

# PRESS RELEASE

## 'The 16 days of activism'- To fight Gender Based Violence in South Sudan

**Gender based violence is deeply rooted in discriminatory cultural beliefs and attitudes that perpetrate inequality and powerlessness, in particular of a women and girls.**

As a result of the protracted conflict in South Sudan, threats and risks of GBV against women and girls persist particularly sexual violence, growing levels of intimate partner violence (IPV), sexual exploitation, harassment and early and forced marriage

According to the Gender Based Violence Information Management System (GBV IMS) annual report of 2019, shows that 41% of the reported incidents were physical violence, 24% were emotional violence and 16% were sexual violence. Government data shows that about 40% of girls are married before age of 18. Clearly, there is a need for urgent and scaled up action against GBV in South Sudan.

“Due to the high rates on physical GBV cases, there’s need to raise more awareness on GBV and its impact on the lives of women/ girls and the community to reduce prevalence abuses on girls and women and call for law enforcers to take action and hold perpetrators accountable” said **Mr Otim George, The Country Director of Plan international in South Sudan.**

Plan International joins the rest of the partners in the campaigns by mobilizing and facilitating communities to challenge harmful cultural practices such as Early, Child and Forced Marriages, and domestic violence that continued to put the lives of women and girls at risk. We call upon all stakeholder supporting efforts to fight Gender Based Violence to strengthen GBV coordination mechanism at the community, state and national levels and develop the capacities on a gender responsive early warning systems and indicators to prevent the re-occurrence of abuses in South Sudan. **Said Mr George Otim.**

In South Sudan, there are strong legal protective frameworks and measures in place, however the rights of children especially girls and women continued to be violated due to cultural and traditional practices and religious beliefs. In support of the existing frameworks, enacting pending bills e.g. the Anti-GBV bill 2019 will be an added value and will support partner’s initiatives in dealing with GBV cases especially those with strong cultural association.

Reports shows high reported GBV cases on emotional violence where limited attention is being paid to, and under reported leading to post-dramatic stress, depression, shame and self-hate and mental illness, or event suicidal thoughts and behaviour among women. Let us join hands to ensure that adequate referral and response mechanisms are put in place, including clear and acceptable referral and reporting mechanisms that respect confidentiality and the rights of the victim/survivor, and that these are known and available to the community. **Mr George Otim emphasized.**

Plan International invites partners to stand in solidarity with girl, and women activists calling for an end to the Gender Based Violence, by taking actions being responsible and accountable at

the individual, community, state and as a nation for prosperous and peaceful South Sudan Free of GBV. **Said Mr Otim**

**To request an interview or for more information, please contact:**

Stella Drate  
Communications and Influencing Manager (Juba)  
Email: [Stella.Drate@plan-international.org](mailto:Stella.Drate@plan-international.org)  
Mobile: +211 922555098

### **About Plan International**

Plan International is an independent development and humanitarian organisation that advances children's rights and promotion of Gender equality for girls and women.

In South Sudan we committed to advocate for long term change and impact by working with key influencers to address the root cause of gender inequality and GBV through:

Providing direct support in emergencies for girls and women affected by disaster and are at a high risk of GBV

Strengthening and mobilizing civil society in raising the voices of the vulnerable girls and women affected by inequality and GBV and supporting youth initiatives on ending CEFM.

Promoting positive attitudes, behaviours and practices through working with men and boys as allies in fighting GBV including other harmful traditional practices.

Advocacy and coordination around National Plans of Action, Laws and other policies

We have been building powerful partnerships for children for over 80 years and are now active in more than 75 countries.

**ENDS**