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### Strategic Approaches for the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Juba City County, South Sudan

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<p><b>Chief Editor</b> Web: <a href="http://www.ijsdc.org">www.ijsdc.org</a> Email: <a href="mailto:info@ijsdc.org">info@ijsdc.org</a></p> <p><b>Editing Oversight</b> Impericals Consultants International Limited</p>	<p><b>Abstract:</b> This study examined the strategic approaches for the protection of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Juba County, South Sudan. The study was guided by Peace Theory which champions the notion that, constructive conflict resolution through negotiation, dialogue, and active participation is paramount for mitigating tensions and fostering social stability (Galtung, 1996). The research employed a mixed-methods approach, encompassing surveys, key informant interviews, and focus group discussions, involving a sample size of 220 participants, including 200 respondents and 20 key informants. The findings revealed substantial challenges within the operational framework, including inadequate political commitment, systemic governance issues, and obstacles to fundamental social services access. On a positive note, successful strategies emerged, underscoring the critical importance of community engagement among IDPs, local authorities, and humanitarian organizations as fundamental elements of effective protection measures. The study recommended:- establishing transparent aid distribution systems and expanding access to healthcare, implementing livelihood programs, vocational training, and financial inclusion strategies which will empower and build capacity of IDPs to reduce dependency on external assistance and increasing legal protections for women, expanding access to education, and integrating women into governance structures to foster inclusivity.</p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> Strategic approaches, Protection, Internally Displaced Persons, UN Guiding Principles</p>
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#### 1.1 Background of the Study

Globally, the implementation of the United Nations Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (UNGPs) encountered varying degrees of success (Schraven et al., 2021). Countries like Germany and Sweden took substantial measures to protect the rights of refugees and displaced individuals, establishing frameworks that addressed essential services, legal support, and integration programs (European Commission, 2020). These nations exhibited a commitment to upholding the rights of IDPs and others seeking refuge, demonstrating the effectiveness of a supportive policy environment combined with community engagement (Refugee Council, 2019). For instance, during the Syrian refugee crisis, Germany enacted proactive asylum policies that allowed for the integration of over one million refugees, providing them with education, healthcare, and employment opportunities (BAMF, 2021). Sweden similarly offered extensive support systems that facilitated the social and economic

integration of displaced people into society (Migration Agency Sweden, 2020).

In Lebanon, the influx of Syrian refugees led to significant challenges (UNHCR, 2021). However, local and international NGOs worked tirelessly to provide healthcare, education, and legal support, highlighting the strain placed on host communities and the resilience shown in addressing the needs of IDPs (Oxfam, 2020). In Israel, discussions regarding the situation of displaced Palestinians prompted ongoing debates about humanitarian support and political rights, emphasizing the intersectionality of displacement, citizenship, and human rights (The Adalah Justice Project, 2019). Lebanon's historically complex socio-political landscape added further layers to the challenges faced by refugees from Syria, particularly regarding their legal status and access to rights and services (Chalabi & Karam, 2022). The crisis in Libya following the civil war resulted in substantial internal displacement, with many citizens forced to flee due to violence and instability (IOM, 2022). The UNGPs were invoked in various interventions aimed at providing humanitarian assistance and promoting the rights of displaced individuals, although progress was hindered by the fragmented political situation in the country (Amnesty International, 2021).

The conflict in Ukraine further illustrated the relevance of the UNGPs, as millions became internally displaced due to the ongoing war (IOM, 2022). The Ukrainian government, with support from international organizations, mobilized efforts to establish temporary shelters, provide food aid, and ensure medical assistance for those displaced. Amidst the war, the implementation of the UNGPs helped to address some of the immediate needs of IDPs, although systemic challenges persisted in ensuring long-term support and integration.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the government established the "National Policy on Displaced Persons" with support from the UN and various NGOs to address widespread displacement caused by years of conflict (UNDP, 2021). This policy focused on shelter, food security, and healthcare. However, implementation faced numerous systemic issues, including widespread corruption, inadequate infrastructure, and ongoing violence from armed groups. Consequently, many IDPs in the DRC continued to live in precarious conditions, underscoring the significant gap between policy intentions and real-world outcomes. The UNGPs called for the protection of these vulnerable populations, yet persistent insecurity inhibited their freedom of movement and access to basic services, highlighting an urgent need for both national and international stakeholders to enhance their commitment to addressing the plight of the displaced.

In South Sudan, ongoing conflict and civil war resulted in one of the highest rates of displacement globally, with millions forcibly displaced within the country and across borders (UNHCR, 2022). The South Sudanese government faced significant challenges in addressing the humanitarian needs of IDPs, compounded by ongoing violence, political instability, and intercommunal strife. The UNGPs were referenced in attempts to provide humanitarian assistance and support to IDPs, yet the volatile security situation hindered effective implementation. Various NGOs, alongside UN agencies, launched programs aimed at providing shelter, food security, and healthcare. However, insufficient infrastructure, limited funding, and deep-rooted corruption often impeded the delivery of assistance, leaving many IDPs in dire need of support and basic services.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

The ongoing protection and assistance of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Juba County, South Sudan, remained critically inadequate despite the formal adoption of the United Nations Guiding Principles (UNGP) on internal displacement and the subsequent transfer of protection responsibilities from the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) to the South Sudanese government. Persistent challenges related to IDP protection emerged from multiple factors, including ongoing violence and civil unrest, insufficient political commitment from the government to prioritize civilian safety, along with systemic governance issues that hindered effective humanitarian responses. Despite the framework provided by the UNGPs, their implementation remained severely lacking. The government's reluctance to facilitate the safe movement of peacekeepers led to substantial delays in humanitarian interventions, thereby restricting IDPs' access to essential services such as healthcare and livelihood opportunities. Furthermore, restrictive measures impacting peacekeeping operations, coupled with the UN's inherent difficulties in safeguarding civilians amid armed conflicts, heightened the risks of violence against IDPs. The targeting of aid facilities by armed groups underscored the challenges faced in providing necessary support and emphasized the failure to effectively operationalize the UNGPs. Given these compounding challenges, this study aimed to investigate the approaches for the protection of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Juba city, South Sudan. There is no sufficient empirical evidence as far as this phenomena is concerned in Juba City. It is therefore against this background that this study was significant.

## **1.3 Study Objective**

The Objective of this study was to analyse the existing approaches for the protection of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Juba City County, South Sudan.

## **1.4 Literature review**

In this section, theoretical review and empirical reviews will be presented.

### **1.4.1 Theoretical framework**

This study was guided by Peace Theory which champions the notion of constructive conflict resolution through negotiation, dialogue, and active participation as paramount for mitigating tensions and fostering social stability (Galtung, 1996). This theory emphasize the critical importance of addressing the root causes of conflict rather than merely responding to its manifestations. Within the context of IDPs in South Sudan, Peace Theory provides an indispensable lens through which we could evaluate the potential for sustainable peace and the necessity of effectively reintegrating displaced individuals into their communities. The application of Peace Theory accentuate the significance of conflict resolution methodologies and the role of dialogue in reshaping the experiences of IDPs. In South Sudan, revitalizing the peace agreement remained a formidable challenge, and the lack of proactive engagement could exacerbate existing tensions. Engaging directly with IDPs to solicit their insights regarding their needs and lived experiences was essential. Welch (2010) argued fervently for incorporating the voices of affected populations in peace processes, suggesting that their active participation could lead to the creation of more comprehensive, inclusive, and enduring peace frameworks.

The urgency of applying Peace Theory became particularly salient when we considered the need for community-level dialogues, which could promote understanding and collaboration among displaced

populations and host communities. Initiatives focused on fostering meaningful conversations could serve to build trust, mitigate fears, and enhance integration prospects. Moreover, innovations in peacebuilding, such as grassroots movements, local peace committees, and non-violent social activism, provided promising avenues for enhancing community cohesion and fostering societal stability amidst the backdrop of ongoing conflict.

An essential aspect of Peace Theory was the concept of "positive peace," as proposed by Galtung (1990). Positive peace referred to the presence of social justice, equality, and the absence of structural violence, as opposed to mere absence of war or conflict (negative peace). In the South Sudanese context, creating an environment characterized by positive peace involved addressing underlying grievances and promoting equitable resource distribution while fostering social cohesion among diverse ethnic groups. This holistic approach to peacebuilding was instrumental in ensuring that IDPs not only received support during their displacement but also became integral members of a revitalized, unified society.

#### 1.4.2 Empirical literature review

##### *Approaches used in the protection of internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Juba City County, South Sudan*

The protection of internally displaced persons (IDPs) has been extensively researched at the global level, with numerous scholars proposing strategies for improving their security and reintegration. Cohen and Bradley (2023), in their study *Global Governance and IDP Protection: Bridging Humanitarian and Developmental Approaches*, conducted an institutional policy analysis to examine how global governance frameworks influence IDP protection strategies. Their findings reveal that a shift from short-term humanitarian responses to long-term developmental approaches is critical for sustainable IDP reintegration. However, they caution that international organizations often lack the funding and political leverage to enforce these strategies effectively in conflict-prone states.

Ferris and Stark (2024), in *Displacement and Human Security: Rethinking IDP Protection*, conducted comparative case studies on IDP situations in Colombia, Myanmar, and Ukraine. Their findings emphasize that community-based protection mechanisms, legal recognition, and localized economic opportunities enhance IDP resilience. However, most global IDP strategies remain donor-driven rather than state-led, leading to inconsistencies in their application across different regions. Cantor (2023), in *Legal Frameworks for the Protection of IDPs: An International Perspective*, analyzed the role of international law in securing durable solutions for displaced persons. His research indicates that countries with strong legal frameworks and independent judicial systems experience greater success in IDP reintegration compared to those with weak governance structures. He highlights that enforcement remains the greatest challenge, as compliance with international frameworks is often voluntary. Meanwhile, Borton et al. (2023), in *Evaluating Humanitarian Approaches to Displacement*, conducted a meta-analysis of UN-led displacement programs and found that integrating IDP protection into national development strategies rather than treating it as a separate humanitarian issue leads to more effective outcomes. They suggest that policies ensuring land tenure security, political participation, and access to vocational training significantly improve long-term IDP stability.

Africa has implemented multiple IDP protection strategies, largely through the Kampala Convention (2009). However, the success of these strategies varies widely. Adeola and Viljoen (2023), in *The African Union and Displacement Governance*, conducted regional policy assessments of African Union member states and found that the Kampala Convention has been effective in establishing a normative framework but lacks consistent enforcement mechanisms. Their research suggests that greater investment in national implementation plans is required for meaningful impact. Mlambo (2024), in *Displacement, Conflict, and State Fragility in Sub-Saharan Africa*, conducted field-based research in Chad, Nigeria, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. His findings indicate that states with chronic instability often fail to implement IDP protection measures due to competing political and security priorities. He emphasizes that a regional approach incorporating cross-border IDP protections could improve enforcement.

Meanwhile, a report by the African Development Bank (2023), *The Economic Impact of IDP Integration in African Host Communities*, conducted econometric modeling to assess the benefits of IDP economic inclusion. The study found that providing IDPs with work permits, business grants, and skills training significantly contributes to economic growth in host communities. However, many governments are reluctant to adopt such policies due to political sensitivities regarding displacement. Deng (2024), in *Humanitarian Responses vs. Localized Protection Strategies: A Comparative Analysis of African IDP Policies*, compared donor-driven humanitarian aid programs with government-led IDP protection frameworks. His findings suggest that African nations that prioritize self-reliance programs, such as Uganda, experience more sustainable IDP reintegration compared to those that depend on international aid alone.

In East Africa, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) has attempted to harmonize IDP protection strategies across its member states, with varying degrees of success. Kamau (2024), in *IGAD's Role in Coordinating IDP Policies*, conducted interviews with regional policymakers and found that while IGAD has developed policy guidelines for IDP protection, enforcement is inconsistent due to national sovereignty concerns. A report by the World Food Programme (2023), *IDP Livelihood Strategies in East Africa*, analyzed income-generating activities among IDPs in Ethiopia, Sudan, and South Sudan. The study found that access to agricultural land and small business support led to higher levels of economic integration but warned that legal restrictions on IDP movement and employment remain significant barriers. A study by Abebe and Hassan (2024), *Land Tenure, Displacement, and Conflict Resolution in East Africa*, reviewed land ownership disputes involving IDPs in Kenya, Somalia, and Uganda. Their findings reveal that weak land governance structures lead to prolonged displacement as IDPs struggle to reclaim or acquire land rights.

South Sudan has faced persistent challenges in protecting IDPs, with the government often relying on international actors to lead reintegration efforts. Jok (2023), in *The Role of the South Sudanese Government in IDP Protection*, conducted interviews with state officials and IDP representatives. His findings indicate that while South Sudan has ratified international agreements on IDP protection, the lack of national implementation frameworks undermines their effectiveness. Similarly, a study by Lokuji et al. (2024), *Customary Law and IDP Land Rights in South Sudan*, used ethnographic research to assess how local governance structures handle land disputes involving returning IDPs. Their findings indicate that customary justice systems play a central role but often contradict formal legal frameworks, creating barriers to legal land ownership for IDPs.

At the local level, IDPs in Juba County face unique challenges in accessing essential services and legal protections. A UNHCR (2024) report, *IDP Settlement Challenges in Juba County*, used community-based surveys to assess IDP living conditions. The findings reveal that a lack of identity documents prevents many IDPs from securing housing, employment, or legal protection. Similarly, Deng (2024), in *The Socioeconomic Barriers to IDP Reintegration in Juba*, conducted longitudinal studies tracking IDP reintegration efforts. His findings suggest that the absence of sustained government engagement leads to fragmented reintegration efforts, with many IDPs returning to informal settlements due to economic insecurity. Ayen and Okot (2023), in *Gender and IDP Protection Strategies in Juba County*, analyzed gender-based protection programs and found that women IDPs face heightened risks of exploitation and gender-based violence due to limited access to formal legal channels and economic dependency.

### 1.5 Research design and methods

Mixed method approach was used to establish the existing strategic approaches for the protection of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Juba City County, South Sudan. Situated in Central Equatoria, Juba County served as the administrative capital of South Sudan. The geography of the area was characterized by the Nile River and fluctuating climatic conditions, significantly impacting the livelihoods of its inhabitants. Juba's location made it susceptible to both natural disasters and socio-political upheaval, factors that compounded the challenges faced by IDPs. The presence of Protection of Civilians (PoC) sites established by the United Nations provided temporary refuge for IDPs, although conditions remained precarious and required constant monitoring (UNMISS, 2022). The limited infrastructure, scarcity of resources, and fluctuating security dynamics continued to pose significant challenges to the safety and well-being of IDPs residing within these sites. As urbanization increased in Juba, it became important to recognize how this affected IDPs. Urban settings offered distinct advantages, such as better access to markets and services; however, they also presented challenges, including potential social tensions with host communities and increased vulnerabilities to violence. As such, the geographical positioning of Juba played a crucial role in understanding the unique challenges faced by IDPs. Flood risks, sanitation issues, and healthcare access within Juba highlighted additional dimensions that compounded the existing vulnerabilities of IDPs. The target population includes internally displaced persons (IDPs), government officials, humanitarian workers, and community leaders in Juba County. IDPs constitute the primary focus group, as they provide firsthand experiences on the effectiveness of current IDP protection strategies. Humanitarian workers and policymakers offer institutional perspectives on IDP interventions. A combination of probability and purposive sampling techniques was employed to ensure the inclusion of diverse perspectives. The sample size was determined using Slovin's formula, reducing the initial target of 400 respondents to 220 due to logistical constraints. A stratified random sampling approach was used to select IDPs from various camps, ensuring representation across gender, age, and displacement duration. Purposive Sampling: This technique was applied to select government officials, community leaders, and humanitarian actors, ensuring that participants with expertise in IDP policies and interventions were included. To determine the adequate sample size, Slovin's formula was employed, allowing for adjustments based on the margin of error. The formula was represented as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N \cdot e^2}$$

Where:

$n$  = sample size

$(N)$  = total population size (321,638 IDPs)

$(e)$  = margin of error (0.05 for a 95% confidence level)

Using this formula:

$n = 321,638 / (1 + 321,638 \times 0.05)$

$n \approx 400$

A structured questionnaire was administered to 220 IDPs across various displacement sites in Juba County. In-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with 40 key informants, including representatives from UNMISS, international NGOs, South Sudanese government agencies, and IDP community leaders. Additionally, three focus group discussions (FGDs) were held to capture collective perspectives on IDP challenges and possible policy solutions. Focus group discussions (FGDs) fostered dialogue among IDP participants, enabling a collective exploration of shared experiences. FGDs brought together diverse voices, enriching the data collected by encouraging interaction and collaboration among participants. Quantitative data was analyzed using statistical techniques while qualitative data was analyzed using thematic analysis.

## 1.6 Study findings

### *Response Rate*

The researcher targeted a sample size of 220 respondents, employing both probability and non-probability sampling procedures. The targeted respondents were from PoC 1 and PoC 3 in Juba County, Central Equatoria State. A total of 220 respondents (166 males and 54 females) were interviewed regarding their gender. Among them, 71% of the total 157 (119 males and 38 females) respondents were from PoC 1, while 29% of the total 63 (47 males and 16 females) were from PoC 3. Key informants and focus group discussions were included in the analysis. To clarify, 20 key informants were targeted from organizations assisting internally displaced people, which included both NGO staff and government officials, and 8 groups were selected for focus group discussions in PoC 1 and PoC 3. Each discussion group consisted of 10 individuals, resulting in a total of 80 participants. Among them, 8 community leaders were interviewed as part of the research. In PoC 1, 10 females were represented, accounting for 32.3%, while 21 males represented 67.7%. In PoC 3, 13 females accounted for 43.3%, while 17 males represented 56.7% in the group discussions. Here, the researcher distributed 220 questionnaires in PoC 1 and PoC 3, with all questionnaires carefully administered while conducting the FGDs and KIs. None of the 220 questionnaires were deemed invalid in PoC 1 and PoC 3 in Juba County, Central Equatoria State. The study achieved a high response rate, ensuring data reliability and representativeness. Out of the 220 targeted respondents, 198 successfully participated, resulting in a 90% response rate. This level of participation surpasses the 70% benchmark recommended by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) for survey reliability, signifying that the collected data is robust and reflective of the IDP population in Juba County. Several factors contributed to the high response rate. Community engagement played a crucial role in ensuring participation, as advance communication with IDP representatives-built trust and facilitated data collection. Additionally, collaboration with local humanitarian organizations proved beneficial in mobilizing respondents and providing logistical support. The research team also ensured inclusivity by translating survey instruments into local languages, thus eliminating language barriers that could have hindered response rates. However, despite these measures, security concerns and logistical difficulties in certain Protection of Civilian

(PoC) sites slightly affected participation, as some respondents were unavailable due to displacement-related uncertainties.

**Table 1: Response Rate**

Gender	POC 1 Frequency	%	POC 3	%
Male	119	71%	47%	29%
Female	38	17%	16	7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Generated from primary data (2023)

### ***Awareness and Implementation of the UNGPs Applied in the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons***

The analysis of respondents' awareness regarding UNMISS's current mandate in protecting internally displaced persons (IDPs) revealed significant findings. According to data generated from primary research conducted in 2023, the figure depicted that a substantial majority of the participants—specifically, 179 individuals, accounting for 81% of the total respondents—were aware of UNMISS's mandate related to the protection of IDPs in the Protection of Civilians (POCs) located in Juba. This group comprised 125 males and 54 females, indicating a strong understanding and recognition of UNMISS's role in this regard. Conversely, a smaller segment of the respondents, totaling 41 individuals or 19%, reported that they were not aware of UNMISS's current mandate concerning IDP protection. This indicated that, while the majority had a clear awareness of the mission's objectives, a notable minority remained uninformed about the efforts being made to safeguard the rights and well-being of internally displaced individuals within the POCs.

Several studies have highlighted the importance of awareness of peacekeeping mandates among affected populations. For instance, according to the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (2022), effective communication about the mandates of peacekeeping missions can significantly enhance community trust and cooperation with those missions. This aligns with the findings of this study, suggesting that higher awareness of UNMISS's mandate may contribute positively to the peacekeeping efforts and ensure better protection for IDPs. Moreover, awareness of protection mandates has been shown to positively influence the communities' perceptions of security and aid in mobilizing local support for peacekeeping operations (Dorn, 2020). In contrast, as noted in research by Adebajo (2015), a lack of awareness can lead to mistrust and a reluctance to engage with peacekeeping forces, which ultimately undermines the mission's objectives. Further details related to these findings were illustrated in the figure below, which provided a visual representation of the level of awareness among respondents regarding UNMISS's mandate.



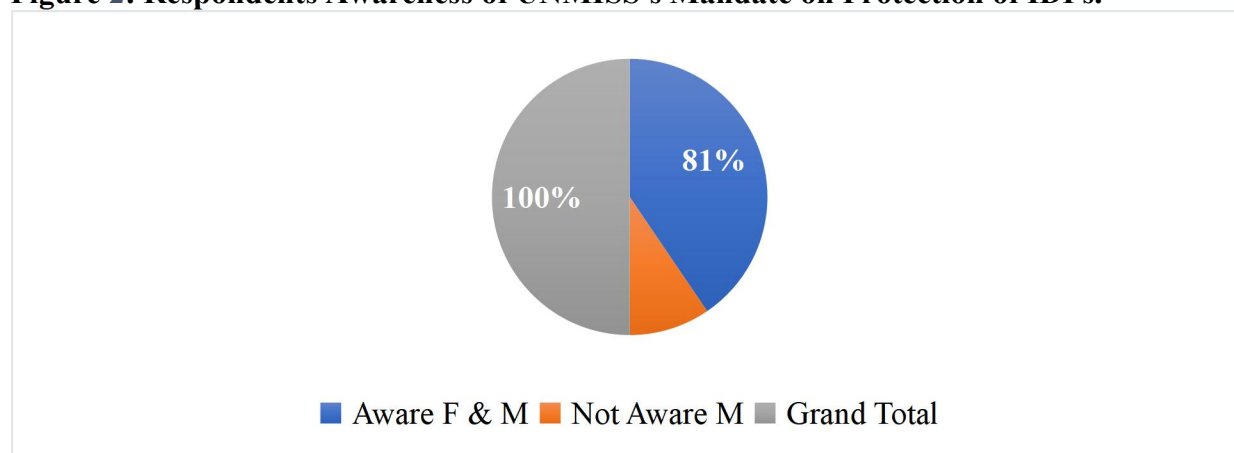
**Figure 1: Respondents Awareness of UNMISS's Current Mandate**



Source: Generated from primary data (2023)

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**Figure 2: Respondents Awareness of UNMISS's Mandate on Protection of IDPs.**



Source: Generated from primary data (2023)

The findings outlined various responses from FGDs and KIIs. KII, POC 3, stated, "UNMISS combats sexual and gender-based violence in POCs. This is done through coordinating other humanitarian

actors who provide technical assistance to the victims." Another respondent from FGD in POC 1 stated that UNMISS provided social services such as water, tents, blankets, and jerrycans, assisting in transporting and protecting civilians from affected villages to POCs, as part of UNMISS's mandate. Among the 220 total respondents, 19% (41 males) were not aware of UNMISS's mandate regarding IDPs protection. Focus Group Discussion (FGD) in POC 3, on October 23, 2023, indicated that, despite the resolutions made in FGDs, individuals within the IDP communities faced protection challenges. The UNMISS, despite the difficulties in managing its mandate, was still perceived to contribute to protection services for civilians subjected to displacement since the outbreak of violence in 2013.

Through the analysis, the researcher concluded that public awareness of UNMISS's mandate is critical, as many respondents exhibited a strong understanding of ongoing humanitarian missions aimed at civilian protection and advocacy for rights, especially under current conflicts. Thus, the adequacy of humanitarian protections remained a significant concern. The need for enhanced community awareness regarding UNMISS's protective role was evident. This is also corroborated by the statement made by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), who asserted that a response rate of 20% or more is necessary for the research to yield a realistic and credible view of the population. The researcher achieved a higher response rate of 75% due to effective data collecting tactics employed.

The situation faced by Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in South Sudan is a complex narrative marked by years of conflict, humanitarian crises, and systemic challenges to human rights and safety. The United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) is tasked with the pivotal role of protecting these vulnerable populations and facilitating their access to essential services. The primary data collected in 2023, through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), provides a nuanced insight into the perception of UNMISS's effectiveness in its mandate. This narrative examines the responses from community members, evaluates both the awareness and experiences of IDPs concerning UNMISS's activities, and discusses the implications for humanitarian engagements within these contexts. In-depth qualitative data were collected using FGDs and KIIs to explore the perceptions surrounding UNMISS's operations among IDPs. The study engaged a total of 220 participants from various Protection of Civilians (POCs) in South Sudan. Interviews were structured to encourage open dialogue about the realities of life in displacement and the impact of UNMISS's interventions. This allowed for rich qualitative insights that closely aligned with community experiences and perceptions.

The FGDs and KIIs were conducted in POC 1 and POC 3. A total of six FGDs were organized, bringing together diverse groups of IDPs, while KIIs involved local leaders and agency representatives. This mixed-method approach provided a comprehensive understanding of community perspectives and the challenges faced by humanitarian actors. Questions were formulated to probe into the specific roles of UNMISS, the effectiveness of its services, and the prevailing issues that hindered its efficacy. The flexible approach allowed participants to express their fears, aspirations, and critiques candidly, leading to various insights about the operational landscape of humanitarian aid within conflict-affected areas. The inclusion of both qualitative and quantitative methods ensured that diverse viewpoints were captured, further enriching the study. Responses indicated that UNMISS played a critical role in alleviating the dire circumstances faced by IDPs. One of the key themes that emerged was the mission's efforts to combat sexual and gender-based violence. A key informant from POC 3 remarked,

"UNMISS combats sexual and gender-based violence in POCs. This is done through coordinating with other humanitarian actors who provide technical assistance to the victims." This statement underscores the collaborative approach adopted by UNMISS, emphasizing the importance of partnerships with various stakeholders in addressing complex issues related to GBV. Coordination with humanitarian actors not only amplified support services but also ensured that those affected by violence received prompt and specialized assistance. This partnership model is critical in contexts ravaged by conflict, where vulnerabilities are often exacerbated. Moreover, it enhances the capacity for timely and effective responses, demonstrating the importance of a coordinated approach in humanitarian efforts.

Further analysis of the data indicated that UNMISS's provision of essential social services was recognized as a lifeline for many IDPs. Respondents from FGD at POC 1 expressed gratitude for critical supplies such as water, tents, blankets, and jerrycans. These resources were highlighted as vital in supporting the transportation and safety of civilians as they moved from affected villages into POCs. This critical role aligns with UNMISS's mandate, which aims to alleviate the humanitarian crisis arising from ongoing violence in the region. The humanitarian interventions implemented by UNMISS align with findings from international human rights frameworks that stress the necessity of meeting basic human needs in contexts of displacement, as stated by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR, 2021). Indeed, the provision of these essential resources was not merely a matter of aid; it was fundamental to ensuring basic human dignity and security for displaced populations.

Despite the positive perceptions of UNMISS's interventions, the study highlighted a concerning gap in awareness regarding the mission's mandate. Among the 220 respondents, it was found that 19% (41 males) were unaware of UNMISS's specific role in protecting IDPs. This lack of awareness raised critical questions about the effectiveness of communication strategies employed by UNMISS and other humanitarian agencies. Focus Group Discussion (FGD) 5 at POC 3, conducted on October 23, 2023, pointed out that despite the resolutions made in FGDs, individuals within IDP communities continuously faced protection challenges. These persistent challenges reflect the complexities of operating within a volatile environment, where misinformation or lack of information can severely hinder community members from seeking necessary support.

The findings affirm the necessity of enhancing community awareness regarding UNMISS's protective role. As noted by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), having a response rate of 20% or more is crucial for research to yield a meaningful understanding of the population. The researcher achieved an impressive response rate of 75%, which suggests a significant level of engagement with the community. However, merely achieving a high response rate is insufficient; it also underlines the need for continuous dialogue and outreach. Ongoing efforts to educate the community about their rights and available resources are paramount. Research has shown that awareness of humanitarian services correlates with improved protection outcomes and can empower vulnerable populations to better utilize available services (Schröder et al., 2021). By fostering an environment where IDPs are informed about existing protections, UNMISS and its partners can improve the effectiveness of interventions and enhance trust between displaced populations and humanitarian agencies.

Despite the vital functions performed by UNMISS, the findings indicated that IDPs faced numerous ongoing challenges. The volatile security situation, coupled with limited access to essential services

and inadequate communication about existing protections, exacerbated the struggles of these communities. Respondents frequently cited issues such as inadequate shelter, insufficient healthcare access, and the constant threat of violence. The precarious living conditions within the POCs also contributed to feelings of despair and helplessness among IDPs, affecting their overall well-being. Many expressed concerns about the sustainability of the resources provided by UNMISS, fearing that as the conflicts persisted, the availability of aid might dwindle. To address these challenges and enhance the effectiveness of humanitarian interventions, several recommendations emerged from the findings. UNMISS should invest in tailored communication strategies that engage IDPs meaningfully. Utilizing local languages, community leaders, and culturally relevant messaging can help bridge the gap between services provided and the populations served. Organizing workshops aimed at educating community members about their rights and the available protections can improve awareness. Such initiatives could empower IDPs to advocate for their needs and facilitate greater community participation in decision-making processes regarding humanitarian aid.

Establishing robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks can help UNMISS assess the effectiveness of its programs. Gathering feedback directly from beneficiaries will ensure that support services remain responsive to the needs of IDPs. Continuous evaluation helps in revising strategies and adapting to the evolving dynamics of the conflict. Strengthening partnerships with local organizations can bolster the impact of humanitarian interventions. Local entities often have a deeper understanding of the community's needs and can facilitate outreach efforts. Such collaborations can also foster trust between IDPs and humanitarian actors, creating a supportive environment for aid delivery. Finally, UNMISS must commit to long-term protection strategies that address the root causes of displacement. Engaging in peacebuilding efforts and addressing the underlying political and social issues contributing to instability can significantly enhance the protection environment for IDPs. This approach emphasizes that humanitarian aid must complement broader efforts aimed at restoring peace and stability.

In conclusion, the findings from the primary data collected in 2023 demonstrate the critical role played by UNMISS in protecting and assisting IDPs in South Sudan. While many respondents recognized the humanitarian mission's contributions, the alarming gap in awareness regarding its mandate highlights the need for effective communication and community engagement strategies. The challenges faced by IDPs within the POCs signify the complexity of humanitarian work in conflict settings. The recommendations provided serve as a pathway for improving the effectiveness of UNMISS's efforts and enhancing the protection of displaced populations. As the situation evolves, ongoing assessments of both community perceptions and the effectiveness of humanitarian strategies will be essential in ensuring that the rights and needs of IDPs are met consistently and adequately.

### **1.7 Conclusion**

From the study findings, it can be concluded that, there exists substantial challenges on realizing strategies for the protection of Internally displaced people in Juba City County in South Sudan. Humanitarian aid has been critical for IDP survival, yet challenges such as irregular food distribution, corruption, and limited healthcare access undermine its effectiveness. Many IDPs also reported frustration over dependency on aid, emphasizing the need for economic empowerment programs and sustainable livelihood opportunities. Gender-based challenges were particularly pronounced, with women and girls facing heightened risks related to violence, lack of access to education, and exclusion

from leadership roles. The findings underscore the necessity of gender-sensitive interventions, legal protections, and improved access to vocational training to enhance women's participation in decision-making processes.

### 1.8 Recommendations

After carrying out this study, the following recommendations were drawn as points of action by different stakeholders.

- a) **Humanitarian Aid Efficiency:** Establishing transparent aid distribution systems and expanding access to healthcare will improve service delivery.
- b) **Economic Empowerment:** Implementing livelihood programs, vocational training, and financial inclusion strategies will reduce dependency on external assistance.
- c) **Gender-Responsive Approaches:** Increasing legal protections for women, expanding access to education, and integrating women into governance structures will foster inclusivity.

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