



SPECIAL REPORT

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ABOUT THE REPORT

This is one in a series of United States Institute of Peace special reports on state building in the Republic of South Sudan following its creation on July 9, 2011. Each report analyzes an aspect of the state-building challenge and recommends priorities for the government of South Sudan. This report assesses the situation, priorities, and expectations of South Sudan's massive youth population in the context of building the new nation. Drawing from field interviews with youth, adults, and government and nongovernment officials in the capital, Juba, the mainly pastoralist oil-rich state of Unity, and the mainly agricultural state of Western Equatoria, this report found that strikingly conservative cultural norms are mixing with new social and economic changes to create a host of pressing challenges. The report highlights the impact of dramatic dowry (bride price) inflation on youth and finds that it is stimulating rises in insecurity, crime, and population growth while intensifying threats against and control over female youth.

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Marc Sommers and Stephanie Schwartz

Dowry and Division

Youth and State Building in South Sudan

Summary

- Most South Sudanese youth are undereducated and underemployed, and their priorities and perspectives are largely unknown. To address this critical knowledge gap, the authors conducted field research between April and May 2011 with youth, adults, and government and nongovernment officials in Juba and two South Sudanese states.
- The increasing inability of male youth to meet rising dowry (bride price) demands was the main research finding. Unable to meet these demands, many male youth enlist in militias, join cattle raids, or seek wives from different ethnic groups or countries.
- Skyrocketing dowry demands have negatively and alarmingly affected female youth. They are routinely viewed as property that can generate family wealth.
- Potent new postwar identities involving youth returning from Khartoum, refugee asylum countries, and those who never left South Sudan, are stimulating hostility and conflict.
- Excess demand on government jobs, widespread reports of nepotism in government hiring practices, cultural restrictions against many kinds of work, and a general lack of entrepreneurial vision are fueling an exceptionally challenging youth employment situation.
- Gang activities continue to thrive in some urban centers in South Sudan. They are reportedly dominated by youth with connections to government officials and by orphans.
- While most undereducated youth highlighted dowry and marriage as their primary concerns, members of the elite youth minority emphasized vocational training and scholarships for higher education.
- While South Sudanese youth view their government as the primary source of education, jobs, and hope, the government of South Sudan does not appear poised to provide substantial support to vital youth priorities related to dowry, employment, education, and training.
- The government of South Sudan and its international partners need to proactively address nonelite youth priorities. They must find ways to cap dowry demands, protect female youth, and support orphan youth, in addition to expanding quality education, job training, and English language training.

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Introduction

The world's newest nation has one of the world's youngest populations.¹ Nearly all South Sudanese youth are profoundly undereducated and underemployed, which deeply affects the government's ability to wrestle with the mechanics of nationhood. Yet youth priorities and perspectives have thus far remained almost entirely unknown.

Drawing from field research between April and May 2011, this report addresses this knowledge gap by assessing the situation of South Sudanese youth at the dawn of independence. It features the central priorities and factors that shape youth lives, which extend from marriage dowry (bride price) costs and divisive new identities to an array of other influences.² It also highlights youth expectations of and relations with their new government, with the questionable status and impact of youth civil society as part of the mix. With an eye to domestic and international actors, the report concludes with a set of recommendations for more effectively addressing the priorities of South Sudanese youth.³

Research Methods and Youth Definitions in South Sudan

The authors' three weeks of field research featured interviews with ordinary South Sudanese youth in three locations: urban and periurban neighborhoods in the nation's capital, Juba; Unity State (Bentiu, the state capital, and its sister town, Rubkona); and Western Equatoria State (the capital city, Yambio, and a rural village). The main interview themes were the situation, priorities, and expectations of youth. The field-research team conducted extensive interviews with youth; adults; South Sudanese government officials at the national, state, and county levels; international agency officials; and members of South Sudanese civil society, particularly youth groups. Significant constraints on research time in the field and the consequent limitation to three of ten states mean that follow-up research on youth concerns in other parts of South Sudan is required. That said, the main findings here were broadly discussed and confirmed by many government and nongovernment officials.

The definition of "youth" in South Sudan is extremely broad and highly contested. Some respondents stated that being a youth started just after puberty and local manhood initiation ceremonies (around age thirteen); others said that being a youth started at age eighteen. The upper limit was just as contested. One official said that his international agency defined youth as up to age forty; however, a forty-six-year-old senior government official stated that "youth are the majority in the government, including myself." He said that a person was a youth up to age fifty.⁴ Despite these definitional differences, men and women of all ages agreed that youth has almost always meant male youth exclusively.

The South Sudanese Context

At the time of writing, serious security threats understandably remained a government preoccupation. Although a violent standoff in the disputed territory of Abyei had been deescalated, fighting had erupted in the northern Sudanese states of Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile. Reports claim that the Khartoum government has committed egregious human rights violations against Southern Kordofan's Nuba population.⁵ Within the new borders of South Sudan, the government of South Sudan (GOSS) is also combating an array of rebel militia forces led by defiant South Sudanese former military leaders.⁶ Although the GOSS and Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A), the dominant political and military groups in South Sudan, regularly claim that Khartoum is providing rebel leaders with direct support,⁷ the Small Arms Survey reported that "there is no independent evidence to support any of these claims."⁸ Khartoum also allegedly supports Uganda's longtime rebel force,

the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), which regularly attacks South Sudan and abducts youth. In response, male youth from the villages and periurban communities that the LRA attacks have organized into militias, known as the Arrow Boys. The Arrow Boys man the front lines against Kalashnikov-armed LRA soldiers, primarily with bows and arrows, spears, and knives. A veteran Arrow Boy reported that while some also use guns, "the problem is [a lack of] bullets." Many Arrow Boys reported that skirmishes are frequent and deadly.

As violence continues across much of South Sudan, a quarter or more of the civilian population of more than 8 million has been on the move.⁹ Since 2005, approximately 2.5 million South Sudanese IDPs have returned.¹⁰ By far the most popular destination is Juba, where the estimated population doubled between 2005, when the historic peace agreement with the Khartoum government was signed, and 2010, when Juba's population stood at roughly a half million.¹¹

Among the substantial challenges before South Sudan is building the government's legitimacy. A high-level government official summed up the situation: "Up to now, the government [of South Sudan] could say that we're a substate of the North. But now we have a high degree of control over our resources. So if we cannot meet the aspirations and expectations of people, what will we do? Whom can we blame it on?" The official cited nepotism as a common senior official response to the government's expanded authority and responsibility. They "become entrenched and build power bases," he stated.

Other indications of government mismanagement, including corruption and impunity, proved similarly commonplace. Indeed, the practice of South Sudan-led governance remains fluid. Many basic policies and standards are reportedly nonexistent or "creatively" applied. For example, one international official stated that the police force in one state contained many "child police," that many legal cases are farmed out to traditional courts, that rape suspects are routinely jailed in the same cell with rape victims, and that the relatives of crime suspects are regularly arrested if the suspect cannot be found.¹²

Available statistical information paints a similarly startling picture. Just over half of the population lives below the poverty line,¹³ one in seven children dies before age five, and an astounding 92 percent of women are illiterate.¹⁴ School achievement rates for youth are low: only 4 percent of males ages fourteen to seventeen and 2 percent of their female counterparts are in secondary school,¹⁵ and every vocational training and technical education school in South Sudan was "shut down for all or part" of the recent civil war.¹⁶

Female youth are disproportionately disadvantaged due, in part, to the high prevalence of early marriage: the 2008 South Sudan census estimates that two in five girls marry before age eighteen and 11 percent marry before age fifteen.¹⁷ An overlapping high priority group is orphaned youth. Although no available statistics or estimates could be found, field research strongly suggests that the population is significant, particularly in cities. One reason for the absence of statistical data may be the local definition of an orphan: someone who has lost his or her father, even if the mother remains alive. Interviews with many youth, particularly those in Juba, highlighted the sweeping and negative impact of the absence of a father, and even more so of both parents.

The Women's Refugee Commission (WRC) report on the situation of South Sudanese youth sheds light on an array of promising nonformal education programs for out-of-school youth. These include programs for accelerated learning, radio instruction, and pastoralist youth.¹⁸ The report also finds severely limited training and employment prospects. While there has been an uptick in training interventions in South Sudan since 2005, the utility of these programs is questionable. The report notes that vocational training tends "to be based on trainee preferences rather than on labor market research."¹⁹ Perhaps not surprisingly, WRC found that training providers face not only high illiteracy among trainees but also a lack of "employability skills," including the ability to keep time, work as part of a team, and communicate effectively.²⁰

WRC highlights the absence of day care as a serious constraint on female youth participation in training programs. The persistence of “social attitudes concerning ‘male’ and ‘female’ professions” further limits female participation.²¹ The report also notes that there have been “very few attempts . . . to link graduates with employment opportunities.”²² A high-level government official cynically remarked that “youth training programs are the solution only for those who get in.”

The Situation and Priorities of Youth in South Sudan

The following research findings strongly suggest that understandings of and approaches to youth priorities in South Sudan require significant revision. Recommendations follow this discussion of findings.

Gender and the Dowry Economy

The most prominent finding about the situation of South Sudanese youth concerns the sculpting impact of the “dowry economy,” which has expansive financial and social significance. Male and female youth must marry to be recognized as adults; however, male youth are under severe pressure to meet escalating dowry costs. High unemployment, low levels of educational accomplishment, and disturbances in trade with Sudan have significantly diminished avenues for economic success. Meanwhile, some entrepreneurs are reportedly generating huge profits from trade in oil, arms, and many other commodities, while even some government officials surmised that government corruption was truly out of hand. Such manifest inequalities directly impact masses of youth and their families through dowry/bride price rates. An unpublished UN report states that dowry prices have grown by 44 percent since the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005.²³

In pastoralist South Sudan, dowries are measured in cattle: “You cannot marry without cows,” one youth explained, “and you cannot be called a man without cows.” In agricultural areas, payments can combine money with cattle or other livestock. There were steady descriptions of a difficult situation getting much worse. “The number of cattle in Unity State is declining,” a male youth in Bentiu explained, “while the price of dowry is going up.” “Dowry is the biggest challenge in Southern Sudan,” an urban male youth stated simply.

Some of those interviewed reported that, instead of negotiating a dowry price down, wealthy men *want* to meet exorbitant demands. The reason given was simple: it provides high public status. “It becomes an ego issue,” a Juba businessperson explained. “The more you pay, the higher the status the husband and his [new] wife receive.” Many claimed that powerful government officials flush with cash were the main cause of dowry price inflation. “People who work for GOSS, they have money,” a twenty-one-year-old male youth in Juba stated, “so when they want to marry a girl, they pay a lot. This makes it more expensive for everyone else.” Others directly link the phenomenon to government corruption. Noted a man of forty-five: “Let’s say I’m a son of a government official. I want to marry a girl, and her parents demand a very high dowry price. My father will now use government money to pay the dowry of his son.”

The desire of parents to profit when their daughters marry contributes to rising dowry prices. This is not necessarily an expression of greed. “Dowry prices are based on market forces,” a longtime foreign resident of South Sudan explained. Parents naturally see it in their interest to maximize their wealth in exchange for marrying off a daughter. One man described the logic that informs high dowry prices: “A daughter has been brought up by her family and is their source of income.” This issue was widely reported and helps escalate dowry demands. “The only property parents have is their daughter,” a county commissioner

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explained. “You give away your daughter for dowry and then you are [financially set].” Fathers in particular are known to command dowry negotiations.

In a postwar environment of reduced capital and limited opportunities for economic advancement, the reliance of many South Sudanese parents on their daughters’ dowries seems to have escalated. One outcome is a strong desire to have more children, as more daughters promise more wealth. A man with five children linked this rationale to why women must marry while they are in their teens: “A girl is called an old lady at age twenty because she cannot bear many children after that. Since she can only give birth until she’s forty-two years old, she can only give birth to eight to ten children [if she is twenty when she marries].”

Polygamy can greatly increase the number of daughters a man has, and thus significantly increase prospects for financial gain. As one in a group of male elders explained, “One of the reasons for polygamy is that when you have ten daughters, each one will give you thirty cows, and they are all for [the father]. So then you have three hundred cows. That is why one marries very many wives: so that you can have very many daughters. If you have a wife who can only give you one child, then you must get another wife.”

Although placing a high economic value on daughters in South Sudan is nothing new, the current situation has created a frightening series of realities for female youth. Widespread economic dependence on dowry and the objectification of women often leave female youth with limited control over their lives. As a government official explained, “Paying dowry for a woman is like slavery. You have no voice before your husband if he pays dowry for you.” Arranged marriages for young girls, moreover, remain common. A high-ranking government official explained that “once girls reach puberty, potential husbands come and apply [to marry them]. If the girl is found with a boyfriend, her family can kill her. If she is impregnated by a boyfriend, she can be beaten to death.”

Some interviewees also noted that high dowries are related to domestic violence. As one female youth interviewed in Bentiu said, “High payment of dowry has increased the pain. [The husband is] paying so many cattle [for you], so he mistreats you.” This mentality also seems to justify adultery committed by husbands.

Caught in a web of severe threat and control, some girls and women reportedly escape by committing suicide. “Sometimes a girl can hang herself because she’s forced to marry a man she doesn’t like,” a government official stated. In Unity State, one female youth explained that young wives who poison themselves are making a rational decision because death allows them “to go to a better life.”

Sky-high dowry rates have devastated male youth, too. Some venture into Uganda or Kenya to marry local women, whose dowry prices are lower. Two veteran international agency officials reported that the Shilluk king has set a dowry limit of ten cows per marriage. As a result, one of them explained, youth from “other tribes seek to marry Shilluk girls because they’re cheaper.” A veteran international agency official stated that “many [South Sudanese] couples in Khartoum can’t return because they were married without dowry there.” Venturing into South Sudan would require the husband to pay dowry to his wife’s family, and many “have no ability to pay.”

Elopement is a common, albeit exceptionally dangerous, alternative to the dowry quandary. One man explained the peril: “If you elope and you’re caught, [the male youth] will be killed.” Another explained, “If the young man doesn’t pay, it is a big problem because daughters are the source of family income.” Stories of male youth who attempted to elope and were captured by the family of their new brides were commonplace and gruesome. One male youth, for example, showed several deep, unhealed scars on his scalp inflicted by his former bride’s male relatives after the pair had eloped. Government officials explained that attempting elopement without paying dowry is a serious offense often punishable by long

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prison sentences, brutal beatings, and even death. A young couple that attempts to elope must find safe haven if they hope to elude such punishment.

For male youth, one such haven is armed militia groups. One youth explained how protection from punishment is traded for participation in violent campaigns: “The militias give [a male youth] a gun. They say it’s a free ticket: help the militia capture this town. After that, with those guns, the youth raid cattle and kill people.” A government official provided an alternative motive for joining militia groups: “Some youth are joining the rebels [militias] to loot properties so they can marry.” A recent Norwegian People’s aid report supports indications in the authors’ interview data that some young men join armed gangs, at least in part, because they believe it will help them pay dowries.²⁴

While cattle raiding is common in South Sudan, reports of recent raids suggest that they are increasingly deadly—for example, more than six hundred people were estimated to have been killed in a raid in Jonglei state in August 2011.²⁵ Field research for this report suggests that the causes for such raids extend beyond immediate factors like poverty, water shortages, and overgrazing, as the Minority Rights Group has reported.²⁶ It is possible if not probable that some well-armed youth are motivated to raid cattle to help them pay dowry and marry. Therefore, initiatives to hold meetings with leaders of conflicting ethnic groups/tribes may have limited effectiveness.²⁷ The research team found little evidence that ethnic/tribal leaders or high-level government officials, many of whom presumably have plenty of daughters and cattle, are concerned about addressing the relationship between cattle raids and dowry.²⁸

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Divided Youth

After the long civil war, youth are returning to South Sudan. From their long years of exile comprising much or all of their childhoods, youth are importing different cultural orientations and languages. Now in a new country that many have scarcely known, they have been thrown into a weak economy and a horrid job market with virtually no relevant training or educational opportunities. Starkly different past experiences and the highly competitive present have combined to inspire three new identities for South Sudanese youth.

The first identity group includes those who remained in South Sudan during the civil war. The next consists of internally displaced persons (IDPs) who fled to Sudan’s capital city, Khartoum. They are known as “Khartoumers” or, disparagingly, as “Jalaba” (Arabs). The third group, the so-called diaspora youth, includes those who lived as refugees in East Africa or beyond. Calling them “East Africans” is provocative because the name suggests that they are no longer South Sudanese.

Although Khartoumers endured a life colored by state intimidation and often extremely difficult living circumstances, many came to see themselves as permanently urban.²⁹ Illustrative of this orientation, a female youth who was an IDP in Khartoum explained why she had migrated to Juba upon her return to South Sudan: “I’m used to Khartoum. Juba is the most similar to Khartoum. So I had to come here.” A religious leader in South Sudan noted that many IDP returnees “may go back to Khartoum. Life isn’t easy there, but they’re used to it.” Nonetheless, the idea of returning to Khartoum is, in his words, “politically sensitive. The [South Sudan] government doesn’t want that and is actively preventing it. So people are going back discretely.” Many IDPs who have lived in Khartoum have become accustomed to recurring instances of government coercion. In response, they found ways to assert a southern identity and resist government mandates, such as by altering the national curricula.³⁰ At the same time, reliance on the Arabic language—Khartoum’s lingua franca—has proved difficult to shed.

The reliance of Khartoumers on Arabic during this early postwar period has opened the door for other South Sudanese to call them Jalaba. It is a provocative and disparaging term.

A male youth entrepreneur who had returned from East Africa illustrated the social distance and resentment that some youth made plain: “You can clearly tell a Khartoumer. They dress and act different. They speak Arabic and have [an] Arabic culture. There’s a feeling that they are the ones who betray us [as spies for Sudanese Arabs]. Some people used the war [with northern Sudan] to benefit themselves.” Asserting that Khartoumer returnees were allied with Sudanese Arabs proved a common view among diaspora youth who were interviewed.

Two female youth who had returned from Khartoum explained another dimension of the return of IDPs to South Sudan. In Sudan, brewing or drinking alcohol is illegal. Despite the danger, many IDPs drank alcohol while in Khartoum, and IDP women, they explained, turned to brewing beer to make money. Once back in South Sudan, some Khartoum returnees reported that many male and female youth returnees eagerly turned to alcohol. A female youth of twenty-eight explained that “when the Khartoumer youth come back, they find that there are no restrictions to drinking alcohol in South Sudan. That is why most of these young men move to bars, where they can drink a lot.” Other returnees said that some female youth are consuming large amounts of alcohol as well. Some female youth and women returnees have picked up beer brewing in South Sudan, too.

Many of the diaspora youth arriving from Kenya, Uganda, or other refugee asylum nations face a different set of challenges than their counterparts returning from Khartoum. A group of diaspora youth contrasted how they are seen with how Khartoumers are viewed: “Those from Khartoum brought an Arab mind. In the Arab world, they say that English is a colonial language. So they just consider you not [truly] educated. . . . those who know English are [considered] foreigners.”

The “foreigner” label characterizes the returning diaspora youth as importers of an alien, dangerous, and threatening culture. This is underscored by the remarks of a male youth who was a refugee returnee. Venturing to the village of his relatives, he has to confront male youth who had remained in South Sudan during the civil war: “They hate the Arabs and they hate those who [returned] from East Africa. They could beat or even kill me if I walk around. They believe that they suffered more than me. I look like an intruder to them.”

As a South Sudanese researcher remarked, “What young people say in Juba is, ‘The reason why we’re not getting jobs is because all the Kenyans and Ugandans have taken the jobs from us.’” The Kenyans and Ugandans he referred to were actually diaspora youth who had attended school in East African nations.³¹ Diaspora youth who are fluent in English and have degrees from respected foreign institutions are thought to have taken all of the jobs with international donors, the United Nations, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), which are considered high status and lucrative. English-speaking former refugees appear to also dominate civil society jobs. Finally, following the establishment of English as South Sudan’s official working language, many interviewees contended that diaspora youth had gained a clear advantage in securing government positions. The perception of diaspora youth as a threat to other youth was a striking field research finding. A South Sudanese official with a UN agency illustrates this perspective: “Changing the [South Sudan government] system into English is throwing a lot of people out [of work]. Even if you have a master’s degree, you can’t get a job if you don’t know English. That’s why the East Africans [that is, refugee returnees] are taking over.”

Diaspora youth also stand out because of the clothes they wear. In a place where conservative dress is the norm, especially for girls and women, there was much talk about diaspora girls and female youth wearing the “don’t-sit” skirt. The don’t-sit refers to high hemlines, which are widely believed to be a direct and conscious affront to South Sudanese traditions and are perceived to be “shameful to the community.” Other sources of tension are blouses that expose a woman’s waist, known as the “*tumbu cut*” (*tumbu* means stomach in Kiswahili), and tight jeans. “The diaspora girls,” a female youth from Unity State asserted, “can be very

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forward with boys. They even smoke.” The style of dress and self-assured attitude of some returning female youth inflames the emotions of many youth and adults and can lead to confrontations with police officers. There were several reports that police harass and arrest women wearing what are commonly called “tight clothes.” One government official reported that if the woman is married, the policeman “takes her to her husband.” If she is not married, “he will beat her, to warn her not to wear those tight clothes again.”

Male youth wearing so-called “nigga” clothes are considered similarly deviant.³² “Nigga” clothes consist of baggy jeans that expose a bit of underwear and T-shirts sporting hip-hop icons. This hip-hop look, so common to male youth in many parts of the world, is anathema to many South Sudanese. As one government official explained, “If boys wear [hip-hop] T-shirts and pants down low, they can be beaten by the police, or at least harassed by them.” Such attacks on the so-called nigga boys, he continued, are justified “because they can influence other boys to dress like that, not listen to their parents, and not go to school. This is why we are still minimizing them.” Just as with girls and female youth wearing tight, Western-style clothes, boys and male youth wearing hip-hop clothes emanating from the West are thought to exhibit a foreign and openly rebellious stand against local tradition. The allegation that diaspora youth were the only ones who wore don’t-sit skirts and hip-hop T-shirts in South Sudan was not supported by field interviews. Nonetheless, many nondiaspora youth and adults blame them for importing Western culture and youth regalia into South Sudan.

Alarming, there are already reports that groups of South Sudanese youth have become violent adversaries. Some Bentiu youth related that two armed nigga youth gangs—one Khartoumer, the other diaspora—battle at night. The persistence of the name Jalaba stimulates hostility and suspicion about Khartoumers’ allegiance to South Sudan, and the insistence that diaspora youth are importing a hostile Western culture foments the belief that they are foreigners. Although these characterizations do not recognize or appreciate the prodigious hardships that IDPs and refugees endured, the scapegoating and enmity among Khartoumer youth, diaspora youth, and youth who remained in South Sudan during the war are potentially explosive.

A Complex Employment Landscape

The public spaces of towns and cities in South Sudan are clogged with so-called idlers, male youth without jobs. Usually well dressed, they sit in large groups for countless hours, under trees and near shops, markets, and homes. Many play cards or *lado*, a popular board game. Others habitually glance at their mobile phones. These male youth personify what may be South Sudan’s most pressing development problem: vast swaths of unemployed youth.

The new nation’s unemployment challenge is a source of keen frustration for many South Sudanese. It is also intransigent. While there is talk of new jobs arriving from private sector investment, the absence of viable (and desirable) work now is a pressing reality. A high-level SPLM official commented that this state of affairs was unsurprising. “During the civil war, there was no work,” he stated. “We were in the bush.” As a result, “We are now starting at zero.” The scarcity of skills training makes the challenge much more difficult.

The youth unemployment situation persists for at least four important reasons. First, there is an overwhelming focus on a finite number of government jobs. “Everybody wants to get a white collar job,” an education official of the South Sudan government stated. Even youth without competitive skills, training, or education tend to neglect technical training, because it is thought to have nothing to do with government work. After all, the official explained, “Many people in the army have no education and they get good money.” Others reported that people acquire government jobs for which they have no qualifications.

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The most common explanation for this phenomenon is also the second reason for South Sudan's youth unemployment situation: widespread nepotism. An unemployed male youth in Juba explained, "We [unemployed youth] are just pushing time. At times when we look for jobs, it's not easy to find them. When we go to the [government] offices, we find tribalism. They ask for your tribe, and if it's the wrong one, you cannot get a job."

A national government official noted that "the youth look to government because it's the only employer. The private sector is not yet [present]." Regarding government hiring practices, the official said that "corruption is there, tribalism is there, favoritism is there. I am confirming what youth are saying about this."

A third reason for the dire youth unemployment situation is that South Sudanese youth refuse to do many jobs. Many youth reported that selling water, clearing land, doing construction, cleaning buildings or outdoor areas, and working in hotels and restaurants invite derisive and humiliating criticism from peers, relatives, and elders. A senior government official stated that the reason youth refuse such jobs "is cultural. Some jobs are not suitable." If a male youth becomes a waiter, cleaner, or sells water in the street, "Other boys and women will make fun of you. We fear character assassination." As for female youth, the official stated, "Culturally, if a girl works in a restaurant, they consider you spoiled [that is, no longer a virgin]. Waitresses work at night and men touch them." Such work also impacts a female youth's dowry price and marriage prospects, just as manual labor can impugn a male youth's reputation and marriage options.

It was clear that many male youth were particularly afraid of being humiliated by female youth and women. One male youth in Juba, for example, explained that many of his colleagues are afraid that, if they took a lowly job like selling water, "Ladies and girls will just laugh at you and say, 'Ah! Look at that boy selling water!'" Yet selling water can be lucrative. Northern Sudanese from El Obeid and Darfur who had migrated to Unity State to sell water in Rubkona and Bentiu reported that they make up to eighty-four Sudanese pounds a day [approximately \$32],³³ substantially more than a day's pay for many government workers.

Despite this refusal to perform certain jobs, former IDPs performed at least some of them in Khartoum (such as building construction). But in the view of a veteran international official, they may have good reasons to resist doing such work in South Sudan. "The Southerners [in Khartoum]," he said, "were really slave labor; they weren't paid much. So they won't do that kind of work for low wages now." Distaste for such work is so great that an unemployed male youth conceivably will join a militia or gang sooner than carry out menial labor in South Sudan. A high-level international security official observed, "If you give a [male] youth a gun, that's a means to employment. He can loot, ambush, stop cars, and get money."

The pervasive unemployment of male youth appears to spur, in the eyes of some, criminal activities. As one male youth of thirty-three in Juba said, "Having no jobs is what leads [male youth] to criminality. Those who have nothing to do are just taking drugs, drinking beer, sometimes stealing or looting." Another thirty-five-year-old man in Juba noted, "Sitting idly all day will stress you too much and you will think of bad things. . . . There are those who are taking guns at night, shooting, raping, and looting land." In Bentiu, one young woman working at an NGO linked idleness to cattle raiding, "Through the raiding, you get something, and if you don't have anything to do, it's a way to push the days."

A fourth reason for high youth unemployment is related to the third. Some South Sudanese maintain unrealistic views of their earning potential and viability as workers. With considerable frustration, a government official in Unity State said that "South Sudanese youth are so selective. They only want to do white collar jobs. Even youth with no education expect a [white collar] job."

Time and again, officials and businesspeople shared stories of how South Sudanese youth worked their way out of jobs and viewed manual labor as beneath them. As a South

"If you give a [male] youth a gun, that's a means to employment. He can loot, ambush, stop cars, and get money."

Sudanese businessman explained, “Everyone wants to be *beny beny*,” a Dinka language reference to being a king or a boss. And until the right job comes around, evidently, many male youth sit and wait. There appears to be a pronounced lack of entrepreneurial vision among many South Sudanese youth.

Gangs, Impunity, and Orphans

Several government and nongovernment officials stated authoritatively that South Sudan’s gang threat is no longer a major concern. A longtime international agency official recalled that “hundreds of ‘niggas’ were picked up in Juba in 2009. [The authorities] found that many were getting arms from government officials.” Many government and nongovernment officials the authors interviewed contend that the thumping government response to the gang situation in 2009 made the gang menace a thing of the past.

Field-research findings indicate that this assessment is mistaken. Despite reports that gang activities have abated, they continue to thrive in the cities and towns that the authors visited in South Sudan. What appears to have changed are the gangs’ main targets. Instead of indiscriminate attacks on cars, businesses, and houses,³⁴ gangs reportedly have turned to committing targeted crimes mainly in poor urban communities. Joining a nigga gang appears to be an increasingly common alternative to urban futility. As a nineteen-year-old male youth in Bentiu remarked, “There are not enough schools. Youth end up in streets. This is where the niggas come in.”

The plethora of criminal urban youth gangs is startling. Ellen Martin and Irina Mosel report that there are two dominant groups, the Niggaz and the Outlaws, both of which “operate across all areas in Southern Sudan.”³⁵ These two groups arose in 2009, the same year as the gang shakedown by the South Sudan government.³⁶ Martin and Mosel mention other prominent gangs such as Black Cross, Donkey Star, Kashami, 2Pac, and 50 [Cent].³⁷ A South Sudanese researcher detailed three types of gangs: an “extremely dangerous” and much-feared armed gang that is notorious for murdering victims; a wide array of “very dangerous” and armed gangs that perform criminal activities such as robbery and rape in addition to murder; and “not very dangerous” gangs that mainly have a “different lifestyle”—such as wearing hip-hop clothing, gesturing like hip-hop stars, and smoking cigarettes. The typology underscores how urban youth gangs continue to thrive in South Sudan.

Local definitions of nigga gangs are expansive. To one government official, “A nigga is someone who is not a straight boy. Niggas look like a new system for the youth. They may not want to join school, they may have houses separate from their mother and father, and they don’t listen to their parents. We call them street boys.”

There was a clear tendency for adults to lump together all male youth in hip-hop regalia as niggas or street boys and then denigrate the independent identity and lifestyle that separates them from traditional norms. A common refrain was the threat of niggas to community life, in particular, their use of *shisha*, a substance that, some allege, contains marijuana or opium. The alignment of shisha smokers and gang membership was vividly expressed by one government official: “South Sudanese didn’t smoke shisha [in the past]. Too much of it is too sexy. When you smoke it, it drives you to do things outside of the community. It is mainly used by niggas. When you smoke shisha, you can do anything.”

The official’s apparent reference to rape (doing “sexy” things “outside of the community”) is noteworthy because youth and adults rarely mention it directly. Although references to it were not uncommon—a Juba youth of twenty-seven, for example, stated that “sometimes the niggas rape, like five men will be raping one girl”—assessing the frequency of rape in South Sudan remains impossible to do.

Direct influence from American hip-hop stars—their music, their T-shirts, and especially their videos—was a recurrent theme in discussions of nigga gangs. A South Sudanese researcher with deep knowledge of Juba’s gang culture suggested that “[gang members] try to copy the American nigga groups. While some are not dangerous in the U.S., they all have money. Here, they go for it: stealing, robbing, and so on. [South Sudanese youth] used to watch videos of the American niggas, who can even burn an American dollar. But these guys here, they don’t have money. That is why they go and rob: to be rich like 50 Cent and the others and have that nigga lifestyle.”

Highlighting 50 Cent was no mistake: quite unlike many other parts of the developing world, the most influential American hip-hop figure in South Sudan is 50 Cent, not Tupac Shakur or others. Urban youth “like those 50 Cent movies so much,” the researcher added. 50 Cent’s famous *Get Rich or Die Tryin’* film and CD soundtrack appear to have impacted male urban youth in South Sudan to a remarkable degree.

Martin and Mosel relate still more about the work and actions of gangs. They assert that “both women and men join” gangs and that “gang groups are alleged to have links with influential individuals within the military and police force [who] lie behind much of the organized crime in Juba.”³⁸ Martin and Mosel warn that the threat of gangs, together with their backers in government security forces, “could be a contributing factor to inhibiting longer-term investment” in South Sudan.³⁹ Field interviews with youth and adults, particularly in Juba, revealed a widespread contention that some gang members are indeed protected by government authorities and thus immune to the law. A male youth of twenty described this common view: “Most of these niggas are the children of government officials. They normally rob and beat poor people. Whenever they’re arrested and taken to the police, the police release them because they’re sons of officials.”

Some urban youth described two kinds of gang members: sons of officials and orphans. One group of Juba youth asserted that orphans had their own gangs. Others said that they join the gangs of influential youth. In both cases, whereas gang members whose fathers are influential in government are thought to carry out most of the violent crimes, orphan niggas are believed to join gangs to survive. As a male youth of thirty-four remarked, “When the orphan nigga can’t get enough money shining shoes or doing other small jobs, the only thing he can do is join [a nigga gang].” Although the number of orphans in South Sudan is impossible to estimate, it is likely that they are numerous, particularly using the local definition of orphan—anyone whose father is dead. Although South Sudanese society typically requires relatives to support orphans, the support may be insubstantial or nonexistent. The needs of orphans in South Sudan remain significantly overlooked.

Gangs are only one manifestation of proliferating violence in South Sudan. “Guns are everywhere in Bentiu,” an international agency official reported. Together with invading forces like the LRA and northern Sudanese government forces, the array of militias in South Sudan, and deadly cattle raiding, aggressive gangs regularly threaten urban neighborhoods.

The Elite Youth Factor

While the overwhelming majority of youth in South Sudan are poor and undereducated, a small yet influential class of elite youth (that is, youth with secondary and university education) is flocking to Juba and state capitals. A fraction of such youth gain prominent work with national and international NGOs, comprise South Sudan’s recognized civil society organizations, and win the coveted government jobs. However, most youth with some degree of secondary and university education, who have recently returned from East Africa and Khartoum, are unemployed. During interviews, elite youth related a set of priorities that were distinct from that of their nonelite counterparts. They generally equated success in life with a university diploma and

Much more than dowry or marriage concerns, elite youth highlighted vocational training, scholarships for higher education, and recreation as the main solutions to the needs of South Sudan's youth.

a high-status job. Only after they had secured these priorities would they turn to the business of buying or building a house and getting married. Much more than dowry or marriage concerns, elite youth highlighted vocational training, scholarships for higher education, and recreation as the main solutions to the needs of South Sudan's youth. Elite youth priorities and their emphasis on access aligned closely with the objectives that government, civil society, and international agency officials shared in relation to their youth work. This apparently unintentional skew toward elite youth views helps explain why governmental and nongovernmental agencies have generally overlooked the more widespread concerns of nonelite youth, such as the dowry issue.

In a departure from nonelite youth perspectives, many elite youth expressed broad resentment of international governments and agencies. Particularly in Juba, where the international presence is manifest, a pervasive criticism was the lack of concrete results despite prodigious investment. As a twenty-eight-year-old female university graduate stated, "There are a lot of conferences and workshops, but nothing [comes] out of them. No one is listening. I swear to God no one is listening." An elite male youth of twenty-three noted, "More than one thousand organizations don't have aims, don't help the poor, and don't value us in the country." Many elite youth expressed intense anger that the few international agency jobs available to them were largely subordinate to Western officials. Some believed that international agencies intentionally overlooked locals. One twenty-year-old young man in Juba claimed that foreigners working for international agencies "only come here to enjoy Juba . . . while the [local] youth are their guards." He added that the time would come when they would just "harm the *khawaja* [slang for white man or woman] with a hammer."

International agency hiring practices appear to be unintentionally exacerbating tensions between diaspora and Khartoumer youth. Arabic has been the lingua franca for South Sudanese of different ethnicities to communicate (usually in the Juba Arabic dialect), and both English and Arabic were the official working languages in government and higher education after the CPA of 2005. However, the declaration in South Sudan's transitional constitution that English had become South Sudan's only "official working language" sparked alarm for many and promoted the perception that English-speaking youth with some degree of educational accomplishment had gained a crucial advantage. Such youth were largely from two groups of South Sudanese: either those who were former refugees in anglophone countries (diaspora youth), or youth from the Equatoria states of southernmost South Sudan, where there is access to comparatively better schools. Agencies hiring mainly English-speaking South Sudanese run the risk of inadvertently exacerbating strained relations not only between Khartoumer and diaspora youth, but also between Equatorians and non-Equatorians within South Sudan.

Elite youth are also dominant among youth in civil society. Mainstream South Sudanese civil society is beginning to develop, and youth groups were instrumental in the January 2011 referendum campaign. Since then, most youth groups generally appear to be withering from decreasing support and either underemphasizing or overlooking the issues facing South Sudan's massive, undereducated youth majority, such as dowry inflation, the protection of female youth, and support for orphans. Nonetheless, many government and international agency officials evidently take the voices of elite youth to represent the majority of South Sudanese youth.

Youth and the New Government

The relationship between South Sudanese youth and their new government is already at a crossroads. Although youth of all backgrounds view the government as the primary source of education, employment, and hope, interviews with government officials at the national,

state, and county levels suggest that the government of South Sudan is not poised to fulfill vital youth priorities (with the possible exception of education, as noted earlier).

Signs of trouble come from at least two sources. First, what is likely to be a slow government response to youth grievances follows a broad, multiparty campaign that promised the opposite. One youth leader who was involved in the January 2011 referendum campaign, for example, recalled that “the government was making a lot of promises” about what an independent Republic of South Sudan would bring to its citizens. These included “good security, good governance, free education and medical care, new schools and hospitals, new roads, improved living standards, a good employment situation, and gender equality.”

The result of the referendum was a resounding endorsement of independence for South Sudan, which magnified public expectations. This sentiment was strongest among youth in Juba. A female youth of twenty-seven in a Juba neighborhood said, “After [Independence], everybody is expecting to get a job, so that we can develop this country and bring the nation up. Me, I’ve never gone to school, but I’m confident that I’ll get a job. The government will give us jobs because this is our country now.”

Not everyone shared this view. In Unity and Western Equatoria states, youth were generally more subdued and even cynical about prospects for any government-led opportunities. As a male youth of twenty-two in Western Equatoria related, “I don’t think anything will happen for the youth after independence. This is because youth have been deceived for a long time. Someone comes from the government and tells the youth to do this or that. But afterward, nothing comes for us. I think this happens because the government sees us as uneducated and untrained people.” Many youth in Unity State expressed similar sentiments.

Disappointment and frustration over government responses to youth needs, and the marginalization of youth voices in government policy, were consistent among elite youth regardless of their location. As an educated female youth noted, “[Youth] feel excluded from building the nation. . . . There is a way of including them through the chiefs, but that doesn’t happen at all.” Another educated female youth warned that “we have so many problems with people that want to get satisfied so fast. And if they don’t get [what they want] they’ll turn against the government any way they can to get it.” Notably, many of the elite youth the authors interviewed recognized the prominent role of youth in protests in Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya. These young people expressed hope that South Sudanese youth would peacefully protest should the government fail to live up to its promises. There was no evidence of an organized response in the making.

Government officials shared conflicting views of the government’s capacity to address the needs of their huge youth constituency. One high-level official expressed concern about the ability of the government to deliver: “If youth are an asset, what are you doing to help them? If they’re a liability, what is the state doing to address their concerns?” Other government officials were unconcerned about the government’s ability to address youth needs. A county commissioner boasted that he already knew the needs of youth and how to address them because “I am the president of the youth, the women, the blind, the disabled, and even the living and dead in my county.” A high-ranking SPLM official explained that “the unemployment and security issues are temporary things: [the new government] will come with our own ways of convincing our youth.” The same official disregarded the dowry inflation issue. “You can negotiate [with the bride’s parents] and pay the dowry over time. Then you get your woman. It’s not a big deal,” he concluded. Officials rarely mentioned the government’s Youth Parliament, which contains youth representatives from all ten states and many political parties. The authors’ research indicates that the Youth Parliament is essentially inoperative and mostly unknown.

Recommendations

Given the limited capacity of the government of South Sudan to act in these early stages of the republic, the set of measures recommended here may seem unrealistic. Much of what is being done for South Sudanese youth, particularly for the nonelite majority, appears to address lesser youth priorities or has limited reach. More effective action must be initiated by reforming current responses to youth needs and by significantly expanding efforts by GOSS and its main international benefactors and by local and international NGOs.

1. The substantial and negative fallout from severe dowry price inflation—from fueling conflict to undermining the rights and protections of female youth—calls for immediate redress. Many youth and adults strongly recommended government laws that set limits on dowry payments. **The government should swiftly enlist local youth, adult, and traditional leaders to help establish reasonable and enforceable caps on dowry demands.**
2. Equally important is an aggressive stance and enforceable laws that combat the pervasive perception of female youth as mere property in dowry transactions. This significant human rights concern is closely linked to current marriage customs. **Additional research is urgently required to develop a viable strategy for protecting and securing rights for female youth before and following marriage.** This must include developing some sense of the frequency and impact of rape and domestic violence on female youth.
3. **Government and nongovernment agencies should expand access to and improve the quality of appropriate education and job training work for South Sudanese youth.** A critical part of this expansion must be English-language training, especially for Khartoumer youth who do not know English. This training is not merely an issue of capacity building, but also an issue of security, as the resentments between Khartoumer and diaspora youth are potentially explosive. Action to reduce tensions should include the equitable hiring of Arabic-speaking youth by national and international agencies and helping Arabic-speaking youth access English-language training.
4. Relations between government and youth are too often debilitating and counterproductive. The government must combat nepotism in government hiring practices by, for example, establishing explicit job descriptions for government posts. **The government must also strive to manage and address youth expectations for employment opportunities, especially for government jobs.**
5. GOSS needs to promote discussion about how South Sudan's cultural conservatism confines and restricts many youth—from what jobs are appropriate to the negative impact of dowry inflation on male and female youth. Donor agencies should consider supporting radio dramas and facilitated discussions about this. Finding ways to stimulate productive exchanges about cultural expectations and restrictions that severely affect youth is required.
6. With unemployment unlikely to subside quickly, youth idleness, alcohol abuse, and the availability of small arms remain serious issues. **The government should support alcohol and drug-awareness campaigns to combat alcohol- and drug-related disease and crime among youth in urban centers.** Researching and recommending viable strategies to begin to address the proliferation of small arms is similarly important, as it is a clear and critical security concern.
7. Research is urgently needed to determine the size and priorities of the significant population of orphan youth. Many orphans face desperate economic circumstances and are unable to access programs for advancement. GOSS and nongovernmental agencies must develop ways to extract them from gang and other criminal activities and provide them with appropriate support.

8. Claims that well-connected gang leaders are immune to arrest and prosecution call for investigation and an appropriate response. The investigation will require GOSS support but should be conducted by a nongovernmental entity. It should also encompass gang activity and examine how, beyond measures such as capping dowry prices, youth involved with gangs can find productive, viable, and peaceful alternative sources of income.
9. The expansion of schools, training, jobs, and economic markets requires the timely construction of new roads. This is not just a general development priority but also one that promises to positively affect the lives of many youth.

Notes

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1. According to a 2009 census, just over half of the citizenry of the Republic of South Sudan is under the age of eighteen (51 percent), and nearly three-quarters are under age thirty (72 percent). Southern Sudan Centre for Census, Statistics, and Evaluation, "Fast Facts," <http://sscscse.org/>. Please note that, while the results of this census are disputed, they represent the only data of its kind that is currently available.
2. The term dowry usually refers to the wealth or property that a bride brings to a marriage. But in South Sudan, dowry actually means the reverse: "bride wealth" or "bride price." In this report, the South Sudanese definition of the word dowry is used.
3. One clear youth priority that is not addressed at length in this report is the broad, complex, and extremely significant issue of formal and nonformal education. The authors strongly encourage additional research on this issue, particularly with regard to devising appropriate education for the massive out-of-school youth cohort in South Sudan.
4. To put such comments in context, it is useful to note that the average life expectancy for South Sudan is 55.42 years. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), "World Fact Book 2011," CIA, August 23, 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/od.html>.
5. See, for example, Maggie Fick and Jason Staziuso, "UN Says Sudan's Army Continues Attacking Civilians," *Boston.com*, June 30, 2011, http://articles.boston.com/2011-06-30/news/29722637_1_aid-groups-nuba-mountains-satellite-sentinel-project.
6. Most notable among them are George Athor, a dissident former lieutenant general in the SPLA, in Jonglei State; Peter Gadet, a recently integrated member of the SPLA who was a key leader of a Khartoum-backed rebel group during the North-South war, in Unity State; and Gabriel Tang Gatwich Chan, another Khartoum-aligned rebel leader, in Upper Nile State (though he has been under house arrest in Juba since April 2011). For more information on active armed insurgencies in South Sudan, refer to the Small Arms Survey's Sudan Human Security Baseline Assessment (HSBA) Project, www.smallarmssurveysudan.org/.
7. HSBA, "George Athor's Rebellion, Jonglei State," Small Arms Survey, April 2011, www.smallarmssurveysudan.org/pdfs/facts-figures/armed-groups/southern-sudan/emerging/HSBA-Armed-Groups-Athor.pdf. See also Ngor Garang, "Defection of Peter Gadet Is a 'Rumour'—South Sudan Army," *Sudan Tribune*, March 27, 2011, www.sudantribune.com/Defection-of-General-Peter-Gadet,38409.
8. HSBA, George Athor's Rebellion, Jonglei State.
9. This population estimate comes from the disputed 2008 census. Southern Sudan Centre for Census, Statistics, and Evaluation, "Fast Facts." According to the CIA's "World Fact Book 2011," the actual 2008 population estimate may be as high as 9.28 million.
10. International Organization for Migration (IOM), "Thousands of Stranded South Sudanese Returnees Desperate for Assistance to Reach Final Destinations," IOM, July 2011, www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/media/press-briefing-notes/pbnAF/cache/offonce/lang/en?entryId=30089; see also Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre and Norwegian Refugee Council, "IDPs Return to Face Slow Land Allocation, and No Shelter, Basic Services, or Livelihoods" (briefing paper, Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre/ Norwegian Refugee Council, May 2011), www.internal-displacement.org/briefing/south-sudan.
11. Ellen Martin and Irina Mosel, "City Limits: Urbanisation and Vulnerability in Sudan: Juba Case Study," Humanitarian Policy Group, Overseas Development Institute, January 2011, www.odi.org.uk/resources/download/5290.pdf, 3. A UN official reported that IDP and refugee returnees are contributing to rapid urban growth by mainly resettling in Juba, state capitals, and urban centers instead of rural villages.
12. The authors also received reports of combative and sometimes violent interactions involving youth and the police in Juba.
13. Southern Sudan Centre for Census, Statistics and Evaluation, "Poverty in Southern Sudan: Estimates from the NBHS 2009," March 2010, http://sscscse.org/storage/Poverty_Southern_Sudan.pdf. See also Southern Sudan Centre for Census, Statistics and Evaluation, "Fast Facts."
14. UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), "Getting It Right as a New Nation Is Born," June 15, 2011, www.un.org/en/development/desa/news/ecosoc/new-nation-is-born.html.
15. Government of South Sudan Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, "Education Statistics for Southern Sudan 2009," as cited in Women's Refugee Commission (WRC), "Starting from Scratch: The Challenges of Including Youth in Rebuilding Southern Sudan," WRC, September 2010, http://womensrefugeecommission.org/component/docman/doc_download/650-starting-from-scratch-the-challenges-of-including-youth-in-rebuilding-southern-sudan-starting-from-scratch-the-challenges-of-including-youth-in-rebuilding-southern-sudan, 6.
16. WRC, "Starting from Scratch," 7.
17. Cited in Voice of America News, "South Sudan's Ticking Youth Time-Bomb," April 7, 2011.

An online edition of this and related reports can be found on our Web site (www.usip.org), together with additional information on the subject.

18. WRC, "Starting from Scratch," 6. Another special report by the authors will more fully address the education situation in South Sudan.
19. *Ibid.*, 10.
20. *Ibid.*, 9.
21. *Ibid.*, 12.
22. *Ibid.*, 11.
23. Matt Richmond and Flavia Krause-Jackson, "Cows-for-Bride Inflation Spurs Cattle Theft in South Sudan," Bloomberg News, July 26, 2011, www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-07-26/cows-for-bride-inflation-spurs-cattle-theft-among-mundari-in-south-sudan.html.
24. *Ibid.*
25. "South Sudan Attacks Leave 600 Dead," BBC, August 22, 2011, www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-14595368.
26. Minority Rights Group International, "Ethnic Tensions Could Increase Violence in Southern Sudan—MRG," Minority Rights Group International, June 15, 2011, www.minorityrights.org/10822/press-releases/ethnic-tensions-could-increase-violence-in-southern-sudan-mrg.html. For the full report, see Jared Ferrie, "Southern Sudan: The Role of Minority Rights in Nation Building," Minority Rights Group International, June 2011, www.minorityrights.org/download.php?id=1007.
27. *Ibid.*
28. While the authors prefer the term 'ethnic group' over tribe, South Sudanese uniformly used the term 'tribe' or 'tribal' instead. Given this difference, the two terms should be considered interchangeable in this report.
29. As early as a decade ago, Karen Jacobsen et al. found that "ten years of displacement to the urban areas of Khartoum have resulted in a fundamental shift in identity, particularly among young people, who consider themselves to be urbanized and have no real desire to return to their rural origins." Karen Jacobsen, Sue Lautze, and Abdal Monim Kheider Osman, "The Sudan: Unique Challenges of Displacement in Khartoum," in *Caught between Borders: Response Strategies of the Internally Displaced*, ed. Marc Vincent and Birgitte Refslund Sorensen (London: Pluto Press and Norwegian Refugee Council, 2001), 84.
30. Marc Sommers, *Islands of Education: Schooling, Civil War, and the Southern Sudanese (1983–2004)* (Paris: International Institute for Educational Planning, UNESCO, 2005), 250.
31. During interviews, it was also common for youth and adults to criticize actual Kenyan and Ugandan nationals who work in South Sudan.
32. The authors are well aware that the meaning of the term "nigga" is loaded and laden with powerful references. However, it is also a commonly used term in South Sudan. We discuss the local meaning and usages of the term in the "Gangs, Impunity, and Orphans" section.
33. During the April–May 2011 field research period, the conversion rate for \$1 was between 2.5 to 3 Sudanese pounds.
34. Martin and Mosel report that "the business community is particularly vulnerable [to gang activity] as both their shops and homes are targeted, as are boda boda [motorcycle taxi] drivers." They also report that the primary activity of gang members before the 2009 crackdown was "during the day, [when] members are sent out to scout businesses and find out how they store their daily cash income, with robberies taking place at night." Martin and Mosel, "City Limits," 31.
35. *Ibid.*, 31. For the purposes of this report, the correct spelling of the plural of nigga—"niggas" or 'niggaz"—is interchangeable.
36. Sudanese returnees from Cairo relocated both gangs to South Sudan when Egyptian authorities expelled them. *Ibid.*, 31.
37. *Ibid.*
38. *Ibid.*
39. *Ibid.*

