



# **VOICE FOR CHANGE STRATEGIC PLAN**

**2022-2026**

## **1.0. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

Voice for Change (VFC) is a national non-governmental organization fully registered on the 12th July, 2006, with South Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission under serial No. 030. The organization is among the leading national civil society organizations promoting women empowerment for public life and justice, food security and livelihoods, climate change; and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) in greater Equatorial, greater Upper Nile (Jonglei) and greater Bar-El-Ghazal (Lakes State). VFC seeks to challenge the harmful social norms and stereotypes which create gender inequality through discrimination of women from decision-making processes towards creation of awareness to communities and policy makers on women's involvement and representation at all levels of governance. The organization is managed by a Secretariat that is headed by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) who is answerable to Board of Directors.

### **1.1. Mandate**

Voice for Change mandate is derived from the communities it serves, comprising marginalized groups in society such as women, girls, persons with disability and youth (female and male) under registration No. 30 of South Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission No. xx of July 2006. The goal of the organization is to empower communities and institutional capacities to promote peaceful co-existence and address all forms of injustice and violence through its thematic areas:

- Gender equality and economic empowerment of women
- Women, Peace and Security
- Sexual and Gender Based Violence and girl child marriages
- Women's political participation and leadership strengthening ;
- Food Security and Livelihoods;
- Persons with disabilities
- Climate Justice; and
- Water, Hygiene and Sanitation (WASH).

### **1.2. Strategic Plan Review and Updating Process**

The reviewed and updated Strategic Plan (2022-2026) is a product of in-depth discussions between Voice of Change staff and its Board of Directors. The process contributed to increased knowledge and sharpened skills to implement the Strategic Plan. The updated Strategic Plan will help Voice for Change position itself strategically in its operational environment by aligning itself effectively to the changes taking place. The Strategy has six chapters, namely: Introduction; Situational Analysis; Strategic Direction; Implementation Framework; Risk management; and Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting.

## **2.0. SITUATION ANALYSIS**

The chapter analyses the internal and external factors that will impact the operations of Voice for Change: internal analysis will focus on organizational capabilities and resources while the external factors will be on the opportunities and threats to delivery of VFC mandate and interventions.

### **2.1 Gender and Equality issues in South Sudan**

Gender and equality issues refer to differential treatment of persons based on their sex and gender roles, ethnicity, status, religion, race, age, beliefs and disability among other attributes.

#### **2.1.1 Sexual and Gender Based Violence**

This is an umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person's will and that is based on socially ascribed (i.e. gender) differences between males and females. It includes acts that inflict physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion, and other deprivations of liberty. These acts can occur in public or in private. Forms of GBV include sexual violence (rape, defilement), intimate partner or spousal abuse (domestic violence), emotional and psychological abuse, harmful traditional practices and discriminatory practices based on sex or gender roles. Most GBV cases involving a female survivor and a male perpetrator can also be described as violence against women and girls (VAWG) causing direct physical, mental, sexual harm or suffering. GBV acts against boys and men are mostly done by male perpetrators (Beth, 2002).

In most parts of South Sudan, (sexual) gender based violence is mostly against women and girls. It takes place as a weapon of conflict, during disasters such as floods and drought when women and girls are running away in search of safety and during ritualization of bride price/dowry payments. This is done against enacted laws in the land and international conventions to which South Sudan has ratified such as Convention of the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against women (CEDAW) and the Child Act (8).

#### **2.1.2 The Youth**

South Sudan is the youngest nation in Africa, with more than 60% of its youth being under the age of 30 years and half of this percentage being between the ages of 15 to 24 years, according to the South Sudan National Bureau of Statistics (SSNBS). However, there is a mismatch of the aspirations of these youth and the opportunities available to them. The marginalization of the youth has resulted in their frustration and desperation, forcing some of them to resort to criminal practices including violence, substance abuse and commercial sex. This has contributed to physical insecurity for communities and the country at large.

### 2.1.3 Persons with Disability

There is no reliable data on persons with disabilities in South Sudan. This is absurd in a country where disability occurs regularly from violent conflict, land mines, sexual and gender based violence, those born with disabilities notwithstanding. Applying the WHO recommended 10 per cent to today's estimated South Sudan's population of approximately 12 million would indicate that there are some 1.2 million people with disabilities, most of whom live in poverty, have limited access to education, health, housing and employment opportunities. Though the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was ratified in February 2023, the next important yet challenging step is its implementation. Some of the challenges faced by persons with disability include: discrimination based on stigma from cultural and religious perceptions; negative attitude of employers towards PWDs; inadequate care and support in educational institutions; and inaccessibility to transport and buildings.

## 2.2 Environmental Scan

### 2.2.1 Internal Environment Analysis

This analysis focuses on the strengths and weaknesses of an organization in terms of (financial) resources, skills /expertise of its staff and processes /management systems to deliver on its mandate and projects.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Qualified staff with relevant experiences and expertise.</li><li>• Availability of office space and facilities</li><li>• Committed staff</li><li>• Long term partnership with donors such UNICEF and OSIEA</li><li>• Good team spirit among the staff</li><li>• VFC as GBV cluster lead in Yei with Yei Hospital as the centre</li><li>• Community goodwill &amp; confidence in VFC</li><li>• VFC membership in several coalitions</li><li>• VFC has prominent visibility</li><li>• Developed Resource Mobilization Strategy</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Inadequate technical expertise in proposal writing and development.</li><li>• Spreading too wide and thin on the ground</li><li>• Irregular board meetings</li><li>• Lack of effective internal coordination, e.g. Head office in Juba and Yei offices.</li></ul>

### 2.2.2 External Environment Analysis

External environmental analysis assesses the current conditions or changes expected to prevail in the organization’s environment whose control VFC does not have. The VFC staff discussed the external potential impacts ranging from the global, regional to local platforms and identified the following opportunities and threats:

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Availability of volunteers</li> <li>• Potential member of different clusters</li> <li>• Availability of women groups that VFC uses to discuss women issues</li> <li>• Presence of donor, NGOs and partner government institutions in the country.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insecurity in the country and along major roads to field offices</li> <li>• Deep rooted cultural belief and norms that negatively impact on women and children.</li> <li>• Prolonged lack of donor funding due to high competition.</li> <li>• Persistence of COVID 19 pandemic</li> </ul>

### 2.3 Stakeholder Analysis

The stakeholder analysis provides an assessment of the roles of various organisations and interest groups that Voice for Change is likely to partner with in the achievement of its program objectives and delivery on its overall mandate.

Stakeholder	Level of influence	Interest	Comments
Government	Approve or disapprove and block the implementation of any project - <b>High</b>	Concerned with the parameters of compliance to law - <b>High</b>	Information about the programmes should be shared with relevant government department in a timely manner
NGOs working in partnership with VFC	May decline to partner or partner and do a shoddy job of it - <b>High</b>	– Opportunity for new projects and / or learning - <b>Medium</b>	Decisions about partnership to be made early and by objective criteria
Development Partners	Provide funding- <b>Medium</b>	–Have to report to their ‘tax-payers’ - <b>High</b>	Scrutinize the contract before signing and comply with its provisions
Communities of the People of South Sudan	Most programmes are undertaken in their names - <b>High</b> .	Most interventions are sophisticated and may appear abstract to them- <b>Medium to Low</b>	Good practice to gather intelligence on communities and to remain sensitive to the culture of the people.

## **3.0 STRATEGIC DIRECTION FOR VOICE FOR CHANGE**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter highlights Voice for Change Vision, Mission and Core values; the Key Areas of Strategic Focus; the Strategic Objectives; and Strategies for the 2022-2026 Plan period.

#### **3.1.1. Vision**

A society that upholds gender equality, dignity and fairness for all while ensuring improved quality of life for women and their families peacefully co-existing and free from all forms of violence”

#### **3.1.2. Mission**

VFC exists to create space for dialogue, strengthen capacities of communities and grass-roots organizations to achieve improved quality of life and to eradicate all forms of violence against women and girls.

#### **3.1.3. Goal**

Women and girls have improved quality of life and peacefully co-existing among their families and community and are free from all forms of violence against them.

#### **3.1.4. Core Values**

Voice for Change values include:

- a) Fairness;
- b) Transparency;
- c) Accountability;
- d) Respect for Diversity;
- e) Public participation;
- f) Inclusiveness; and
- g) Integrity.

### **3.2 Key Strategic Focus Areas**

These are the goals/ thematic /focus areas that Voice for Change will mobilize for and deploy resources to achieve its mission and vision and deliver value to customers. In the remaining four (4) years of this Strategic Plan, Voice for Change will scale up its programming in the following areas:

- a) Sexual and gender based violence and girl child marriages
- b) Women and youth economic empowerment
- c) Women’s political participation and leadership strengthening
- d) Women, Peace and Security
- e) Climate Change; and
- f) Water, Hygiene and Sanitation (WASH).

The following is an overview of the key result areas:

### **3.2.1 Addressing Sexual and Gender Based Violence**

Women and girls experience various forms of GBV such as emotional, economic, sexual and physical violence, sexual harassment, harmful practices such as female genital mutilation, underage and forced marriage and sexual exploitation and abuse. This negatively affects their physical, mental, sexual and reproductive health.

Voice for Change will implement preventive and responsive strategies to address the prevalence of gender-based violence against women at State and County level. We will also target the referral pathways (health, police and judiciary, social service institutions) to provide comprehensive survivor centred quality services to GBV survivors while considering gender stereotypes and social norms that perpetuate GBV against women .

### **3.2.2 Women and youth economic empowerment**

This key result is in line with Sustainable Development Goal 5: “Achieve gender equality and empower all women (**includes youth**) and girls”. In previous and on-going projects implemented by Voice for Change (funded by UNICEF, OSIEA and CARE International), the organization has noted that most of the women and youth who experience or are vulnerable to SGBV are those that are economically deprived.

Voice for Change will continue to implement women and girls safe centres economic initiatives for women survivors of SGBV and as a preventive strategy in violence against women and girls. Lessons learned from these economic interventions indicate that there could be better benefits and impact of the initiatives if the potential beneficiaries are equipped with business development skills. Moving forward, VFC will therefore use an apprenticeship approach to build experience among the apprentices who will be attached to different trade centres such as hospitality sector, transport industry, beauty, agri-business and WASH among other industry.

### **3.2.3 Women’s political participation and leadership strengthening**

Like in the previous key result area on women and youth empowerment, gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world in which women take an active role in leadership and decision making (SDG 5). Voice for Change has, over the years, worked with women in political leadership and decision making and strengthened their capacity to seek appointive and nominative positions in government and other echelons in society.

Within the Revitalized Agreement for Resolution of Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS), Voice for Change continues to increase the civic awareness of the young women leaders to play an effective role in the governance of South Sudan. The capacity strengthening includes increased knowledge on the Transitional Constitution of South Sudan (TCSS, 2011) and how women can engage with the Constitution Review process to get a better deal in Permanent Constitution of South Sudan. The women leaders will also participate in on-going social, economic and political debates and processes in South Sudan

### **3.2.4 Women, Peace and Security**

The UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) is the premier international law on women, peace and security. It has four pillars: participation, protection, prevention and relief and recovery and addresses the impact of war on women and their full and equal participation in conflict resolution, peace building, peacekeeping, humanitarian response and in post-conflict reconstruction. However, during violent conflicts and wars, women in South Sudan are forced to assume new roles as heads of families, providers, combatants and freedom fighters while the men go to the frontline. During peace negotiations, women are largely absent yet their participation is recognized to increase the likelihood of stability and social and economic recovery. Moreover, when women participate in peace processes, the resultant agreement is more durable and better implemented.

Voice for Change will continue to provide civic education on the three pillars of UNSCR 1325, namely participation, protection, prevention of women in peace and security processes within the context UNSCR 1325. In the past, VFC facilitated formation of Peace Committees at community level to mitigate violent conflicts in Maridi, Yei and Bor.

### **3.2.5 Climate Change**

According to the United Nations, climate change refers to long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns, which may be natural or as a result of human interference thereby adversely affecting people's livelihoods security. When there is drought, for example, most water sources dry, forcing women and girls to spend longer hours to access very little water that is often split between cooking and other needs of the household. By the time the floods register their presence, women and girls are forced to flee to safer grounds while overburdened with luggage such food stuffs, beddings, children and some herds (pastoralist communities) to safer grounds to construct new makeshift homes. In the process, women and girls risk abductions and rape while some men are killed on the way. Some of the herds also die due to disease outbreaks and lack of water. Floods are common in parts of greater Upper Nile such as in Jonglei (Fangak, Bor) where many people lose their lives due to the low level of preparedness to respond to these disasters. VFC will implement disaster preparedness interventions for women and girls to mitigate the adverse impacts of the climate action

### **3.2.6 Water, Hygiene and Sanitation (WASH).**

Water, Sanitation and hygiene (WASH) is one of the first lines of defense in slowing the spread of most infectious disease outbreaks such as the flu, diarrhea, cholera as well as well as protecting communities, patients, and health workers over the long-term. When WASH services are not available to households, it becomes a driver and symptom of poverty and loss of life. VFC will partner with women's grassroots networks to implement WASH interventions in selected States and Counties of South Sudan.

#### 4.0 IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

1.SEXUAL AND GENDER BASED VIOLENCE					
Strategic focus area	Strategic objective	Outcomes	Activities	Indicators	Timelines
1.0 Addressing gender based violence	1.1: Situation Analysis on GBV in at State and County level	Comprehensive data base of GBV issues and impacts on women, girls.	Situation Analysis conducted.	# GBV policies	3 years
	1.2: Capacity building for law enforcers on gender-responsiveness to address GBV against women and girls.  1.3 Consultations with strategic leadership to agree on a reduced standard bride price for all girls in South Sudan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Law enforcers better equipped to handle GBV survivors with respect, care and dignity.</li> <li>• Power structures and systems, norms and beliefs that perpetuate GBV shifted in favor of women and girls</li> <li>• Reduced bride price for marriage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % increase in # GBV survivors accessing and utilizing the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) meaningfully by 2026.</li> <li>• Accountability of WROs to end GBV against women, girls</li> <li>• Develop Action Plans to eliminate GBV.</li> </ul>	# Projects on GBV against women and girls <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % increase in # GBV survivors who use evidence-based prevention strategies to challenge GBV against women, girls by 2026.</li> <li>• % increase in # of GBV survivors who endorse gender equitable practices by 2026.</li> </ul>	2023-2026

2. WOMEN AND YOUTH ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT						
Strategic area	focus	Strategic objective	Outcomes	Activities	Indicators	Timelines
2.0 Enhance women's and youth economic rights		<p>2.1 Conduct Baseline study on women's land, property and inheritance rights</p> <p>2.2 Strengthen the capacity of women and youth in business development skills to become apprentices</p>	<p>Status of women's land, property and inheritance rights established.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Qualifying women and youth grouped by business opportunities selected and linked to selected industry for 6-12 months</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mapping and documentation of title deeds owned by women in South Sudan.</li> <li>Undertake training on security of tenure for land among women and girls in Sudan</li> <li>Monitor performance of the apprentices at their industry attachments.</li> </ul>	<p># of land titles owned by women at State and County level</p> <p># of demand driven capacity building workshops on security of tenure for land by women.</p> <p>Apprentices with skills to enter the labour market as self-employees or employed by respective industry.</p> <p># of apprentices grouped into 3's Grameen like model to guarantee each other and given business kits to start business</p>	2023- 2026

<b>3. WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP STRENGTHENING</b>					
<b>Strategic focus area</b>	<b>Strategic objective</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Timelines</b>
3.Enhance women's political participation in South Sudan	3.1. Equip aspiring women leaders with practical skills and knowledge to deal with internal beliefs of self-image and strengthened self-efficacy	Strengthened capacity of South Sudanese women to vie for political /or seek appointive positions at all levels in the 10 States	Train aspiring women leaders in life skills such as agenda setting, negotiation, lobbying, working with political parties, resource mobilization, enhancing visibility, media engagement and self-image.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># women who have declared candidature for elective leadership through political parties</li> <li># women declared to run as independents</li> </ul>	2023-2025
	3.2. Identify and build the capacity of male gender champions to mobilize other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More women leaders elected and appointed to leadership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruit religious leaders as male</li> </ul>	# of cohorts of male gender champions challenging	

	members of community, specifically men, to support increased women's involvement in leadership and women's participation in governance processes.	positions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emerging fairer world in which there is shared leadership between women and men.</li> </ul>	gender champions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>	traditional mind-sets and negative stereotypes about women's leadership in selected State and Counties	
<b>4. WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)</b>					
<b>Strategic focus area</b>	<b>Strategic objective</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Timelines</b>
5.0 Access to safe drinking and sanitation and hygiene services (WASH)	5.1 To enhance the well-being of Water User Committees and Water User Associations on safe WASH practices and access to safe and sustained drinking water, adequate basic sanitation and hygiene practices	5.1.1 Water User Committees disseminate good practices in WASH	5.1.1.1 Create awareness on safe WASH handling practices to community	Women apply sharpened skills in safe WASH practices	2023- 2026
	5.2 Training of hygiene promoters	5.2.1 Strengthened capacity on safe WASH practices including hand washing with soap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dig water boreholes</li> <li>Consult communities on locating of water access points</li> </ul>	Water sources constructed within required proximity to users	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sanitation awareness campaign</li> <li>Construction of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># of hygiene promoters volunteers identified and</li> </ul>	

			<p>institutional and community latrines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hygiene and Sanitation</li></ul>	<p>trained</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Number of institutional communal latrines constructed and are in use</li></ul>	
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## 5. MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN

The success of the strategic plan implementation depends on how the planned activities and output are effectively monitored and evaluated. It is therefore important to put in place a monitoring and evaluation team (committee) to oversee the implementation of the strategic plan within the planned period. The team will continuously monitor and evaluate all strategies, activities and outcomes with a view to advising the management of any alternative strategies. Monitoring will be based on the key performance indicators. The means of verification will be the instruments adopted to establish whether the planned activities and strategies are on course.

The evaluation of the results and strategies will be an on-going process involving redesigning and restructuring the activities. This will purely involve valuation activities and results based on the internal and external factors. Consultation with implementing departments and realigning the strategies, resource outlay, objectives, activities and other support procedures and processes will be key requirements on the monitoring. Preparation of reports for every participating department will be important.

### **5.1. Critical success factors**

Voice for Change will identify the following critical factors for the successful implementation of the Strategy:

- a) Understanding of the Strategy by all those who are involved in its implementation;
- b) Effective communication between all implementers on activities and outcomes;
- c) Timely implementation of activities;
- d) Availability of resources as identified under each strategy;
- e) Effective translation of strategic plan targets to annual plans and budgets; and
- f) Regular review, performance oversight, measurement and reporting.

### **5.2. Progress reports**

Progress reports will be prepared regularly by the implementing departments as per the budgetary cycles. The reports will describe actions taken by the departments toward achieving specific strategies of the Plan and will include costs, benefits, performance measures and progress to date.

The Strategic Plan will be evaluated on annual basis and at the end of the plan period to ensure that it remains relevant, feasible and delivers outputs that contribute to sustainable development.



**ANNEXES**

**Annex 1: Management Structure**



