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In celebration of International Women's Day, Internews supported partner radio stations to generate and produce unique programming *for women, by women.*

Juba, South Sudan – in celebration of International Women's Day, Eye Radio dedicated a week of programming to women – featuring stories about inspiring women and producing programming that contributes to women's welfare and equality in South Sudan. Eye Radio interviewed activists, parliamentarians and diplomats throughout the week including ambassadors from the US, UK and EU and female role models from South Sudan. During the coverage, guests highlighted the plight of women in South Sudan in terms of health, sexual and gender-based violence, social and economic development. They also reiterated their call for gender inclusivity in decision-making at all levels.

During Eye Radio's coverage, quotes from guests and listeners alike underscored the support for promoting women's equality in South Sudan:

"South Sudan is too behind when we talk of gender equality simply because war has interrupted everything since the independence. Right now in offices, the number of women when compared to men are very few. If they are there, they are in junior positions, there are very few women in managerial roles. Actually it is also our responsibility to come up as a woman and stand for your rights and contribute to the nation building whether at family level or at the community level."

– **Literacy Advisor of Oxfam South Sudan, Rose Guwo**

"I wish women in South Sudan are totally liberated from their sufferings. We cannot say that we are not educated, a lot of women here are educated but for some reasons they opted to stay at home to take care of their young children not realizing that by doing so, they are losing their rights."

– **Mama Joice, Eye Radio Listener in Aweil**

"On the International Women's Day, I'm calling for an end to abuses of women and girls in South Sudan, and perpetrators of such acts should be brought to justice. Husbands and married men should stop harassing, beating or mistreating their wives at home because they are as important as men."

– **Chairperson for Parliamentarian's network on population and development**



UK Ambassador to South Sudan, Alison Blackburne during an interview on Eye Radio. Photo/Eye Radio



US Ambassador to South Sudan, Thomas Hushek said the US will continue to support youth especially women and girls in capacity building. Photo/Eye Radio





Juba, South Sudan – The Radio Community produced special programming honoring the role of women in society for International Women’s Day (IWD) 2019. Women were interviewed from around the country, highlighting concerns they have to women’s rights, protection and discrimination that is deeply rooted in culture and norms in South Sudan. Women cited their involvement in the peace process as crucial, urging leaders to appoint qualified women to support a successful transition towards peace. During one program, acting secretary general for the SPLM was interviewed. Jemma Nunu Kumba said that gender issues in South Sudan must be addressed.

At Akol Yam FM, the station interviewed women being trained to do business in Aweil. Around 300 women took part in the three-month program, which provided them practical skills in embroidery and making other local products. The women called on their fellow community members to participate in development activities, *“We are asking the people to respect our rights. Because, both women and men have equal rights on everything’s, including job opportunities.”*



Akol Yam presenter hosting live discussion with women in the community ahead of IWD. Photo/ Internews

In Mingkaman, the station aired a live talk show featuring women’s leader, Veronica Yar. Ms. Yar underscored the importance of women in decision-making yet noted that they are denied full participation in nation building. She reinforced the need for women across the country to advocate for their rights at the grassroots level, citing cultural barriers, which hinder women’s opportunity to use their voice. A listener called into the station and urged community leaders to revise customary laws that negatively affect women.

At Mayardit FM in Turalej, the station aired a two-part live program with women role models. The first episode interviewed an NGO CEO, Ms. Achel Barach Atem, who said her organization is playing a vital role in advocating for the rights of children and women in the country. She also noted the challenges that women face in business and education opportunities, saying, *“My organization is raising awareness on, in the communities to make sure women understands the important of education and self-reliance.”*



Mayardit FM interviews the chairperson of the Women Association on International Women's Day. Photo/ Internews

In Kapoeta, Singaita FM aired a live discussion program about women's issues in Eastern Equatoria. Journalists from the station interviewed women at Freedom Square, where a celebratory event was taking place for IWD. Elizabeth Halima, the chairperson of the state's Women's Association said that women are still oppressed in South Sudan despite efforts to include them in government. Other women speaking at the event noted that women are responsible for much of the farm work, but do not receive enough support from men. Singaita FM also took callers on-air to share their views about the rights of women.

“Men need to engage to cultivation to produce enough food because the one produced by women is not enough” – Female caller, Singaita FM

The Radio Community operates four community radio stations throughout South Sudan:





Abyei Administrative Area – each week, the Abyei Information & Radio Service (AIRS) produces their flagship program, *Abyei This Weekend*. In honor of International Women’s Day, journalists aired interviews with women about their challenges, achievements and needs. During one interview, the Women’s Union members spoke to AIRS and encouraged women to work for peace and girl-child education to achieve greater gender equality in the future.

During an interview with Nyageu Dau, a women’s representative from Abyei, she commented on the lack of women leaders in the traditional courts saying. Last year, Ngok Dinka chiefs approved the participation of women in the traditional courts, though their representation is still low. The Paramount Chief told the program that they are working to improve the local governance system in this regard.

Finally, AIRS interviewed Rejina Akoy, a business woman whose struggle embodies the theme of IWD this year. Rejina is a fuel seller, working in a male-dominated industry where fuel is often smuggled from Sudan. Rejina started her business in 2013. An ambitious woman, she says she’ll always overcome gender inequality and believes in gender balance for the wellbeing of men and women. In her message, she urged all women to adventure to what men do.

“A fuel supplier was shocked seeing me queuing up with men to buy diesel. I told him that out of Bahr El Ghazal women I mastered this business very well” – Rejina, fuel seller in Abyei



AIRS reporter after an interview in Aniet Market with Rejina, a fuel seller during International Women’s Day.
Photo/AIRS



Bentiu, South Sudan – Internews and Kondial FM invited women leaders from the PoC to participate in a special program dedicated to International Women’s Day. The women discussed their experience being involved in PoC leadership and how they see themselves executing their duties. Together, they discussed how they approach problem solving in the community. They also highlighted the challenges that they face as women leaders and how they overcome them. During another program, Kondial FM interviewed community members about IWD. The guests appreciated the role that radio plays in creating awareness and providing the community with information and entertainment. One caller said, *“this day has been received by men who have appreciated gender equality and are now starting to support their wives and mothers by encouraging them to participate in the decision making.”* He encouraged women to take advantage of any opportunity to get an education. Other female callers from the PoC were grateful to men who offer support to women, recognize their rights and promoting their education levels to improve their standing in the community.

Kondial FM also covered IWD events in the PoC and in Bentiu Town. Women in Bentiu Town came together to celebrate each other on the occasion. The event was attended by Northern Liech state Deputy Governor, Laraka Machar Turoal, who thanked women for joining the rest of the world to recognize the special day.

“Women in Bentiu are joining the rest of the world to recognize the importance of women’s rights. This should be a sign that things are changing for better. To show our commitment, we now have a woman for the position of Town Mayor in Bentiu. It had never happened before”.

– Northern Liech state Deputy Governor Laraka Machar Turoal

“We need to be strong from today everyone in the PoC knows that women have a special day for themselves. To improve in whatever you do will depend on how you carry yourselves and how you conduct yourselves in the community. Now that women have 35%, we need to be educated no matter whether we are young or old”. – **Bentiu PoC, CHC chairperson**



Malakal, South Sudan – Internews’ humanitarian radio station in Malakal, Nile FM, aired a special message from the protection cluster ahead of International Women’s Day, encouraging the community to take part in the celebration. Then, Nile FM covered the event live.

Humanitarian agencies, community boards, youth, women and girls and government officials were apart of the event at Malakal Stadium. UNICEF’s gender-based violence specialist briefed participants about the background of IWD, citing the importance of both men and women’s participation in the fight for equality.

*“As women we cannot give up and think that men are stronger than us in our communities, we should be there with men to get our rights. - **Faduat Daniel, Malakal PoC resident***

Several attendees at the event shared feedback with Internews, reiterating their call for women to be provided with education opportunities and the ability to participate equally in social and political spheres.

In addition, women asked the education cluster to expand the Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) so that women who do not have any formal education can also participate in the program. Other feedback gathered by Internews shared that when families do not have money for school fees for all their children, they send the boys to school instead of the girls. Thus, they asked humanitarian agencies to assist the government to make education free and compulsory so that boys and girls have equal opportunity to get an education.

“If women need to be equalized with men in responsibilities in the community, they should work hard and be educated.” - Stephen Rondial, an elder from Malakal PoC

“The community should work hard on how to stop early marriage so that we can have more educated women, so they can compete with a man either in the community or government.”
- Aliza Ngor, Malakal Town resident



The PoC chairlady speaks to Nile FM correspondent live during IWD celebrations at Malakal stadium. Photo/ Internews



Ajuong Thok, South Sudan – during programming dedicated to International Women’s Day, Jamjang FM interviewed women and men during panel discussions related to this year’s theme – *balance for better*. During an event in Ajuong Thok and Pamir, refugees celebrated the role of women. Government officials, refugee leaders and community members attended the event. The chairlady of the women’s leadership from Pamir appealed to UNHCR to provide education opportunities for refugee women. She said, *“women need more skills to support their families, especially women who have lost their husbands due to conflict back home in the Nuba Mountains.”*



Jamjang FM correspondent interviews women during the celebration of IWD in Pamir camp. Photo/Internews



Juba, South Sudan – Internews’ Boda Boda Talk Talk (BBTT) project in Juba conducted a joint campaign with other humanitarian actors in the UN House PoC. The campaign aimed to assist protection partners with International Women’s Day activities by disseminating PSAs about the theme of IWD, which were divided into two themes – international and national and were recorded by BBTT staff in Nuer and Arabic.

In addition, Internews conducted a Community Communication and Engagement (CCE) training that targeted humanitarian staff. The training allowed humanitarian partners to learn more about the bottom-

up CCE approach, and how the methodology applies to their everyday work. Then, Internews conducted a training for community women in PoC 1 and PoC 3. The idea with this training was to put the theme of IWD into action – training women on how they can engage in decision-making for their communities. In total, Internews trained 34 community women on CCE.



BBTT Team leader conducting a training on CwC with PoC women leaders. Photo/ Internews

“BBTT has done a great job in making sure our role as women is realized by the general community. To this point BBTT, has showed us what to do in case of an issue.”

– Women’s leader from the PoC

“We appreciate Internews for the training that they gave us, and we believe the knowledge we gained will make us to move on”

– Female IDP, CCE training participant

Below: participants from the training for community women pose with the Internews trainers.

