

# NEC attends BRIDGE training on Boundary Delimitation and Voter Registration

written by NEC Press | March 28, 2025



On 25<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> March 2025, the National Election Commission (NEC) attended a 4-day customized modular workshop on Boundary Delimitation and Voter Registration in Juba supported by the United Nations Integrated Election Assistance Team (UN-IEAT). The training utilized BRIDGE (Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections), a comprehensive capacity development curriculum for election management bodies worldwide. The workshop being the first of two on the topics brought together NEC Commissioners, members of the secretariat as well as members of the State High Election Committees (SHECs) in Upper Nile, Unity, Lakes, Northern Bahr El Ghazal and Central Equatoria.



The workshop was led by BRIDGE facilitators Natia Kashakashvili and Shalva Tskhakaya and supported by BRIDGE facilitators – Ahon Malou Lueth Makeny and John Kuot Kuany Diing. The workshop was opened by welcoming remarks from the NEC chairperson Prof. Abednego Akok Kacuol and the Head of the UN-IEAT/UNMISS Principal Electoral Affairs Officer, Darren Nance.

Participants were taken through:

1. Analyzing the implications of boundary drawing decisions

on electoral outcomes and representation in the South Sudanese context.

2. Identify and apply principles that ensure fair and effective electoral boundary delimitation appropriate to South Sudan's demographic and geographic realities.
3. Establish criteria for assessing the fairness and effectiveness of proposed electoral boundaries.
4. Master practical skills through hands-on activities that simulate the actual process of electoral boundary delimitation.
5. Examine foundational principles of effective voter registration systems with particular attention to South Sudan's unique challenges.
6. Develop a comprehensive understanding of the administrative and logistical requirements for implementing voter registration in South Sudan.
7. Compare various voter registration methodologies and systems to determine which approach best suits South Sudan's infrastructure and population distribution.
8. Collaboratively create operational planning frameworks for voter registration that can be adapted to local contexts.
9. Strengthen the institutional capacity of the National Election Commission and State High Election Committees to implement electoral processes.
10. Foster collaboration between national and state-level electoral authorities.
11. Develop action plans for implementing workshop learnings in preparation for upcoming electoral activities.

The 4-day workshop has laid a strong foundation for understanding the different modalities of Boundary Delimitation and Voter Registration. Through the interactive sessions conducted, NEC and SHECs capacity is more enhanced which improves the institution's readiness for the upcoming elections.

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# NEC Consults with Civil Society in Bor and Yambio to Enhance Electoral Awareness

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On 26 March 2025, the National Elections Commission (NEC) and the State High Election Committees (SHECs) of Jonglei and Western Equatoria states organized consultative meetings with civil society organizations (CSOs) in Bor and Yambio.



The one-day event brought together 79 representatives of state-level CSOs (45 from Bor including 19 women, and 34 from Yambio including 13 women), including community and faith-



based organizations, youth and women's groups, as well as media representatives, to raise public awareness of the electoral process and strengthen relationships and partnerships between the NEC, SHECs, and CSOs. The NEC Board and Secretariat members from Juba also participated in these events. The NEC and SHECs informed of challenges associated to the electoral timeline – namely as related to the Constitution-making process timeline, political and legal clarity needed, in addition to financing. The discussion included topics and coordination on civic and voter education, voter registration, and overall election preparations at both national and state levels. Other topics covered included the inclusiveness of the electoral process, the neutrality of NEC and SHEC members, the roles of and capacity building for electoral stakeholders, and collaboration in the electoral process, among others.



After the two events, the NEC and SHECs agreed to meet

regularly to share information on the electoral process and coordinate the essential role CSOs play in the electoral process – as extended arms for civic and voter information, and as observers and watchdogs of the process. The CSO participants committed to strengthening collaboration with the election management body to ensure transparency and a coordinated approach to the electoral process. They also pledged to support comprehensive public awareness campaigns associated with civic and voter education upon clarity on the way forward. The UN Integrated Electoral Assistance Team (UNIEAT), which includes the UNMISS Electoral Assistance Division and the UNDP South Sudan Electoral Support Project, provided both technical and financial support for the meetings.

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## **NEC LAUNCHES TWO FIRST STATE-LEVEL ENGAGEMENTS WITH CIVIL SOCIETY IN BENTIU AND MALAKAL**

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UN-IEAT supported the NEC to conduct the first two state-level engagements with CSO, i.e., in Bentiu (Unity State) and Malakal (Upper Nile State) on 05 March 2025. The events were hosted on UNMISS premises in the two states with key logistical and administrative support provided by the UNMISS

field offices and UNIEAT UNVs recently recruited and deployed to the two states.



The events were well attended by about 45 invited participants from each state. The meeting in Unity State was held at on the UNMISS premises in Rubkano and was attended by 33 CSO representatives including 7 women, while the one in Upper Nile was held in the Legislative Assembly Chamber in Malakal town and was attended by 47 CSO representatives including 11 women. Each meeting was convened and moderated by the respective chairperson of the State High Committee (SHEC) of the NEC, Honorable Peter Mayom Pur for Upper Nile, and Honorable George Kuong Gattang for Unity. The meetings started with opening remarks read out on behalf of the Chairperson of the NEC, Honorable Professor Abednego Akok Kacuol, who commended CSOs for their active engagement with the electoral process and support to the NEC in the preparations for the next elections including their



participation in the first two NEC state-level engagements with CSOs. “The NEC remained committed to creating an enabling environment based on, among other things, stakeholder trust and confidence in the electoral process and institutions. This will go a long way to guarantee credible elections which will serve as a firm foundation for sustainable peace, democracy, and development in South Sudan”, he pointed out.



The meetings sought to bring state-level CSOs including community and faith-based organizations, and media with the SHEC to raise public awareness and foster working relations between the NEC and SHECS on the one hand, and CSOs as key electoral stakeholders. The meeting also sought to discuss NEC preparations for December 2026 based on the revised transition timeline of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS) of 2018. Among related issues discussed were the election timelines, funding, legal and political issues impacting election preparations. The SHECs used this platform to inform CSOs about ongoing NEC activities such as NEC institutional strengthening including training and capacity building most of which is provided by the UNIEAT; ongoing legal reform,



establishing the NEC presence at the state level through office construction and refurbishment, support to NEC business processes and policy development covering areas such as civic and voter education, stakeholder engagement, gender and inclusion, corporate branding and communication also engagement with key national stakeholders including the presidency to discuss the NEC funding, organogram, legal reform; CSOs to discuss civic and voter education, election observation; and NPS on election security issues; also regional and international partners on technical and financial support.

Among the comments and questions from CSOs in the two meetings were: concern about the lack of NEC and election funding and the impact this has on NEC credibility and capacity to deliver elections in two years; continued insecurity including the recent upsurge in violence in Upper Nile and how these could adversely impact the country preparedness for elections. Participants in the two meetings resolved to work closely with the NEC and the SHECs in areas such as civic and voter education and to actively participate in relevant coordination structures once the NEC has set them up at state and local levels. An issue raised in the meetings was the concern about the increasing number of internally displaced persons due to conflict and flooding – the latter has rendered many communities inaccessible by road and without access to many government services. Reaching out to water-locked communities may be a challenge when it comes to civic and voter education, voter registration, election campaigning, and the voting process itself.

The NEC used these two occasions to validate the database of CSOs working on democracy, human rights, inclusive participation and elections and the meetings agreed to regularly update the database with the support of the SHECs and UNIEAT in each state.

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# NEC Successfully Completes Induction Training for State High Election Committees

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Juba, South Sudan – The National Election Commission (NEC) has successfully concluded the induction training for the State High Election Committees (SHECs), marking a significant achievement in preparation for the upcoming national elections scheduled for December 22, 2026. The workshop, held from October 8-11, 2024, in Juba, was organized with the support of the UN-Integrated Electoral Assistance Team (UN-IEAT) and aimed at equipping the SHEC members with the skills and knowledge necessary to ensure a smooth electoral process.

The training is a culmination of months of meticulous planning and consultations that began earlier this year. In April and May, NEC officials visited all ten states to engage with stakeholders and discuss the establishment of the SHECs. The committees, comprising 50 members, were officially announced on June 17, 2024, by NEC Chair Prof. Abednego Akok Kachuol, and took their oath of office on July 11, 2024.

The induction workshop covered a comprehensive curriculum that included electoral laws, ethical standards, and operational procedures for managing elections. Participants were also

trained on logistical coordination, stakeholder engagement, and conflict resolution strategies to handle potential challenges during the electoral period. The NEC, along with the UN-IEAT, emphasized the importance of transparency, integrity, and inclusiveness in the electoral process.

Speaking at the closing ceremony, Prof. Abednego Akok Kachuol commended the commitment and dedication of the SHEC members. "The completion of this training marks a critical milestone in our journey toward a fair and credible election in 2026. With this induction, our State High Election Committees are well-prepared to uphold democratic values and oversee the electoral process effectively," he stated.

Participants expressed their readiness to apply the training in their respective states, where their immediate focus will be refurbishing and setting up local offices to facilitate election-related activities. The NEC and the UN-IEAT will continue to provide technical support and monitoring as the SHECs carry out their mandate in the lead-up to the 2026 elections.

The successful completion of this induction training is a promising step toward strengthening South Sudan's democratic framework, as the country gears up for its national elections. The NEC's proactive measures, supported by international partners, underscore a commitment to enhancing the electoral process and ensuring that the voices of the South Sudanese people are heard.

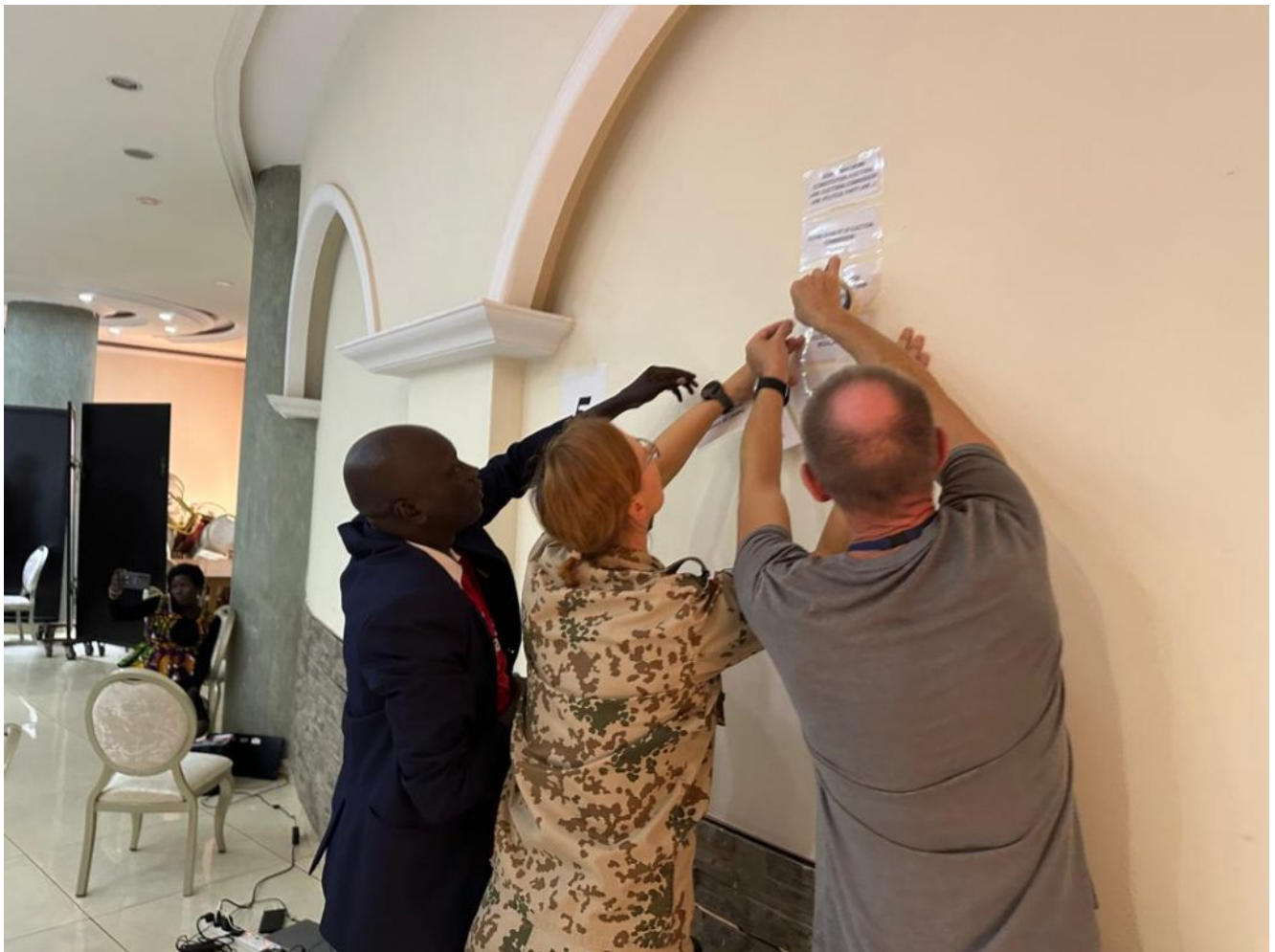














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# BRIDGE Training for SHEC

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The newly appointed members of all ten State High Election Committees in South Sudan met in Juba to strengthen their knowledge on the principles of electoral administration with the support of the UN Integrated Electoral Assistance Team (UNMISS and UNDP).

The training utilized BRIDGE (Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections), a comprehensive capacity

development curriculum for election management bodies worldwide. This training is one of many capacity building programmes planned to support South Sudan's electoral process.

This foundational BRIDGE training on Electoral Administration was launched on 1 October and will continue through 17 October, with the participation of the National Elections Commission, all State High Election Committees, and representatives of civil society organizations.