



# LIVING IN INFORMATION LIMBO

THE CASE OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED  
PERSONS IN SOUTH SUDAN

AN INFORMATION ECOSYSTEM ASSESSMENT:  
SUPPLY AND DEMAND ANALYSIS

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# LIST OF ACRONYMS

<b>ADRA</b>	Adventist Development and Relief Agency
<b>AYR</b>	Advance Youth Radio
<b>CEN</b>	Community Engagement Network
<b>CES</b>	Central Equatoria State
<b>CPA</b>	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
<b>CPJ</b>	Commission for the Protection of Journalists
<b>EES</b>	Eastern Equatoria State
<b>FGDs</b>	Focus Group Discussions
<b>ICAP</b>	International Center for AIDS Care and Treatment Programs
<b>IDPs</b>	Internally Displaced Persons
<b>IEA</b>	Information Ecosystem Assessment
<b>KIIs</b>	Key Informant Interviews
<b>MOH</b>	Ministry of Health
<b>NSS</b>	National Security Services
<b>PoCs</b>	Protection of Civilian Site
<b>PoE</b>	Point of Entry

<b>RiT 2.0</b>	Rooted in Trust Phase 2
<b>SPLM</b>	Sudan People Liberation Movement
<b>SSBC</b>	South Sudan Broadcasting Corporation
<b>SSNA</b>	South Sudan News Agency
<b>SSTV</b>	South Sudan Television
<b>TRC</b>	The Radio Community
<b>UJOSS</b>	Union of Journalists of South Sudan
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
<b>UNS</b>	Upper Nile State
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>VOR</b>	Voice of Reconciliation
<b>WFP</b>	World Food Programmes
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization

# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In South Sudan information flows are hindered by immense logistical, technical, and financial constraints and these have, over the years, been worsened by conflict and violence across the country. The 2013 civil war led to further economic fragmentation, negatively impacting mass media growth and development. Prior to the outbreak of conflict in 2013, South Sudan already ranked high among countries with a harsh environment for journalists, curtailing freedom of expression and free press.

Internews carried out an Information Ecosystem Assessment (IEA) in South Sudan from February 2022 to September 2022 to better understand the unique and localized information needs, gaps, sources and patterns of access and use of information. The IEA offers an analytical framework to capture all dimensions of the relationship between information consumers and suppliers. Gaining insights into these dynamics allows us to design projects that meet people where they are to deliver information through the channels, platforms, formats, or people that they prefer and trust.

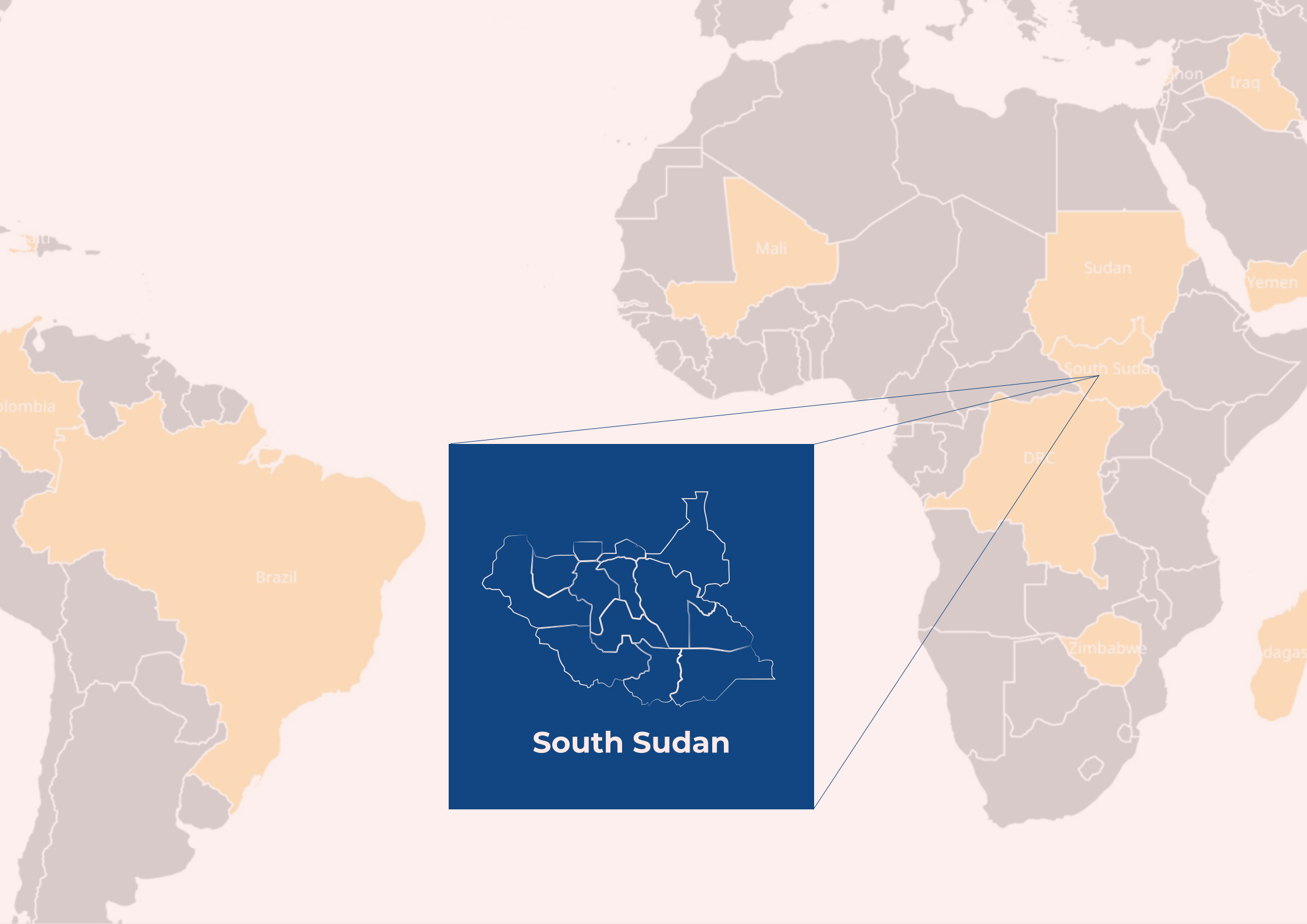
From June to July 2022, Internews through the Rooted in Trust (RiT 2.0) global project collected data in three selected counties in Upper Nile State, Central Equatoria and Eastern Equatoria among the internally displaced persons (IDPs) and host communities. Both the IDPs and host communities are largely disadvantaged due to their lack of connections, dependence on state assistance and the difficulties that confront them in accessing essential-basic services including reliable information on any topic. The themes studied focused on information consumption, habits, health, and preferences, as well as beliefs about the reliability of information from diverse sources. Internews employed the IEA methodology, a participatory approach which incorporates both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods.

The IEA data was collected through desk reviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), key informant's interviews (KIIs) and a community survey in three counties of the three selected states. These data collection tools were developed and tailored to fit the local context, themes, and access factors with the broader aim to gain a deep understanding of how people and

communities in the selected target geographic areas find, share, value, and trust information in their own local contexts and explore all the factors that govern information needs, access, sourcing, movement, uptake, and impact in an ecosystem.

South Sudan has a harsh media environment and is heavily controlled with limited freedom of expression for journalists. Access to radios and television stations is constrained in both rural and urban areas due to energy shortages and economic reasons. Newspaper readership levels are low in rural compared to urban pockets of South Sudan due to low literacy levels among IDPs and remote communities. It is religious leaders that are the most vocal and trusted opinion leaders, especially in rural areas and many have negative views about the COVID-19 vaccine. This increased community hesitancy and vaccine apathy in the country. Most communities get COVID-19 information from the Ministry of Health (MoH) and other health partners. The participation of women and people with disabilities in community activities is very low due to negative cultural perceptions and sociocultural factors where women are discouraged by their partners. This is a group of people that were displaced from their homes by either natural disasters such as flooding, or conflicts. Such insecurity and intercommunal conflicts disrupt the flow of information in the community and among vulnerable groups - those who do not have strong social connections and thus have limited access to reliable information. Food insecurity induced by a combination of famine, natural disasters, and a lack of sustainable agricultural practices is perceived as one of the pressing issues in the communities.

We recommend that Government promotes freedom of expression and press freedoms. The role of informal networks in sharing information within communities, such as informal networks on social media, should not be underestimated. Social media (Facebook) is the leading medium of information followed by television and radio. Government should also initiate peace dialogues and conflict resolution activities in the community, and improve infrastructure, particularly road networks to remote communities for easy access to information and services in urban areas.



**South Sudan**





## 2. INTRODUCTION

South Sudan gained independence in 2011, following a protracted civil war pitting the Muslim-Arab dominated north against the Christian majority south. The 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) signed in Naivasha, Kenya between the Northern Sudan government and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) paved way for a referendum for self-determination and independence.

The secession of South Sudan from Sudan initially opened minimal space for expression and press freedom leading to a sharp increase in the number of media institutions. South Sudan, however, plunged into civil war, barely two years into independence, and this resulted in the killing of hundreds of thousands and the displacement of at least 4.5 million civilians (United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) 2019). At independence, South Sudan relied hugely on oil revenue to finance up to 90% of its government functions, but the ensuing war decimated the country's economy and altered information flows and dynamics.

In the first instance, media organizations face immense logistical, technical, and financial challenges, worsened by incessant conflict and violence across the country. The 2013 civil war led to political and economic crises, and this negatively impacted mass media growth and development. Prior to the 2013 conflict outbreak, South Sudan

curtailed freedom of expression and free press and ranked high among countries with a harsh environment for journalists (Freedom House 2019). The country's authorities, mainly the National Security Service (NSS), employed a heavy-handed approach in dealing with journalists and media houses and this includes arrests, torture, and punitive laws, like the previous Khartoum regimes which used to censor journalists and suppress freedom of expression. Hostility and violence against journalists worsened as the civil war intensified. Reporters Without Borders estimate that at least 10 journalists were killed in South Sudan between 2014 and 2016 while others remained under arrest without charge. Furthermore, the continued sporadic fighting among various warring factions hindered access to many parts of the country, causing a sharp drop in mass media circulation which has, in effect, severely hindered many South Sudanese from access to news and information.

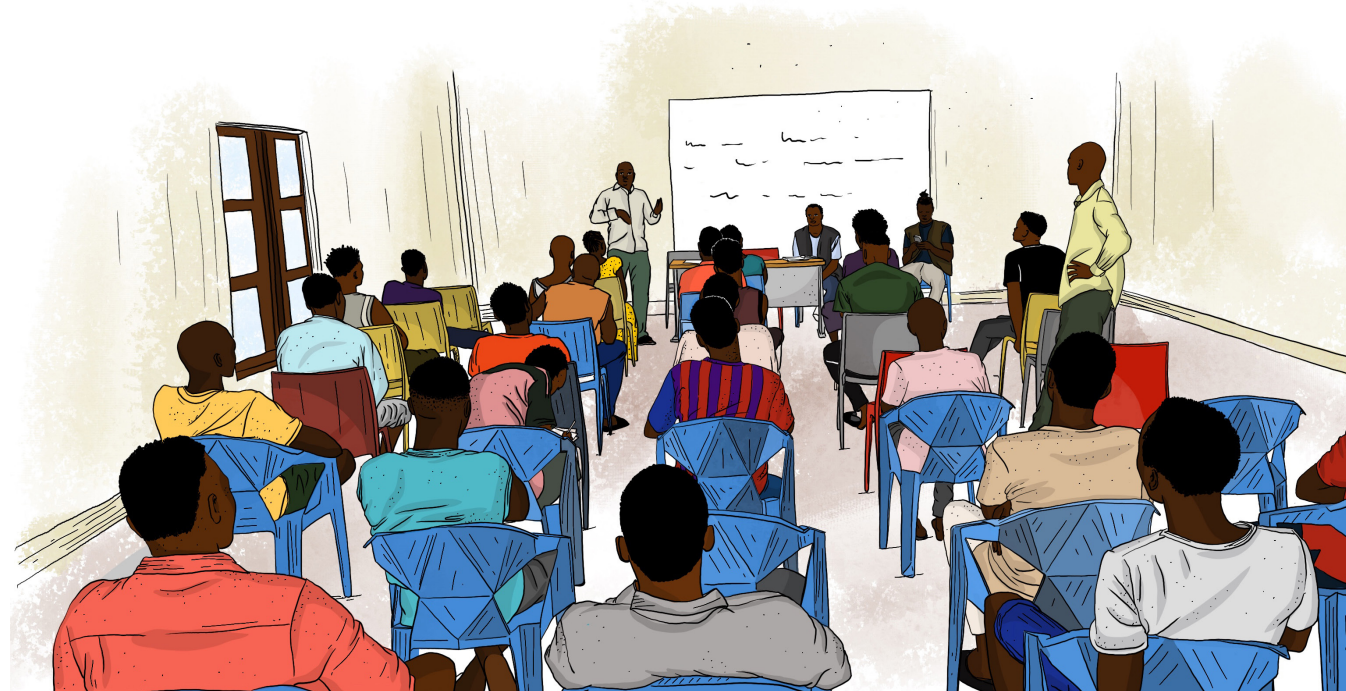
Through the support of faith and international organizations, information flows improved after the signing of the 2005 CPA in Kenya. Humanitarian agencies and the government of South Sudan collaborated towards an effective information ecosystem. Local communities, however, still have limited access to reliable information providers from both traditional and social media platforms.

## 3. RESEARCH SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Information Ecosystem Assessment Approach

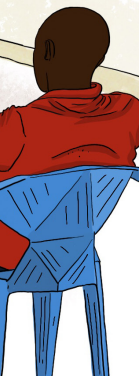
The Internews IEA methodology aims to develop a deep understanding of how people and communities in the selected target geographic areas find, share, value, and trust information in their own local contexts. An IEA aims to explore all the factors that govern information needs, access, sourcing, movement, uptake, and impact in an ecosystem. By focusing on both the supply-side (media outlets and their capacity, other partners, and the business and governmental forces that influence) and on the community demand side of the information ecosystem, IEAs examine the dynamic human-centred aspects of information flows. The method also pays attention to informal, cultural, and social media factors that can disrupt and corrupt information flows with rumours, misinformation, and propaganda.

Internews undertakes IEAs to better understand unique and localized information needs, gaps, sources and patterns of access and use. IEAs offer an analytical framework to capture all dimensions of the relationship between information consumers and information supply. Gaining insights into these dynamics allows us to design projects that meet people where they are, to deliver information through the channels, platforms, formats, or people that they prefer and trust.



Our IEA research is predicated on four key principles that lie at the core of our methodological approach:

- 1. Putting the community at the core of the research:** Internews strives to be at the center of the communities that it serves. As such we endeavor to have the community itself do a large part of the research; and this entails communities selecting the research questions and collaboratively identify the relevant stakeholders.
- 2. Following a human-centered research design:** The IEA seeks a holistic understanding of people's information practices. We understand demand and supply in a broad sense, not narrowly focused on media outlets or traditional media actors. Our scope of analysis is defined by how people access and consume information and not by pre-defined categories. We strive to understand both which practices are broadly shared and what are the specific needs and behaviours of groups, especially the most vulnerable ones.
- 3. Marrying qualitative and quantitative data:** We seek to combine different types of data to best understand both the supply and demand of information and how the two interact to produce a dynamic ecosystem. We go beyond traditional mapping and audience surveys. Our IEAs rely heavily on a qualitative approach: understanding information practices requires getting up, close and personal to people to figure out the best ways to reach them with good information.
- 4. Integrating research and action:** We do not see IEAs as an "end product". They are most often the first stage of our project design, providing invaluable context and a way to build a trusting relationship with the community we hope to work with. They are always connected to recommended actions, whether our own, those undertaken by the communities or by our partners and other key stakeholders in the ecosystem.



Following these principles, the research team collected data in three selected states: Upper Nile, Eastern Equatoria and Central Equatoria. The three states were selected purposively based on the population of the IDPs in the area and the security situation in each state.

The KIIs and FGDs were conducted in Malakal County in Upper Nile (UNS), Kapoeta County in Eastern Equatoria (EES) and Yei County in Central Equatoria (CES) among host and IDPs communities. The research team was unable to reach certain locations for data collection as initially envisaged due to a combination of security, weather and time constraints. For instance, Melut county in Upper Nile was not accessible due to insecurity and flooding. Torit and Juba counties were not accessible due to time constraints.

## 4.1 Methods of data collection

### *Desk Review*

A desk review of existing studies on the information landscape focusing on both the information supply side and demand side in South Sudan was conducted. The desk review was also used to inform the research scope and design. The research team identified and reviewed available resources published by the organizations working on the COVID-19 pandemic and health communication and in support of conflict-affected communities or IDPs. These included the World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), TRC, AYR, and CEN.

In general, the desk review highlighted that there is a limited number of studies that explore information needs, flow, trust and sharing among local communities and IDPs in South Sudan.

## Community Survey

The research team conducted a survey among communities of IDPs in the selected locations. A questionnaire comprising both open and closed ended questions was administered to a total of 235 participants.

Apart from demographic information, the questions posed to the participants focused on participants' COVID-19 information needs, access to information and trust in the sources of information. The tool also solicited information on the drivers and barriers to accessing information and how and in what ways this impinges on healthcare practices and health seeking behaviours.

## Sampling and sampling strategy

A sample of 235 individuals was used for the study. The sample size calculation used a 95% confidence level ( $\alpha=0.05$ ), and a relative precision of 5%. The formula used assumed that the population is large. Partners (TRC, CEN and AYR) recruited 13 data collectors in each State. These data collectors mobilized FGD participants with the help of partners in each State. Data collection was conducted electronically using a mobile application, *KoboCollect*. This allowed real-time monitoring of data collection and enabled the researchers to make better decisions about field survey implementation through conducting course correction earlier in the data collection phase. The system also automatically checks for logical consistency and enforces skip patterns and restricts non-eligible or out-of-range variables. This meant that data was transferred to from the enumerator to the Data Analyst in a near perfect state and ready for analysis.

The survey and KIIs were developed to reflect key indicators to illustrate the changing realities on the ground including audience and community preferences and distribution channels that develop over time (access to online/digital platforms among the communities)

The semi-structured interviews were designed to collect data from humanitarian actors, media houses and outlets, government institutions, religious leaders, and civil society organizations in the three selected states (Upper Nile, Eastern Equatoria and Central Equatoria states). The 63 semi-structured interviews were conducted in three selected States or Counties (21 interviews in each State). This convenience sampling method specifically reached local and IDP communities who access information through online/digital platforms, humanitarian sectors and social media pages. While this is not statistically representative of all South Sudanese communities and humanitarian sector because a primary goal of this IEA is to inform communication channels, sharing of information in the community and programming, the method was deemed appropriate.

## Focus Group Discussions

The qualitative portion of the research was developed (after survey data collection) to form a more complete picture of South Sudan local communities' information trends and preferences. Semi-structured questionnaires were developed

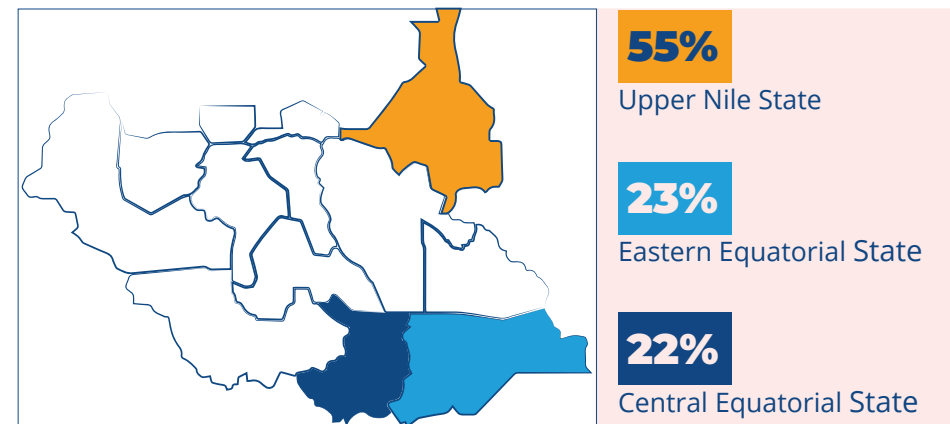


Figure 1: Data Collected per State

to prompt more open-ended responses from both FGDs and KIIs. A pilot interview was conducted, and the questionnaires were finalized by integrating the feedback from the experts during the IEA launch workshops in Malakal County, Kapoeta South County and Yei County.

Twelve FGDs were conducted in three locations. At each study site four FGDs were conducted and each FGD was comprised of 16 participants of all ages and gender totalling 192 (i.e., 167 men, 25 women). Of the 192 participants 10 individuals have disabilities. Civil society organizations and local media partners, religious leaders, government, and humanitarian sectors located in South Sudan were identified and selected for local communities and IDPs were identified for FDGs with the support of the Internews partners (CEN, TRC and AYR) on the ground and the core researcher. Over the course of seven

days, two researchers conducted data collectors' training and dispatched 39 data collectors to their respective communities to collect data through interviews and FGDs, 13 data collectors in each State. These workshops were conducted in Malakal County, Kapoeta South County and Yei County respectively.

The interviewers informed the participants about the purpose of the study after which they sought participants' consent to take part in the study. The study was therefore conducted on the basis that the participants understood the purpose of the study and they participated voluntarily. During the interviews, researchers took systematic, detailed notes and transcripts. This qualitative data was then coded manually for open questions and thematic analysis. A total number of 439 participants took part in this study.

### Study Limitations

There were some limitations in conducting the study.

- Very few women were interviewed compared to men. The study does not therefore sufficiently present a balanced gender analysis. Women as well as vulnerable members of society such as persons with disabilities could not participate in large numbers and their views and perspectives are not pronounced in the report.
- Data and findings collected during this IEA do not represent the entire South Sudanese population; it was collected in three States of the 80 Counties in the country.
- Despite these limitations, the report offers valuable insights about the information ecosystem obtaining in contemporary South Sudan.



# 5. INFORMATION SUPPLY

## 5.1 Media Providers

### 5.1.1 Newspapers



The media space in South Sudan is severely constrained by a combination of political factors and a difficult economic environment. Upon the attainment of independence in 2011 over 10 newspapers were in circulation. The newspapers later shut down either due to pressure from the government or financial constraints.

The affected newspapers were: The Citizen, The Juba Post, Sudan Mirror, The Southern Eye, The Star, The New Times, The Hero, and The New Nation. A few newspapers survived the difficult operational environment and are still operational and these include Juba Monitor, The Dawn, The Citizen No.1, Review City and The Citizen. South Sudanese Journalists and radical civil society activists often experience intimidation, detention, and arrest by government authorities (Kermalli & Patrick, 2021).

In 2017, there were only five daily newspapers in circulation in the capital, with Juba Monitor newspaper being the most read by English-speaking residents of the city. Presently, the print media market is dominated by the Juba Monitor which is partially supported by United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to strengthen the transition and stability

program in the country. Juba Monitor remains a popular newspaper read by mostly the educated and professional elites. The government of South Sudan does not own any print media or newspaper agent, all the print media are independently and individually owned.

A previous study by USAID (2012) found that newspaper readership levels are low due to low literacy levels. In 2012 surveys in accessible areas of South Sudan including the Central Equatoria State, Western Equatoria State, Western Bahr el Ghazal State and Warrap State indicated that among youth of 15-25 age group, literacy levels were much higher, at 43% among male and 57% among females (Robert Powel, 2012). A Forcier survey (2021) states that the percentage of the newspaper readers was 68.5% of which 74.2% of participants read newspapers through the internet. However, among the population with low literacy levels, the survey indicated 26% of those without basic education trusted information relayed by word of mouth from family members and relatives, opinion leaders such as religious leaders and community elders (Forcier, 2021).

### 5.1.2 Radio

An Internews study (2017) also found radio to be popular, widely consumed, and trusted media in the country. The study focused on information needs and access to media among Sudanese refugees in Northern Unity State. The findings showed 41% of respondents listened to the radio, with a sub-sample of 56% of residents in Ajuong Thok refugee camp stating that they listened to radio. In the 2017 study, many respondents (84%) said the lack of radios hindered access to information.

In a recent survey conducted by Forcier in 2021, nearly 93% of participants reported having access to radio and 81% reported having access to television (TV). In Juba, 66% of respondents have access to radio with men more likely (70%) to have listened to radio than women (62%). Just like other media, radio has come under huge pressure to broadcast pro-government information or at worst became a mouthpiece for the government and military regimes. The operations and reach of radio stations have also been impacted by the conflict manifest in increasing operational costs and diminishing revenues (Forcier, 2021). Radio operations and reach are concentrated in Juba city but few covering the States. In the 2021 National Audience Survey, the radio stations' weekly reach in major towns in the country besides Juba were Radio Miraya (46.6%), Eye Radio (43.8%), BBC World Service in English (15.1%), Voice of America (19.1%), City FM (21%), Liberty FM (14.7%) of participants reported having access to these media channels (Forcier, 2021).

### 5.1.3 Television



The growth and development of television in South Sudan has been hampered by economic hardships. Television stations are saddled with huge operational and production costs.

TV stations are also hindered by limited electricity and telecommunication infrastructure. As of 2018, the state-run South Sudan Television (SSTV), which has since been renamed to South Sudan Broadcasting Corporation

(SSBC), is the only station operating in the country after KISS TV channel established in 2020 in Juba. The SSBC channel was fully established in 2013 (SSBC, 2018).

The SSBC broadcasts news and current-affairs programming, music, and entertainment via the Arabsat Badr-4 Satellite, Multichoice DSTV and some online streaming services. The use of digital satellite technology has a limited reach, reaching slightly above 10% of the South Sudanese, according to an Internews survey conducted in 2017. Thus, a significant percentage of the population does not have access to television. Most of the South Sudanese population is hindered from accessing TV stations due to energy shortages. Less than 29% of the population had at least one source of power and only eight per cent had television sets in their household. Regarding nationwide television penetration, even the most popular station had a reach of less than five per cent, with South Sudan Television dominating the TV market with 47%, followed by Al Jazeera Arabic (35%) and Al Jazeera English (28%).

## 5.2 The Digital Media Landscape

South Sudan's government has restrictive laws and orders on media houses and due to such excessive government control and a violent approach in dealing with journalists and media institutions, it has not only discouraged critical digital reporting, but also citizen journalism. According to a recent national audience survey, access to the Internet has increased across South Sudan (Forcier in 2021). In all, 74.2% of participants reported having access to the internet and this means that connectivity to internet is increasing in the country and the diaspora can access digital media (Forcier, 2021). Some media organizations have an online presence, but government

ensorship has hindered their ability to operate as credible sources of news and information. Access to the various vibrant online news sites and blogs has been blocked in South Sudan. In the same survey, Sudan Tribune, Gurtong and Radio Tamazuj were among social media outlets that are accessed by South Sudanese who have access to internet to access digital media services for news and information, Sudan Tribune was consulted by 42% of the people surveyed. Other popular websites were Eye Radio (31%) and BBC News (23%).

### 5.3 Social networks

Social media has grown in popularity in South Sudan, particularly Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp. During the war, social media tools reportedly played a significant role in the escalation and de-escalation of conflict. On one hand social networks are providing space for South Sudanese to share news and information and creating a platform for interaction and engagement on issues developing in the country. A United Nations (UN) report on freedom of opinion and expression in South Sudan (2016) stated that since the 2016 crisis, social media platforms have been used to fuel or instigate rumors and, in some cases, to incite violence.

Much of the online media is consumed via social networks; Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram which remain accessible mostly in major towns. Internet World Stats (2019) estimate active social media users in South Sudan to have grown by 21% year-on-year between 2018 and 2019 and that currently they stand at 230,000 representing 1.8 per cent of the total population. Slightly more than 220,000 social media users access the networks from their mobile devices. In terms of the platforms, Facebook is used by an estimated 214,201 users as of April 2019, making it the most popular social media platform.



Instagram is used by 10.9 per cent of active social media users and LinkedIn by 12.6 per cent. Twitter and Snapchat have a small (almost insignificant) number of users in the country. Increased accessibility of inexpensive smartphones led to a sharp rise in WhatsApp popularity. WhatsApp has become a popular tool for communication and plays a key role in disseminating videos and photos in groups and on other social media platforms, majorly by South Sudanese of the diaspora who have a pervasive presence on most of the major networks. Those who live in the country have access to digital technologies such as smartphones which they use to share information with their friends and relatives both inside and outside the country. YouTube is also popularly used to disseminate and share news. The SSBC has, for instance, used the platform to share its news programming. Most social media users, however, are concentrated in Juba.



## 5.4 Local Relevance of Information

Despite the heavily controlled media landscape and limited freedom of expression, politicians from both sides of the political divide, religious leaders, military factions' heads, social interest groups, tribal leaders, rights activists, and politicians are the public figures making the headlines in South Sudan. Opinion makers have used various platforms including religious gatherings and traditional functions such as weddings and sports events to voice their opinions. Religious leaders, however, have remained the most vocal and trusted opinion leaders, especially in rural areas. Their voices are also getting inroads into media and policy making. For instance, in 2016, Bishop Paul Yugusuk of the Anglican Church used various media platforms and religious gatherings to call for justice for the victims of the Kubi rape incidences (David Lomuria Eperit, 2020). His efforts led to the establishment of a military investigation taskforce which resulted in the trial of the soldiers who participated in the raping of women in Kubi. Sources are linked to websites when available or Facebook pages, as many traditional media find it hard to maintain an online presence outside social media (Eperit, 2020).

## 5.5 Organizations and Associations

### 5.5.1 Trade unions

The Transitional Constitution of the Republic of South Sudan provides for freedom of labor movements and the formation and membership to unions. Many trade unions and workers' associations are registered to advocate for a better work environment and resolve disputes. In 2017, the Ministry of Interior established labour laws that sought to mediate in labor-

related disputes to protect workers' rights and provide guidelines for employment in foreigner-operated organizations. Before these laws were established, South Sudan used the labour law of Sudan despite repeated lobbying by labour unions since 2010. Other trade unions like the South Sudan Women Union have been at the forefront advocating for gender inclusion in governance.

### 5.5.2 Media and Journalists Association and Regulators

The Union of Journalists of South Sudan (UJOSS) was established in 2004 and is the key association representing journalists in the engagements with the government and other organizations in the country. The association holds a database of both journalists working in media organizations and freelancers. The UJOSS, which was registered and legally accredited in 2008, advocating better working conditions and environment for journalists and thus association has also represented journalists during harassment and arrests by government authorities. The new South Sudan Media Authority has required membership from UJOSS for South Sudanese journalists seeking accreditation to practice the profession. According to Oliver Modi, speaking during the 2018 First National Media Symposium, the capacity for the association to advocate and represent journalists has been effectively frustrated by the lack of sufficient sources of revenue to cover its operations.



### 5.5.3 News agencies

International news agencies, such as Reuters, Voice of America (VOA), FSN, Agence France-Presse (AFP) and Associated Press (AP) have freelance stringers and correspondents facing censorship and threats just like South Sudanese journalists. Most foreign correspondents have either been denied accreditation or deported. In 2018 and 2019, there were only three foreign journalists reporting from the country. International media organizations such as China Global Television (CGTN) and Al Jazeera English and Arabic have maintained a presence in the country despite the harsh working environment for journalists. The operations of Al Jazeera English were briefly shut down in 2017 after the national Minister for Information and Technology, Hon. Michael Makuei Lueth accused the news agency of misinformation and bias in reporting.

**Due to fear of censorship and shutdowns, many news agencies provide limited coverage and self-censored reporting.**

South Sudan has more than 50 registered news agencies operated by South Sudanese journalists who work intermittently. Due to fear of censorship and shutdowns, many news agencies provide limited coverage and self-censored reporting. Other South Sudanese media agencies run social media pages, but these are usually not updated for weeks or even months. The South Sudan News Agency (SSNA) maintains regular reporting pushed by a diaspora group in the United States.

### 5.5.4 Audience measurement organizations

There are no audience measurement organizations in South Sudan. The ensuing war and lack of resources have made it extremely difficult to conduct nationwide household surveys measuring how the South Sudanese consume or use media. Existing surveys have been conducted on behalf of two important players, Internews and *Radio Miraya*.

**There are no audience measurement organizations in South Sudan.**



Lack of data and research on audience insights, media reach and circulation has made it extremely difficult to analyze the South Sudan media landscape. The available surveys by Swiss-based organization, Hironnelle Foundation (2007) and Internews (2013 and 2015) are limited to specific locations within the country. The surveys used a combination of qualitative and quantitative research to gather data from sections of South Sudan, but limited access remained a hinderance. Other available survey findings and data are outdated.

The latest research conducted on behalf of various South Sudan government departments dates up to the first decade of the century. For instance, the South Sudan household baseline survey was conducted in 2009.

## 5.6 Policies and Regulations

### 5.6.1 Media legalization

The harsh laws governing media and journalists' operations in South Sudan have drastically changed over the years but more in theory than in practice. President Salva Kiir signed into law the Media Authority Act (2013), the Broadcasting Corporation Act (2013) and the Right of Access to Information Act (2014), providing the legal framework for the promotion of press freedom and access to information. The Media Authority Act enshrines the principle that the right to freedom of expression, including the public right to a pluralistic media, is a fundamental human right, protected under Article 24 of the Transitional Constitution of the Republic of South Sudan. This new legislation is a stark contrast to the Penal Code Act (2008), which holds laws that govern freedom of expression and press formation.

Despite the new provisions, government authorities such as the National Security Services (NSS) are involved in continuous violations. For instance, the NSS has imposed regulatory agents on press facilities, who review and eventually remove articles from the publication before newspapers go to press. The Media Authority Act provides for digital media registration and regulation. However, the Media Authority of South Sudan, the body established to oversee media operation in South Sudan, has summoned and sanctioned the digital press in various occasions. In 2017, the South Sudanese Ministry of Information and Broadcasting blocked access to two online media, Sudan Tribune and *Tamazuj* and two blogs *Paanluel Wel* and *Nyamilel* in 2017. Such acts have undermined the provisions for free press and freedom of expression.

## 5.7 Accountability

Pursuant to the Media Authority Act, complaints filed against media entities are treated as civil offenses and subject to review and investigation by the Press and Broadcast Complaints Council and the Media Appeals Board. The Press and Broadcast Complaints Council is mandated to impose administrative sanctions envisaged in Article 29 of the Transitional Constitution of the Republic of South Sudan. However, in cases "where malicious intent or recklessness is shown and damage is serious," offenders will be subjected to a prison term of up to five years by a competent court.

Specific provisions in the Media Authority Act defining hate speech and incitement of violence follow international human rights standards. For example, Article 29-2 requires that a nexus must be established between the words and an actual or probable act of violence or discrimination. This is to avoid, for example, limitations on the use of offensive or insulting language under the pretext of prohibiting hate speech, according to the 2016 Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) report on Rights to opinion and expression. The report further claims, the NSS Act (2014) granted the South Sudanese National Security Agent sweeping powers with respect to surveillance, arrest, and detention in situations where the national interest could be threatened. It also allowed security agents to arrest individuals without a warrant. This provision has been used against journalists and other individuals for exercising their legitimate right to freedom of expression. Moreover, while the NSS Act requires that individuals arrested and detained by the NSS be brought before a magistrate within 24 hours, in practice, people are frequently held without any access to the court system.

## 5.8 Regulatory authorities

The Media Authority Act (2013) provides for the establishment of an autonomous oversight body, the Media Authority, to regulate, develop and promote an independent and pluralistic media industry in the country. It was created in 2016 and started operations in 2017. The establishment of the Media Authority was met with enthusiasm by many media practitioners and journalists. However, media professionals today are skeptical of the Authority's mandate. Many believe the Media Authority acts on behalf of the NSS instead of defending media freedom and the ability of journalists to exercise the profession. While on paper South Sudan's media laws offer adequate protection and a conducive environment for journalists, the opposite is indeed true when applied to the daily coverage of news and current affairs.

In 2017, 20 foreign journalists were barred by the Media Authority from entering the country and reporting. On January 7, 2019, the Media Authority summoned the Editor-in-Chief of the Arabic-language newspaper *Al-Watan*, Michael Christopher. The Authority issued a warning to the paper to *"stop with immediate effect writing anything on topics relating to the ongoing protests in Sudan, which is an internal political issue (sic) of a friendly neighboring country"*. Various local and regional media groups interpreted the warning written by the Authority's Managing Director, Sapana Abuyi, as a blanket warning to all South Sudanese media not to cover the protests.

In the letter, Sapana said *"the media in South Sudan should not write or broadcast or instigate statements and comments about [the protests in Sudan]"*. The Commission for the Protection of Journalists (CPJ) said the gag on *Al-Watan* newspaper exposed South Sudan's hostility toward its citizens' right to information.

## 5.9 Transmission

The methods of information transmission currently used in South Sudan communication channels are as follows:

**Print:** People who live in urban areas have more reliable access to newspapers and magazines, compared to those who live in rural areas.

**Telephone:** Mobile network communication; it is likened to face-to-face communication only that users are not physically present.

**Oral:** face-to-face communication, for example, receiving information from friends, community leaders and family members.

**Radio:** Radio is used to broadcast audio information to a group of people at the same time. The group of people could be in different locations, but within the radio transmission area. One must have access to a radio device to be able to receive radio signals but there is lack of enough radios in communities.

**Television:** Television is used to broadcast audio-visual information to a group of people at the same time. The group of people could be in different locations but within the TV transmission area. One must have access to a TV device to be able to receive TV signals but majority in South Sudan do not have access to TV.

**Internet:** Anyone at any location with the right devices can have access to information shared on the internet but in this case only a few people have access to the internet in local remote areas.

## 6. INFORMATION DEMAND

The Internews IEA framework seeks to capture all the dimensions of the relationship between the information supply and information demand. Information supply focuses on the information landscape and how information is transmitted. Information demand on the other hand aims to understand how people and their communities find, share, and value information in their own local contexts, whether it comes from the media, community leaders or not. By focusing on both the capacity of the supply-side (media outlets and other partners) and on the community demand side of the information ecosystem, IEAs examine the dynamic human-centred aspects of information flows and pays attention to informal, cultural, and social media factors that can disrupt and corrupt information flows with rumours, misinformation, and propaganda. Given the limited access to television or social media, especially outside the main urban centers, radio is often the only means by which vulnerable populations receive critical, often life-saving, and actionable information to make informed decisions (iSTREAM Project report, Internews, 2022).

### 6.1 Identified gaps in information

From the desk review of South Sudan media landscape, low radio coverage, limited radio stations, power outage or electricity disruption and insecurity have been identified as major problems hampering accessibility to reliable information in the communities. Previous surveys conducted among refugees and the host communities in Ruweng Administration Area (formerly Unity State) and in other states indicate that refugees and the humanitarian communities believe that *Jamjang* FM, TRC stations and humanitarian information service

as source of reliable information on health, education, local security, registration and other relevant information needed by the community (Forcier, 2021) but coverage is very low, and does not reach communities in far flung areas. As these stations continue to refine their programming; they have great potential not only to meet the information needs of refugees in the language and medium they prefer, but also to create content that meets the information needs of refugees and advances humanitarian programs simultaneously (Internews, 2017).

### 6.2 Needs and programming

In a broader sense, local communities in South Sudan are struggling for reliable information and other competing opportunities such as educational, food security and ways to make a living and information on how to stay healthy during the pandemic and throughout their lifespans. When people think about programming in community engagement, traditional programs—how local communities can have access to reliable information—like radio talk shows in local languages, women empowerment and story times for kids and peaceful building seminars; programming must be in response to the specific needs of their communities.

***“We need information on health, education and local security,” participant from Yei County, Central Equatoria.***

In a series of FGDs, participants expressed differing ideas about what constituted community needs. Do communities need information on certain topics, such as information literacy? Do needs include broader social issues, such as the need for safe places for young people and the community at large? Are these needs related to issues of accessibility and/or alignment with community characteristics for instead language preferences whether it is Arabic, Dinka and other local languages?

***“We need information on health, education and local security,” participant from Yei County, Central Equatoria.***

Responses reflected all these categories of topics on health, education, local security and livelihood in their respective communities. Majority of the study participants agreed that it was important to assess community basic needs and rights and whereas minority struggled to articulate specific methods they used to do so.

### **6.3 Access - channels and sources**

Access to information was assessed by asking respondents if they had access to any type of information either at home or elsewhere in their communities. Having access to health-related and other relevant information is vital in the community, however, how, and where communities get reliable information plays a major role in local people’s lives.

Local communities in South Sudan have limited access to health-related information and other relevant information they need to have access to; the primary information source provides direct or first-hand information about an event, person, object, or health-related information.

The community gets limited information from friends, family members, religious and community leaders and through local community radio stations. Participants revealed that:

***“We have shortage of radio stations, and this is making it hard to get information.”***

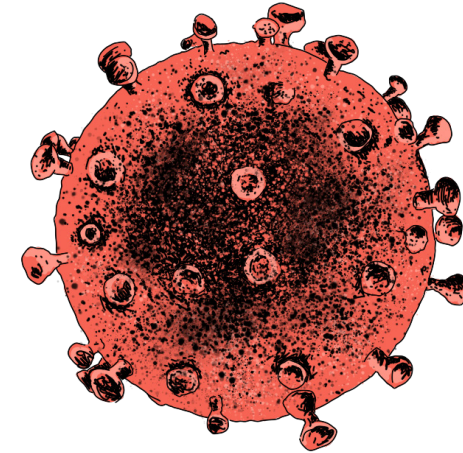
Kapoeta FGD participants

***“Lack of information due to limited radios, radio stations and radio coverages.”***

Majority of alakal FGD participants

## 6.4 Main determinants and barriers to accessing information

A lack of information technology skills and access affects communities' use of information and communities tend to base the selection of information sources on convenience and accessibility rather than quality. They also tend to rely on colleagues, friends, family, and community leaders as information sources and prefer to refer to them than to printed or computerized sources. The assumed acceptance of information determines the access to COVID-19 and health-related information in local communities. The more access people have, the more critically they perceive their knowledge. People with ill-health conditions frequently search for health-related information compared to people who are not aware of their health status conditions or know less about health-related topics in the community.



***The assumed acceptance of information determines the access to COVID-19 and health-related information in local communities. The more access people have, the more critically they perceive their knowledge.***

Community members who live in rural areas have more barriers to accessing information about COVID-19 and other health-related topics or issues than members living in urban or suburban areas of the counties in South Sudan. There are numerous challenges that rural dwellers face, but the communities who are living too far away from the nearest facility and those facilities regularly having clinician shortages.

## 7. INFORMATION DYNAMICS

Desk review indicates that community differences do emerge in the number and variety of local news sources used, as well as the degree of “local news participation” and mobile news consumption. Many of the differences in local news consumption emerging from these data reflect the varying demographic composition of different community types in South Sudan (Internews, 2017).

### 7.1 Trust

Trust is essential for sharing information, especially when it comes to health-related and security issues in the community. A trust-based relation that facilitates sharing information is hard to build and it would not happen merely because formal rules mandate it in the community. Media landscape and communication channels in South Sudan also indicate that there are a variety of factors that influence knowledge sharing in communities. Some of the factors include personality traits, communication styles, trust, interpersonal attitudes, leadership, diversity of expertise and community size. This IEA found that leadership and trust have a positive direct impact on community knowledge and information sharing in the community. Some of the participants in the FGD stated that:



***“Radio, international Aid Organization, community media, international media are all popular and are trusted means of receiving and transmitting information. IDPs and community consider the information provided by Radio to be relevant and reliable,”*** said an FGD participant in Malakal Protection of Civilian (POC).

***“We only have Nile FM here in Malakal and we trust whatever information comes from there. We need more radio stations in Malakal and more programs in different languages for example, in Dinka, Shilluk and Nuer,”*** FGD participant in Malakal town Payam.



## 7.2 Impact on Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices

Survey material and information from FGDs shows that the majority of the participants believe that reliable information to the community has a positive impact. It improves knowledge, attitude, and practices, particularly about local communities having access to reliable information providers from both traditional and social media platforms and culminating into better information sharing that can slow down the progression of misinformation and disinformation in the communities. Participants revealed that:

***“We heard the corona messages from Singaita FM, and we have learned, talked about signs of the sick person,”***

FGD Female participant in Kapoeta South County, EES.

***“Our community has seen the badness of COVID-19 and we continue with COVID-19 preventive measures,”***

FGD Male participant in Yei County, CES.

***“Source of our information is from schoolteachers, community leaders and community health workers,”***

FGD participant in Malakal County, Upper Nile.



## 7.3 Information Needs

Study findings show that information needs were determined by the occupation and status of the participants. For instance, farmers prioritized agricultural activities, roads, cattle raiding and rearing, those who understood the importance of health prioritized health, those who are struggling to secure solid employment opportunities are interested in livelihood information and those who have close connection and want their kids to go to school cited education information. Respondents were asked about what information they most needed in the current situation.

***“We need information related to health, COVID-19, education and food security and these are my first priorities at this point of time,”*** said a Male participant from Kapoeta South County, during an FGD.

***“We know corona kills but few numbers of our community have received COVID-19 vaccines,”*** FGD participant in Yei County.

Based on the data collected from the three targeted States in South Sudan for this research, major information needs were presented by the community under which the FGDs were carried out.

From the information needs presented, 100% of the respondents would want to hear information on health, security, food security and livelihood and information on education.

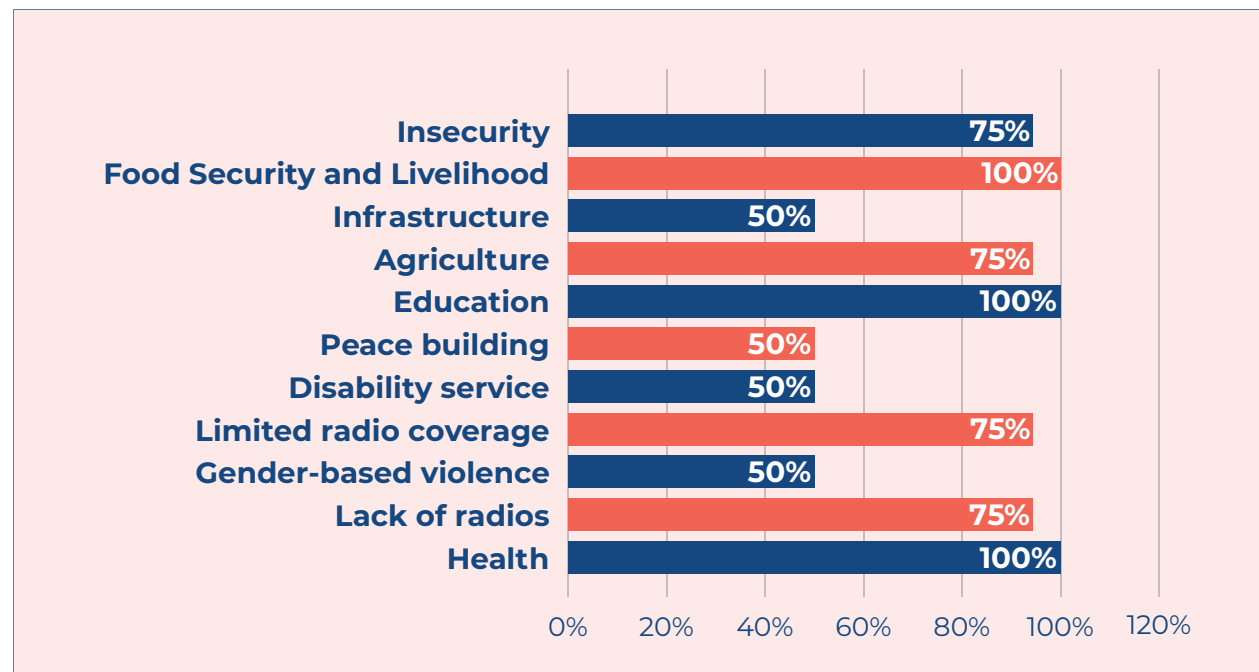
Information needs were also presented on media and radio needs, with 75% of the states presenting limited radio coverage and lack of radios. Another 75% was also recorded on needs for information on agriculture.

Among other information needs, 50% were recorded on information needs like infrastructure, pest and diseases that affects animals and farms, peace building and news on disability service provision. Twenty-five per cent of the data was on inter-communal conflict, gender-based violence, rape and cattle rearing.

Due to the volatility of the context for this research, communities presented a dire need for information on services that matter to them. This is due to the absence of access to basic needs and information on basic and vital information under which, channels were affected by many factors including flooding, famine, and the crisis of 2013 and 2016 respectively.

**All respondents would want to hear information on health, security, food security and livelihood and information on education.**

**Figure 2: The information needs of communities in general**



## 8. HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE AND INFORMATION

### 8.1 National COVID-19 Response Plan

The South Sudan COVID-19 Country Preparedness and Response Plan was issued at the end of March 2020. It described activities to be carried out over a six-month period, April to September 2020, with a financial requirement of about US\$ 10.9 million. Formulation of the plan pre-dated the first confirmed case in the country at the beginning of April 2020. It was developed from the perspective of preparedness, with a geographical focus on high-risk areas of Juba and a few locations including Bentiu, Nimule, Poluch, Renk, Wau and Yambio (MoH Response Plan, 2020-2021) but one point of entry (PoE), Nadapal in Kapoeta East was left out.

### 8.2 Humanitarian actors active on COVID-19 response

Several humanitarian organizations are involved in the COVID-19 response in South Sudan. Some directly implementing activities like immunization and medical care in tandem with the MoH, while others provide peripheral services which are mainstreamed in their humanitarian work (MoH, 2021). Internews is an integral partner of the COVID-19 response structure through provision of accurate, timely and life-saving information on the disease and other health issues of concern.

Other humanitarian actors that are active on COVID-19 response and vaccines in the country are as follows:

- Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA)
- UNICEF
- SAVE the CHILDREN
- WHO
- ICAP, Columbia University
- World Food Program (WFP)

### 8.3 Rumour Tracking and Community Feedback Mechanisms

Rumors, mis and disinformation on COVID-19 are rife and affect the efforts to contain the pandemic. Most humanitarian organizations involved in the COVID-19 response had their own rumor tracking and management mechanisms. Each organization had its own feedback-gathering mechanism. Some of the mechanisms would look similar in structure but the way information is processed and used was different (Internews, 2017). Until recently, there had been no unified approach to harmonize the gathering of information. Internews in partnership with other humanitarian organizations including WHO, UNICEF and WFP, just to mention a few developed a unified set of indicators that have now been incorporated into the rumor tracking and information management tool. The tool is available to all members of the Rumor Tracking and Management Subcommittee, led by Internews. Rumors

and feedback are gathered through several channels ranging from in-person interactions, listening groups, FGDs, on-air phone calls, social media, public congregations and gatherings and a host of others. This information is responded to basing on the frequency of the rumour and the negative impact (risk factor) it may have on the community. The rumors or feedback is shared with experts who debunk them or provide accurate information in response to the concerns or questions raised by the public. The information is crafted into products like factsheets, bulletins, social media and online publications and radio broadcast programs. When the rumors are acted upon, and the community feels their questions and concerns are addressed satisfactorily, that is when the loop is closed.

The following are some of the key rumour areas recorded from FGDs in the three selected States.

- There is misinformation and miseducation to the community about COVID-19 pandemic and its vaccines.
- Rumours such as *“vaccine cause infertility”*, and *“corona virus only kills those who use bleaching cream”* among others circulate in the community.
- COVID-19 vaccines cause miscarriages.
- COVID-19 vaccines contain abortion chemical (FGDs Participants).

## 8.4 Identified gaps in information

Like in any emergencies and crises, timely information sharing is important in averting further exposure to risk and danger (Forcier, 2021). Information sharing is affected by several factors ranging from human error to more complex and technical factors. Based on several studies and surveys that have been conducted in South Sudan, information gaps have been

identified and recommendations made to develop mitigation measures. Some of the gaps are because of mistrust in the sources of information. For example, a study commissioned by Internews and carried out by Forcier Consulting indicates that the perceptions that many humanitarians have during emergency responses are alien to the aid recipients. This in a way creates mistrust hence information flow gaps. Another major issue is the language barrier because many communities have witnessed or undergone displacement due to conflict or natural disasters. Some of the languages used in communicating information are not well understood by sections of the communities. Lack of access to radios, lack of qualified staff to facilitate information flow, low levels of literacy, lack of access to TV and reliable power supply, unreliable words of mouth coupled with poor mobile network connectivity and access (Forcier, 2021), creates barriers and gaps.

***The perceptions that many humanitarians have during emergency responses are alien to the aid recipients.***



## 9. KEY FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH

Amid the Coronavirus outbreak across the country and continued conflict in areas such as Malakal County in Upper Nile State, Kapoeta South County in Eastern Equatoria State and Yei County in Central Equatoria State, timely and accurate information is essential for people to ensure their safety. People need to be aware of existing risks of COVID-19 and its preventive measures, as well as their local situation.

It is important to note that the choices about information acquisition are not necessarily the same in all communities. For instance, it might be the case in rural areas that the local newspaper and broadcast outlets are not online or have a very limited online presence and that is a determinant in whether residents get local information online or not. This IEA survey asked what consumers do in terms of information acquisition and what sources they “rely on”. It did not ask what they *could* do that is, what information and sources are available in their communities. In many respects- if not all- people generally want similar types of news and information. In some communities, they have many choices and are quite deliberate in which platform they use to get which kind of information. In other communities, they have fewer choices or needs.

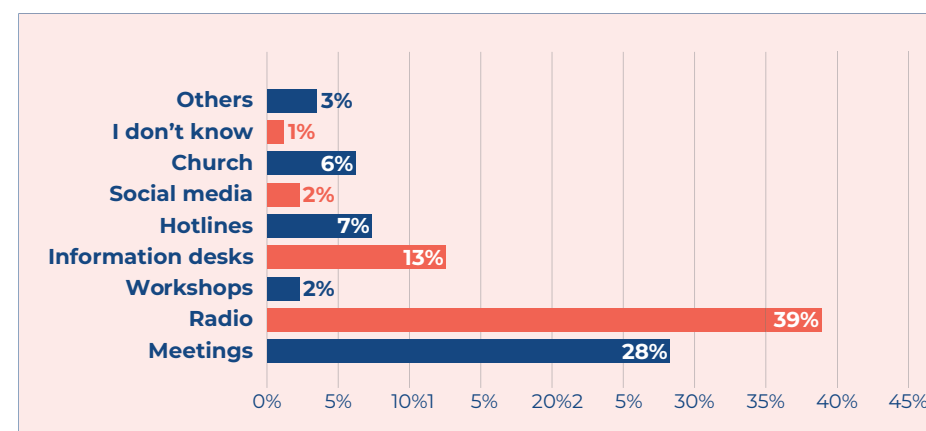
### 9.1 Information Landscape

Majority of participants reported radio and community meetings as source of information. Thirty-nine per cent of FGD participants have reported having access to information mainly through radio. This is because of the presence of few radio stations where this research was carried out, similarly, the radios have limited coverage as presented by 75% of the

states. Communities focus on radio because of it being the reliable source of entertainment and news.

Twenty-eight per cent get information or pass information through community meetings and partners’ health meetings, this also includes other casual meetings and gatherings. Thirteen per cent depend on information desks, 7% on hotlines, 4% on church, 3% on other channels, 2% on awareness, social media, rumour tracking and 2% on workshops and 1% don’t know.

Figure 3: The information landscape in the community



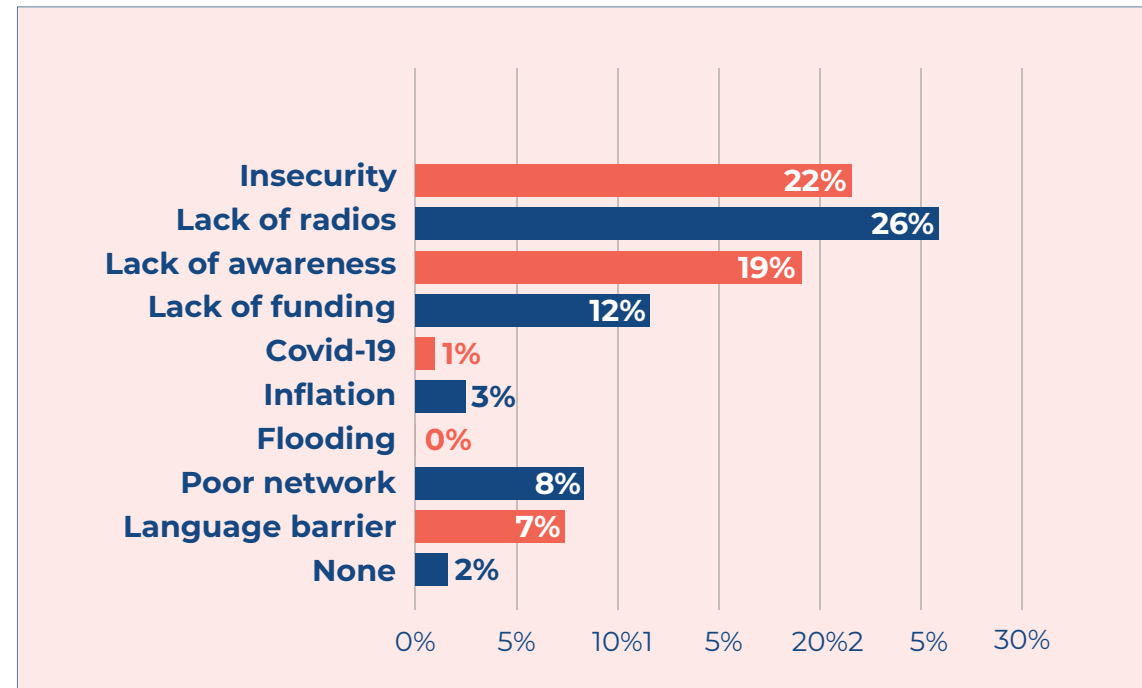
**Thirty-nine per cent of FGD participants have reported having access to information mainly through radio.**

## 9.2 Dynamics to Information Access

Dynamics to information access in the community vary from person to person and is affected by many challenging factors. For example, lack of radios in the community is a major contributing factor account for 26%, insecurity account 22%, limited risk communication activities or lack of awareness account for 19%, lack of funding account for 12%, poor network/infrastructure account for 8 percent and 7% is account to language barriers. The translation of data into local languages was encouraged by the community members. Also, socioeconomic crisis and inflation have curtailed the purchasing power of the locals, even failing to afford radio account for 3%, while 2% didn't report any challenges in access to information and 1% attributes these challenges to information access to COVID-19.

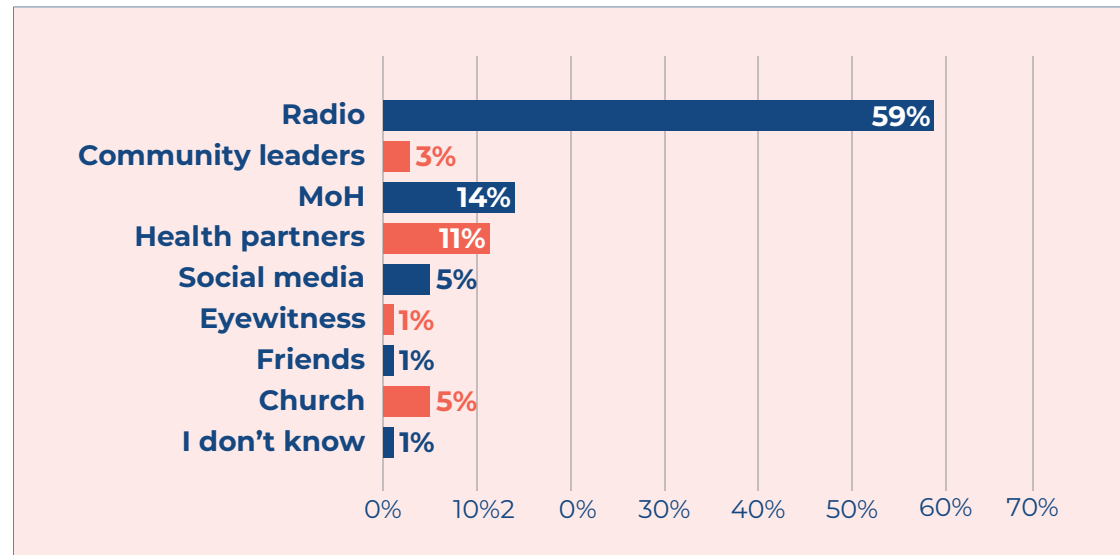
On the other side, when it comes to access to accurate and timely information, 75% of the interviewed population said "yes" to this variable. This is because of strategic settlement in areas easily accessed with radio coverage and the availability of radio, while 25% said they don't have access to accurate and timely information. To them, this can be solved by provision of radios and increase in network coverage to reach remote communities. Rumours are also blamed for lack of access to timely and accurate information.

Figure 4: The dynamics of access to information



***Lack of radios in the community is a major contributing factor.***

**Figure 5: What are the main sources of information you trust?**



***They trust radios because they believe radio stations fact-check their information before dissemination and provide information in a timely manner.***

During the research, communities were asked to state the sources of information they trust and 59% revealed that they trusted radios because they believe that radio stations fact-check their information before dissemination and provide information in a timely manner. The MoH is trusted at 14% because of the close collaboration with international health partners like WHO and other actors. Health partners are trusted at 11%, while 5% trust social media and the church, community leaders are also trusted at 3% and 1% for eyewitnesses, friends and 1% don't know the main sources of information to trust.

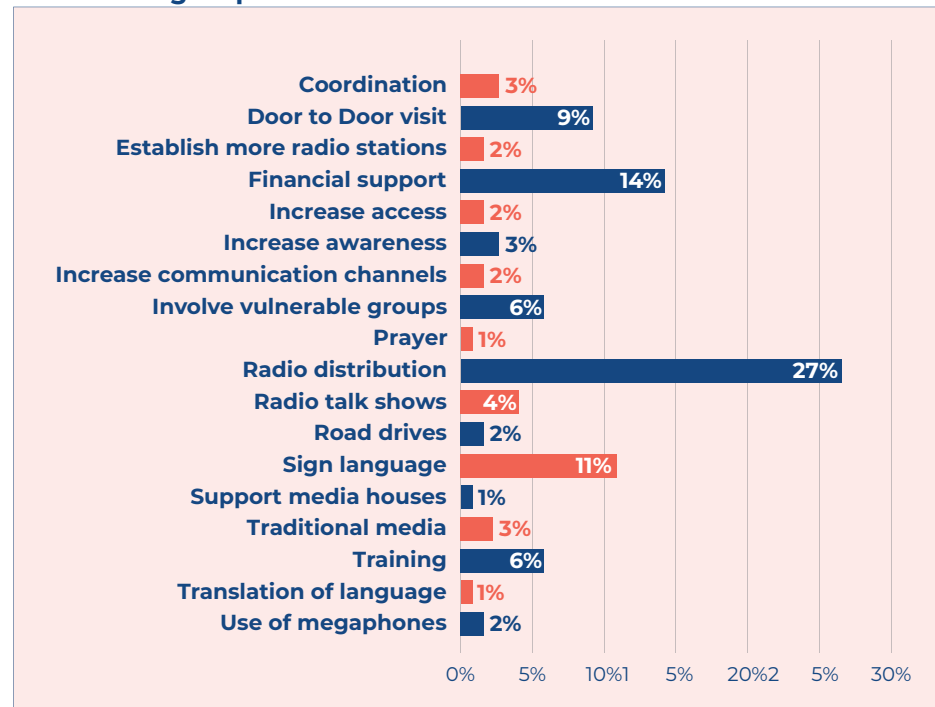
Of those who were interviewed, 98% said they share the information they get from these trusted sources with friends, family, and their communities, leaving 2% who decide not to share the information they get. People share stories and information with relatives and friends simply because to stay connected and raise awareness of what is happening in the community, and this may be driven by arousal. Information or a story evoking more positive emotions is shared more; some negative emotions like fear and anxiety increases the transmission of information while others like sadness decreased sharing it. People's behaviour is heavily influenced by what others say and do, and with this, it seemed like arousal might be a key factor.

With communities aware of the challenges facing vulnerable communities or individuals when it comes to easy access to information, the study participants provided recommendations on how to improve information flow to vulnerable groups in their communities.

Twenty-seven per cent thought that radio distribution to the vulnerable would improve flow of information to the vulnerable groups, while 14% stated that information flow could be improved the provision of financial support to vulnerable groups and communities. Another 11% suggested greater inclusion of persons with disabilities in information dissemination using braille for the visually impaired and sign language for people

with hearing impairments. 9% encouraged door to door visits, and 6% were for specialized trainings to people who will communicate to the vulnerable groups and involving vulnerable groups in all activities. Four per cent encouraged talk shows, 3% use of traditional media, better coordination between local communities, partners, and vulnerable groups, increase in awareness, and another 2% were for establishment of more radio stations, increase in access, increase in communication channels, road drives, use of megaphones and 1% for translation of languages into local adaptive languages, support to media houses and prayers.

**Figure 6: How to improve information flow in and/or to vulnerable groups?**



***Participants suggested greater inclusion of persons with disabilities in information dissemination using braille for the visually impaired and sign language for people with hearing impairments.***



## 9.3 Summary of findings on Humanitarian Response and information dynamics

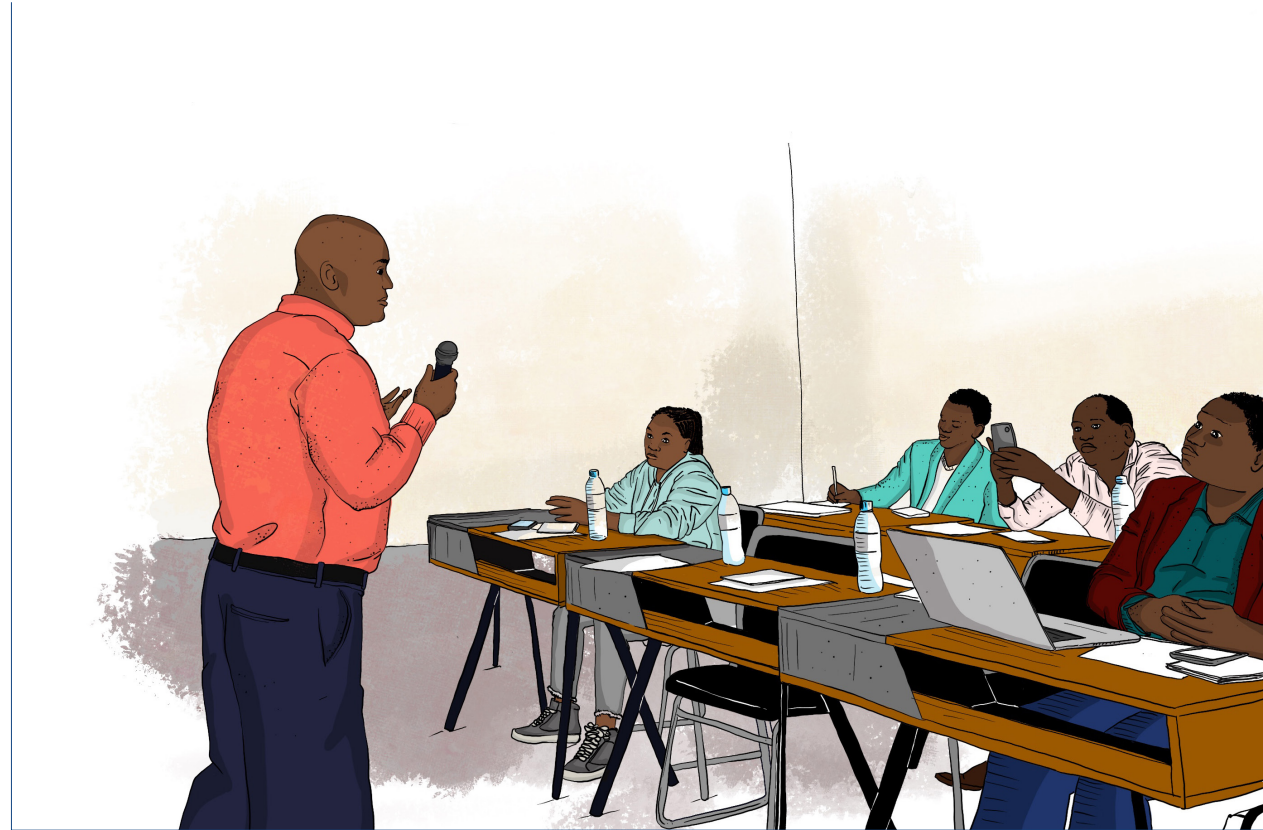


- Many trade unions, humanitarians and workers' associations advocate for a better work environment and resolve disputes, and the government has established labour laws that seek to mediate in labour-related disputes to protect workers' rights and provide guidelines and better practices for all the citizens.
- Vulnerable groups and people with disabilities are disproportionately underrepresented in humanitarian services. They have limited access to services and reliable information in their respective communities, there are no services in the community that are directly targeting people with disabilities across the community. Further research urge among persons with disabilities to determine their access to information and information flows among the Persons with Disabilities.
- Female participation is very low, there were few women interviewed and this is because sociocultural factors that hold back women participation in community activities that bring both men, women and children together includes discouragement by partner, family chores, not having interest, gender prejudice, no motivation, inferiority complex, religion and political interference.
- Shortage of food items due to famine and other natural disasters is one of the pressing issues in the community.
- South Sudan has a harsh media environment which curtail freedom of expression and the free press.
- Journalists are restricted by the security sectors. There is heavy control on media landscape and limited freedom of expression. Politicians from both sides of the political divide, military factions' heads, and tribal leaders, are the public figures making the headlines in South Sudan.
- Religious leaders remained the most vocal and trusted opinion leaders, especially in rural areas than in urban areas.
- Access to radio and television is limited in both rural and urban areas due to energy shortages or power stations and economic hardships in the country.
- Newspaper readership levels are low in rural areas compared to urban areas due to low literacy levels among IDPs and remote communities.
- Insecurity and intercommunal conflicts disrupt the flow of information in the community and among vulnerable groups.
- Promote sustainable agriculture in the community.

## 10. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This information ecosystem assessment shows the lack of participatory approaches involving community actors in the response has been identified as a result of limited community consultation prior to project design. Risk communication is not tailored to IDPs, host communities nor responsive to their needs. There is a need for the use of indigenous languages (in health communication) in order to build trust and engage communities. The IDPs are less likely to understand health information, and feel involved and recognized in the humanitarian response, and ultimately make informed decisions, if communication is not tailored to their concerns, culturally relevant, and provided through preferred and trusted channels.

Humanitarian actors should pay great attention on how to take cultural diversity into account as it can affect the delivery of services both positively and negatively, and how local governments (state and county) can respond to the challenge of programming for target population and across the communities.



***Risk communication is not tailored to IDPs, host communities nor responsive to their needs. There is a need for the use of indigenous languages in order to build trust and engage communities.***

## Summary of Recommendations

### Political Actors

- Government should allow freedom of expression. Social media (Facebook) is the leading medium followed by television and radio. The role of informal networks in sharing information within communities, such as informal networks on social media, should not be underestimated.
- Initiate peace dialogue and conflict resolution activities in the community.
- Improve infrastructures and roads in and to remote communities for easy access to information and services in urban area.

### Information Providers (media, NGOs, and civil society)

- Humanitarian sector to increase services to vulnerable groups and people with disabilities and to have sufficient access to services and reliable information in their respective communities.
- IDPs and local communities want the number of radio stations and radio coverage or frequency to reach the far or remote communities in the counties to be increased.
- Communities want more community health and women empowerment activities in the community.
- Religious and community leaders as well as famous celebrities are considered influential, and they should be included in the content dissemination strategy.
- It is therefore important to develop a cultural inclusion strategy by identifying cultures that make up target populations or community.
- Community education that aims to improve awareness, knowledge, attitudes behaviors, and access to health information and other relevant information that addresses gender and public health problems in the communities.
- Improve the supply of food items to affected communities.
- Improve food security and livelihoods of vulnerable families and their communities.
- Promote Sustainable agriculture in the communities.

### Policy Makers

- Mobile network and internet access should be universal among urban, rural, and remote areas so that communities can access reliable information equally.
- Factchecking websites or services should be set up and widely promoted to counter misinformation and disinformation.
- South Sudan should ease restriction on media environment and journalists to enhance freedom of expression and the free press.

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## **12. ANNEXES**

**12.1 INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR GOVERNMENT HEALTH OFFICIALS**

**12.2 INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR HUMANITARIAN ACTORS**

**12.3 INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR CIVIL SOCIETIES**

**12.4 INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR MEDIA PRACTITIONERS**

**12.5 INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR RELIGIOUS LEADERS**

**12.6 SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRES FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS**



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THE CASE OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED  
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