2025
ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

1 January - 31 December

SUPPORTING THE CREATION OF AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR **SOUTH SUDAN'S ELECTIONS**



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Group photo: Bridge Workshop on Equal Access: Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Electoral Processes held on 17-20 June 2025 in Juba, South Sudan with NEC and CSO representatives.

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PROJECT BRIEF

Project title:	South Sudan Electoral Support Project	
Project number:	01000165	
Project duration:	July 2023 - December 2026	
Implementing Partner:	UNDP (Direct Implementation Modality)	
Project partner(s):	National Elections Commission (NEC), Political Parties Council (PPC), United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), UNESCO and UN Women	
Total budget:	USD 14,515,200	
Development Partner	Contribution	Disbursed
		In USD
EU	3,281,400	3,281,400
Canada	948,642	948,642
Switzerland	776,855	776,855
UNDP	1,257,677	1,257,677
UN Women	80,000	80,000
Sub-Total	**6,344,574**	**6,344,574**
Funding through UNDP joint programmes		
Japan	670,481	670,481
UN PBF	515,193	515,193
UNDP-CB- FW	203,300	203,300
Africa Elections Fund (Germany)	167,635	167,635
Sub-Total	**1,556,610**	**1,556,610**
Total	**7,901,184**	**7,901,184**
UNSDCF (2023-2025) Outcome 1:	"Women and men in South Sudan, particularly youth and vulnerable groups, benefit from and participate in more transparent, accountable, and inclusive governance that protects and promotes human rights, enables the consolidation of peace, establishes the rule of law, and ensures access to justice for all."	
Related Strategic Plan outcome 3:	Resilience built to respond to systematic uncertainty and risk.	
Country Programme Document's (2023-2025) related programme priority: Pillar 1 (b).	"Enhance the integrity and credibility of elections by strengthening the capacity of the Elections Commission, the Political Party Council, and CSOs, as well as the police and judiciary for elections security and dispute resolution in compliance with human rights standards".	
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ACRONYMS

AU	African Union
BRIDGE	Building Resources in Democracy Governance and Elections
CO	Country Office (UNDP)
CoC	Code of Conduct
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CTA	Chief Technical Advisor
CVE	Civic and Voter Education
DRI	Democracy Reporting International gGmbH
DRR	Deputy Resident Representative (UNDP)
EAD	Electoral Affairs Division (UNMISS)
ESC	Elections Security Committee
ESWG	Elections Security Working Group
GoSS	Government of South Sudan
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IEA	International Electoral Assistance
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IOM	International Organization for Migration
JICA	Japanese International Cooperation Agency
JMAC	Joint Mission Assessment Centre
MoJCA	Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs
NCRC	National Constitutional Review Commission
NEA	National Elections Act
NEC	National Elections Commission
NPS	National Police Service
PMU	Project Management Unit
PPC	Political Parties Council
QIP	Quick Impact Project
R-ARCSS	Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan
R-JMEC	Reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission
RoLSIS	Rule of Law and Security Institutions Section (a Section within UNMISS)
RR	Resident Representative (RR)
TNLA	Transitional National Legislative Assembly
RTGoNU	Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity
SHEC	State High Elections Committee

SSES	South Sudan Electoral Support
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UN IEAT	UN Integrated Electoral Assistance Team
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNMISS	United Nations Mission in South Sudan
UNPOL	United Nation Police
VAWiE	Violence Against Women in Elections
WPPWG	Women's Political Participation Working Group

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The results in this Report reflect concerted efforts undertaken through an integrated implementation approach within the framework of the UN Integrated Electoral Assistance Team (UN IEAT). Throughout the year 2025, the UN IEAT upheld the implementation of its mandated activities to support the creation of an enabling environment for elections, including through technical, logistical, and operational support to national electoral stakeholders, including the NEC, SHECs, the National Police Service (NPS), the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs (MoJCA); the South Sudan Bar Association (SSBA), Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), and media organisations, in view of the 2026 General elections.

The political landscape in South Sudan remained highly volatile throughout 2025 with several key events raising widespread concern about the derailment of the peace agreement and the risk of a renewed cycle of violence. On 3 March 2025, fighting between the South Sudan People's Defence Forces (SSPDF) and the White Army escalated in Nasir County, Upper Nile, with several members of the SSPDF killed and barracks taken over. After several senior members of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-in-Opposition (SPLM-IO) were arrested following the incident, SPLM/A-IO suspended its participation in the joint security mechanisms on the condition that the detained officials were released. Instead, on 26 March 2025, Vice President Riek Machar was placed under house arrest, subsequently charged, on 11 September 2025, for grave offences including treason, murder, and crimes against humanity thus marking a significant escalation in the country's longstanding political crisis. The trial of the suspended VP Machar trial continued to hold the center stage in the South Sudanese politics for the rest of the 2025. As a backdrop of the proceedings, further destabilization unfolded with worsening security, governance and humanitarian conditions.

Parallel to these events, a systemic purge of the top elite continued with incessant government reshuffles affecting key ministries and security institutions. While these changes reshaped the political landscape, they did not translate into progress on critical electoral decisions, potentially due to the short tenures of newly appointed officials. These events led to exclusion or sidelining of SPLM-IO representation in the government and the institutional volatility impeded the timely advancement of electoral preparations creating significant risks to the cohesion and sustainability of the R-ARCSS, increasing the likelihood of political fragmentation and undermining progress toward lasting peace. This has also affected the National Elections Commission, with two unexplained absences since early 2025.

There were, however, some efforts on behalf of the Kiir Government to move the process forward - on 4 June 2025, the Presidency established a *High-Level Ad Hoc Committee*, comprised of some members of the National Transitional Council (NTC), and assigned it oversight responsibilities for implementation of key benchmarks of the Peace Agreement, including elections. Earlier, on 8 May, President Kiir and the *Ad Hoc Committee* members had met with the National Elections Commission (NEC) Chairperson,

Honorable Professor Abednego Akok Kacuol, and NEC Secretary-General to discuss electoral preparations, including progress made, ongoing and pending tasks.

There was little impact of this initiative at the institutional level, as the National Elections Commission (NEC) continued to operate under severe financial constraints, with multiple directorates understaffed and unable to sustain planned activities. This limited institutional footprint has directly affected the consistency, reach, and sustainability of technical support provided by the UN Integrated Electoral Assistance Team (UN IEAT). Frustration and skepticism on the feasibility of holding credible elections by December 2026 continued to be voiced across the country. In an additional push for elections, NEC Chairperson, Professor Abednego Akok, followed suit and announced on 22 December 2025 that December 2026 elections will be conducted using 2010 constituency boundaries; under this framework, the NEC has declared a total of 102 geographical constituencies in ten states and three administrative areas.

Similar to earlier initiatives such as the *Ad Hoc Committee*, the push for elections has not brought about changes in operation and management, the NEC remains severely understaffed and underfunded. While NEC staff have conveyed that the government is committed to funding the process, timing remained key challenge to timely electoral preparation for the December 2026 elections.

In a surprise move, South Sudan Presidency approved a series of amendments to the 2018 Peace Agreement, delinking elections from the completion of permanent constitution, paving the way for elections, albeit unilaterally. Under these changes, elections are to be conducted under the Transitional Constitution 2011 (as amended). SPLM-IO rejected this move noting that signatories to the 2018 Agreement were excluded.

Notwithstanding these difficulties, the NEC and UN IEAT adopted adaptive and pragmatic strategies to maintain momentum while staying in line with the mandate to support an enabling environment for elections. Continued capacity and institution building as well as targeted measures such as the designation of training focal points, the prioritization of foundational work on civic and voter education, and the expansion of youth and inclusion partnerships helped mitigate operational gaps and preserve the continuity of essential preparatory efforts. These interventions ensured that electoral stakeholders remained engaged, informed, and increasingly capacitated despite the complex and rapidly evolving political context.

Overall, the reporting period underscores both the fragility of the environment and the financial challenges that both the UNDP administered multi-donor Basket Fund and the UNMISS components of the UN IEAT face.

This Annual Progress Report presents provides an overview of the output-level results achieved between 1 January and 31 December 2025, in alignment with the Project Results Framework of the SSES project. These results reflect the concerted efforts undertaken through the integrated implementation approach the UN IEAT through a collaborative and cohesive approach. Beyond a summary of tangible outcomes, the report also offers a broader

reflection on the progress made throughout the year underscoring the spirit of partnership and shared commitment that has guided this work.

Project Output I: **Establishment of an enabling legal framework for free, fair, and inclusive elections is supported**: Results in this area relate to development of an effective and inclusive legal framework for elections. UNIEAT advocated for the review and amendment of the National Elections Act (NEA) to facilitate the first elections, drafted regulations on Electoral Dispute Resolution (EDR) and NEC Internal Regulation covering NEC's organizational structure, decision-making processes, representation roles within the Commission, delegation of authority, operational modalities for the Commission and High Elections Committees (SHECs), ethical standards within the NEC. UNIEAT and the NEC engaged with various stakeholders on issues related to electoral framework.

Project Output II: **Strengthened institutional capacities for professional, transparent, and accountable election management**: Results in this area relate to supporting the institutional capacity of relevant electoral stakeholders to efficiently plan and manage electoral processes. During the reporting period, the UNIEAT engaged the NEC through regular coordination meetings, technical advisory support, and workshops, to enhance NEC's capacity towards performing its electoral management roles. In addition to technical support and advice provided to the NEC and State High Election Committees (SHEC), the project continued to support activities aiming to operationalize electoral infrastructure in ten states through UNMISS Quick Impact Projects (QIP).

Project Output III: **Inclusive participation fostered through enhanced rights and access to information**:

Results in this area relate to the enhancement of inclusivity in the electoral process through efforts to support the NEC to foster an open and pluralistic civic space. During the year 2025, the UN IEAT, resulted in adoption of key documents serving as a building block for establishment of a wide-reaching civic and voter education effort. With the establishment of the NEC Civic Education Working Group, a significant step was made in streamline the approval process and enhancing institutional efficacy. Through the UNESCO component, UNIEAT provided continuous support to strengthening the capacity of wide range of stakeholders on combating hate speech, misinformation and disinformation.

Project Output IV: **Enhanced environment for maintaining security and mitigating violence during elections**: Results in this area relate to strengthening the capacity of the Election Security Committee (ESC), support to the operationalization of the Joint Election Operation Centres (JEOC) in the ten States of South Sudan and to establishing mechanisms for the prevention of electoral violence, including the prevention of violence against women in elections (VAWiE). During the year 2025, Joint Election Operation Centre (JEOC) assessment report was conducted and finalized in all ten states and two administrative areas, identifying levels of support required to strengthen security infrastructure. A wide array of strategic outreach and engagements in violence prevention strengthened electoral risk monitoring, fostered public dialogue, positioning women and young people as key actors in South Sudan's democratic transition.

Project Output V: Strengthened effectiveness in planning and implementing electoral operations for all citizens: Activities under this output pertain to Phase 2 of the UN electoral assistance: "support to

the electoral event" which are not part of the current mandate. Hence no activities have been budgeted nor been implemented during the reporting period.

Project Output VI: Project effectively managed: The achievements recorded under this output demonstrate the strategic leadership and operational effectiveness of the Project Management Unit (PMU) in ensuring the coherent, timely, and accountable implementation of the South Sudan Electoral Support Project (SSES) throughout 2025. As the operational and technical backbone of the project, the PMU played a central role in strengthening integrated programme delivery and maintaining operational continuity within a highly dynamic and complex political and institutional environment.

Working in close coordination with the United Nations Integrated Electoral Assistance Team (UN IEAT), the PMU provided comprehensive oversight and support across key operational portfolios, including human resources management, financial oversight, budget planning and utilization, procurement, logistics, administration, and compliance. Through the application of robust management systems, risk-informed planning, and responsive operational support mechanisms, the Unit ensured the efficient delivery of project activities and the effective utilization of donor resources in line with United Nations standards and accountability frameworks.

The PMU's interventions were instrumental in enabling the uninterrupted provision of technical assistance and institutional capacity-building support to principal national stakeholders, including the National Elections Commission (NEC), the Political Parties Council (PPC), the National Police Service (NPS), and civil society organizations. By fostering operational coherence, strengthening coordination mechanisms, and ensuring timely service delivery, the PMSU contributed significantly to enhancing institutional preparedness for electoral processes and reinforcing stakeholder confidence in the broader electoral support architecture.

Through its adaptive, solutions-oriented, and service-driven approach, the PMSU established a strong operational foundation for inclusive, transparent, and accountable electoral preparations, while supporting the project's strategic objective of promoting credible and peaceful democratic processes in South Sudan.

RESULTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The following provides a summary of the key results attained in 2025, aligned with the output-level indicators outlined in the South Sudan Electoral Support (SSES) Project Document (2023–2025) and the 2025 Annual Work Plan. These achievements reflect the collective efforts of partners and stakeholders working together to advance the project's objectives in a complex and evolving context.

With the escalating political crisis and possible collapse of the R-ARCSS, the ability to deliver electoral technical assistance was limited due to absence of political decisions which drive the technical process. Events that followed the Nasir incident in March 2025, turned much of the public debate on validity of the peace agreement thus shifting the focus from the political decision-making relevant to elections. The NEC continued to operate under severe financial constraints, with most of its offices understaffed and unable to support substantive activities. Push for elections, announced in December 2024 did not significantly change this situation at the institutional level.

In addition to technical support and advice provided to the NEC and State High Election Committees (SHEC), UNIEAT supported activities aiming to operationalize electoral infrastructure in ten states through UNMISS Quick Impact Projects (QIP). To enhance the capacity of Election Security Committees (ESC) and Joint Election Operational Centers (JEOC) in ten states of South Sudan, a significant achievement was also made in strengthening security infrastructure and establishing mechanisms to prevent electoral violence, including violence against women in elections (VAViE).

Lack of clarity on the legal framework for elections and absence of political decisions on legal reform, limited the scope of substantive support in drafting and adoption of secondary legislation for elections. However, some progress has been achieved; drafts of *Internal Regulation and Regulation Candidate Nomination and Election Dispute Resolution* have been prepared through UNIEAT support. The review of the National Elections Act (as amended) continued, as well as engagement with a wide range of electoral stakeholders to enhance knowledge on issues pertaining to electoral framework.

Building on its achievements in 2025, UNIEAT worked with the NEC to create foundational documents for the conduct of an inclusive and far-reaching civic and voter education campaign. Baseline Survey on Citizens' Awareness of the Electoral Processes and Access to Information validated, Civic and Voter Education Strategy and Civic and Voter Education Curriculum drafted and adopted. Efforts have subsequently been placed on the development of the Civic Education Training Manual, designed to support conduct of direct outreach activities as well as the Civic Education Booklet, an overview of the Manual in easy-to-understand language. All materials have been made available to the public at NEC website.

Throughout 2025, the Project Management Unit (PMU) continued to play a critical enabling role in advancing the strategic objectives and operational delivery of the SSES project, while simultaneously supporting the broader coordination and implementation efforts of the UN IEAT. Operating within a complex and evolving political and operational environment, the PMU ensured that project implementation remained responsive, accountable, and aligned with United Nations standards, donor commitments, and national priorities.

The PMU provided integrated operational, administrative, and programme management support that was instrumental in sustaining the effective delivery of electoral assistance interventions across all project outputs. Through strengthened planning, coordination, and oversight mechanisms, the Unit facilitated the timely execution of activities aimed at enhancing the institutional capacities of key electoral stakeholders, including the NEC, the PPC, the NPS, and civil society partners. This support contributed to reinforcing institutional preparedness, improving coordination among stakeholders, and maintaining momentum towards inclusive and credible electoral preparations.

In close collaboration with the UN IEAT, the PMU ensured the efficient management of financial, procurement, human resources, logistics, and administrative functions necessary for project delivery. The Unit maintained rigorous compliance with UNDP policies, procedures, and internal control frameworks, thereby strengthening fiduciary oversight, operational transparency, and value-for-money principles across project implementation. Through proactive budget monitoring, risk-informed operational planning, and timely support services, the PMU enabled the uninterrupted implementation of programme activities despite operational constraints and an increasingly fluid political context.

The PMU also played a strategic role in maintaining constructive and transparent engagement with international development partners and donors supporting the SSES basket fund mechanism. Through regular coordination, timely reporting, and responsive communication, the Unit contributed to strengthening donor confidence, enhancing accountability, and ensuring continued alignment between project implementation priorities and partner expectations. These efforts were particularly important in sustaining financial and political support for the continuation of electoral assistance during a period marked by uncertainty surrounding the electoral timeline and broader transition processes.

Furthermore, the PMU supported high-level project governance and coordination mechanisms, including the facilitation of Project Board engagements, technical consultations, donor coordination meetings, and inter-agency collaboration processes. These efforts enhanced strategic coherence across the electoral support architecture and reinforced integrated UN support to South Sudan's peacebuilding and democratic governance agenda.

Through its responsive, solutions-oriented, and service-driven approach, the PMU continued to provide the operational foundation necessary for the successful implementation of the SSES project and the wider UN electoral assistance framework. Its contributions not only strengthened institutional efficiency and accountability but also supported the creation of an enabling environment for inclusive, peaceful, and credible electoral processes in South Sudan.

Output 1: Establishment of an enabling legal framework for free, fair, and inclusive elections is supported.

Throughout the first two reporting quarters, the UN IEAT advocated for the review and consolidation of the National Elections Act (NEA) into a single document and engaged with the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Judicial and Constitutional Affairs (MoJCA) to encourage the formation of a working group to consolidate and amend the NEA to facilitate the first elections. To note, the NEA must be reviewed and consolidated by merging the 2012 NEA and its 2023 amendments into a single document. Stakeholders for this process include the NEC as the leading body demanding changes in the electoral legal framework for easy implementation; the TNLA that proposes and recommends bills to the parliament; and the MoJCA that is responsible for legal drafting. While the MoJCA fully supported the idea and committed to collaborating closely with the NEC, the activities were put on hold by the NEC in the second reporting quarter, presumably due to the political situation.

Facing this setback, the UN IEAT Legal Unit focused on engagement with electoral stakeholders on issues pertaining to electoral framework. The team supported "*CSO-NEC Roundtable Dialogue*" organized in coordination with the Community Empowerment for Progress Organization (CEPO) and the NEC; they delivered a presentation at a three-day *Inter-Generational Dialogue on Inclusive Elections* that brought together participants from the NEC, CSOs, faith leaders and youth representatives.

To empower women's engagement in the legal field and encourage their involvement in shaping electoral laws and policies, the team worked with a group of South Sudanese Female Legal practitioners to discuss ways of enhancing their role in the electoral and the constitutional-making process. Organized by UNMISS Political Affairs Department (PAD) and in collaboration with UNMISS Gender Affairs Unit and the Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA) of South Sudan, women lawyers and legal practitioners discussed the existing legal gaps in electoral law, electoral dispute resolution (EDR) and lack of penalties for the enforcement of Revitalized Peace Agreement's (R-ARCSS) commitment to ensuring that women hold at least 35% of positions in all transitional government institutions. Participants developed recommendations to be drafted as a position paper for FIDA and submitted to the National Constitution Review
Commission (NCRC) for their consideration in the permanent constitution making process and to the NEC for possible inclusion in the forthcoming amendments to the National Elections Act (NEA).

In a three-day workshop on Local Governance and Devolution in South Sudan, organized by the Ministry of Peacebuilding in collaboration with UNMISS PAD, the UNIEAT presentation examined the implications of adopting a federal system of local governance in South Sudan, encouraged participants to discuss the prospects and challenges of local government reform, and foster stakeholder discussions that would lead to recommendations for improving local governance to be reviewed by the NCRC during the constitution-making process (CMP). Referring to the provisions of

the NEA and Local Government Act related to conducting local government elections, UNIEAT highlighted current gaps and inconsistencies in the NEA as well as the challenges arising from the political and legal timelines set by the South Sudan framework. The workshop included representatives from the Ministry of Federal Affairs, NCRC, the Transitional National Legislative Assembly (TNLA), NEC, local government units, and civil society organizations.

Aiming to advance the electoral process in South Sudan, the UNIEAT facilitated the discussion on collaboration of electoral stakeholders in an event titled *NEC Electoral Stakeholder's Engagement on the Electoral Process in South Sudan*. Main obstacles for holding elections, the existing gaps in electoral legislation, NEC's efforts and achievements in setting the foundation for a far-reaching and inclusive civic and voter education were some of the key discussion points. The event brought together members of the Government, National Transitional Committee (NTC), *ad hoc* Committee, NEC, MPs representing different political parties, media and civil society.

In the fourth reporting quarter, the UNIEAT Legal team engaged with the African Legal Practice (ALP-South Sudan) a leading law firm in Juba which has established a strong platform for aspiring law students to develop advocacy skills through moot court competitions. In partnership with the University of Juba and its Christian Law Students' Association, ALP has successfully organized high-profile legal events that have enhanced the visibility and reputation of the College of Law. Building on this foundation, UNIEAT Legal Team sought to collaborate with ALP to raise awareness among law students about electoral legislation and dispute resolution mechanisms, including about participation of women in elections.

Concurrent to the above activities, UNIEAT Legal Team continued review of the National Elections Act (as amended). To prepare the NEC for issues that will arise as we move closer to the election, the team also worked on draft regulations related to candidate nominations, electoral dispute resolution, polling and counting.

Throughout 2025, the UN IEAT also held l meetings with the NEC Legal Working Group and some of the Commissioners towards enhancing knowledge on various election-related topics, starting to revise the NEA section by section, consolidating the NEA 2012 and 2023 versions, addressing legal and technical challenges, and highlighting political decisions to be taken. The consolidated and revised NEA will serve as the basis for NEC's discussions with other interlocutors on the required review of the electoral legal framework. UN IEAT Legal Unit and the NEC Legal Working Group discussed Draft *NEC Internal Regulation* building on the *2013 NEC Internal Regulation* covers various topics, including Commission's organizational structure, decision-making processes, representation roles within the Commission, delegation of authority, operational modalities for the Commission and High Elections Committees (SHECs), ethical standards within the NEC, and strategies for training and capacity, financial provisions, and external relations.

The NEC developed a draft regulation on Election Dispute Resolution, with support from UNIEAT electoral experts. The UN IEAT produced a report focusing on a comparative study on elections dispute resolution in the East African region and recommendations on the EDR system to be implemented in South Sudan. To leverage the existing UNMISS relationship, institutional knowledge, and technical expertise, UN IEAT Legal Team also developed a joint activity with UNMISS Rule of Law and Security Institutions Section (RoLSIS) and started preparations to hire a Senior EDR Consultant to ensure consistent support and advice on EDR and other election related issues to the Judiciary, Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs (MoJCA) and other relevant institutions.

The UN IEAT also engaged with the South Sudan Bar Association (SSBA) with the aim of strengthening of its knowledge of electoral issues. The workshop jointly organized by the UNIEAT and the SSBA on 3 June 2025,*"Introduction to the international standards for elections and the electoral legal framework of South Sudan"* discussed international standards for democratic elections, the national legal framework, electoral dispute resolution, the background of election observation, and the requirements for accreditation of observers according to the NEA 2012/2023.

Output 2: Strengthened institutional capacities for professional, transparent, and accountable election management.

During the reporting period, the UNIEAT engaged the NEC through regular coordination meetings, technical advisory support, and workshops, to enhance NEC's capacity towards performing its electoral management roles. The UNIEAT' s advisory support to enhance the NEC's institutional capacity included the production of a draft action plan to operationalize NEC's Stakeholder Engagement Strategy which targets state and non-state electoral stakeholders including political parties, civil society, and media organizations, at both national and state levels.

In March 2025 , the UNIEAT conducted an important virtual meeting with the Chair of National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) and an international consultant on Boundary Delimitation to discuss the status of census preparations, flaws in existing population data sets (2008 Census and 2021 Population Estimate Survey); and other possible data sources including the ongoing Labour Migration Survey and future Voter Registration data (as a proxy for population). The Chair of the NBS noted that, even with funding and staffing in place, the conduct of the national census would take a minimum of 16 months to conduct a and produce useable population data.

In an effort to foster collaboration with other Government of South Sudan (GoSS) institutions, the NEC, with UNIEAT support, delivered an Orientation Workshop on the Electoral and Constitution-Making Processes in South Sudan for seventy-five participants from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other ministries, covering election updates, the legal framework, and civic and voter education plans.

Another important intervention in the institutional capacity building was the UNIEAT-supported Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections (BRIDGE) training in Juba in March and April on Voter Registration and on Boundary Delimitation respectively. The sessions brought together NEC and SHEC members aiming at providing participants with knowledge and practical skills in voter registration and boundary delimitation processes, enabling them to design and implement fair, accessible, and effective electoral processes.

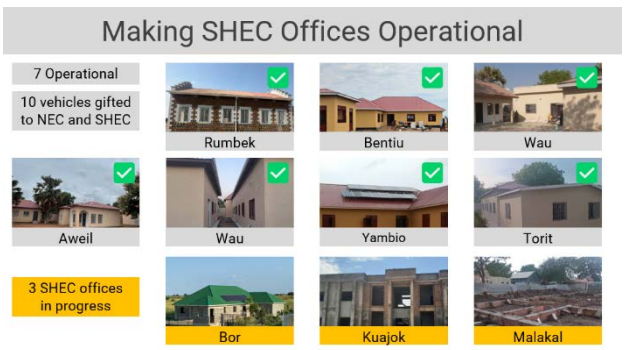


BRIDGE training on Boundary Delimitation and Voter Registration for 21 members from the NEC and five SHECs. Juba, 1-4 April 2025.

Following the BRIDGE training on boundary delimitation, UNIEAT met with an international consultant specializing in this area to discuss the finalization of an Options Paper to be shared with NEC and aiming to inform decision makers on the need to initiate the boundary delimitation process. To move forward with important discussion on IDP inclusion in December 2026 elections, UN IEAT organized a meeting to discuss draft paper on IDP inclusion with two international experts, NEC Commissioners, Secretariat and SHECs. The meeting was a platform for learning about approaches in this thematic area and focused discussion on the South Sudanese context.

Throughout the year, continued technical support and advice was provided to the NEC and its field structure for operational State High Election Committees (SHEC. Regular monthly Video-Teleconference (VTC) meetings brought together the NEC leadership and Secretariat and all the SHEC members for strengthened coordination, information sharing and guidance on the way forward.

In addition to technical support and advice provided to the NEC and State High Election Committees (SHEC), the project continued to support activities aiming to operationalize SHECs in ten states through UNMISS Quick Impact Projects (QIP). In 2025 seven offices were built or refurbished and officially opened. Remaining three are planned for opening in early 2026.



Also, as a part of its support to the enhancement of NEC's institutional capacity for efficient election management, the UN IEAT donated ten vehicles to NEC and SHECs and purchased 15 software licenses. The UN IEAT also donated a consignment of ICT equipment to NEC and all SHECs comprising desktop computers, printers, monitors, projectors, screens, modems, UPS, laptops and accompanying software. Valued at approximately USD 212,000, the equipment was handed over to the NEC for distribution to the SHECs. This intervention, combined with training on effective use of the IT equipment for 24 SHEC members in four states is aimed at bolstering staff performance and operational efficiency and contributing to the overall readiness of the NEC and SHECs to effectively deliver their electoral mandate. SHEC members in remaining offices will receive the training in 2026.

The absence of a NEC Training Department or Unit has created obstacles in the sustained and focused capacity development and training of both NEC and SHEC members. To address this need temporarily, until the financial situation allows the NEC to hire dedicated staff, UN IEAT proposed the appointment of training focal points. The proposal was well received and the NEC moved to appoint training focal points both at NEC and SHEC levels that will be leads in training activities The focal points received training by UN IEAT and will, in future, be implementing a range of training activities designed for their colleagues or electoral stakeholders. This measure is aimed at establishing a community of practice and engaging in collective learning, thus allowing the NEC to operate in a more professional manner, with enhanced capacities. To calibrate their interventions and adapt them to the needs of NEC and SHEC staff, the Training and Capacity Building Unit circulated an evaluation questionnaire to adapt future interventions. Starting with the Interactive Civic Literacy Workshops as the first activity, Training Focal Points were involved through collective learning, coordination and review of forthcoming activities and support through ongoing institutional capacity building conducted by UNIEAT.

To raise the staff capacity, UNIEAT facilitated a three-month English language course attended by Arabic-speaking Commissioners of the National Elections Commission. The initiative was designed to improve their English proficiency, enabling more confident participation in electoral dialogues. Also designed to increase capacity, a four-day training on the Fundamentals of Training and a two-day training on time management conducted by the UN IEAT Training and Capacity Building and Inclusion (TRCBI) to strengthen participants' skills in designing and facilitating effective training sessions and planning and effective decision-making to support electoral planning and implementation.

To further strengthen NEC's institutional capacity and align staff competencies with operational and strategic needs, the Terms of Reference for a National Human Resources Consultant were drafted and presented to the NEC Administration. Through a review of its organizational structure and existing staff functions, the consultant will identify gaps and overlaps, thus increasing organizational efficiency.

Output 3: Inclusive participation fostered through enhanced rights and access to information.

With activities launched in January 2025, this year has been busy with activities relating to promotion of access to accurate and impartial information through media. The UNIEAT supported a three-day workshop in Juba on Media Management to strengthen the Communications Departments of relevant national electoral stakeholders including the NEC, the SHECs, the PPC, the NCRC, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), and the NPS. The workshop, designed to build the capacities of the national institutions and their Spokespersons to effectively communicate key messages and important updates regarding the electoral process to the South Sudanese media and public at large, as well as to handle biased media coverage, allowed participants to be equipped with skills to positively engage with members of the media, thereby establishing themselves as credible sources of information.

In February, South Sudan's Ministry of Information, Communication, Telecommunication, and Postal Services, in partnership with Japan and UNESCO, launched a two-year project aimed at improving access to information during elections and post-election periods. *"Project for the Development of Mass Media to Improve Access to Information for Elections and Post-elections"*, is to run through 2026 and to focus on strengthening civic education and enhancing access to information for the South Sudanese through infrastructure development, training, and the establishment of community radio stations. The project also seeks to combat disinformation and hate speech.

In March, the UNIEAT supported a Media Training Engagement for Senior NPS Officials in Juba. The training was organized to follow-through on a request from the NPS Spokesperson who had requested a dedicated training session on media engagement and public communication, given the crucial role the NPS is expected to play in maintaining election security and public order. The training sought to equip participants with effective communication skills to build trust, transparency, and accountability with citizens, foster public confidence in the security measures taken to ensure free and fair elections and combat misinformation and speculation that could incite tensions.

From 24 to 26 June, the UN IEAT organised a workshop entitled "Strengthening Media Capacity on Electoral Processes and the Prevention of Electoral Violence" for 28 journalists, including 7 women (i.e. 25 %) from national media outlets, regional and community radio stations in all 10 states and 2 administrative areas, print and online journalists, social media influencers and independent content creators, opinion leaders and young media professionals. Facilitated by UNESCO, UN IEAT and NEC officers, the three-day training strengthened journalists' understanding of electoral processes, legal frameworks, institutional mandates, electoral violence and the role of the media in the prevention of conflicts and VAWiE; built their capacity to report accurately and responsibly on elections; promoted gender-sensitive reporting and contributed to relationships between the NEC and the media to enhance transparency and proper communication.

Working at the community level, UNESCO extended support to both listeners and media professionals. Through the distribution of 100 handheld radio sets, 14 bicycles and sound systems, to enhance access to information for communities through listeners groups of youth and women, aiming to increase radio listenership and participation to radio programmes on elections and other key topics. Eighty journalists (50 men and 30 women) in Wau and Aweil were trained on physical and digital safety and preparedness in high-risk environment and taught to use the Safety Guide for

Journalists in South Sudan. Another batch of thirty journalists (21 men and 9 women) from five community radio stations across Lakes State, Central Equatoria, Eastern Equatoria, Upper Nile, and Western Equatoria States were trained on factchecking.



In a two-pronged approach to address misinformation and with the aim of promoting accuracy, accountability and transparency in election-related reporting, support was also extended to media houses to establish fact-checking desks. An online open-source tool was developed to monitor misinformation in collaboration with DefyHate Now and Meedan Check to monitor, record, and analyze misinformation, disinformation, and hate speech before, during, and after elections. The tool was tested through the annotation of over 170 data entries, and twelve journalists were mentored and onboarded to actively use the platform, strengthening early detection and response to harmful content.

In addition to work with the journalist throughout South Sudan, UNIEAT UNESCO component also worked to strengthen communication capacity of the National Elections Commission (NEC). Fifteen NEC members (12 men and 3 women) were trained on media engagement, public information management, press conference coordination, and drafting effective press releases. This enhanced the NEC's institutional credibility, transparency, and ability to communicate effectively with the public ahead of electoral activities.

Within the context of World Press Freedom Day in May and the array of activities in support of freedom of expression, UNESCO conducted an advocacy conference entitled "Support to Enabling Environment for Media in South Sudan" aiming at reaffirming commitment to promote freedom of expression and press freedom as human rights enshrined in the country constitution and the media laws, recognizing their importance in strengthening democratic societies.

Ice-breaker moment, Media Management training for NEC, SHECs, PPC, and NCRC, 21-23 January, Juba.

Within the framework of NEC's Civic and Voter Education Working Group (NEC-CVEWG) which aims at facilitating decision-making and implementation of civic and voter education (CVE) programming UNIEAT continued engaging with the NEC on several key issues:

UNIEAT made significant efforts in calling on the NEC to approve key documents setting out the work of NEC's Public Outreach Directorate. The lack of clarity on the NEC's validation procedures impeded speedy approvals and to address that issue UNIEAT supported the idea of establishing the Civic Education Working Group. Comprised of three NEC commissioners and Director of Public Outreach, the group helped streamline the material approval process. This gave a significant push for the approval of the Baseline Survey, a research study that provides insights into citizen's

knowledge, perceptions and experience related to the electoral process and a tool that is useful in crafting targeted civic education programming. Other approvals followed, by late June 2025, the NEC also approved the Civic and Voter Education Curriculum and Civic and Voter Education Strategy.

The main tool for the implementation of civic education programming, Civic Education Training Manual, was completed and piloted in the Training of Trainers (ToT) which took place from 10-13 and 17-20 June. Fifty master trainers (of which women made up 30%, 17 participants) were trained and given an opportunity to provide their feedback on the content and practical exercises. The manual initially comprised of five modules focusing on democracy, human rights, governance, elections and peacebuilding. Based on the feedback, an additional module on inclusion was drafted after the ToT and included in the final version of the Training Manual. All six topics were outlined in the Civic Education Curriculum and are in line with the CVE Strategy.

UNIEAT Civic and Voter Education Unit, with assistance from the UNMISS Public Information Office, developed and produced three radio dramas based on a topic outlined in Civic and Voter Education Curriculum. The dramas have been produced and will be broadcast as soon as there is an agreement on media placement. The scripts, which explain ideas of democracy, election and governance in a fun and approachable way, are based on the ideas of edutainment. They have been shared with the NEC and JICA who has funded several activities based on the scripts and the CVE Curriculum. First JICA activity is a cooperation with a cartoonist who will translate adapt the text and create comics. This highlights seamless cooperation among international partners working to support NEC's civic and voter education efforts.

To increase the visibility of direct outreach activities expected to take place at a grassroots level in all ten states, CVEER proposed campaign-specific branding. While retaining the colors associated with the NEC and featuring NEC logo as well as a new civic education campaign logo, the new branding aimed to be associated with a larger civic education effort and bring under the same umbrella all actors supporting the NEC. Visibility for use by trainers/educators working in the field and included items such as T-shirts, caps, banners, notebooks and other promotional materials. With designs approved by the NEC, UN IEAT team moved quickly to use funds remaining from the fiscal year ending on 30 June 2025. All items will be stored until the civic education campaign is ready to be launched throughout the country.

UNIEAT assistance on the issue campaign focused on identification of all components of a successful campaign, visibility items being only one. Finalized material, secured funding, planning from the start to finish of the campaign, agreements with media outlets and other vendors must be in place before the campaign is launched. NEC was adamant on an immediate launch UNIEAT cautioned that under the current financial, operational and staffing situation, it may be impossible for NEC to adequately support such campaign and that it may be more feasible to focus on activities that do Civic Education. The decision was made after two vendors informed UNMISS that they would not be able to deliver services as agreed under the scope of work and within requested timelines. To address this situation, UNIEAT has decided to work with the UNMISS Public Outreach and Advocacy Unit to conceptualize and produce audiovisual content and redeploy some of the budgetary resources to produce material via long-term agreements and in-country low value acquisitions.

After carefully considering challenges in provision of technical assistance to NEC (slow approval mechanisms and staffing issues, to name a few) and the timelines within the context of the new push for conduct of elections, UNIEAT proposed a new approach in addressing this situation. The next phase of material development is planned to focus on design of visual aids for direct outreach in the field, targeting rural population with low literacy levels. Planning for the December 2026, Civic and Voter Education Unit plans to create visual aids for civic education (covering five topics discussed in Civic Education Manual) and voter education (voter registration and polling) and will start developing civic education material immediately and voter education material as soon as relevant information about the registration and voting processes becomes available. As NEC approval mechanisms are slow and cumbersome, it is imperative to save time on during the creative design process. With that in mind, CVE has proposed use of AI tools in generating visual aids. UNIEAT Training Officer who worked closely with CVE Unit on the Civic Education Manual attended a UN designed AI training; she will work with the National Graphic Designer on creating visually appealing and culturally appropriate visual aids. With this, National Graphic Designer will receive a unique skillset, and the material will be created within tight timelines. To prepare for this, UNIEAT requested procurement of AI software to be procured with UNDP funding.

Output 4: Enhanced environment for maintaining security and mitigating violence during elections.

Results in this output pertained to enhancing the capacity of the Election Security Committee (ESC) and support to the operationalizations of the Joint Election Operation Centres (JEOC) in the ten States of South Sudan.



Official handing-over ceremony of fully equipped meeting space to the NPS

In February 2025, the UNIEAT handed over a fully equipped Office/Meeting Space at the NPS premises for the Election Security Committee in Juba. The handover ceremony was chaired by the Inspector General of the NPS, and attended, inter alia, by Hon. Sarah Gatluak, Commissioner at the NEC; the Deputy UN Police Commissioner, and the Deputy Chief IEAT. Through this project, UNIEAT is supporting the creation of an enabling environment for election security, as a broader part of institutional preparedness, including capacity building and planning on election security.

The IEAT participated and supported the Election Security Committee (ESC) in their weekly meetings to plan for the coordination of election security, and to support the finalization of the Joint Election Operation Centre (JEOC) assessment report. Between 1 April and 30 June, the UN IEAT supported the NEC and the NPS in conducting assessment for the JEOCs in eight (8) states and one administrative area. The assessment revealed that all the JEOCs neither have digital equipment nor internet connectivity and lack furniture. It was also confirmed that, although all the state capitals

have network coverage, outside of the state capitals the signal is weak and unreliable. To note, the JEOCs will be part of the early warning system to identify threats to elections and to prevent electoral violence.

To enhance the working conditions of the NPS towards effective risk management, monitoring, and response, the UN IEAT installed 10 solar panels on the ESC office based at the NPS, handed over an ablution facility consisting of a building, water facility and septic tank.

In a continued effort to strengthen the capacity on electoral security standards and procedures and the integration of gender-responsive and gender-sensitive approaches, the UNIEAT supported the Training of 30 Trainers organized by UNPOL on the "Role of Security in Electoral Processes and Prevention of Violence Against Women in Elections (VAWiE). Equipped with skills and knowledge, 30 UNPOL trainers (16 men, 13 women) with the necessary skills and knowledge, Trainers proceeded, with the second and third steps of the cascade trainings at state and intra-state levels. During the second step, 234 beneficiaries from the NPS, SHECs, CSOs, UNPOL and UNIEAT, including 71 women (30%) were trained in the ten states of South Sudan. For the third step, cofacilitated by the UNPOL and NPS officers that were trained during the 2nd step of the cascade trainings, 125 NPS officers including 18 women (14 %) were trained in five states. Altogether, for the second and third steps, fifteen (15) workshops were organized to train 359 direct beneficiaries including 89 women in elections security and the prevention and address of VAWiE. A thousand (1,000) brochures were printed for the trainings, including 500 training manuals on "The Role of Security in Electoral Processes" and 500 training manuals for VAWiE, which were distributed within the respective states for the conduct of the trainings.

To broaden the reach of VAWIE programming, the UNIEAT supported a BRIDGE workshop which gathered a diverse group of stakeholders, including election administrators; the political party council leadership; security sector officials; and civil society members to enhance their knowledge of gender-sensitive electoral processes. The workshop focused on international electoral standards; barriers to women's political participation; risk assessments; and strategic planning for VAWiE prevention. The inclusion of multiple stakeholders contributed to cross-sector collaboration and strengthened participants' capacity to address gender-related electoral violence. The Participants, including 12 men, reported having acquired an enhanced understanding and practical tools to support women's safe participation in electoral processes. Two months later, in March 2025, UNIEAT supported a workshop in Juba for 33 young women leaders from the civil society. The workshop aimed at strengthening CSO Engagement in Preventing Violence Against Women in Elections (VAWiE) and provided participants with tools and strategies for advocacy, prevention and intervention.

Activities continued in May 2025, gathering 39 young women from youth-led CSOs for a forum on participation and VAWiE prevention and June, when a two-day "Youth Engagement Forum" on the prevention of VAWiE and the promotion of inclusive electoral participation brought together 44

youth network participants (including 18 women). They engaged in interactive sessions covering the basics of elections, electoral systems, inclusive participation, and the drivers of VAWiE.

UNIEAT UN Women trained 21 women civil society leaders have in mediation and engagement skills to address political tensions and promote gender inclusion in constitution-making and elections. Through CEPO-led training, they strengthened their knowledge of R-ARCSS gender provisions, regional and UN roles, and political dialogue. Follow-up activities include coaching, meetings with leaders, "Women for Peace" roundtables, radio dialogues, and one-on-one engagements with peace signatories and advancing South Sudan's commitments to inclusive governance under R-ARCSS and UNSCR 1325.

The South Sudan Gender Observatory trained and engaged a total of 453 participants across Juba, Wau, Yambio, and Kapoeta South, including 256 women, 131 men, and youth and persons with disabilities. Consultations emphasized that sustainable peace and credible elections are inseparable, with women's equal participation central to both. Dialogues in Yambio and Wau brought together 102 women across age groups to strengthen mentorship and solidarity, while broader civic engagement promoted awareness and collective responsibility to prevent electoral violence and ensure peaceful democratic participation.

UNIEAT UN Women and Community Empowerment for Progress Organization (CEPO)supported Women Action for Peace Dialogue (WAPD) and brought together 21 women mediators, including young women, for five dialogues aiming to strengthen their roles in peacebuilding and political transition. The last dialogue concluded in a joint agreement to pursue a political resolution, underscoring women's leadership in shaping peace.

Despite the political stalemate and the deteriorating security situation in South Sudan, UNIEAT UN Women continued its efforts in empowerment of women, youth and marginalized groups. Another highly profiled activity commemorated the *16 Days of Activism: End Digital Violence Against Women and Girls: Unite to Stop Digital Abuse*, In partnership with MTN, the South Sudan Football Association, and the Federation of Women Lawyers, the campaign brought together 49 stakeholders, engaged 150 youth at an event in a tweetathon amplifying messages of peace and inclusion, and reaching thousands through the *Play for Peace* football match led by Amy Lasu Luaya, an international soccer player from South Sudan based in Europe. Pre- and post-game convenings focused on trauma-informed responses to online and other forms of violence. Ambassadors from the EU and France, alongside UNMISS, joined events attended by 300 participants, with 2,000 more reached via radio, TV, and social media. Youth made up 60% of attendees, and women 45%, including athletes, activists, and community leaders. Post-event surveys showed that 70% gained a deeper understanding of technology-facilitated GBV. The campaign culminated in *Connect for Change* event, which engaged 250 students at the University of Juba on digital resilience,

cybersecurity, and women's leadership, laying the foundations for inclusive governance, credible elections, and sustainable peace.

Output 5: Strengthened effectiveness in planning and implementing electoral operations for all citizens.

NOT ACTIVE.

Output 6: Project effectively managed.

In 2025, the Project Management Unit (PMU) delivered substantive results under Output VI of the SSES project, providing strategic leadership, operational oversight, and integrated management support that enabled the effective implementation of electoral assistance activities within a highly dynamic and politically sensitive operating environment. Serving as the operational backbone of the project and supporting the broader UN IEAT, the PMU ensured that project delivery remained timely, coordinated, accountable, and fully aligned with United Nations standards and donor expectations.

A major achievement during the reporting period was the successful development, endorsement, and operationalization of key planning and programming instruments, most notably the 2025 Annual Work Plan (AWP), with an approved budget of USD 5.6 million. Developed through a consultative and results-oriented process, the AWP was fully aligned with UNDP corporate requirements, donor contribution agreements, and evolving national electoral priorities. The planning framework provided a coherent strategic and operational roadmap for implementation, strengthened resource predictability, and reinforced the project's commitment to transparency, accountability, results-based management, and value-for-money principles.

In parallel, the PMU successfully coordinated a series of amendments to existing donor contribution agreements with key development partners, including the European Union, Canada, Switzerland, UN Women, and UNESCO. These engagements were instrumental in safeguarding operational continuity, maintaining financial sustainability, and reinforcing donor confidence in the project's governance, fiduciary oversight, and implementation arrangements. Strategic partnerships with UN Women and UNESCO were further consolidated and operationalized, contributing to tangible programme outcomes, including initiatives aimed at addressing violence against women in elections (VAWiE), strengthening gender-responsive electoral participation, and enhancing the professional capacity of media practitioners in responsible and conflict-sensitive electoral reporting.

The PMU continued to play a central role in ensuring robust project governance, oversight, and reporting. The Unit maintained accurate and timely management of project information within UNDP's Quantum platform, enabling transparent financial monitoring, compliance oversight, and evidence-based decision-making. High-quality narrative and financial reports were prepared and submitted to donors, national counterparts, project governance structures, and the UNDP Country

Office, thereby strengthening accountability, promoting stakeholder confidence, and facilitating informed strategic engagement.

The PMU also successfully coordinated four Project Board meetings convened on 21 May 2025 and 25 November 2025 . These meetings provided an important platform for strategic oversight, stakeholder coordination, and collective decision-making. Key outcomes included the endorsement of strategic implementation priorities, review of programme progress and risks, and approval of the 2026 Annual Work Plan with an indicative budget of USD 2 million, ensuring continuity of electoral support interventions into the subsequent implementation period.

Human resources management and technical capacity strengthening remained central pillars of PMU support throughout the year. The Unit successfully led transparent and competitive recruitment processes for a range of highly specialized national and international positions critical to project delivery. These included the recruitment of a Gender and Inclusion Consultant, Curriculum Developer for Civic Education, Graphic Designer, Civic and Voter Education experts, and BRIDGE-accredited facilitators and trainers, among others. The deployment of these technical experts significantly enhanced the project's operational readiness, strengthened thematic expertise, and improved the project's ability to respond effectively to evolving electoral priorities and stakeholder needs.

Collaboration and institutional engagement with national electoral stakeholders were further strengthened through the PMU's proactive coordination and advisory support to the NEC, PPC, NPS, and other relevant actors. The Unit provided technical and operational advisory support aimed at strengthening institutional systems, organizational development, workforce planning, and operational preparedness within the NEC, thereby contributing to improved institutional functionality and readiness to discharge its constitutional responsibilities.

In support of institutional capacity-building efforts, the PMU facilitated the implementation of a series of BRIDGE training workshops delivered during January and December 2025. These trainings covered a range of thematic electoral modules tailored to the operational requirements of electoral institutions and stakeholders, contributing to enhanced technical knowledge, institutional coordination, and professionalization of electoral administration processes.

The PMU also played an important role in supporting electoral security coordination and preparedness. Through close collaboration with the NEC and the NPS, the Unit facilitated coordination mechanisms aimed at strengthening election security planning and operational readiness. This included oversight and support for infrastructure improvements, notably the establishment of the Electoral Security Committee Office within the NPS Headquarters in Juba, which enhanced institutional coordination and operational functionality related to electoral security management. In parallel, the PMU continued to provide regular technical advisory support to the NEC on budget formulation, operational planning, logistical preparedness, and implementation

strategies, ensuring that the institution remained better positioned to fulfil its mandate in an increasingly complex political and operational context.

From a financial and operational management perspective, the PMU effectively administered a multi-donor basket fund valued at approximately USD 7.9 million. The project was supported through contributions from Canada, the European Union, the Africa Elections Fund, Switzerland, Japan, the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund, UN Women, the UNDP Crisis Bureau Funding Window, and UNDP core resources. Through sound financial stewardship, rigorous compliance oversight, and strengthened internal controls, the Unit ensured the transparent, efficient, and accountable utilization of project resources.

The PMU additionally oversaw procurement and contracting processes amounting to approximately USD 1.1 million, including the preparation of Terms of Reference, technical specifications, solicitation processes, bid evaluations, and contract management activities, all conducted in full compliance with UNDP procurement policies, procedures, and principles of fairness, integrity, transparency, and best value for money.

Throughout the reporting period, the PMU demonstrated a high level of operational effectiveness, adaptability, and strategic responsiveness in supporting the delivery of the South Sudan Electoral Support Project. Its contributions not only ensured the smooth implementation of project activities and strengthened stakeholder coordination, but also reinforced broader efforts to promote inclusive, transparent, peaceful, and accountable electoral processes in South Sudan. The achievements realized during 2025 reflect a strong commitment to partnership, institutional strengthening, good governance, and sustainable capacity development, laying a solid operational and strategic foundation for the next phase of electoral support.

PARTNERSHIP

In line with the United Nations' integrated approach to electoral assistance in mission settings, the South Sudan Electoral Support Project (SSES), implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), continued to serve as a core operational component of the United Nations Integrated Electoral Assistance Team (UN IEAT) under the overall political and strategic leadership of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). Throughout 2025, the Project's partnership architecture remained central to ensuring coherent, coordinated, and effective electoral assistance in support of South Sudan's democratic transition and peacebuilding agenda.

The SSES Project adopted a partnership-driven implementation approach aimed at maximizing institutional synergies, strengthening operational complementarity, and minimizing duplication across the electoral assistance landscape. This collaborative framework reinforced alignment among national institutions, United Nations entities, development partners, and regional actors, while promoting shared accountability, collective ownership, and strategic coherence in the delivery of electoral support. Through sustained coordination and inclusive engagement, the Project contributed to strengthening confidence among stakeholders and fostering a more integrated and responsive support environment for electoral preparedness.

National ownership remained at the center of project implementation. The SSES Project continued to work closely with South Sudanese institutions to strengthen institutional capacities, enhance operational readiness, and promote inclusive participation in electoral processes. The National Elections Commission (NEC) remained the Project's principal institutional counterpart and strategic partner, with collaboration spanning electoral planning, institutional development, operational preparedness, civic education, and coordination mechanisms at both national and subnational levels. Through sustained technical and operational engagement, the Project supported the NEC in advancing its institutional functionality and preparedness to fulfil its constitutional mandate in a complex and evolving political context.

The Project also maintained close collaboration with the Political Parties Council (PPC), the National Police Service (NPS), and a broad range of civil society organizations (CSOs), recognizing their critical role in fostering inclusive, peaceful, participatory, and credible electoral processes. Engagement with CSOs contributed to strengthening civic awareness, community outreach, and grassroots participation, particularly among women, youth, and historically marginalized groups. In parallel, collaboration with the NPS and electoral security coordination structures supported efforts to enhance election security preparedness and inter-institutional coordination mechanisms.

Beyond direct electoral support, the Project leveraged synergies across the broader UNDP governance and development portfolio, ensuring that electoral assistance remained embedded within a wider framework of democratic governance, peacebuilding, institutional strengthening, and sustainable development. Strategic linkages were maintained with complementary initiatives in access to justice, rule of law, human rights, gender equality, youth empowerment, and social cohesion. This integrated programming approach strengthened policy coherence, enhanced operational efficiency, and mitigated the risk of parallel systems or fragmented interventions.

At the United Nations system level, the SSES Project worked in close partnership with UNMISS and relevant UN agencies, drawing upon their respective mandates, technical expertise, and comparative advantages to strengthen the overall effectiveness of electoral assistance. Collaboration with UN Women contributed significantly to advancing women's political participation, gender-responsive electoral processes, and initiatives aimed at addressing violence against women in elections (VAWiE). Similarly, engagement with UNESCO supported interventions focused on media development, civic education, access to information, and the promotion of responsible and conflict-sensitive electoral reporting. These partnerships enhanced the inclusivity and sustainability of electoral support interventions and reinforced the broader human rights and governance dimensions of the project.

The Project also continued to strengthen coordination and collaboration with regional and international partners to enhance complementarity, optimize resource utilization, and promote harmonized support to South Sudan's electoral institutions. Strategic engagement with the African Union (AU) leveraged the organization's regional legitimacy, political convening role, and electoral expertise, particularly in the areas of technical advisory support and electoral observation frameworks. In addition, collaboration with bilateral and specialized technical partners, including the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the Max Planck Foundation, further enriched the Project's technical assistance architecture. JICA's institutional capacity-building support to the NEC contributed to strengthening organizational preparedness and technical competencies, while the Max Planck Foundation provided specialized legal and constitutional expertise in support of the evolving electoral and legislative framework.

Throughout the reporting period, the Project's partnership model demonstrated the value of integrated, multi-stakeholder collaboration in supporting complex electoral processes within fragile and transitional contexts. By fostering strong institutional relationships, promoting coordination across the UN system and development partners, and maintaining a consistent focus on national ownership and inclusivity, the SSES Project strengthened the foundations for sustainable electoral governance and contributed to broader efforts aimed at promoting peace, democratic participation, and institutional resilience in South Sudan.

International Donor Partners

The South Sudan Electoral Support Project (SSES) continued to benefit from the sustained diplomatic, technical, and financial support of a committed group of international development partners whose contributions remained instrumental in advancing inclusive, peaceful, and credible electoral preparations in South Sudan. Throughout 2025, the continued engagement of donor partners reflected a strong collective commitment to democratic governance, peacebuilding, institutional strengthening, and the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS).

Core financial support to the Project was provided by the European Union, Governments of Canada, Japan, and Switzerland, as well as by UNDP from its core resources whose contributions enabled the continuation and expansion of critical electoral assistance interventions across multiple thematic and operational areas. Their support played a pivotal role in strengthening the institutional capacities of national electoral stakeholders, promoting inclusive participation, enhancing electoral security

coordination, and supporting civic and voter education initiatives at both national and subnational levels.

Beyond financial contributions, donor partners maintained active strategic engagement through regular policy dialogue, participation in Project Board meetings, technical consultations, and coordination mechanisms that strengthened transparency, accountability, and collective oversight of project implementation. This sustained partnership approach reinforced mutual trust and enabled responsive decision-making in a fluid and evolving political environment, while ensuring continued alignment between project priorities, national needs, and international commitments.

The support provided by international partners also contributed significantly to strengthening the operational resilience and sustainability of the Project during a period characterised by political uncertainty and evolving electoral timelines. Through flexible and adaptive funding arrangements, including amendments and extensions to contribution agreements, donor partners demonstrated continued confidence in the project's governance architecture, fiduciary controls, and results-oriented implementation approach. Their support enabled the Project to maintain operational continuity, preserve institutional gains, and sustain critical technical assistance to national counterparts despite the complex operating context.

The SSES Project further benefited from complementary support provided through broader United Nations financing mechanisms and partnerships, including contributions from the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), the UNDP Crisis Bureau Funding Window, and collaborative initiatives with UN Women and UNESCO. These partnerships enhanced the multidimensional nature of electoral assistance by integrating gender equality, peacebuilding, media development, and civic engagement dimensions into project implementation.

Collectively, the support of international donor partners has been fundamental in enabling the United Nations to provide coherent, coordinated, and sustained electoral assistance to South Sudan. Their continued engagement not only strengthened institutional preparedness for future electoral processes, but also reaffirmed the broader international community's commitment to supporting South Sudan's democratic transition, inclusive governance, and long-term peace and stability.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

UNDP maintains a robust and adaptive monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework to ensure that the South Sudan Electoral Support (SSES) Project is implemented with rigour, transparency, and aligned strategic intent. Monitoring is conducted on a continuous basis to track progress towards the agreed results, inform evidence-based decision-making, and support adaptive programming in a rapidly evolving political and operational environment.

The project's Results Framework is fully harmonized with the UNDP Strategic Plan 2022–2025, the UNDP South Sudan Country Programme Document, and relevant national indicators. Progress against output-level and outcome-level indicators is systematically collected, verified, and analysed, allowing the project team to assess delivery trends, identify performance gaps, and support corrective actions where required. The project risk log is actively maintained and updated to reflect emerging risks, mitigation measures, and management responses, thereby contributing to a strengthened risk-informed programming approach.

Lessons learned, both operational and strategic are captured regularly by the project team and feed directly into management deliberations, ensuring continuous improvement in the efficiency, relevance, and impact of project interventions. Oversight, quality assurance, and compliance monitoring are further reinforced through systematic engagement by the UNDP Country Office Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) team, in line with UNDP's corporate policies on monitoring, evaluation, and results reporting.

PROJECT GOVERNANCE AND OVERSIGHT

On 18 November, as a pre-project board meeting, the UN IEAT convened a technical-level consultation with donor partners, including representatives from the European Union, Canada, Switzerland, and Germany. The meeting served as a critical platform to review the proposed 2026 Project Work Plan and the associated recommendation for project extension beyond December 2025. Donor partners reaffirmed their commitment to supporting the NEC and other key national institutions in nurturing conditions conducive to credible, inclusive, and peaceful elections. However, partners reiterated that no additional financial contributions could be pledged at this stage. Their decision remains contingent on demonstrable Government actions and assurances that would allow them to justify further allocations to their respective capitals. It was further agreed that the UN IEAT would present three work plan scenarios for 2026 based on project extension periods of 3, 6, or 12 months each, paired with proportional programmatic outputs and financial requirements. This approach reflects a pragmatic, risk-aware planning methodology aligned with donor expectations for accountability and responsive adaptation to political realities.

On 25 November, the Fifth Project Board Meeting of the Electoral Support Project was convened to assess progress and agree on forward-looking priorities for electoral readiness. Co-chaired by the Honourable Minister of Finance and Planning and the Chairperson of the NEC, the meeting drew full participation from contributing partners to the multi-donor basket fund. Speaking on behalf of His Excellency the President, the Minister reiterated the Government's continued commitment to the conduct of credible elections and emphasized the importance of this milestone for the country's democratic trajectory. He reaffirmed the Government's intention to provide the political direction and timely financing necessary for the process to advance meaningfully. The Board approved a one-year project extension through December 2026 and endorsed the 2026 Annual Work Plan totaling USD 1.9

million. Within this allocation, approximately USD 645K earmarked for programmatic activities would be available, leaving a funding gap of USD 1.3 million. While donor partners reiterated their support for the broader R-ARCSS implementation agenda and acknowledged the need for continued electoral assistance, they remained hesitant to mobilize additional electoral financing absent tangible Government action. It was agreed to reconvene the next board meeting in February 2026 to reassess the progress on R-ARCSS implementation. The project, meanwhile, continues to operate under minimal staffing and reduced operational funding. UNDP has stepped in to sustain continuity of essential functions, providing core UNDP resources to ensure staffing coverage through March 2026.

Audit

The UNDP's Office of Audit and Investigations (OAI), New York, successfully concluded its periodic audit of the UNDP South Sudan Country Office including the SSES Project for the period 1 January 2024 to 30 June 2025. The audit assessed the effectiveness of risk management, internal controls, and governance arrangements, focusing on:

- Alignment with organizational strategic objectives;
- Reliability and integrity of financial and operational information;
- Efficiency and effectiveness of programme delivery;
- Safeguarding of assets; and
- Compliance with applicable policies, rules, and regulations.

The audit resulted in an overall rating of 'Satisfactory', with some improvement needed demonstrating that internal controls, financial stewardship, and governance practices are functioning effectively. This positive assessment reaffirms the project's commitment to accountability, transparency, and responsible resource management, thereby strengthening donor confidence and reinforcing credibility with national counterparts. The audit report is accessible on the UNDP audit disclosure platform http://audit-public-disclosure.undp.org/ .

CHALLENGES and LESSONS LEARNED

The persistence and escalation of conflict in parts of the country, coupled with a deteriorating political environment, significantly affected the project's ability to engage political parties and advance broader stakeholder preparedness. While electoral assistance remains a central pillar of UNDP's governance support, the volatile context necessitated a heightened focus on neutrality, resulting in the temporary suspension of UN IEAT support to political parties through the PPC.

Critical challenges faced by national counterparts particularly the National Elections Commission (NEC) continued to impede progress and required sustained, targeted support:

***Capacity gains are fragile in the absence of fully recruited staff within permanent NEC structure**:* The UN IEAT and other international assistance providers understand capacity building as a key component of successful technical support. During the reporting period, the number of permanent NEC staff has, in fact, reduced thus limiting the potential of technical assistance and putting at risk the ability of the institution to retain knowledge and lessons from the pre-elections period. A related challenge

concerns NEC's staff and leadership being overwhelmed by the number of responsibilities and a volume of international assistance providers relative to their own skeleton staff. Lessons from initial stages of implementation, point to the need for permanent staff to be recruited at an early stage in the process.

Lack of infrastructure and funding hamper the ability of electoral institution to perform: The infrastructure of the main state counterparts, NEC and NPS was almost inexistent or inadequate. This will have a significant impact on NEC's ability to deliver on its mandate – for this reason, UNIEAT stepped up to support the establishment of minimum operational requirements both in HQ and state level. However, this intervention is not a long-term solution and sustainability of NEC's work in unchanged circumstances is a concern.

Maintaining adaptability and flexibility to cope with unexpected changes to the operating context: The year 2025 was characterized by uncertainties around the ability of South Sudan to conduct elections scheduled in December 2026. First, limited progress was made in the implementation of the key milestones of the roadmap, notably on constitution-making process and census. In the context of a highly volatile political landscape, the South Sudan's Presidency approved a series of amendments delinking elections from the completion of constitution and conducting the elections under the Transitional Constitution (2011). SPLM-IO rejected this move noting that signatories of the 2018 Agreement were excluded and making it clear that there is no political consensus necessary for the conduct of inclusive, credible and peaceful elections. Lessons learned address the challenges associated with adapting to a fluid environment:

- Lack of political decisions carried knock-on effects for the eventual electoral process, requiring extension of the transitional period and rescheduling of elections. After political decisions were made, lack of political consensus endangered the credibility of the process.
- The persistent lack of legal clarity hampers the ability of the NEC to thoroughly plan for different phases of elections.
- A fluid operational environment necessitated ongoing efforts to ensure flexibility.
- Resource availability is less predictable and less stable, negatively impacting flexibility.

Establishment of coordination mechanisms strengthen the effectiveness of national management of processes as well as international support:

During the reporting period, significant progress was achieved in strengthening coordination mechanisms aimed at enhancing the effectiveness, coherence, and efficiency of both national electoral management processes and international electoral assistance efforts in South Sudan. The establishment and operationalisation of structured coordination platforms within the National Elections Commission (NEC) and the National Police Service (NPS), alongside strengthened coordination among international providers of electoral technical assistance, contributed substantially to improving institutional collaboration, strategic alignment, and operational preparedness.

At the national level, the establishment of dedicated coordination mechanisms within the NEC and NPS enhanced inter-institutional planning, information-sharing, and decision-making processes related to electoral preparedness and election security management. These mechanisms facilitated more systematic engagement between electoral and security institutions, strengthened operational coordination, and supported the development of more integrated approaches to electoral planning

and implementation. In particular, regular coordination engagements enabled stakeholders to identify operational priorities, address emerging challenges in a timely manner, and improve overall institutional readiness within a complex and evolving political environment.

The operationalisation of coordination structures also contributed to strengthening national ownership of electoral preparations by promoting greater institutional accountability, clearer delineation of responsibilities, and more efficient utilisation of available technical and operational resources. Through these collaborative platforms, the NEC and NPS were better positioned to harmonise planning processes, align operational timelines, and reinforce preparedness for future labour-intensive phases of the electoral cycle.

At the international level, strengthened coordination among providers of electoral technical assistance proved equally important in ensuring a coherent and harmonised approach to support delivery. Through regular coordination forums and technical consultations led within the framework of the United Nations Integrated Electoral Assistance Team (UN IEAT), international partners were able to improve information exchange, align technical interventions, minimise duplication of efforts, and maximise the strategic use of available resources. This collaborative approach enhanced complementarity among stakeholders and reinforced the effectiveness of international support to national electoral institutions.

The establishment of these coordination mechanisms further strengthened strategic coherence across the broader electoral assistance architecture, enabling more responsive and integrated support to South Sudan's electoral processes. Importantly, these structures are expected to provide a sustainable foundation for intensified collaboration and coordinated action during more operationally demanding phases of the electoral process, including large-scale electoral operations, voter education campaigns, electoral security deployments, and stakeholder engagement activities.

Overall, the strengthened coordination mechanisms established during 2025 represented an important institutional achievement that contributed to improving operational efficiency, reinforcing stakeholder confidence, and advancing a more unified and accountable approach to electoral assistance in South Sudan.

RISK MONITORING

During the reporting period, the situation for each of the below risks, pre-identified in the Project document, was as follows:

a) Risks associated with the national context.

Risk #1: Increased instability and insecurity. The reporting period witnessed an increase of this risk, with likely impact on the footprint of election related activities and operations.

Risk #2: Changes in the political and electoral context resulting in new priorities. With the delinking of the elections from the completion of permanent constitution and mandating the conduct of the election under the Transitional Constitution 2011 (as amended) and the SPLM-IO's

rejection, the reporting period witnessed great changes in political landscape resulting in highly probable lack of consensus required for credible elections.

Risk #3: Reduction in political and civic space. The reporting period saw increased reduction in political and civic space, with highly likely impact on the electoral process in parts of the country.

Risk #4: Delays in the implementation of the R-ARCSS and legal and institutional frameworks to hold elections. Despite the decision to delink completion of the constitution from elections, outstanding institutional reforms which impact elections (e.g. judicial and security) have not met established timelines. There is a high probability of the occurrence of this risk as well as impact on the timely implementation of the electoral process.

Risk #5: Natural or manmade hazards. No change with respect to this risk over the reporting period as it remained high with floods limiting access to some areas. However, there was little impact on the electoral process due to the absence of electoral operations.

Risk #6: Lack of experience and capacity of national stakeholders. The reporting period witnessed no change in the probability of this risk. The capacities of relevant national electoral stakeholders remained constringed by their inability to proceed with substantial recruitments, causing a delay in the implementation of their respective mandates. This has mostly impacted on the NEC.

Risk #7: Unaligned needs and lack of national ownership. No change to this risk over the reporting period, hence no impact on the electoral process. While on national ownership the risk is no longer relevant, thanks to the re-establishment and establishment of the NEC, PPC and NCRC

b) Organisational Risks for the Project.

Risk #8: inadequate harmonization and rationalization of international efforts. No change to this risk over the reporting period, hence no impact on the electoral process.

Risk #9: lack of demand for, or consent to, international electoral assistance. While this risk remains low in the longer term, during the reporting the national counterparts established a very constructive relationship with UN IEAT and other international providers of electoral assistance hence the risk did not materialize.

Risk #10: Inadequate national funding of the electoral process. This risk materialized during the reporting period with high impact on the establishment of the NEC, the NPS and partly the PPC. This risk remains high for the year 2026. The Project itself remained underfunded throughout the year, nevertheless adequate programming of limited resources along with the slow implementation of electoral activities minimized the impact on the support provided to national counterparts.

PROPOSED WAY FORWARD AND NEXT STEPS

Despite the challenges of the volatile political landscape, the UN IEAT will uphold its coordination with, and support to, NEC, the SHECs, and other relevant national electoral stakeholders working towards the December 2026 election, including the NPS, PPC, the MoJCA, TNLA and CSOs.

Coordination and assistance continue focusing on the strengthening of the enabling environment. Support will continue to be provided for capacity and institution building, enhancing the capacity of the NEC and CSOs to conduct civic and voter education, strengthening of an electoral process with focus on women, youth and other marginalized groups, supporting the legal reform and legal drafting, technical, logistical, and operational support, all with the overarching objective to enhance the capacities of the beneficiaries towards planning, organising and implementing the December 2026 General elections.

Specifically, during the year 2026:

- Under *Output 1*, the UN IEAT will continue supporting the NEC and the PPC in the development of regulations and codes of conduct for elections and other counterpart with the necessary reform of the legal framework for elections, including for effective electoral dispute resolution.
- Under *Output 2*, the UN IEAT will continue strengthening the institutional capacities of NEC, CSOs and other national stakeholders for accountable, transparent, and professional election management.
- Under *Output 3*, the UN IEAT will be fostering inclusivity through supporting civic and voter education planning and implementation, including for women and vulnerable groups, and enhancing access to information through support to media organisations in the provision of accurate and impartial information.
- Under *Output 4*, the UNIEAT will also be strengthening the institutional capacity and capacity building of the NPS as national, state and county level to professionally manage elections security and mitigate the occurrence of electoral related violence, with a specific focus on the prevention of violence against women in elections (VAWiE).
- *Under Output 6*, the UN IEAT will uphold its project management support towards achieving the above outputs but also maintaining a transparent and accountable relation with international partners.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

A financial overview of the South Sudan Electoral Support (SSES) Project as of 31 December 2025 is presented below. This summary reflects the project's resource utilisation from its inception in July 2023 to December 2025 and offers insight into the financial stewardship underpinning the delivery of planned results.

a) Expenditure by Project Output

Project Outputs	Approved Budget	Expenditure			Commitments, Advances and Undepreciated fixed assets	Total funds utilization 2023- Sep. 2025
	2023-25	2023	2024	2025		
	in USD					
	a	b	c	d	e	f=(b+c+d+e)
Output 1: Establishment of an enabling legal framework for free, fair and inclusive elections supported	1,001,324	21	265,590	8,643	-	274,254
Output 2: 'Strengthened institutional capacities for professional, transparent and accountable election management	4,104,000	499,795	876,027	886,793	6,792	2,269,406
Output 3: 'Inclusive participation fostered through enhanced rights and access to information	4,374,001	4,924	1,187,768	1,024,082	174,300	2,391,075
Output 4: 'Enhanced environment for maintaining security and mitigating violence during elections	2,322,001	30,430	122,203	457,182	-	609,816
Output 5: 'Strengthened effectiveness in planning and implementing electoral operations for all citizens	-	-			-	-
Output 6: Project effectively managed	2,713,874	45,846	839,053	767,752	136,761	1,789,412
Total	**14,515,200**	**581,016**	**3,290,641**	**3,144,452**	**317,853**	**7,333,962**

b) Donor contribution and funds utilization

Sl. no	Donors	Donors Committed Resources	Funds Received	Funds Utilized as of 31 December 2025	Balance Available as of 31 December 2025
		in USD			
1	EU	3,281,400	3,281,400	3,225,369	59,152
2	Canada	948,642	948,642	944,449	4,193
3	Switzerland	776,855	776,855	776,208	647
4	UNDP	1,257,677	1,257,677	1,257,677	-
5	UN Women	80,000	80,000	80,000	-
a	**Sub-total**	**6,344,574**	**6,344,574**	**6,283,703**	**63,992**
6	Japan	670,481	670,481	613,374	57,107
7	UN Peace Building Fund	515,193	515,193	269,250	245,943
8	UNDP (GPCR FW)	203,300	203,300	-	203,300
9	Africa Elections Fund (Germany)	167,635	167,635	167,635	-
b	**Sub-total**	**1,556,610**	**1,556,610**	**1,050,260**	**506,350**
c=(a+b)	**Total**	**7,901,184**	**7,901,184**	**7,333,963**	**570,342**

Note: The financial information provided above is provisional pending certified financial reporting expected no later than 30 June 2026.

RISK LOG

Description/ Event	Cause	Impact (s)	Risk Category	Sub-Category	Impact	Likelihood	Risk Significance/ Level	Risk Valid		Risk Treatment	Status of Risk treatment measures
								From	To		
Increased instability and insecurity, including outbreaks of violence, prevent or make difficult implementation of activities.	Instability and insecurity: The volatility of South Sudan's political and security landscape, marked by localised conflicts, intercommunal violence, and weak law enforcement, may trigger disruptions. These conditions can limit the safe access of UNDP and partners to target areas and beneficiaries.	Widespread or localised instability and security problems could preclude actions being undertaken in certain areas, and/or limit access of UNDP and implementing partners to target populations. This may limit the ability to implement or monitor project activities without putting the safety of partners and beneficiaries at risk. This may impact on the achievement of project outcomes also through diverting stakeholder attention from away from electoral issues.	Safety and Security	Political instability	Intermediate	Moderately likely	Moderate	July 2023	Dec 2025	The project will continuously monitor the political and operational security environment, utilising assessments provided by the UN security apparatus and political analyses. In light of this, adjustments may be made to the workplan, in consultation with key stakeholders, so as to "Do No Harm" through project actions and target interventions where actions are possible. The project will seek to foster partnerships with actors able to engage at local level, to improve access to target populations. In addition to UN structures in place, the project includes support to national early warning and response mechanisms, to facilitate prompt reaction to security risks arising.	On-going
Changes in the political and electoral context result in new needs and priorities.	Changes in political and electoral context: The fragile political settlement under the R-ARCSS and shifting dynamics among national stakeholders may alter priorities, delay reforms, or introduce new demands, thereby changing the	Changes in the political environment may reduce the relevance of planned interventions and give rise to new needs and priorities.	Strategic	Government commitment	Minor	Moderately likely	Low	July 2023	Dec 2025	The project is based on an adaptive programming approach so that it can respond to needs as they arise. Ongoing contextual analysis will take place, which assesses the relevance of planned activities, and revisions to the project and/or its workplan may be considered by project governance structures. The project will work with a range of state and non-state actors to sustain implementation through political changes.	On-going

	relevance of originally planned interventions.									Technical assistance is being provided to the legal framework and continuation of building capacity of national counterparts to support any agreed legal framework to conduct electoral events	
Reductions in political and civic space limit participation of beneficiaries in certain project actions, and impact on freedom of expression and access to information.	Reductions in civic and political space: Heightened tensions between state and non-state actors, as well as restrictive measures on civil society, media, and political opposition, may curtail freedoms of expression, association, and participation, reducing inclusivity in project actions.	Mistrust or tensions between state and non-state actors or between political factions may limit possibilities for beneficiaries to engage in meaningful dialogue on certain issues. This may also reduce the inclusiveness of consultations and preclude opportunities, which may reduce the effectiveness of project actions in reaching intended outcomes. Restrictions to freedom of expression may also limit access to information.	Safety and Security	Political instability	Intermediate	Highly likely	Moderate	July 2023	Dec 2025	Project priorities and timelines will be reviewed and revised with key stakeholders in light of the electoral timetable. The project is designed to work with a range of partners and can prioritise activities that are not reliant on the establishment of the legal framework for elections. In the meantime, the project will rely on UNMISS' good offices, alongside regional bodies supporting the peace process, to encourage adoption of the electoral framework in a timely manner. Civic education strategy is under discussion for implementation	On-going
Delays to implementation of the R-ARCSS, including legal and institutional frameworks for elections, reduce the timeframe available for project activities and election preparations.	Delays in R-ARCSS implementation: Prolonged negotiations, political deadlock, and limited institutional capacity may slow the establishment of electoral legislation and management bodies, compressing timelines for electoral preparations and project delivery.	Delays to the establishment of the legal framework for elections and election management institutions may affect the time available for certain activities. This may reduce opportunities for capacity development and affect sustainability of project outcomes, as well as quality of electoral processes. Truncating time available for election preparations may also increase the resources required to achieve its effective conduct.	Strategic	Government commitment	Extensive	Moderately likely	Substantial	July 2023	Dec 2025	Project priorities and timelines will be reviewed and revised with key stakeholders in light of the electoral timetable. The project is designed to work with a range of partners and can prioritise activities that are not reliant on the establishment of the legal framework for elections. In the meantime, the project will rely on UNMISS' good offices, alongside regional bodies supporting the peace process, to encourage adoption of the electoral framework in a timely manner.	On-going
Natural or manmade hazards and their	Natural or man-made hazards: Recurring environmental shocks,	The impact of environmental hazards, such as flooding, or health emergencies may bring	Social and Environmental	Community health,	Minor	Low likelihood	Low	July 2023	Dec 2025	Possibilities of unexpected disruptions will be factored into the development of annual workplans. Historic data may	On-going

repercussions disrupt implementation of project activities.	such as seasonal flooding, droughts, or disease outbreaks, coupled with man-made crises, may disrupt mobility, divert national attention, and strain partner resources.	disruption to project operations. While this is often localised in impact, it may cause delays to activities, affect stakeholder priorities and sometimes partners' resources for cost sharing.		safety and security						be useful in this regard. The project will consider UN system contingency planning and responses to determine appropriate solutions. Allowing sufficient time for planning of activities will also work towards mitigating this risk.	
Lack of experience and capacity of national partners presents challenges to effective and timely achievement of project results.	Limited national partner capacity: Weak institutional frameworks, insufficient technical expertise, and overburdened human resources within national counterparts may impede their ability to absorb assistance effectively and deliver on mandates.	Weak capacities may limit the effectiveness of institutions in fulfilling their mandates or cause delays to project actions. This could have a knock-on effect on other areas of electoral project support. It may also lead to more direct technical support, which, if not managed properly, may have adverse effects on national ownership and capacity development objectives.	Operational	Capacities of the partners	Intermediate	Moderately likely	Moderate	July 2023	Dec 2025	The project aims to define expected results realistically in relation to national capacities, and take care to avoid overloading key partners, in coordination with other electoral assistance providers. The project will agree scope and type of assistance in consultation with national project partners and will support them in defining and delivering on their workplans. Knowledge and skills transfer will be promoted throughout interventions.	On-going
National partners and/or beneficiaries demonstrate a lack of responsiveness to engage on project objectives, which impedes delivery of concrete results in a timely manner.	Lack of responsiveness by partners or beneficiaries: Divergence in priorities, limited awareness of project objectives, or lack of confidence in the electoral process may reduce national partners' and beneficiaries' willingness to engage fully in project design and implementation	A reluctance to participate may signal that project and national partner goals may not be aligned leading, a lack of involvement in project design and delivery or limited understanding of the project framework. Beyond the project, it may also demonstrate a lack of commitment for free and fair national elections in the broader context.	Operational	Partner's engagement	Extensive	Low likelihood	Moderate	July 2023	Dec 2025	The project will work collaboratively with partners and beneficiaries to agree interventions in relation to identified needs and priorities. It will involve them in conceptualisation and delivery of activities and monitoring of results. Efforts will be made to ensure understanding of the project through sensitisation of stakeholders involved in the project. highlighting its value in contributing to a successful transition.	On-going
Insufficient harmonization of approach	Weak coordination among international actors: The multiplicity	With the broad project scope and large number of partners, a lack of coherence and/or	Strategic	Stakeholder relations	Intermediate	Low likelihood	Moderate	July 2023	Dec 2025	Through its governance structures, the project will seek to build consensus around priorities and responsibilities	On-going

between international electoral assistance providers compromises project cohesion and effectiveness.	of international electoral assistance providers, each with differing mandates, priorities, or approaches, may hinder harmonisation, resulting in overlaps, fragmentation, or diluted impact.	coordination could result in fragmented and diluted results, duplication of efforts and under-utilization of the benefits of strategic partnerships. This could reduce the impact of the project and could also be confusing to stakeholders.		and partnerships						and provide a forum for information sharing. It will also maintain open and ongoing communication with project partners and other electoral assistance providers through informal mechanisms. Use of the monitoring and evaluation plan will help to maintain focus on achieving project objectives.	
There is a lack of demand for international electoral assistance and/or inaccurate perceptions of UN involvement in the electoral process that undermines the credibility of electoral support provided by the project.	Lack of demand or perceptions of bias: Limited understanding of the UN's technical mandate, political sensitivities, or mistrust of international involvement may lead to perceptions of partisanship or irrelevance, thereby undermining the credibility of UN electoral support.	A lack of receptiveness to UN electoral support or perception of bias may generate resistance to the project and/or reputational risk to UNDP and the UN system as a whole at country level.	Strategic	Stakeholder relations and partnerships	Extensive	Not likely	Low	July 2023	Dec 2025	As guided by UNMISS and together with all UN entities at country level, UNDP will maintain effective communication on the mandate of the UN in electoral assistance, its role in South Sudan and the purpose of the project. The project will highlight its focus on technical processes and its priority of inclusion, rather than advancing specific policy options, and will pay attention to transparency in project execution. Throughout its communications, the project will emphasize the primacy of national sovereignty over South Sudan's electoral processes.	On-going
Insufficient funds are committed for the conduct of electoral operations.	Insufficient electoral funding: Constrained fiscal space, competing government priorities, and donor fatigue may result in inadequate financial commitments for election operations, particularly for high-cost logistics and procurement.	Insufficient government funding for elections places pressure on the project and donor resources to cover shortfalls. This may also not be readily available, if donor priorities lie elsewhere. This may have significant impact on priorities for project budgeting as well as on electoral processes, particularly in relation to high-cost items, such as election materials, equipment and transportation. Budget limitations may also	Financial	Budget availability and cash flow	Extensive	Highly likely	Substantial	July 2023	Dec 2025	As part of its electoral advisory support, together with UNMISS and in coordination with the Ministry of Finance and Planning, the project will work with the National Elections Commission to establish an appropriate budget estimate for the elections, including timelines for required funds. The project will ensure regular monitoring of the funding situation, highlighting the potential risks of shortfalls on quality and integrity of electoral processes. Activities may be prioritised and	On-going

		reduce the operating capacity of election management institutions.								reduced, through project governance structures. Effective procurement and financial planning may to some extent mitigate the risk, and in-kind contributions may also be encouraged.	
Weak capacity, or lack of commitment, of national partners and stakeholders impedes delivery of concrete results in a timely manner.	The institutional and operational capacity of national partners and stakeholders may be constrained by limited technical expertise, insufficient human resources, inadequate infrastructure, or competing political and administrative priorities. In certain contexts, a lack of sustained commitment may also result from shifting political dynamics, differing agendas, or low levels of ownership, which can delay decision-making and hinder the effective implementation of agreed activities.	Delays in implementation and achievement of outputs, leading to slippage in the electoral calendar and reduced effectiveness of project activities. Weak partner engagement could result in fragmented or inconsistent delivery across regions, limited outreach to vulnerable or marginalised groups, and possible duplication or gaps in support. In the medium to long term, this may undermine stakeholder confidence in the project, reduce donor trust, and compromise the overall credibility and legitimacy of the electoral process.	Organizational	Governance	Intermediate	Moderately likely	Moderate	July 2023	Dec 2025	The project is working with UN, international and national partners, according to comparative advantages, to extend the project's reach to as wide a range of areas and target groups as possible.	On-going

a) **Impact:** 1- Negligible, 2- Minor, 3-Intermediate, 4-Extensive, 5-Extreme
b) **Likelihood:** 1-Not Likely, 2-Low Likelihood, 3-Moderate likely, 4- Highly likely, 5-Expected
c) **Risk Significance Level:** 1- Low, 2- Moderate, 3- Substantial, 4- High
d) **Risk Category and Sub-Category**

RESULTS FRAMEWORK

Attached as Annex-I