 Gender roles

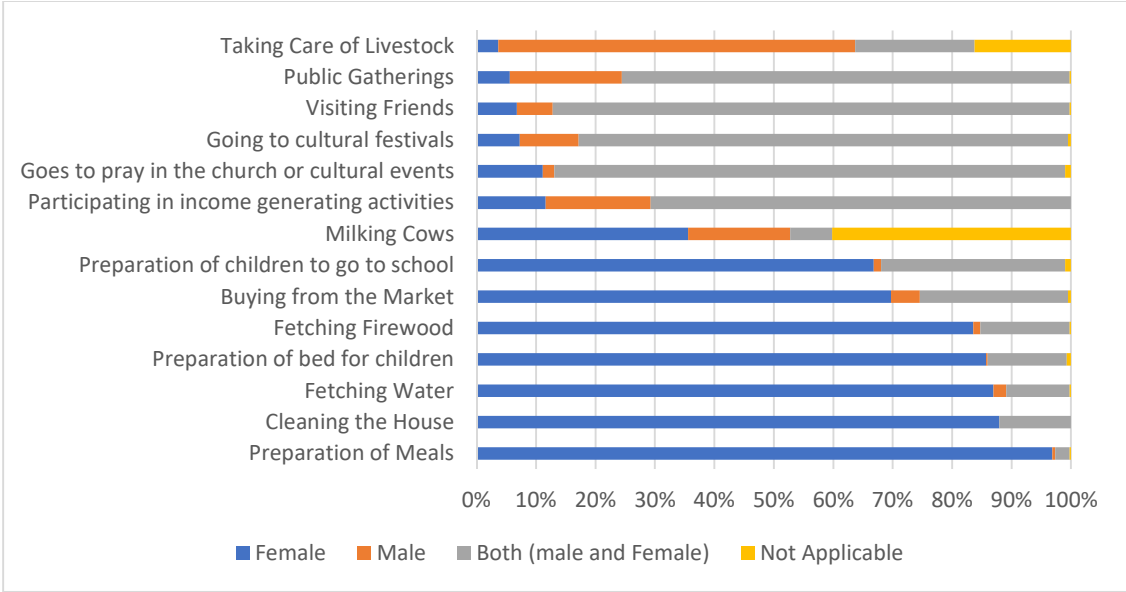
Results of the survey on the gender questions are presented here.

Intra household decision-making

Intra-household division of tasks in the household are presented in figure below.

¹³⁵ For example and a vicious circle is ‘Women who do not own land, do not get a loan (lack of collateral) and have a reduced self-esteem.

Figure: Gender distribution of household tasks¹³⁶

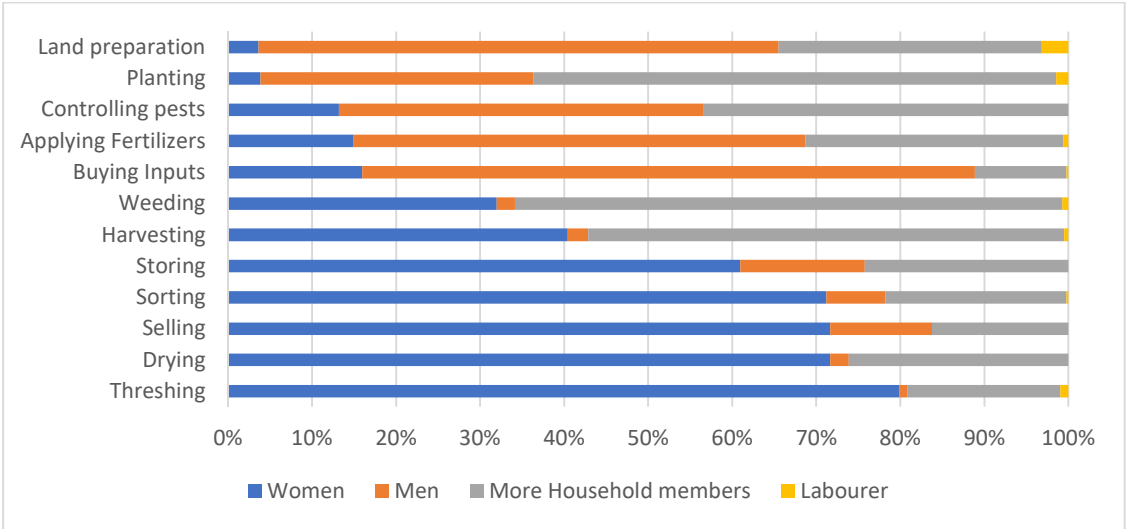


The division reflects the classical patriarchal structure one expects: women deal with cleaning, children and in-house activities and men deal with livestock, and external affairs. There are more only female activities than activities done by both or only male activities.

Intra-household farming tasks

Intra-household division of farming tasks are presented in this table.

Figure: Gender distribution of farming tasks¹³⁷



¹³⁶ Based on the survey of 347 respondents.

¹³⁷ Based on the survey of 347 respondents.

Results from the FGDs on the same question¹³⁸

Issue	Yambio FDG	Torit FDG	Bor FDG
Land preparation	Both	Female	Male
Planting	Both	Both	Both
Controlling pests	Women;	Both	Both,
Applying fertilizers	N/A	Both	Male
Buying inputs	Both	Female	Male
Weeding	Female	Both	Female
Harvesting	Mostly female	Female	Both
Storing	Both	Female	Male
Sorting	Females	Female	Female
Selling	Both	Both	Female
Drying	Female	Female	Female
Threshing	Female	Female	Female

- The women of the FGDs regard activities as threshing, drying, storing, sorting, and selling as female, whereas they regard land preparation, planting, controlling pests, applying fertilizers, and buying inputs generally as male.
- Land preparation as cutting trees is regarded as a male activity. However, some women states: 'Both male and female¹³⁹ or 'We do that to prove that we are real farmers. Also, if 'women hire land labourers, they are hired for land preparation.
- Some respondents stress the cooperation model between the man and wife. They tend to say that both do activities, sometimes together: 'Because in this process there is cooperation between men and women'.¹⁴⁰
- Complaints of women about men are: 'Men complain of back pain during weeding' and 'Men says they do not have enough time for farm work'.

Ownership of assets

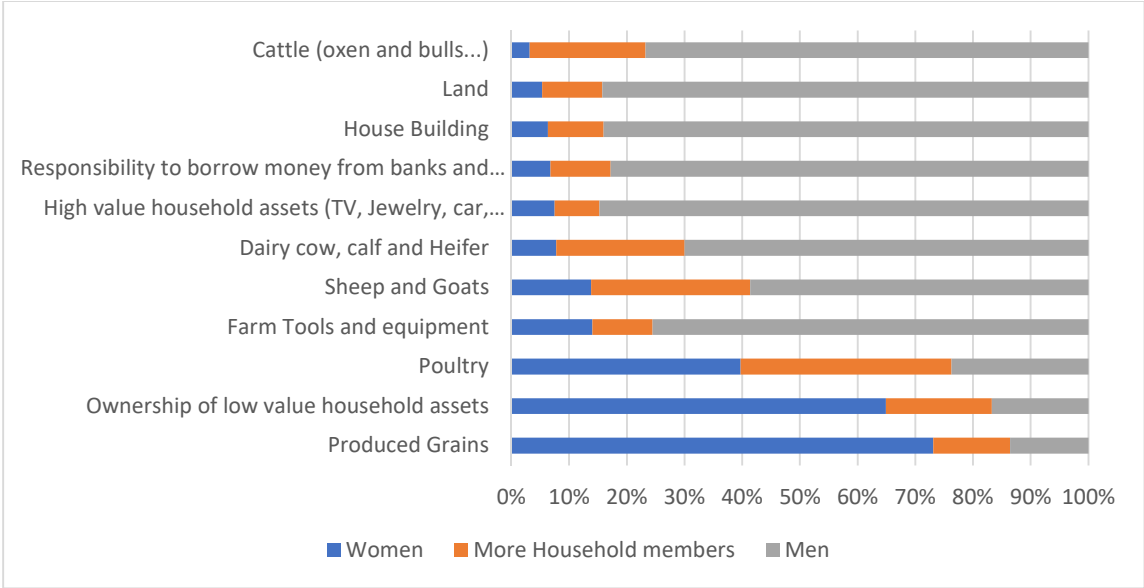
Hereunder, the results are presented of the perception of ownership of assets. Firstly, the figure displays the results from the survey (among men and women), the subsequent table gives the results of the FGDs. Both the survey data including both men and women as well as the FGDs among women point in the same direction.

¹³⁸ Based on 7 FGDs FEMA Gender in Yambio, Bor and Torit (only women respondents).

¹³⁹ FGD Yambio among FEMA Gender on 9 December 2020.

¹⁴⁰ FGD Yambio among FEMA Gender on 9 December 2020.

Figure: Ownership of the below items and assets¹⁴¹



Hereunder, the perception of ownership of assets among female members of the FEMAs is discussed in the household.¹⁴²

Table: Ownership relations in the household among female FEMA members?¹⁴³

Item	Yambio	Bor	Torit
Cattle (oxen and bulls...)	n/a ¹⁴⁴	male	male
Land	male	both	male
House/buildings	male	male	male
Responsibility to borrow money from banks and other sources	male	male	male
High value household assets (TV, Jewellery, car, motorbikes)	male	male	male
Dairy cow, calf and Heifer	n/a	male	male
Sheep and Goats	male	both	male
Farm Tools and equipment's	male	male	male
Poultry	female	female	male
Ownership of low value household assets	female	female	both
Produced Grains	both	female	both

- Poultry, ownership of low value household assets and produced grains are mostly owned by women. Men own cattle (oxen and bulls...), land, house/buildings, responsibility to borrow money from banks, high value household assets (TV, Jewellery, car, motorbikes...), dairy cow, calf and heifer.
- Ownership and decision-making are formally seen as male activities by both men and women. Sometimes women are not in agreement with this, as appears in the FGDs, but in general all respondents seem to have internalised this.
- Land ownership is rare among women.

¹⁴¹ Based on the survey of 347 respondents.

¹⁴² 'Male' is noted when more than 50% of the participants of the FGD think the man is the owner, 'female' is noted when more than 50% of the participants of the FGD think the woman is the owner. 'Both' is noted when the distribution is 50-50.

¹⁴³ Based on FGDs among gender FEMA groups

¹⁴⁴ In Yambio, the respondents (or other people) usually do not possess cows.

Decision-making in the household

In figure below household decision-making is presented. The figure displays the results from the survey, the table gives the results of the FGDs. Both the survey data (including both men and women) as well as the FGDs among women point in the same direction.

Figure: Gender in household decision making on key farming activities

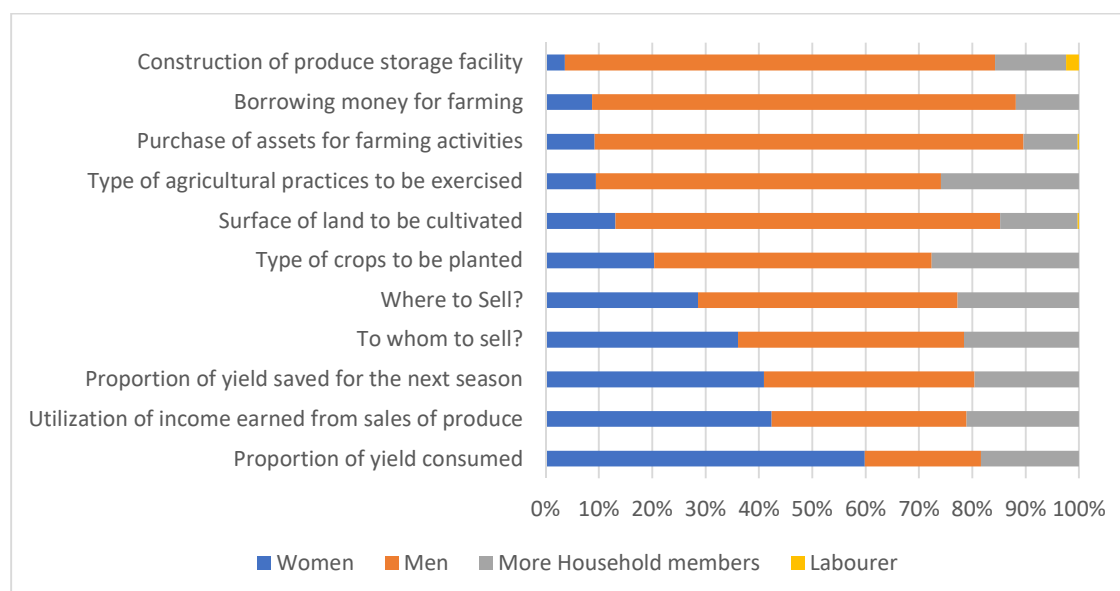


Table: Gender in household decisions making on key farming activities¹⁴⁵

Issues	Yambio	Torit	Bor
Construction of produce storage facility	male	both	male
Borrowing money for farming	both	female	male
Purchase of assets for farming activities	male	male	male
Area of land to be cultivated	male	male	male
Types of crops to planted	male	male	male
Where to sell?	male	?	both
To whom to sell?	male	male	female
Amount of yield saved for next season	male	female	both
Choice of Mode of agricultural practices to be exercised	male	both	male
Utilization of cash income earned from the sales of produce	male	female	both
Amount of yield to be consumed	both	female	male

- Decision-making is more equally distributed than ownership among women and men.
- The research points to the fact that in Torit, women have more say in decision-making than women in Yambio and Bor. This is contrary to the findings of other researches and a general belief that women in Yambio are more involved in decision-making, when compared to Torit (and Bor).
- Formal decision-making is mostly male. In practice, women might have influence on a decision through giving a strong advice.

¹⁴⁵ Male' is noted when more than 50% of the participants of the FGD think the man is the owner, 'female' is noted when more than 50% of the participants of the FGD think the woman is the owner. 'Both' is noted when the distribution is 50-50.

6 Conclusions and recommendations

As we have seen, the SSADP II is largely on track. The outputs are achieved and the results are, where measurable, within reach. The purpose of this study is to arrive at recommendations.

6.1 Market systems approach in South Sudan

The SSADP II programmes applies the Making Markets Work for the Poor (M4P) approach, also known as Market Systems Development (MSD) approach. This approach moves beyond traditional development assistance – with its focus on direct support and training for cooperatives and FEMAs – towards a facilitating approach that links actors, improves regulations and increases service provision by market actors.¹⁴⁶¹⁴⁷ A quick scan of market-oriented food security programmes in fragile settings shows that ‘in fragile settings, interventions that strengthen multiple interconnected actors along a chain are most effective.’¹⁴⁸

As we have seen, the SSADP II project supports FEMAs and cooperatives as the entry point. Building on this support, the SSADP II focusses on improving the market-oriented production systems and private sector engagement strategy supporting value addition and processing of value chains, supporting aggregators (buying, bulking, distributing, exporting), agro-input dealers, improved seed supply, agricultural equipment suppliers, hermetic storage technology supply and the scale-up of technologies and innovations to improve smallholder productivity and income.

It is important to realise that it is the “midstream segment, where many small and medium enterprises are involved, that is critical for economic growth.’ ‘Most employment and more than 80% of value-added creation takes place beyond the farm gate: in processing, packaging and transporting food along the value chain.’¹⁴⁹

The SSADP II adapts flexibly to context developments, even beyond the MSD approach. The SSADP II responded quickly to the COVID-19 epidemic and to the flooding in Bor (switch to emergency aid). It has a CMDRR component and has recently added an important component of conflict analysis and reduction. It was for this set of competences that Cordaid (and SPARK and Agriterra with their partners) was selected as the implementer of the SSADP II.¹⁵⁰ In short, one can say that the SSADP II project lives up to this expectation. In this sense, the SSADP II fits in a trend: Dual mandate (humanitarian and development) organisations’ .’have started bridging the gap between emergency

¹⁴⁶ Pathways for market-oriented development on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace nexus Aid transitions in fragility and protracted crisis settings August 2020 Rojan Bolling & Jacqueline Vrancken

¹⁴⁷ Interviews and literature study made clear that interpretations of market-oriented approaches vary significantly: ranging from cash distributions, to value chain development and extended market systems development (MSD) approaches. In “Pathways for market-oriented development on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace nexus Aid transitions in fragility and protracted crisis settings Aug. 2020 Rojan Bolling & Jacqueline Vrancken.”

¹⁴⁸ Quick-scan: Lessons of market-oriented food security programmes in fragile settings, March 2020 Rojan Bolling & Jacqueline Vrancken; Food and Business Knowledge Platform

¹⁴⁹ Interview with Professor Ruurd Ruben, 22 Nov 2020 in Vice Versa

<https://hetnieuwe.viceversaonline.nl/2020/11/22/food-security-policy-should-focus-less-on-production-and-more-on-consumers/#>

¹⁵⁰ The SSADP I did not reach its complete potential because there were many hiccups due to context developments at that time. The donor needed a project implementer equipped to deal with such hiccups.

and development assistance by including MSD approaches in their humanitarian and early recovery responses.¹⁵¹

Having said this, there are recommendations:

Market imperfections in private sector development programmes¹⁵²

- Any market systems development programme in South Sudan should reckon with the fact the business environment in South Sudan is not very healthy: ‘A domestic entrepreneur’s ability to operate a business in South Sudan is to a large degree determined by his or her ability to leverage proximity to – and ‘holding power’ within – the elite networks that span the public/private divide’,¹⁵³
- Therefore, ‘... many SMEs operating in places of insecurity and high risk deliberately deploy coping strategies rather than realising their growth ambitions. This allows them to operate below the radar, minimise exposure to risks and circumvent relations of mistrust. As such, these commonly found coping strategies are likely to differ from the promising investment plan that typically makes an SME qualify as a beneficiary of commercially driven SME support programmes’,¹⁵⁴
- Farmers do not always decide to use fertiliser and improved seed varieties when seeking to increase their yields per hectare, because this involves increased risk. A first priority of many farmers is to avoid risks rather than increase the productivity of their land.

Importance of understanding the contexts, actors, and systems in MSD

- MSD requires aid actors to focus on understanding the role of social and political power in markets,¹⁵⁵ through in-depth context analysis (or political economy and “Do No Harm” analyses) and identify light-touch, fast, and informal feedback systems that help program teams adapt. For the SSADP II this means insight in the consequences of the R-ARCISS for the implementation of the programme at county level, insight in specific power imbalances at county level and interethnic relations (in relation to communal violence), and the aid strategies of FAO and WFP, etc.,
- Collaboration and coordination with other aid organisations is necessary, especially when they hand out large quantities of low-quality inputs for free.

Provision of seeds

- The AR 2019 discussed whether Cordaid should provide seeds for free: would this not lead to a perpetuation of the situation in which people maintain their dependency on handouts and humanitarian aid?

¹⁵¹ Changing Aid Industry Norms Applying the Market Systems Development Approach to the DRC’s Aid Industry Diane Bommart and Kim Beevers, with contributions from Marco Venier, ÉLAN RDC July 2019

¹⁵² Pathways for market-oriented development on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace nexus Aid transitions in fragility and protracted crisis settings August 2020 Rojan Bolling & Jacqueline Vrancken

¹⁵³ Twijnstra, R. and Hilhorst, D. (2017) ‘Blind Spots: Domestic Entrepreneurship and Private Sector Development in South Sudan’

¹⁵⁴ Clingendael, A. (2018) ‘Growing or Coping? Evidence from Small and Medium Sized Enterprises in Fragile Settings’

¹⁵⁵ Beyond Cash: Making markets work in crisis March 2018 — Abridged, Mercy Corps, March 2018

- This year (2020) it was decided to again hand out seeds.¹⁵⁶ In May 2020, beneficiaries were supplied with seeds (maize, sorghum, ground nuts)¹⁵⁷ – unfortunately this was too late for groundnuts as their planting season was already over -,¹⁵⁸
- One may wonder if seed delivery is still necessary in the current context of Yambio. At the same time, it would be interesting to know what FAO and WFP policies are in this regard,
- Although not investigated in depth during this research : If one decided to continue the practice, seeds might be replaced by cash,¹⁵⁹ so that the farmers can decide for themselves.¹⁶⁰ Recently, a number of successes have been reported with handing cash to beneficiaries in early recovery situations instead of goods.

Higher production of food and nutritional status

- Findings of a research on a GiZ project in Yambio¹⁶¹ are that ‘direct food outcome indicators suggest that households have relatively poor food quality, however, are consuming a sufficient quantity of food.’
- This points to the believe that increased production and productivity will not automatically lead to a higher household income and that this in turn will lead to a better food and nutritional status. For example, increasing food production does not always automatically lead to better nutrition, because extra income can end up in the pocket of the male farmer and does not reach the woman, who buys and cooks food.

Intra group dynamics

- Internal social coherence of a cooperative or FEMA is sometimes assumed or taken for granted, when designing trainings and interventions. However, economic success increases the stakes and interests, and different categories of people are involved in cooperatives or FEMAs, all with different interests: chair and board vs. members, men vs. women, members vs. those who carried out the daily labour paid by a cooperative.¹⁶² For instance, the new training model distinguishes between progressive farmers, lead farmers and the other farmers – they all have slightly different interests. This assumption of social cohesion can be dangerous in the fragile South-Sudanese context.

¹⁵⁶ Interview Mark Okongo, 3 dec 2020, Interview Aloro Babanju Sila, 7 Dec. 2020.

¹⁵⁷ Interview Mark Okongo, 3 dec 2020, Interview Aloro Babanju Sila, 7 Dec. 2020.

¹⁵⁸ Provision of seeds was not originally foreseen in the budget and therefore required additional approval of the donor.

¹⁵⁹ Pathways for market-oriented development on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace nexus Aid transitions in fragility and protracted crisis settings August 2020 Rojan Bolling & Jacqueline Vrancken

¹⁶⁰ Vice versa 22 Nov 2020: ‘ Meaning the ability of poor consumers to buy healthy food. One way to address this is to give people the money or other means to access food, he explains. ‘This can be done through social safety nets and cash transfers aimed at food insecure people, such as poor women. Or through school feeding programmes.’ Social safety programmes

¹⁶¹ Yambio County Food Security and Livelihoods Brief South Sudan, February 2019 , GIZ (The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH) Food Security and Agricultural. The overall aim of the programme is to improve the productivity of farms and reduce reliance on food aid.

¹⁶² Fro instance see: ‘ ... in a post-conflict setting, where in the experience of Techno Serve communities tend to select a ‘wrong’ leader’. P. 13 *Box 2 – Performance-based election model and bonus payment contracts for cooperative leaders*. In: Pathways for market-oriented development on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace nexus Aid transitions in fragility and protracted crisis settings August 2020 Rojan Bolling & Jacqueline Vrancken

6.2 CMDRR committees, conflicts, and conflict sensitivity

Conflict analysis

During 2020 Cordaid realized that conflict sensitivity and conflict reduction were missing in the CMDRR approach. So, Cordaid included a Conflict Risk Analysis and Conflict Risk Reduction in the SSADP II. This decision is in line with the recommendation of the Action Research 2019.

CMDRR committees

- Part of the CMDRR approach is that the communities prepare action plans. The next step of the approach is that the communities take care of the implementation themselves or that the government mobilises funds. But this does not happen. Instead Cordaid has undertaken action on some priorities: for instance, in Bor the rehabilitation of smaller dikes was supported to prevent further flooding in the Makuach, Anyidi and Kolnyang payams; in Yambio radio shows advised the communities about how to diminish the risk of a fire outbreak. In Torit, deforestation was addressed by planting siblings and giving tools. Also, in cooperation with the government, radio shows addressed the occurrence of child abduction. In 2021, the SSADP II will support digging wells in Yambio.
- It is advised that the CMDRR Committee have a broad composition, and if this is not yet the case, to also include the boma chiefs, county council representatives and landlords.¹⁶³ A category that is often overlooked is 'youth', which should be added in the first place, because of their position in the traditional governance of a village.¹⁶⁴
- Before electing a committee, one could take a closer look at what is already there. At local level already many committees exist. This is described in an IOB evaluation report (2019) 'New committees were regularly set up instead of building on already existing structures or revitalising inactive committees.'¹⁶⁵ This is also important when considering sustainability of the committees: 'Regular monitoring and logistical and financial support from implementing agencies are often critical for their functioning.'
- It is indeed an excellent decision to include Conflict Risk Analysis and Conflict Risk Reduction in the CMDRR approach.
- However, this does not necessarily mean that the SSADP II project has to achieve reconciliation itself: sometimes other partners are better equipped (professional facilitators) to lead reconciliation dialogues. Certainly, the CMDRR-committees need external support when they deal with higher-level conflicts such as armed groups or other political violence.¹⁶⁶

2 Conflict sensitivity and do-no-harm

- From a pragmatic point of view SSADP II decided not to work in some payams, although they were selected. Reasons are: bad road conditions, flooding, or security considerations.

¹⁶³ Report of Conflict Risk Analysis and Conflict Risk Reduction Training, 16 Oct 2020.

¹⁶⁴ Youth In Torit (called Monyomiji) and in Bor form part of the traditional governance setup. And, youth is missed by peace building interventions. Actors who are excluded from peace negotiations often cause problems later on. See for instance : "Like the military of the village", Security, justice and community defence groups in south-east South Sudan, February 2020, Saferworld Lucian Harriman with Ilona Drewry and David Deng.

¹⁶⁵ Less Pretension, More Realism - An evaluation of the Reconstruction Programme (2012 - 2015), the Strategic Partnerships in Chronic Crises Programme (2014 - 2016) and the Addressing Root Causes Tender Process, 1 July 2019.

¹⁶⁶ To underline the recommendation of the 'Report of Conflict Risk Analysis and Conflict Risk Reduction Training, 16 Oct 2020': 'It was agreed that the Field Offices will continue to collaborate with other partners like Catholic Diocese of the County and others in providing the support to communities on peace building and conflict resolution'.

- In Torit: the project does not work in Irye (too far, requires hours of travel, and ‘road is not safe’) and Hyala (communal violence, road not safe). Instead, another Payam was added (Ifwotu).
 - In Yambio, the project does not work in Ri-Rangu (Payam under SPLA-IO rule, argument was that it is ‘not yet settled’, ‘we could have done only emergency aid’).¹⁶⁷ Another payam was selected instead. It should be realised that the Dutch government has financed the reconstruction of the road leading to Ri-Rangu Payam to facilitate Dutch projects in Ri-Rangu. On top of that, The UN in Yambio advised Cordaid to start working in Ri-Rangu one year ago (Cordaid comments that it will start in Ri-Rangu in 2021)
 - In Bor, the project does not to work in Jalle and Baidit (due to flooding)¹⁶⁸
- It is therefore important to realise that these excluded payams are precisely those associated with the former opposition in South Sudan and communal violence. Hence, the recommendation is to revise the decision and to start working in these payams to do justice to conflict sensitivity.
- Although in principle both rural and urban people are invited to the projects, it is important to realise that there is de facto a bias between pro - urban/peri-urban bias. For many reasons, rural areas are not selected for development projects (particularly clients of YWE, MSMEs and RUFU are not in the remote rural areas), whereas it is there that the support is needed most.
 - A conflict analysis is very important, even if there are no evident security threats at hand, as seems the case in Yambio.

6.3 Gender

The challenge is to put the earlier gender recommendations into practice: SSADP II Project Gender Assessment and Action Plan – January 2019 and the Action Research (on gender) of 2019. Basically, gender issues are worked out and the lack of ‘access to productive resources’ and the ‘power and agency inequalities’ are largely agreed upon. There is needed a willingness to implement.

Specific recommendations:

- Analyse gender constraints in the SSADP II activities (FEMAs, cooperatives, businesses, CMDRR groups, etc.) and identify obstacles to women’s participation in trainings (transport, care of children, unwillingness of husband), hence improve the accessibility of the trainings. This follows the advice in an FAO report.¹⁶⁹ Examples of gender constraints in the context of the SSADP II are:
 - Women are raised differently from men: they have less self-confidence and take fewer risks. This is also reflected in FEMAs: they speak less often at meetings when there are men.
 - Women are sometimes only present, because of the requirement to have 50% women and they do not speak out and have no real power (for example, appointed as vice-chair). ‘Most of the decisions taken in a FEMA group are done by men,

¹⁶⁷ Interviews with Aloro Babanju Sila, 7 Dec. 2020, Teshale Endalamaw 14 Dec. 2020.

¹⁶⁸ However Arem Deng thinks that Cordaid can restart when the area is dry again (interview 14 Dec. 2020)

¹⁶⁹ P. 26 FAO <http://www.fao.org/policy-support/resources/resources-details/en/c/1175525/>; ‘when faced with women’s lack of active participation in a producer organization, a VC practitioner might choose to address the symptom by raising the quota for membership of women. However, if the practitioner focuses instead on identifying and understanding the underlying constraints (e.g. lack of time, mobility or public speaking skills) that may be inhibiting women’s participation, it is far likelier that a more effective intervention will be implemented and stronger results will be achieved.’

although women are present.¹⁷⁰ This has many varieties: ‘Sometimes men and women are on the list of invitees, but only the men come.’¹⁷¹

- Having women in cooperatives seems gender responsive. However, sometimes, these women are simply invited to join a cooperative to do manual work men do not want to do.
- Most of the agricultural work is done by women and most of the trainings are given to men.¹⁷² The question is whether men are conveying what they learnt to their wives. The flip side of the coin, however, is a case where a woman had gained new knowledge about planting in a row, but was not allowed to practise this by her husband.
- A successful woman in a group (FEMA, cooperative) has additional challenges. There are cases of husbands not allowing their wives to attend trainings any longer.¹⁷³
- There is a case of a woman who says she had to ask her husband to co-sign before she could get a loan.
- Gender-based violence, although not openly talked about (in the FGDs), is widespread.^{174,175}

Examples of tailor-made gender interventions

- After the gender constraints are discovered, practical solutions need to be designed: designing tailor-made, gender-transformative interventions:
 - Women are culturally responsible for the care of children and have domestic duties, so have less time
 - Sometimes, if there is 5 days training a schedule of 9 AM – 3 PM might be optimal in order that the women have time to do other things¹⁷⁶
 - A kindergarten can be established next to a cooperative or a babysitter can be hired¹⁷⁷
 - Transport of women can be facilitated to attend a training
 - A training can be organised near the place where women live to facilitate child care and home duties

¹⁷⁰ Comments of Aloro Babanju, Mark Okongo and Gai Kuch, 28 November 2019.

¹⁷¹ Interview Nancy Lumeit Agriterra, SSAPU 7 Dec 2020

¹⁷² Interview Nancy Lumeit Agriterra, SSAPU 7 Dec 2020

¹⁷³ Interview with Nancy Lumeit Agriterra, SSAPU, 7 Dec. 2020.

¹⁷⁴ Cited in Cordaid, (2019) ‘Women’s Perspectives on Security in South Sudan, WPS Barometer 2019’, November: ‘In 2018, UNMISS communicated an “alarming increase in the number of incidents and victims of conflict-related sexual violence.” In 2019, the Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan reinforced this message by making clear that “despite the signing of the peace agreement, violations including rape and sexual violence continue to occur which may amount to international crimes, including war crimes and crimes against humanity.”’

¹⁷⁵ Gender Norms, Conflict, and Aid Research conducted in Rumbek and Yambio, Kuyang Harriet Logo Conflict Sensitivity Resource Facility (CSRF), February 2017.

¹⁷⁶ Interview Nancy Lumeit Agriterra, SSAPU 7 Dec 2020

¹⁷⁷ As was arranged in a training of Agriterra/SSAPU.

- It is key to pay attention to the gender composition of the trainees. Sometimes, a training to only women can be preferred, sometimes it is best to train both sexes in a specific training.¹⁷⁸
- Life radio talk shows are used more in COVID-19 times than before and are a good alternative. But, it is a setback that women telephone less in in radio talk shows than men – either they lack self-confidence to speak anonymously in public or they are not able to pay for airtime-. A remedy to this challenge could be to gather the women in one place and have them listening together to the radio. This might reinforce their self-confidence and airtime might be provided.

SSADP II Internal

- Build capacity of project staff on gender-transformative strategies (use the ‘FAO’ concepts: ‘access to productive resources’ and ‘power and agency’).
- Appoint a gender focal point for the SSADP II or appoint an internal SSADP II working group (including the project leader of Agriterra) to guide this training.
- Increase the number of female staff and extension workers.
- Alternatively, the Female leadership training of SSAPU/Agriterra could be adapted to be used in all SSADP II activities.

Female leadership training of Agriterra¹⁷⁹

The female leadership training (FLT) is a standard training of Agriterra/SSAPU to the cooperatives. it regularly involves 15 women and 10 men – in total 4 days, the first day women only. The training comprises of the items: current female positions within the cooperative, diversity in the cooperative; gender roles and their influence, leadership development; leadership styles, leadership, and authenticity: personal leadership (practical exercises on formal and informal roles); core qualities of leadership), action planning: how can female leadership development be encouraged?

6.4 Strategic discussion about Access to Finance

Repayment of the loans

- The repayment rate is approximately 94% as indicated by the manager of RUFU. However, he thinks this, as such acceptable, figure could mask some emerging problems. While in Yambio the repayment rates are good, in Bor the 6 loans to the cooperatives and FEMA groups have just been provided in the past three months and are still in a grace period. If their repayment is not good, the repayment percentage will decrease.¹⁸⁰
- Beneficiaries are used to humanitarian aid, and sometimes seem to think that the project will eventually free them from their debts. Farmers do not always understand the difference of a loan versus a grant: There are other organisations that give grants in the same areas.
- However, the project should do a lot to get the debt back. This should not only be a task for RUFU. This requires teamwork from SPARK, Cordaid, Agriterra, as has already happened in Torit (possibly also with other organizations)

¹⁷⁸ See <http://www.fao.org/policy-support/resources/resources-details/en/c/1175525/> ; CARE Gender Justice (January 2019), Gender Marker Guidance; Guijt, I. et al. (2019) ‘How to Integrate Gender in Research Planning’, Oxfam Blog, 8 March, <https://views-voices.oxfam.org.uk/2019/03/gender-research-planning/>

¹⁷⁹ From brochure: Female leadership Agriterra training programme, no date.

¹⁸⁰ Interview Lokule Yengi 2 Dec. 2020

High inflation

- It is contractually determined that the interest rate is 21% per annum. The official exchange rate is SSP 165 per USD.
- However, there is massive inflation in the street market value, which reflects the SSP's true purchasing power. It was reported to have gone up to 580 SSP per USD on 4 Dec. 2020.¹⁸¹
- This high inflation is a major problem for the sustainability of RUFİ (and of every bank in South Sudan); in this way the revolving fund is quickly exhausted.
- Mostly, a high depreciation works out negatively for business (uncertainty, higher costs labour, seeds, fuel, customers that cannot afford higher prices etc.).

RUFİ's appraisal of business plans of cooperatives and FEMAs

- The actual number of beneficiaries is 932 farmers (51% women, MDS 2020 final). In total, the projects target is 3000 beneficiaries over the duration of the project (until 2023).
- By far most loans are given out in Yambio,¹⁸² probably because it has a higher agricultural potential and the communal conflicts are less in Yambio at the moment. A strategic question is whether this is an acceptable development (because this is a market development) or whether additional efforts are required to get business plans awarded from Torit or Bor.
- Additional efforts are now being made to have more cooperatives and FEMAs to prepare business plans, in the expectation that RUFİ will finance them.¹⁸³ But as we have seen, RUFİ is already nearing its annual quota of beneficiaries. There is thus a bottleneck coming up between the number of business plans that are drawn up but will not be positively assessed by RUFİ, which can lead to frustration among those who have drawn up the business plans.

RUFİ's Appraisal of business plans of WYEs and MSMEs

- The total number of beneficiaries of MSMEs, YWE and individual borrowers is 12. In total, the project target is to have 895 beneficiaries (until 2023). So, the performance of the project is behind schedule
- Among the approved business plans, there is a bias towards men (maybe because they are better educated to develop a business plan) and towards Yambio (maybe because there are less safety concerns and higher agricultural potential)¹⁸⁴
- From the interviews it appears the beneficiaries belong to the elites (higher education, educated parent, operating in a multi-ethnic urban environment, having spent time in Uganda (as a refugee mostly). They are required to have a bank account in the city
 - o To measure the impact of given loans to these better-off beneficiaries, it would be good to monitor the effect these loans have on the target group (so the number of people employed in the end through the trickling down effect)
- Some payams are not considered due to safety considerations or due to bad infrastructure (Kudo in Torit). See recommendations for CMDRR committees (see 6.2) on this issue.

¹⁸¹ A prediction is that this will go up to 660 – 700 SSP in a USD when in Jan. 2021 schools in Uganda open and those South Sudanese that have their children at school will convert SSP to USD (reducing the value of the SSP).

¹⁸² 82% of the beneficiaries of the loans live in Yambio, 18 of the 26 Cooperatives/FEMAs are in Yambio and 58% of the money lent is in Yambio (but appraisal process in Yambio and Torit took place later in the year, - so, with the high inflation, the purchasing power of the loans in Bor and Torit was less).

¹⁸³ Among others by the Cordaid HQ Expert in Private Sector Development.

¹⁸⁴ 7 Of the 10 beneficiaries are male; 8 of the 10 loans are in Yambio, 2 in Torit and none in Bor.

- Following the project objectives of the SSADP, the number of business plans of WYs and MSMEs to be assessed by RUFi is much higher than of the cooperatives and FEMAs
- The bottleneck that can be predicted with the appraisal process of the Cooperatives and FEMAs does already exist with the appraisal of the WYEs and MSMEs: many business plans are hanging in the balance leading to frustrations.
- Now we are in a dead end: either the number of approved business plans must increase drastically, or the number of prepared business plans must decrease.
- If not acted upon here, this tension will only increase in 2021, because the plan is that the number of business plans that are drawn up will increase

Loans for VEMSA

- In Torit, the advantage is that there exist VSLA-groups that are already trained (by another) international organisation
- It can be good to design a specific loan product for VEMSA, because the beneficiaries, unlike the other SSADP II interventions, will use the loans for a variety of activities
- The same inflation problem occurs *mutatis mutandis* for VEMSAs. It might not be wise to encourage the communities to save cash in the actual circumstances.

Strategic discussion

There is a need for a strategic discussion involving all SSADP II partners about:

- too many business plans of the WYEs and MSMEs are hanging in the balance. This leads to frustrations. It should be avoided that participants lose faith in the appraisal process.
- Is RUFi not willing to finance more business plans of FEMAs and Cooperatives based on the legitimate idea that it already meets the projects objectives? Or is it a lack of staff capacity? Or are the business plans submitted simply not good enough?
- It should be avoided to have many business plans hanging in the balance: (Measure the time between submission of a business plan and the moment it is approved (or rejected). Changes in this time lap could be used as a management instrument.
- decide on the number of loans and a division over the categories (Cooperatives, FEMAs, VEMSAs, YWEs, MSMSEs) and counties and gender.
- If more business plans are approved, what risks is the project willing to take? And who will carry the risks?
- How can the project deal with the inflation (buy stocks, change SSP in hard currency?)
- Discuss the financial sustainability of RUFi¹⁸⁵

6.5 Monitoring and learning in the SSADP II

The recommendations in this section are based on the experiences while doing this research, but extend to other aspects of monitoring and evaluation of the SSADP II as well.

It is recommended to analyse the quality of data collection, the interpretation process, the drawing of conclusions, and the linking of data sets. It is recommended to analyse in greater detail the process of data handling/interpretation at the level of the respondents, the enumerators, and the analysts. What happens at each phase, what biases occur, and in the end how can each phase be

¹⁸⁵ See also 'Multi-stakeholder processes as a key element in agricultural finance' by Gerrit Holtland Dec. 2014.

improved? This could be done in the next action research cycle. This will eventually improve the credibility, reliability and trustworthiness.

In the project, there is a positive attitude. And, in a market-based approach such a positive attitude is a good thing, for positive results (in part a self-fulfilling prophecy). However, research (with the purpose to make a project better) can only be done based on facts.

Quality of data collection and interpretation

- Respondents have the tendency to play down their socio-economic position or to answer in positive terms about the project (in the expectation to receive more aid or otherwise)
- Enumerators are under time pressure to do as many questionnaires as possible; they do not always strictly follow the answer categories, for instance when speaking about the production some fill the amount in malva (bag of 50kg) of maize others in kg. More time could be spent to train enumerators and check how the enumerators do the questionnaires.
- Data can be hard to interpret for analysts, and there is no possibility to check the reliability and/or consider the context of the data. The different datasets give different results as happened during the AR of 2019 when a comparison was made between the data from the Agricultural Value Chain Analysis report,¹⁸⁶ the data from the baseline measurement and SSADP II monitoring data.
- Overall, the increase in production of the SSADP II was overwhelming following every data set. But the discrepancies between the data sets certainly require a careful analysis and explanation.

Learning

It would be good to share the assessment with the staff of SSADP II.

The project would gain, and the staff would be motivated by a general discussion about the MSD approach in South Sudan and the functioning of the SSADP II. A proper format should be found (How, who, what).

6.6 Localisation and strategic partners

The project finds itself at a crossroads. Cordaid started working with three local partners with a (small) contract in the three counties. The collaboration with all three partners has stopped after the first year, due to different reasons including accountability issues.

Cordaid policy papers are unambiguous about the Cordaid position: 'Localisation therefore refers to transformative, structural changes at the local, national and international level to change the 'who is in the lead' and 'We must walk the talk: How to foster resilience through localisation'.¹⁸⁷ As is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Yearly contracts lead to uncertain prospects for implementing partners, as referred to by IOB.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁶ AGRICULTURAL VALUE CHAIN ANALYSIS REPORT, Teshale Endalamaw, Godfrey Omondi, Lokule Yengi October 2019.

¹⁸⁷ Localisation: an essential step to resilience, policy paper Nov 2020 and 'We must walk the talk: How to foster resilience through location' https://www.cordaid.org/en/publications/localisation_resilience/ 8 Dec. 2020

¹⁸⁸ 'The long-term commitment and flexibility that MFA provides to Northern-CSOs is not always transferred to Southern-CSOs, many of which are still bound to annual contracts, activity-based budgets and strict reporting requirements' (IOB, 2019, 'Strategies for Partners: Balancing Complementarity and Autonomy: Evaluation of

A principled discussion is needed based on the question: What is the role a local partners should play in the SSADP II? Possible arguments are as follows:

- The position can be taken that local partners are strategic partners. When the project ends, they stay. This requires an extension of the contract with Cordaid that goes beyond practical aspects, such as organizing specific training for the FEMA groups.
- Another position is that the local partners are implementing partners, instrumental to reach the SSADP II's aims. In this case, the decision not to include them any longer is justified. During the Action research of 2019 it was established that the work of the local partners in the SSADP II was not principally distinguishable from the work of Cordaid.
- An issue of a different order is that If the project decides to engage local partners again, how can the project deal with the accountability issues.
- If the project decides again to engage local partners, preferably they would need to be engaged in the sector of value chain development and agribusiness – because these activities are meant to sustain after Cordaid leaves. But this is not written in the SSADP II project proposal in which local partners are supposed to do trainings in FEMA, CMDRR and VEMSA groups.
- Alternatively, it could be decided that the SSADP II is an agribusiness and value chain development project and that the role of local partners is played by the local businesses that remain behind. In this context, localisation means that local companies are supported, that remain behind when Cordaid leaves.

Annexes:

Annex one: Itinerary

Annex two: Excel data set of survey results

Annex three: Tools used

Annex four: Geographical distribution of questionnaires

Annex five: CMDRR focus group discussions in Torit

Annex six: CMDRR focus group discussions in Yambio and Bor

Annex seven: FEMA Focus group discussions

Annex eight: Cooperatives focus group discussions