Sawtaha (Her Voice) صوتها

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Darfur, Sudan

Author

Acknowledgements

Cover page photo: Photo taken by Fatima Mohammed, Gender Research Officer, Independent Consultant. Caption: Focus Group Discussion with a CBRM Sanideliba, Al-Salam locality, South Darfur

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Abbreviations

AAO	Alsawaaid Alkhadra Organization
CBRM	Community Based Reconciliation Mechanisms
CEDAW	The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DCPSF	Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund
DDPD	Doha Document for Peace in Darfur
DDRA	Darfur Development and Reconstruction Agency
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FGM/C	Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting
GAH	Global Aid Hand
GaPI	Gender and Peacebuilding Initiative
GBV	Gender-based Violence
GII	Gender Inequality Index
KII	Key Informant Interview
LOGiCA	Learning on Gender and Conflict in Africa
NCP	National Congress Party
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NNGOs	National non-Governmental Organisations
PBA	Peace Bridge Association
SGBV	Sexual and gender-based violence
UN	United Nations
UNAMID	United Nations – African Union Hybrid Operation in Darfur
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNSCR 1325	United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325
VSLA	Village Saving and Loan Association

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Executive Summary

Research has shown that women's role in all major peace processes is a significant factor in both the quality and durability of peace.[1] It has been argued that women bring in fresh perspectives which "contribute to different understandings of the causes and consequences of conflict,"[2] thereby improving the possibilities for innovative and lasting solutions. The war in Darfur has made it increasingly difficult for traditional justice mechanisms to resolve disputes across tribal lines,[3] which has highlighted an increasing necessity for local communities to be able to resolve disputes themselves. As a result, the Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF) has been funding the establishment of Community Based Reconciliation Mechanisms (CBRMs) to help increase the capacity of local communities to better manage local conflict. In order to improve the <u>chances of local community buy-in, many of these CBRMs mimic the structures of traditional reconciliation mechanisms</u>, such as the *Judiya*. On the whole, however, women have tended to <u>be excluded from such traditional mechanisms in Darfur</u>.

As a result of an evaluation conducted by DCPSF in 2017[4], it was noted that more needs to be done to ensure representation and full and meaningful participation of women, youth and margenalised groups within community decision-making processes, specifically their inclusion within peacebuilding and conflict resolution processes and mechanisms. As a result, this current study was proposed to garner further analysis on the current situation across the five States in Darfur, to better understand the level of women's meaningful participation and leadership in peacebuilding mechanisms. The research focused on the following areas of enquiry:

a) To better understand the social and cultural pressures that contribute to women's negative perceptions of their own advocacy power and their belief that these structural inequalities can change

b) Explore the level of representation of women and young women within CBRMs, particularly in leadership roles, and the perceptions of traditional, social and religious structures

c) To understand the perception of men and young men on women's participation and leadership within the CBRMs

d) To understand the power structures that exist in the communities and whether there is opportunity to create a more enabling environment for women within the CBRM structures.

This research is designed as a first phase of the Darfur Community Peace & Stability Fund's Gender and Peacebuilding initiative. From this a 24 month project will be developed to address the gaps and barriers and harness existing opportunities within the communities (Phase 2).

The study focused on twenty villages across the five States of Darfur. Research tools used were 62 Focus Group Discussions (CBRMs, Women Groups, VSLAs and Youth Groups), 85 key informant interviews (19 with female CBRM members; 20 with male CBRM members; and 46 community role models, which included religious and Native Administration leaders, several economically successful[5] and/or socially empowered women, community-based trainers, female combatants and persons with and consultations

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[1] World Bank Group. Voice and Agency. Empowering women and girls for shared prosperity. 2014.
[2] Center on International Cooperation. Beyond "women's issues" and smoky rooms: debunking the myths about gender in peace mediation. September 2018. https://cic.nyu.edu/publications/beyond-womens-issues-and-smoky-rooms-Debunking-Myths-About-Gender-in-Peace-Mediation
[3] Peaceworks. Traditional Authorities' Peacemaking Role in Darfur. United States Institute of Peace. 2012.
[4] UNDP, Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF), Phase 2, Evaluation, (December 2017), PFD file.
[5] Women were identified as being economically successful, if they owned their own business in the market.

with 12 Women's Rights Organisations. The research questions focused on the four key areas of CARE International Sudan's framework for gender equality: advance her human capital; avail the space; engage men and boys; and create an enabling environment. A summary of the key results are outlined below.

Avail the space: Findings show that since the establishment of the CBRMs the percentage of female representation only increased by 1%, from 27% to 28%. Traditional gender roles, and the large responsibilities women have both in the household and working in the farms limits the opportunity women have to access the spaces where decisions are made and conflicts resolved. This is as a result of gender roles, gender power relations and male authority over women in all spheres. This impact was seen to be exacerbated for female-headed households. There were also restrictions, particularly for young, unmarried women, who could not spend time together with men in public spaces and the potential shame associated with this if they did do so. Not only was it important to identify women's representation and meaningful participation in the space, but to see their representation in leadership. Overall, female representation in leadership was low (6%) across the CBRMs. 72% women in the CBRMs have the perception that female members can become leaders but the greatest barriers to them achieving this, are those of self-confidence and the cultural pressures they face. VSLA were seen as a positive vehicle, which has helped women gain a level of economic independence, changing power dynamics within the home, a greater social standing within their communities, thereby contributing to improved confidence levels and strengthening their voices. Overall representation of young men (26%) was higher than that of young women (15%) and at leadership level the disparities were even greater with young women in leadership being very low (3%).

Advance her Capital: Perceptions from the community of the impact of female CBRM members, highlighted that they felt that women had a voice within the CBRMs; that women had gained a platform to share their opinions, increased women's representation in these spaces and were able to defend and raise women's rights and issues to the CBRM. However, the findings also showed that cultural pressures to be silent[6] were the most identified barrier to women who were voiceless or felt they were not able to represent their own view in public spaces. The study also found that women who have been successful in the public domain, such as economically successful women[7] and CBRM members also experienced challenges to participate in the CBRMs in a meaningful way; even though they have managed to succeed in other areas, in spite of cultural barriers.

Engaging men and boys: Findings show that 70% of male CBRM members believe women are capable of holding a leadership position with higher results being seen from male respondents from outside the CBRMs. A key factor required for meaningful participation of women (by men) was for women to be educated. A large proportion of male respondents limited the role of women to solving "women's issues" and there was also the opinion among a number of the respondents that men are less comfortable with, or do not believe, that women can or should lead men. The perception of young women's role was also seen as limited, and included helping to prepare food and to solve "women's issues." It seemed that when young women were represented, it was more to be present in the space rather than to meaningfully participate in the activities of the CBRM. In addition to their representation in the CBRMs, overall, young women have a low representation in the Youth Committees (29%) and low representation in leadership positions in Youth Committees (13%) compared to male youth.

The Enabling Environment section found there is potential to engage key community figures such as religious leaders to be agents of change. Findings showed that 78% of religious leaders believed that women are capable of holding leadership positions in CBRMs if they had the right education and skill set.

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[6] Cultural pressures to be silent included: women being expected to be polite; men not listening to women; women not feeling they can reject men's views when they represent the views of women; men silencing women. A full description can be found in the main report

[7] Women were identified as being economically successful, if they owned their own business in the market or were a head of a VSLA

VSLAs were also highlighted as being positive vehicles for both social and economic change. With regards to capacity building of the CRBMs, a total of 70% mentioned that they received training on the topic of conflict resolution, however there was not always consistency with the type of training received by CBRMs and the recipients of such training. Training was also not informed by themes of gender and gender equality. More variety of training that addresses gender within peacebuilding is required, as well as specific training on SGBV for CBRM members. When looking at the external environment, while many of the humanitarian actors had some focus on peacebuilding (either directly or indirectly through their work), there seemed to be a disconnect between peacebuilding processes and women's empowerment. It was noted that gender was not often clearly mainstreamed throughout the peacebuilding and reconciliation work of some of the organisations.

National NGOs and CSOs, mentioned a gap in their capacity being a lack of skills and understanding in report and proposal writing as well as project implementation. It was also expressed that there was a lack of coordination among organisations. Social and traditional views on gender proved to be some of the biggest obstacles facing many of the organisations when dealing with gender issues and women's empowerment. It was expressed by respondents that there had been a positive impact of the work of NGOs in that, by necessitating the participation of women in CBRMs, this had the effect of increasing the acceptance of women's participation and with that, women becoming more confident in their own capacities.

Based on the analysis, recommendations were made and grouped under the following findings:

- Women's meaningful participation and representation in leadership in the CBRMs is limited, and is being constrained by social and cultural norms that impact the ability of women to be meaningful participants in peace building processes

- CBRMs are still replicating some of the pre-existing power structures, which, are conceivably impeding women's access to leadership and decision-making roles

- There is limited engagement between NGOs and the CBRMs limiting the full effectiveness of the CBRMs

- Agencies and government bodies engaged in peacebuilding and women's rights lack co-ordination and experience barriers to achieving their peacebuilding goals

- There is limited capacity of CBRMs, influenced by cultural bias's, to approach and respond to cases of SGBV and GBV is limited, it does not take a survivor-centered approach

- Economic empowerment seems to lead to improved social empowerment, giving women greater social standing and, by virtue, a stronger voice

The recommendation of the study focuses on (1) addressing the negative impact of male authority on women participation in CBRMs, (2) generating new knowledge and values that favour women's participation in the public domain, (3) educating and building women's leadership capacities, (4) addressing issues of SGBV through prevention, protection and service provision programs (see Output 2)

Introduction

Sudanese context

Sudan, located in North-East Africa, is a country with a rich and complex past, and an ethnically diverse population. Its recent history has been marred with protracted conflicts, ethnic violence, and civil war, having devastating impacts on the lives of thousands of its inhabitants. In 1997, the United States imposed comprehensive economic, trade and financial sanctions on Sudan. The secession of South Sudan in 2011 brought with it reduced oil revenue, further damaging the Sudanese economy.

In recent years, inflation has sky-rocketed, exacerbating fuel and cash liquidity crises, and substantially raising the cost of living. Rising food and fuel prices have been blamed for much of the discontent, which led to the recent revolution. While rising costs may have been the catalyst, the revolution was as much rooted in a desire by vast swathes of the population, particularly the country's youth, for social and political transformation, as it was about the economy.

The National Congress Party (NCP - 1989 until 2019) is responsible for bringing in a number of laws, derived from a strict interpretation of Sharia, which arguably infringe upon several human rights, particularly those of women and girls.[8] These infringements can be found in the Personal Status Law, the Public Order Act, and the Penal Code, among others.[9] As in many countries around the world, in Sudan, gender and women's rights are highly sensitive topics. The country has an arguably poor record on gender equality and women's rights, with its record for dealing with sexual and gender-based violence particularly lacking.[10] It is one of the few countries in the world not to have signed the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and is also not a signatory to the Africa Protocol on Women's Rights.

These socio-religious reservations, ingrained as they are into the social fabric of many Sudanese communities, reflect some of the most challenging obstacles facing women's rights movements in Sudan. The history of the fight for women's rights began in Sudan earlier than in most countries in the region, precipitated by young, educated women who established the Sudanese Women's Union in 1952. Within the first two decades of their existence, the Women's Union made notable gains in areas such as suffrage, equal pay, and maternity leave.[11] Up until the early 1980s, the Sudanese women's movement accelerated both social and political mobilisation for women's rights, helping to bring about the establishment of laws pertaining to consensual marriage, divorce, and child custody, which were more favourable to women than previous laws had been.[12] However, the shift to political Islam and with it, the adoption of a strict interpretation of Sharia law in Sudan, saw much of this progress halted, suppressed, or reversed.[13] This was most obvious in the adaptations made to the penal code and Sudanese family and public order laws, which restricted, among other things, women's public mobility and work participation.[14]

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[8] Ritchie, H. Social Norms and Barriers Analysis for Agro-Pastoralist Women and Girls in South Darfur, Sudan: Trends of change in a complex context? November 2018

[9] Ritchie, H. Social Norms and Barriers Analysis for Agro-Pastoralist Women and Girls in South Darfur, Sudan: Trends of change in a complex context? November 2018

[10] Nobel Women's Initiative. Survivors Speak Out: Sexual Violence in Sudan, November 2013.

[11] Ritchie, H. Social Norms and Barriers Analysis for Agro-Pastoralist Women and Girls in South Darfur, Sudan: Trends of change in a complex context? November 2018

[12] Ritchie, H. Social Norms and Barriers Analysis for Agro-Pastoralist Women and Girls in South Darfur, Sudan: Trends of change in a complex context? November 2018

[13] Ritchie, H. Social Norms and Barriers Analysis for Agro-Pastoralist Women and Girls in South Darfur, Sudan: Trends of change in a complex context? November 2018 and Learning on Gender and Conflict in Africa (LOGICA). Brief overview of key gender issues, Darfur, April 2013.
http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/715571468311372234/pdf/862970BRI0Box30ogica0DissNoteDarfur.pdf

[14] Ritchie, H. Social Norms and Barriers Analysis for Agro-Pastoralist Women and Girls in South Darfur, Sudan: Trends of change in a complex context? November 2018

Throughout the recent revolution, protestors demanded fundamental changes to both laws and cultural ideals, particularly those which most impact the lives of women and minority groups in Sudan. For instance, women demonstrators challenged public decency laws by wearing trousers in public, as well as demanding changes to the laws governing rape, which make it incredibly difficult for a survivor to seek and attain justice.[15] Moreover, the revolution was fortified by an energy of national unity, the likes of which, have been rare in Sudan's history. Sudan now finds itself in a period of transition, with an uncertain future. There is a palpable sense of both trepidation and excitement at what might lie ahead.

Darfur Context

One of the regions which has seen some of the most protracted conflicts in Sudan is Darfur, the geographical location for this research. This research focused on all five States in Darfur namely: North Darfur, South Darfur, East Darfur, West Darfur and Central Darfur. Since 2003, the conflict in Darfur has killed an estimated 300,000 people and left 2.7 million displaced.[16] In 2004, the United Nations (UN) described it as "the world's worst humanitarian crisis,"[17] and Darfur remains a region primarily known by international outsiders, as well as others within Sudan, for the grave human rights abuses that have taken place there, including devastating sexual violence and gender-related atrocities.[18] Still now, parts of Darfur are seeing increasing pressure on resources, exacerbating local tribal conflict, often between sedentary farming and nomadic pastoral communities; leading to further insecurity and displacement.[19]

Armed conflict and its aftermath are proven to have a disproportionate impact on groups already socially marginalised, including women and youth, limiting their opportunities for, among other things, education, productive livelihoods, access to health services, and participation in decision-making.[20] During times of conflict, the burden of work on women "left behind" increases dramatically, and they also become more vulnerable to incidences of sexual and gender-based violence.[21]

In spite of, or perhaps due to, its turbulent recent history, Darfur is a region not short of women's rights activists, boasting a plethora of vibrant and committed civil society and women's advocacy groups. However, both politically and socially, Darfur makes for a difficult operating environment, especially when it comes to issues pertaining to gender and women's rights, and there are a number of issues, which will be expanded upon in the findings section, which create barriers to the effectiveness of these groups. Furthermore, reflecting the diversity of Darfuri society, the Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and other groups in question, tend not to sing from the same hymn sheet when it comes to key gender issues. Opinion is often divided along social, economic, political, and religious lines, hindering efforts to foster a stronger, more united movement.

Social Norms and Gender Roles

Social norms exist in all communities, intrinsic to and buried deep within the social fabric. These norms provide the contours of behaviours and expectations, and define the boundaries of what is deemed

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[15] https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/sudan-youth-showed-counter-sexual-violence-190904113714967.html

[16] Inclusive Peace and Transition Initiative (IPTI), Graduate Institute Geneva, Case Study Series, Women in Peace and Transition Processes. September 2018, https://www.inclusivepeace.org/sites/default/files/IPTI-Case-Study-Sudan-Darfur-2009%E2%80%932017.pdf

[17] https://news.un.org/en/story/2004/03/97792-worlds-worst-humanitarian-crisis-unfolding-darfur-sudan-un-official

[18] Ritchie, H. Social Norms and Barriers Analysis for Agro-Pastoralist Women and Girls in South Darfur, Sudan: Trends of change in a complex context? November 2018; Nobel Women's Initiative. Survivors Speak Out: Sexual Violence in Sudan, November 2013.

[19] Ritchie, H. Social Norms and Barriers Analysis for Agro-Pastoralist Women and Girls in South Darfur, Sudan: Trends of change in a complex context? November 2018

[20] Search for common ground

[21] Ritchie, H. Social Norms and Barriers Analysis for Agro-Pastoralist Women and Girls in South Darfur, Sudan: Trends of change in a complex context? November 2018

acceptable and unacceptable for men, women, boys and girls. They constitute powerful prescriptions, which are reflected in formal structures of society as well as in its informal, both of which are equally pervasive in terms of rules, beliefs and attitudes.[22]

Gender roles in Sudan tend to be traditional, with the male of the household being the 'head'; responsible for decision-making and all financial aspects of family life. Women are largely responsible for domestic duties, including maintaining the home and raising children,[23] with, particularly rural women and girls, not traditionally included in household decision-making, community meetings and gatherings.[24] Less than a third of women in Sudan have had access to any form of education, and women's labour force participation is at 31%, compared to 76% for men. The burden of unpaid work is large, with 96% of women reporting to spend over 40 hours per week in unpaid work, and 46% spending over 80 hours on unpaid activities.[25] Rural women and girls make up over 60% of the country's most vulnerable poor. Data from the Federal Ministry of General Education (2009)[26] showed the gross enrolment rate for primary school in Sudan to be 73%. Primary school enrolment rates in Darfur, however, fall much lower with an average with 54% in Darfur, in general at 66%, 86% and 40% in North, West and South Darfur respectively. Rates in North and South Darfur fall among the bottom five enrolment rates for all of Sudan, which was thought to reflect the impact of protracted conflict.[27] Regional disparities for enrolment rates for secondary school are also significant at 21%, 25% and 17% for North, West and South Darfur, compared with 61% in Khartoum.[28] While the data is not disaggregated by gender, it was noted in the report that girls are less likely to be enrolled in school among more marginalized and vulnerable populations, a finding particularly relevant for the Darfur context. Women's lives in Sudan are highly restricted, governed by a patriarchal set of gender roles that are inhibitive and strictly enforced. This is guided by a traditional, restrictive interpretation of Shari'a law. Law protects and enforces men's role as the breadwinner, and the requirement for women to obey their husbands.[29]

Social norms reflect societal power dynamics, with a tendency to reinforce the status quo by fortifying existing social inequalities, with the potential to exacerbate conflict. As Ann Tickner observed, the achievement of peace "is inseparable from overcoming social relations of domination and subordination; genuine security requires not only the absence of war but also the elimination of unjust social relations, including unequal gender relations."[30] As adverse social norms "underpin and reinforce the multiple deprivations that many women and girls experience,"[31] it is vital that we develop a deeper understanding of how certain social norms and associated gender roles function within the context of Darfur. This will allow us to better analyse the nuanced and varied effects they have on Darfuri women's attainment of full and meaningful participation within peacebuilding mechanisms and the public domain more generally.

The disruption to the lives of communities brought about by conflict can be devastating for women and men, boys and girls, but such socially disruptive events also have the potential to bring about positive changes to the social make up of communities torn apart by war. In such circumstances, women are often forced to develop new coping skills and to find the courage and resilience necessary for sustaining and rebuilding

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[22] World Bank Group. Voice and Agency. Empowering women and girls for shared prosperity. 2014.
[23] Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). The Republic of Sudan: Country Gender Profile, March 2012. https://www.jica.go.jp/english/our_work/thematic_issues/gender/background/c8h0vm0000anjqj6-att/sudan_2012.pdf
[24] Ritchie, H. Social Norms and Barriers Analysis for Agro-Pastoralist Women and Girls in South Darfur, Sudan: Trends of change in a complex context? November 2018
[25] CARE International, Gender in Brief, Sudan 2017
[26] Learning on Gender and Conflict in Africa (LOGICA). Brief overview of key gender issues, Darfur, April 2013. http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/715571468311372234/pdf/862970BRI0Box30ogica0DissNoteDarfur.pdf
[27] Learning on Gender and Conflict in Africa (LOGICA). Brief overview of key gender issues, Darfur, April 2013. http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/715571468311372234/pdf/862970BRI0Box30ogica0DissNoteDarfur.pdf
[28] Learning on Gender and Conflict in Africa (LOGICA). Brief overview of key gender issues, Darfur, April 2013. http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/715571468311372234/pdf/862970BRI0Box30ogica0DissNoteDarfur.pdf
[29] CARE International, Gender in Brief, Sudan 2017
[30] Ann Tickner, quoted in CARE's Gender Peace and Conflict Training Manual
[31] World Bank Group. Voice and Agency. Empowering women and girls for shared prosperity. 2014. p.30

their families and communities, often in the absence of men.[32] Such conditions have been known to give women the confidence, in themselves and their abilities, to challenge pre-existing social gender norms, which had previously held them back from demanding a greater role in public life.[33]

Traditional mechanisms for peacebuilding in Darfur

In Darfur, there are two forms of legal mechanisms for solving disputes; the national formal legal mechanism which relies on Statute and Sharia law, and the informal mechanisms which based on the unwritten customary laws for solving disputes through methods of conciliation and application of traditions.[34] It is worth noting that there are no unified customary laws as it depends on local the customary, traditional, or tribal system. Hence, it differs from community to community and tribe to tribe. Generally, the independence of the formal judiciary system has been questioned, as there were practices of dismissal of qualified judges and alienation between the bill of rights in the constitution and the laws[35]. In addition, customary law is weak in terms of human rights protections for women and children.

Customary courts in Darfur under the Native Administration (*idara ahliya*), function alongside the statutory court system. In fact, customary law and traditional justice mechanisms are more commonly relied upon as a means of seeking justice by people in Darfur.[36] The Native Administration is a body of traditional leaders instituted under British rule over a century ago. Over the years, the National Administration's influence has fluctuated. The body has been "compromised, disempowered, and delegitimised," with many courts being shut down.[37] However, instead of disappearing, these traditional mechanisms have continued to evolve and remain central to dispute resolution and reconciliation processes in Darfur.

The main traditional reconciliation and justice mechanism in Darfur is called *Judiya*. During any given reconciliation process, the *Ajawid*[38], formed of elders or notables from a family, clan, or tribe, that are not involved in the dispute, are charged with hearing all sides of the disputes, deciding where the responsibility of any wrongdoing lies, and what punishment(s) should be given. The neutrality of the *Ajawid* is a key principle of the *Judiya* as all sides must agree to abide by the *Ajawid*'s rulings before the hearing takes place. The *Ajawid* may, however, agree to review their decisions in instances where one party remains dissatisfied. The most common penalty for wrongdoing is the payment of compensation, which, once paid, tends to be taken as an acknowledgement of responsibility.[39] Many Darfuris claim to favour *Judiya* over the statutory court system because is more locally based, thereby more reflective of Darfuri societal and cultural norms.

The war in Darfur has made it increasingly difficult for traditional justice mechanisms to resolve disputes across tribal lines.[40] This has highlighted an increasing necessity for local communities to be able to resolve disputes themselves. Indeed, this is one of the reasons why the Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF) has been funding the establishment of Community Based Reconciliation Mechanisms (CBRMs), to help increase the capacity of local communities to better manage local conflict. In order to improve the chances of local community buy-in, many of these CBRMs mimic the structures of traditional

[32] Ibid.

[33] World Bank Group. Voice and Agency. Empowering women and girls for shared prosperity. 2014; Ritchie, H. Social Norms and Barriers Analysis for Agro-Pastoralist Women and Girls in South Darfur, Sudan: Trends of change in a complex context? November 2018

[34] Parmar, Sharanjeet' An overview of the Sudanese legal system and legal research. hauser Global Law School Program . https://www.nyulaglobal.org/globalex/Sudan.html

[35] Parmar, Sharanjeet' An overview of the Sudanese legal system and legal research. hauser Global Law School Program . https://www.nyulaglobal.org/globalex/Sudan.html

[36] Peaceworks. Traditional Authorities' Peacemaking Role in Darfur. United States Institute of Peace. 2012.

[37] Peaceworks. Traditional Authorities' Peacemaking Role in Darfur. United States Institute of Peace. 2012., p.3

[38] Ajawid is the plural for Judiya

[39] Peaceworks. Traditional Authorities' Peacemaking Role in Darfur. United States Institute of Peace. 2012

[40] Peaceworks. Traditional Authorities' Peacemaking Role in Darfur. United States Institute of Peace. 2012

reconciliation mechanisms, such as the *Judiya*. As we shall see later, this has led to some unintended consequences with regard to the incorporation of women and youth into these bodies.

On the whole, women have tended to be excluded from the Native Administration and from other leadership positions within traditional authorities in Darfur. (There is one notable exception to this: in 2011, Fatima Mohammed al-Fudul became the first, and so far only, woman to be appointed to the Native Administration.) This conspicuous absence is one of the reasons the Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) helping to set up the DCPSF-funded CBRMs have been so keen to ensure the inclusion of not only women, but also young people who have also been excluded from the traditional public sphere.

Research has shown that women's role in all major peace processes is a significant factor in both the quality and durability of peace.[41] There is evidence to suggest that women are more likely than men to take into account the interests of all, or at least more, of the communities affected by any given conflict, thus improving the likelihood for success and durability.[42] It has been argued that women bring in fresh perspectives which "contribute to different understandings of the causes and consequences of conflict,"[43] thereby improving the possibilities for innovative and lasting solutions.

According to UN Women, a study of 82 peace agreements in 42 armed conflicts between 1989 and 2011 found that those agreements signed by women delegates were associated with durable peace by a statistically significant margin.[44] In fact, women's meaningful participation has been found to increase the likelihood of a peace agreement lasting more than 15 years by up to 35%.[45] A report by the World Bank Group found that women's participation "results in greater responsiveness to citizen need, often increasing cooperation across party and ethnic lines, and delivering more sustainable peace."[46] Conversely, women's exclusion from peacebuilding processes has been found to "drastically increase the risk of failure" of those efforts.[47] A 2015 report by the International Peace Institute found a 65% reduction in the durability of peace deals when women have not been included.[48]

Honouring women's roles and their proven successes in creating and preserving peace, in 2000 the United Nations adopted Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, which "reaffirms the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts."[49] The Resolution requires both the prevention of violations against women's rights in conflict settings and, importantly, the inclusion of women in peacebuilding processes at all levels. In Darfur, Resolution 1325 has played an important role in the United Nations – African Union Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), particularly in the work that went into establishing the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (DDPD).[50] While women were involved in the peace processes, which resulted in the signing of the DDPD, it is widely agreed that many of its provisions regarding women have borne little fruit in reality.

CBRMs that have been established, function in a similar way to existing reconciliation mechanisms (outlined above), where disinterested committee members hear from conflicting parties, issue judgements and "solutions" to conflicts, often in the form of fines. The NGOs which establish the CBRMs provide them with training (see attached sub-report in Annex 1) and although training manuals and methods of delivery vary

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[41] World Bank Group. Voice and Agency. Empowering women and girls for shared prosperity. 2014
[42] https://www.thenational.ae/opinion/comment/women-s-voices-are-vital-to-achieving-lasting-peace-1.841882
[43] https://cic.nyu.edu/publications/beyond-womens-issues-and-smoky-rooms-Debunking-Myths-About-Gender-in-Peace-Mediation
[44] UN Women
[45] UN Women
[46] World Bank Group. Voice and Agency. Empowering women and girls for shared prosperity. 2014. p.152
[47] https://www.thenational.ae/opinion/comment/women-s-voices-are-vital-to-achieving-lasting-peace-1.841882
[48] https://www.ipinst.org/2015/02/building-peace-and-development-in-the-sahel-enhancing-the-political-participation-of-women-and-youth
[49] UN Resolution 1325 https://www.peacewomen.org/SCR-1325
[50] UN – African Union Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) Doha Document for Peace in Darfur
https://unamid.unmissions.org/doha-document-peace-darfur

between NGOs, all training includes segments on conflict management and reconciliation methods. In active efforts to further support and increase women and youth active participation in peacebuilding mechanisms and conflict resolution processes, CARE is also supporting the establishment of separate women's and youth associations (in villages where they do not already exist) in order to support them to connect better and voice their concerns and priorities.

While positive efforts are being made through the CBRMs and women and youth committees, an evaluation conducted by DCPSF in 2017[51], , noted that still more needs to be done to ensure representation and full and meaningful participation of women, youth and margenalised groups within community decision-making processes, specifically their inclusion within peacebuilding and conflict resolution processes and mechanisms. As a result, this current study; the 'Gender and Peacebuilding Initiative (GaPI)' research, was proposed to garner further analysis on the current situation across the five States in Darfur, develop recommendations and support the design of a new project that will aim to address the gaps and barriers and harness existing opportunities within the communities.

Methodology

The Gender and Peacebuilding Initiative (GaPI) research was funded by the Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and carried out by CARE International Sudan with the support national NGOs (NNGOs), the Darfur Development and Reconstruction Agency (DDRA) and Global Aid Hand (GAH). DCPSF was launched in 2007 with two clear aims: firstly, to help facilitate peacebuilding by "restoring the capacity and authority of traditional community-based conflict resolution mechanisms"; and secondly, to enhance the delivery of economic and basic social services through a number of community-based activities.[52]

The research feeds directly into the Gender Strategy for DCPSF, which is driven by "a need to change the prevailing perception that women are passive beneficiaries of development initiatives in Darfur, into women as active agents in decision-making in conflict resolution committees, as well as interventions on access and control of resources."[53] There is clearly need for improvement in Darfur in terms of the degree and quality of women's participation in peacebuilding processes, as well as the ways in which sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) is dealt with at the community level. Because of this, it is vital we develop a sound understanding of the current situation, highlighting what works well and where there is room for improvement, to be able to better serve the women and men, girls and boys of Darfur, and further the fight for women's empowerment.

CARE Gender Framework

CARE defines women's empowerment as "the sum total of changes needed for a woman to realise her full human rights." This involves an interplay of changes in three key areas: agency (an individual's aspirations and capabilities to fulfil them); structure (the environment that surrounds and conditions an individual's choices); and relations (the power relations through which an individual negotiates their path). This can be seen in the figure below.[54]

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[51] UNDP, Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF), Phase 2, Evaluation, (December 2017), PFD file.
[52] Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF) Gender Strategy, December 2014
[53] Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF) Gender Strategy, December 2014, p.12
[54] CARE International, Gender equality, women's voice and resilience. Guidance note for practitioners.

Building confidence, self-esteem and aspirations (non-formal sphere) and knowledge, skills and capabilities (formal sphere).

The power relations through which people live their lives through intimate relations and social networks (non-formal sphere) and group membership and activism, and citizen and market negotiations (formal sphere).

Build agency

Gender Equality & Women's Voice

Change relations

Transform structures

Discriminatory social norms, customs, values and exclusionary practices (non-formal sphere) and laws, policies, procedures and services (formal sphere).

A key assumption is that gender is always relational and deeply rooted in societal norms and power structures, meaning that for sustainable change to take place, it needs to happen across these three areas. Based on the three areas of change, CARE International Sudan, developed a framework to promote women's empowerment[55], that can be applied to peacebuilding and recovery contexts. It consists of four pillars, which aim to help women and youth realise their full agency through structural and relational changes in their environment. These pillars are: **advance her human capital; give her space; engage men and boys; and create an enabling environment.** The first pillar 'advance her capital' ensures women's access to knowledge, experience and life skills in conflict resolution, peacebuilding and leadership, as well as access to and control over productive resources.

The second pillar recognizes the need for woman's access to spaces and platforms where their voices can be heard, both in the public domain as well as within the household. This study adapted the term 'give her space' to 'avail the space' with the understanding that while the focus is on women, the inclusion of the excluded youth and other marginalised groups are considered important for change to happen with regards to their active involvement in peacebuilding and conflict resolution spaces and mechanisms. The third pillar understands that for women to make meaningful gains in these spaces, 'engaging men and boys' is fundamental to create any meaningful societal change. As gatekeepers and those with greater social leverage, men have the potential and power, as allies, to galvanise social changes which will empower women. Central to this pillar, is the need for men to understand that women's empowerment is not only an important end in itself, but also, that while being beneficial to women, it is beneficial to everyone; within the household, the family and the wider community. Finally, we need to create an enabling environment; the legal, social and religious institutions, as well as humanitarian actors, have an important role to play in the actualisation of women's empowerment in peacebuilding and recovery contexts. Local authorities, customary courts, and religious leaders are central to creating an enabling environment where women's rights are protected and realised, and women are given the space and opportunity to thrive. These four pillars informed the methodological framework of this research and the development of the qualitative and quantitative research tools.

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[55] CARE International, Women's empowerment framework, August 2014. https://www.care.org/our-work/womens-empowerment/gender-integration/womens-empowerment-framework

Research aims, tools and sampling

This research aims to develop further analysis on the current situation across the five States in Darfur, to better understand the level of women's meaningful participation and leadership in peacebuilding mechanisms. This is based on the understanding that only meaningful and active participation, including at decision-making levels, will allow women in Darfur the opportunity to fully enact their agency and have their voices heard, especially in the public domain. The second prong of the research is to examine the ways in which sexual and gender-based violence is being dealt with through the CBRMs, including the degree of knowledge CBRMs have about services available at the community level for survivors. This will take the form of a separate report (Output 2).

This research focused on the following areas of enquiry:

a) To better understand the social and cultural pressures that contribute to women's negative perceptions of their own advocacy power and their belief that these structural inequalities can change

b) Explore the level of representation of women and young women within CBRMs, particularly in leadership roles, and the perceptions of traditional, social and religious structures

c) To understand the perception of men and young men on women's participation and leadership within the CBRMs

d) To understand the power structures that exist in the communities and whether there is opportunity to create a more enabling environment for women within the CBRM structures.

This research was designed as a first phase of the Darfur Community Peace & Stability Fund's Gender and Peacebuilding initiative. By examining the current state of play, this study hopes to make valuable recommendations to support women across Darfur actualise their agency within peacebuilding structures and within the public domain more generally. Output 2 of the research is designed to strengthen understanding of survivor-centered approaches among the CBRMs and to better support women, going forward, who have experienced SGBV.

From this study, a 24 month project will be developed to address the gaps and barriers (if any) raised through the research and harness existing opportunities within the communities (phase 2)

The overall objectives of the Gender and Peacebuilding Initiative, DCPSF seeks to:

- Strengthen the integration of gender equality and women's empowerment within existing conflict prevention and peacebuilding initiatives on the ground;
- Support innovative projects, focused on gender equality and women's empowerment with the potential for catalytic effect and DCPSF peacebuilding outcomes, and the potential to be scaled up;
- Contribute to collective operational learning on gender-responsive programming, through the gathering, analysis and dissemination of lessons learned and good practices;
- Accelerate implementation of the Secretary General resolutions on Women, Peace and Security and the Secretary General Seven-Point Action Plan and its commitment to increase funding of gender-responsive peacebuilding projects.
- Increase the linkages between DCPSF and organizations focused on women's rights, including UN Agencies, INGOs and NGOs.

The study focused on twenty villages across the five States of Darfur offering a broad overview of the current situation with regard to women's participation in peacebuilding efforts, but one that is also able to highlight important differences across and within states. To select the villages, the study categorised the CBRMs into 'high', 'medium,' or 'low' performing based on 1) the resolution rate of the cases brought to

them in the previous year and 2) the representation of women within the CBRM. While CBRMs with different levels of performance were selected, the majority chosen were high performing, to enable the research to identify the roles of women and young women within the CBRM.

Research tools included a total of 62 Focus Group Discussions (20 with CBRMs, 23 with Women Groups, including VSLAs, and 19 with Youth Groups). Most of the FGDs were conducted as mixed FGDs. A total of 85 key informant interviews were held (19 with female CBRM members; 20 with male CBRM members; and 46 community role models, which included religious and Native Administration leaders, several economically successful and/or socially empowered women, community-based trainers, female combatants and persons with disabilities (a full list of respondents can be found in the Annex 2).

Interviews were also conducted with representatives from twelve different women's organisations, and a panel discussion in each of the five states, comprising NNGOs, various government and UN agencies, and other local experts with an interest in gender and/or peacebuilding.

Limitations and considerations

The research encountered a number of challenges which delayed the project, many of which centred on the political situation and ongoing revolution throughout Sudan, as well as some localised conflicts within Darfur:

- Access issues, especially after the start of the rainy season, meant that some village selections had to be altered. In Central Darfur, this meant that both villages ended up being in the same locality.

- The limited timeframe for the project limited the types of research tools we could utilise, excluding for example more time-intensive anthropological approaches, which may have been helpful in obtaining more thorough answers to our enquiries into sexual and gender-based violence. It also limited the number of respondents, which led to unequal numbers of respondents across the States, making it difficult to make direct comparisons between the States.

- Given the highly-sensitive nature of discussions around gender, and especially around sexual violence, in Sudan, and the limitations placed on us by local authorities, also impacted the types of questions we were able to ask, and subsequently the depth of the answers we received.

- All the quantitative data in this analysis was developed out of the qualitative survey tools. This needs to be considered when reading the report as no quantitative data tools were included in the methodology. Therefore, data is not, and was not intended to be statistically significant.

The structure of the report follows the four pillars of CIS's Gender Equality Framework. The following four chapters will lay out the findings under each of the pillars, noting the overlap between each of the areas. This will be followed by the report's recommendations.

Findings and analysis

Avail the space

Avail the space, which was adapted from "give her space" (as discussed in the method section) focuses on the power relations that exist and govern how people live their lives through creating opportunities for marginalised women, men and youth (male and female) to participate in decision-making from the household to community-levels. An unequal balance of power in the home, community and among authorities limits women's role and ability within decision-making. It is crucial that men and women and marginalised groups know their rights and are able to exercise them without fear of, or actual, repercussions. This includes having the space to meaningfully participate in public decision-making; not only in a tokenistic way. Shifting power dynamics and affording women the rights and opportunities to engage in public decision-making, to be meaningfully represented and take on leadership roles within these spaces, gives women more say and choice to make decisions about the issues that are important in their lives.[56]

This section of the study aimed to look at the representation of women in CBRMs, their representation in leadership roles, as well as the perception by men and women on whether women should, or are capable, to hold such roles within the CBRMs. This analysis looked, not only at the numerical representation of women in such positions but also discusses the opportunities and barriers related to effective and meaningful participation and leadership of women.

Female representation in the CBRMs

Regarding the question of the proportion of representation of women in the CBRMs, at the time of the establishment of the DCPSF funded and NGO supported CBRMs, women constituted 27% of the total members (which at the time was 281 with 76 women (including young women) members). At the time of this study, the total number of women and young women in the researched CBRMs was 102, making the percentage of female representation in the researched CBRMs at 28% (with male members at 72%). Although the percentage of female representation in the CBRMs remained roughly the same (with only a 1% increase), there are some changes noted in number of women and young women in the CBRMs (See Table 1). 45% of the researched CBRMs have shown a rise in the number of female members, 30% of the researched CBRMs have seen a decline in women participants and a total of 15% showed that number of the women participants has remained the same. Table 1, shows this data disaggregated per State and is accompanied with a key.

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[56] CARE International, Gender equality, women's voice and resilience. Guidance note for practitioners.

Table 1: The total membership and % representation of members in the CBRM disaggregated by sex, by CBRM and by State

State	CBRMs names	No. of total members within the CBRM	No. of men members	No. of women members	% representation of women per CBRM	% representation of women per state
North Darfur	Um-Hijlij	27	19	8	29%	22%
	Abu-Sekeen	30	25	5	16%	
East Darfur	Aljalabi	14	9	5	35%	38%
	Abujabra	9	6	3	33%	
	Bakeet	12	4	8	66%	
	Alriyad	34	20	14	41%	
	Abu-Karinka	14	10	4	28%	
	Eisheraya A	9	6	3	33%	
	Maali South	12	9	3	25%	
Central Darfur	Amar Jadeed	23	19	4	17%	18%
	Kubuk	25	20	5	20%	
South Darfur	Abu-Adoum	12	8	4	33%	25%
	Alhila-Aljedeeda	15	11	4	26%	
	Baracatoly	20	16	4	20%	
	Donkeydrisa	22	17	5	22%	
	Sanidiliba	21	17	4	19%	
	Tabaldeyat	18	14	4	22%	
	Taysha	12	7	5	41%	
West Darfur	Abu-Soroj	21	13	8	38%	27%
	Umtajok	22	18	4	18%	
Total		372	268	104		27%

0% - 10%	Poor representation	
11% - 20%	Low representation	
21% - 30%	Fair representation	
31% and above	High representation	

Table 1 shows that across the five States, East Darfur, has the highest female representation in CBRMs (38%), with Central Darfur claiming the lowest representation (18%). Of the individual CBRMs, Bakeet, East Darfur has the highest percentage of women (66%) (including young women), with some of the lowest representation being seen in Abu-Sekeen, North Darfur (16%), Amar Jadeed, Central Darfur (17%), Umtajok, West Darfur (18%).

Therefore, in relation to the issue of representation, it can be concluded that there is a large gender gap in the current formation of the CBRMs. Women's participation in CBRMs is lagging behind men despite the slight (1%) increase in their proportion of representation. Therefore, there are two issues for discussion; the interpretations for the slight increase in female representation in the CBRMs and the reasons behind the gender gap in CBRMs. Tackling the issue of the slight increase of female representation in the researched CBRMs, it has been noted from the interviews and the group discussion that factors such as: education, acceptance of women's participation in public domain and *Judya* by males and the community members; civil society organizations work in human rights and pressure for inclusion of women in decision making; and the existence of women's role models were all factors pushing for change in increasing women's participation in CBRMs. For instance, interview data showed that there has been positive change over time, with the number of women represented in Bakeet increasing; from 1 woman among 12 members from its establishment, to 8 women among 12 members, as of today.[57] It was observed by the field team in East Darfur during FGDs, that, Bakeet has a relatively high number of educated individuals, due to them belonging to the Maalia tribe who are famous for educating their children.

Further, several of the members of the panel discussion held in North Darfur, which included representatives from United Nations agencies, government ministries, local NGOs and CSOs who have a

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[57] See Annex 3 which provides details on the chosen CBRMs

focus on women's rights,told us that from their work in North Darfur, it was clear that Darfuri communities are becoming more accepting of women in *Judiya*. Indeed, several of the Darfuri women with whom we spoke were keen to point out that just by being allowed to be present, gradually increases their acceptance by the community.[58] A male member of the CBRM in Alriyad, East Darfur, said, "since the NGOs have come to us, we have become more aware and more accepting of women's participation [in CBRMs]."[59]

Indeed, being allowed to be present in these spaces by those who have the social power to grant such access, is an important step in the slow processes of change, which gradually helps strengthen women's participation in the public domain. As one woman in Abuadum in South Darfur astutely pointed out, the more women there are, who are visibly participating in these spaces, the more it encourages other women to get involved.[60] This was echoed by the women's committee in Abusuruj, West Darfur, who told us that "women's participation is very important; it has a value, increasing women's future participation in the area."[61] Through the act of being present, these women help normalise women's involvement, and thus encourage other women's participation. However, while necessary and important, the increase in the number of women present in the public domain is far from the only change needed to ensure the actualisation and acceptance of women's meaningful and active participation in those spaces. This is supported by a 2018 study, which emphasized that "whilst change was indeed 'incremental' in women getting a 'seat at the table'; the next step was in supporting women's confidence to be active and vocal,"[62] with a key barrier being that women's 'active participation' is still being frowned upon.[63]

This report views meaningful participation as: The ability to participate meaningfully in public spaces and claim one's rights goes beyond token representation and quotas for under represented groups within a forum or association. Meaningful participation involves environments where individuals may actively contribute to decisions, where their ideas are heard and considered, and where they can take part in leadership or decision-making.

(https://www.care.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Good-Practices-Brief.pdf)

Regarding the issues related to the experienced gender gap in CBRMs, it is better to examine them within the socio-cultural, economic and political situation of women in the context of Darfur. Women are vulnerable to pre-existing inequalities in their societies. The culture in Darfur values women's economic role on the one side and on the other side it emphasises male domination over women. It values women's obedience to men and it requires that men protect women accordingly. It is not accepted for women to participate in the traditional *Judya,* which oversees customary disputes resolution. Also, they are relegated from native administration bodies. Moreover, political instability and lack of infrastructure and social services curb women's education Tthe political instability and conflict in Darfur, led families to prohibit their girls and women's exposure to the public domain because of security reasons and fears of SGBV from militia groups. Furthermore, traditional conflict resolution mechanisms have been perceived as male structured mechanism; it structures and its rules being set and governed by men. Women, therefore, by de-facto, would refrain from participation in male dominated bodies. So, considering women's condition and position in Darfur, the question of the barriers to women's meaningful participation in CBRMs was raised. From the interviews and focus group discussions, it was noted that there have been some barriers related to gender

[58] Women's committee Donkidreisa
[59] KII with man CBRM member, Alriyad, East Darfur
[60] CBT woman Abuadum, South Darfur
[61] FGD with women's committee, Abusuruj, West Darfur
[62] Ritchie, H. Social Norms and Barriers Analysis for Agro-Pastoralist Women and Girls in South Darfur, Sudan: Trends of change in a complex context? November 2018
[63] Ritchie, H. Social Norms and Barriers Analysis for Agro-Pastoralist Women and Girls in South Darfur, Sudan: Trends of change in a complex context? November 2018

power relations, gender division of labour and patriarchy. The next section discusses these barriers in reference to the study findings.

Barriers to the meaningful participation of Women in CBRMs

The findings of the study revealed that there were several barriers to women's engagement in CBRM meetings. These barriers can be related to gender roles, gender power relations and the patriarchy. Chart 1 below shows the responses of 18 female CBRM members[64] regarding their views on constraints they face.

Chart 1: Shows the responses from female CBRM members regarding the factors that prevent their full participation in the CBRMs.

What factors do you feel prevents your full participation in the CBRM? (female CBRM members)

■ Household responsibilities 33%　■ No factors 44%　■ The husband's permission 6%　■ Lack of capacity 11%　■ Money 6%
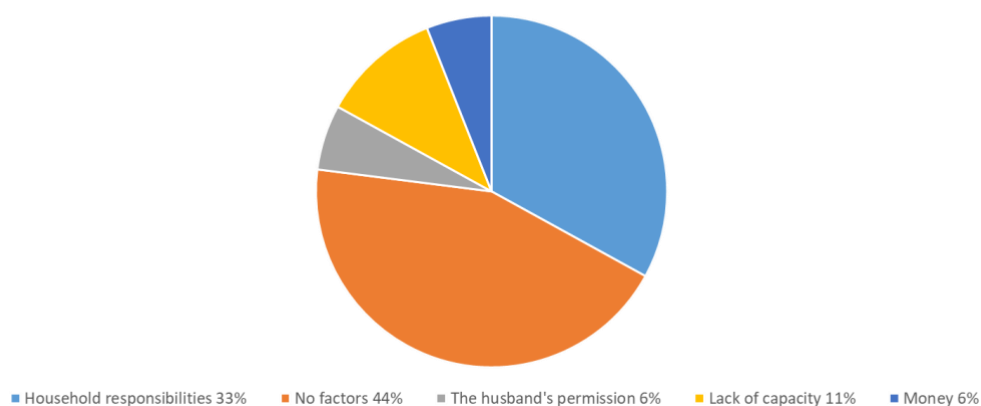
Gender roles

Gender roles refer to socially determined patterns, tasks and responsibilities for women and men based on socially perceived differences that define how men and women should act. Women in Darfur assume domestic roles as primary activities to be undertaken by them. Carrying out household chores and taking full responsibility over domestic activities are incredibly time intensive. This overburdens women and deprives them of being able to be involved fully in the activities of the CBRMs. For instance, Chart 1 indicates that 33% of the participates perceived that their quality participation is low due to their household responsibilities which left women with little spare time at their disposal to be able to commit to other activities. The same result was stressed in an interview with a female CBRM member from Aboodam, South Darfur. She mentioned that the main barriers included: "Household responsibilities, and sometimes the meetings to resolve the problems take a long time. The men do not allow women to be out of the house at a late time or for a long time."

Another gender role assigned to young females is farming related activities. Engagement of young women in farming activities for family subsistence and/or marketing was seen as a priority role for young women rather than participation in CBRMs. As a result, young women perceived that it was difficult for them to combine their farm work and CBRM activities. An interviewed woman noted that one of the challenges she faced was difficulties in attending the meeting due work on the farm. In addition, she noted that it is difficult for girls in her neighbourhood to attend the youth committee meetings because:

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[64] KII with Women CBRM members in all the states, question 18

they assist their family in the farms; the timing of meetings is not convenient; and some families would not allow their daughters to attend if young men were also attending. A final challenge was that meetings were held during school times.[65]

Male authority over women in all spheres

Patriarchy, which refers to male authority over women in all spheres, appears to be one of the factors that leads to low or non-meaningful participation of women in CBRMs. The findings of the interviews revealed that men did not allow women CBRM members to attend the meetings, which took ran over the course of many hours. Men did not allow women to be outdoors late in the day, or if it meant they had to neglect their household responsibilities which was considered a priority over attending public meetings. On the other hand, male members of the CBRMs used to schedule meetings without consulting women to identify the appropriate time for them and ensure their participation in the meetings.

In addition, men restricted their wives' movement as well as not wanting them to mix with men in the public domain. This led to low or no participation of women in the CBRMs. This is indicated in the findings of the groups discussion when interviewed women agreed that "some men do not allow their wives to attend meetings."[66] Obeying their husband is seen as one of the values and a good quality of what it means to be a woman in Darfur communities. Moreover, formal rules dictate that women's movement is dependent upon her husband or from the permission of male relatives. Women's freedom of access to public space is limited, in part due to provisions outlined in the Personal Status Law (1991) which states that married women cannot travel without the permission of their husbands,[67] This can also be linked to threats of sexual violence, as a significant, compounding obstacle for women's movements in public spaces.[68] SGBV will be discussed in Output 2.

Another practical barrier to women's presence at meetings, which was highlighted by young female respondents, was the limited degree to which women, particularly young, unmarried women, could spend time together with men in public spaces. For instance, A female respondent from Abusoroj, West Darfur, mentioned that,"Yes, some women are busy in their domestic role, and some of them are affected by tradition that prevents women from being among the men in public."

This issue was most prominently seen in several of the villages visited in South and Central Darfur. Out of the seven FGDs held in South Darfur with youth groups, which along with women's groups are satellites to the CBRMs, no young women turned up to four of them: in Alhilla Aljadida; Barakatoly; Donkidreisa; and Sanidleba. The same happened with the FGD with the youth committee in Kubuk, Central Darfur. Looking at Table 1, this could explain why the lowest representation of women was seen in Central Darfur. When the researcher spoke to the young women separately (from the men), the interviewed women mentioned that in all five villages, they were often prevented from attending the youth committee meetings, either directly by elders who told women that they could not go, and/or due to the pervasive cultural pressure where they felt that they might be shamed for doing so. It was socially frowned upon for them, as young women, to socialise so publicly with young men."

Similarly, and highlighting that this was not just a problem among the youth committees, a female member of the CBRM in Abusuruj, West Darfur, mentioned that "there are certain traditions and customs that prevent women from being among men in public,"[69] and therefore women were sometimes

[65] KII with young woman role model from Alhila-aljdeeda, South Darfur, question 2
[66] KII with ESW2 Umtajuk, West Darfur,
[67] Personal Status Law for Muslims, 1991, Article 75(b) sourced from http://land.igad.int/index.php/documents-1/countries/sudan/gender-6/1110-sudan-social-institutons-and-gender-index/file
[68] OECD Development Center. Social Institutions and Gender Index. Sudan. http://land.igad.int/index.php/documents-1/countries/sudan/gender-6/1110-sudan-social-institutons-and-gender-index/file
[69] KII with woman CBRM member, Absuruj, West Darfur

unable to attend committee meetings. Another woman in Kubuk in Central Darfur emphasised this point, saying that if there were lots more men at the CBRM meetings than women, then the women would not be able to attend, as "women will not be able to be among the men."[70] To note, is that in this segregation of women's and men's spaces, it seems that when custom dictated that the space should not be shared, it was the women who were excluded. As the meetings went on regardless, with only the men in attendance, it suggests that the men's participation in these committees were seen as more fundamental than the women's, and that, at least in the public domain, women's participation was seen as secondary to men's. This highlights a need for more work to be done in emphasising the fundamental importance of women's role in the public sphere in general, and, more directly linked to the aims of DCPSF, in peacebuilding processes specifically. How that is done, without potentially inadvertently feeding patriarchal ideas that women's full and active participation in such spaces requires lengthy and evidence-based justification whereas men's participation is a given, is a delicate and complex process, and any prescriptions or recommendations on which, fall outside the scope of this research.

We can therefore conclude that gender roles and male authority over women in all spheres puts women in a subordinate position in CBRMs and deprives them from meaningful participation. The following section discusses the experience of women's representation in leadership positions.

Female representation in leadership

The inclusion of women in leadership positions is a human right, as well as a good governance and peace issue; with women assuming leadership positions leading to comprehensive and durable peace. Therefore highlighting female representation in leadership positions in CBRMs is an important aspect to be covered by the study. The aim of this section is to reveal the proportion of women in leadership position compared to that of men, as well as to discuss the experience of women with regards to the barriers that prevent female members of CBRMs to hold leadership positions. CBRM leadership positions are composed of three to four positions including: Head, Deputy Head, Secretary and Treasurer. Within these positions the study findings revealed that overall, on average, female representation in leadership was low (6%) across the CBRMs interviewed through this study. This is indicated in Chart 2.

Chart 2: The percentage of female leaders in the CBRMs interviewed in the study
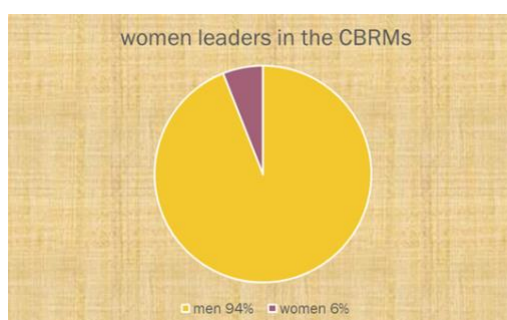
Furthermore, highlighting the representation of women in leadership positions in the CRBMs per state (See Table 2), the findings revealed that North and Central Darfur hold the lowest representation of women in leadership positions from the CBRMs interviewed (both at 0%). The highest number of women in leadership positions was in West Darfur despite one of the interviewed CBRMs in West Darfur having one of the lowest proportions of female representation in the CBRM (Table 1). However, even with this, overall West Darfur (Table 1) still had the second highest representation of women in CBRMs across the five States, showing that representation varies between CBRMs within States. It is worth noting that among 12 CBRM members

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in Bakeet, East Darfur (who had the highest number of female representatives) none of 8 female members in this CBRM hold a leadership position.

Table 2: Shows the number and percentage of women in leadership positions in the CBRMs disaggregated by State

State	CBRMs names	Total No. of leaders within the CBRMs leaders	No. of women in leadership positions within the CBRM leaders	Percentages of women in leadership positions within the CBRM leaders per state
North Darfur	Um-Hijlij	3	0	0%
	Abu-Sekeen	4	0	
East Darfur	Aljalabi	3	0	4%
	Abujabra	3	0	
	Bakeet	3	0	
	Alriyad	3	1	
	Abu-Karinka	4	0	
	Eisheraya A	4	0	
	Maali South	3	0	
Central Darfur	Amar Jadeed	4	0	0%
	Kubuk	4	0	
South Darfur	Abu-Adoum	3	0	7%
	Alhila-Aljedeeda	4	1	
	Baracatoly	4	0	
	Donkeydrisa	4	0	
	Sanidiliba	4	0	
	Tabaldeyat	4	0	
	Taysha	3	1	
West Darfur	Abu-Soroj	4	1	25%
	Umtajok	4	1	
Total		80	5	6%

0% - 10%	Poor representation	(red)
11% - 20%	Low representation	(orange)
21% - 30%	Fair representation	(yellow)
31% and above	High representation	(green)

Opportunities and barriers to women's representation in leadership positions in CBRMs

This section deals with opportunities and barriers related to the level of representation of women in leadership positions. The findings of the study indicated the positive perception of women towards women's leadership capabilities, as well as the barriers which stem from unequal power dynamics between men and women and cultural and social norms that lead to low representation of women in leadership positions. However, two factors were discussed in this section: the perception of the positive perception of women towards the leadership capacities of women and discrimination against females in CBRMS by male. The positive perception of women towards CBRMs female leadership capability reflects the level of women's empowerment in terms of self- confidence and knowledge on the importance of leadership capabilities of

women to hold top positions in the CBRMs. The positive perception towards female capabilities to assume leadership roles can be considered as an opportunity to strengthen women's qualities and leadership skills. However, despite the positive attitudes of women towards female capabilities to assume leadership roles within CBRMs, men perceived women as not capable to assume leadership roles.

Chart 3: Shows the perception of CBRM women and how they view women's capability to hold leadership positions.[71]

Are women capable of holding leadership positions? (Female CBRM members)

■ women are capable of holding leadership positions 72%   ■ women are not capable of holding leadership positions 28%
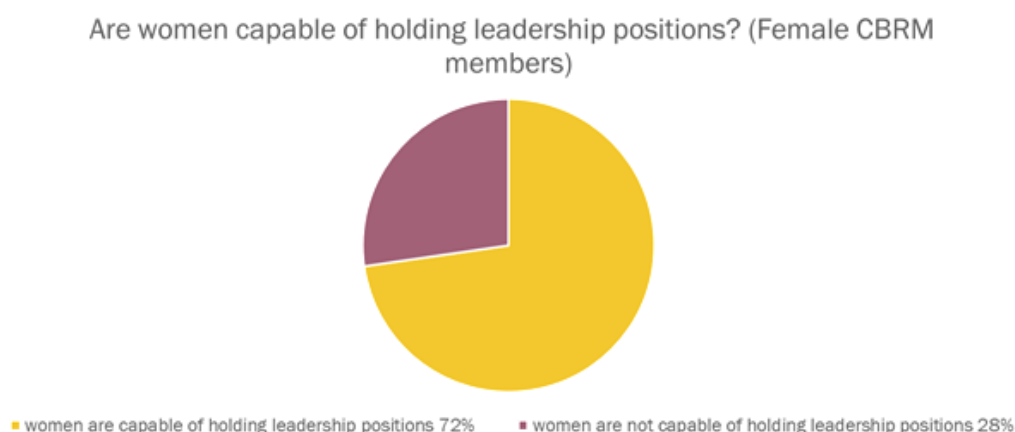
A total of 72% of the interviewed CBRM female members felt that women are capable of holding leadership positions in the CBRM, which is positive and corresponds to the previous data, that showed only 10% of female CBRM members felt that women had low capacity. This shows that women in the CBRMs have the perception that women members can become leaders. The data is disaggregated below by State.

Chart 4: Shows the perception of CBRM women and how they view women's capability to hold leadership positions, disaggregated by State.[72]

Are women capable of holding leadership positions? Disaggregated by state (female CBRM members)

■ women can hold leadership positions in the CBRMs   ■ women cannot hold leadership positions in the CBRMs
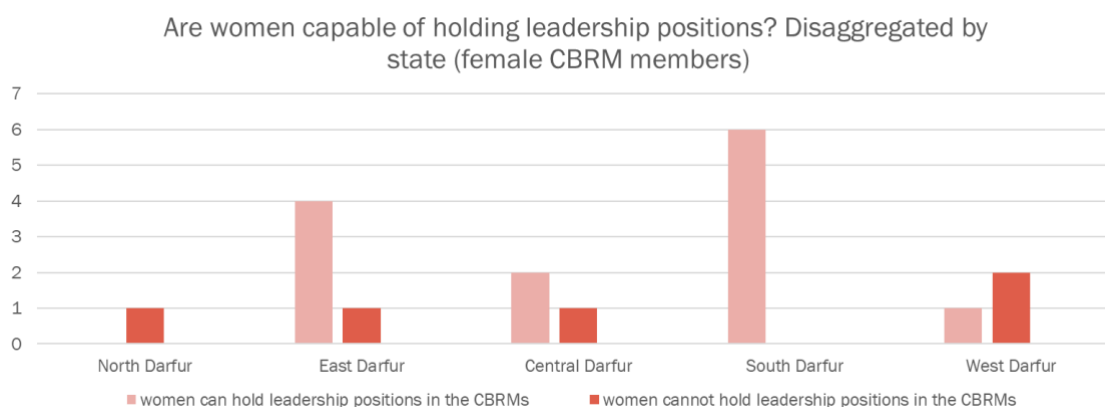
Looking at the perception of female CBRM members across the States (Chart 4), although the interviewed CBRMs in West Darfur hold the highest representation of women in leadership positions, a greater number of the interviewed female members in these CBRMs think that women cannot hold leadership positions (66% (2 respondents) compared to 33% (1 respondent)). A CBRM female member in Abusoroj, West Darfur stated the reason why women cannot hold a leadership position was because "leadership is a responsibility and women cannot handle responsibility well because they are uneducated, therefore women cannot hold

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[71] KII with a woman CBRM member in all the states, question 16
[72] KII with a woman CBRM member in all the states, question 16

leadership positions." This highlights the strong barrier that education has on the perception of women to be leaders.

All respondents from South Darfur felt that women could hold leadership positions.. Although the interviewed CBRMs in Central Darfur were seen to have the lowest representation of women in leadership positions, two of the three CBRM female members interviewed mentioned that women were capable of becoming leaders.

Tackling the issue of barriers to women assuming leadership roles, the data revealed that the interviewed women believed that discrimination against female members of CBRMs perpetuated by CBRMs male members relegated women from leadership positions. For example, an interview with a female respondent from Central Darfur (Kubuk), stated that "Yes, women can hold leadership positions, but men discriminate against women and they don't give women a chance to participate."

Interestingly, looking at previous secondary data, the results of the DCPSF evaluation in 2017 noted that at the time "none of the female beneficiaries had reached a leadership role within the CBRM. This had led them to believe that they were less capable compared to men and was reported to be an inhabiting factor for them to speak out."[73] It went on to say that at that moment in time "it does not seem possible to install women in leadership positions within CBRMs as this would likely result in significant resistance from male members and potentially lead the CBRMs to decrease in effectiveness."[74] It is interesting, therefore, to compare the findings of this current study to the DCPSF finding in 2017. Firstly, it shows that while representation of women in leadership is low, there has been progress since 2017, not only in the gaining a percentage of women holding leadership positions, but that there is a perception among female and male respondents that women would be capable of such positions.

Intersectionality of gender, age and representation in CBRMs

Darfur has an estimated population of roughly 7.5 million people with 52% of the population falling under the age of 16 and 70% under the age of 30.[75] Youth unemployment is a common problem, and the youth are increasingly searching for a sense of community and belonging. As a result of the conflict in Darfur, the loss of parents, the lack of livelihood opportunities including lack of interest in traditional livelihoods such as farming and herding, has led to youth seeking alternative, criminal livelihoods, as payoffs from such activities are substantially higher. It is also thought that it is common for the youth to reject traditional structures where elders control decision-making. Given the high proportion of the country's youth, their role within the community and their views on traditional decision-making structures in the community, it is important that their role is also analysed and understood as part of this study.[76]

In Sudan, there is a cultural perception that youth means inexperience and therefore that the associated belief that such contributions by youth may not hold as much value, and that they do not have the wisdom to make decisions regarding conflict resolution. This idea was supported in a previous DCPSF evaluation, during their household survey, where it was found that this view was expressed most strongly among the older respondents.[77]

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[73] UNDP, Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF), Phase 2, Evaluation, (December 2017), PFD file.
[74] UNDP, Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF), Phase 2, Evaluation, (December 2017), PFD file.
[75] Learning on Gender and Conflict in Africa (LOGICA). Brief overview of key gender issues, Darfur, April 2013.
http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/715571468311372234/pdf/862970BRI0Box30ogica0DissNoteDarfur.pdf
[76] UNDP, Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF), Phase 2, Evaluation, (December 2017), PFD file.
[77] UNDP, Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF), Phase 2, Evaluation, (December 2017), PFD file.

The current study was interested to look at the representation of youth (male and female) within the CBRMs, as well as male and female youth representation in leadership positions.

Table 3 below shows the representation of young women among the youth in the interviewed CBRMs. Overall representation of young men (26%) is higher than that of women (15%). The state with the highest representation of female youth is East Darfur (25%) and the lowest is in West Darfur (9%). One barrier found during this study related to the belief among the community that the term "youth" is synonymous with "young men." This, as a result, is thought to have led to fewer female youth being engaged in a CBRM even if a requirement by an NGO has been to ensure a quota of 'youth' and even when the overall representation of youth in a CBRM is high.

Table 3: Representation of young women among youth in the interviewed CBRMs

| State | CBRMs names | No. of members within the CBRM | Total number of youth within the CBRMs | | % youth representation per CBRMs | %youth per state | %representation of young men per state | % representation of young women per state |
			No. of young men members	No. of young women members				
North Darfur	Um-Hijlij	27	6	4	37%	38%	28%	10%
	Abu-Sekeen	30	10	2	40%			
East Darfur	Aljalabi	14	3	2	35%	49%	23%	25%
	Abujabra	9	3	3	66%			
	Bakeet	12	0	2	16%			
	Alriyad	34	12	14	76%			
	Abu-Karinka	14	2	4	42%			
	Eisheraya A	9	2	1	33%			
	Maali South	12	2	1	25%			
Central Darfur	Amar Jadeed	23	3	2	21%	37%	27%	10%
	Kubuk	25	10	3	52%			
South Darfur	Abu-Adoum	12	2	2	33%	42%	30%	12%
	Alhila-Aljedeeda	15	3	1	26%			
	Baracatoly	20	11	3	70%			
	Donkeydrisa	22	5	1	27%			
	Sanidiliba	21	6	2	38%			
	Tabaldeyat	18	8	2	55%			
	Taysha	12	1	4	41%			
West Darfur	Abu-Soroj	21	5	4	42%	34%	25%	9%
	Umtajok	22	6	0	27%			
Total		372	100	57		42%	26%	15%
			157					

When we look at the gender-disaggregation in youth leadership roles, the disparity is even higher.

Table 4: Shows the number and percentage of young women in leadership positions in the CBRMs, disaggregated by State

State	CBRMs names	Total No. of leaders within the CBRMs	No. of youth leaders in the CBRMs	% youth leaders in the CBRMs	% youth leaders per state	No. of young men leaders in the CBRM	No. of young women leaders in the CBRM	%representation of young women in leadership positions within the CBRM leaders per state
North Darfur	Um-Hijlij	3	0	0%	14%	0	0	0%
	Abu-Sekeen	4	1	25%		1	0	
East Darfur	Aljalabi	3	1	33%	43%	1	0	4%
	Abujabra	3	3	100%		3	0	
	Bakeet	3	0	0%		0	0	
	Alriyad	3	2	66%		1/head	1	
	Abu-Karinka	4	2	50%		2	0	
	Eisheraya A	4	2	50%		2	0	
	Maali South	3	0	0%		0	0	
Central Darfur	Amar Jadeed	4	1	25%	37%	1	0	0%
	Kubuk	4	2	50%		2	0	
South Darfur	Abu-Adoum	3	2	66%	34%	2	0	3%
	Alhila-Aljedeeda	4	1	25%		0	1	
	Baracatoly	4	1	25%		1	0	
	Donkeydrisa	4	1	25%		1	0	
	Sanidiliba	4	1	25%		1	0	
	Tabaldeyat	4	2	50%		2	0	
	Taysha	3	1	33%		1	0	
West Darfur	Abu-Soroj	4	3	75%	37%	2	1	12%
	Umtajok	4	0	0%		0	0	
Total		80	26		32%	23	3	3%

The data is very telling and highlights extreme differences in the levels of male and female youth representation at leadership level. Overall data shows that the number of young women represented in leadership positions among the youth is very low (3%) even though the overall percentage of the youth in leadership positions is high (32%). All the states have 'poor' to 'low' representation of female youth leaders with North and Central having 0%; the same two states where male respondents from outside the CBRMs said that women were not capable of being leaders (as discussed later in this report).

It is not the case, however, that young women are poorly represented in the CBRMs in all cases. For example, when we look at the proportion of young women, among women in general, we can see that young women's representation is 55% and other women account for 45%. In terms of leadership, it was

found that 60% of young women compared to only 40% of older women hold leadership positions within the CBRMs.

Despite young women's slightly higher representation in both the CBRMs and as leaders in the CBRMs compared to older women, it was noted through observations by the field team that that older women gain more recognition from the male CBRM members. This can be linked back to the idea that age is linked to wisdom. It was felt that older male members of the CBRM preferred female youth to participate due to the social roles commonly ascribed to young women, which translated over to the CBRMs. For example, young women would be responsible for cooking, welcoming quests and because they are the main group that are considered most 'active' in the community, in that they work on the farms, which means they have the finances to help the CBRMs.

Further, in terms of meaningful participation it was thought that older women were more engaged in meaningful roles. This was, in part, again due to youth female's social role in the community, e.g. being largely responsible for taking care of the household, farming or for the collection of water, leaving them little time to engage meaningfully in the CBRMs. Therefore, while they are 'represented' in number, when a meeting is called or there is a conflict to be resolved, it is usually the older women who are available, who are called by men, and who participate in this.

This is also supported by the data discussed later in this report, where we see the perception of roles of women (by men and women), to be focused more on solving issues and solving "women's issues" compared to the roles of young women.

It is clear from the analysis so far that there are unequal and discriminatory power dynamics based on gender and age, with women being disproportionately impacted by cultural, social and religious norms. This has had the impact of prioritising men and often excluding women and young women from public decision-making spaces, leading to lower representation, lower meaningful participation of women and young women, compared to men and young men, as well as less access to and opportunity for female leadership among the CBRMs.

Advance her Capital

The theme of 'Advance her Capital' focuses on building women's overall agency, skills, economic empowerment and confidence to further gender equality and increase women's voice in peace building, conflict resolution and recovery programmes. This focuses on building women's aspirations and self-esteem in the non-formal sphere, as well as knowledge, capacities and skills in the formal sphere, at all stages of a woman's life cycle. By doing so, women are better able to affect the change they desire.[78] Noting the intersectionality[79] of gender equality, it is also important to understand and analyse the lived experiences of men, women, boys and girls, based on age, disability status, ethnic and tribal identity and other factors, that may contribute to either increasing or decreasing men or women's access and opportunities within both the informal and formal sphere, in public and private. The research questions for this pillar, focused on the social and cultural norms and pressures that contribute to women's perceptions of their own advocacy power within the CBRMs, the perception of their roles within the CBRMs and peacebuilding mechanisms, and their belief as to whether existing structural and social inequalities can

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[78] CARE International, Gender equality, women's voice and resilience. Guidance note for practitioners.
[79] Intersectionality refers to the way in which multiple forms of discrimination – based on gender, race, sexuality, disability and class, etc. – overlap and interact with one another to shape how different individuals and groups experience discrimination. Sourced from: https://gadnetwork.org/issues/intersectionality

change over time. Based on this, the analysis aims to show whether these views, held by women and by men, impact women's participation and / or whether there are opportunities for positive change.

The scope of women's voice

Tackling the question of the scope of women's voices in CBRMs and the potential individual barriers that limit female members of CBRMs to raise their voices such as female agency, self-confidence, and the free expression of views about peace and conflict issues, it was found that female members of CBRMs who have been able to express their views and raise their voices were characterized with self-confidence and capabilities to overcome social constraints. On the other hand, it was found that female members of CBRMs who have not been able to raise their voices depend on men to raise their views and needs on behalf of them. The reasons given for women's dependency on men for presenting their views are confined to low self-confidence, low level of education, low level of knowledge on conflict resolution and peace issues, low public speaking skills, and language barriers.

Chart 5 highlights the responses of female role models[80] and female CBRM members[81] to a question, which asked: "Why are men asked sometimes to represent the views of women?" The responses highlighted that 52% of female respondents mentioned that this was because of cultural reasons, 22% women stated that that women lack the confidence (to speak in public), 15% female respondents stated that women have low capacity (this referred to speaking in public, as well as low capacity regarding education and language). Only 11% of female respondents revealed that they did not feel pressured to be silent.

Chart 5: The responses of female role models and female CBRM members as to why men are asked to represent the views of women.

Why are men asked sometimes to represent the views of women?

- cultural pressures to be silent 52%
- women lack confidence 22%
- women have low capacity 15%
- we are not pressured to be silent 11%
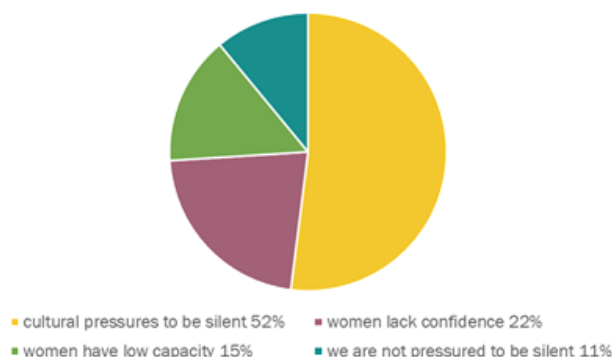
Concerning the barriers to women's voices in CBRMs along the five states of the study, It was found that that cultural pressures are most prominent (proportionately) among respondents from West Darfur and South Darfur. For East, Central and West Darfur, within each State, the second highest stated reason, was that women perceived themselves as having low capacity. For women, cultural pressures to be silent included the expectations placed on them due to their gender role; they were expected to be polite and respect men and therefore it was not appropriate to speak their opinions in front of men, their roles were limited and women believed that men did not listen to them or see a value in what they have to say. There was the idea expressed by women that women should not and do not reject the idea or stand against the idea of men representing women's ideas. If they did speak up, they would have to

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[80] KIIs with woman role model, question 15
[81] KIIs with CBRM woman member, question 14

be directly asked a question whereas women felt that men did not have this and speak when they want to. Women also felt that men silenced women in order to stop women from speaking out about different situations that effect them.

Men's viewed cultural pressures to be more internal for women rather than external pressures e.g. the idea that women are shy, that they lacked courage or that women are afraid or do not know how to answer questions. Similar to women's responses men felt that cultural women had to respect men and were there to support the ideas of men.

For women the idea of low capacity related to men being seem to have more experience than women, they felt women lacked the capacity of genera knowledge. For men, they felt women had low capacity because they were not trained to solve problems, they had a lack of awareness about problems and could not present the key issues clearly. For men and women low education levels and a lack of capacity in Arabic language or the idea that woen could not speak as elequontely as men was identified.

A lack of confidence was an issue highlighted across each State, with this being identified as the main reason in East Darfur compared to being the least expressed reason by respondents in West Darfur. For female respondents when they mentioned 'lacking confidence' this refered to a lack of courage by women to speak in public, as well as women being weaker than men. For men a lack of confidence refered to women being seen as shy (which was also seen as a positive attribute), women being afraid or lacking the courage to speak out in the CBRMs or in public.

Chart 6: The responses of female role models and female CBRM members as to why men are asked to represent the views of women, disaggregated by State.[82]

Why are men asked sometimes to represent the views of women? Disaggregated by state
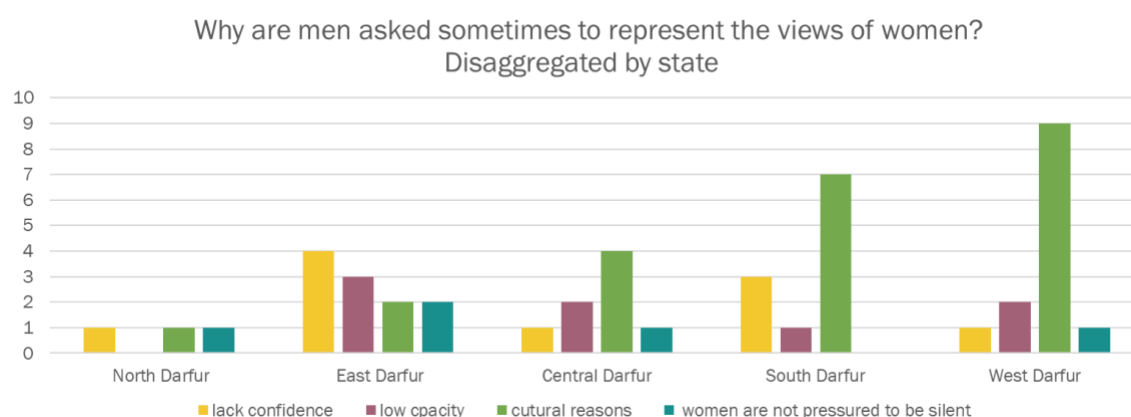
This study focused on obtaining the views and perspectives from different categories of women, noting the intersectionality impacts of, age, socio-economic status and their status within the community; in this case, revealing the perception of women who are considered 'role models' as well as the perception of economically successful women towards the dependency of women on men to present their views on their behalf.

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[82] The graph represents the number of respondents who identified each factor, and reflect the differences in numbers of respondents per State.

Chart 7: The responses of female respondents as to why men are asked to represent the views of women

Why are men asked sometimes to represent the views of women?
Disaggregate by category of female respondent

- cutural pressures to be silent
- women lack confidence
- women have low capacity
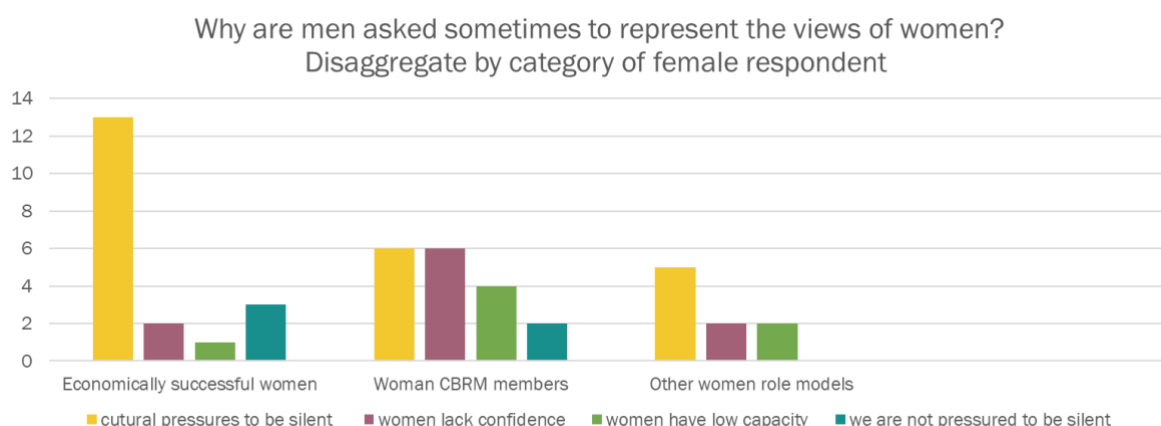- we are not pressured to be silent

Chart 7 shows that out of the 46 interviewed women, there were 18 women who were considered economically successful, 18 female members of CBRMs and 9 women considered as role models.[83] Interestingly, data from these women show that despite their achievements economically, they still recognised that one of the main challenges for women in society was the cultural pressure to be silent with 68% of those respondents noting this. Only 15% of the women considered economically successful stated that they did not feel pressured to be silent, 10% noted that women lack confidence, and 5% noted that women have low capacity. Women CBRM members were more divided across their responses, with one third of the group highlighting that women lack confidence, and another third believing that there are cultural pressures to be silent. Interestingly, female role models were the only group that did not have any responses indicating that they are not pressured to be silent.

This data highlighted the strong impact and influence cultural factors (as listed above) play on women's ability to represent her own views. Even for women who are role models, participate in CBRMs and have shown to be economically sucessful in their community still find that cultural pressures are having an impact on male dominance over women speaking out.

Nature of women's roles in the CBRMs

CBRMs are bodies through which women ought to play key roles in reducing conflict, promoting peace and bringing change.[84] Therefore, women's participation in the CBRMs must go beyond only their number in the mentioned mechanism. It was envisaged that CBRMs brings change towards peace building through the tools of change such as collection of information, conflict analysis, sensitization on gender and conflict issues, solving domestic violenc and sexual violenceincidences and raising awareness of the sexual and gender-based violence referral system, reconciliation, mobilization, funding, campaigns, transitional justice, mediation, dialogue and negotiations. Thus, this section deals with the role of women in CBRMs in reference to these tools of change.

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[83] Socially empowered women (one is young woman) from East and West Darfur (4), community based trainer (CBT) from South Darfur (1), Hakama from South Darfur (1), a combatant from West Darfur (1), 2 Shiekas (women leaders) from West Darfur

[84] According to the theory of change in peace building: changing individual's mindset, targeting elites and politicians, campaign, awareness raising through public speeches and seminars, production of materials and flyers, funding, and the promotion of good governance are among tools for bringing change for peace building.

In addition to the perception of women, with regards to their power and voice, it was important to understand how they perceived their role within the CBRMs. The results are shown in Chart 8 below. Linked to the data above on why men would represent the views of women, it follows that the (joint) lowest role perceived by women was to 'share opinions' (6%). High proportions of respondents noted their role to be solving issues (44%) and solving "women's issues" (44%).

Solving "women's issues" was a term brought up by the respondents of this study, rather than the research team. Men and women consistently referred to the difference between "issues" and "women's issues." The role of women in solving women's issues referred to specific forms of issues within the community. This included: fights between women, family disputes and fights between husband and wives, where the role of the woman was more to speak with the wife. Issues that required solving more broadly, and that were less attributed to a female CBRM member's role related to, flights between men, disputes between pastoralists and farmers, murder, thefts, land and water issues

Chart 8: Responses from female CBRM members on how they saw the role of women in the CBRMs

The role of women within the CBRMs (female CBRM members)

■ share opinions 6% ■ solve issues 44% ■ solve women's issues 44% ■ welcoming the visitiors and preparing food 6%
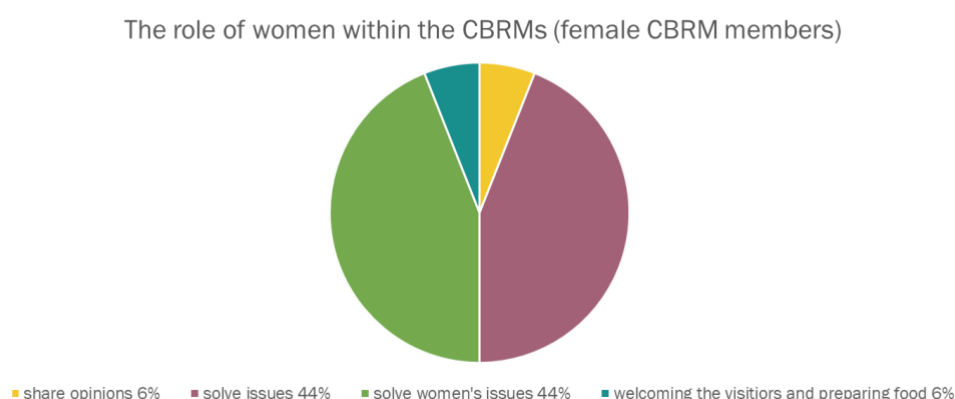
There were interesting findings when we disaggregated the data by State, which is shown in Chart 9. The only state whereby women in the CBRMs identified their role as 'sharing opinions' was in North Darfur (where there was only 1 respondent). Overall, many women complained that their opinions were not listened to or taken seriously by their fellow CBRM members.[85] One group of women in Bakeet, East Darfur, were particularly disappointed saying that: "Men do not listen to us or consider our opinions. To them, shoes are worth more than we are! Even though we participate physically and financially, men get all the praise, control and decision-making power!"[86] A male key informant stated, "we ask them [women] for their opinions, but they cannot sit with us in our meetings"[87] When we look at the idea that women 'share their opinions', there was also information through the consultations that pointed to the idea that women were somehow 'allowed' to share their opinion. This was not explore further but is important to note as a consideration, if they are only sharing their opinions if they are given permission by male members, this does not support an equal role in participation.

Solving issues was the highest rated by those in East and Central Darfur, when we look within the States, with respondents from South and West Darfur largely rating their role to "solve women's issue". An example from a female CBRM member in Alriyad, East Darfur stated, "The cases of women being beaten has dropped," with an economically successful woman from the same village stating that, "The beating cases have declined because there are women members in the CBRM and these women started to get to know

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[85] KII with female CBRM member, Abujabara, East Darfur
[86] FGD with female-only VSLA, Bakeet, East Darfur
[87] KII with male CBRM member, Umhijlij, North Darfur

the women in the village. This led to women starting to trust the female CBRM members and talk to them about their issues."

Chart 9: Responses from female CBRM members on how they saw the role of women in the CBRMs, disaggregated by State

The role women within the CBRMs, disaggregated by state (Female CBRM member
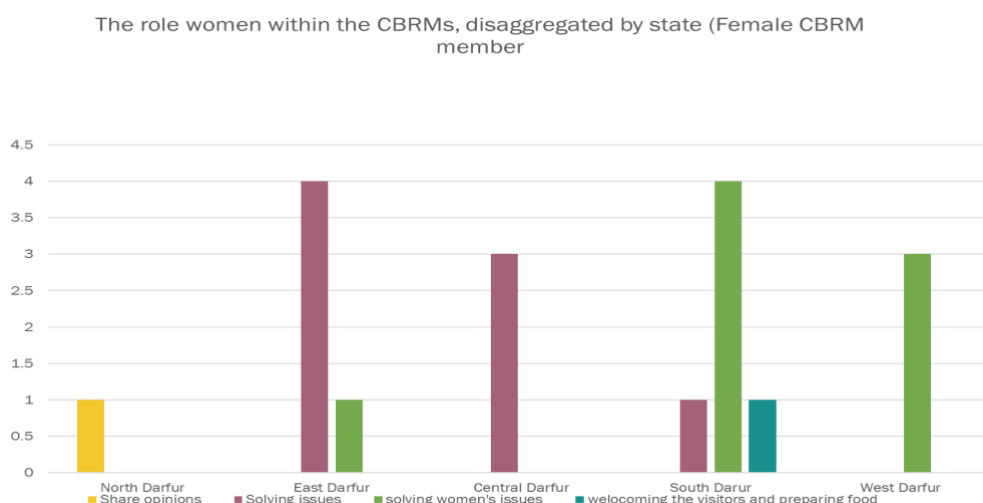
It was only some respondents from South Darfur that thought a women's role was 'welcoming visitors and preparing food' and this was supported through the community discussions. For instance; One woman (a member of the CBRM in Abuadum, South Darfur), stated that she considered   men to be responsible for "chairing the committee and solving problems," whereas she described women's role as "welcoming visitors to the village."[88] In her mind, men were in charge, whilst women only seemed to have hosting responsibilities.

When we speak about women having meaningful participation in the CBRMs, their role is crucial to achieving this. Looking back at secondary data, in an evaluation conducted by DCPSF in 2017 found that female members' views of their role within the CBRM had an impact on their perceived level of meaningful participation. One of the factors highlighted was that some female respondents noted that they never received information about their role and consequently, were unable to exercise any power within these bodies.[89] Still, in this study in 2019, the roles identified by women seem quite vague and not representative of the broader, seemingly more substantive role male members play. It will be important that women (and men) have clearly defined roles in the CBRM and that all members are aware of the roles and the responsibility each member has. This should also support with the next area of enquiry in terms of the community's (outside the CBRMs) view on the impact of women's within the CBRMs.[90]

<mark>The communities views on female CBRM members</mark>

The views of women from the community with regards to the impact they perceived female CBRM members having included: having a voice (39%), solving women's issues (18%), solving problems in the community (14%) and gaining knowledge (7%). Only 22% of the community felt that female CBRM members had no impact.

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[88] KII with woman CBRM member, Abuadum, South Darfur
[89] UNDP, Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF), Phase 2, Evaluation, (December 2017), PFD file.
[90] Results came from 28 KII with women who economically successful, CBRM members and other role models, question 12

It is positive to see that 39% perceived that women had a voice within the CBRMs. This referred to the belief that women had gained a platform to share their opinions, increase women's participation (representation) and to defend and raise women's rights and issues to the CBRM.

One issue to address would be that 22% of respondents did not see an impact of female CBRM members. The researchers in this study do not feel that this reflects women's capacity but rather this is another challenges that is driven by the deep rooted social and cultural norms that perceive women to be less capacity or have less capacity in public decision-making bodies. Traditional gender roles in Darfur tend to mean that what is considered women's work and what is considered men's work are customarily quite distinct. While not universal, there was a general sense among some, in the communities visited, that peacebuilding and community reconciliation was distinctly not women's work. For example, when we asked one woman in Abusuruj, West Darfur, who was not part of a CBRM but had established a successful business and was actively involved in the community in other ways, what she knew about CBRMs and what they do, she replied: "I do not know anything about them because it is men's work."[91] This idea is supported by the previous DCPSF evaluation, which found that, "Up to 49% of respondents agreed with the statement that women should not be involved in conflict resolution and peacebuilding".[92] However, it did go on to find that, "almost as many respondents (26% vs 28%) strongly disagree with this statement as strongly agree with it, and that the number of those who disagree are similar for both genders." [93] So, it is important to mention as it shows that attitudes are changing and as they continue to shift the impact of women may be seen more clearly. This also may be due to: the specific roles identified for men and women, and the fact that these are still quite undefined; the way that CBRMs are perceived more generally in the community; and the communication and feedback mechanisms between the CBRMs and the community. This will be important to review going forward to see how we can promote the work of the CBRMs and in particular the role of women to overcome some of the stereotypical attitudes and beliefs that still exist – with regards to the division of work based on a person's gender. This may require awareness raising and practical discussions, including perhaps a community forum, to show that women are engaging in peacebuilding efforts, that they do have a right to a role in these processes, and to show their positive impact in this regard.

To conclude, the findings of this area of enquiry, showed that cultural reasons were the most identified barrier to women feeling that they do not have a voice, or are not able to represent their own view in public spaces. Even for women who have been successful in the public domain, such as economically successful women and CBRM members also see this as a challenge; even though they have managed to push against these barriers to achieve success. The perception of women's roles, overall was quite vague but did focus on solving issues, but more specifically solving "women's issues" which, while it demonstrates women taking a role within the CBRMs it does limit their involvement and reduce their contributions to only issues that involve women. This idea is explored further in the next section. Perceptions from the community highlighted that they felt that women had a voice within the CBRMs; that women had gained a platform to share their opinions, increased women's representation and were able to defend and raise women's rights and issues to the CBRM.

Engage men and boys

CARE's gender equality work has a strong engaging men and boys approach. Its programs work with both women and men because it is recognized that overcoming the social injustice that keep women disempowered is everyone's challenge and responsibility.[94] While there is a focus on women due to

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[91] KII with an ESW Abusuruj, West Darfur
[92] UNDP, Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF), Phase 2, Evaluation, (December 2017), PFD file
[93] UNDP, Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF), Phase 2, Evaluation, (December 2017), PFD file
[94] CARE International, Gender equality, women's voice and resilience. Guidance note for practitioners.

disproportionate impacts of exclusion in decision-making spaces, conflict resolution and in peace building mechanisms, a core part of understanding and addressing unequal power relations, is to analyse the key dynamics of the relationships women have with others.To ensure lasting empowerment of women, a serious effort to understand the realities and the priorities of men, particularly regarding shifting power dynamics and social norms, it is imperative to support change and address attitudes and behaviours among men.

This section focuses on male perceptions of women's voice in the public domain, male perceptions of women's role within the CBRM's and has a particular focus on the idea of women being responsible only for addressing or solving "women's issues". This section will go on to look at male perceptions of women as leaders and finally will focus on the perceptions of men related to young women within the CBRMs, both in terms of their role and their view of young women as leaders.

Perceptions of women's voice

When male respondents from the CBRM were asked "why are men sometimes asked to represent the views of women?" it was recognised by male respondents[95] that cultural pressure was a key barrier with 24% responding in this way, however the higher responses were that women lacked confidence (41%) and that women had low capacity (35%).

When we disaggregate by State (Chart 9), we see that West Darfur was the only State that only identified cultural pressure as a key reason. All respondents in Central Darfur noted low capacity of women as an issue. This is clearly an avenue which needs to be built on with regards to changing attitudes towards women and their capacity of leaders.

Chart 10: Male respondents views as to why men are asked to represent the views of women, disaggregated by State
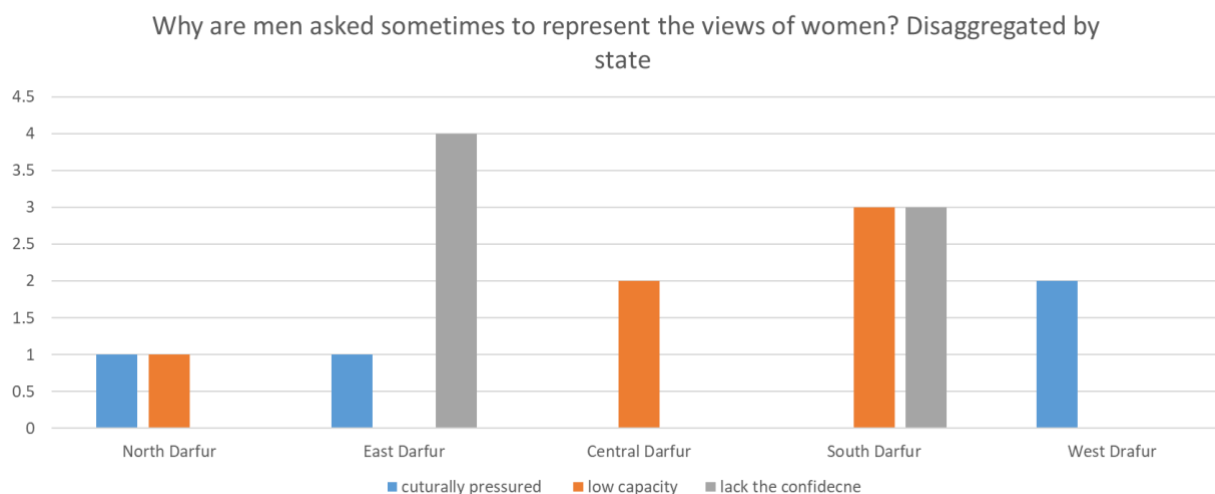
Data was also analysed to look at the views of religious leader and male role models with regards to why men sometimes represent the views of women[96][97]. A total of 50% of religious leaders identified cultural pressure as a key barrier, which was higher than the average for other male respondents. 35% felt that

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[95] KII with CBRM men members in all the states, question 14
[96] KII with religious leaders in all the states, question 13
[97] KII with male role models in all the states, question 15

women had low capacity (similar to the results from male CBRM members), 10% believe women lack confidence. Interestingly, the remaining 5% did not believe that this was the case.

While there was an acknowledgement of the cultural barriers by male respondents, this was not as high as women's perceptions of culture as a key barrier ie. only a small proportion of women were concerned over women's capacity but largely they felt that cultural pressures were responsible for men representing views on their behalf. This also points to the fact that men are attributing women's lack of leadership to an internal lacking of women, rather than noting that there is a larger influence of the external environment, with barriers caused by social, cultural and religious restrictions, that would need to be addressed and acknowledged to ensure women are able to fully realise and access their right to meaningfully participate in the public domain, and in this case have a leading role in conflict resolution and peace building.

Perceptions of male respondents towards women's role in CBRMs

With regards to male perceptions, a male CBRM member in Abusikeen, North Darfur, said that men were responsible for "mentoring and informing people about the different issues and making the decisions," but when asked the same question about women's role he simply replied, "participating."[98] It is arguably difficult to know exactly what he meant by "participating," but it seems clear that he did not see women's role to be as fundamental to the workings of the CBRM as he considered men's to be. The young men in the youth committee in Alriyad, East Darfur, stated: "Women cannot be part of the decision-making process due to our cultural values. Woman can only approve what we say. But [male] youth have the right and freedom to express their thoughts and opinions as part of the decision-making process."[99] The same committee went on to give the example that when, dealing with cases of SGBV, "women only give us the information we need to know, and then the men pursue the solutions."[100]

Indeed, these statements were supported by data, based on interviews with 17 male CBRM members when asked about women's role in the CRBMs.[101]

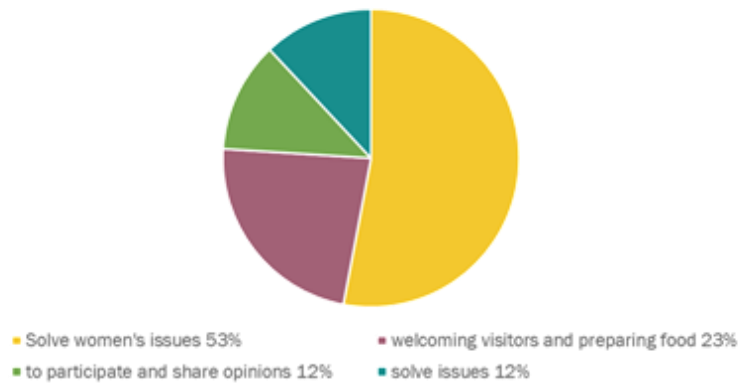**Chart 11: Male CBRM members' views on the role of female CBRM members**

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[98] KII with man CBRM member, Abusikeen, North Darfur
[99] FGD with youth committee, Alriyad, East Darfur
[100] Ibid
[101] KII with men CBRM members in all the states, question 10

The role of women within the CBRM (Male CBRM members)

- Solve women's issues 53%
- welcoming visitors and preparing food 23%
- to participate and share opinions 12%
- solve issues 12%

Of the interviewed male CBRM members, 53% think that women's role in the CBRM is to solve "women's issues", with only 12% identifying 'solving issues' more generally. This identifies an important but limited role of women in supporting their community. It also leads to the assumption that certain issues in the community are only women's issues. Roles in welcoming visitors and preparing food was rated quite highly (at 23%), compared to women's own perceptions of this as their role in the CBRMs (at just 6%).

Within the responses from the questionnaires, focus group discussions and key informant interviews, the amount of times that dealing with "women's issues" ("قضايا المرأة") or "women's problems" ("مشاكل المرأة") was brought up in relation to the impact of women's participation in the CBRMs was striking, particularly by female respondents from South and West Darfur. This focuses on the idea that women are best placed to be, or are the only, champions for other women. As one woman in Central Darfur pointed out, "women should be a part of the CBRM as some problems are only related to women,"[102] with the inference being that women are better able to deal with such problems than men. The same sentiment was reflected by another women in West Darfur, who said, "the absence of women in the CBRMs is bad, especially as men cannot address women's issues."[103] Furthermore, women may be more inclined and better equipped to fight for the rights of other women in their communities, as highlighted by local NGO Alsawaaid Alkhadra Organization (AAO), in Eldaein, East Darfur, who said, "Women will highlight issues in different arenas that people usually do not pay attention to. For example, they provide insights on where the 'donkey' [water tank] should be located, because women are more likely to be harassed or raped if it is far away."[104] It was thought that such insights can bring about practical and uncomplicated solutions to problems that may have previously been overlooked.

During a FGD with CBRM (male and female) members in Umhijlij, North Darfur, most of the people had been displaced from the village, and had only begun returning late in 2017. This meant the CBRM was not properly functioning. They told us that before they were displaced, they had run the CBRM as it had been set up by the NGO Peace Bridge Association (PBA), but since they had returned, they had reverted to managing conflicts using the Ajawid, a traditional mechanism used for reconciliation across Darfur. Interestingly, while they had chosen not included any youth in the Ajawid, they had included a number of women (both groups have in the past generally been excluded). They told us that the inclusion of women was specifically "to help us in resolving issues related to families."[105] The women in Umhijlij had, like the women in Alriyad, East Darfur, proven their worth when it came to resolving family issues. The head of the

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[102] ESW3 in Amar Jadid, Central Darfur
[103] KII with ESW Abusuruj, West Darfur
[104] KII with a representative from AAO, Eldaein, East Darfur
[105] FGD with CBRM, Umhijlij, North Darfur

CBRM in Umhijlij informed us that women's role was limited to women and family issues, because "women cannot solve an issue between two men."[106]

Indeed, many of the men and women with whom we spoke, across all five states, saw the role of women in CBRMs to be either almost entirely limited to or mainly focused on raising and dealing with what they considered to be women and/or family issues. This idea was common to men and women of all ages, both among members of the CBRMs and those external to them, and is clearly highlighted in the following selection of quotes: "Women assist the CBRM in solving problems that are related to women and by raising women's issues to the committee"[107]; "Women are playing an important role in solving women's problems"[108]; "Women are able to express women's issues easily and to understand the solutions"[109]; "Women have a role in solving the inner issues of the family"[110]; "We use them [female CBRM members] to solve issues between women. They do not have a huge role in solving other issues that do notconcern their families"[111]; "Women's role is to assist in cases related to women's issues, such as conflict between couples."[112]

While women may be in a unique position for better understanding the lives of other women and the concerns and issues which affect them, that being the defining feature of their contribution unnecessarily limits their scope, and risks reducing women's broad and varied ideas, opinions and contributions into a single matter of "women's issues." It is important that women are engaged in issues that impact and affect women, however it is crucial that issues brought out by or that affect women are not seen as separate from community issues as a whole. The limiting nature of the proposition is highlighted by the fact that men's participation is rarely described in the same way, ie. that dealing with "men's issues," whatever they may be, is their central role. The idea that women's contributions are positive simply because they are able to provide insight into women's issues, perpetuates limiting stereotypical ideas about women's roles in society and helps to reinforce patriarchal norms which restrict women's access to leadership and decision-making roles within the public domain.

Male perception on female leaders

As mentioned previously, none of the CBRMs in the twenty villages where we conducted field work, were headed by a woman at the time of our visit.[113] While other villages may have female heads, within the twenty villages we visited we did not gain a sense that this would likely occur in the near future in these particular locations. While the acceptance of women's participation is gradually increasing, to varying degrees throughout Darfur, the idea of women being in leadership positions over and above men was still seen as problematic, and in some cases unthinkable.

This study analysed the percentage of interviewed male CBRM members who believe that women are capable of holding a leadership position.[114] Positive findings show that 70% of male CBRM members believe women are capable of holding a leadership position, just short of the proportion of women who responded in the same way.

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[106] KII with a man CBRM member, North Darfur
[107] KII with a religious leader, Donkiddreisa, South Darfur
[108] KII with a Native Administration leader, Kubuk, Central Darfur
[109] KII with a Native Administration leader, Abusuruj, West Darfur
[110] FDG with CBRM, Aljelabi, East Darfur
[111] FGD with CBRM, Eisheriya A, East Darfur
[112] FGD with CBRM, Abuadum, South Darfur
[113] There were female members who were classed as leaders and they held positions such as deputy head, treasurer and secretary but none of them were 'heads' of the CBRMs.
[114] KII with a man CBRM members in all the states, question 16

If we look State-wise, we can see more clearly the perceptions of male respondents from within the CBRMs. Interestingly, while the proportion of female respondents from South Darfur were overwhelmingly positive, with regards to the ability of women to be leaders, for male respondents one third did not believe women were capable of taking on such positions. On the other hand, all male respondents from East and West Darfur responded positively to this question. While there were mixed responses from Central Darfur for female respondents, all male respondents did not see the capacity of women to be leaders.

Chart 12: Shows the perception of CBRM male members and how they view women's capability to hold leadership positions, disaggregated by State.
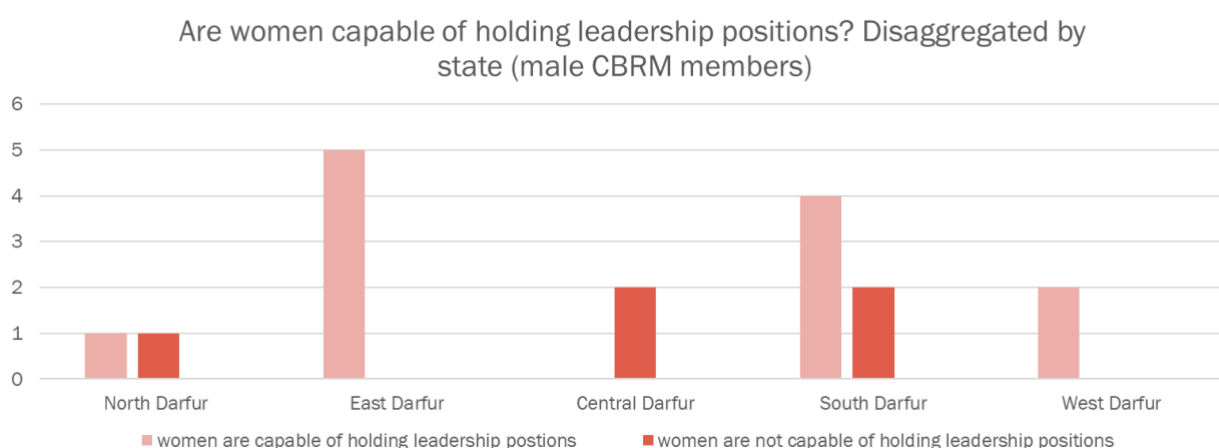
This could be a contributing factor as to why women in North and Central Darfur may have 0% of women in leadership positions. A CBRM member in Amar-Jadeed, Central Darfur said,[115] "leadership requires education, language and knowledge. Women do not have that."

This was a common answer from both men and women, who believed women lacked the necessary education and/or language skills required for leadership: "No, leadership requires education, language and knowledge. Women do not have these things"[116]; "No, because in our community, women are not educated"[117]; "No, because women are uneducated and lack the capacity in language"[118]; and "No, because leadership requires competence and a strong language capacity and women do not have that."[119] Some did believe that as long as women did have a strong enough education, there was nothing preventing them from holding leadership positions.

Positive results from male respondents are higher for male respondents *outside* of the CBRM with 86% of other interviewed men (native administrators[120], religious leaders [121] and community's role models, a total of 20 male respondents) believing that women are capable of holding a leadership position in the CBRMs, only if they are educated and have high capacity. Most of the male respondents who thought that women are capable of holding a leadership position stated that women need to be educated first to hold a position in the CBRM.

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[115] KII with a CBRM man member in Amar-jadeed, Central Darfur, question 16
[116] KII with head of CBRM, Amar Jadid, Central Darfur
[117] KII with ESW1, Amar Jadid, Central Darfur
[118] KII woman CBRM member 2, Abusuruj, West Darfur
[119] KII with a man CBRM member, Abuadum, South Darfur
[120] KII with native administrators and male community's role models in all the states, question 16
[121] KII with a religious leader in all the states, question 14

The idea that women need to be educated to participate in CBRMs, as well as to become leaders, is a common theme throughout the report.

A DCPSF evaluation in 2017, noted a gender disparity, through their household survey in that up to 54% of the female respondents had no formal education, compared to 36% among males.[122] Lack of access to education was also seen to be compounded for families who are of lower socio-economic status who cannot afford to send their children to school. Education attainment is also noted to be lower for those outside of urban centers[123], which is important to note as all the CBRMs interviewed in this study were from rural areas.

Low levels of education, as we will see below, can be a factor linked to increased risk of early marriage, which in turn can lead to lower access of education.[124] Early marriage within this study is discussed in output 2, which can also have impacts on women's public participation.

The respondents who felt that women could not hold leadership positions came only from respondents in Central and North Darfur; similar to the results from male CBRM members. All (100%, 2 respondents) of the interviewed men in North Darfur responded that women were not capable of holding leadership positions. This could explain why the interviewed CBRMs in North Darfur had the lowest percentages of women in leadership positions in CBRMs. For Central Darfur it was 25% (1 response) of male respondents from that State who felt that women could not hold leadership positions. This result, however, was a more positive result than the CBRM male members from Central Darfur, all of whom responded that women cannot hold leadership positions. The higher positive response from those outside the CBRM, could be potentially because they have experienced other women leaders in their communities or it could be due to the type of leader they felt women could be, for example, it could also be the case that those male respondents believed that women could lead other women, but not necessary other men (this is discussed further in the next section). An example of this came from a Native Administrator in Kubuk, Central Darfur who said, "Women are leading women as Sheikhs and solving problems among women and other small problems in the community."[125] Men in West Darfur seem to be supportive of the idea of women holding leadership positions in the CBRMs with all respondents from that State responding positively. This may be why West Darfur has the highest representation of women on leadership positions among the interviewed CBRMs in all the states.

If the majority of male respondents, both from the CBRMs and from the wider male respondents said that they were supportive of other women to hold leadership positions, it is interesting that still 52% of women still felt culturally pressured to be silent. This may be due to the current roles women are undertaking within the CBRM and the opportunities made available to them. It also could be an issue of putting theory into practice and for men to actually create an enabling environment for women to take on these positions.

From this study, while it seems that both men and women are not against the idea of having women in leadership positions there do remain barriers and ideas perhaps of what female leadership means. One key factor that came out of the discussions was that women need to be qualified, which currently does limit participation of those who are less literate or less educated.

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[122] UNDP, Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF), Phase 2, Evaluation, (December 2017), PFD file.
[123] Samia El Nagar, Sharifa Bamkar & Liv Tønnessen. Girls, Child Marriage, and Education in Red Sea State, Sudan: Perspectives on Girls' Freedom to Choose. Sudan report number 3, September 2017. https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/6326-girls-child-marriage.pdf
[124] Samia El Nagar, Sharifa Bamkar & Liv Tønnessen. Girls, Child Marriage, and Education in Red Sea State, Sudan: Perspectives on Girls' Freedom to Choose. Sudan report number 3, September 2017. https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/6326-girls-child-marriage.pdf
[125] KII with a Native Administrator in Kubuk, Central Darfur, question 16

Previous studies have noted high levels of illiteracy among women in Darfur, and their exclusion from the formal economic sector, affecting their capacity to contribute to peace processes.[126] According to the Sudan Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS 2014)[127], literacy rates for women, aged 15-24, were assessed, with results for the Darfur region and Khartoum shown in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Literacy rates for women ages between 15-24, by State in Darfur and Khartoum

Location	Percentage of women, aged 15-24 literate (%)
Khartoum	82.6
North Darfur	56.0
West Darfur	50.1
South Darfur	49.3
Central Darfur	27.4
East Darfur	40.0

Educated women and those active in civil society often belonged to large influential families led by traditional elites. This, therefore provided a narrow category of women who were engaged in the process.[128] While this study did not look at factors such as status and level of education of the women engaged in the CBRMs, this would interesting to see whether those who did occupy leadership positions had a specific level of education, held a status in society or had a specific skill that enabled them to take on the position. An important way forward would also be to ensure that women who are represented do include those more marginalised groups and who may otherwise have fewer opportunities within the society to reach such spaces. This is an opportunity for CARE, DCPSF and other agencies to support female (and marginalised males) in education initiatives, training on leadership and literacy classes.

It was also noted by men that there are female leaders in their community, "Shiekahs." but perhaps here there is more of a focus on female Sheikahs leading other women. We did find that from men and some women, there was a deep-seated belief that, while some women were considered capable of leading other women, due to various socio-religious beliefs, women were not considered to be capable of leading men. Here are some of their answers to the same question: "No, our community will not allow a woman to become a head or president over men"[129;] "No, religion makes men better than women"[130;] "No, because a woman cannot lead a man"[131;] "For religious reasons, a woman cannot be in a leadership position"[132]; "No, but only for religious reasons, men are superior to women"[133]; "Women can become treasurers or superior over other women, but they cannot hold leadership positions over men because of our religious beliefs."[134] These answers support the idea that women can 'participate' but are not equal to men and therefore do not hold equal status when it comes to leadership. This also links to the emphasis on the strong role of female

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[126] Inclusive Peace and Transition Initiative (IPTI), Graduate Institute Geneva, Case Study Series, Women in Peace and Transition Processes. September 2018, https://www.inclusivepeace.org/sites/default/files/IPTI-Case-Study-Sudan-Darfur-2009%E2%80%932017.pdf
[127] Results are only for female as there was no male comparison conducted as part of the survey. Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS), UNICEF Sudan. 2016, *Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2014 of Sudan, Final Report*. Khartoum, Sudan: UNICEF and Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS), February 2016
[128] Inclusive Peace and Transition Initiative (IPTI), Graduate Institute Geneva, Case Study Series, Women in Peace and Transition Processes. September 2018, https://www.inclusivepeace.org/sites/default/files/IPTI-Case-Study-Sudan-Darfur-2009%E2%80%932017.pdf
[129] KII with a woman CBRM member, Aljalabi, East Darfur
[130] KII with a man CBRM member, Umhijlij, North Darfur
[131] KII with a man CBRM member, Kukbuk, Central Darfur
[132] KII with a man CBRM member, Abusikeen, North Darfur
[133] KII with ESW, Maali South, East Darfur
[134] KII with a religious leader, Aljelabi, East Darfur

CBRM members being to solve women's issues, which was the perception by both female CBRM members (44%) and male CBRM members (53%), and perhaps points to the men being less comfortable with, or less of the opinion that women can or should lead men.

While this idea seemed prevalent, it was by no means universal. One woman in Amar Jadid, Central Darfur, told us that "women can carry out any duty assigned to them."[135] In addition to the examples highlighted through women's involvement in the VSLA's, it was also noted that women have been building new skills and confidence due to the absence of lot of men resulting from the conflict. Another woman said, "most of the time men are absent, therefore we have had to proceed to lead our community."[136] It was not just women who believed in their capacity for leadership. A Native Administration leader in Abusuruj, West Darfur, told us that women are capable of leadership, stating, "women have good morals, patience and more honesty than men."[137]

> "I am the head of a VSLA group that consists of 42 members, of which 8 of them are men. Everybody agreed on choosing me to lead the group. I am transparent with people and I do not have any trouble with anyone. We face a lot of issues in the VSLA but we communicate and listen to each other. I always aim to be patient and to accept the differences between people. This way we try to fix the little issues before they get bigger. For women who would like to succeed in life, I would recommend that everyone shows manners to other people, that they are patient in solving issues and as women we need to stand together. With regards to peacebuilding, it is all about people standing together, understanding the issues we face as a community and finding to ways we can solve them. It is important that we link neighbourhoods and communities to ensure we are able to know one another and resolve any hidden issues. I solve some issues that we face in the community because I am a CBRM member. I solve my neighbourhood issues, family issues and sometimes we fix issues related to men, for example when two men are fighting. I think women are capable of holding leadership positions, because women have become powerful, they understand and can fight for their rights."
>
> - *Economically successful young woman, Abukarinka, East Darfur*

Perceptions of young women

In the previous section we found that young women have a low representation among youth in the interviewed CBRMs but have a high representation among women, it is important, therefore to look at the relationships between young men and young women (in addition to men and women as a whole) and how these dynamics could influence participation and leadership. It should also support us to understand how to engage, particularly the male youth to better support female leadership and participation.

Chart 13: Shows the role of <u>young</u> women in the interviewed CBRMs from the perspective of CBRM male members.[138]
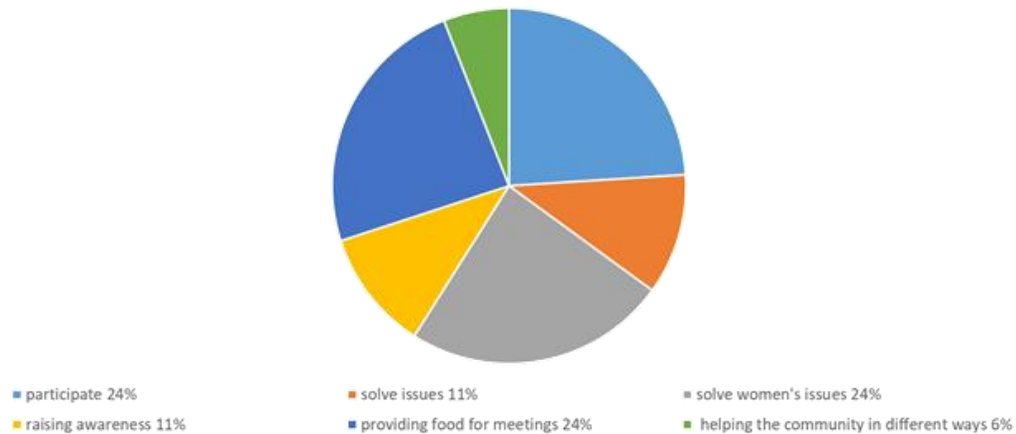
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[135] KII with ESW3, Amar Jadid, Central Darfur
[136] KII with ESW2, Kubuk, Central Darfur
[137] KII with a Native Administration leader, Abusuruj, West Darfur
[138] KII with 17 men CBRM members in all the states, question 10

The role of young women within the CBRM (Male CBRM members)

- ■ participate 24%
- ■ raising awareness 11%
- ■ solve issues 11%
- ■ providing food for meetings 24%
- ■ solve women's issues 24%
- ■ helping the community in different ways 6%

Most of the young women's role was perceived to be: to help preparing food (24%), physically 'participating' in meetings (24%), and to solve "women's issues" (24%). While it was not expanded on greatly, it seemed from the supporting data that 'participation' referred more to physically attending meetings rather than meaningful participation within the meetings. Only one respondent, a CBRM man member in Alriyad, East Darfur said that young women's role involved "helping the community in different areas," however he did not expand on this. One male CBRM member in Eisheraya A, said that the role of young women is "raising awareness about early marriage and female genital mutilation." It will be important going forward to build on this and to understand better how the youth are supporting the community and how their role in supporting the community is perceived, as this could provide entry points for young women to engage further.

Female CBRM members views young women's role to be much more active. Their responses included: solving problems, participating and sharing their opinions, many respondents identified solving problems. Similar to women, there was still an emphasis on solving "women's issues" or "girls" issues. Some, particularly in West Darfur noted that young women's role was to provide information to the committee – rather than solving the issues themselves.

While the study focused on women and young women's roles, it is important to note the intersectionality of age and gender, especially as in Darfur, age tended to be viewed together with wisdom. Male CBRM respondents tended to view male youth as less active than male members and saw their role more as inviting people to the meetings and writing reports; more of a supportive role. In North Darfur male members even mentioned that they do not call male youth to attend the meetings. In East Darfur, it was noted that the male youth are there to learn from the older male members and be trained through watching and listening to the older members. In North Darfur they specified that male youth have the right to be there and to be part of the decision-making processes. They felt that they did hold a sense of responsibility over solving issues. Female CBRM members saw male youth as being relatively active e.g. solving problems and sharing opinions. They felt that if male youth saw problems they would take action and solve it as well as being able to take decisions. It seems that while older men may have more influence and respect within the CBRM, and take on more of the problem solving, male youth are seen as important and key stakeholders in the CBRMs for the future. While their role may not be as full as the older male members, they seem to be more respected and given more responsibility that the roles of young women. They also seem to be viewed as tomorrow leaders, and are being trained and exposed to allow for this. This was not raised in discussions regarding the role of young women.

We saw that, for women, although their representation in leadership in the CBRMs was low, in other structures such as the VSLA's it was higher. Therefore, we were interested to see whether this was the

same for female youth; was their representation in other forums such as Youth Committees higher than within the CBRMs

Table 6: The number of young women who are represented within the interviewed Youth Committees[139]

State	Youth Committees names	No. of members within the CB	No. of young men members	No. of young women members	%representation of young women per Youth Committee
North Darfur	Um-Hijlij	30	20	10	33%
	Abu-Sekeen	15	10	5	33%
East Darfur	Abujabra	15	9	6	40%
	Bakeet	9	7	2	22%
	Alriyad	34	22	12	35%
	Abu-Karinka	75	58	17	22%
	Eisheraya A	9	7	2	22%
Central Darfur	Amar Jadeed	42	27	15	35%
	Kubuk	30	25	5	16%
South Darfur	Abu-Adoum	9	5	4	44%
	Alhila-Aljedeeda	9	5	4	44%
	Baracatoly	21	4	17	80%
	Donkeydrisa	11	11	0	0%
	Sanidiliba	15	12	3	20%
	Tabaldeyat	16	12	4	25%
	Taysha	19	15	4	21%
West Darfur	Abu-Soroj	18	14	4	22%
	Umtajok	22	12	10	45%
Total		415	268	123	29%

Poor representation	Below 10%
Low representation	10 – 29 %
Fair representation	30 – 49%
High representation	50% - above

Youth Committees only consist of young men and young women. Considering this, young women have a low representation in the Youth Committees (29%). The highest representation in Baracatoly, South Darfur (80%) and the Youth Committee in Donkeydrisa, South Darfur being the lowest with 0% female youth representation.

Table 7 below goes further to show the number of young women in leadership positions in Youth Committees.[140] Overall, young women have low representation in leadership positions in Youth Committees, with an average of only 13%, an example of this comes from Baracatoly, South Darfur, where

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[139] FGD with Youth Committees in all the states, question 2
[140] FGD with Youth Committees in all the states, question 7

the four leadership positions (in a CBRM with the highest representation of young women in a Youth Committee) are occupied by young men.

Table 7: The number of young women in leadership positions in Youth Committees.[141]

State	Youth Committees names	Total No. of leaders within the Youth Committees	No. of young women in leadership positions within the Youth Committees leaders	Percentage of young women in leadership positions per Youth Committee
North Darfur	Um-Hijlij	3	0	0%
	Abu-Sekeen	4	1	25%
East Darfur	Abujabra	3	1	33%
	Bakeet	3	1	33%
	Alriyad	3	1(s)	33%
	Abu-Karinka	4	0	0%
	Eisheraya A	4	1(s)	25%
Central Darfur	Amar Jadeed	4	0	0%
	Kubuk	4	0	0%
South Darfur	Abu-Adoum	3	1(s)	33%
	Alhila-Aljedeeda	4	1(s)	25%
	Baracatoly	4	0	0%
	Donkeydrisa	4	0	0%
	Sanidiliba	4	0	0%
	Tabaldeyat	4	1(s)	25%
	Taysha	4	1(s)	25%
West Darfur	Abu-Soroj	4	0	0%
	Umtajok	4	0	0%
Total		67	9	13%

Poor representation	Below 10%	
Low representation	10 – 29 %	
Fair representation	30 – 49%	
High representation	50% - above	

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141 FGD with Youth Committees in all the states, question 7

The increased responsibilities often taken on by women in times of conflict, and the related changes in long-established gender roles this creates, disrupting traditional family and community social structures, can have negative effects on men who are now unsure of their social roles and responsibilities. In an interview with the Gender Unit coordinator,UNFPA, in North Darfur, she said that "men fear that women are becoming too empowered, and that one day women will no longer need them."[142] In Darfur, as in many conflict zones around the world, this disorientation, or sense of redundancy, has led to increased alcoholism in men and spikes in domestic violence against women.[143] For areas of further research it would be interesting to explore further whether men (youth and older men) feel that there is any negative impacts of women's involvement or whether there are feelings of threat to their roles, by the increased inclusion of women and female youth. This was beyond the scope of this study but would be an important area of investigation going forward, particularly when we look at how to best work with men in the community to better support women and female youth's participation in CBRMs and other peacebuilding mechanisms.

Based on the data, it is clear that there are a barriers to men viewing women as equal in terms of ability to lead. Many of the attitudes still relate to women's lack of education or ability to lead and particularly with regards to men leading women. There was more positive support for women to lead on "women's issues" and women to led women. It is vital therefore that peacebuilding efforts are gender-sensitive, taking into account the nuanced differences in which conflict and peacebuilding impact women and men, girls and boys, and that they are responsive to each group's particular needs. In order to achieve this, it is important that the CBRMs clearly define roles of male and female leaders in the CBRMs to allow women and men to hold such positions and be meaningfully engaged in conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Further it is important to address some of the structural barriers that are still preventing women from holding leadership positions e.g. through skills building, literacy classes, and leadership and conflict resolution training. Starting with youth (both male and female) to build skills and change attitudes will be crucial.

Create enabling environment

CARE's theory of change is based on the knowledge and experience that achieving gender equality and women's voice requires transformative change. Transformative change includes transforming the existing power relations and the structural environment that are intrinsic to social, cultural and political factors, that exist both in the household and the community and can either be enablers or preventative factors in men, women, boy, girls and margenalised groups from achieving their rights and their full potential. Creating an enabling environment in this context when looking at gender-equality within peacebuilding, requires a focus on the current law and policy and how these are understood and put into practice e.g. through religious institutions, community structures, local authorities and humanitarian organisations, and how cultural and social norms influence the practical application. Creating an enabling environment involves transforming discriminatory social norms, customs, laws and policies, to enable positive change to take place.

This next section will continue to look at existing social, cultural and religious norms and how they can provide opportunities for women's meaningful participation and leadership within the peacebuilding process, with a focus on key role models and groups in the community. It will also look at the extent to which the CBRMs and other peacebuilding mechanisms have the capacity to work on peacebuilding initiatives and conflict resolution to create an enabling environment for women to participate in this space. It will discuss opportunities to support this e.g. through key role models in the community, as well as how other mechanisms e.g. through VSLA's, could be key entry points to support change in the attitudes and opportunities for women and young women in the CBRM structures.

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[142] Interview with UNFPA, North Darfur, 5th May 2019
[143] Ritchie, H. Social Norms and Barriers Analysis for Agro-Pastoralist Women and Girls in South Darfur, Sudan: Trends of change in a complex context? November 2018

Engaging community leaders and existing structures as agents of change

It has been noted that faith –based actors (including religious individuals and organisations), have a rich history in shaping the societal process in Sudan. It is recognized that, while noting that they are not a homogenous group, their work both on a community and political level can support and actively engage advocacy of a variety of issues.[144] Key figures in the community can have the effect of being gatekeepers and upholding discriminatory norms, or if the right leaders are identified and initiatives structured in the right way, they can be key entry points and can lead to opportunities for change.

One of the key community figures included as part of this report was religious leaders, to understand their perception of women in the CBRMs and their role as leaders.

Chart 14: Responses of 9 religious leaders regarding the impacts they see of involving women in the CBRMs.[145]

What are the impacts of involving women in the CBRM? (Religious leaders)

■ solving women's issues 67%   ■ solving issues 22%   ■ don't have an impact 11%
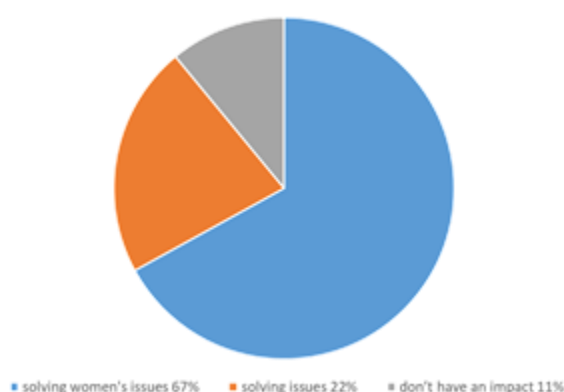
While only 11% identified that women did not have any impact, the majority of responses were still focused on the idea that women's main impact or role was to support with "women's issues" (67%). One religious leader in Abusekeen, North Darfur said that, "As a religious leader I do not think women participation is important". Through this analysis we have seen that religious leaders are supportive of women's participation and representation in leadership, however there were often caveats to thi, as seen below. Of the 9 religious leaders who were interviewed for this study, when asked if women were capable of holding leadership positions, 78% said that they felt women are capable holding leadership positions in CBRMs. Of the 22% who answered otherwise, this comprised of the 1 religious leader from North Darfur and 1 of the 2 religious leaders from East Darfur. Some religious leaders were of the opinion that "Women can participate, but they cannot lead men"[146] which echoed views of male representatives of the community and CBRMs. However, several religious leaders expressed support for women in leadership positions, highlighting that different religious interpretations can be used to counter religious-based arguments on women's inferiority to men. For example, a religious leader in Maala South, East Darfur, said: "Some women speak more eloquently and are more useful than men, which make them more applicable for a leadership position than men."[147]

When a religious leader from South Darfur (the State where 3 of the 3 religious leaders were in support of female leadership in the CBRMs) was asked about whether women are capable of holding leadership

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[144] Netherlands Institute of International Relations, Clingendael. Conflict Research Unit, Stuck in Change, Faith-based Peace-building in Sudan's Transition, October 2006. https://www.clingendael.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/20061000_cru_occ_sudan.pdf
[145] KII with Religious leaders in all the states, question 10
[146] KII with a religious leader, Alriyad, East Darfur
[147] KII with a religious leader, Maali South, East Darfur

positions or not, he replied "Yes, if she is qualified, she can hold a leadership position" [148] This relates back to the issue of education and the recognition of women having the skills to hold leadership roles.

Interestingly the data discussed previously from religious leaders identified cultural pressures (as a barrier) as higher than other male respondents, showing their awareness of this as a challenge for women. Religious leaders and other role models in the community can play a pivotal role in dismantling the views that women are less capable or secondary to men, supporting their arguments with religious doctrine, and being agents of change in the community. What is key is learning how religious leaders would like to work with the community and with CBRMs on these issues and, in turn, how CARE and NNGOs can work with and through religious leaders to affect such change. Key areas of engagement could be with regards to community messaging on gender in peacebuilding and working with religious leaders to align their own messages with those that relate to and support women's participation in peacebuilding processes. Second would be to engage religious leaders specifically in training and sensitisation sessions on the importance of gender, gender equality and women within peacebuilding processes. As a next step, CARE should hold consultations with religious leaders in the target areas for the next project to identify how we can work together for common goals.

In addition to religious leaders and religious systems, other structures in the community can also lend themselves to be agents of change in the communities and can make women feel more accepted as part of the peacebuilding mechanisms. A disabled man in Eljeneina, West Darfur, who had experienced his own difficulties with acceptance within the community and who was supportive of women's increasing participation in public life said, "women are ready [to make a meaningful contribution to the CBRMs], but sometimes the community will not accept them in the committees."[149], VSLAs are key mechanisms for women's economic and social empowerment, supporting women's meaningful participation and leadership. In the VSLA structures, women are accepted as leaders, often even when there are mixed groups of VLSAs. VSLA's are noted to be key community structures that support in shifting household and community gender dynamics through women's increasing capacity and confidence, engagement in business and social initiatives, and social networks.[150] Harnessing the positive outcomes seen in the VSLAs and working with women who are identified as roles models and seen as successful within the community, can be a key entry point to support women in the CBRMs to realise the potential roles they could have, as well as raise awareness among men as to women's capacity and skills in this area.

While VSLA's were not a target for this research, some of the female respondents were heads of VSLA's and other CBRM members were also members of VSLA. Therefore through the discussions there were some interesting differences highlighted between the structural makeup of the CBRMs and that of the VSLAs. Understanding this can provide some insight into the successfulness of women's leadership in one mechanism versus its limited success in the other, and as a result point us to opportunities from within the CBRMs. As outlined in the contextual background, in order to encourage the acceptability and efficacy of the CBRMs as useful mechanisms through which to improve peacebuilding at a community level across Darfur's five states, they have generally retained some of the structures (and members) of pre-existing bodies which have traditionally dealt with conflict resolution, such as the Native Administration and the *Judiya/Ajawid,* thereby reinforcing pre-existing power structures. For example, of the fourteen members of the CBRM in Abukarinka, nine were also Native Administration leaders. Elsewhere, religious leaders and other prominent men, including *Ajawid*, formed the bulk of the CBRM membership.

While this is sensible in terms of ensuring the CBRMs acceptability by the community, it appears to have had the unintended consequence of reinforcing pre-existing power structures at the expense of women,

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[148] KII with a religious leader, Donkeydresa, South Darfur, question 14
[149] KII with role model, disabled man, Eljaneina, West Darfur
[150] Ritchie, H. Social Norms and Barriers Analysis for Agro-Pastoralist Women and Girls in South Darfur, Sudan: Trends of change in a complex context? November 2018

youth and other marginalised groups. This has arguably had an impact on how the inclusion of women has been seen, namely their inclusion and participation being seen as "extra" and not fundamental to the CBRM as a whole. It has also perpetuated the idea that women cannot or should not lead over men. The VSLAs, however, were specifically established to economically empower women and therefore they had women in leadership positions from the outset. VSLAs are 100% led by women and some VSLAs in Central, East and South contain both women and men of different ages. An example of female leaders, leading men, came from a VSLA in Abukarinka, East Darfur, which is led by woman and among the 42 members there are 8 men.[151]

A number of women with whom we spoke, told us that the VSLAs had helped them to gain a level of economic independence, allowing them to implement initiatives, such as building schools for their communities, setting up small businesses or helping to finance businesses of others. The women also reported changes in the power dynamics at a household level; they claimed to have more control over resources and a stronger voice within their homes. This is supported by data from a 2016 CARE study on VSLAs in South Darfur, which found that VSLAs contributed strongly to women empowerment at the household level. As a result of earning independent incomes, gaining training and subsequent positions of responsibility, women increased their decision-making power and gained confidence at the household level.[152] The same study found minimal changes at the community level, with the level of respect for women increasing, however there was no evidence that VSLAs contributed to women being in leadership positions.[153]

In this current study, economic advances mentioned by the female respondents were seen to have allowed women greater social standing within their communities, earning the respect of men and women alike, thereby contributing to improved confidence levels and strengthening their voices. This is positive, and while, this report also still highlights the disparity among female and male representatives and leaders in the CBRMs, it does highlight the importance of economic empowerment to support other forms of social empowerment. It is worth noting that in Sudan levels of women's economic participation (21%) is much lower, compared to men (54%)[154] and there are a number of significant barriers to explain this, including, but not limited to, heavy domestic burdens due to their gender roles within the home, insufficient options for childcare and support, illiteracy and lack of formal education. Barriers also include, insufficient opportunities for technical training and business skills development, a lack of access to financial services, and lack of access to factors of production including land, markets and inputs such as seeds and tools.[155] Therefore, it is important that we learn from the experiences of VSLAs and note that while economic empowerment is not all that is needed to support women's involvement in the CBRMs, it can have a strong positive influence on women's own agency, power relations and her links and networks within a community.

Capacity building of the CBRMs: status, gaps and prospectus

In theory, capacity building should be characterized by transformative learning which includes: stages of an enhanced level of awareness of the context based on one's beliefs and feelings; a critique of their assumptions and particular premises; an assessment of alternative perspective; a decision to negate an old perspective in favour of a new one to or to make a synthesis of old and new; an ability to take action

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[151] KII with an economically successful woman in Abukarinka, East Darfur, question 1

[152] CARE, Forcier, Improving Resilience through Village Savings and Loan Associations. https://www.careevaluations.org/wp-content/uploads/evaluations/care-vslas-in-south-darfur-final-report.pdf

[153] CARE, Forcier, Improving Resilience through Village Savings and Loan Associations. https://www.careevaluations.org/wp-content/uploads/evaluations/care-vslas-in-south-darfur-final-report.pdf

[154] Samia El Nagar, Sharifa Bamkar & Liv Tønnessen. Girls, Child Marriage, and Education in Red Sea State, Sudan: Perspectives on Girls' Freedom to Choose. Sudan report number 3, September 2017. https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/6326-girls-child-marriage.pdf

[155] Learning on Gender and Conflict in Africa (LOGICA). Brief overview of key gender issues, Darfur, April 2013. http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/715571468311372234/pdf/862970BRI0Box30ogica0DissNoteDarfur.pdf

based upon the new perspective; and a desire to fit the perspective into the broader context of one's life. This is known as transformative learning theory, which in practice would produce enlightened agents of change. Furthermore, capacity-building approaches include training, technical assistance, knowledge networks and professional coaching[156]. An objective was that capacity building of CBRM members through training would produce members who are enlightened agents of change for conflict resolution and peace building equipping them with knowledge and skills for achieving durable peace with gender perspective.

Therefore, this study aimed at identifying the training received by CBRMs members and to seek ways to strengthen these trainings, considering both contents and processes. The study aimed to explore how gender and human rights are addressed in the training and how can women's participation and capacity in conflict resolution be increased. This section deals with the main findings of the study with regard to the nature of gender and peace building trainings received by CBRMs members and its contents.

Themes of the training delivered to CBRM members

Primary data on the issue of the types of the trainings that CBRMs members received has revealed that in 70% of the 20 CBRMs all members received trainings on conflict resolution while in 20% of CBRMs only select members received the training in conflict resolution (see chart 14).

Chart 14: Responses from 20 CBRMs on whether their members received training on conflict resolution

Did your CBRM receive training on conflict resolution?

■ All the members were trained on conflict resolution 70%   ■ selected members were trained on conflict resolution 20%   ■ None 10%

Interviews and data from focus group discussions showed that only few members had received training in conflict resolution and peace building. For example, a FGD with a CBRM in Abuodam, South Darfur stated that "we received a "training on conflict resolution that targeted three members of the committee." Another CBRM from Alhilaaljdeeda, South Darfur stated that, "six members of the committee were trained, (of which two were women), on conflict resolution, peace building and peaceful coexistence." It was raised by some respondents that there was a gender bias in the delivery of training and the types of training being given to men and women in the same CBRM. For instance, one CBRM member in Maali South, East Darfur stated that, "Women were trained on lending and loaning money. Men were trained on management, leadership, conflict resolution and how to discuss and share their opinions."

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[156]Kim Bergeron etal (2017) "Theories, models and frameworks used in capacity building interventions relevant to public health: a systematic review" in BMC Public Health. 2017; 17: 914. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5706342/

It will be important going forward that male and female representatives within the CBRMs are trained on the same topics, especially when it comes to areas such as management and leadership, where there is already a large discrepancy in terms of a gender-balance within the CBRMs and corresponding attitudes. Having bias in the delivered training topics will only reinforce existing differences. While it was noted only by one CBRM, this was not a direct question, so we cannot identify how many CBRMs experience similar issues.

Furthermore, data showed that CBRMs members were only trained on conflict resolution and not on topics such as gender or SGBV. However when we look at the contents of the training provided by NGOs (see Annex 1 for the NGO reports of the training) it was noted that other trainings on gender, SGBV and peacebuilding were provided by NGOs. Therefore, there seems to be a discrepancy between the training delivered and the training received. This was not resolved within this study but would be important for NGOs to note going forward. As the CBRM members did not respond knowingly regarding training on gender or SGBV, it can be concluded that trainings on gender and sexual based violence and gender and peace building skills are needed to be delivered to CBRM male and female members. Moreover, human rights and women's participation in decision-making and peace making processes were not mentioned as training received by the CBRMs members. This shows that there are gaps in knowledge and skills in areas of women's rights, negotiation , mediation, protection, and prevention and response from sexual ad gender based violence and issues of the women, peace and security in general and UNSCR 1325 and other protocols of human rights.

As discussed previously in this report, overall high levels of illiteracy and lower education levels, were explicitly stated as reasons why women and young women were seen to not be capable to participate and be leaders within the CBRMs. It is also important that we tailor trainings to accommodate for these different groups and recognize that we need to cater for different education levels to afford all members equal opportunities. It was noted in a previous study that older women's high levels of illiteracy may hold them back in terms of their ability to absorb training in local governance and decision-making.[157] Going forward this needs to be considered in the design, content and delivery of training.

NGOs' training modules for the CBRMs targeted for the GaPI's project

Analysing the modules of the NGOs trainings for CBRMs, it was found that NGOs differ in the training they provided for CBRMs. Some organisations focus on communication and leadership skills and others focus on conflict definition and causes, negotiations, and conflict resolution mechanism. Few organisations focus on gender training. None of the organisations provided trainings on SGBV, UNSCR 1325, and the inclusion of women in peace making processes (See annex 1 for more details). Therefore, it can be concluded that trainings would not produce the change that was intended in areas of SGBV and peace building processes. Training targeting CBRMs must focus on SGBV and its referral system, conflict analysis and resolution, peacemaking and peace building with inclusion of gender perspective.

The external capacity of humanitarian actors

In each of the five Darfuri states, a panel discussion was conducted with representatives of NNGOs, CSOs, UN agencies, government ministries, and local university departments and others who work on or have an interest in women's rights and/or gender equality. From these discussions, it was clear that the level of civil society and local NGO involvement in such areas varied hugely by state. For example, just the sheer number of people who turned up the panel discussion in North Darfur was impressive, particularly as it was

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[157] Ritchie, H. Social Norms and Barriers Analysis for Agro-Pastoralist Women and Girls in South Darfur, Sudan: Trends of change in a complex context? November 2018

held during the first few days of Ramadan, when people might be less inclined to voluntarily attend meetings. The passion and determination of the participants of this particular panel discussion to improve the lives of women in the areas in which they work, and to fight for women's empowerment and gender equality across Darfur and Sudan more broadly was clear from the way they spoke and participated during the discussion. The same energy was not felt to the same degree in some other panel discussions, particularly in the smaller, newer states, of East and Central Darfur. The differing levels of resources available across the different states may also have contributed to these variations.

Not all the organisations, which mainly worked on women's rights and empowerment, had a particularly strong focus on peacebuilding. However, given Darfur's recent past and its political and social context, most organisations' work touched on, if not directly dealt with peacebuilding in one way or another. For instance, organisations which had a focus on women's economic empowerment discussed the ways in which such empowerment also contributed to strengthening women's participation in peacebuilding processes.[158] Others had a more direct involvement in peacebuilding, providing trainings and workshops on peacebuilding, conflict analysis and reconciliation methods.[159] However, there often seemed to be a disconnect between peacebuilding processes on the one hand and women's empowerment on the other. Gender was not often clearly mainstreamed throughout the peacebuilding and reconciliation work of some of the organisations with whom we spoke.

Across all five panel discussions, there was a general consensus regarding the barriers organisations experienced which prevented them from achieving their aims, in relation to both peacebuilding and women's empowerment. High up on the list of concerns was a lack of capacity, particularly among some of the local NGOs and CSOs, especially in report and proposal writing as well as some project implementation. They told us that this impacted their ability to gain funding to implement many of their initiatives. Some raised their concerns about the current, ongoing departure of UNAMID, which funded and supported many of the peacebuilding initiatives in Darfur, but is gradually ceasing its activities.[160] Others discussed what they saw to be a lack of coordination among organisations, many of whom were working on overlapping issues, leading to ideas and resources not being shared, and the potential for unnecessary duplication of work.

Certain social and cultural norms proved to be some of the biggest obstacles facing many of the organisations we spoke to in the panel discussions, when dealing with gender issues and women's empowerment in Darfur. As we found through the fieldwork, panel members also indicated that socially determined and accepted gender roles often hindered their efforts to improve women's meaningful participation in peacebuilding processes, including in the CBRMs. For example, it was often harder for them to get women, particularly young women, to attend trainings or workshops than men, as these were usually held in the main cities, often quite a distance from the villages in which they lived. In addition to the common, yet arguably changing, perception in Darfur that peacebuilding is "men's work", women's household and child-rearing duties also left many women with very little free time to be able to travel for such training. This meant that, even though many organisations had quotas to ensure a certain number of women were included in trainings and workshops, it was not always easy to meet them.

Darfur presents a difficult operating environment for many of those working in CSOs and NGOs, especially for those dealing with gender issues. We were told that there remain many misconceptions within the community (and within some organisations themselves) about what gender means as well as the importance of it in development work. In Darfur, as in many places in the world, gender is associated in many people's minds with women much more than it is associated with men, meaning that it can easily be overlooked or dismissed as "irrelevant" to men.[161] This meant that many panellists found it difficult to

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[158] For example, Sudanese Women Development Organization, panel discussion in South Darfur
[159] For example, PBO, panel discussion in North Darfur
[160] https://unamid.unmissions.org/
[161] See panel discussion in North Darfur

incorporate and mainstream gender into much of the implementation of their initiatives on the ground, especially those which did not begin with a strong gender focus and where others found it harder to see its relevance. Indeed, we found even among the panellists, there was some confusion over what certain women's rights look like, particularly in the context of Darfur. For example, one man at the panel discussion in East Darfur mentioned during a conversation about domestic violence that "it is okay to beat your wife just a little."[162] Similarly, a *Judiya* representative, who was also a CBRM member, at the panel discussion in North Darfur said, "I think women and how they dress is the reason why they get raped. Women are the main reason for rape."[163] While others present at the discussion rejected the man's comments, some did agree. That these misconceptions about SGBV, including victim-blaming, were so easily shared in a setting such as a panel discussion among people who will have been exposed to or work on gender and women's empowerment, make these statements particularly concerning, and suggest that a lot of work needs to be done in Darfur on changing people's perceptions about SGBV in particular.

As we found throughout much of our fieldwork (see output 2), gender and particularly SGBV are difficult topics to broach due to associated social stigma. This has had an impact on the ways in which such organisations have been able to approach SGBV within local communities. Panellists in East Darfur explained that they tried to raise awareness about SGBV, highlighting the risks to women and the importance of men and boys' understanding of its impacts, without alienating or risking the safety of individual survivors of sexual violence.[164] We were told that many victims of sexual violence did not report the attacks because of the stigma associated with it, meaning that usage of services available was much lower than they would have liked. We also found that many organisations were not aware of many of the services available in their states, and therefore had not, up until then, been encouraging uptake among the communities in which they worked.

However, despite many of these challenges, panellists were keen to express that from their observations, there were positive changes occurring in Darfur in relation to gender and peacebuilding work. For instance, at all five of the panel discussions we were told that, despite the social and practical challenges, women were becoming increasingly visible in the public domain. They believed that the combined work of CSOs, NGOs and other development agencies in the region, had had, and was continuing to have, a positive impact on public perceptions of women's participation in peace processes at all levels. We were told that due to the work of NGOs in necessitating the participation of women in CBRMs, for instance, that gradually women's participation was becoming more and more accepted, and that with that increased acceptance, women were becoming more confident in their own capacities.[165]

Furthermore, the panellists shared their experiences of the positive effects increased women's participation in CBRMs and other peacebuilding mechanisms were having both in terms of creating a more sustainable peace and in strengthening women's voice in the public domain in Darfur more generally. The panellists in West Darfur explained how increased women's participation in the public domain was helping build bridges between communities, strengthening the social fabric and improving community stability.[166] Some participants in the panel discussion in Central Darfur highlighted the importance of diversity within peacebuilding and reconciliation mechanisms such as CBRMs, and mentioned that they have witnessed the benefits brought by the inclusion of women in CBRMs through a broadening of concerns and perspectives, and therefore stronger and more resilient reconciliation methods.[167] Panellists at all five of the discussions agreed that, in general, women were beginning to be better accepted by their communities for their participation in the public sphere. We were told that this acceptance, alongside women's economic

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[162] Panel Discussion, East Darfur, question 6
[163] *Judiya* representative and CBRM member (man), panel discussion, North Darfur, question 6
[164] Panel discussion in East Darfur,
[165] Panel discussion, Central Darfur, question 4
[166] Panel discussion, West Darfur, question 8
[167] Panel discussion, Central Darfur

empowerment and increased independence (through VSLAs and other means), was giving many women a more powerful voice within their communities, both in the public sphere and within the household. While there is clearly more work to be done on improving women's participation in the public domain in Darfur, there are signs of change, and therefore hope for the future.

Key findings and recommendations

The key recommendations are divided under headings that group key findings. These findings were developed based on the analysis of the report, as well as recommendations taken from the panel discussions and consultations with the NGOs and CBRMs; to ensure their priorities and voices were fully reflected in this report.

Women's meaningful participation and representation in leadership in the CBRMs is limited, and is being constrained by social and cultural norms that impact the ability of women to be meaningful participants in peace building processes

- **Quota systems** have shown that having women present in these spaces has led to positive impacts on both the perception of men of women being active in public spaces, and of women's own perception of themselves. While quotas will not solve issues and barriers for *meaningful* participation, CARE and NNGOs working with the CBRMs should maintain the requirements for female representation at 30% and look for opportunities to increase this over time.

- **Ensure female representation in leadership positions**. Ensure that the policy for the two top leadership positions (head and deputy head) to be held by a male and a female, is actuated in practice.

- **Engage women in conflict resolution.** Currently the members responsible for solving conflicts in the community are largely male. It is important that women and young women are further engaged in conflict resolution, taking on roles to lead in solving cases. To understand the extent of this and its impact, it is recommended that the CBRMs establish a monitoring and reporting system for within the CBRM and to the NNGOs on a regular (monthly) basis. This will also support increased understanding of whether women are actually solving community issues, or being limited to only focusing on 'women's issues. This report touched on this in terms of men and women's perception, however this will allow us to understand more the reality of roles of male and female members.

- **Identify key barriers with women and how they would like to overcome these**. Cultural pressures and lack of confidence were highlighted by women as key reasons they are reluctant to speak in public-forums and as barriers for their meaningful role within the CBRM. To mitigate these overlapping barriers initiatives to work with women in the community, both in and outside the CBRMs should be implemented. An example being CARE's Women Lead in Emergency (WLiE) initiative that works with women to understand their goals in participation and leadership in decision-making spaces and the steps they would like to take to overcome the barriers they face.

- Literacy and education were highlighted as two key barriers by male and female members of the CBRMs and the wider community, in which gender, age and economic status all play a role. Efforts should be made to provide literacy classes within the CBRMs, through partnerships with local or national agencies.

- **Ensure CBRM meetings are inclusive**. To ensure women's participation in the CBRMs is realised in practice, the meetings and activities must be accessible for all members in the community.

Limitations from their husbands, as well as daily schedules and workload form barriers for women being present in meetings. Therefore, the location of meetings and timings must be identified in consultation with women, men, young men and young women, as well as other diversity factors e.g. older women, widows, female-headed households.

- **Support the Youth Committees** in identifying specific roles for young women and young men, and ensure that young women are represented in the leadership of the committee. This should be ensured from the establishment of the committee.

- **Strengthening local law and justice systems**. This will have multiple impacts. 1) Create a safer environment for women, which will increase her participation in CBRM activities. Particularly for young women who have a high workload during the day but may face security issues at night, creating a barrier for them to participate in meetings 2) Increased law enforcement can support CBRMs in implementing national regulations and provide a level of accountability to do so.

- **Engage men and boys** in discussions around gender inequality, raise awareness of the impact of inequality in peacebuilding and conflict resolution.

- **Work in schools** with boys and girls to encourage, from a young age, discussions on gender, SGBV and peacebuilding.

- **Establish forums or spaces** where men and women can discuss issues most important to them. This will aim to mitigate the view that some issues are only women's issues / they can only be addressed by women. Examples directly from the CBRMs spoke of needing to address issues of legalization and registration of land as an issue for conflict mitigation.

- **Raise awareness of Resolution 1325.** Disseminate widely the commitments under 1325 to CBRMs and make a plan for how this can further be disseminated to the wider community.

Economic empowerment seems to lead to improved social empowerment, giving women greater social standing and, by virtue, a stronger voice

- **Support women ins income generating activities.** Although not the focus of this report, in general VSLA's have shown strong links between economic and social empowerment. Efforts should be made, either through the Youth Committees and Women Committees (that are branches of the CBRM mechanism) to engage women in income-generating activities to increase access and control over financial resources.

- **Work with young women and young men**, from an early age to provide them with or support them in opportunities to engage in income generating projects. This has the aim to increase economic independence and empowerment as well as having knock on effects to prevent GBV and SGBV. This was noted as specifically important through the panel discussions in reducing early marriage.

- **Use role models as agents of change**. Work with economically successful women, female role models and female leaders of the CBRMs to raise awareness of their journey, how they achieved their roles and status despite the cultural limitations they faced. Mentorship initiatives and awareness raising forums could be held with youth committees, women committees, as well as in CBRMs who have been identified as having less overall female representation and female leadership.

CBRMs are still replicating some of the pre-existing power structures, which, are conceivably impeding women's access to leadership and decision-making roles

- **Strengthening the CBRMs knowledge of and ability to implement national regulations** related to the cases they work with. This will reduce the influence of traditional systems, moving towards nationally-agreed mechanisms to reduce power dynamics and increase gender equality within conflict resolution processes.

- **Establish accountability and feedback mechanisms**. There exists a lack of awareness of the impact female CBRM members are having in the community with regards to conflict resolution and peace building. Therefore, it is recommended to establish or where they exist, leverage, community accountability and feedback mechanisms to increase awareness of the impact of male and female CBRM members as well as gain feedback on where the gaps are from the community perspective. When establishing such forums or feedback mechanisms it will be important to ensure full consultation with men, women and youth (male and female) in determining the format, the location and the time of day – all of which were highlighted in this report as barriers for participation for women and young women.

- CARE, DCPSF to work with the CBRMs to develop conflict analysis using a common approach and framework across all CBRMs, to identify the causes and root causes of conflict in their communities, based on power, gender inequality, diversity issues. The aim will be to increase the role of CBRMs not only in responding to issues in the community but to work to build peace in the society.

There is limited engagement between NGOs and the CBRMs limiting the full effectiveness of the CBRMs

- **Establish minimum standards** for training curriculum and minimum standards for the curriculum - Training should follow an agreed style and framework to ensure: that all groups within the same CBRM receive the same training; that all CBRMs receive consistent training; and that if selected members are trained, that they have the tools to be trainers or community facilitiators themselves to convey the messages back to the community. Efforts should be in place to allocate resource persons who can act as trainers. To ensure the effectiveness of the training, pre-training assessments should be undertaken, and action plan developed at the end of the training with evaluation forms to monitor the CBRMs perceptions of the training content and style, and to dentify what further training is required. In terms of progress indicators, for CARE, NNGOs and DCPSF implementing partners these should focus on the impact of the training. The importance of gender and peacebuilding modules should be emphasised.

- **Based on existing training modules**, topics covering gender and peacebuilding are currently addressed independently. We need to ensure that CBRMs see the value of engaging women and men in peacebuilding structures and that gender is not seen as an add on.

- **Ensure nexus programming**. Through all the work with CBRMs, there should be a focus on ensuring humanitarian response and development initiatives has peacebuilding as a cross-cutting issue, as well as gender and SGBV.

- **Inclusive training approaches**. If only selected members are trained this need to be representative of men, women, young men and young women and take into consideration other diversity factors to mitigate any groups being excluded. The method and approaches of the training must takes into account participants who may have lower levels of education and literacy levels.

- Training should include ways to build key skills e.g. in leadership style, management, communication.

- **Continued engagement between NNGOs and CBRMs**. There seems to be a disconnect between the NNGOs and the CBRMs, after their establishment. A key focus of support to date, has been through training, and while this is important, there does not seem to be continuous monitoring or engagement with the CBRMs. CARE currently has developed a scope of work for the CBRMs it works with and it is recommended that all other partners do the same. This would allow the CBRM to develop clear guidelines to ensure rotation of leadership, representation of women, recruitment of new members, and to identify clear roles and responsibilities of men, women, young men and young women in the CBRMs.

Agencies and government bodies engaged in peacebuilding and women's rights lack co-ordination and experience barriers to achieving their peacebuilding goals

- **Activate and strengthen co-ordination mechanisms** to link organisations together, for information sharing, avoid repetition of projects and overall co-ordination. CARE and DCPSF can provide training and capacity building to interest Ministries and organisation to achieve this.

- **Build capacity of NGOs** to create or re-activate an internal system for monitoring and reporting on their work.

- **Strengthen existing networks of CBRMs** within the States and potentially build co-ordination networks and information sharing of CBRMs between States

- **Support NNGOs and provide training** to write proposals and reports to ensure equal opportunities for funding.

- **Engage NGOs and all implementing partners in any new project design** and proposal development, to ensure appropriate understanding of the specific target areas and groups, understanding of the capacity of all actors to implement the project within a given timeframe and to ensure a full understanding of the conflict and gender analysis (including the root causes) to ensure the project really addresses the key needs and priorities of the community.

- **Advocate to peace actors** and agencies to reactivate laws and international resolutions that work to uphold the rights of women in peacebuilding.

- Focus on projects that look at interconnecting issues not working in silo, for example peacebuilding, livelihoods, SGBV/GBV and economic empowerment. Again, focus on nexus programming to ensure peacebuilding, humanitarian action and development initiatives work together.

Areas for further research

To build on this report and the analysis that has been developed there are a number of avenues required to develop a more in depth understanding of how we can engage all women and young women in peace building and conflict resolution.

- We need to look further at the impacts of the intersectionality of women e.g. the levels of participation and the barriers women face with regards to their levels of education, disability status, socio-economic status.

- It would be interesting to look further at the impacts of VSLAs directly linked to impacts of their engagement in peacebuilding and conflict resolution in the community

- How to measure the quality and impact of women's active and meaningful participation, especially if we compare the current situation, to after the implementation of the above recommendations.

- In addition to youth and women's committees, it would be interesting to see women's roles in other committees such as village development committees, water committees etc, to understand what effect, if any, these also have on empowering women and engaging them within peacebuilding and conflict resolution processes in their community.

- To review in more detail the existing laws and policies related to gender, gender equality and peacebuilding and how these are understood at the grassroots level; within the community and within the CBRMs. Within this, explore the link between theory and practice and identify areas for advocacy for CIS and other NNGOs to work toward providing a more enabling environment with laws and policies that uphold the rights of women, girls and margenalised groups.

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Annexes

Annex 1: Implementing Partner training modules review

Annex 2: Full list of respondents and tools

Annex 3: Details on the chosen CBRMs

Annex 4: GaPI's field action plan

Annex 5: Mapping of Women Organizations in Darfur

Annex 6: Recommendations by CBRMs, NNGOs & UN Agencies

Annex 7: CBRMs Knowledge About Handling SGBVGBV Cases

Annex 8: Services available for SGBV & GBV survivors

Annex 9: GaPI Database

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