



Zerfa Gordan, 45, walks home. The mother of eight joined a FEED farming group in 2015. Besides receiving goats, agricultural training, tools and a bicycle, Zerfa has learned to balance her children's diet and been trained on gender-based violence. "God sent the FEED project to elevate us from poverty," Zerfa says.

FEED II **Gender** **Analysis** **Report**

Key Findings in South Sudan

WHAT IS FEED II?

FEED II stands for *Fortifying Equality and Economic Diversification for Resilience*. This women's empowerment initiative works through food security and livelihood development projects throughout seven states and 21 counties in South Sudan. The first phase of this initiative was successfully implemented between 2015 and 2018.

In its second iteration, FEED II will reach more than 280,000 people, including 160,000 women, over a five-year period starting March 2020.

The project seeks to reduce inequalities between women and men, particularly when it comes to accessing and controlling food security resources, through:

1. Increasing the participation of women and men in managing threats to their food security,
2. Improving the use of female-friendly agricultural and business practices that promote income generation and natural resource management, and
3. Cultivating equal and safe environments for women to participate in leadership.

This initiative is made possible with funding from Global Affairs Canada, and is implemented in partnership between World Vision, CARE Canada and War Child Canada.

GENDER ANALYSIS

As FEED II began implementation, it was crucial to understand the current reality for women (and men) as it related to gender roles, gender-based violence (GBV), food security, resource allocation, leadership and other issues of inequality in the particular communities of focus.

The following report highlights findings on gender gathered in:

1. FEED II Baseline Report

The baseline interviewed 87 key informants, facilitated 70 focus group discussions and randomly sampled and visited 1,278 households to administer questionnaires for female and male adults, youth and children across seven states in South Sudan (Central Equatoria, Eastern Equatoria, Western Equatoria, Warrap, Northern Bahr el Ghazal, Western Bahr el Ghazal and Jonglei).

2. FEED II Gender Analysis Report

The gender analysis conducted 38 focus group discussions and 17 key informant interviews across three states (Warrap, Jonglei, and Western Bahr el Ghazal).

“There is no time saving! Women wake up, fetch water, firewood, cook, go to the farm, take vegetables to market. A full day of work for a woman.”

– Female Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare Representative, Western Bahr el Ghazal

Food Security

- Families face many challenges to food security: drought, cattle raiding, pests, disease, lack of seeds and flooding.
- Consumption practices and food taboos put women and children—especially girls—at a disadvantage. Only 43% of women and 49% of men use equitable feeding practices for both girls and boys. Meanwhile, female youth are reported to have the lowest food consumption scores—48% are categorized as poor—followed by male youth (47.5%), men (47%) and women (45%).
- Most households worry about not having enough food because of insufficient money.

Gender Roles & Responsibilities

- Women and female youth report waking as early as 5:00 am to begin household chores, with work ending as late as 9:00 pm. Most of their waking hours are dedicated to domestic and caretaking work.
- Women spend 40% of their active daily time on agriculture, business, leisure and all other daily activities, with 43% of their time devoted to domestic and care work and 17% spent on volunteer and communal work. This means women spend 60% of their time on unpaid care work.
- Men, meanwhile, give only 34% of their time to unpaid care work, allowing more time for agriculture, business, leisure and other daily activities (64%).



Even though women do an estimated 80% of the agricultural work in South Sudan, they are still expected to do all the domestic chores before and after their productive labour, with limited assistance from men.

Household Decision Making

54% of men and 43% of women report that they share household decision making. However, it's important to note that “joint decision making” does not mean equal decision-making power. Women are expected to consult with men and get their approval on most issues, and typically have a subordinate role in decision-making processes. If a woman fails to consult or involve her husband, this can result in marital conflict, including GBV.

While both male and female respondents agreed that household decision making could be jointly shared in some instances—such as selecting which crops to plant—in most areas, including livestock, agricultural purchases and managing income, both genders agreed that men alone should make household decisions.

Key informants shared that women who financially contribute to the household may be more empowered in the home. This shows us that economically independent women hold more decision-making power.

Access To/Control Over Resources

- Both women and men believe that adult men should have control over resources, including farm equipment, seeds and fertilizers along with funding and credit for agriculture. Women only control family assets and resources in approximately one tenth of households.
 - While both women and men face challenges in accessing markets, women in particular struggle to travel the long distances while also bearing the responsibility of their domestic work.
 - Because property is often owned communally or by families, the majority of women in South Sudan have access to land for farming and agri-business.
- However, it is very difficult for women to inherit or own land, which puts their investments at risk.
- Most adults (78% of men and 77% of women) disagree with male youth managing resources such as crop lands, and have particularly low acceptance for female youth controlling agricultural production resources.
 - Adults are slightly more supportive of male youth controlling land for livestock, since young men and boys play important roles in securing and protecting pasture and water for livestock—an endeavour closely linked to inter-communal conflict.



Only 2% of men and women report being able to secure formal credit and finance—and women face added barriers like higher illiteracy and a lack of assets in their name for collateral.

Coping Mechanisms

- Families use many coping mechanisms to reduce the impact of natural shocks and conflicts that harm their livelihoods. To address food insecurity, women gather wild fruit (despite facing risks of gender-based violence) and participate in community efforts to reduce the impact of natural shocks like floods.
- 58% of households report that girls and women are actively managing food security threats through work including pest control and constructing/maintaining dykes. However, only one fifth of women (22%) and men (20%) express confidence in their own ability to manage natural shocks.
- 22% of households reported experiencing conflict and its consequences in the previous twelve months. For example, cattle raiding is common in South Sudan, connected to the practice of bride pricing, as men must acquire cattle to pay dowries.
- Respondents explain that these conflicts disrupt agriculture at three levels:
 - 1) putting them at personal risk of violence while farming,
 - 2) preventing them from accessing markets, and
 - 3) displacing families from their land.

Female-Friendly Agricultural & Business Practices

Women use simple local tools for farming: hoes, malodas, rakes and axes. In most cases, they are not satisfied with these tools, and desire more advanced methods for farming like tractors, ox-ploughs and irrigation equipment that allow for greater efficiency and productivity.

The women surveyed expressed desires to start micro-businesses and small businesses, with ideas for baking, making juice, creating tea shops and snack shops. They also noted the formation of co-operatives as a way to divide labour and support women.

As an assistant to the community facilitator, Teresa Akon's role is to address gender-based violence issues, such as domestic abuse, which could interfere with women's farming activities. She has created a safe space for breastfeeding mothers to feed their children at the field school.



“Women are the stronghold of food production in South Sudan and without women, there would be no food.”

– Key Informant, Ministry of Agriculture



61% of women interviewed had experienced physical assault, sexual assault or rape within the previous 12 months.



Alexander Bullen, a participant in the first phase of FEED, prepares to plant groundnuts. In addition to agricultural training, the father of five has participated in sessions about peacebuilding and gender-based violence. He says perspectives on gender equality have shifted radically.

“There is a change in our community,” he says. “A chief can stay for two months, and never sees any case presented to his table of beating, or abuse of women, or claiming of women’s property by men.”

Alexander has personally become an advocate against gender-based violence, working to change the hearts and minds of his peers.

National Policies

While South Sudan has a range of national policies that promote gender equality, including progressive policies for gender in agriculture, they are not adequately implemented—particularly in local communities, where awareness of women’s rights remains limited.

While 42% of male respondents and 32% of female respondents believe it appropriate for women and men to participate equally in national-level politics, male traditional leaders are unable to cite ways of promoting gender equality, sexual and GBV prevention and protection under the law (64%) compared to female leaders (85%).

Sexual & Gender-based Violence

- Sexual and gender-based violence is widespread in South Sudan. When women return late from the farm or market without completing their domestic chores, they may be blamed and beaten. At the same time, women are responsible for the family’s meals—when food is scarce or lacks variety, they may also be subject to violence.
- Formal channels for reporting GBV are not widely used. Instead, women rely on their male relatives and close networks, including chiefs and traditional or religious leaders. GBV services also have significant gaps, particularly in Warrap state, where only 33% of men, 30% of women, 36% of male youth and 50% of female youth were aware that services existed.
- Women and men need non-violent methods of conflict

resolution—among those interviewed, non-violence was only mentioned by 28% of men, 25% of women, 28% of male youth and 22% of female youth.

- Both men and women’s attitudes uphold traditional perspectives about gender roles, with beliefs that a woman should obey her husband in all things (men 51%; women 49%); a woman’s role is taking care of her home and family (men 54%; women 51%); the husband should decide to buy the major household items (men 54%; women 47%); and a man should have the final word about decisions in the home (men 59%; women 58%).
- Youth hold even more pronounced views, showing that perspectives on the roles of women and men need to be addressed among young people.

Participation in Leadership & Decision-making Structures

- Women and adolescent girls lack confidence in their abilities to lead—even though nearly a third of them are leaders in their project groups and churches. Only 19% of women have “high” or “very high” confidence as leaders, and only 12% of female youth say the same.
- Although women are perceived as peaceful and less corrupt, both men and women note that female leaders are slow to make decisions and may not be strong in times of conflict and crisis—and women may push men to fulfil violent masculine roles such as cattle raiding.
- Positive experiences with female leaders are in the minority, with 39% of women categorizing their experience as positive, 13% as acceptable and 48% as unpleasant or negative. Meanwhile, male perspectives on female leaders are diverse—40% categorize

their experiences as positive, 19% as acceptable and 41% as unpleasant or negative.

- Women’s burdensome domestic and productive responsibilities often prevent them from filling leadership positions in community structures.

“[The] rights of women are not being given. If women leaders are not there, women’s rights won’t be promoted.”

– Female Leader, Turalei Payam, Twic County, Warrap