



CARE INTERNATIONAL IN SOUTH SUDAN

**BASELINE SURVEY REPORT  
WOMEN'S VOICES AND LEADERSHIP PROJECT  
(CENTRAL EQUATORIA, EASTERN EQUATORIA & JONGLEI  
STATES)**



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## ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS

<b>CBOs</b>	Community Based Organizations
<b>CEDAW</b>	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
<b>CSOs</b>	Civil Society Organizations
<b>FGD</b>	Focus Group Discussion
<b>KII</b>	Key Informant Interview
<b>PMF</b>	Performance Measurement Framework
<b>POC</b>	Protection of Civilians
<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SPSS</b>	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>USD</b>	United State Dollar
<b>WLO</b>	Women Led Organizations
<b>WVL</b>	Women’s Voice and Leadership

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This is a report of a baseline study carried out in Eastern Equatorial, Central Equatorial and Jonglei States by the NAJJ Consultants on behalf of CARE South Sudan under the project of Women's Voice and Leadership. The consultants would like to sincerely thank the participants for their's time and contribution both in granting interviews and providing feedback. Specifically, we acknowledge support received from key partners including but not limited to the 16 Women Led Organizations under the Women's Voice and Leadership project, and the various stakeholders engaged in the three target states such as Government Ministries/Departments, community leaders, civil society organizations, women groups, media organizations and gender advocates among others.

Findings from the survey will undoubtedly provide strategic direction in the implementation of the Women's Voice and Leadership Project in addition to serving as a valuable resource for women's rights work in South Sudan.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CARE South Sudan, with funding from Global Affairs Canada, implements the Women's Voice and Leadership (WVL) project in the Eastern Equatorial, Central Equatorial and Jonglei states. WVL is a four-year project that supports the capacity and activities of local and national women-led organizations (WLO) seeking to empower women and girls, advance the protection of women and girls' rights and achieve gender equality.

The baseline survey purposely informs the establishment of realistic and achievable targets and provides a point of reference against which progress on or towards the achievement of outcomes will be assessed, monitored and evaluated. This will also inform project implementation performance review process, maintain accountability by informing what difference the project is making and provide justification to the stakeholders for programme intervention. The study was also used to assess the political economy that underpins the operating environment for WLOs. The findings and recommendations of the baseline will help to provide strategic and operational guide to shape the implementation process.

### Research design

The baseline study adopted a mixed qualitative and quantitative descriptive study design. This method allowed for triangulation and corroboration of information with each of the methods reinforcing each other. 16 WLOs and 3 women's networks were assessed to document evidence on their capacity to develop strategic plans, mobilize sustainable resources, ability to design and deliver community level gender equity awareness raising and rights based programming, ability to come together and identify common issues / needs of the communities and participate in collective action, make decisions, and have access to and control over resources.

### Data analysis

The study design allowed for the collection of qualitative and quantitative data. This mixed design saw quantitative data derived mainly from the WLO survey tool and the women network member survey tool, while qualitative data was derived from the key informant interviews (KII). This triangulation-based approach required multiple analyses. Quantitative data from the questionnaire were entered and analysed in an established SPSS database after cleaning and data checks for internal consistency. Data was subjected to a non-parametric test using chi-square for significance test at 0.05 confidence level. Qualitative data from the KII were typed in MS word from the notes taken during the sessions.

### Key findings

1. **WLO staff, board and members age distribution:** 69% of the 74 respondents were female and 31% male. The average age of the staff, board and members was found to be 35 years with the oldest being 64 years and the youngest being 21 years old with the majority falling in the age bracket of 21-35 years. 69% were of the age between 21-35 years.

2. **WLO staff, board and members involvement in the organizations:** 49% of those interviewed comprised of the regular and volunteer staff, 28% being board members while the remaining 23% were members of the various networks and organizations.
3. **WLO programs:** 51% of the organizations had programs that were entirely women focused, 31% had programs that were directed to the entire community while 16% supported girl's programs. Only 2% of the organizations supported boy's programs.
4. **WLO and marginalized groups:** 53% of the organizations serve survivors of gender-based violence as one of the marginalized groups. Youth and people with disabilities are both served by 8% of the organizations. People living in Protection of Civilians (POC) camps are served by 3% of the organizations, while 28% of the organizations serve other groups of people such as widows and orphans, women and girls, pastoralist communities, women in civil societies, religious groups or political groups among others.
5. **WLOs and population served:** 68.9% of the WLO respondents said that most of the organizations support between 500 to 1000 people directly but indirectly reaching more people.
6. **Organizational maturity:** WLOs' respondents were asked to rank the women's movement in South Sudan in terms of its development and maturity. Only 4% of the 16 organizations believed the movement is mature, 28% considering it at the medium strong level, 53%, considered it to be medium weak while 15% considered it weak/young.
7. **Management and sustainability of WLO:** 68% of the respondents said that their WLO had a strategic plan, and among those, 87% had participated in the development process.
8. **Best practices:** It was found WLOs reported around 43% achievement on some of the best practices identified by the project, while 57% did not.
9. **Funding and sustainability of WLOs:** at 84% had received financial assistance from 1-3 donors in the past year, 15% had received support from between 4-6 donors while the remaining 1% received financial support from 7-10 donors. In terms of the amount 43% of them received in the last year less than USD 10,000, 34% received between USD 100,001-50,000 while 5% received between USD 50,001-100,000. The remaining 18% received more that USD 100,000.
10. **Opportunities for funding by WLOs:** 57% possess an average ability to improve resource mobilization and fundraising. 32% of the respondents had a high ability while 11% had the lowest ability.
11. **WLO capacity:** 42% of WLOs possess a "high" ability to manage / govern their organisations, 54% report "high" ability to deliver quality programming, and 43.2% report "high" capacity to channel demand related to gender equality and engage in decision-making. 38% feel confident to create strategic plans.
12. **WLOs and policy influence:** 55% of the respondents had influenced targeted policies/ laws/ framework/ mechanisms/ procedures or plans. The other 40% had not done anything while 5% of the respondents had no idea on policy influence.
13. **WLOs and Collective Actions:** 97% of the respondents had undertaken less than 10 collective actions. 73% had undertaken less than 5, 19% between 5-9, 5% between 10-14 and 3% more than 15.
14. **Meaningful participation:** 26% of respondents reported that they had "very good" participation in formal and informal decision-making spaces, while 49% others reported "good" participation.

15. **WLOs and networking:** 59% respondents reported high ability to engage in networks/alliances/platforms/ movements, 39% reported average ability to engage in network platforms while only 4% reported low ability.
16. **WLO and Network:** The study findings show that 88% of the supported WLOs take part in the networks supported by the WVJ project.
17. **Gender equitable attitudes:** 84% of respondents displayed gender equitable attitudes through a series of gender-related questions.

## **Key conclusions and Recommendations**

The baseline shows that the current performance by the by WLOs in regard to their voices and engagement in leadership of most of the project indicators is still relatively low and there is a need to improve. The participation of the WLOs especially in women led advocacy and campaigns is still low and is impeded by organizational systems and structures as well as lack of adequate information. The study has shown that a majority of the WLOs have actively been engaged in women and girl's rights awareness and empowerment but there is room for improvement

### **The key recommendations**

1. Prioritize developing the capacity of WLOs on organizational development, advocacy and networking for gender equality and empowerment of women and girls.
2. Strengthen governance and management practices of WLOs by strengthening leadership, governance systems and structures, communications, succession planning and accountability.
3. Facilitate organizational development, maturity and collaboration by building strong sustainable networks and platforms for engagement.
4. Support WLOs' engagement in policy dialogue and advocacy through training, support and planning of actions.
5. Support WLOs in fundraising and resource mobilization through training linkages and technical support.
6. Exploit potential opportunities for women to engage in decision making and leadership such as the 35% quota for women.

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### Project Overview and background

CARE South Sudan, with funding from Global Affairs Canada, implements the Women's Voice and Leadership (WVL) program in the Eastern Equatorial, Central Equatorial and Jonglei states. WVL is a four-year project to support the capacity and activities of local and national women-led organizations (WLOs) seeking to empower women and girls; advance the protection of women and girls' rights and achieve gender equality.

South Sudanese WLOs operate in a challenging environment with limited resources and increased capacity gaps to better implement their programs or invest in their institutional growth. The WVL project aims to provide targeted support to selected WLOs to address these challenges and help them respond to gender inequality and issues that affect women and girls in their communities. The WVL project will strengthen the capacities of WLOs through: provision of multi-year funding grants to WLOs; fast responsive funding for short-term discrete advocacy, innovative and strategic activities; institutional capacity building support; and networking and alliance building among WLOs.

Overall, the WVL project aims to achieve the following outcomes:

- Improved management and sustainability of WLOs
- Enhanced performance of WLOs in programming, advocacy, feminist transformative community engagement and institutional capabilities to advance gender equality and empower women and girls
- Increased effectiveness of national, state and local WLOs' platforms, networks and alliances to influence, policy, legal and social change in the country.

### 1.2 Baseline Objectives

This baseline study focused on the information that must be assessed and analyzed to establish a **baseline** or starting point for the benchmark indicators against which future progress can be assessed or comparisons made. Specific purposes include:

1. To provide a specific value and benchmarks for each indicator in the performance measurement framework (PMF) as the starting point for the project.
2. To inform the establishment of realistic and achievable targets, provides a point of reference against which progress on or towards the achievement of outcomes will be assessed, monitored and evaluated, and will also inform project implementation performance review process.
3. To help the project maintain accountability, by informing what difference the project is making when baseline results are compared to midline and endline findings and provide justification to the stakeholders for the intervention.
4. To identify key gender dimensions of human rights, decision-making, and access and control over resources that influence the 16 WLO Partners and three networks and to understand the relationships between men and women, their access to resources, their activities, and the constraints they face relative to each other.

5. To assess the political economy that underpins the operating environment for WLOs and women's networks.
6. The findings and recommendations of the baseline will help to provide strategic and operational guide to shape the implementation process.
7. To provide qualitative information on the contextual social norms within the field, to inform the programme approach and substantiate future documentation and learning.

## CHAPTER II: METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Project context Area (Eastern Equatorial, Central Equatorial and Jonglei states)

The baseline was carried out in the Eastern Equatorial, Central Equatorial and Jonglei States where the project is being implemented. Eastern Equatorial is a state in South Sudan covering an area of 73,472 km<sup>2</sup> with its capital at Torit. Central Equatorial is a state in South Sudan covering an area of 43,033 km<sup>2</sup> and includes Juba. Jonglei is 80,926 km<sup>2</sup> with Bor as the capital of the state.

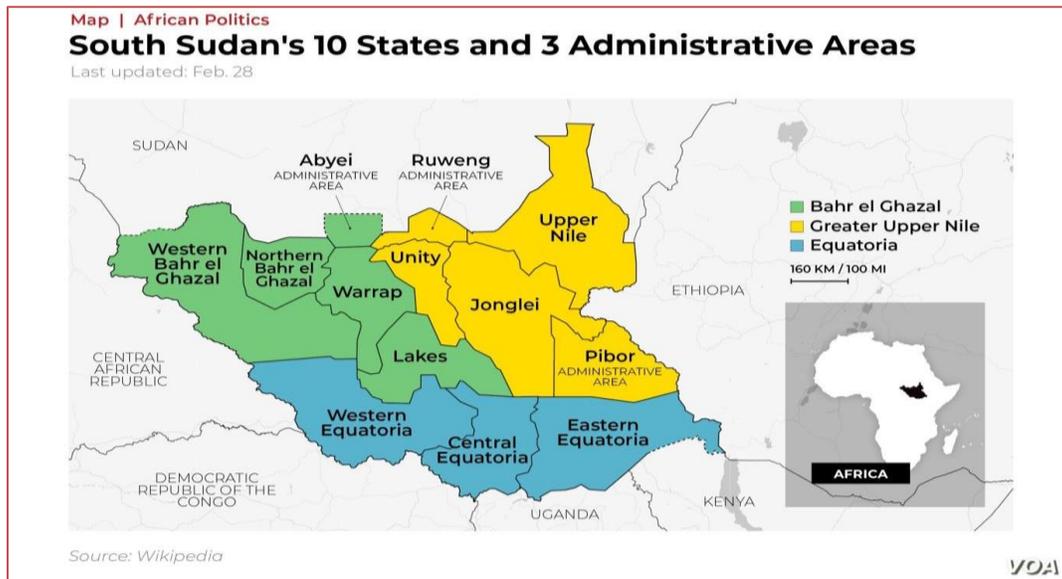


Figure 1: Map showing WVL project Areas

### 2.2 Study research and sampling design

#### 2.2.1 Study research design

In executing this study, a mixed qualitative and quantitative descriptive survey design was adopted. This mixed method design and triangulation helping in validation of data, bias reduction and enriching the findings.

#### 2.2.2 Study sampling design

This involved concurrent mixed methods approaches for undertaking the study. This included both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to generate rich information to help fully explore each of the study objectives. The study entailed conducting key informant interviews (KII) with project staff, the state representatives, WLOs, government departments and community leaders with knowledge of the project in consideration of gender and social inclusion needs. The key informants were probed on issues of women leadership and decision making, empowerment of women and girls and engagement of WLOs in programming, advocacy and action. Information obtained from KIIs validated some findings from the project documents and WLO survey findings.

The baseline adopted a purposive sampling methodology and focused on 16 WLOs that are part of WVL project (those receiving multi-year funding) in the Central Equatorial, Eastern Equatorial and Jonglei states using an online quantitative survey tool administered to five members of each

of the 16 organizations (comprising of 2 board members, 1 Executive Director and 2 other staff), giving a total of 80 targeted WLO respondents. All 16 WLOs supported by the project (7 in Central Equatorial state, 5 in Eastern Equatorial state, and 4 in Jonglei state) were included in the study. The total number of targeted respondents who responded to the study were 74, accounting for a 92% response rate.

The qualitative data was collected from the literature review and 16 key informants who included WLOs, government, religious organization, media and other civil society organizations.

### **2.2.3 Baseline instruments**

The CARE team administered baseline WLO survey tool to the 16 WLOs and the key informant interview guide tool with 16 CARE staff, government officers and other non-state actors.

### **2.2.4 Document Review**

The team reviewed the following project documentation: Project design documents and proposal, the performance monitoring framework, the capacity assessment reports of the 16 WLOs, the capacity building plans of each of the 16 WLOs, the project implementation plan, the gender analysis, policy documents and project reports.

### **2.2.5 Data Collection**

The study team carried out a desk review to generate relevant information from secondary sources listed above.

The consulting team also carried out WLO's surveys. CARE team administered the WLO survey using online KOBO Connect to undertake the baseline assessment of the 16 WLOs using the WLO survey tool. This digital data collection targeted 80 respondents but ultimately was able to reach 74 respondents which included the board members, executive directors, senior and junior staff of WLOs benefiting directly from the project.

The CARE team conducted 16 key informant interviews as follows: CARE staff, SAC, non-state actors (representatives of NGO'S, media), women leaders, gender desks in the state government offices.

### **2.2.6 Data analysis**

While CARE staff led on most of the data collection, the analysis was led by NAJJ Consultants. Quantitative data from the questionnaires were entered and analysed in an established SPSS database after cleaning and check-up of data for internal consistency. The qualitative data was subjected to content analysis which involved reading and re-reading of the notes to identify emerging themes, patterns and trends and placing the responses within the appropriate context. During analysis, the qualitative data was included to reinforce the quantitative findings and bring out the reason behind the numbers. In some instances, verbatim citations in their unadulterated form have been included in this report to give credence to the findings.

### **2.2.7 Ethical considerations**

The study was conducted fully guided by the ethical requirements based on international evaluation standards. Specific considerations were given to ethical issues of research design, piloting of tools, data collection, reporting and storage. The enumerators were trained on ethical research, consent and coercion, non-judgemental data collection and ethical interviewing, as well as the specific use of the research tools, confidentiality and secure data handling. Participants consented freely to be included in the study and they were made aware of the how they were identified and the objectives of the study. It is only upon consenting after the full briefing that they were allowed to participate.

### **2.2.8 Risks and challenges to the baseline study including COVID-19**

The impact of the global spread of the COVID-19 has hit home in the region and South Sudan is not an exception. Although still lower in numbers than the epicentres in China, US and Europe, the continued testing is confirming a rise in number of infections with fear of the health systems being overwhelmed, with high morbidity and mortality rates. COVID-19 has resulted in travel restrictions, quarantine of those who have come into contact with confirmed victims, curfews and a partial lockdown. Government offices and businesses have either reduced working hours or are completely shut down.

NAJJ consultants conducted a risk assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on the baseline study and developed a response mechanism, including remotely coordinating the data collection from the field using CARE staff and virtually collected data via KoBo Toolbox surveys. This involved coordinating field surveys and creating tools for remote / virtual data collection online and by phone. During this data collection period, daily monitoring was conducted through an appropriate platform.

## CHAPTER III: CONTEXT ANALYSIS

### 3.1 Overview of the operating socio-political environment

#### 3.1.1 Overview of South Sudan Socio-Political Economy

In South Sudan, poverty and food insecurity has risen due to displacement of people caused by the conflict. South Sudan and its people continue to reel from the impacts of years of conflict, violence and limited of development investment. With famine spreading, 66% of the population in South Sudan is living on less than about \$2 a day, up from 50.6% in 2009, according to the World Bank. About 80% of the population lives in rural areas, with agriculture, forestry and fishing providing the livelihood for a majority of the households. Industry and infrastructure are severely underdeveloped. Continued fighting within the new nation is disrupting what remains of the economy. The vast majority of the population is dependent on subsistence agriculture and humanitarian assistance. Property rights are insecure and price signals are weak, because markets are not well-organized.<sup>1</sup>

South Sudan is still a volatile country due to underlying challenges such as; delayed cantonment of former fighters, full integration of forces, decisions concerning the number of states and their boundaries, and unresolved issues in the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS) that cause uncertainty to its future growth and development.<sup>2</sup> The armed conflict has exacerbated pre-existing inequalities and has made both women and men more vulnerable to violence.

Two-thirds of South Sudan's population is under the age of 30 and life expectancy stands at 57 years, well below regional and global averages. Some 7.3 million people are facing problems related to their physical and mental well-being. Almost half of all counties have a convergence of high needs related to food insecurity, protection, and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH).

Literacy rates among persons 15 years or more are only 27% (16% for female literacy). A very large proportion of the population is thus made up of young people with limited education and skills, particularly girls and young women. The destruction of schools and displacement of teachers has severely impacted access to education, as well as the protective environment and other basic social services such as food, nutrition and healthcare that are commonly associated with education, thereby making children and youth particularly vulnerable to the impacts of the armed conflict as well as to adopting negative coping mechanisms.<sup>3</sup>

Gender inequality and gender-based violence (GBV) permeate South Sudanese society. GBV is a reality for many women, and abortion is illegal even when a woman has been raped. The rule of law is largely non-existent, and the majority of cases are dealt with using customary laws which inevitably discriminate against women and other minorities. Traditions vary between cultural, ethnic and religious groups, but child marriage is widespread and 52% of girls are married before

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<sup>1</sup> [https://theodora.com/wfbcurent/south\\_sudan/south\\_sudan\\_economy.html](https://theodora.com/wfbcurent/south_sudan/south_sudan_economy.html)

<sup>2</sup> South Sudan Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020 (November, 2019)

<sup>3</sup> South Sudan Crisis HUMANITARIAN CRISIS ANALYSIS 2020

turning 18, and 9% even by the age of 15. Reports of human auctions, abductions and sexual slavery are increasing. The stigma and discrimination towards people with disabilities is very high, especially for mental disabilities. People with disabilities are extremely vulnerable to abuse and negative coping mechanisms, and children with audio-visual or mental disabilities rarely have access to education. Furthermore, WHO concludes that when applying the latest prevalence estimates of mental disorders in conflict settings to South Sudan, approx. 2.5 million or every fifth South Sudanese might have a mental disorder at any point in time.<sup>4</sup>

Decision making in both private and public spheres is viewed as the role and responsibility of men. They are seen as heads and protectors of the family, make the main farm/ economic decisions, and as having a right to control women's bodies. Men decide on how many children to have and on birth-spacing and they decide when and how daughters will be married. A 2017 study by Oxfam found that within the household, most women had little or no involvement in decision-making. In contrast, most male respondents in the study considered themselves 'decision makers'. Boys and girls, who identified men as the principal decision makers in their households, corroborated this finding. Women were viewed, by both men and women, as weak, unable to make decisions, and changeable. The more limited access to education, information, training and employment opportunities that women and girls have seems to reinforce this view.

In South Sudan, women and girls tend to be expected to take on a greater unpaid care burden of household chores and caregiving, but also tend to be particularly disadvantaged in situations of scarcity - whether it is eating 'last and least' or being left out of education, decision making, or the health decisions. In South Sudan, women are the primary food producers in their households, accounting for 70% of the agricultural labour force and contributing to as much as 80-90% of labour for household food production. However, men generally make decisions on what is cultivated and, in most cases, control the small amounts of money gained from the sale of produce. Additionally, as various reports have highlighted, men normally decide the eating habits and patterns at all levels of the society including what is eaten by each gender and when they eat it.

### **3.1.2 Legal and policy framework on women in South Sudan**

South Sudan ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and its optional protocols in 2014. They have also ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention against Torture. More recently, in June 2019, the government ratified major human rights instruments such as the International Covenants on Human Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of Children, which prohibits child marriage, has also been ratified. These international treaties, including the Beijing Platform for Action and the Maputo Protocol, formed the basis of South Sudan's 2012 National Gender Policy. The Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Affairs is in charge of the implementation of this policy and other gender policies alongside the gender focal points in other ministries. In 2016, the South Sudanese government launched the National Action Plan to implement UNSCR1325 on Women, Peace, and Security.

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid

Domestically, since independence in 2011, there have been real changes in national policy and laws on gender equality. The Transitional Constitution and Bill of Rights (2011) provides guarantees for equality between women and men. Recognizing the historic inequalities between women and men in South Sudan, it sets a 25% Affirmative Action quota for women in legislative and executive bodies. The peace process increased this commitment to 35%. Women currently comprise 26.5% of the National Legislative Assembly.

Despite all these policies in place, the government seems to face a capacity gap in the implementation of the plan.<sup>5</sup> While the Constitution and Bill of Rights provides some guarantees for equality, the constitution is clear that traditional customs can be practiced as long as they are not against the legal framework. Yet, South Sudanese rely almost exclusively on traditional courts, which apply the customary laws of South Sudan's many tribes. Each tribal group has its own discrete body of customary law, resulting in over fifty separate bodies of customary law existing within South Sudan. The incompatibility between the Constitution and customary law remains unaddressed and is a major barrier to the achievement of gender equality and the advancement of women's rights.

### **3.1.3 Progress on women's participation and leadership in South Sudan**

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Most women in South Sudan are not socially and economically empowered. Failure to pay closer attention to differentiated positions of women and men in the society when formulating policies and designing projects can have an adverse impact on development outcomes. The inclusions of sustainable development goal number five (SDG) on gender equality is essential to ensure development.

The reason why women in South Sudan are not as empowered socially and economically is due to existing cultural and customary barriers that prevent them from gainful employment, ownership of property and access to social amenities such as education and right to health. Others include wide discrepancies between men and women on issues of unemployment, educational opportunities and access to credit facilities and resources to build and empower themselves socially and economically. Due to existing discriminatory marital and property laws, women are subjected to a vicious cycle of poverty.

As some reports indicate, women account for over 60% of the population in South Sudan. This is orchestrated by among others over 40 years of conflict. Years of conflict has not only deprived women of their dependents - husbands and sons, but the disturbing and conventional post-war society coupled with discriminatory cultural traditions and abject poverty undermines the promotion of equal rights and the ability for women to actively participate in the development of the new nation. The high rate of maternal mortality in the country is still thought to be the highest in the world. South Sudan even since independence continues to suffer from inter-ethnic conflicts with many women and children being the victims of these clashes.

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<sup>5</sup> [https://www.jica.go.jp/english/our\\_work/thematic\\_issues/gender/background/c8h0vm0000anjqj6att/south\\_sudan\\_2017.pdf](https://www.jica.go.jp/english/our_work/thematic_issues/gender/background/c8h0vm0000anjqj6att/south_sudan_2017.pdf)

As a demonstration of the commitment to the 35% quota, at present there are some women in the Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly and some in the State's Legislative Assembly. Unfortunately this does not translate down to more local levels of government. Women are rarely awarded high level positions in politics and even in institutions, due to poor literacy levels, low education, lack of opportunities and gender stereotypes. These are important obstacles to women's empowerment and their possible inclusion in decision making, peace building and leadership. Furthermore, due to cultural traditions and the perceived low status of women in Southern Sudanese society, women are not being offered enough opportunities to make a difference to the development of their society. At the community level, older male chiefs with deeply ingrained patriarchal views continue to dominate decision making in customary courts. Almost 72% of national parliamentarians and 100% of state governors are men.

Nevertheless, the return of many qualified women to South Sudan due to its independence and the important role that women should play in the political, economic and cultural development cannot be underestimated. Despite the government's commitment, at least on paper to gender equality, women played a very insignificant role in the development of the transitional constitution despite the eagerness of many women to exercise their right to participate in politics.

A strategic and sustained approach needs to be developed with the government and civil society organizations to translate the commitment of the government from rhetoric to reality. There is also a need to put in place certain things in order to enhance social and economic empowerment of women such as; equal access to education, quality healthcare, basic services, employment with equal pay, and laws that protect women's right to land, property, and assets.

### **3.2 Women Led Organizations in South Sudan**

According to the KII and secondary data, WLOs in South Sudan operate in one of the most challenging environments in the world. State services are unable to provide basic education, health care or livelihood supports, and infrastructure remains weak. Initial gains in the formation of a national gender machinery have not translated into women's leaders, rights or agendas being equally included in state structures or policies.

The space for civil society in South Sudan is limited and marred with obstacles that prevent WLOs and the women's movements from thriving. In February 2016, the South Sudanese government passed a bill that gives the government sweeping powers to regulate, shut down, and seize assets of non-governmental and civil society organizations based on declarations or activities deemed political (HRW 2017). These restrictions, combined with the high risk of intimidation, imprisonment, and violence faced by activists, have limited the operational capacity of WLOs and caused the flight of key champions within the women's rights movement. WLOs have limited allies - while the media is sometimes friendly to WLOs, the prevailing censorship environment limits their allegiance.

WLOs occupy a unique niche and provide clear value add in this context. They play key roles in peace building, nation building, promoting women's public voice and participation in multiple layers of governance, and in linking women and girls to services. WLOs have gained some strategic experience in pushing forward gender change agendas during long periods of historical conflict and displacement. South Sudanese women have developed extensive peace building

skills and strategic thinking, emanating from their roles as spiritual and political leaders as well as their experiences of exile and displacement in war-affected areas. Women's rights groups and activists have been key to ensuring women's representation on national peace negotiations and community councils. They lobbied for the affirmative action quota and have been key to localizing UNSCR 1325. WLOs also train women as politicians and peacemakers and take on the broad task of raising women's and girls' awareness of their human rights. WLOs have worked with women and adolescent girls to generate income, strengthen access to health care, develop life skills, focus on self-empowerment, and farm sustainably.

Membership in women's organisation has exposed South Sudanese women and girls to new ways of thinking and provided them with information about their rights. Membership provides women and girls with critical peer-to-peer support, reinforces friendship and social bonds across ethnic groups. WLOs are able to implicate change makers and committed volunteers from boma to national levels. They are relatively well linked into exogenous networks such as those associated with the humanitarian cluster coordination system and regional women's rights networks (such as the Women's Block or SSWEN). In other words, WLOs in South Sudan are responsible for promoting women and girls as equal and fully active citizens from the household level upwards. At the same time, and recognizing the heterogeneity of this movement, South Sudanese WLOs often struggle in a number of key organizational development, programming and advocacy areas.

### **3.2.1 Challenges facing Women Led Organizations in accessing funding in South Sudan**

The key challenges facing WLO in accessing funding in South Sudan are varied and this impacts on the visibility, programmes and advocacy on women and girl's empowerment. From the KIIs and secondary literature, WLO face major challenges getting funding because of: lack of organizational systems and structures, short term funding which in the most cases are humanitarian in nature, lack of fundraising skills like proposal and concept note writing, limited ability to network and connect with prospective donors. Another notable impediment is the stiff competition with other already well-established and networked national and international organizations with fundraising and proposal writing experts. Further, most of the WLO are operating at lower levels of the society hence lack the much needed visibility to attract funds. The WLOs also have limited access to the internet and other social media coupled with poor connectivity and high cost of internet where it does exist, this affects their ability to undertake donor research and proposal writing. Local WLOs often miss funding from larger donors because they do not have the staff or language skills to access application forms that are frequently complex and bureaucratic. In consultations undertaken for the SSUDEMOP project (2016), activists described this as a disconnect between WLOs and donors. For example, donors define "competence" as being able to write English-language reports and meet related accountability requirements, rather than the ability to undertake high quality work on gender justice activities with rural women and girls. Requirements have become more stringent and funding opportunities have further diminished as conflicts accelerate. Awareness about prospective funders is also cited as a major obstacle to WLOs to access funds.

Again, in a patriarchal society like South Sudan, women do not own property so they lack adequate resources they can use in raising funds. Related to this is the power to make decisions

to dispose of a family asset in case there is a need to do so in order to raise funds. Although women's agendas are not fully appreciated in South Sudan, there is also a general perception that leadership is still within the domain of men and this has exacerbated a lack of confidence in women leadership even among the women themselves.

From the consultation with the 16 WLOs during the WVL Project Implementation Plan workshop in 2019, the following were cited as key challenges for WLOs: lack of strong governance and organizational structures, unstable short-term funding with a lot of competitive and fragmented, competitive and uncoordinated forums for collaboration.

*"..... In short, if WLOs in South Sudan are to realize their full potential as effective development and rights actors. They must be supported to achieve better funding, capacity and solidarity..... Key Informant Interview women leader*

## CHAPTER IV: BASELINE FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

### 4.1 Overview

This section presents findings from the survey questionnaire, key informant interviews based on data collection tools. Quantitative data is presented in the form of tables and graphs to offer a situation analysis of WLOs in the study states. Anecdotes provided by key informant's participants contextualize, support or contrast quantitative information.

### 4.2 Profile of respondents and their organizations

The survey was carried out in three states namely Central Equatoria, Eastern Equatoria and Jonglei with the 74 respondents at (30) 41%, (24) 32% and (20) 27% respectively. 69% of the respondents were of the female gender and the 31% of male gender. Below shows the distribution by state and gender.

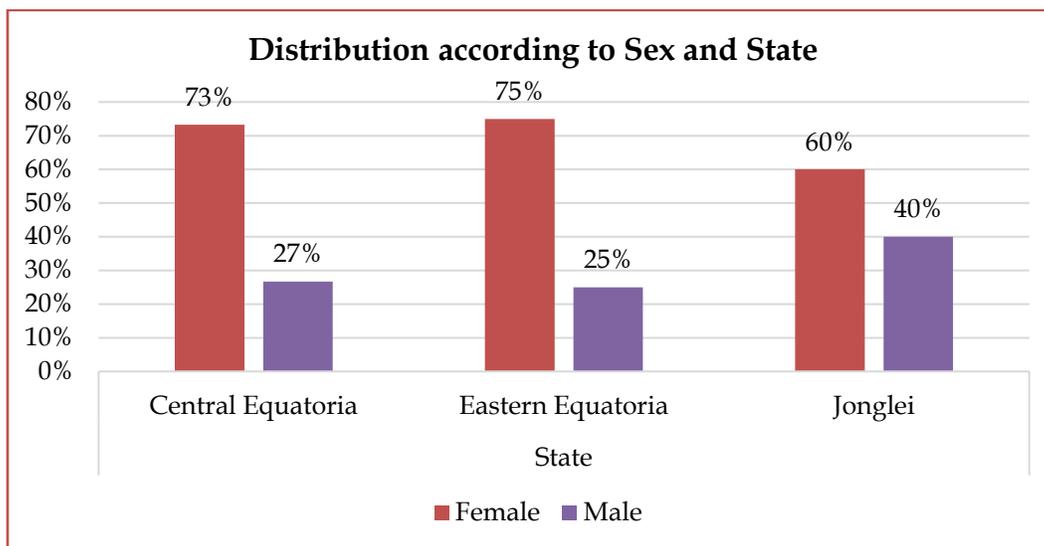
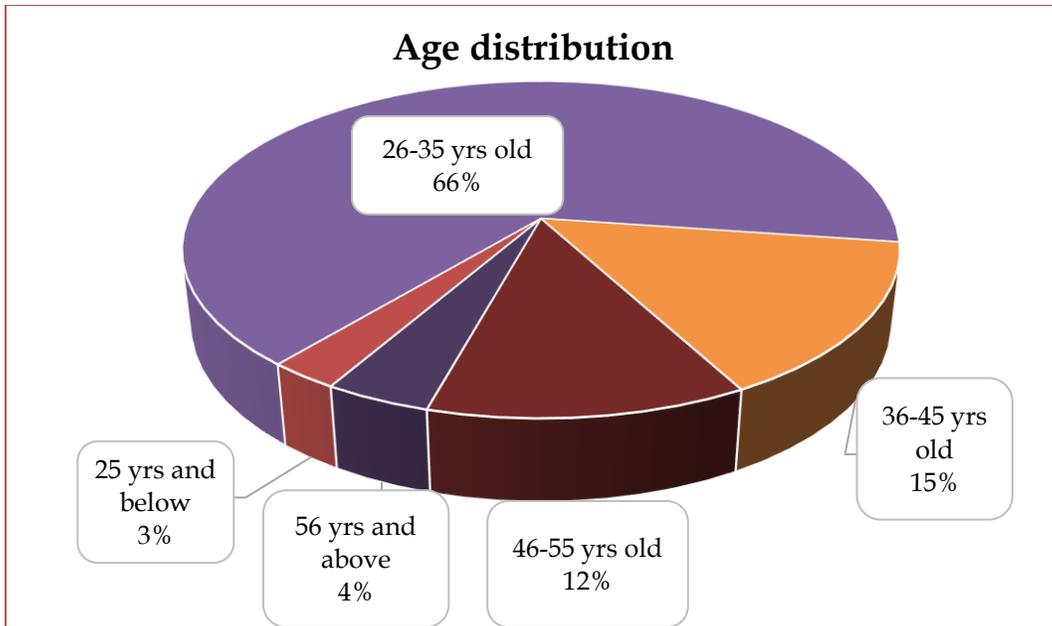


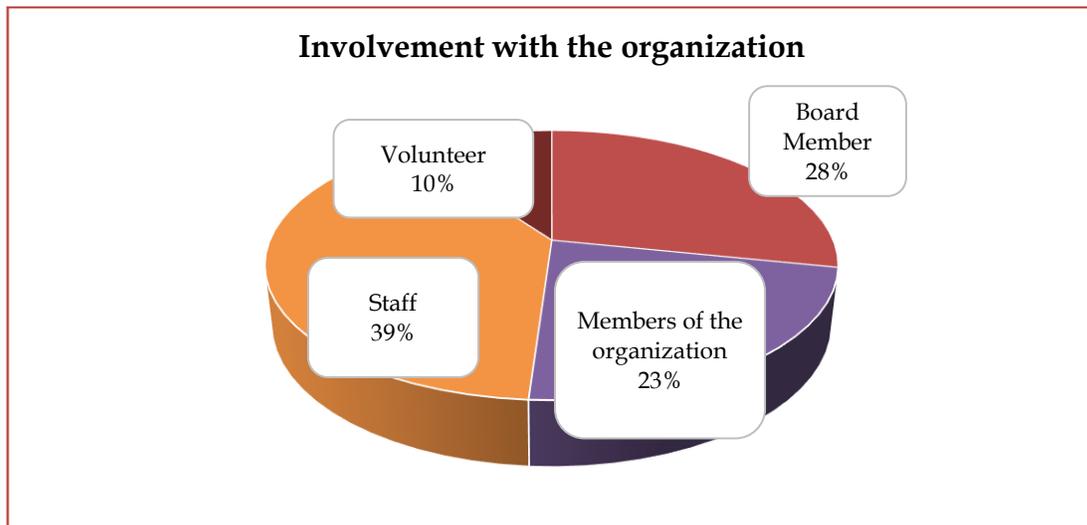
Figure 2: Distribution according to gender and state

The mean age of the staff, board and members was found to be 35 years with the oldest being 64 years and the youngest being 21 years old with the majority falling in the age bracket of 21-35 years. 69% were of the age between 21-35 year while 31% were those between 35-64. Out of the 74 respondents only 2 reported some form of disability.



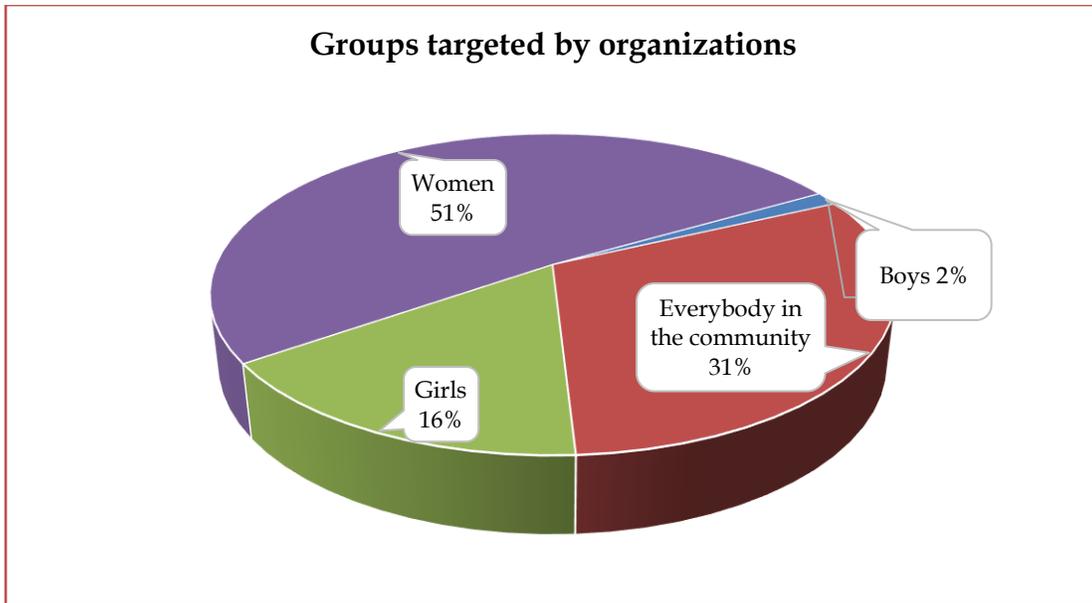
**Figure 3: Age Distribution of respondents**

49% of those interviewed comprised of the regular and volunteer staff, 28% being board members while the remaining 23% were members of the various networks and organizations.



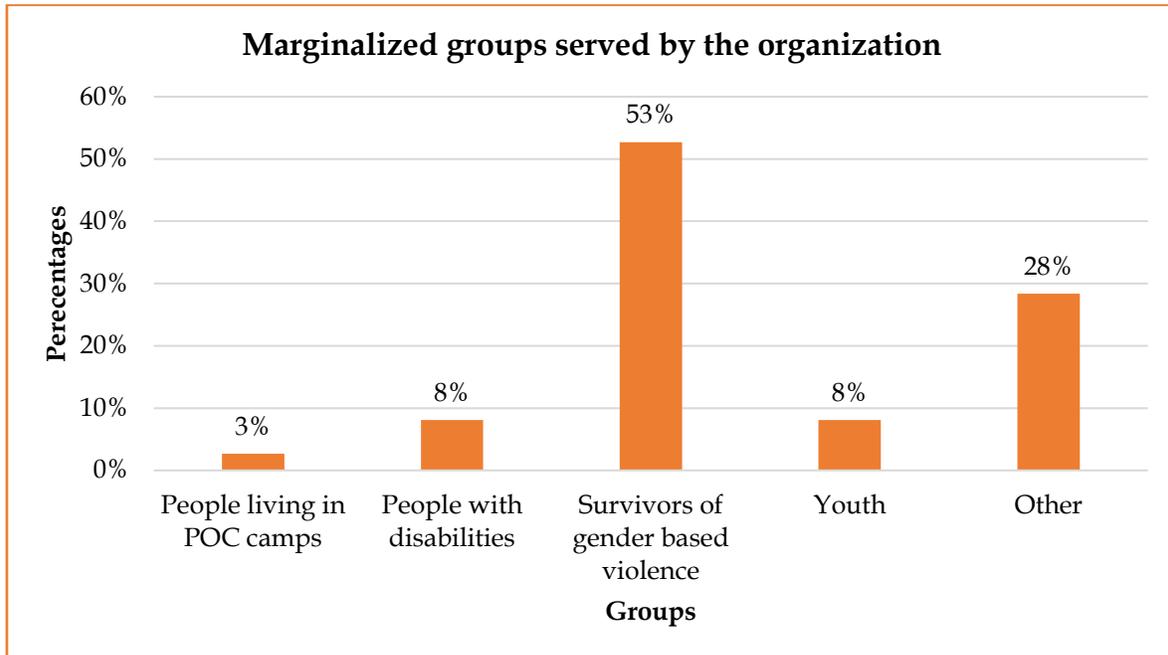
**Figure 4: Involvement with organization**

In terms of programming, 51% of the organizations reported that they had programs that were entirely women focused, 31% reported that their programs were directed to the entire community, while 16% reported that they mainly supported girl's programs. It was notable that only 2% of the organizations primarily supported boy's programs.



**Figure 5: Groups Targeted by Organizations**

The survey further asked respondents about their main target group. This revealed that 53% of the organizations serve survivors of GBV as their main target marginalized group. Youth and people with disabilities are each a main target group of 8% of the organizations. People living in POC camps are a main target group of 3% of the organizations, while 28% of the organizations serve other groups of people such as widows and orphans, women and girls, pastoralist communities, women in civil societies, religious groups or political groups among others as shown in the figure below.



**Figure 6: Main marginalized group served by the organization**

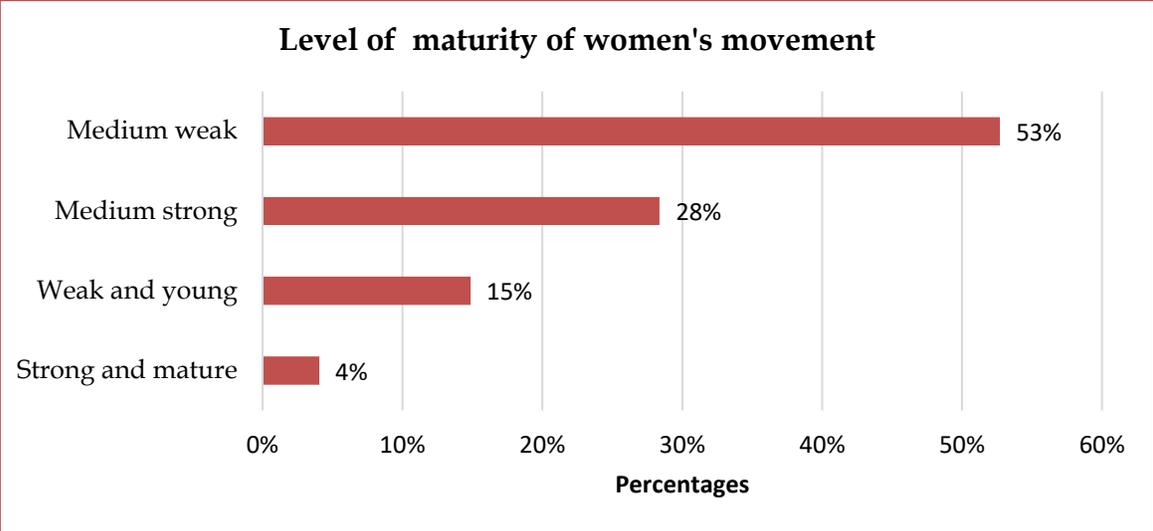
WLOs implement community awareness, advocacy and direct service delivery in the communities. 68.9% of the respondents said that most of the organizations support less than 1000 people directly but more indirectly. The highest number of people that has been served by the some of the organizations was as high as 50,000. The mean number of people served by the organizations stood at 9307.8.

**Table 1:** Estimated number of people served by the organization

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Less than 1000 people	51	68.9%
1001-5000 people	13	17.6%
5001-10000 people	4	5.4%
More than 10000 people	6	8.1%
Total	74	100.0%

**4.2.1 Level of maturity of the women’s movement**

On the level of maturity of the women movement, the WLO respondents were asked to rank the women’s movement in South Sudan in terms of its development and maturity. Only 4% of the respondents believed that the women’s rights movement is mature, 28% felt it was “medium strong”, 53% considered the movement to be “medium weak” while 15% said the women’s movement in South Sudan was “young and weak”.



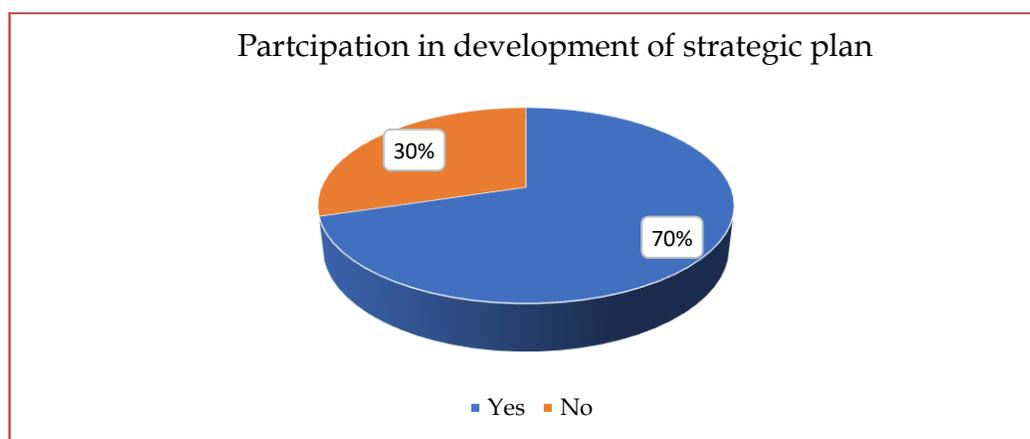
**Figure 7:** Level of maturity of women’s movement

**4.2.2 Management and sustainability of local WLO**

The survey sought to find the total percentage of WLOs who are using best practice governance and management practices by looking at several factors. These included availability of a functional strategic plan and participation in the development of the strategic plan. 68% of respondents said that their organizations had strategic plans, 28% did not have a strategic plan while 4% did not know whether their organization had a strategic plan or not.



**Figure 8: Organizations with strategic plans**



**Figure 9: Participation in development of strategic plan**

**Table 2: Cross tabulation of participation in the Strategic Plan**

Do you have a strategic plan	Did you participate in the development of the strategic plan?		Total
	No	Yes	
Don't Know	13.6%		4.1%
No	63.6%	13.5%	28.4%
Yes	22.7%	86.5%	67.6%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

A cross tabulation shows that 86.5% of the respondents who said that their organization had a strategic plan participated in the development of that plan.

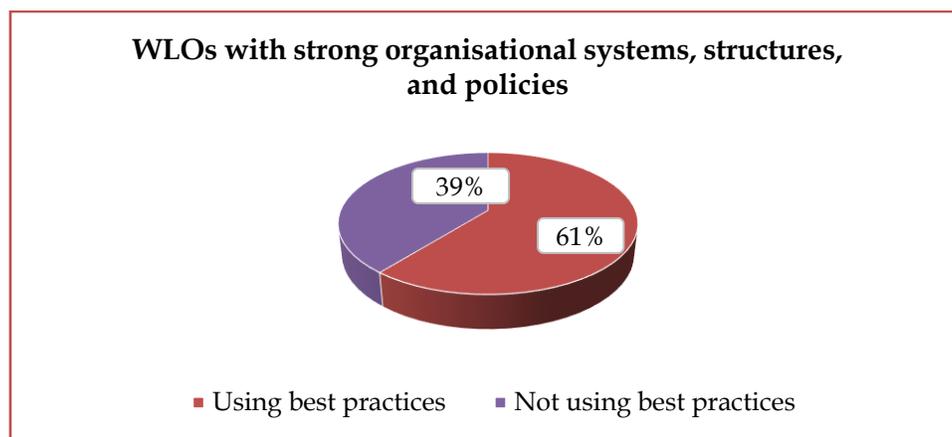
There are also several factors which make up strong organizational systems, structures and policies. The study looked at the existence of a functional board, the existence of fund raising and resource mobilization strategies, adequacy in human resource/staffing and ability to manage finances efficiently as well as organization governance and management practices. It also looked at strategic and annual planning, legal and statutory compliance and ability to design and deliver gender equity awareness. Factors like organizational ability to implement women rights-based programs, organizational ability to undertake gender equality and women rights focused

advocacy and campaigning were studied. The final factor was organizational ability to network with other organizations. It was realized from the study that 61% of the supported WLOs use best practices in governance and management while the remaining 39% had not adopted best practices in organization management and practice. From individual parameters analysis the results is as below with 44.6% of organizations having fundraising and resource mobilization strategies, it was observed that fundraising and resource mobilization strategies, 56.8% practising annual planning based on strategic plan, while 58.1% cited adequacy in human resource.

**Table 3: Organizations systems, structure and policies**

ORGANIZATIONAL SYSTEMS, STRUCTURES AND POLICIES	
1. Existence of a functional board	71.6%
2. Fundraising and resource mobilization strategies	44.6%
3. Adequacy in human resource/staffing	58.1%
4. Ability to manage finances efficiently	75.7%
5. Organizational governance practices	71.6%
6. Organizational management practices	78.4%
7. Strategic and annual planning	56.8%
8. Legal and statutory compliance	77%
9. Design and ability to deliver gender equity awareness	82.4%
10. Organizational ability to implement women rights-based programs	85.1%
11. Organizational ability to undertake gender equality and women rights focused advocacy and campaigning	85.1%
12. Organizational ability to network with other organizations	87.8%

The figure below summarizes the strong organizational systems, structures and policies analysed above.



**Figure 10: WLOs with strong organisational systems, structures, and policies**

### 4.2.3 Best practices for WLO

The study sought to determine the proportion of WLOs who have been able to use best practices. Several parameters were analyzed and they included the existence of a strategic plan that is aligned with the priority needs of women and girls in the organization, the availability of results tracking system in the organization, and the presence of an emergency plan or risk management strategy in the organization. It further looked at the availability of a written gender equality policy and an implementation plan for the policy. Another parameter analyzed the existence of a funding strategy for diversification and mobilization and the recent revision of the human resource policies or practices. Further to that, the study investigated if the organization has recently revised their financial management policies or practices. It investigated the organizations operation on an annual plan as well as if there is annual gender review. Finally, the existence of participant protection and safeguarding policy was also investigated for the organization. None of the organizations interviewed met were fully applying these best practices. It was found that WLOs reported around 43% achievement on mostly applying these best practices while 57% did not.

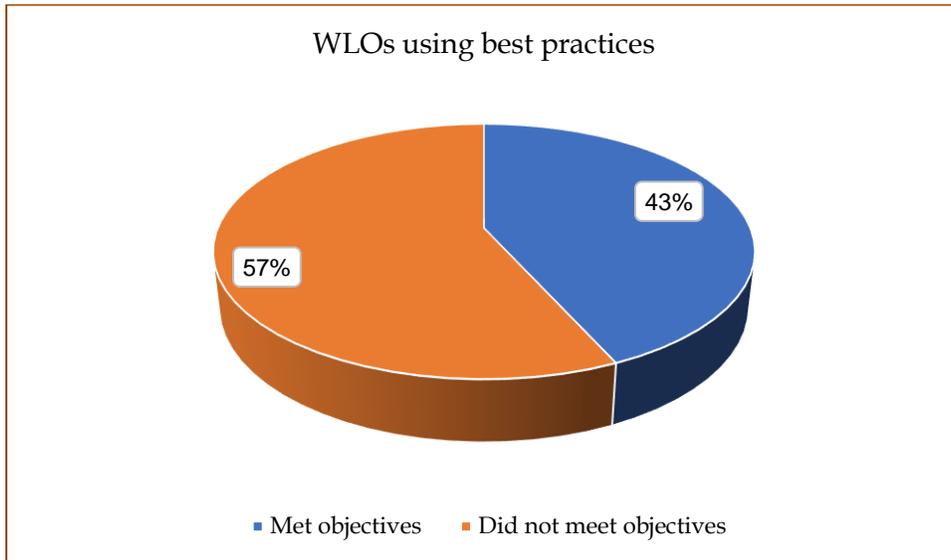


Figure 11: WLOs meeting key objectives

### 4.2.4 Funding and sustainability of WLOs for their operations and programming

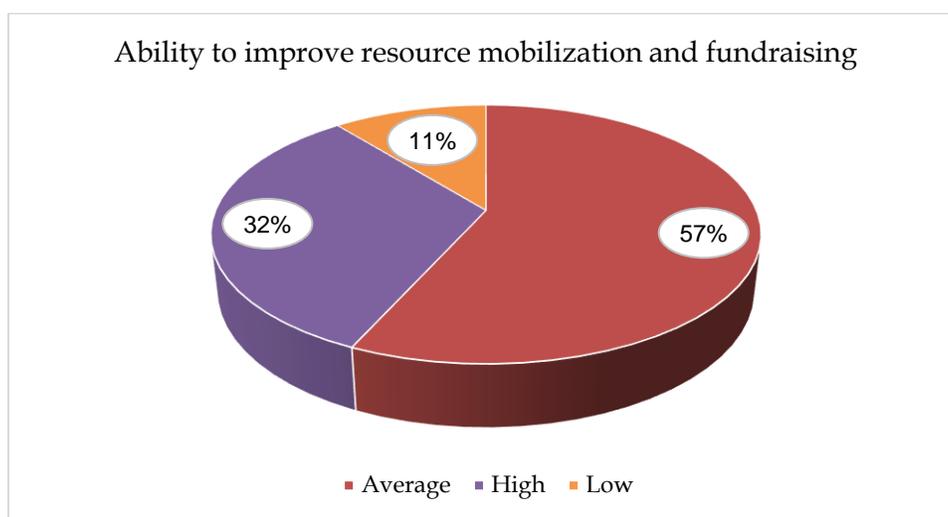
The funding environment in South Sudan is highly competitive. Short-term funding opportunities prevent women's groups from developing, advocating for, or implementing their own agendas and priorities, establishing sustainable programs or focusing on their constituents' needs. The survey revealed that most of the organizations have 3 donors or less. 84% WLOs had received financial assistance from 1-3 donors in the past year, 15% had received support from between 4-6 donors while the remaining 1% received financial support from 7-10 donors. In terms of the amount, 43% of them received less than USD 10,000, 34% received between USD 100,001-50,000 while 5% received between USD 50,001-100,000. The remaining 18% received more that USD 100,000, as summarized in the table below.

**Table 4: No. of donors and the amount received cross tabulation**

Donors in the last one year	Grant levels in the last one year.				
	Less to USD10,000	USD 10,001-50,000	USD 50,001-100,000	More than USD 100,000	Total
1-3 Donors	43.2%	31.1%	2.7%	6.8%	83.8%
4-6 Donors	-	2.7%	2.7%	9.5%	14.9%
7-10 Donors	-	-	-	1.4%	1.4%
Total	43.2%	33.8%	5.4%	17.6%	100.0%

#### 4.2.5 Opportunities for funding by WLOs

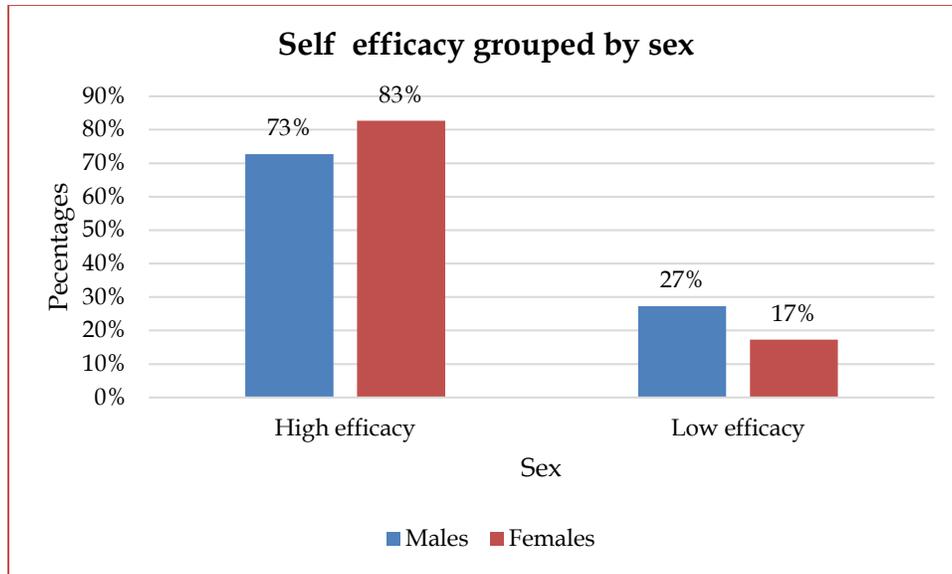
There are limited funding opportunities for WROs in South Sudan, and lack of fundraising skills like proposal and concept note writing, limited ability to network and connect with prospective donors constrain the WLOs. From the baseline findings, most of the respondents (57%) rated their organizations as possessing an average ability to improve resource mobilization and fund raising. 32% of the respondents reported their organization had a high ability while 11% had reported a low ability.



**Figure 12: Ability to improve resource mobilization and fundraising**

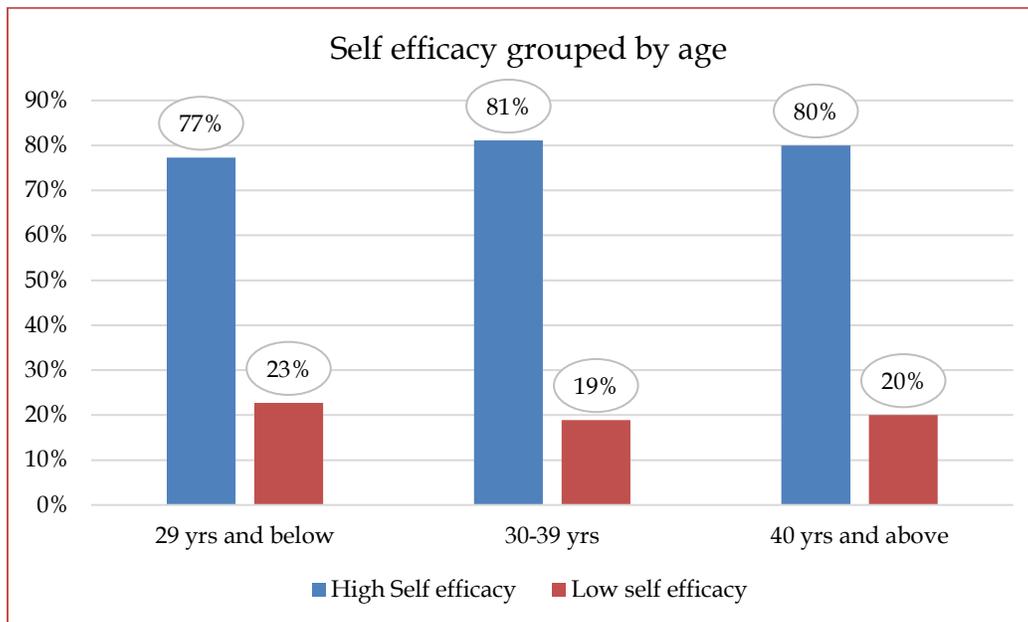
#### 4.2.6 Individuals reporting high self-efficacy (SADD)

Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in his or her capacity to execute behaviors necessary to produce specific performance attainments (Bandura, 1977, 1986, 1997) and reflects confidence in the ability to exert control over one's own motivation, behavior, and social environment. In general, study revealed that 80% of the respondents expressed high self-efficacy. It was interesting to note that women reporting more self-efficacy than men. 83% of the females (52) expressed self-efficacy while 73% of the males (22) expressed self-efficacy.



**Figure 13: Self efficacy disaggregated by Sex**

In terms of age 81% of those between 30-39 years old (37) expressed high self-efficacy. This was followed by 80% of those who are 40 years (15) and above who expressed high self-efficacy. The remaining group indicated that 77% of those below 29 years old (22) expressed high self-efficacy. Therefore there was no significant difference in self-efficacy based on age.



**Figure 14: High self-efficacy disaggregated by age**

#### 4.2.7 Gender equitable attitudes

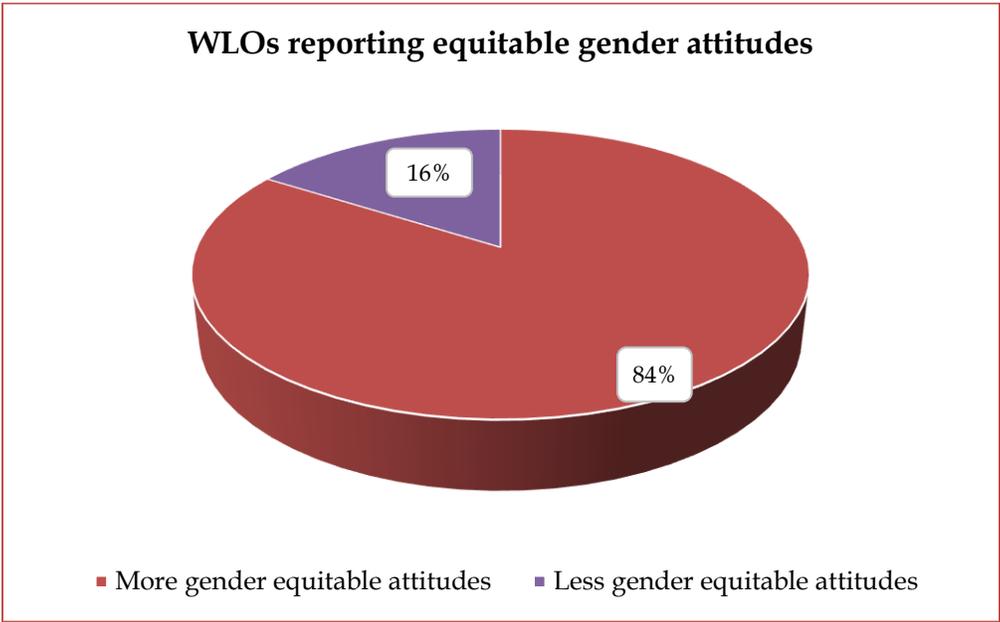
Several factors were considered by the study to determine the percentage of survey respondents who report gender equitable attitudes. They included men making decisions at the household level, women tolerating some violence to keep families together, women roles in the family, both

parties participating equally in making decision in the household, men and women to provide equally in the family, Women and men participating equally in local decision-making and governance, Women and girl’s equal rights being guaranteed by law, men and women should have equal or 50/50 chances in national leadership and representation in South Sudan. It was found out that majority of the respondents 84% reported gender equitable attitudes as shown in the table below.

**Table 5: Gender equitable attitudes among respondents**

Gender Equitable Attitudes	
Rejected the notion that, at the household level, a man should take the final decision on issues related to the household	73.0%
Rejected the notion that women should sometimes tolerate violence in order to keep her family together	70.3%
Rejected the notion that woman’s most important roles are to take care of home and children	73%
Women should make decisions together with the men on the family assets	85.1%
Men and women should be equal providers in the family	86.5%
Women and men should participate equally in local decision-making and governance	90.5%
Women and girl’s equal rights should be guaranteed by law	98.6%
Men and women should have equal or 50/50 chances in national leadership and representation in South Sudan	94.6%

The above findings are as illustrated in the figure below.



**Figure 15: WLOs reporting equitable gender attitudes**

#### 4.2.8 WLOs collectively influencing community, state and national policy agendas, legislation and governance, state building and peace processes to amplify women's voices

WLOs have contributed a lot through empowering women at the grassroots level but have not played a significant role in policy making in South Sudan. 39% of WLO respondents felt that their organization had significantly influenced policies in the past year, 6% said they did not and 33% did not know. This shows room for improvement in terms of policy influencing.

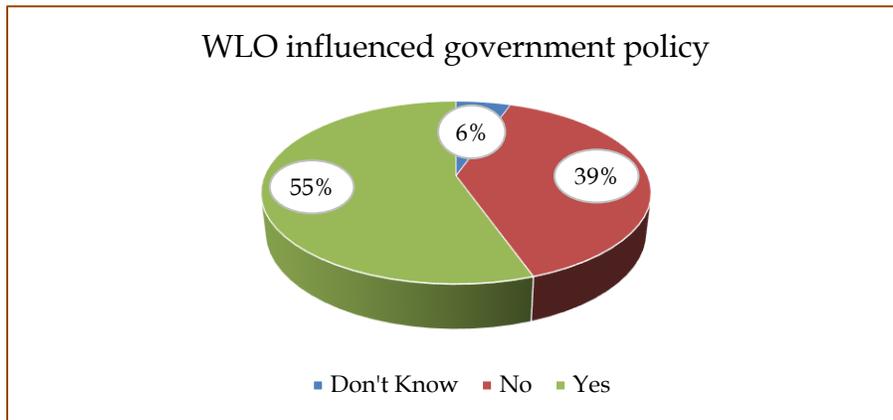


Figure16: WLO influenced government policy

55% of those WLO respondents said women have been involved in influencing government policies while 45% believe women have not been involved in influencing government policies.

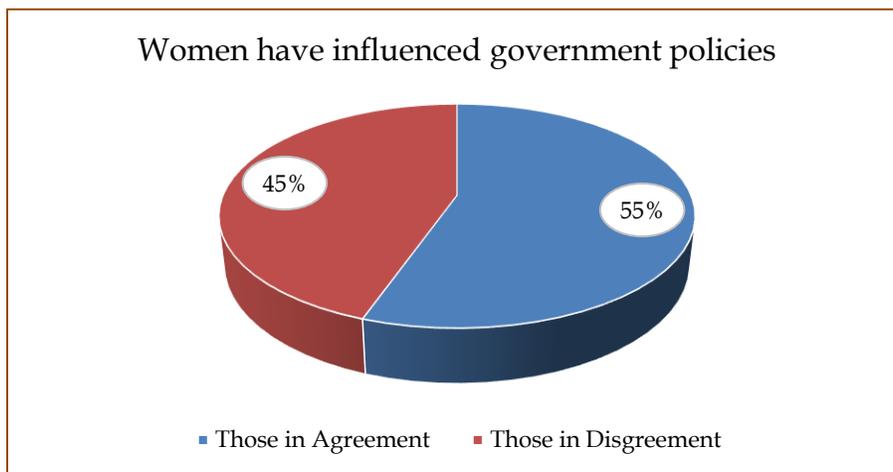


Figure 17: Women have influenced government policy

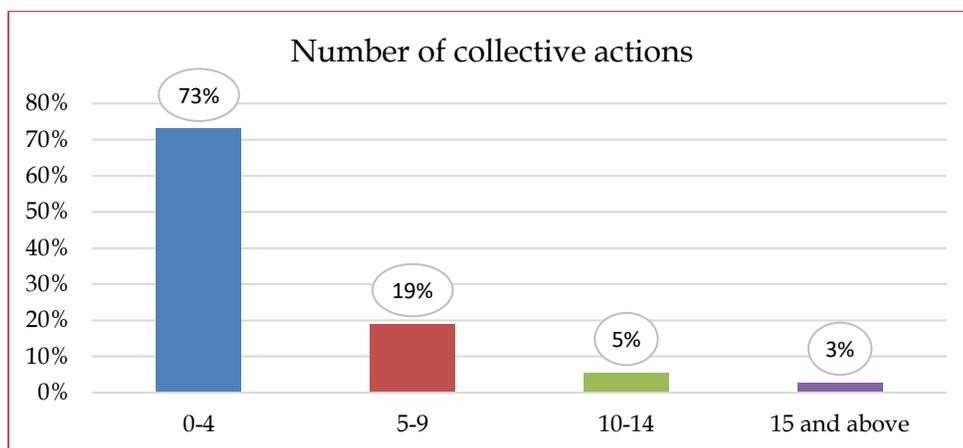
*Respondents explain it thus: they sometimes participate in policy advocacy campaigns. For example, the campaign to compel the state government to operationalize the 35% women quota as enshrined in the constitution. Sometimes women organizations take leadership in campaigns for girl child education and campaigns to end early girl child marriage. And these are essential policy matters affecting women's livelihood.*

*As one respondent frankly puts it: "In most cases, the male dominated political leadership in South Sudan has continued to marginalize women and women led organizations, partly due to the cultural and historical background and beliefs. The women led organizations are rarely consulted and involved in policy formulation although as time progresses and with increased worldwide emancipation of women, there is now some little effort in involvement of these organizations in policy formulation".*

#### **4.2.9 Togetherness of WLOs to identify common issues and participate in collective actions related to women's and girls' rights, including legislation, policies, programs, and gender sensitive governance and peace processes**

These actions seek to significantly shift the balance of local norms that in turn creates new space for women to express their issues. Actions might include women's groups agitating about norms around age at marriage, seeking legal recourse on oppressive dowry practices or promoting women's suitability for political office. Collective action in this sense is less about solving particular practical development problems and more about shifting the whole context in which women and girls can engage fully and fruitfully in the process of development.

The study revealed that 73% of the WLOs respondents had undertaken less than five collective actions within the last year. This was followed by 19% who had undertaken 5-9 collective actions and 5% had undertaken 10-14 collective actions. The remaining 3% had undertaken above 15 actions. The study revealed that the highest number of actions were 250 and the lowest was zero. The mean number of actions were 6.9.



**Figure 18: Number of collective actions by WLOs**

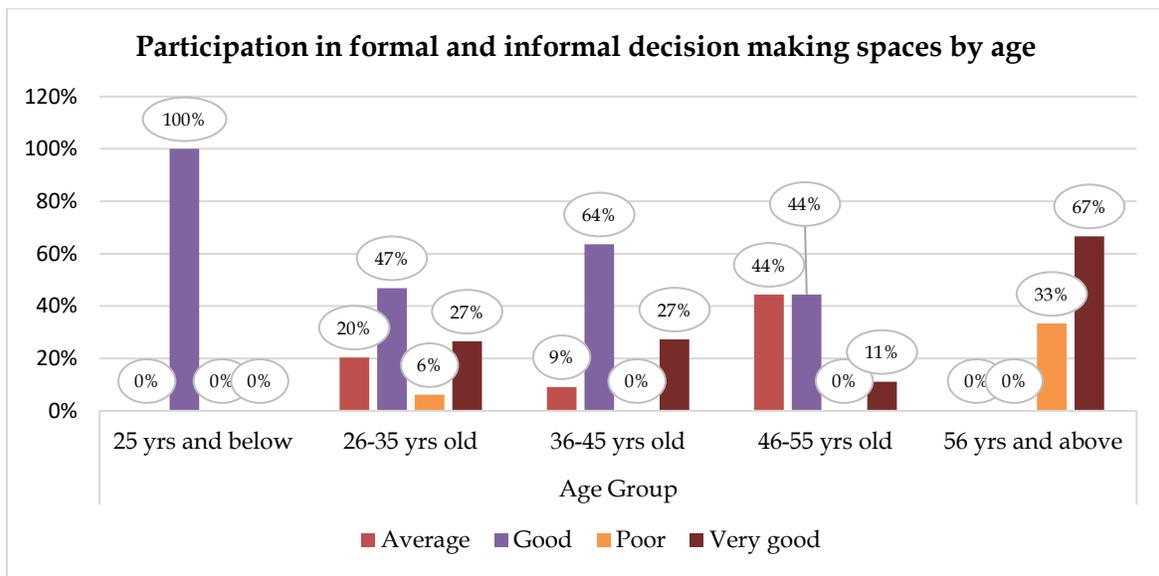
#### **4.2.10 Capacity of WLOs to effect gender change in key national and state legislation and policies**

The study revealed that all the respondents have participated in formal and non-formal decision-making process. However, it was noted that the extent/ degree of participation differs between different age groups. In terms of age and participation it was realized that 67% of those aged 56 and above have had very good participation in both formal and informal decision making. At the same time 27% of both the 26-35 and the 36-35 age groups experienced very good participation.

The study further revealed that 11% of 46-55 year old had a very good participation in the decision-making processes and none of the below 25-year old had had very good participation (100% had good participation).

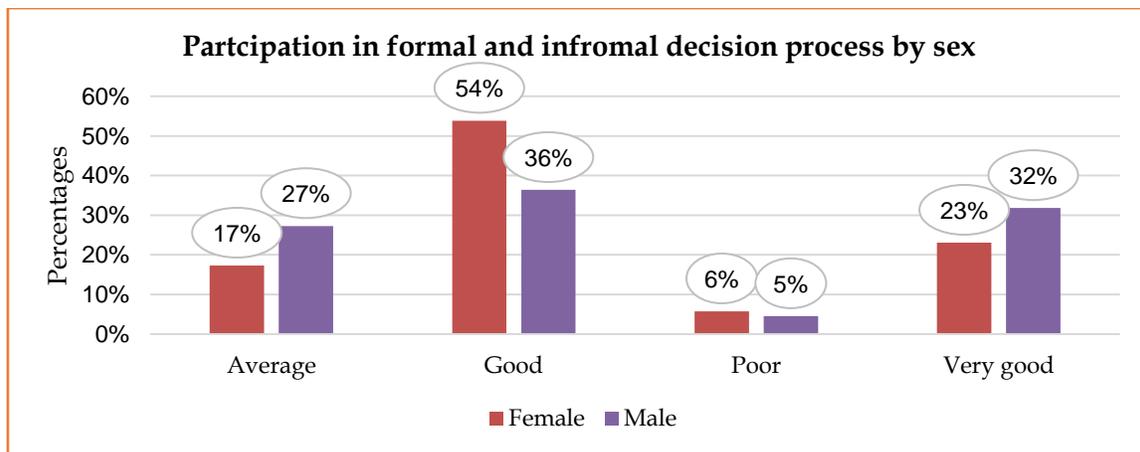
**Table 6: Level of participation in formal decision making**

Variables	Frequency	Valid Percent
Average	15	20%
Good	36	49%
Poor	4	5%
Very good	19	26%
Total	74	100%



**Figure 19: Participation in formal and informal decision making spaces by age**

In terms of sex, more males than females reported “very good” participation at 32%. More females reported “good” higher participation than males at 54%.



**Figure 20: Participation in formal and informal decision process by sex**

#### 4.2.11 Capacity of WLOs in the areas of executive leadership, governance and organisational systems and structures

As seen in the secondary research desk review (including the capacity assessment of the 16 WLOs supported by the project) WLOs face challenges of leadership, governance, communications, transparency systems and structures. The lack of diverse women's voices in decision-making undermines the impact WLOs have toward achieving SDG 5. From the KII, the respondents eluded to the fact most of the WLO also lack clear succession strategies and that there is dominance of 'strong women' without bringing up others/upcoming leaders.

The study revealed that 46% of the respondents said that their organization had an average ability to manage and/or govern their organization. This was followed by 42% who had said their organization had high ability and 12% of the respondents registered a low ability or their organization to govern their organization.

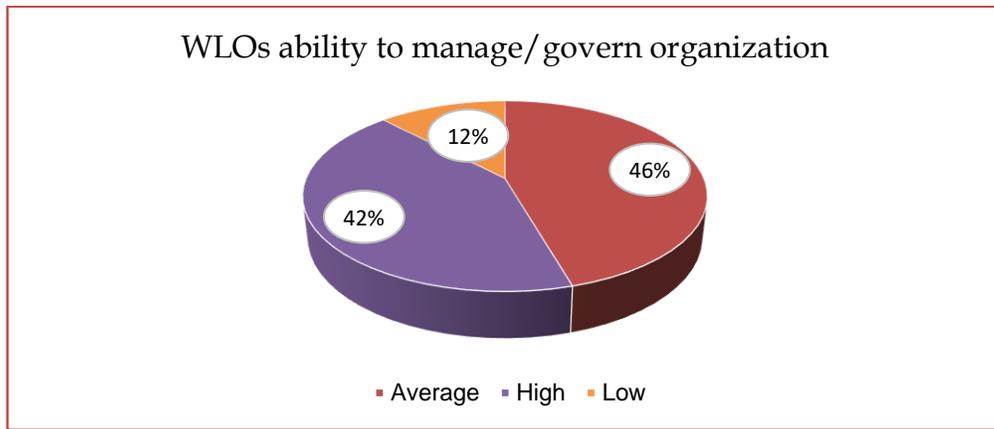


Figure 21: WLOs Increased ability to manage/govern organization

61% of WLO reported a high ability to make transparent, accountable, and sustainable decisions, processes and systems, 32% reported average, and 7% said low.

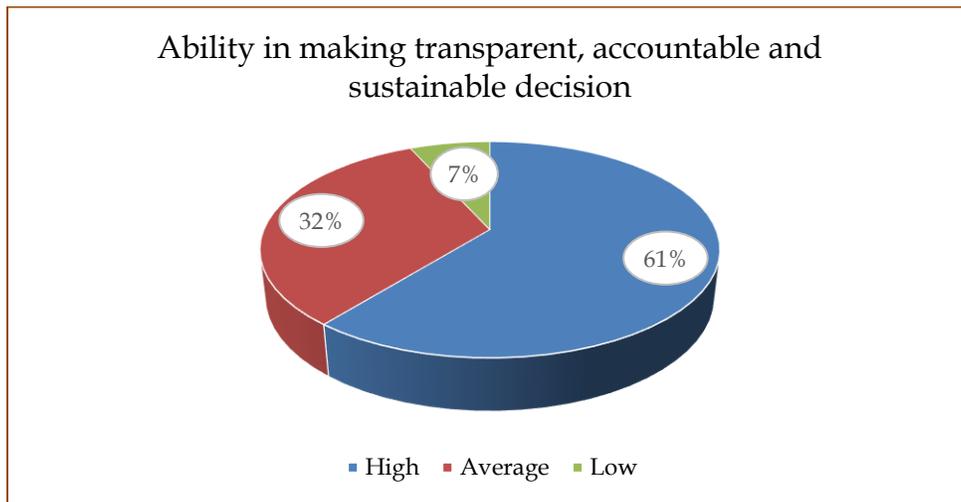


Figure 22: WLOs Increased ability to manage/govern organization

#### 4.2.12 Organisational risk (including social barriers) and response plans developed and managed by WLOs

Potential risks come and go, or evolve, as an organization's internal dynamics change, and as the external environment in which it operates changes. Risk is present at all levels of activity. There are risks that may affect the organization as a whole such as risks to the organization's reputation. There are risks that may affect the health and safety of staff, financial activities, service delivery activities, or risks that affect more than one activity. There are also risks specific to each and every project. The study findings show that those reporting that their organization had high and average ability to manage internal risks were each at 45%. The remaining 10% had low ability.

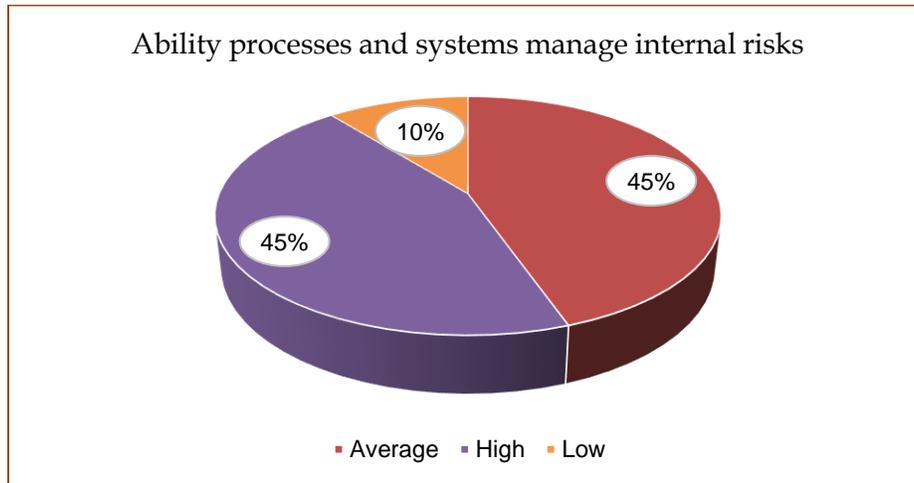


Figure 23: Ability, processes and systems manage internal risks

Management of external risks are equally important for the well-being of the organization. The study revealed that 50% of the respondents reported that their organization had an average ability to manage risk. Only 23% had high ability while the remaining 27% had the lowest ability.

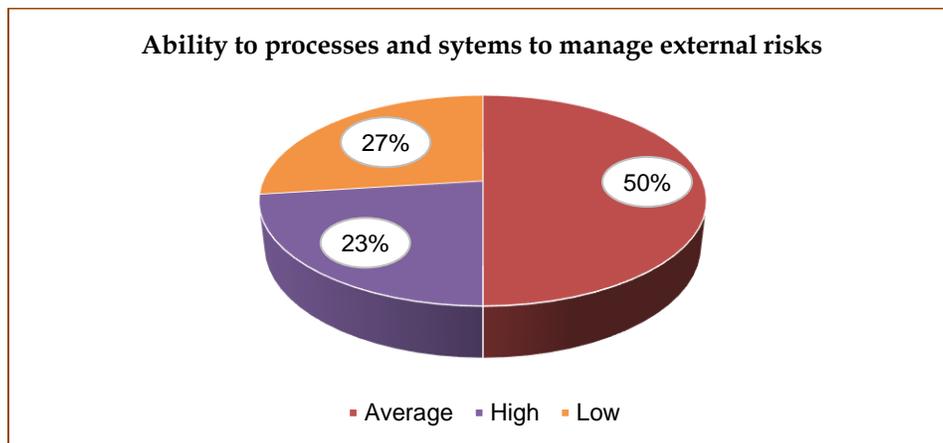


Figure 24: Ability to processes and systems to manage external risk

#### 4.2.13 Development of clear and actionable strategic plans by WLOs

Strategy concerns how an organization achieves its broad long-term objectives by addressing those major structural and/or programmatic issues that are crucial to the long-term viability of the organization and the success of its programs. Strategic planning is giving the organization direction on what to do how to do it, and when to do it.

From the study findings, it was realized that 54%, of the respondents confirmed that their level of confidence in creating strategic plan was average. 38% expressed high level of confidence while only 8% had low confidence.

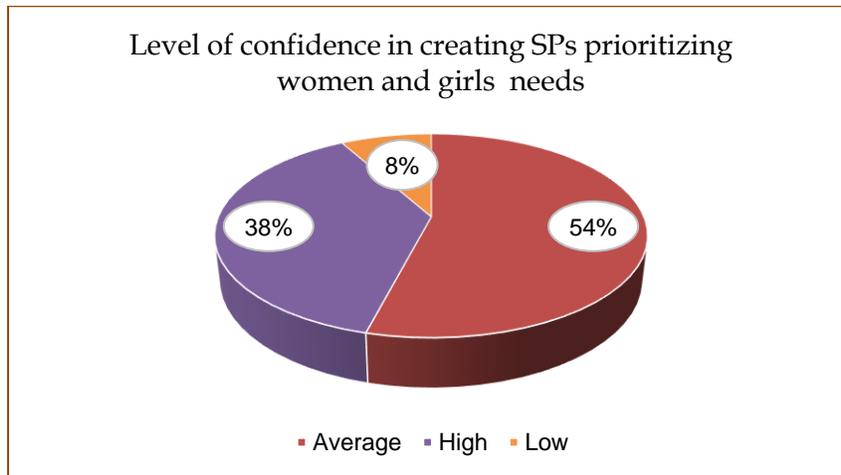


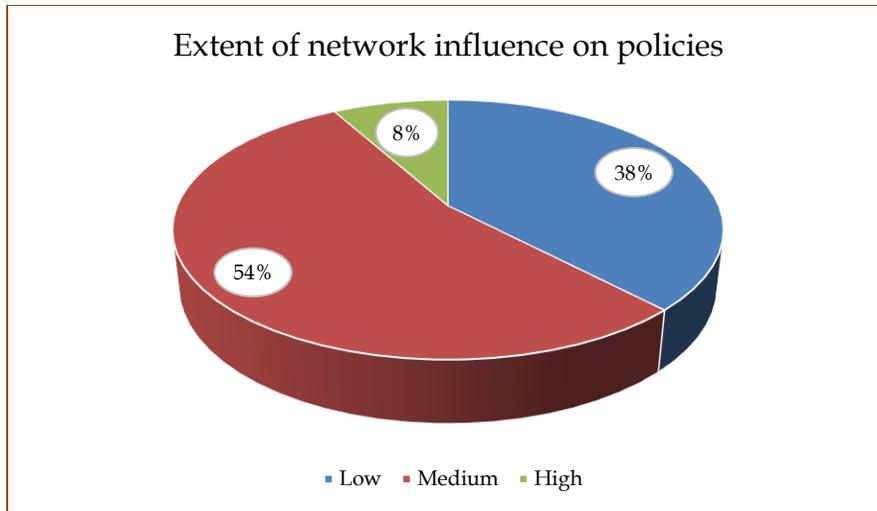
Figure 25: Level of confidence in creating SPs prioritizing women and girls need

#### 4.2.14 Effectiveness of national and sub-national women rights platforms, networks and alliances to affect gender sensitive policy change and policy implementation

WLOs are part of the solution to increasing the policy influence and pro-poor impact of their work. Many WLO in South Sudan are moving beyond service delivery and are effectively engaged in informed advocacy as an important route to social change and a means of holding governments and other duty bearer to account.

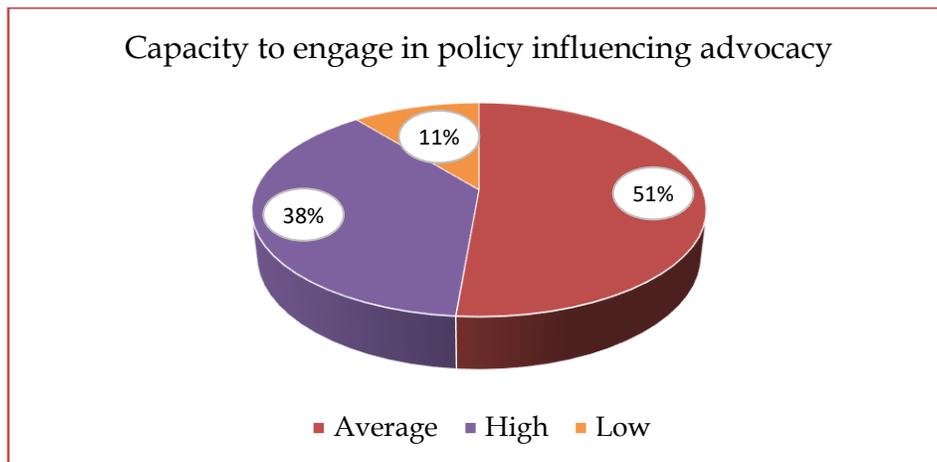
From the study findings, the networks influence policy changes. 54% of the WLOs respondents said networks influence policy changes to a high extent, 38% of the respondents indicated average extent while 8% mentioned low extent.

The networks were found to be more effective in influencing government policies through petitions, campaigns and awareness according to the KII. 54% believe that the networks influence policies was rated at the medium level, 34% low while only 8 % rated the network's influence as high.



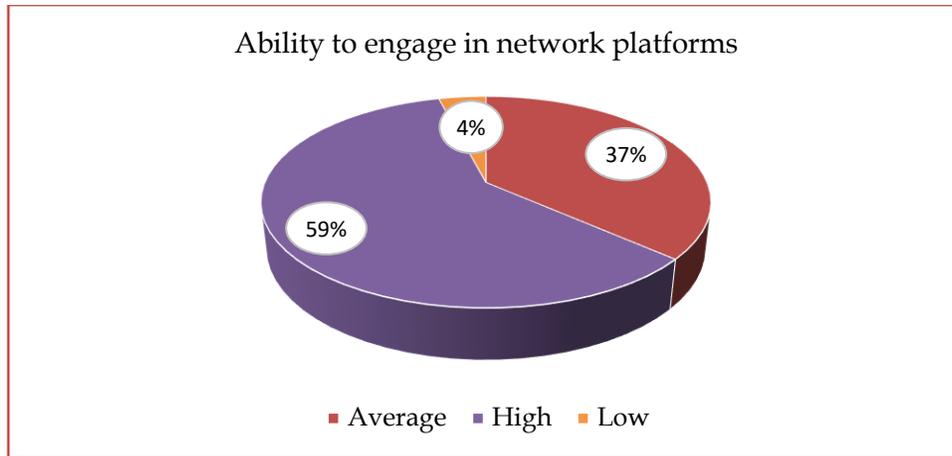
**Figure 26: Extent of network influence on policies**

In terms of capacity to engage in policy influencing advocacy, the study found, as shown in the pie-chart below, a total of 51% of respondents as members of the networks that have average capacity to engage in advocacy and policy while 38% have high capacity and 11% have low capacity.



**Figure 27: Capacity to engage in policy influencing advocacy**

The study findings show that 59% WLOs reported high ability to engage in networks/alliances/platforms/ movements. While 37% of the respondents reported average ability to engage in network platform. While only 4% reported low ability to engage in network platforms.



**Figure 28: Ability to engage in network platforms**

*"As a female leading an organization in South Sudan, my greatest challenge is to connect with others who can help me succeed, this difficulty contributes to a waste of resources because I have to spend more of my precious resources to reach the same opportunities other men get just because they have the right contacts. I believe that to obtain the biggest possible positive impact out of any women funding it is key to connect the women leading organization with the right people to help me or women leading organizations succeed. "*

#### 4.2.15 Women’s Networks

Networking is a key strategy advocacy. Networking is the exchange of information and ideas among people with a common or special interest, usually in an informal social setting. Networks are inherently complex vehicles for the delivery of practical solutions on the ground and at the strategic level.

The study findings show that 88% of the respondents said that their organizations are part of the networks/alliances supported by the WVL project. From the survey, the three project areas each has a women’s network which is being strengthened by the project and other donors. The purpose of these networks is to create a formidable voice for women advocacy, learning and sharing of skills, knowledge and experiences while also developing stable foundation for the membership, rationale, and activities of the network.

According to the respondents, there are a number of network organizations working on gender issues in the communities. From the KII’s a there are number of networks including Jonglei Women Network, The Women Pool, Eastern Equatorial Women Network, South Sudan Women Forum, South Sudan Women Block, Women Humanitarian Network. The figures show women and girls have participated in the various platforms at 68% while everybody in the community at 31%.

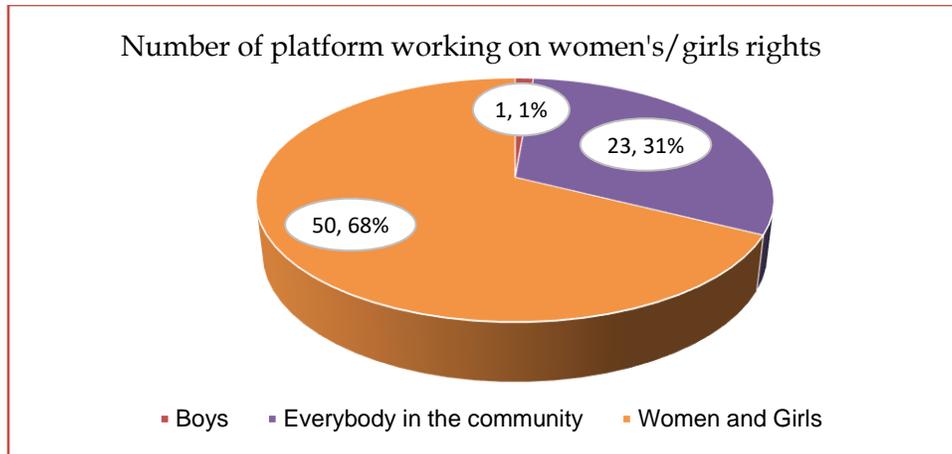


Figure 29: Number of platforms working on women's/girls' rights

#### 4.2.16 Individuals' confidence in their own negotiation and communication skills

84% of the respondents had enough confidence in their own negotiation and communication skills. The age group between 30-39 years expressed more confidence at 41% followed by those below 29 years old at 23%. Those above 40 years old expressed 20% confidence in negotiation skills.

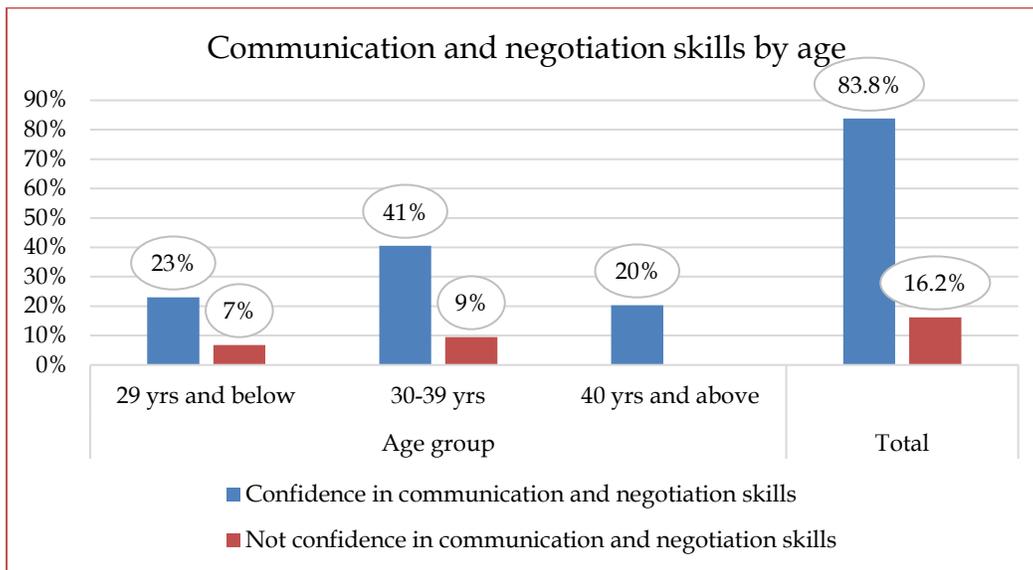


Figure 30: Communication and negotiation skills by age

Out of the total number of women/girls interviewed (52), 87% of them expressed confidence in communication and negotiation skills. At the same time Women/girls expressed high confidence in communication and negotiation skills than men. At the same time, out of the total males interviewed (22), 77% of them expressed confidence in communication skills. Proportionately it was seen that more females had more confidence in communication than men.

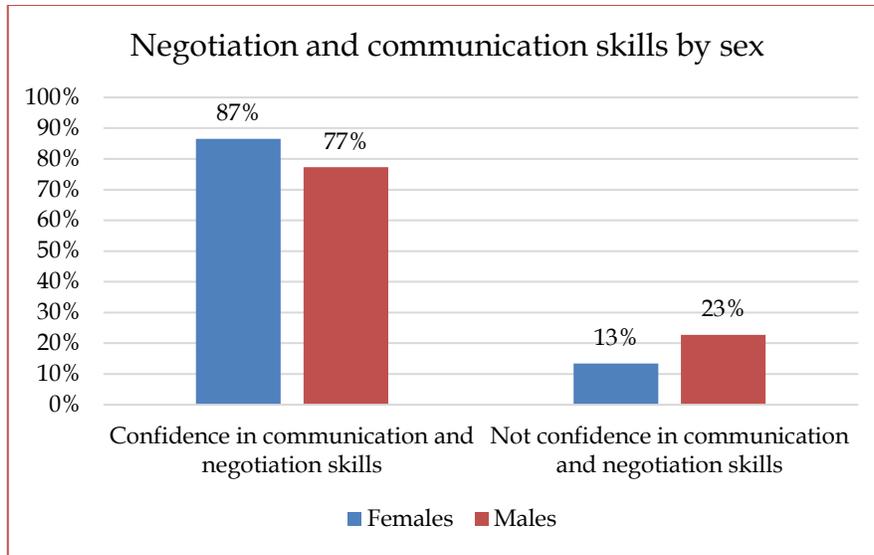


Figure 31: Negotiation and communication skills by age

#### 4.2.17 WLOs designing and delivering community level gender equality awareness raising and rights-based programming

WLOs design and deliver community level gender equality awareness and human right based programmes. From the KII, the respondents indicated that they had ability to design and develop women empowerment interventions, human rights programmes, gender awareness programmes and civic education. The survey revealed that 54% of the respondents have the ability to deliver quality programming. The average ability was found to be at 37% while the least ability was shown by only 9% of the respondents.

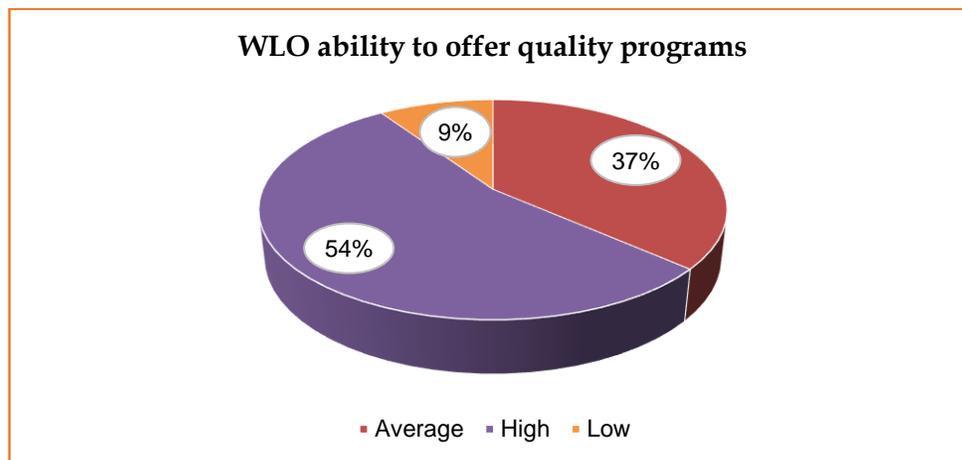


Figure 32: WLO ability to offer quality programs

#### 4.2.18 WLOs receiving multi-year grants and support meet all their M&E capacity building key objectives and targets, as described in capacity development plan

58% of the WLO's exhibit average M&E capacity, while 34% high and 8% low. According to the KII most of the organizations have basic monitoring and evaluation in terms of skills and knowledge.

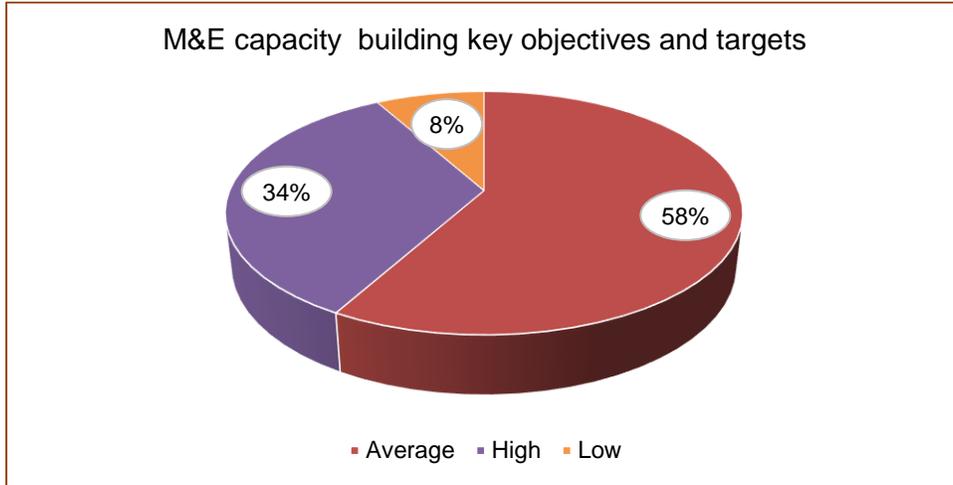


Figure 33: M&E capacity building key objective and targets

#### 4.2.20 Quality of Policy/ advocacy influencing WLO by their own definition

From the figure above, 51% of the WLO's respondents rated the quality of policy/advocacy as average, 38% as high while 11% as low. From the KII's, they defined advocacy as actions and activities geared towards changing policies, and governance issues.

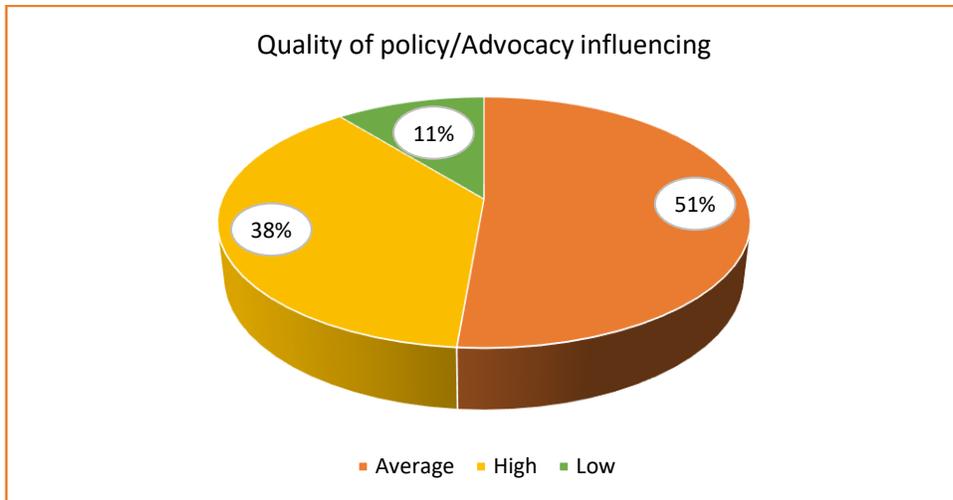


Figure 34: Quality of policy/advocacy influencing

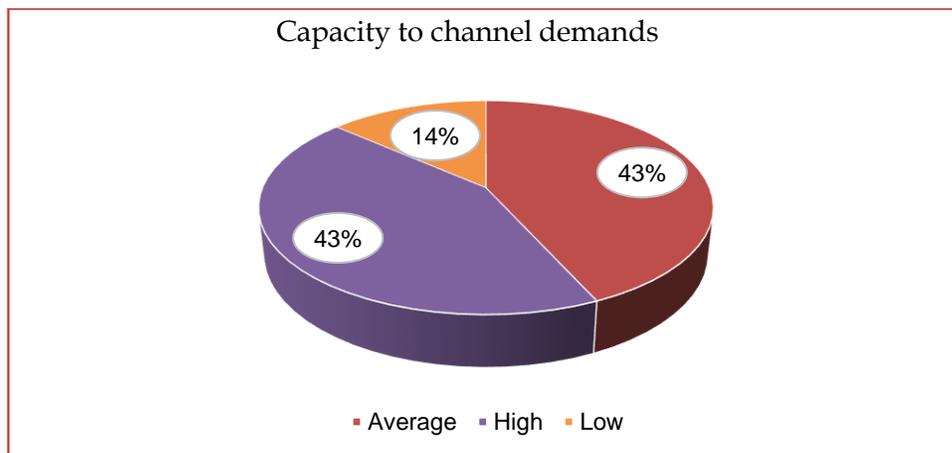
#### 4.2.21 WLOs with strengthened capacities to collaborate, channel demands related to gender equity of marginalized citizens and engage in decision-making

The majority of the respondents were aware of the 35% quota allocated for women in the constitution. However, there are a number of laws and policy that are unknown to most of the respondents at both levels. Some of the laws and policies established to promote gender equality cited by some of the respondents are: Draft cattle raiding by-law; Draft policy on state bordering - county to county; Child Act 2008, Women rights policy; ending early child marriage policy; by-laws on dowry; National Action Plan for 1325; Ending child marriage policy; family law policy; article 16 of the constitution; national gender policy; the Maputo protocol; Gender National Action Plan; National Affirmative Action and the Constitution of South Sudan.

**Table 4: Capacity to channel demands related to gender equality**

Variables	Frequency	Valid Percent
Average	32	43.2
High	32	43.2
Low	10	13.5
Total	74	100.0

Those with high and average capacity to channel demands were each at 43%. The remaining 14% of the respondents reported low capacity to channel demands related to gender equity of marginalized citizens and engage in decision making.

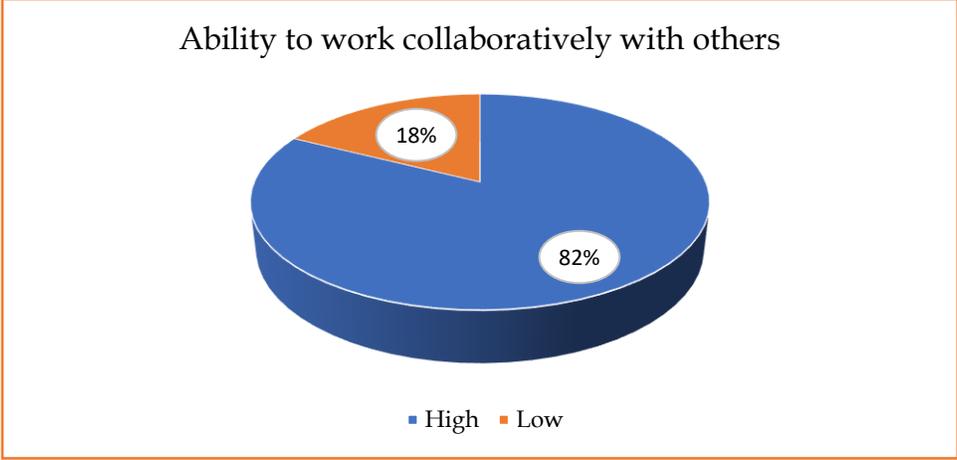


**Figure 35: Capacity to channel demands**

As many respondents also confirm, being in a patriarchal society, woman often shy away from taking on men wielding power to cause policy change through advocacy. Imbalance in education between men and women means that women will always lack the capacity for advocacy and leadership. Advocacy as a strategy also needs requisite skills to be successful and a lot of conflict sensitivity within the South Sudan context. Risk taking is also mentioned as a challenge for women’s participation since both advocacy and leadership both involves risks at various levels. The political environment in South Sudan characterized by lack of gender sensitivity and massive GBV has seen many potential women leaders shying away from leadership and advocacy roles. Lack of resources is also cited as one of the major challenges to women leadership and advocacy in society. Funding an advocacy initiative can be an uphill task especially in the context of South

Sudan where one would need several resources to succeed. Because most of the women have not gone to school or attained high levels of education, lack of leadership skills has also been mentioned as a major constraint to women taking up leadership and advocacy roles at all levels.

WLOs were also asked to what extent their organization is able to work collaboratively with others to achieve common goals. 82% reported a high ability and 18% a low ability to collaborate.



**Figure 36: Ability to work collaboratively with others**

## CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

The baseline study report presents the findings and confirms that women led organizations (WLO) are challenged by lack of resources, low capacity to fundraise and mobilize resources, strategically implement programmes. Though WLOs have played a critical role in the democratization process and engagement in leadership in South Sudan, there is still need for capacity building and support for their voices to be amplified. The report further reveals that WLOs are marginalized from the top hierarchy of decision-making structures.

### 5.1 Conclusion

In summary this baseline has established benchmarks that the project should be able to track throughout its lifetime. The baseline shows that the current performance by the WLOs in regard to their voices and engagement in leadership most of the indicators are still relatively low and there is need to improve. The participation of the WLO especially in women led advocacy and campaigns is still low and is impeded by organizational systems and structures as well as lack of adequate information. The study has shown that a majority of the WLOs have actively been engaged in women and girl's rights awareness and empowerment but there is room for improvement.

The role played by WLOs cannot be overemphasized. With the little resources and funding, they have been able to raise their voices on women and girl's empowerment. Inadequate funding and limited expertise hinder the effectiveness and sustainability of interventions of many WLOs, especially community-based organizations. Even the more established local WLO organizations are still struggling with funding and sustainability issues and lack of sufficient and secure resource base for broad reach and continuity. WVL therefore provides an opportunity for the WLOs to develop organizational systems and structures, improved funding and sustainability and developed capacity to engage in advocacy and policy influence.

### 5.2 Recommendation

#### 1. **WVL Project should prioritize developing capacity of WLOs on organizational development, advocacy and networking for gender equality and empower women and girls**

39% of the supported WLOs report that they do not have strong organizational systems, structure and policies in place. From the study, there is a clear need to engage in structured capacity building of WLOs. First in the list is that the WVL project should engage in capacity building initiatives focusing on organizational development including strategy implementation, resource mobilization and fundraising, sustainability, advocacy and lobbying, governance and women and girls' rights among others. This capacity building could be through structured training of the boards of organizations, the staff and the members, also through mentorship and technical support to the leadership of the WLO. The WVL project should continue to provide grants that target WLOs so that they can implement programmes on gender and women empowerment, engage in civic education, campaign and conduct advocacy for the girl child empowerment.

*"The WLO in South Sudan needs to be serious with their role as advocates of women and girl's empowerment. What we need is our capacity built, funds channeled to women organizations and supported to develop a voice to be leading organizations on advocating for our needs and priorities. This time they have decided to talk for ourselves not men talking on our behalf."*

2. **Strengthen governance and management practices:** 46% of respondents have average ability to govern and manage their organizations, and 12% of the respondents registered a low ability. This indicates that there is need for capacity building of the women leaders on leadership, governance systems and structures, communications, succession planning and accountability. This will also include supporting implementation and review of their strategic plans to be gender responsive and support them in developing management systems and structures.
3. **Facilitate organizational development and maturity:** Only 4% of the respondents believed that the women's rights movement is mature, and 53%, considered the movement to be "medium weak" while 15% said the women's movement in South Sudan was young and weak. This indicates that women movement requires institutional and technical support to mature as well as facilitation of linkages, networking and coalescing. This could be done through building strong networks and creating platforms and engagement forums.
4. **Supporting WLOs in fundraising and resource mobilization:** The secondary research found that raising/diversifying funds is a top priority for WLOs. In the survey, over 68% possess average and low ability to improve their fundraising and resource mobilization with most of the WLO having between 1-3 donors with annual funding below USD 100,000. WVL needs to support the WLO in developing fundraising and mobilization strategies, training in resource mobilization and supporting them in fundraising by offering technical support and linkages.
5. **Support WLOs engagement in policy dialogue and advocacy:** 40% of the WLO had not been involved in policy advocacy while 5% of the respondents had no idea on policy influence. This points to a need for developing their skills in gender based advocacy. At individual level, 51% of respondents as members of the networks have average capacity to engage in advocacy and 11% have low capacity. In order for the WLOs to have impact at policy and legislation levels there is need to improve their capacity on policy formulation and advocacy, advocacy methods and policy monitoring.

*A respondent summarized it eloquently that: "My dream is that gaps in gender equality close, that women and girls can have equal opportunities to contribute to economic and social development in South Sudan through empowerment and capacity building from grassroots though to the national level."*

## 6. Potential opportunities for women to engage in decision making and leadership

There are several opportunities for women to engage in decision making as enumerated by most of the respondents. One such avenue mentioned is the South Sudan constitution which allocates a 35% quota for women. Another significant opportunity cited is the WLOs. Women from diaspora with skills and experience are also coming back to participate in governance

and in decision making. Women engaging in businesses, in small and medium enterprises are also availing valuable opportunities to engage in decision making at various levels. Training either formally or informally is also another avenue cited as an opportunity for women to engage in decision making.

*As one woman during KII cited: "There are many opportunities for women to be leaders and participate in leadership in South Sudan, the only problem is that we have not been prepared well to take up these roles. We should be exposed and trained on leadership and we can also train other women."*

**7. Support the establishment and sustainability of the women's networks**

In order for the project to achieve the desired results, there is need to strengthen and support the sustainability of the state networks through creating platform for learning and sharing, women empowerment and gender responsiveness in the society and encourage participation in forums or meetings for networking and sharing good practices and lessons learnt nationally and internationally.