



## **Stabilizing Abyei**

### **Trauma and the Economic Challenges to Peace**

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*In memory of Paramount Chief Kuol Deng Kuol, a man of service and peace.*

## **About Kush**

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## Acronyms

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| <b>AAA</b>      | Abyei Area Administration                                      |
| <b>ACAD</b>     | Abyei Community Action for Development                         |
| <b>AJOC</b>     | Abyei Joint Oversight Committee                                |
| <b>AUHIP</b>    | African Union High-Level Implementation Panel                  |
| <b>CBO</b>      | Community-Based Organization                                   |
| <b>CEDZ</b>     | Common Economic Development Zone                               |
| <b>CFW</b>      | Cash For Work  |
| <b>CPA</b>      | Comprehensive Peace Agreement                                  |
| <b>FAO</b>      | Food and Agriculture Organization                              |
| <b>GoS</b>      | Government of Sudan  |
| <b>GoSS</b>     | Government of South Sudan                                      |
| <b>IDP</b>      | Internally Displaced People                                    |
| <b>IOM</b>      | International Organization of Migration                        |
| <b>INTERSOS</b> | Intersos - Humanitarian Aid Organization                       |
| <b>MSF-CH</b>   | Médecins Sans Frontières – Switzerland                         |
| <b>NCP</b>      | National Congress Party  |
| <b>NFI</b>      | Non-Food Item  |
| <b>NGO</b>      | Non-Governmental Organization                                  |
| <b>PTSD</b>     | Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder                                 |
| <b>RoSS</b>     | Republic of South Sudan  |
| <b>SAF</b>      | Sudan Armed Forces   |
| <b>SNV</b>      | SNV- Netherlands Development Organization                      |
| <b>SAARF</b>    | Secretariat for Agriculture and Animal Resources and Fisheries |
| <b>SPLM</b>     | Sudan Peoples’ Liberation Movement                             |

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| <b>SPLM-N</b> | Sudan People’s Liberation Movement North         |
| <b>SCS</b>    | Save the Children Sweden                         |
| <b>SSRRC</b>  | South Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission |
| <b>UNCSO</b>  | United Nations Coordination Support Office       |
| <b>UNDP</b>   | United Nations Development Programme             |
| <b>UNHCR</b>  | United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees    |
| <b>UNICEF</b> | United Nations Children Fund                     |
| <b>UNISFA</b> | United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei  |
| <b>UNMIS</b>  | United Nations Mission in Sudan                  |
| <b>UNMISS</b> | United Nations Mission in South Sudan            |
| <b>UNPOL</b>  | United Nations Police                            |
| <b>WASH</b>   | Water Sanitation and Hygiene                     |
| <b>WFP</b>    | World Food Program                               |

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## Executive Summary

Research was conducted in 2012 in order to assess the material, physical and psychological conditions of the Ngok Dinka displaced population and their views regarding willingness to reconcile with the Misseriya<sup>1</sup>, and their outlook toward peace. The question that drove the inquiry was whether the conditions of Internally Displaced People (IDP) would relate significantly to their outlook.

Many studies have shown direct correlations between per capita income and violence, thus demonstrating the susceptibility of impoverished regions to conflict. What is not as often investigated is the impact of trauma upon stability and peace. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder diminishes a person's ability to function independently, regulate behavior, reason and solve problems.<sup>2</sup> The impact of this illness is especially detrimental in post-conflict contexts where individuals are charged with the formidable task of rebuilding lives and where critical reasoning is needed for reconciliation with former enemies. The community of Abyei has expressed concern over the emotional impacts of the area's crises. Hence, the study conducted looks at levels of trauma among the IDP population. The findings of the study informed recommendations presented in this report which are outlined within a stabilization framework.<sup>3</sup>

Since the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) Abyei has suffered from chronic insecurity resulting in two massive displacements of the Ngok Dinka in the years 2008 and 2011. The invasion and occupation of Abyei by the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) in May 2011 left approximately 120,000 Ngok Dinka displaced. The SAF occupation was brought to an end with the signing of the Temporary Arrangement for the Administration and the Security of the Abyei Area. This agreement was to uphold critical elements of the Abyei Protocol and set the path for the stabilization of Abyei. However, recovery from the attack has been slow and an interim Abyei administration, legislative council and police force have not been appointed because of political disagreements between Sudan and Republic of South Sudan (RoSS).

In the meantime, the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA), a force of approximately 4,200 Ethiopian soldiers, maintain security in an environment that has increasingly

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<sup>1</sup> Misseriya refers to the Awlad Kamel, Mazgna and Aulad Umran clans who have seasonal migration and grazing rights in Abyei.

<sup>2</sup> Symptoms may include intrusive thoughts, flashbacks, difficulties with sleep, a detachment from others, irritability or bouts of anger and rage. Symptoms may resolve themselves in the weeks after the traumatic event or persist and become debilitating.

<sup>3</sup> Stabilization refers to post-conflict transition operations seeking to transform conflict and guide host countries toward a trajectory of stability and peace. The goal is for a host to reach the point of being able to independently address sources of conflict and maintain peace. Borrowing from the USIP's "Guiding Principles for Stabilization and Reconstruction," the recommendations offered in this report are outlined under the following stabilization objectives: Safe and Secure Environment which in this report is referred to as Security, Rule of Law, Stable Governance, Sustainable Economy, and Social Well-Being.

become tense, culminating in the death of Paramount Chief Kuol Deng Kuol. On May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2013, Chief Kuol, escorted by UNISFA traveled from Diffra to Abyei Town in a convoy with members of the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee (AJOC). The convoy was ambushed by a militia consisting of about 200 men (UNISFA, 2013). Chief Kuol and a UNISFA soldier were killed. The news of Chief Kuol's death was met with disbelief and outrage by the Ngok Dinka and the people of South Sudan.

South Sudan AJOC co-chairs are demanding that the referendum which is to decide the final status of Abyei be held on October 2013, according to the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) proposal. This proposal confines referendum voter-eligibility to residents, thus excluding the participation of nomads. Sudan rejects the AUHIP proposal while South Sudan and the Ngok Dinka continue to apply pressure for its enactment.

The referendum will legally settle the political dispute over Abyei's status but the conflict and animosity between the Ngok Dinka and the Misseriya may not be resolved through a vote. A political resolution, though urgently needed, will not ensure peace as Abyei's extensive history of dishonored agreements has shown. Instead the realization of a resolution of the conflict will be dependent upon successful transitions in the realms of security, economy, governance, rule of law, and the overall social wellbeing of the population. Creating an environment conducive to the successful execution of a political resolution requires immediate attention to local conditions.

Poor economic conditions have been among the drivers of conflict in the area. The lack of economic opportunity can to a large degree explain the southern insurgency and the participation of Misseriya in the counterinsurgency during both of Sudan's civil wars. The probability of conflict between the Ngok Dinka and the Misseriya increased relative to their economic vulnerability. Other factors were at play during the civil war, such as political exclusion and religious oppression, but economic triggers were critical.

Presently, both the Ngok Dinka and the Misseriya live in impoverished conditions. Around half of the displaced Ngok Dinka population has not returned to their homeland in Abyei. Of those who have returned north of the river Kiir, conditions are severe with few services provided. Though the Misseriya are not experiencing the level of devastation of the Ngok Dinka, their way of life is in peril. Challenges to the nomadic migration have increased after the May 2011 attack on Abyei. Hostilities between the Ngok Dinka and Misseriya and the limits of area's natural resources endanger the future of the seasonal migration. Access to land north of Abyei has also diminished over the years with the expansion of large-scale agriculture and the spread of the desert. Muglad, a home area of the Misseriya, is underdeveloped with few opportunities for generating income. Additionally, the war in Southern Kordofan has drawn men to war, increased insecurity, and stifled movement and trade.

The environment on the ground is harrowing. The mindset of the Ngok Dinka population surveyed showed remarkably little variation and leaned heavily toward the negative when discussing prospects for peace and attitudes toward the Misseriya. The findings of this study reveal a population whose outlook appears to reflect the severity of their conditions.

## Key Findings:

- Economic insecurity
  - 71.6% lost one or more asset required for operating a business or for livelihood
  - 84.1% lost one or more type of asset that characterizes one's wealth such as cattle or life savings
  - 98.8.% lost one or more real estate asset
  - Only 4% of the respondents own cattle. Approximately 15% own goats and chickens and around 5% own sheep
- Income insecurity
  - 79.2% reported monthly individual earnings of less than 360 South Sudan Pounds (SSP)
  - 92% of the men and 93.4% of the women reported individual earnings of less than 721 SSP
  - 62.3% reported a monthly family earnings of less than 600 SSP. By gender, 52.8% of men and 70.2% of women report family income of less than 600 SSP
- Physical Security
  - More than 50% of the sample population lacked access to food, water, and medicine
  - 82.7% of the sample population live in Racuba
- Physical and Psychological Well-being
  - 82% of the sample population with children had a child or children who became ill or injured as result of the attack on Abyei
  - 51% of the respondents became ill or injured as a result of the attack. By gender, 58.3% of women and 42.8% of men became ill or injured as a result of the attack
  - 37.8% of the respondents met the criteria for PTSD. By gender, 48.6% of women and 24.8% of men met the criteria for PTSD
- Attitudes
  - 79.3% of the men and 80.5% of the women indicate unwillingness to forgive the Misseriya for crimes and misdeeds during the 2011 invasion of Abyei
  - 75.2% of the men and 66.5% of the women indicate that it is very important to return to Abyei. A total of 90% reported that it was important or very important to return.
  - 10.6 % of the respondents expressed it is "likely" that the Abyei conflict can be resolved peacefully and 5.6% of the respondents expressed it is "very likely"
  - 88.7% of the respondents expressed unwillingness to trade with the Misseriya at local markets
  - 90.5% of the respondents expressed unwillingness to allow Misseriya to migrate south of the River Kiir<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> At the time of the survey, the nomads were present in Abyei north of the river Kiir. There was question of whether they should be allowed to migrate south of the river.

- 2.8% of the respondents expressed that they are very willing to have their leaders enter peace talks with the Misseriya
- Corresponding variables
  - Higher levels of income among the Ngok Dinka are positively correlated to a more optimistic outlook concerning the prospect for peace. The higher the income, the more favorable the outlook.
  - Higher levels of education are related to more favorable attitudes toward the Misseriya.
  - Age is negatively correlated to attitudes toward the Misseriya. The lower the age, the more positive the views toward the Misseriya.
  - The more favorable the individual's views toward the Misseriya, the more optimistic the outlook regarding the probability for peaceful resolution.
  - The Ngok Dinka women showed more negative attitudes toward the Misseriya than men.
  - Income is negatively correlated to PTSD. The lower the income, the higher rate of PTSD.
  - Education is negatively correlated to PTSD. The lower the level of education, the higher the rate of PTSD.
  - Age is positively correlated to PTSD. The higher the age, the higher the rate of PTSD.
  - Gender is a predictor of susceptibility to trauma. Women are more prone to PTSD than men.
  - Trauma in women is negatively correlated with outlook toward peace, the higher the level of trauma the less optimistic the views regarding the probability of a peaceful resolution.

The following recommendations outlined under stabilization objectives prioritize interventions that empower people to return to rebuild their communities and livelihoods. Assisting individuals in gaining a sense of control over their security and wellbeing can serve to reduce the level of trauma. The people's capacity should be built so that they may lead the transition toward recovery, stability and peace.

Recommendations:

Security

- Community security should reinforce the work of UNISFA to give individuals a greater sense of control over their own safety.

Economic sustainability

- Income generating interventions should be implemented with a pronounced component of skills development, including vocational training with a focus on youth, women, and those who are most severely deprived.
- Support for a common economic development zone as proposed by the AUHIP can create an enabling environment for acceptance of a political resolution, as it will aid in aligning the economic interests of the Ngok Dinka and Misseriya.
- Critical analysis of migration should consider long term solutions to the challenges of nomadism, including taking development to the Misseriya areas of permanent domicile as a matter of policy – Government of Sudan should be lobbied to make this a policy imperative.

#### Stable Governance and Rule of Law

- Additional co-chairs should be appointed to AJOC and stationed in Abyei in order to oversee the return and the seasonal migration while the area waits for the referendum and the implementation of its results.
- The AJOC secretariat, the Abyei leadership, civil servants, traditional leaders and the SSRRC could benefit from in-kind contributions that would support operations and training of staff. This would assist in alleviating the negative impact of the present governance gap.
- Traditional courts need to be firmly reestablished in all areas of previous operation.

#### Nomadic Migration

- The Ngok Dinka and Misseriya need to work out their differences regarding the seasonal migration according to inter-tribal rules. Assistance should come in the form of support for preparation for constructive deliberations. Readiness of the two groups on all issues to be reconciled is critical. The Ngok Dinka and Misseriya should not be coerced to meet before they are willing and prepared.
- Attention needs to be paid to matters of justice in support of the overall goal of healing and reconciliation in the future. What justice and reconciliation looks like in Abyei will have to be determined by the people.

#### Social wellbeing

##### Trauma

- Trauma interventions should build the affected population's resilience and utilize local communal practices for healing and strengthening social cohesion.
- To promote greater resilience to the impact of trauma, policy should emphasize investment in improving material conditions of the local communities.
- Awareness should be raised regarding PTSD symptoms and treatment. Law enforcement and the courts should be trained to intervene in these cases so that individuals' illness is not treated as criminality.
- More study on PTSD is needed in order to follow-up on findings with a wider sample, for design of interventions and for further analysis of PTSD's impact on women and the area's stability.

- Policy governing humanitarian assistance to Abyei should recognize that local peace is necessary to support national peace, i.e. a political solution.
- Stabilization and recovery<sup>5</sup> efforts should be transformative. This entails empowering the local communities to lead the transition from conflict to peace.
- Focus on the establishment of Community Based Organizations (CBOs).
- Peace talks and reconciliation efforts should take into account women's influence within society and engage them as an integral part of the fabric that holds the communities together.
- Civil society groups, including non-governmental groups, social networks, civic clubs, community leadership, and traditional leaders should be provided an expanded space of engagement where ideas and norms can be formed, tested and challenged.
- Radio in Abyei and areas north should be supported, including local content development, specifically building in dialogue, theatre, sports and creative performance.
- The youth need to be actively engaged in the area's recovery, giving them necessary training to carry out their roles and offering forums to voice their concerns.
- Provision of education should be strongly linked to peacebuilding efforts.

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<sup>5</sup> Recovery in this report refers to interventions that support the return and reintegration of IDPs and serve as the initial steps for development. Recovery activities may include any intervention that addresses socioeconomic challenges, security, the delivery of basic services and the building local capacities in the realms of civil service, security, governance and rule of law. Early recovery refers to the bridging of recovery objectives with humanitarian relief.

## Chapter One: The Context

### 1.1 Introduction

In seeking to understand the challenges of achieving peace and stability in Abyei, research was conducted in 2012 to measure the conditions of Ngok Dinka IDPs and their views regarding peace and the Misseriya. Of interest was the correlation between the material, physical, and psychological wellbeing of the Ngok Dinka IDPs, and their views concerning the likelihood of peace and their opinions regarding the Misseriya. The hypothesis of this study was that the traumatic conditions of the Ngok Dinka population would negatively influence their outlook.

Other studies have shown a negative relationship between economic conditions and conflict, that is, declines in per capita income are significantly related to increases in conflict (Miguel et. Al, 2004; Fearon and Laitin, 2003; Collier and Hoeffler, 1998). Declining economies left populations vulnerable and with few alternatives for generating income. In these cases, joining militias and rebel movements were seen as a viable option for income sustainability.

Economics is widely assessed when analyzing structural impediments to peace but the impact of trauma on populations in conflict areas less researched. In a country that has been at war for approximately half a century, and where inter-communal competition over resources and political representation has resulted in further violence, trauma is a national public health crisis that has yet to be addressed (Von Habsburg-Lothringen, 2013). From the time of the study until the present, conditions in Abyei have not significantly improved and the security situation has deteriorated. The killing of Paramount Chief Kuol Deng Kuol raised the political stakes while deepening the trauma within the Abyei community. There is a general recognition among the Ngok Dinka that their displacement and chronic crisis have taken an emotional and spiritual toll on their people. The stories told by members of the community led to the questions posed in the study regarding how the population's trauma impacts the area's stability. In the research conducted, the participants were given a questionnaire which measured the presence of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Trauma was analyzed in relation to the displaced population's physical and socio-economic conditions.

The findings from the assessment were then used to inform recommendations for the area. The recommendations are outlined under the objectives of a stabilization and recovery framework. As the present goal is to transition the area toward stability and peace, the findings of the study are analyzed in juxtaposition to stabilization aims.

### 1.2 Background

This year has seen an escalation of violence in Abyei. Prior to the death of paramount Chief Kuol there were reports of cattle raids and the burning of villages. The violence and death of Chief Kuol has resulted in a stronger push for the referendum to be conducted in October 2013. The Ngok Dinka are now rejecting a focus on the full implementation the post-May 2011 interim framework and are calling for the referendum. The Temporary Arrangement for the Administration and the



Security signed by the National Congress Party (NCP) and SPLM in June, 2011 after the occupation of Abyei provides a security and governance framework for the post-Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), two-state context. Most importantly, the arrangement upholds critical elements of the Abyei Protocol, thereby securing residents' right to a referendum and the nomads' right to seasonal migration. Approximately a year after its signing, the AUHIP in the final rounds of negotiations between the Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan (RoSS) endorsed a proposal for resolution of outstanding issues regarding Abyei. However GoS rejected the proposal in disagreement with the voter eligibility requirements for the referendum. The implementation of the Temporary Arrangement and the AUHIP proposal has been hindered by political disputes that have condemned the people of Abyei to return and rebuild in an environment of uncertainty and insecurity.

The achievements related to the Temporary Arrangement had been principally within the realm of security until the recent violence of 2013. Abyei was demilitarized and 4200 Ethiopian peace keeping officers were deployed to the area. Despite some of the difficulties faced with the nomadic migration and the return of the Ngok Dinka the area was arguably more secure than it had been during the CPA years which were plagued by militia-driven low intensity fighting. Those years also saw the massive displacement of the Ngok Dinka in 2008 and later in 2011.

Among the recent security challenges has been the expansion of the seasonal migration. Because of the security provided by UNISFA and due to the heightened insecurity in other areas such as Aweil and Mayom, nomads entered Abyei in higher numbers. Complicating matters further, the nomads remained armed and the presence of militias in the area grew. Currently the number of militia members in Abyei is not determined but it is significant that 200 armed men were able to ambush and hold for several hours the UNISFA-escorted convoy which included paramount Chief Kuol and members of AJOC. Number of arms among the returnees is also not determined.

UNISFA efforts have been focused upon keeping the returnees separate from the nomads, however, no effort was made to disarm the Misseriya or members of the Ngok Dinka community until after an agreement was reached on disarmament in May, 2013. Without the presence of an Abyei police force, the burden of security in the area rests solely upon UNISFA. Meanwhile, constraints on movement in addition to scarcity of water are endangering Misseriya nomadic migration.<sup>6</sup> The death of Chief Kuol has further complicated the situation. Outrage and distrust are at a peak and the Ngok Dinka wariness of the Misseriya presence in Abyei has deepened.<sup>7</sup> Following the death of the paramount chief the Abyei Town market was burnt down and the mosque destroyed.

AJOC which represents the two presidents of Sudan and RoSS was introduced in the Temporary Arrangement. Each country has two co-chairman and there are an additional two chairs with

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<sup>6</sup> Numbers of returnees north of the river Kūr are increasing. The nomads are instructed to not enter areas of Ngok Dinka resettlement. However, the scarcity of grass and water has the nomads threatening to enter the settlements. They argue that they have a right to graze in all areas (UNCSO, January 2013).

<sup>7</sup> See "Dividing Lines: Grazing and Conflict along the Sudan-South Sudan border" by Joshua Craze for an in depth look at the past and present Misseriya nomadic migration.

representation by the AU and the UN. The main role of AJOC is to provide political and administrative oversight of the Abyei Area Administration (AAA). Presently it is the only Abyei authority officially recognized by both Sudan and RoSS. Locally, the ambiguity of the Abyei Administration's legitimacy has been a source of confusion and discord. The administration, which was displaced from Abyei during the attack on the area, was operative in Agok, south of the river Kiir. As of August 2012 civil servants returned to Abyei to assist returnees. While the government of Sudan unilaterally dissolved the AAA, RoSS continues to financially support and recognize them.<sup>8</sup> Some members of the Abyei Administration returned to Abyei Town shortly before the rainy season. Members of UNISFA and the humanitarian agencies negotiate a delicate balance between the positions of the two countries.

According to members of the current Abyei Administration, the present circumstances impede their ability to effectively serve their people since agencies are not well coordinated with them.<sup>9</sup> Consequently the priorities of the agencies are said to not be sufficiently aligned to those of the people as programmatic processes are not always inclusive of the community. In the meantime, the Ngok Dinka return north of the river Kiir while a new administration remains to be appointed. Bulabek Deng Kuol has been named as the new paramount chief. Misseriya announced that they would settle Abyei permanently in time to vote in the referendum.<sup>10</sup>

The AUHIP proposal addresses the region's vulnerabilities and the political impasse regarding Abyei's status. It is decisive on the subject of the Abyei referendum and voting eligibility, and reaffirms grazing and migration rights and calls for the full implementation of the Temporary Arrangement including the formation of the Abyei administration, legislative council, Abyei police and the referendum commission. But the composition of all these bodies has not been agreed upon, and presently the Ngok Dinka have decided to bypass several of the requirements of the Temporary Arrangement in order to move forward with the referendum. The status of the Temporary Arrangement and the AUHIP proposal is not clear. In the meantime Sudan and RoSS struggle with conflict within their borders, disputes over oil and support to rebel forces, and political and economic problems that appear intractable. Abyei's struggle is set within this wider, increasingly chaotic context.

### 1.3 Challenges to Stabilization

Efforts centered on political resolutions and security measures have been the main ways that the crisis in Abyei has been tackled. Less attention has been paid to recovery and the underlying roots of

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<sup>8</sup> The Ngok Dinka community asserted that the "incumbent Abyei Area Administration is legitimate and thus must continue to dispense its duties and responsibilities" (Abyei Community, 2011). The people of Abyei recognize the present Abyei Administration as their leaders, however, for now, the strongest possibility for the people's self-determination appears to be the referendum.

<sup>9</sup> Interview with Abyei Secretary General Ring Deng Kuol (April, 2013).

<sup>10</sup> Misseriya leaders announced their intentions to settle Abyei this year in order to secure the participation of nomads in the referendum scheduled in October 2013 according to the AUHIP proposal (Sudan Tribune, January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2013). The AUHIP proposal limits voter eligibility to residents of the area. Seasonal migrants would not qualify. As of August of 2013, there has been no confirmation of new Misseriya settlements.

insecurity for the Ngok Dinka and Misseriya. Conditions since May 2011 for both populations have been poor and the sources of instability continue to threaten the area.

While the Ngok Dinka wait for the referendum they face the challenges of: an under-assisted return and recovery<sup>11</sup>; problems of representation as local governance structures are undermined; and violence. Misseriya nomads are trying to exercise their right to seasonal migration while hostilities in Abyei continue to rise and insecurity in other areas persists. In Muglad and other parts of Southern Kordofan, there are few opportunities for establishing a sustainable livelihood. They are caught in the middle of conflict with their southern neighbors and the fighting in Southern Kordofan and Darfur. Additionally, many have joined rebel forces in these areas. Trade between the north and south, though recently said to be reopened, had come to a halt in 2012, disrupting the region's economy and destabilizing the livelihood of Arab traders.

Although a political solution is vital, and the absence of one remains a great source of volatility, an enforced resolution such as the referendum as proposed by the AUHIP, will be met with resistance. When the results of the referendum are enacted, containing violent opposition will most likely be a problem. In the past, Abyei Area's agreements have been forcefully violated, beginning with the Addis Ababa Agreement which ended the first civil war. During the years of the CPA, the Abyei Protocol, the Abyei Road Map, the PCA award and the Kadugli Agreement were all undermined through violent attacks. Attention needs to be paid to other immediate areas of concern since stability is dependent upon management of justice, civil affairs, the ability of families to generate income, and a population's access to basic services such as health and education; in short, the overall wellbeing of the people.

The objective goals to be reached in the course of operations for stabilization and recovery can be described as: security, rule of law, stable governance, a sustainable economy, and social well-being (USIP, 2009).

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<sup>11</sup>Humanitarian support to the area lagged after the attack in 2011. The fighting in Southern Kordofan, June 2011 and the heavy rains and flooding that occurred after the Abyei attack limited the ability of the agencies to respond to the humanitarian crisis. Among the impediments was policy regarding agency and NGO staff access to the area from South Sudan and policy on whether support to the area would come mainly from the South or the North. Staff access issues have been resolved. Additionally, agencies may access the area from any border or country. Generally speaking, donors are tentatively supporting Abyei. The ongoing political dispute, the present insecurity and the loss of past investments due to violence seem to be at the heart of donor wariness.

Activities underway are as follows (UNCSO Reports Jan 2013, June, 2013): World Food Program reported a caseload of approximately 79,522 beneficiaries; IOM distributed 6000 NFIs, FAO along with ACAD and the Secretariat for Agriculture and Animal Resources and Fisheries (SAARF) carried out animal vaccinations. SNV has provided livestock to vulnerable families. SNV is also supporting SAARF with operational costs. IOM, UNICEF, Save the Children Sweden (SCS), Mercy Corp and UNHCR/INTERSOS are working on water and sanitation. UNICEF and SCS are rehabilitating schools in Abyei Town and providing materials. SCS trained teachers. IOM has been tracking and monitoring movements of the returnees and IDPs. UNDP is supporting community police volunteers. MSF-CH is operating a hospital in Agok and mobile clinics north of the river Kiir. IOM is rehabilitating the hospital in Abyei Town. SCS is training medical assistants. Mercy Corps' is expanding its Cash For Work (CFW) program. SCS is also implementing a CFW projects. UNPOL advisors for volunteer police were reported being deployed to the area. AJOC co-chair raised alarm regarding lack of assistance for returnees. He alerted to a need for food, shelter and basic services north of the river Kiir (Sudan tribune, February, 2013). The WFP caseload north of the river Kiir increased since that time.

The goals, from security to social well-being are interdependent. Thus, failure to strategize and implement a transition within all these target objectives would put at risk the course so far set by the Temporary Arrangement of 2011, and would undermine a political resolution of the final status of the area. Creating an environment conducive for the implementation of the final political resolution of Abyei's status requires a current focus on recovery and stabilization.

The assumption at the heart of this line of thought is that insufficient attention to recovery and development for Abyei and its neighbors, during this period of transition where political outcomes are yet to be determined, are undermining current agreements and will probably hinder the execution of a final political solution such as the referendum. Can security be maintained in the long run if the basic needs of the Ngok Dinka and their Misseriya neighbors are not met?

## Chapter Two: Economic Drivers of Conflict and Trauma

### 2.1 Economics

According to recent studies, economic problems are a greater contributor of civil conflict than political differences (Miguel et. Al, 2004; Fearon and Laitin, 2003; Collier and Hoefler, 1998). Conflict tends to be concentrated in countries that have vulnerable, under-developed economies where large segments of the population have incomes that are below poverty levels. A wide selection of research shows that as economic conditions decline the possibility of conflict increases. Each percentage point off the growth rate of per capita income increases the risk of violence by approximately 1% (Collier, 2006). A Sierra Leone case study which tracked rainfall over a period of 5 years, showed how the decrease in rainfall made participation in agriculture less profitable than joining a militia (Miguel et al, 2004; Abdullah, 1997). Another study which analyzes civil wars from 1945 to 1999 concludes that the “factors that explain which countries have been at risk for civil war are not their ethnic or religious characteristics but rather the conditions that favor insurgency” such as the level of poverty (Fearon and Laitin, 2003). What matters most is whether the economic opportunities in a country are so poor that becoming a militia member becomes an attractive option. That being said, it is important to note that the point is not to reduce analyses simply to economic considerations as economies are embedded within historical, social, cultural and political contexts. Yet, by separating what is naturally linked, we may better understand the different parts that make the whole so that policies and interventions can be designed accordingly.

### 2.2 The Economic Roots of Violence in Abyei

The dynamics of the violence in Abyei during the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> civil wars were similar. The Misseriya, aligned with the North to fight the southern insurgency. During the 2<sup>nd</sup> civil war the rapid growth of Misseriya militias coincided with the droughts of 1980s. From approximately the 1970s, accessing land for grazing became increasingly more difficult and the challenges grew worse through the years. A few factors limited Misseriya access to water and fertile land at a time when the size of their cattle holdings was steeply increasing. Among the factors were: the expansion of cultivation in areas of Southern Kordofan due to a shift toward large, modernized agricultural schemes; a 250% increase in swamp and floodplains in some areas; and insecurity stemming from hostilities with various Dinka tribes (Johnson, 2011; Pantuliano et al, 2009; Keen, 2008, Saeed, 1982). Development in Southern Kordofan largely benefited owners of capital and marginalized the majority of the population dependent upon subsistence farming and animal husbandry. From 1983-1985, the drought depleted the number of cattle. Prices for cattle and grain rose dramatically and the security situation deteriorated further with the onset of the SPLA insurgency.

The economically and politically marginalized Misseriya were seen as a possible threat to the central government if they were to align with the SPLA. The central government fostered a political alignment with the Misseriya and gave them positions of power in government and in the military (Keen, 2008). Militias became a cost-effective way to counter the southern insurgency. The

devastating loss of cattle brought on by the drought and the diminished access to land relegated many pastoralists to joining the militias as a means of generating income (Johnson, 2011; Keen, 2008). Militia raids provided a way for replenishing herds and allowed for a lucrative cattle trade (Johnson, 2011).

In turn the Ngok Dinka incentive for joining the southern insurgency during the 1<sup>st</sup> civil war was largely borne out of the economic and political marginalization suffered in the south. During the war Ngok Dinka educated youth identified with the cause of southerners who were rebelling against a lack of services, development and representation in local and central government. Another reason for allying with the rebellion was the failure of the government of Sudan to address large scale emergencies among the Dinka such as the famine in Bahr el Ghazal in 1959 and severe flooding in the Bor Dinka region (Keen, 2008). Still, Ngok Dinka paramount chief Deng Majok practiced a delicate diplomacy continuing to bridge the relationship between the north and south as tensions rose (Deng, 2009). The southern rebellion moved to Bahr el Ghazal and the Misseriya and northern security forces targeted Abyei in a counterinsurgency campaign. Conflict in Abyei escalated after the death of Deng Majok. This period saw a rise in violence and an increase in loss of cattle among the Ngok Dinka thus heightening their economic susceptibility. Fighting continued and the Misseriya were increasingly militarized over the years extending to the 2<sup>nd</sup> civil war beginning in 1983.

The failure to fully implement the Addis Ababa Agreement which ended the 1<sup>st</sup> civil war caused the resumption of the insurgency. Marginalization of the south, Blue Nile, Nuba Mountains, and Darfur had continued. In 1983 President Nimeri proclaimed sharia law, a major step in the imposition of Islam on the non-Muslim population of Sudan. Matters were made worse by the discovery of oil in the south and in Southern Kordofan as the central government made attempts to claim oil fields by redrawing the borders between the north and the south and claiming oil rich territories.

During the 2<sup>nd</sup> civil war the Ngok Dinka were faced with depleted resources, and continued raids by Misseriya militias. Governance mechanisms that helped stem the tide of conflict between the Ngok and Misseriya communities were a thing of the past.<sup>12</sup> The raids and subsequent loss of cattle is said to be one of the main reasons that the Ngok Dinka joined the 2<sup>nd</sup> rebellion (Keen, 2008). Without adequate representation in government and with the central government's strong alliance with the Misseriya militia forces, peaceful alternatives to resolve economic and social disruption were not available to the Ngok Dinka. The Ngok Dinka played a central role in the rebellion. The area was devastated by the 2<sup>nd</sup> civil war. As in the case of other oil rich locations, Abyei was among the most depopulated with a displacement rate of approximately 90%.

Economic marginalization was among the reasons for the southern insurgency and for the participation of Misseriya in the counter insurgency during both civil wars. Indeed, access to resources was to a great extent politically determined as demonstrated in the diminished access to

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<sup>12</sup> The native administration was abolished in 1971 and representation for with a direct link to the central government was lost. The ability of the Ngok Dinka and Misseriya traditional leaders to affect the political climate and mitigate conflict was diminished for the years to come (Deng, 1982).

land for the Misseriya in Southern Kordofan and as in the case of the decades of underdevelopment in South Sudan which was a policy choice of the British colonial administration and later the Sudan government. Nevertheless, the economic vulnerability of the Ngok Dinka and the Misseriya increased the likelihood of conflict between them. Although other factors were identified as central to the conflicts in the studies cited and in Abyei, economic instability is significant throughout all the cases.

### 2.3 Psychological Well-Being

The notion of trauma has gained widespread acceptance not only in the literature addressing people and populations who have faced horrific situations, but also in the common parlance of the layperson. In Abyei, conversations within the community regarding trauma are prevalent. A visceral understanding of trauma is easily achieved when surveying the state of extreme deprivation uprooted people face, and when imagining the state of mind that results from prolonged deprivation of this sort. Clinically speaking, psychological trauma is defined as the response of the mind to extreme stress, and when symptoms are sufficiently profound, a diagnosis of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is assigned (APA, 2000). PTSD is a clinical condition of psychological distress and disturbance that may require psychiatric intervention, may be improved by such intervention, or may be a condition from which one can actually recover on one's own, given the proper environment. However, the condition is also acknowledged to manifest so strongly in some cases it persists for decades (Green, 1994).

In the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV-TR, 2000), the criteria for the assessment of traumatic exposure which can lead to PTSD involves two components: (1) that the person experienced, witnessed, or was confronted with an event or events that involved actual or threatened death or serious injury to self or others, and that (2) the person's response involved intense fear, helplessness, or horror. Such events may include military combat, violent personal assault (sexual assault, physical attack, robbery, mugging), being kidnapped, being taken hostage, terrorist attack, torture, incarceration as a prisoner of war or in a concentration camp, natural or manmade disasters, severe automobile accidents, or being diagnosed with a life-threatening illness (APA, 2000). From this non-exhaustive list, it can be seen that although "trauma" has a wide and varied scope and the diagnosis of PTSD is tied to trauma, PTSD is more specific in both how it is assessed, and how it should be treated once a positive assessment is made. This is especially true of populations where the possibilities for clinical intervention are rare to nonexistent as in the case of Abyei.

The mental and physical resources needed from a population for effective return and rehabilitation is significant, thus the prevalence of PTSD is relevant to recovery and stabilization in a post-conflict context. People suffering from PTSD may be unable to perform more complex mental tasks, a condition characterized as reduced executive function (Sutker, Winstead, Galina, Allain, 1991; Vasterling, Brailey, Constans, & Sutker, 1998). Reduced executive function is essentially a diminished ability to plan, direct one's attention, organize, regulate behavior, reason, solve problems, and

execute numerous other higher order mental skills and abilities (Chan, Shum, et al, 2008). Particularly problematic for effective life functioning is the inability to function independently, to care for oneself or to maintain social relationships (Lezak, Howieson, & Loring, 2004). On the whole, PTSD is an assault on the senses of immense proportion, which manifests symptoms falling into the categories of re-experiencing, avoiding and hyper-arousal (APA, 2000). Nightmares, intrusive thoughts, or flashbacks cause individuals to re-experience the traumatic event. Re-experiencing then triggers numbing of emotions, or avoidance of situations and thoughts that remind one of the traumatic events. Lastly, excessive arousal in the form of an exaggerated startled response or hypersensitivity is also present. One may have difficulty in calming down, or in falling asleep, and may be in an always-ready-to-fight state of mind. Symptoms in all three clusters must be present to meet the diagnosis of PTSD. Symptoms in all three categories must persist for at least a month to receive the diagnosis of PTSD (APA, 2000).

A 2004 study involving 2074 Rwandan citizens examining the relationship between PTSD symptoms and attitudes toward judicial and reconciliation initiatives, found that almost 25% met symptom criteria for PTSD. Those who met these criteria were less likely to have positive attitudes toward the Rwandan national trials, less positive belief in community, and less subscription to interdependence with other ethnic groups (Pham, et al, 2004). This and other studies conducted on PTSD in conflict areas have shown that the presence of PTSD was significantly related to unwillingness to reconcile with former enemies and pessimistic attitudes towards mechanisms for justice and peace (Pham, et al, 2004; Vinck, et al, 2007).

Exposure to war crimes quite aptly describes the pre-conditions for PTSD onset. With this in mind, research examining how survivors respond to mechanisms for peace-building found that among 2389 participants, 74.3% met PTSD symptom criteria (Vinck et al, 2007). This study found that those with more trauma exposure were more likely to have PTSD, and those meeting PTSD criteria were more likely to identify violence as a means of achieving peace. A 2005 cross-sectional field study of 169 former child soldiers (aged 11-18 years) in rehabilitation centers in Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, yielded similar findings. Almost 35% of the sample met symptom criteria for PTSD. Those who had higher rates of PTSD symptoms were significantly less open to reconciliation efforts, and held significantly stronger feelings of revenge. The authors expressed concern about how such traumatized youth could overcome their feelings of hate and revenge given their resistance to reconciliation, and if retaliation might be deemed appropriate means of coping with their trauma for recovering their sense of self, thus perpetuating the cycles of violence found in conflict zones (Bayer et al, 2007).



## Chapter 3: The Study and Findings

### 3.1 The Study

In the study conducted, the findings revealed a population living under harsh conditions with high levels of trauma, holding attitudes toward the Misseriya and peace that are remarkably uniform. Still, there was enough variation among the Ngok Dinka IDP population to detect significant relationships influenced by level of education, gender, income, and age that affect attitudes toward the Misseriya and belief in the possibility of peace. Economic and psychological factors were assessed as critical variables that would most likely influence IDP attitudes.

### 3.2 Methodology

In April 2012, 320 participants were recruited from six general areas in Agok, the location containing the highest concentration of Abyei IDPs. All participants were displaced by the May 2011 attack and some were returnees from northern Sudan, who arrived to settle in Abyei shortly before they were driven from the area. Each of the six areas contributed participants in all the four age groups (young, adult, middle-age, elder) and of both genders. In order to avoid geographic sect or familial uniformity, enumerators were sent to different geographical locations on a daily basis and recruited participants according to desired age and gender categories. Economic diversity in the sample was introduced by selecting participants in the center of Agok where those who were employed could be identified and recruited. Economic status was measured by individual and family income, possessions including cattle and other livestock and type of shelter. The methodology for sample selection was not random but stratified, since participants were chosen so as to reflect the demographics of the wider adult population.<sup>13</sup>

The main challenge faced in conducting the survey was the lack of diversity among the population since the study was focused upon measuring the conditions of the displaced population and how their socio-economic, physical and psychological circumstances would influence their outlook towards their neighbors and peace. The living conditions of the IDPs showed a uniformity which could make the identification of any influencing factors difficult. Additionally, the trauma of the May 2011 attack was fresh in the minds of most participants.

In preparation for the survey, a series of focus groups were conducted and a PTSD measure was tested on 90 individuals in December 2011. The focus groups and preparatory survey helped in choosing a PTSD measure and constructing the final survey.

The survey of 115 items was constructed in English and translated into Arabic for presentation to participants via interview, as it was determined that Arabic would be the most widely understood language given the presence of returnees from Khartoum and other northern areas. In addition to demographic and economic data, questions were asked about education, possessions and personal

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<sup>13</sup> For a more detailed description of the methodology see Appendix F.

and family injuries that resulted from the Abyei invasion (Appendices A-F). Questions were also asked about attitudes towards the Misseriya and peace. These questions focused upon willingness to engage Misseriya in peace talks and trade. A question was asked regarding nomadic migration proceeding south of the river Kiir. At the time of the survey, the migration was underway and nomads were present in Abyei north of the river. Additionally participants' willingness to reconcile with the Misseriya and their belief in the possibility of peace was assessed. Lastly, the 17-item Screen for Post-Traumatic Stress Symptoms version 2.0 (SPTSS; Carlson, 2001) was administered to measure levels of trauma and PTSD.

### 3.3 The Findings

The survey results bring into sharp relief a picture of a population that has suffered great loss and lives in an environment of extreme scarcity. Sixty-two percent, the majority of the sample, reported a family income of less than 600 SSP a month (Appendix B). Approximately 97% of the population sample reported individual earnings ranging less than 720 SSP monthly (Appendix B). Personal income ranged from zero (5% of respondents) to 1800 SSP (0.3% of respondents). Within this range, about 79.2% receive less than 360 SSP per month. Seventy one percent of respondents reported receiving food rations from WFP.<sup>14</sup>

Few respondents own livestock. Only 4% of the respondents own cattle. Approximately 15% own goats and chickens and around 5% own sheep.

Other measures of present conditions suggest that 82.7% of the IDP population live in racuba, which is basically a structure made of grass. Only 3% live in the sturdier and more permanent tukuls, which have the addition of mud walls (Appendix C).

The overview of property loss shows that only 1.3% of the sample did not lose any real estate property compared to 98.7 % that lost either their home, property (any property other than primary home), farm, other (any type of property not listed among choices in the survey); of the 98.8 % respondents, 65.6 % lost more than one form of real estate property (Appendix B). Around 72% of the sample reported a loss of business property or equipment associated with their livelihoods (Appendix A). Eighty four percent of the sample population reported losing some form of property wealth such as: cattle, life savings, family heirlooms or other form of wealth (Appendix B). Non-poor households were more susceptible to loss of wealth, making them less able to assist other affected family members (Deng, LB, 2008).

More than half of the individuals surveyed reported that they do not have sufficient food, water or medicine (Appendix C). Sixty nine percent reported receiving rations from WFP. Over half of the respondents reported becoming ill or injured due to the attack and approximately 60% reported that

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<sup>14</sup> Out of 320 individuals surveyed, 71% reported receiving food rations from WFP and 18% said they did not receive assistance from WFP or any other agency. Eleven percent did not respond.

members of their family became ill or injured. Of those respondents with children, 45% have children that became ill or injured (Appendix C).

The level of trauma is considerable. The findings shows that 37.8% of respondents would be assessed as traumatized according to widely used criteria (Appendix E). This level of trauma coincides with findings from a study conducted in Juba involving 1242 adults, primarily IDPs living in informal settlements. The study found that over 36% of the sample met symptom criteria for PTSD, and 50% met the symptom criteria for depression, providing evidence for high levels of mental distress (Roberts et al, 2009).

Income, level of education, age and gender were found to be predictors of PTSD. The most vulnerable segments of the population are more prone to trauma; that is the poor, the uneducated, the elderly and women.

Women are suffering especially high levels of adversity. Of the women surveyed 70.2% reported a monthly family income of less than 600 SSP, in contrast to 52.8 % of men (Appendix B). Higher earnings are correlated to higher levels of education and in this study 54.9% of the women reported not being able to read as compared 33.1% of men. Around 61% of the women surveyed are not able to write compared to 41% percent of men. Merely 4.6% of women reached secondary school. Roughly 57% of the women reported receiving little to no schooling compared to 35% of men (Appendix A).

More women reported illness or injury due to the May 2011 attack on Abyei; 58.3% of women became ill or injured because of the attack in contrast to 42.3% of men. Consistent with other studies investigating rates of trauma, a larger percentage of women appear to suffer from PTSD; 48.6% of women scored within the PTSD range as compared to 24.8% of the men (Appendix E). A recent study of 430 internally displaced persons in Darfur revealed a high prevalence rate among inhabitants of three IDP camps, with 54% meeting symptom criteria for PTSD. Once again, women had higher scores than men, and an additional finding was that those who had been in the camp longer had higher PTSD scores than those who arrived at the refugee camp a year or two later. Characterized particularly by lack of employment, food, and security, such an environment presents challenges in which PTSD symptoms do not alleviate by themselves after a period of time, but instead worsen (Hamid & Musa, 2010).

The displaced population has been living in an acute state of emergency where the initial stages of recovery have just recently begun. The extreme conditions under which the population lives appear to be reflected in the severity of their viewpoints. The replies of the Ngok Dinka population sample regarding the Misseriya slant significantly towards disapproval. For example, 84% responded they were unwilling to have their leaders hold talks with the Misseriya compared to 8% that are willing; 80% of the sample are not willing to forgive the Misseriya for the crimes they committed during the occupation of Abyei compared to 14% that are willing; 88.7% reported that they were not willing to trade with the Misseriya versus 1.9% that are willing; 91.5% reported that they were unwilling to

allow Misseriya nomads to migrate south of the River Kiir for water and cattle grazing versus 1.9% who reported that they are willing<sup>15</sup> (Appendix D).

When asked how important was returning to Abyei to live, around 90% of those individuals surveyed that it was important versus 5 % that responded that it was not important. As of February of 2013 50,000 individuals remain displaced. This is approximately 45% of the originally displaced population.

The individuals surveyed were asked how likely it was that the Abyei conflict would be resolved peacefully. Approximately 73% responded that it was unlikely the conflict would be resolved peacefully compared to 16.3 % who believe it is likely (Appendix D).<sup>16</sup>

### 3.4 Possible Influencing Factors

We attribute the lack of diversity in opinions to largely 2 main factors: 1) as stated previously it was only a year since the attack when the survey was administered and the people had not yet recovered. Thus the material and psychological conditions of the IDPs were almost uniformly poor; 2) the fighting in Heglig/Panthau and the bombing nearby in Abiemnom during the time of the survey intensified the insecurity in Abyei. The people were unsure if they would once again be targeted. With the profound effects of these considerations, the usual socioeconomic influences may have been suppressed under the intensity of the immediate experience. If the survey were taken at present after the killing of the paramount chief and as living conditions have not substantially improved, the outcome of the survey would likely be similar if not more uniform.

### 3.5 Predictors

Although there was little variance in the sample's opinions, there were statistically significant findings related to their attitudes towards the Misseriya and peaceful resolution of the conflict. The overall outlook of the Ngok Dinka toward the Misseriya indicates that level of education, age and gender are predictors of their attitudes; the higher the level of education, the more favorable the attitude towards the Misseriya (Appendix F). The lower the age of the respondent, the more favorable their opinions were of the Misseriya. This indicates that the youth are more open to engaging the Misseriya in talks and trade and may be more open to reconciliation. Of course recent developments have negatively influenced the outlook of the youth and the difference in views between their generation and that of their elders may not be present in the current climate.

The mindset of women appears to be less positive toward their Misseriya neighbors than is that of the men (Appendix F). The findings regarding the opinions of women is counterintuitive as widely held assumptions regarding gender would suggest that women would be more open to interacting with adversaries in peace talks. Yet this study shows that they are less open to having their leaders take part in talks with the Misseriya and overall they are less open to trading with the Misseriya and

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<sup>15</sup> These figures combine the percentages of “unwilling” with “not at all willing” respondents.

<sup>16</sup> Percentages of “likely” and “very likely” respondents were combined. Likewise, percentages of “unlikely” and “not at all likely” respondents were also combined.

to nomadic migration in the area. Women were also less hopeful about the possibility of peace in Abyei. Their views regarding the likelihood of a peaceful resolution were meaningfully related to levels of trauma. The higher the trauma scores of the women, the more pessimistic the outlook toward peace.

There was a positive relationship between opinions regarding the Misseriya and beliefs in the possibility for a peaceful resolution of the conflict (Appendix F). Respondents exhibiting more favorable attitudes toward the Misseriya were more likely to believe in the possibility of a peaceful end to the conflict (Appendix F). Income was also significantly correlated to opinions regarding a peaceful resolution; namely, the higher the family income, the more positive the attitude regarding peace.

Research in Rwanda which measured PTSD symptoms' implications for attitudes toward reconciliation was carried out 8 years after the genocide (Pham, 2004). During those years much was achieved in the realms of reconstruction, development, justice and reconciliation. Conditions were improving. These improvements were reflected in the diversity of the economic status of the people and their opinions. The difference between healthy conditions and poor conditions would more easily show themselves with a wider number of people living under secure circumstances. In the Rwanda study the relationship between PTSD and reconciliation was pronounced. Exposure to trauma negatively influenced outlook toward reconciliation. The present study shows similar outcomes for the women surveyed who scored high on the trauma scale and were less likely to have faith in peaceful solutions.

## Chapter 4: Recommendations

### 4.1 Stabilizing Abyei

The findings of the study support the notion that conditions in the area would improve by carrying out interventions which would empower people to return, rebuild their communities and develop sustainable livelihoods. One way to reduce trauma is by helping individuals gain a sense of control over their security and wellbeing (Summerfield, 2000). Delivery of basic needs should be carried out with the intent of building the people's capacity to drive the transition toward recovery, stability and peace.

Three quarters of the sample in this study believe a peaceful resolution to the conflict is unlikely. Although many individuals among the Ngok Dinka community have come to believe that military action is necessary to removing militias, SAF and PDF elements from the area, there is no sign that this an option presently available to them. Military interventions can be part of wider schemes for ending conflict, however, cannot in and of themselves resolve outstanding disputes, let alone ensure stability. Because of the heightened sense of injustice felt by the Ngok Dinka community and a loss in faith in political negotiations with Sudan, there is a growing sentiment that military intervention is needed. In the end, the area needs to be rid of militias and unauthorized forces in order to achieve stability. How this will be done remains to be seen.

Governance has been undermined by the political differences between Sudan and RoSS. Without an administration that is officially recognized by all parties, the people's interests are not well addressed. Humanitarian agencies' coordination with the people of Abyei is perceived as weak by local leadership. This is especially detrimental in a politically sensitive, post-conflict environment. The tools used for designing and planning humanitarian interventions require the participation of the beneficiaries in order to avoid missteps. One important phase in the design of projects is the stakeholder analysis. Who are the stakeholders in Abyei and what are their interests? The interests and needs vary according to demographics. This type of analysis is essential for understanding the Misseriya that are present in Abyei. The recent violence is detrimental to the interests of Misseriya nomads, traders and peaceful residents. Distinguishing law abiding Misseriya from those of militia members and groups that are seeking to settle and occupy areas of Abyei in order to change the demographics is critical.

In this study higher levels of income were significantly correlated to lower levels of trauma and more positive attitudes towards peace. Higher levels of income are also strongly correlated with higher levels of education, which is meaningfully related to more positive views of the Misseriya and reconciliation. Chronic poverty diminishes resilience and is an obstacle to social cohesion. The two displacements of the Ngok Dinka in 2008 and 2011 have severely depleted the population's wealth. Only 4% of the sample reported owning cattle yet cattle have been central to the Dinka economy and are "used to maintain social relations, religious values and political institutions" (Deng, LB 2010). Without cattle, families are less able to help each other during times of crisis and starting a family is exceedingly difficult without the ability to provide bridewealth for marriage.

This report centers upon the conditions of the Ngok Dinka and briefly touches on the challenges of the Misseriya. Understanding the current dynamics of the evolving political and socio-economic conditions of the Misseriya is equally important.<sup>17</sup> Many of the recommendations for the Ngok Dinka are applicable to the Muglad population though the context is different as Abyei was destroyed. Nonetheless the socio-economic obstacles are somewhat similar.

Over the years access to Misseriya localities has not been easy for humanitarian agencies and non-governmental organizations to obtain. Pastoralists receive some services in Abyei but the wider population in Muglad and other areas of Southern Kordofan is barely reached.<sup>18</sup> Given the current sensitivities in Abyei and surrounding areas, an effective approach to building peace would most likely be pragmatic with a focus on basic needs and developing capacities for a locally-driven recovery.<sup>19</sup>

## 4.2 Recommendations

### Security

Community security is an approach that should be adopted in the area for residents and nomads. Members of the community may learn how to discern perceived threats from actual ones and can acquire appropriate responses to conflict or triggers of violence. This method would reinforce the work of UNISFA and would give individuals a greater sense of control over their own safety. The communities should be involved in hazard mapping and the development of early warning systems.

### Sustainable Economy

Empowering the local population to transition from a state of crisis to stability would not only help address basic needs but would also assist in building resilience to trauma. A critical recommendation is the implementation of income generating interventions including vocational training. Financing the building of local capacity is an investment that is not easily lost even in the event of further conflict. Skills are maintained and people are better able to rebuild.

The market in Abyei Town needs to be fully reestablished. Markets are also required in other localities. Trade is a pragmatic means of bringing people together. Part of the AUHIP is founded on

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<sup>17</sup> After the signing of the CPA the Misseriya have remained economically marginalized. Desertification, large scheme agriculture and war continue to impede access to land (Pauntaliano & et. al, 2009, ICG, 2013). As in the case of other populations in Southern Kordofan, the Misseriya have complained about representation and allege that their leaders are more aligned with the interests of Khartoum than their people (Muglad citizens' interview February, 2011). Unlike the civil war period, where the central government was able to mobilize the Misseriya to fight insurgents, many Misseriya have resisted the call from GoS for supporting the fighting in Southern Kordofan. Instead many have joined the Justice Equality Movement (JEM) and SPLM-North. This is a significant shift which has implications for resolution and reconciliation in Abyei.

<sup>18</sup> The government of Sudan has rejected allowing humanitarian access to Southern Kordofan for fear that the assistance would be channeled to the rebels. There should be continued pressure for access.

<sup>19</sup> Humanitarian interventions provide relief and are largely geared toward short-term objectives. Stabilization is meant to be transformative, supporting security, political resolutions and development. Humanitarian support will most likely not be supportive of peace if it does not address the populations' chronic vulnerabilities. A framework is needed to derive as much impact as possible from humanitarian assistance and to drive the planning of assistance toward more long-term goals.

this notion. The framework takes into account challenges being faced by the Misseriya in their place of residence.<sup>20</sup> For now, taking steps in opening trade and building a basic infrastructure in support of this endeavor would help grow income and would be an exercise in bringing the people of Abyei and northern traders under the umbrella of their shared economic interests.<sup>21</sup>

The nomadic migration is in peril as the migration appears to have expanded over the years in the area while resources have been depleted. An assessment of the environmental resources would help to better understand nomadic migration in practical terms. Given the present conditions of the area's ecosystem what is the future of nomadic migration in Abyei? What are the possibilities and constraints?

#### Stable Governance and Rule of Law

Local governance needs to be supported especially for the coordination of the return and nomadic migration. As the current Abyei leadership is not officially recognized by all parties, additional AJOC co-chairs should be appointed and stationed in Abyei to oversee the return, migration and recovery.

Overall the function of the AJOC secretariat, Abyei Administration, civil servants, and traditional leaders could be supported through training of staff and in-kind contributions that would help operations.

The Ngok Dinka traditional courts are operating though all are not completely reestablished. Support for governance and rule of law would help create order in all realms of the area's affairs.

#### The Nomadic Migration

With every violent incident that has occurred in Abyei the seasonal migration has been further imperiled. Moving forward whether the referendum is held in October or whether it is delayed, differences between the Ngok Dinka and the Misseriya regarding the migration need to be resolved.

These efforts should be in keeping with inter-tribal rules which call for compensation for loss. Local buy-in to the rights of nomadic migration is needed to secure safe movement. This can be done by appealing to both communities' sense of justice, which is a necessary stage in order to move toward healing and reconciliation.

Outside-in processes, such as UNISFA attempts to bridge the differences between the Ngok Dinka and the Misseriya nomads are less likely to succeed than locally driven processes founded upon established inter-tribal rules of conduct.<sup>22</sup> Readiness of both communities is necessary for successful talks on all matters. Establishing the groundwork for fruitful dialogue can include work on justice

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<sup>20</sup> Proposed is a Common Economic Development Zone (CEDZ) which would develop Abyei and adjoining areas of Kordofan thereby tackling the region's economic challenges.

<sup>21</sup> Although the Ngok Dinka did not react positively to the question of trading with Misseriya, the market in Abyei was functioning until the death of Chief Kuol.

<sup>22</sup> There are limits to what can be achieved by external parties, outside of local government and traditional structures (Armstrong and Chura-Beaver, 2010). UNISFA has acted as a go-between trying to influence groups toward consensus.



and healing while engaging the communities in a rigorous analysis of their interests, possibilities and constraints so that they may engage each other constructively.

## Social Wellbeing

### Trauma

A traditional counseling approach to psychological breakdown, which is labor intensive and resource demanding in situations where resource deficits are among the prime drivers of the problem, may be unrealistic and possibly misguided. The problem-centered medical model also carries with it a certain stigma, a sense of victimhood, which could promote resistance to counseling, and impede recovery (Saxena, Thornicroft, Knapp, & Whiteford, 2007). Of course in the most severe cases of PTSD medical assistance may be required.

Trauma research now largely focuses upon the building of resilience to disasters and reducing vulnerability to disease, social dysfunction and human and environmental resource depletion rather than disease-driven inquiries regarding PTSD risks (Almedom 2008, 9). Resilience is a common, though not routine, phenomenon, a psychological capacity for adaptation that arises in the face of adversity (Luthar, Cicchetti, & Becker, 2000). The following types of interventions are suggested:

- Interventions that build upon the innate, familial and communal resources that people have to overcome trauma rather than a pathology based approach centered upon viewing PTSD as a disease.
- Interventions that promote social cohesion and social support, and the cultivation of realistic optimism, i.e., the tendency to remain positive based upon what is actually known while accepting the unknown.
- Interventions that reinforce or rebuild social systems with cohesiveness, effective communication and systems of meaning such as morality, faith, spirituality and identity. Many of the community practices such as church-going, traditional ceremonies and rituals, storytelling and singing are the types of activity recommended as they are inherently therapeutic.
- There is a gendered aspect to PTSD within the Ngok Dinka community that requires more study in order to effectively address the specific challenges of women. Understanding their strengths and targeting the stressors that make them more susceptible to PTSD would be among the first lines of inquiry.

### Gender

The study indicates the magnitude of the challenges being faced by women and the negative impact the conflict has had on them. Nearly half of the women surveyed scored within the PTSD range. As caregivers of the young and elderly they have borne a disproportionate share of the adversity. Although the impact of the conflict on women is an urgent matter that requires targeted interventions, equal attention needs to be paid to their strengths, especially when considering

peacebuilding. Women are playing a significant role though not through formal channels. Women in the community uphold customs, norms and pass on traditions. Their views and sentiments are imparted to their children and shared with the men. The findings of the study suggest that improving their conditions would improve their outlook. Given their role in society, raising the socio-economic conditions of women would be imperative for any peace strategy.

The women of Abyei have been pioneers of the return and have been vocal advocates within the community throughout the conflict. Sixty percent of households moving back to Abyei are led by women (IOM, 2012). In early March, 2011 after a series of attacks on Abyei, a large group of mostly Ngok Dinka women many of whom had lost sons in the battles, protested at the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) compound and then stormed the gates and destroyed vehicles and other property. They were enraged by what they saw as the UN's failure to protect the area and by their recent loss.

Their trauma and the depths of their suffering are to be considered when addressing the different layers of the conflict. However, rather than merely focusing on women as victims it would be helpful to recognize their agency and influence. During the civil war, in the late 1990s, the Council of Churches facilitated a peace process between the Nuer and Dinka which began by working with the women.<sup>23</sup> After engaging the Nuer and Dinka women separately, they were brought together for talks. In time, the women eased the way for the Nuer and Dinka men, who were originally resistant, to gather for peace talks.

#### Education

Support for education should be strongly linked to peacebuilding efforts. Along with interventions centered upon improving access to education, attention should be paid to curriculum. What happens in a classroom may either exacerbate tensions in an area of conflict or help alleviate them. Schools are centers where a community's awareness may be raised and resilience enhanced. Conflict sensitive approaches to education should be promoted.

#### Civil Society

Civil society is essential to peace and stability as it plays a role in holding government accountable and creating supportive networks for civic engagement. Also it is an important realm of transition as it may be a force for good as has been historically witnessed through social movements such as the American Civil Rights movement or a force for bad, such as in the case of fascism in Europe during World War II (Cox and Sinclair, 1996). Transformation and change are often rooted in civil society. For this reason, trusted organizations, well established youth groups, the women's league and other community based organizations should be supported.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> From interview with Dr. Julia Aker Duany, Chairperson of the Recruitment Board, RoSS Ministry of Public Service, Labor & Human Resource Development, April, 2012.

<sup>24</sup> As mentioned civil society also encompasses forces that may be destabilizing, for this reason we place an emphasis on groups trusted by the community which are enlightened rather than reactionary. Another challenge is discerning which

CBOs should be at the frontline of humanitarian interventions. At present there is just one fully operational local organization in Abyei, leaving agencies short of local partners. There should be a drive to support local organizations and help incubate viable CBOs.

Civil society also refers to a space of engagement where ideas and norms are formed, tested and challenged. Ideas of rallying for peace or war can be largely formed by civil society. In the focus groups held leading to the survey, participants complained of lack of access to reliable information. News is largely spread through word of mouth. This is also the case in Muglad. The information gap is too often filled by rumors and disinformation which threatens peace in the region. Eighty three percent of South Sudan's rural population does not have reliable access to information.<sup>25</sup> Only 15% of the sample surveyed in this study reported owning a radio. Support is needed for radio, content development and other forms of media.

## Youth

Youth are often thought of as a destabilizing factor in post-conflict settings. Incidents such as destruction of the Abyei market and mosque in the aftermath of Chief Kuol's death are examples of what is most anticipated from the young. Yet if their energies are channeled positively they are a great asset in recovery efforts.

One of the more important findings of the study is that youth attitudes toward the Misseriya were significantly more positive than that of their elders. This is encouraging and gives hope for the future. In other post-conflict cases, youth roles were positively shaped by access to education; employment or skills training; and empowerment in civil society (Schwartz, 2010).<sup>26</sup> Best strategies would include programs that would give youth structure, by keeping them actively engaged in the return and rebuilding of their communities while offering opportunities to share their ideas and express their concerns.

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groups are representative of civil society and not coopted by government or outside interests that may not be rooted in the community.

<sup>25</sup> Sudan Catholic Radio Network Juba 2/9/13.

<sup>26</sup> Evidence from case studies of the Republic of Congo, Mozambique and Kosovo showed that each critical function from "protection to reintegration and empowerment builds on the success of preceding function: youth empowerment cannot be successful without first ensuring that young people's basic needs are met" (Schwartz, 2010).

## **Conclusion**

One of the critical assumptions informing this report is that the implementation of any political resolution for the Abyei conflict will be met with some resistance from one of the political parties and, or stakeholders. Implementing a final political resolution and transitioning towards peace in Abyei requires managing the drivers of conflict and creating an environment which is favorable towards this end.

This study conducted in Abyei showed that there is a significant relationship between the material and psychological conditions of the displaced Ngok Dinka population and their beliefs in the possibility of peace and their willingness to reconcile with the Misseriya. Traumatic conditions adversely affect the mindset of the affected population whose outlook is decidedly negative. Although the end goal is reconciliation between the two communities, at present they are polarized and living under traumatic conditions for which they blame each other. Readiness is critical to the process of reconciliation which cannot be forced. The communities should be supported by helping to create the conditions necessary for constructive dialogue.

The implications of this study are not limited to Abyei as the nature of the crisis is reflected in other areas of the region. Given the extent of underdevelopment and decades of conflict in the Sudans, more research should be conducted in order to measure the implications of the population's socio-economic status and levels of trauma on stability and peace.

Finally, this study shows the urgent need for interventions that are focused on recovery and development. Empowering the local population with the technical and material resources required for the area's transition would support long term stability in Abyei.

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## Appendix A: Abyei IDP Sample Population Demographics

Table A1:

*Gender of the Sample*

| Status | Number of Participants | % of sample |
|--------|------------------------|-------------|
| Male   | 145                    | 45.3        |
| Female | 175                    | 54.7        |
| Total  | 320                    | 100         |

Table A2:

*Age of the Sample*

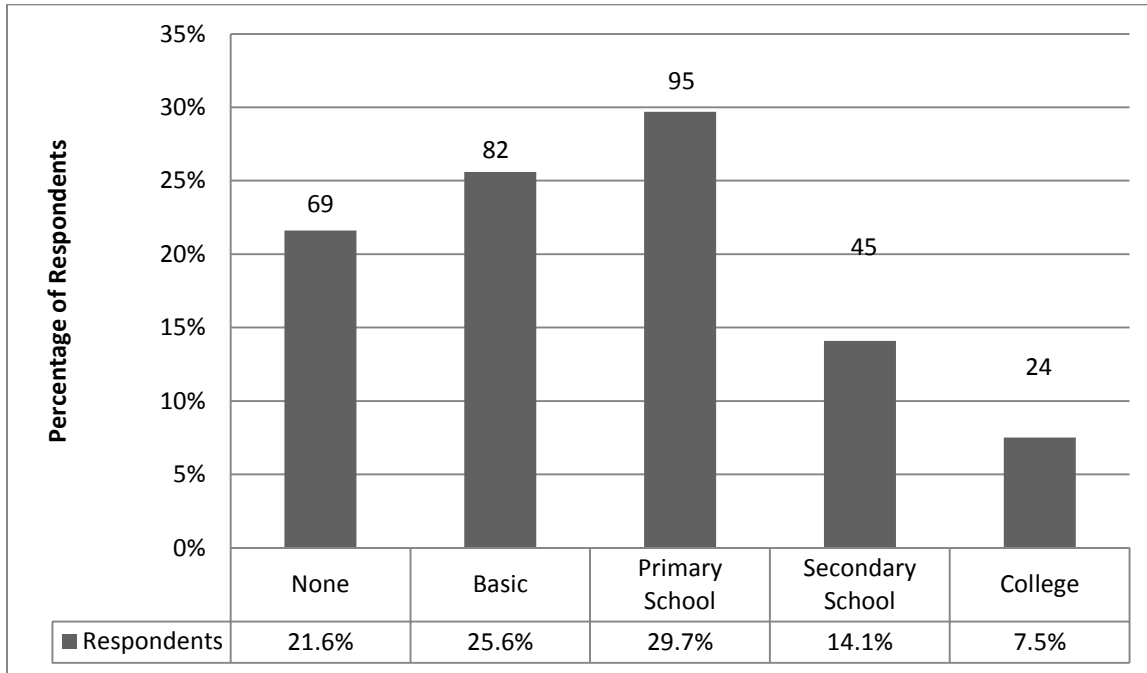
| Status       | Number of Participants | % of Sample |
|--------------|------------------------|-------------|
| 18-29        | 126                    | 39.4        |
| 30-44        | 100                    | 31.3        |
| 45-59        | 48                     | 15          |
| 60 and older | 46                     | 14.4        |

Table A3:

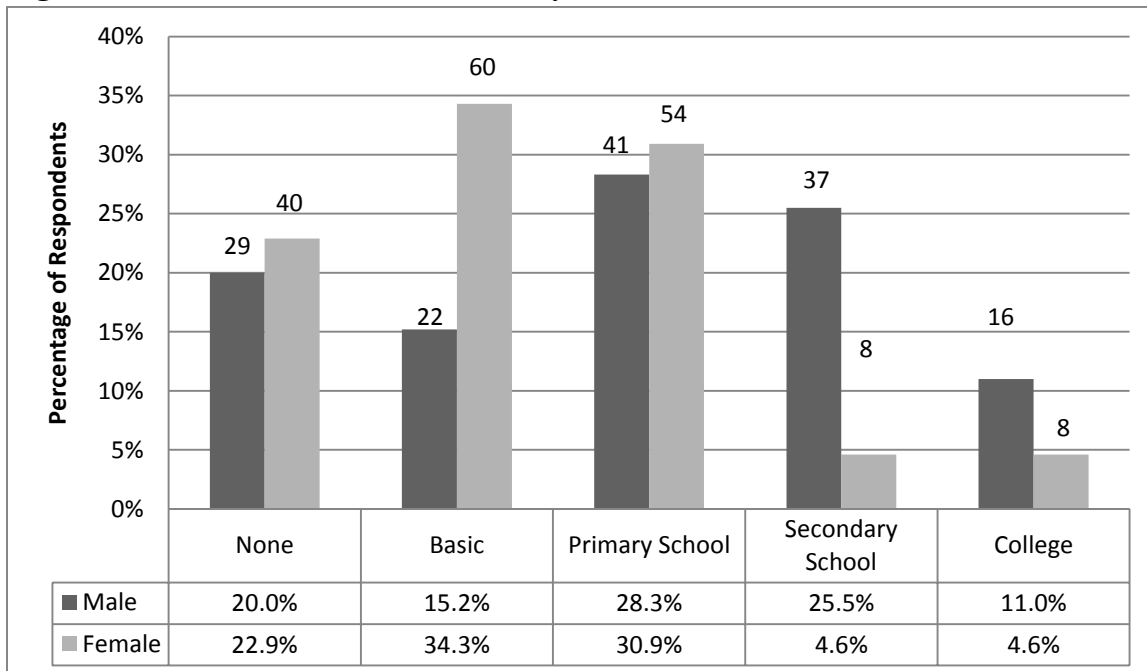
*Marital Status of the Sample*

| Status  | Number of Participants | % of sample |
|---------|------------------------|-------------|
| Single  | 58                     | 18.1        |
| Married | 262                    | 81.9        |
| Total   | 320                    | 100         |

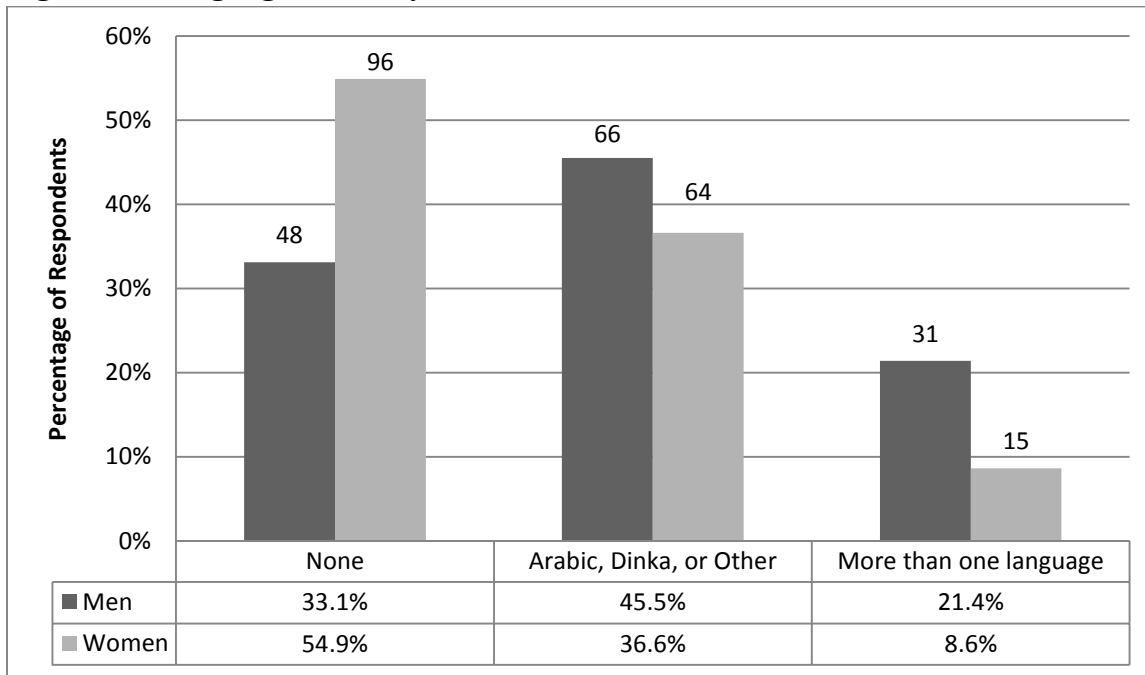
**Figure A1: Education Levels Achieved**



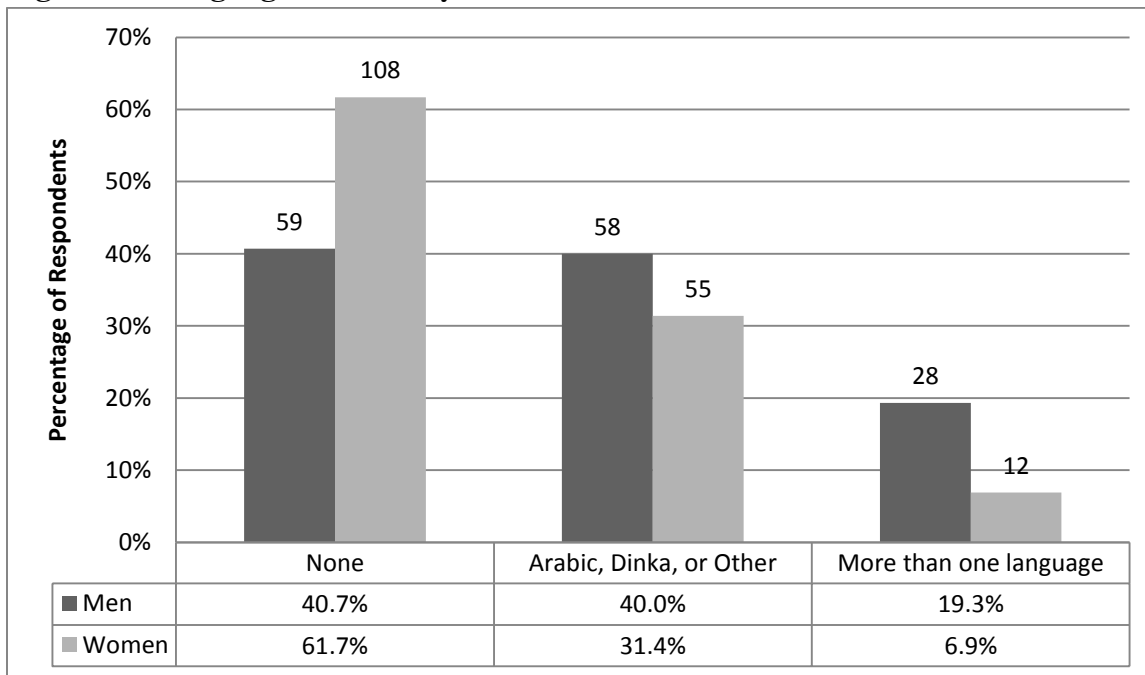
**Figure A2: Education Levels Achieved by Gender**



**Figure A3: Languages Read by Gender**



**Figure A4: Languages Written by Gender**



## Appendix B: Economic Conditions

Table B1:

*Family Earnings in South Sudanese Pounds*

| Monthly Income | Number of Participants | % of Sample |
|----------------|------------------------|-------------|
| <600           | 195                    | 62.3        |
| 600-1200       | 98                     | 31.3        |
| 1201-1800      | 14                     | 4.5         |
| 1801-2400      | 4                      | 1.3         |
| 2401-3000      | 2                      | .6          |

Figure B1: Family Earnings by Gender

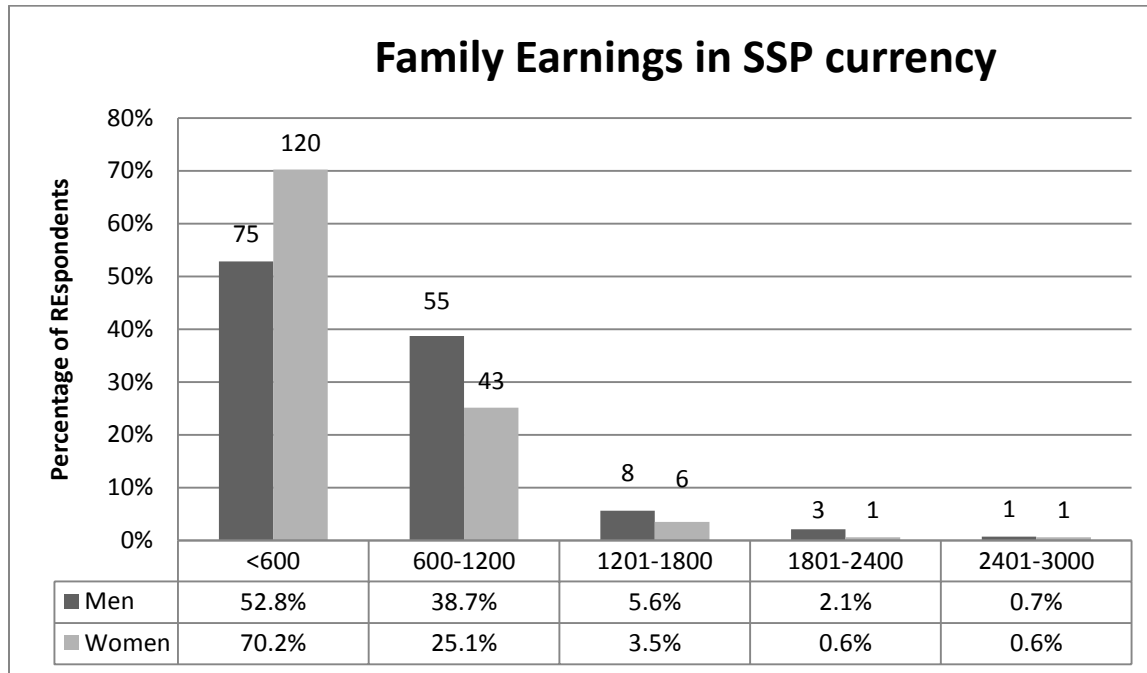


Table B2:

*Individual Earnings in South Sudanese Pounds*

| Monthly Income | Number of Participants | % of Sample |
|----------------|------------------------|-------------|
| <360           | 240                    | 79.2        |
| 600-1200       | 41                     | 13.5        |
| 1201-1800      | 12                     | 4.0         |
| 1801-2400      | 3                      | 1.0         |
| 2401-3000      | 2                      | 2.3         |

Figure B2: Individual Earnings by Gender

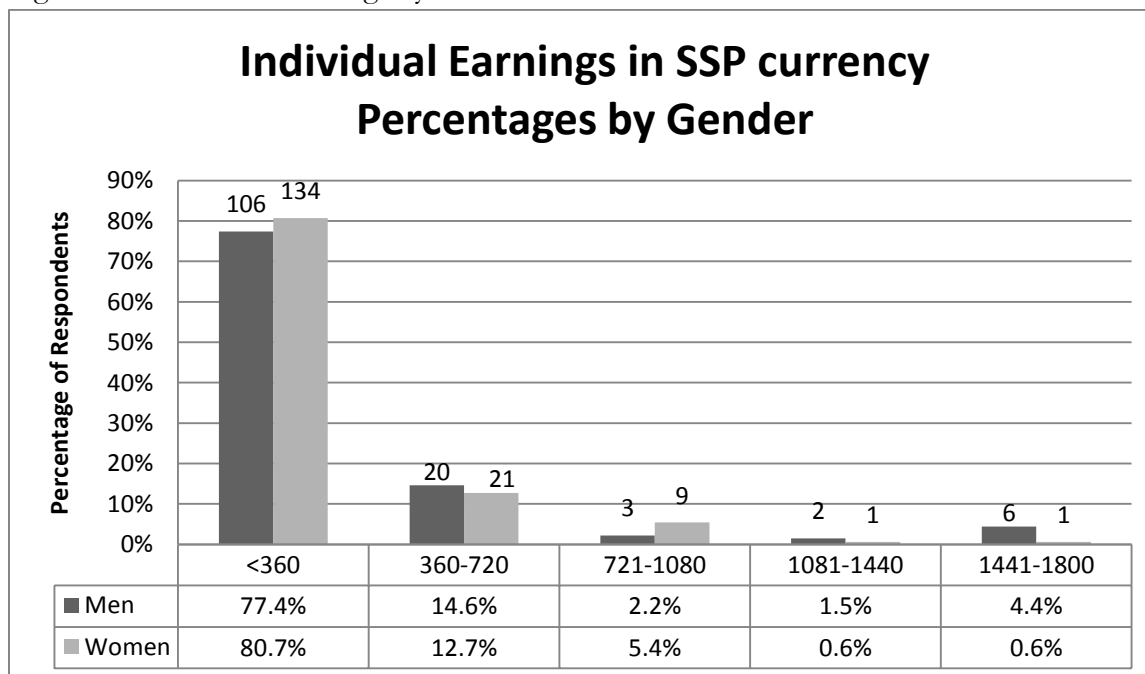


Figure B3: Property Loss

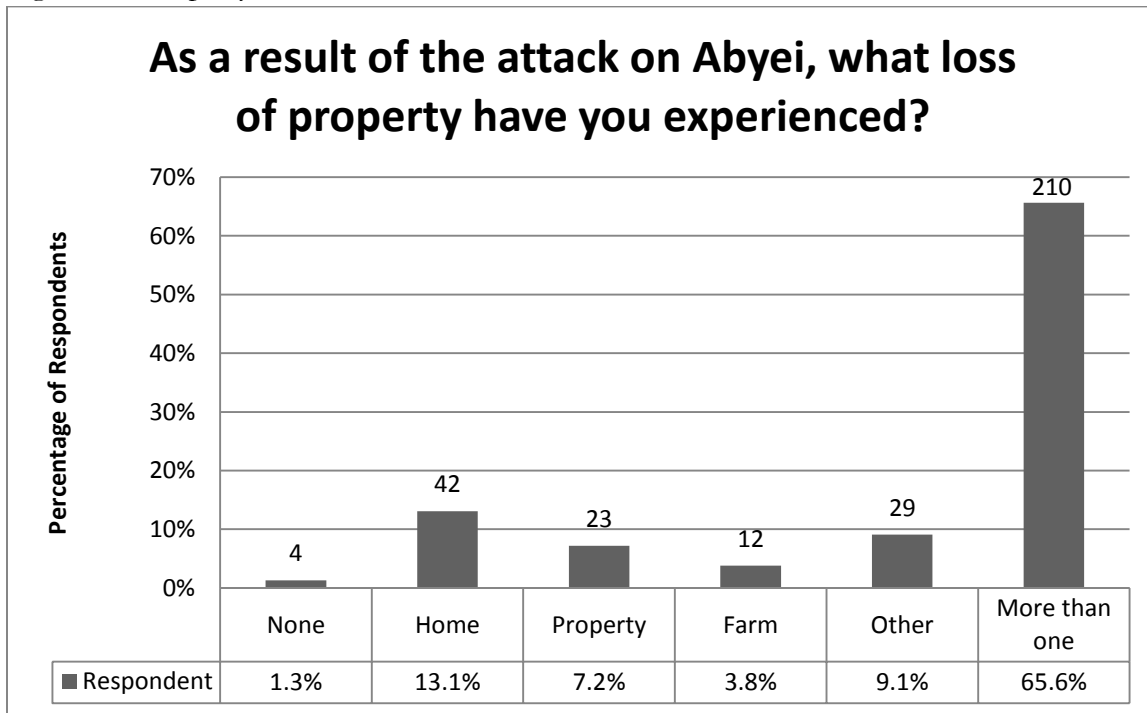


Figure B4: Loss of Property Associated with Livelihood

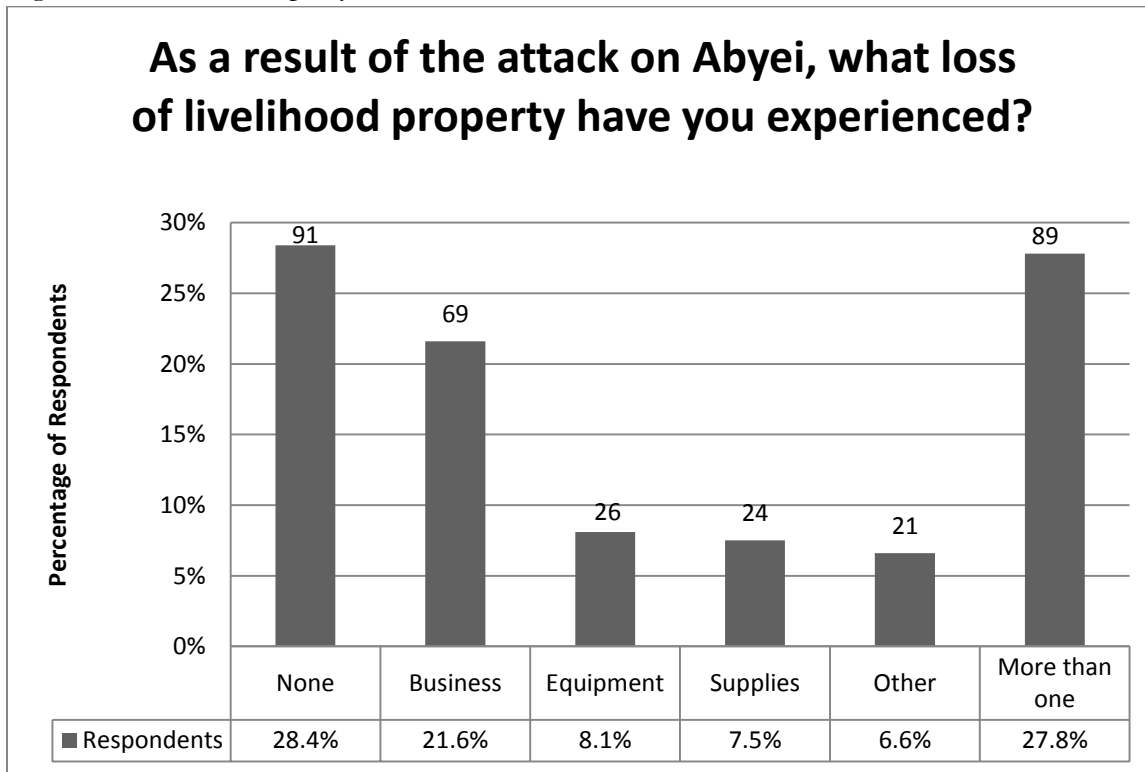
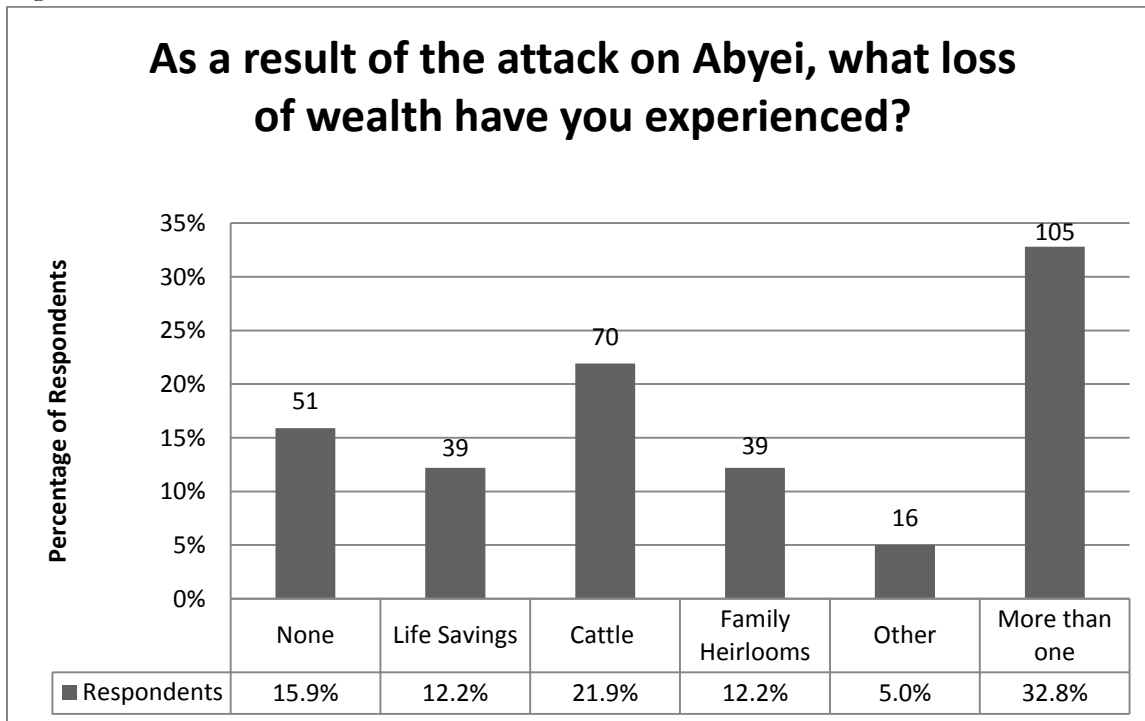


Figure B5: Loss of Wealth





## Appendix C: Physical Conditions

Table C1: Types of Shelter

| <i>Shelter</i>              |                       |             |  |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|--|
| Type of Shelter             | Number of Respondents | % of Sample |  |
| Shack                       | 16                    | 5.1         |  |
| Racuba                      | 259                   | 82.8        |  |
| Tukul                       | 27                    | 8.6         |  |
| More than 1 type of shelter | 11                    | 3.5         |  |
| Total                       | 313                   | 100         |  |

Table C2: Child Illness and Injury

| <i>As a Result on the Attack on Abyei, Did Any of Your Children Become Sick or Injured?</i> |                       |             |  |
|---|-----------------------|-------------|--|
| Response  | Number of Respondents | % of Sample |  |
| Yes   | 114                   | 36.1        |  |
| No  | 139                   | 44.         |  |
| Do not have children  | 63                    | 19.9        |  |
| Total   | 316                   | 100         |  |

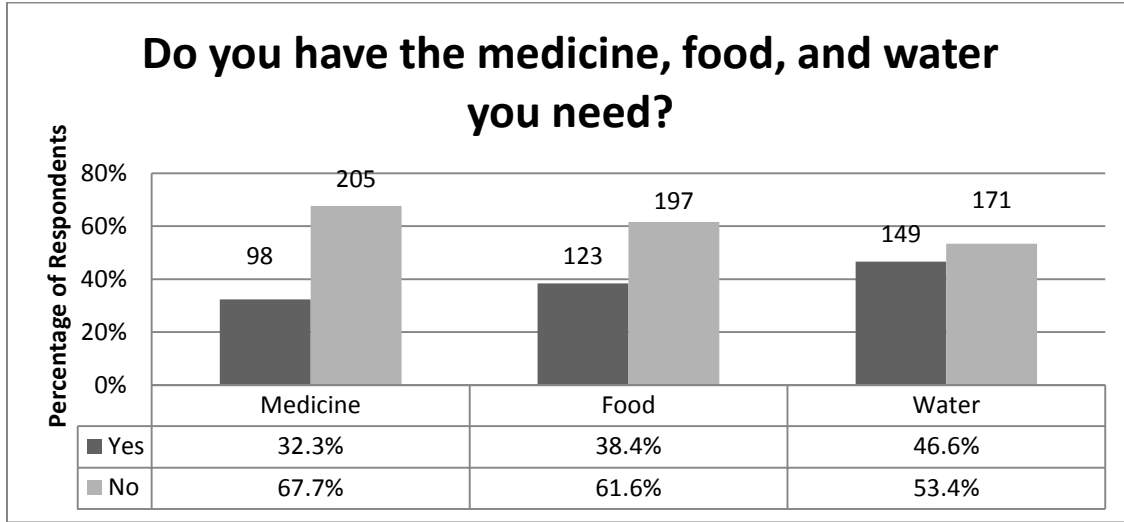
Table C3: Individual Illness and Injury

| <i>Individuals Who Became Ill or Injured as a Result of the Attack</i> |                        |             |  |
|--|------------------------|-------------|--|
| Response   | Number of Participants | % of sample |  |
| Men  | 62                     | 37.8        |  |
| Women  | 102                    | 62.2        |  |
| Total  | 164                    | 100         |  |

Table C4: Illness and Injury by Gender

| <i>As a Result of the Attack on Abyei, Did you Become Sick or Injured ?</i> |            |        |            |        |        |        |
|---|------------|--------|------------|--------|--------|--------|
| Status  | Number     | % of   | Number     | % of   | Total  | % of   |
|   | Responding | Sample | Responding | Sample |        |        |
|   | Yes        |        | No         |        | Number | Sample |
| Men   | 62         | 48.8   | 83         | 57.2   | 145    | 45.3   |
| Women   | 102        | 51.2   | 73         | 41.7   | 175    | 54.7   |
| Total   |            |        |            |        | 320    | 100    |

Figure C1: Access to Medicine, Food and Water



## Appendix D: Attitudes

Figure D1: Outlook on Peace Talks

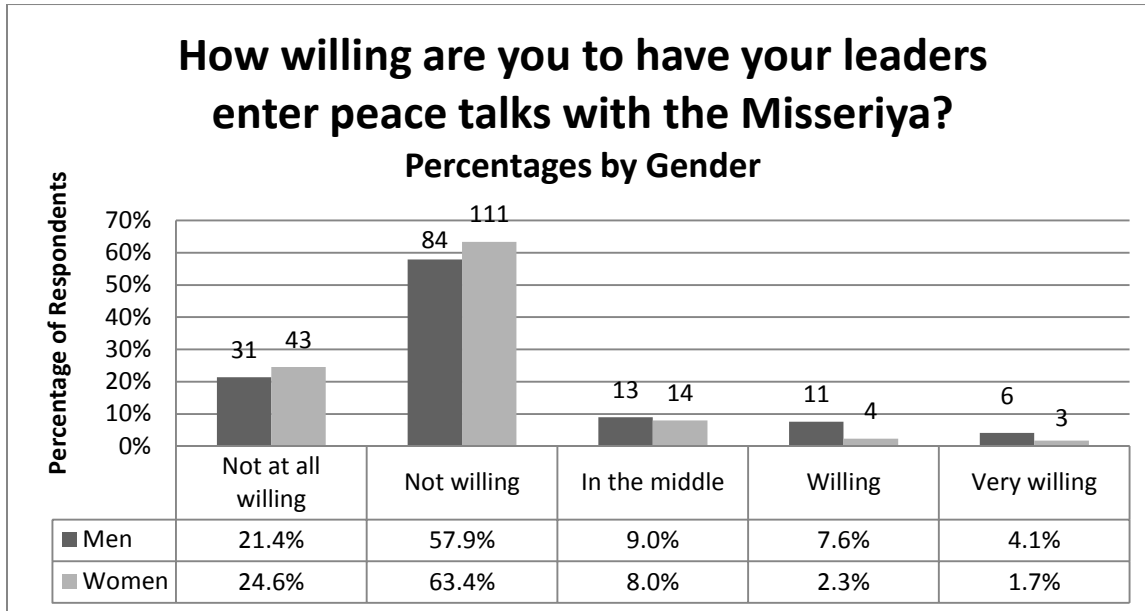


Figure D2: Willingness to Forgive

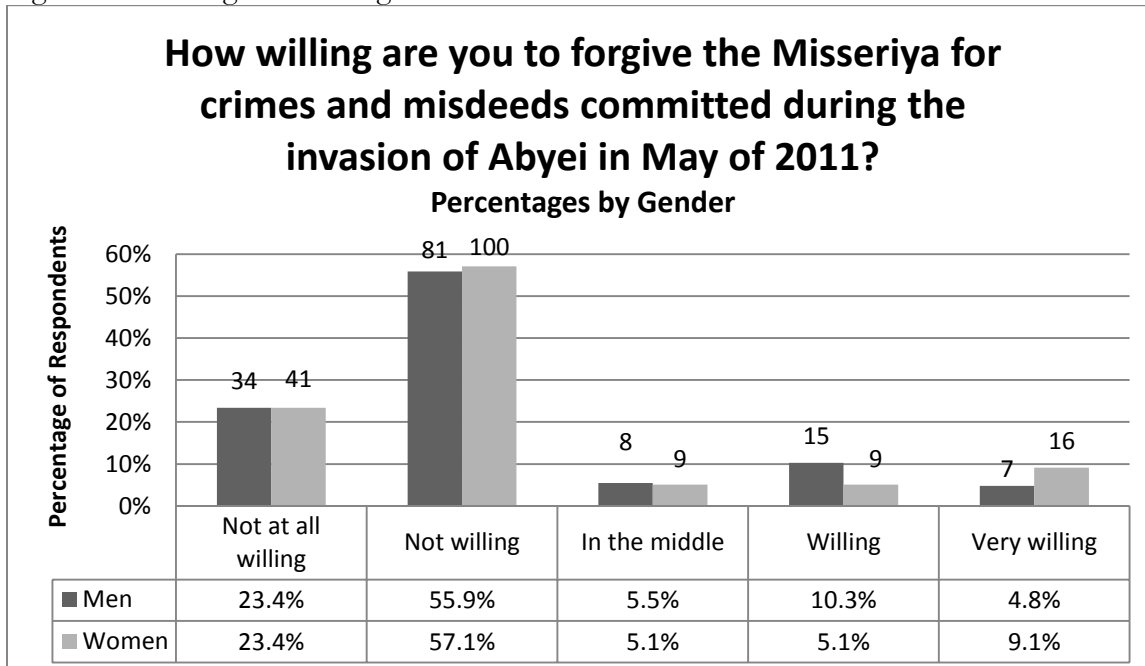


Figure D3: Willingness to Engage in Trade

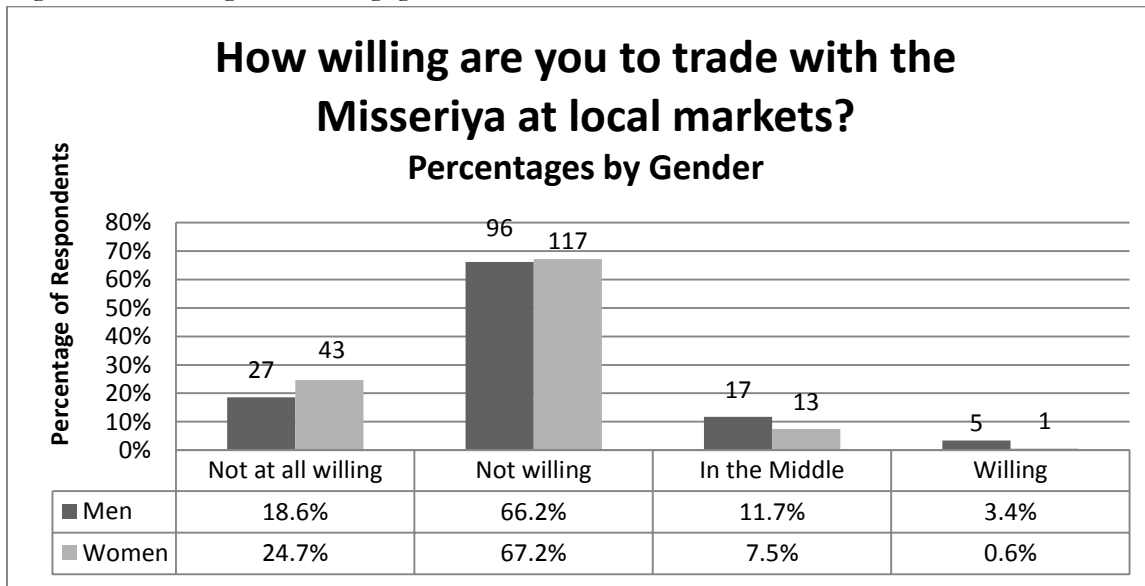


Figure D4: Outlook Regarding Seasonal Migration of Misseriya Nomads

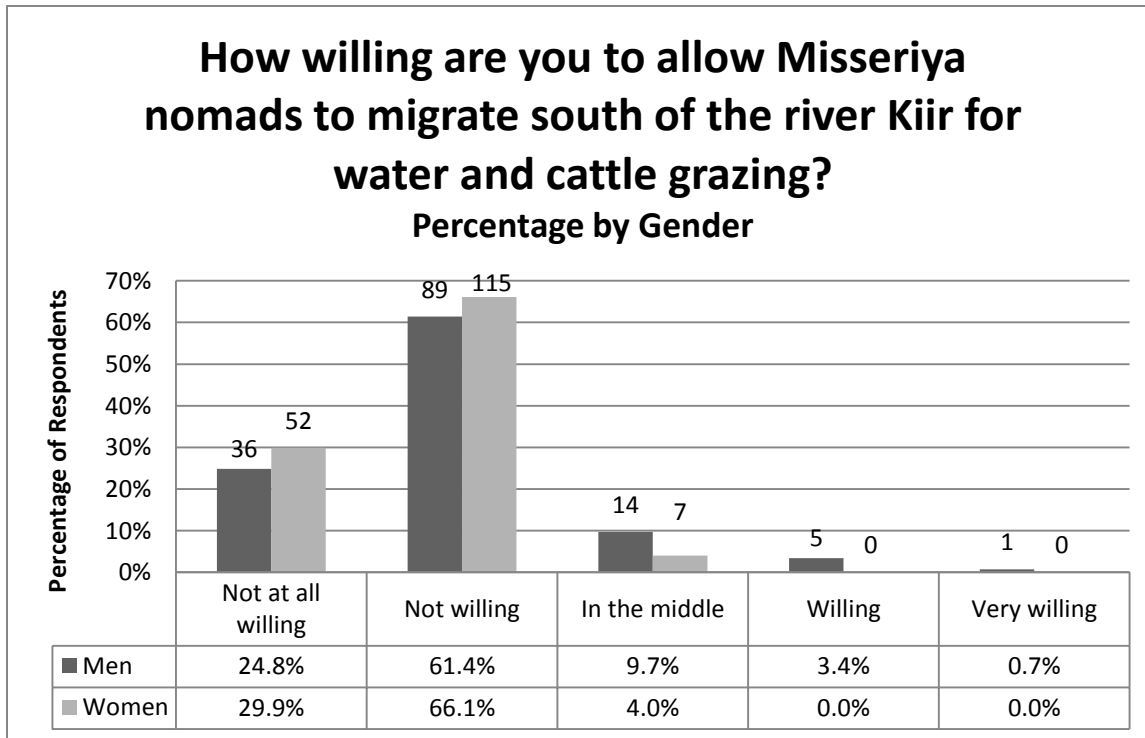


Figure D5: Outlook Regarding Peaceful Resolution of the Abyei Conflict

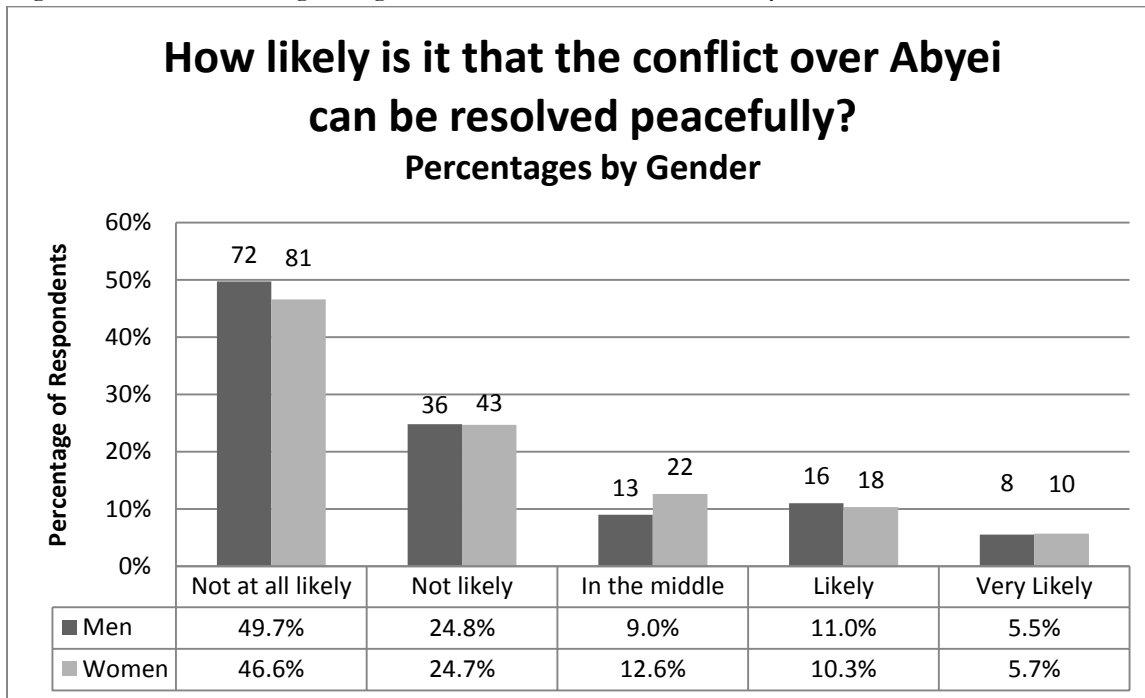
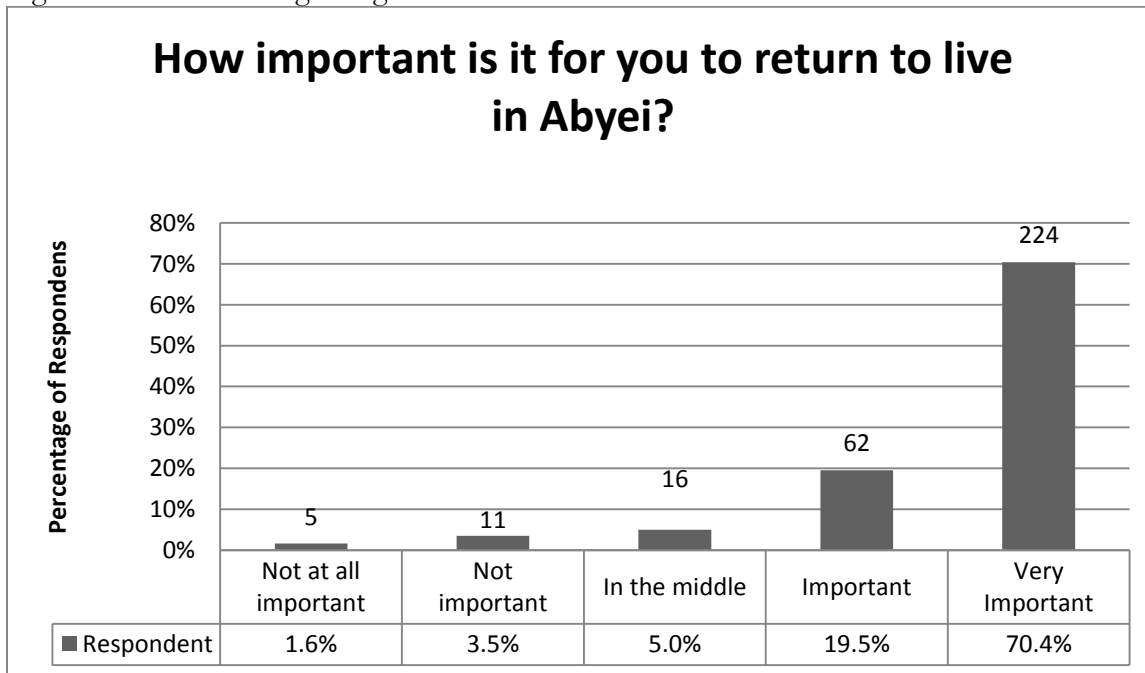
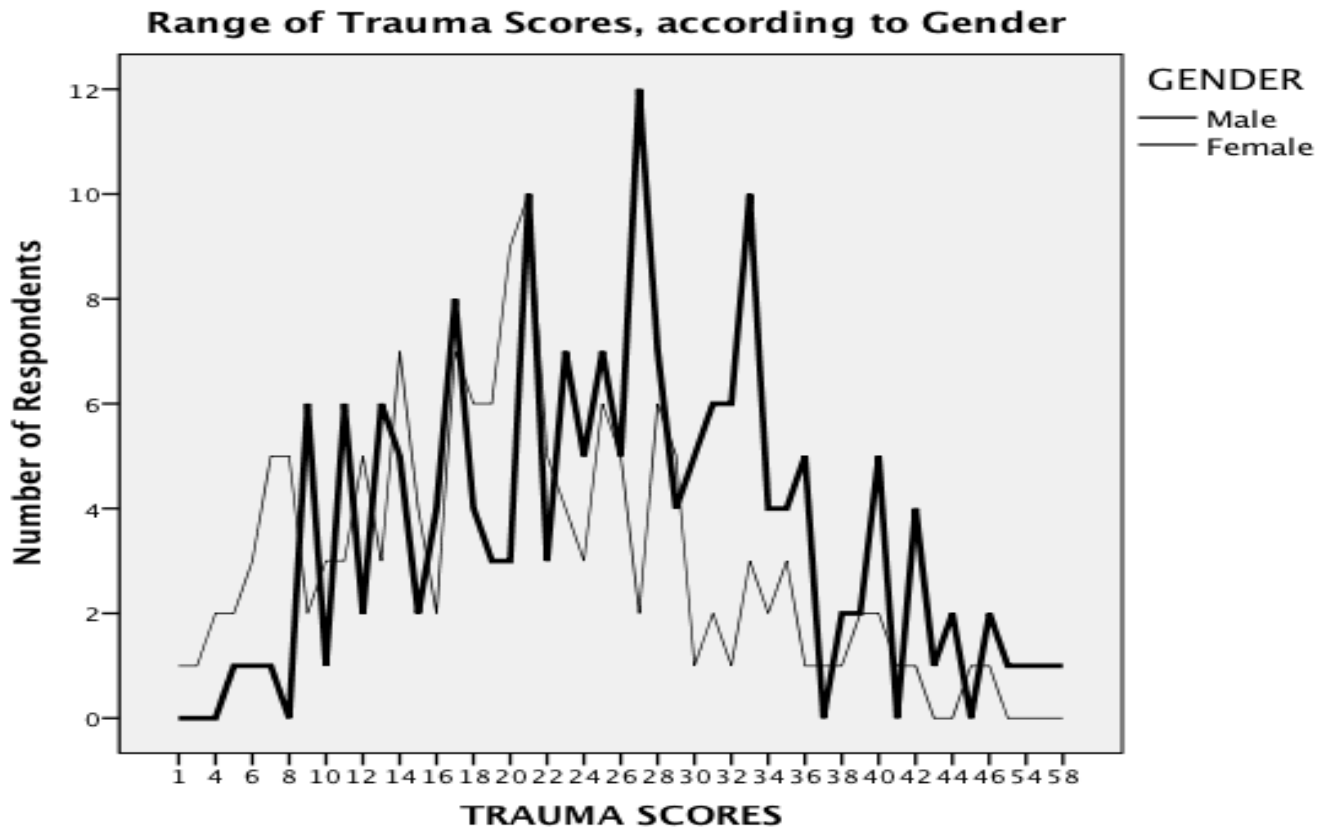


Figure D6: Outlook Regarding the Return



## Appendix E: Psychological Conditions

Figure E1: PTSD Scores by Gender



As can be seen, trauma scores for women tend to be higher, particularly after criterion score of 27. Female scores are darker lines.

## Appendix F: Methodology

Data for the findings presented in this paper were collected in two waves, the first in December 2011, and the second in March 2012. These two collection periods are referred to as the preliminary study and the second phase and what follows is a description of their design.

### Preliminary Study

Conducted in December 2011 in Agok, the main goal of this research effort was to identify a usable instrument for the larger planned study, examining trauma and its correlates among persons displaced from Abyei. The preliminary study tested a questionnaire measuring symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome (PTSD), a revised version of the TSC-33 (Briere & Runtz, 1989).

A convenience sample of 90 respondents participated, ranging in age from 19 to 78 years of age. All were Ngok Dinka, and all spoke Dinka and Arabic. No remuneration was promised. The scheduled activities were explained, which included responding to the 40-item questionnaire, playing a structured game, and engaging in a focus group discussion. Participants were informed they could leave at any time they desired. All consented to stay and participate. Questionnaire items were read in English, then Dinka. Two additional translators were able to assist with clarification of questions and response marking for non-literate participants.

Analysis of questionnaire results showed a measurable level of trauma present in the sample with obtained mean item scores above the midpoint of 2 on a scale of 1-4. Additionally, both women and older members of the community experience higher levels of trauma than do men and younger individuals.

### Second Phase

The purpose of this study was to investigate the material, physical and psychological conditions of the IDPs. Of particular interest was whether a relationship existed between their physical and psychological conditions and their belief in the possibility of a peaceful resolution to the Abyei conflict. Their views regarding the Misseriya were also of interest. Demographic data, such as income, education, possessions, injuries, property losses and family losses were collected to help explain findings obtained.

### Methods

*Participants.* The 320 participants who participated in the research interviews were recruited from six general areas south of the river Kiir, in and around Agok. All were IDPs from different areas of Abyei, and some additionally were returnees from Sudan, who arrived to settle in Abyei shortly before they were driven from the town at the hands of Sudanese from the north. Efforts were made to select participants in a “random” manner, by having enumerators approach potential participants in each of the six areas of Agok, according to desired gender and age categories. This “stratification” was done in order to capture more of the demographic variation of the wider Ngok Dinka population. The IDP population in the six areas south of the river Kiir represent a mixture of those displaced, as they are haphazardly settled in their places of displacement and not according to their section of the Ngok Dinka population<sup>27</sup>.

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<sup>27</sup> There are 9 sections of the Ngok Dinka.

*Instrument.* Scoring concerns with the instrument used to measure PTSD in the first study prompted the use of another measure. The instrument used to measure degree of PTSD symptomatology in this study was the Screen for Posttraumatic Stress Symptoms (SPTSS), created by Eve Carlson (2001) of the National Center for PTSD. This instrument was selected because the language used appeared more straightforward and easier to translate than the original measure, suggesting the questions would be more easily understood by respondents. The number of items employed to assess PTSD was also reduced from 40 to 17, and were based directly on the symptom criteria for PTSD delineated in the DSM-IV (American Psychiatric Association, 2000). The length of the survey was important, because with the numerous demographic, trauma-exposure, income, possession, education, personal injury/loss, and attitudinal measures, the instrument contained 115 items, a concern for an oral interview intended to be administered in 30 minutes or less. This instrument was translated from English into Arabic, and back-translated prior to administration.

*Procedure.* The lead researcher led a team of one data manager from Juba, a lead recruiter/supervisor and 10 enumerators from Agok. The interviews were conducted in Arabic, that being the language with which respondents would be most familiar since childhood.

Respondents were not paid in any way to participate. Those who were available and willing were asked to take 30 minutes of their time to share information that would enable others to know of their situation. Most approached in this manner complied. The enumerators sought people based on the demographic criteria of age and gender. Each of the six areas contributed participants in all the four age groups (young, adult, middle-age, elder) and of both genders. In practice, the interview took an average 15 minutes to conduct. Enumerators expressed no difficulties regarding duration, or language used.

## **Results**

*Instrument scoring.* A comparison was made between the SPTSS and a very similar instrument, the PTSD Checklist-Civilian Version (PCL-C). The 17 items of this self-report measure, like the SPTSS, correspond to the symptoms associated with PTSD as described in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition* (American Psychiatric Association, 2000). The PCL-C had been rejected in favor of the SPTSS due to language concerns. However, the 17 items of the PCL-C map directly onto the 17 items used in the SPTSS, suggesting the scoring would be similar. This is helpful, because the scoring scheme for the PCL-C is clearer, and the instrument has been used more widely in populations similar to the one in our sample (Pham, Weinstein, & Longman, 2004; Vinck, Pham, Stover, & Weinstein, 2007). Its psychometric properties have also received wider validation than the SPTSS.

Although the two instruments address the same DSM-IV criteria, they use slightly different language. Where the SPTSS states “I don’t feel like doing things that I used to like doing,” the PCL-C will say “Loss of interest in activities that you used to enjoy?” Or the SPTSS version will say “I can’t remember much about bad things that have happened to me,” whereas the PCL-C asks “Trouble remembering important parts of a stressful experience from the past?” Each of the 17 questions is identical in content to one another, and to DSM-IV criteria, yet the wording varies in minor ways.

The PCL-C scoring method is useful in its straightforward approach. It uses two methods, the first of which is summing the scores. The PCL-C items offer a choice of response from 1-5 where the SPTSS item scoring ranges from 0-4. Thus, total scores obtained on the PCL-C can range from 17



to 85. This is exactly 17 points greater than the highest possible score on the SPTSS, 68 (the SPTSS scale runs from 0-68). Researchers using the PCL-C state that they “used a cutoff of 44 for meeting symptom criteria of PTSD,” (Pham, et al, 2004, p. 604). Accordingly, subtracting 17 from 44 yields a score of 27, a reasonable threshold for our sample. Using this indicator, i.e., an overall score of 27 as indicative of meeting the criteria of PTSD, we examined our outcomes.

*Trauma.* In this study PTSD scores are said to assess the level of trauma. Of the 320 respondents (175 female, 145 male) assessed in the survey, using the cutoff score of 27 identified by the PCL-C, 37.8 % of our respondents would be assessed as traumatized. Thus the overall number of individuals in the sample of 320 that would be classified as traumatized by clinical standards is 121, comprising 23.4% of the men (n=36), and 48.6% of the women (n=85). This assessment is in line with what was observed in the focus groups of the preliminary study, members of which expressed a consistent and insistent concern for the mental health of their family members, friends, and neighbors.

The relationship of key variables and trauma, i.e., trauma defined as PTSD and measured using the SPTSS, was evaluated with standard linear regression. Income, literacy, age, and gender were entered into the equation. The variance accounted for by these factors was 15% ( $R^2=.147$ ),  $F(4, 298) = 12.86$ ,  $p < .001$ . All four predictors were significant, decreasing in magnitude starting with gender (GENDER;  $\beta = .22$ ;  $p < .001$ ), income (EARNWHAT;  $\beta = -.16$ ,  $p < .004$ ), literacy (LANGREAD;  $\beta = -.14$ ,  $p < .031$ ), and age (AGE;  $\beta = .13$ ,  $p < .033$ ). To summarize the findings below:

- Gender is a predictor of susceptibility to trauma. Women are more prone to PTSD than are men.
- Income is negatively correlated with PTSD. The lower the income the higher rate of PTSD.
- Literacy is negatively correlated with PTSD. The lower the level of literacy the higher the rate of PTSD.
- Age is positively correlated with PTSD. The older the individual, the higher the rate of PTSD.

*Belief in the possibility of a peaceful resolution to conflict.* Standard linear regression was used to assess the ability of income, age, gender, literacy, trauma and attitudes toward the Misseriya to predict degree of belief in a peaceful resolution to the Abyei conflict. Attitudes toward the Misseriya were captured in three measures, one a composite of two questions asking whether one was willing to let the Misseriya a) trade in the Abyei area, and b) graze their cattle in the Abyei area. The second measure asked the degree to which one would be willing to forgive the Misseriya for their misdeeds during the recent invasion, and the third measure inquired about the degree to which one would be willing to have his or her leaders talk with the Misseriya leaders.

The total variance explained by the model as a whole was 9% ( $R^2=.087$ ),  $F(8, 291) = 3.45$ ,  $p < .001$ . The three measures reaching statistical significance were income (EARNWHAT;  $\beta = .13$ ,  $p < .031$ ), willingness to forgive the Misseriya (MESFORGV;  $\beta = .16$ ,  $p < .009$ ), and willingness to have leaders talk with the Misseriya (MESTALK;  $\beta = .14$ ,  $p < .028$ ). These results indicate:

- Higher levels of income among the Ngok Dinka are positively correlated to a more optimistic outlook concerning the prospect for peace. The higher the income the more favorable the outlook.
- The more favorable the individual's views toward the forgiving the Misseriya and having their

leaders talk with Misseriya leaders, the more optimistic the outlook regarding the probability for peaceful resolution.

In order to take a closer look at the effect of trauma upon belief in the possibility of a peaceful resolution to the Abyei conflict, the data set was split by gender for separate analysis using the same variables. In this analysis for males, 11% of the variance was accounted for ( $R^2=.113$ ),  $F(7, 129) = 2.36$ ,  $p < .027$ . For men, the only significant predictor of belief in peaceful resolution was willingness to let leaders talk (MESTALK;  $\beta = .25$ ,  $p < .012$ ). For women, again 11% ( $R^2=.109$ ) of the variance was explained,  $F(7, 155) = 2.71$ ,  $p < .011$ . For women, however, two factors were significant predictors of belief in peaceful resolution to the Abyei conflict, trauma (TRAUMASC;  $\beta = -.17$ ,  $p < .03$ ), and willingness to forgive the Misseriya, (MESFORGV;  $\beta = .20$ ,  $p < .016$ ). In this split analysis, differing results were obtained for men and women, due perhaps to the greater degree of trauma found among the women. This split analysis suggests:

- For men, willingness to allow their leaders to talk to one another is indicative of a stronger belief that peaceful resolution to conflict in Abyei is possible.
- For women, trauma and belief in peaceful resolution to conflict are inversely related, such that the greater the trauma, the less likely to believe in the possibility of peaceful resolution.
- For women, willingness to forgive the Misseriya is indicative of a stronger belief in the possibility of a peaceful resolution to conflict.

*Attitudes toward the Misseriya.* Attitudes toward the Misseriya were examined by combining the attitudinal variables of willingness to let the Misseriya graze, trade, and have their leaders talk with the Ngok Dinka leaders into one composite variable. This was possible because the Cronbach's Alpha for the combined three variables achieved a reasonable reliability of  $\alpha = .65$ . Thus predictors of attitudes toward the Misseriya were gauged using standard linear regression to examine the influence of literacy, age, income, trauma and gender. The overall model explained 10% ( $R^2=.097$ ) of the variance,  $F(5, 295) = 6.37$ ,  $p < .001$ . Three of the five predictors attained statistical significance, with literacy having the largest influence education (LANGREAD;  $\beta = .20$ ,  $p < .003$ ), followed by age (AGE;  $\beta = -.14$ ,  $p < .024$ ), and gender (GENDER;  $\beta = -.14$ ,  $p < .023$ ). From these outcomes we see that:

- Higher levels of literacy are related to more favorable attitudes toward the Misseriya.
- Age is negatively correlated with attitudes toward the Misseriya. The lower the age the more positive the views toward the Misseriya.
- Ngok Dinka women show more negative attitudes toward the Misseriya than do Ngok Dinka men.

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