**THERE ARE PROMISING OPPORTUNITIES TO BUILD PEACE IN SOUTH SUDAN:**

**RECOMMENDATIONS FROM SOUTH SUDANESE PEACEBUILDING ACADEMICS & PRACTITIONERS**

| “In my opinion, the opportunities for peace must come from the people of South Sudan, because change needs to come from within the problem itself. When you know the source of the war, easily you can know the solution to that problem. We cannot look for the peace from afar, it is within us.” | “We can use schools at the primary, secondary, and tertiary level as instruments for change, by forming peace clubs, mentorship programs, music, dance, and drama in secondary and tertiary institutions. If the minds of youth are not changed, then we are retaining the soul of the conflict.” | “There must be an effective national dialogue convened including a broad basis of stakeholders for a meaningful deliberative process. It is imperative, in this sense, that all interest groups ranging from women, youth, major ethnic groups, traditional leaders, and others be invited to participate to ensure inclusivity. A true dialogue must have participation of the public at all levels.” |
| “Regional actors, corporate bodies, and eminent personalities can get involved. For instance, First Ladies in the region, eminent personalities like Kofi Annan, Jakaya Kikwete, and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, should take personal interest in building peace.” | “Inclusion of women in the peace process can lead to sustainable peace in South Sudan. We should promote women’s empowerment in the communities to use their influence for peace and support women’s movements and organizations working for peace. Mentorship programs for young women can help build confidence for their participation in the peace process. Many women in South Sudan feel they are starting from zero because they have not heard the stories of women contributing to peace.” | “There are many countries that have experiences to share with us. The Liberian women, South Africa, and Kenya in 2007 – those lessons can be used to help us.” |
| “Focus on the local level. Let’s organize workshops for traditional and community leaders to build peace, facilitate community-based dialogue, and leverage family structures where parents can teach their children about peace.” | “Dialogue right now goes from the top, down to the communities, not the other way. We need to have ways to feed community needs into the dialogue for peace. The peace process should be owned by South Sudanese and be a home-based country initiative.” | “Utilize media communication through radio, newspaper, and social media (WhatsApp, Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook) to portray the views of the community and promote messages of peace.” |
| “We should build on the commonalities that exist in the communities, through activities like cultural events, sports, and drama. Drama, especially, knows no boundaries. Drama exposes the ills of society as general and doesn’t assign blame to different groups. This helps to build unity among the youth, women, and the communities.” | “Government should involve researchers, practitioners, think tanks, and non-governmental organizations in identifying root causes of conflict and possible ways to resolve the conflict among the communities. Peace and conflict research papers should be shared among all stakeholders.” | “Incorporate indigenous mechanisms for peace in local settings, like ceremonies and rituals, whereby different communities can come together to embrace peace and build relationships. For instance, when someone from one tribe has been killed by a member of another, to make amends they will each bring a cow to be slaughtered by the other group. The parts are divided and distributed to members of each group and only after they are consumed is the wrong considered to be rectified.” |

**SEARCH FOR COMMON GROUND**
These recommendations were collected from over 30 South Sudanese academics and practitioners at a two-day learning exchange organized by Search for Common Ground, on May 24-25, 2018 in Juba, South Sudan. The learning exchange brought together academics and practitioners from governmental and non-governmental institutions who work on peace and conflict/security issues in South Sudan and who have experience researching and/or responding to conflict at sub-national, national, and/or regional levels. The topic of the two-day learning exchange was to discuss what works, what does not, and opportunities for collaboration between academics and practitioners in the peace and conflict field. The participants discussed a number of opportunities for collaboration including through media, participatory theater, and the promotion of women in peacebuilding. Together, the participants identified the need for interdisciplinary exchange and joint identification of areas for additional research and practice to improve reach and effectiveness on the ground and to generate strong evidence for multi-level policy influence on conflict in South Sudan.

Members of the learning exchange represent members of the following academics and practitioner institutions:

- Action for Relief and Development Organization (ARADO)
- Catholic Radio Network
- Catholic University
- Children Organization for Peace Outreach and Development (COPOD)
- CSD
- Future Alive Organization Services (FAOS)
- Global Relief and Development Organization (GRADO)
- Green Site
- Initiative for Peace Communication Association (IPCA)
- Legacy for African Women and Children Initiative (LAWANCI)
- Lozoh Women Development Organization (LWDO)
- Nation Aid Organization (NAO)
- National Women’s Empowerment & Rehabilitation Organization (NWERO)
- National Alliance for Women Lawyers (NAWL)
- Nkumba University
- Nurture South Sudan (NUSS)
- Peace and Development Collaborative Organization (PDCO)
- Search for Common Ground (Search)
- Solidarity Ministries Africa for Reconciliation and Development (SMARD)
- South Sudan Agency for International Development (SSAID)
- South Sudan Democratic Engagement Monitoring & Observation Program (SSUDEMO)
- South Sudan Theatre Organization (SSTO)
- South Sudan Widows, Orphans Relief, and Development Agency (SSWORDA)
- St. Lawrence University
- University of Juba, Institute of Peace, Development and Security Studies (IPDSS)
- Youth Empowerment Organization

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