

Strengthening Local Governance Institutions and Communities for Lasting Peace and Creating Enabling Environment for Elections

- **Project Duration:** March 2024 - March 2025
- **Partnership:** Ministry of Peacebuilding, National Electoral Commission, Ministry of Justice and Constitutional affairs, Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare, Local government Board and CSOs including women's, Youth and PWD groups
- **Budget:** USD 600,000

South Sudan is grappling with significant obstacles to its development, with progress in peacebuilding efforts overshadowed by conflicts between states. According to the UN, more than 700,000 people have been internally displaced, with 150,000 seeking refuge in neighboring countries. While a Peace Agreement extended until February 2025 offers hope for peace and development, political tensions persist nationally, and conflicts at sub-national levels driven by resource disputes and ineffective local leadership undermine governance reforms.

Planned elections will be held in December 2024, the first since independence, face logistical challenges exacerbated by weak infrastructure, climate-related disasters, and ongoing violence, raising concerns that electoral competition could escalate tensions. Access to justice and security remains limited, with institutions concentrated in urban centers and inadequate resources. Only three out of six counties have judges, leaving rural populations reliant on customary courts, which also face capacity issues. The absence of judges and prosecutors, limited police coverage, inadequate police equipment, and low investigator capacity in Aweil North, Aweil South, and Aweil Center hinder access to justice, making customary courts the viable option.

Objectives

The project aims to enhance local governance institutions and communities to facilitate the peaceful reintegration of returnees and create a conducive environment for implementing an extended roadmap for a sustainable peace agreement, including planned elections. The main objectives of the project are:



Enhancing the capacity of local governments to fulfill their designated responsibilities



Providing mental health and psychosocial support for returnees and refugees



Improving access to justice for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, including returnees, refugees, and host communities

Contribution to SDGs



Facilitating voter education initiatives aimed at promoting peaceful and inclusive elections, leading to the establishment of legitimate representative institutions in South Sudan

Outputs

The project will be implemented in Western Bahr-el-Ghazal, Upper Nile and Northern Bahr-el-Ghazal (with a specific focus on Aweil counties).

01

Local Government and communities' capacity reinforced to support social cohesion amongst returnees, refugees, and host communities

02

Access to justice for SGBV survivors including returnees, refugees, and host communities strengthened

03

Peaceful and inclusive elections supported through voter education