

Vice President for Economic Cluster, Dr. Benjamin Bol Mel meets with Chairperson of the National Elections Commission on Election Preparations

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On 13th May 2025, Vice President Dr. Benjamin Bol Mel held a consultative meeting with the Chairperson of the National Elections Commission (NEC), Prof. Abednego Akok Kacuol, to discuss ongoing preparations for the upcoming general elections scheduled in December 2026 – with particular focus on delivering credible and timely elections.



During the meeting, Prof. Akok presented a comprehensive progress report, outlining key milestones achieved over the past two years and the roadmap ahead as South Sudan approaches a defining moment in its democratic trajectory.

Vice President Dr. Benjamin Bol Mel reaffirmed the full support of the Government of His Excellency President Salva Kiir Mayardit in ensuring NEC is adequately resourced and empowered to fulfil its mandate.

He further emphasized the conduct of peaceful, fair, and credible elections is not only a national obligation but also essential to democratic growth and sustainable stability. The Vice President urged all institutions, stakeholders, and citizens to unite in the spirit of patriotism in this vital endeavor. The success of these elections depends on a collective commitment to ensure that every South Sudanese voice is heard, every vote counts, and that together, we build a future rooted in peace, democracy, and inclusive governance.

Stakeholders' Validation Workshop on Media Communication Strategy for General Election in South Sudan

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The Media Authority and the National Communication Authority (NCA) co-chaired a Stakeholders' workshop held on 7th May 2025 at Telecom House, Juba, under the theme “Unpacking Elections Media Communication Matrix”. The event brought together key institutions including South Sudan Broadcasting Corporation (SSBC), the Information Commission and the Universal Service Access Fund (USAF), with guidance from the Competent Minister of ICT and Postal Services.



The workshop focused on the upcoming General Elections process to ensure transparency, inclusivity and credibility to reflect the democratic aspirations of the South Sudanese people. The program was centered around enhancing voter education to ensure that every eligible citizen is well-informed about their rights and responsibilities. It also aimed to promote peaceful participation by fostering an environment of tolerance and respect. Another strategy was designed to combat misinformation, providing accurate and reliable information to counter false narratives; and furthermore, to ensuring equitable media access to all political parties and empowering citizens to make informed decisions.



The workshop brought together representatives from a diverse range of stakeholder groups which included National Election Commission, Political Parties, Civil Society Organizations, Media Fraternity, UN Agencies, Donors, Academia, Government and Law Enforcement Agencies.

Opening remarks were delivered by senior government officials and stakeholders including Hon. George Lemi Yata (Spokesperson – National Election Commission), Hon. Oliver Mori Benjamin (Spokesperson – Transitional National Legislative Assembly), Hon. Elijah Alier Kuai (Managing Director, Media Authority) and Edmund Yakani (Executive Director – Community Empowerment for Progress Organization); among others.



This collaborative initiative demonstrated a unified commitment to strengthening media engagement and access to information during election.

NEC attends BRIDGE training on Boundary Delimitation and Voter Registration

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The National Election Commission (NEC) attended two customized modular workshops on Boundary Delimitation and Voter Registration in Juba supported by the United Nations Integrated Election Assistance Team (UN-IEAT). The trainings, held between 25-28 March and 1-4 April 2025, utilized the BRIDGE (Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections), a comprehensive capacity development curriculum for election management bodies worldwide.



The two workshops brought together over 50 participants NEC Commissioners, members of the secretariat as well as members of the State High Election Committees (SHECs) from all 10 states.



The trainings were designed to equip NEC and electoral stakeholders with the knowledge to analyze implications of electoral boundary decisions and shed light on foundational principles of effective voter registration systems. The workshops are part of a capacity building series that provide platforms for electoral administrators to continue preparing South Sudan for its national elections scheduled in December 2026.

NEC engages Civil Society Organizations

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The National Elections Commission (NEC) held a stakeholder engagement consultative meeting on 17 January 2025 with a diverse group of civil society organizations (CSOs) including faith-based organizations, academia and media from South Sudan. The objective of the half-day engagement focused on raising awareness on the electoral process and key updates related to the electoral timeline and preparations.

Over 60 CSOs participated in the event who welcomed NEC's initiative to strengthen dialogue with electoral stakeholders and exchange crucial information about the progress of electoral preparations and challenges, such as proposed timelines for constitutional review, population census and elections, electoral legal framework and budget constraints.







This series of stakeholder engagements form part of the Commission's action plan adopted during a retreat in Entebbe, Uganda, in December 2024. The consultative meeting was NEC's

second stakeholder meeting, following a similar one held with political parties on 17 December 2024.

NEC Engages Political Parties in Crucial Electoral Preparations

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The National Elections Commission (NEC) held a stakeholder engagement consultative meeting on **17 December** with diverse political parties from South Sudan to discuss electoral

timelines, electoral preparations and enabling decision-making for credible elections. Twenty-six (26) registered political parties attended the event.

The NEC provided a detailed briefing to the participants on electoral achievements and challenges related to the National Election Act and the electoral timeline. Several issues were highlighted to the plenary, including but not limited to: (i) the outcomes of the recent operational planning workshop from 3-5 December 2024 in Entebbe; (ii) adoption of the two regulations on observers, media and party agents and election campaign; (iii) adoption and signing of the NEC Code of Conduct; (iv) development of a NEC civic and voter education strategy; and (v) updates on the refurbishment of the new State High Election Committee offices.

In an interactive spirit, political parties engaged in discussions with the NEC, and the latter appealed to the parties' support in taking critical decisions required to advance the electoral process. There was consensus among the group that while the Commission relies on legal frameworks to guide its mandate and work, collaboration with the political parties remained essential for progress. It was also encouraged by NEC Commissioners for all political parties to be well informed with the National Election Act. Several questions were raised at the conclusion of the event on a number of issues relating to the gaps in the legal framework, decisions on the population census and constitution-making process, the question of IDPs and refugees, NEC budget and fundraising efforts. It was agreed that more forums with political parties will be convened to foster relations and build civic and political space for effective citizens' engagement with democracy and elections.

NEC Press Conference and Website Launch

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Juba, South Sudan—NEC held a press conference to announce the outcome of the NEC Operational Planning retreat and launch the official website for the NEC. 56 participants from NEC, Media houses, international partners, and others attended this event.



During this press conference Honorable Professor Abednego Akok

Kacuol, the chairperson of the National Elections Commission (NEC), and Deputy Chairperson Honorable Gabriel Gabriel Deng briefed the participants on the outcome of the Operational Planning, adoption of regulations, and signing of the code of conduct. The Spokesperson of the NEC spokesperson, Honorable George Lemi Yata launched the website and took the participants through its contents.

The commission then answered questions raised by the media about the legal framework, budget and finance, and the website.

NEC Concludes Operational Planning Retreat in Entebbe

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The National Elections Commission held a successful operational planning retreat in Entebbe Uganda, attended by nine commissioners, two Secretariat Staff, and eight UN Integrated Electoral Assistance Team advisors.

The objective of this operational planning retreat was for the Commission to calibrate its priorities and establish an overall strategy for advancing its institutional readiness towards managing the electoral process that would enable the holding of the anticipated elections to be held in December 2026. Some of the objectives of the planning retreat

included:

- Review of R-ACSS extension timelines and identify key political decisions required for NEC to be able to deliver the December 2026 elections
- Define NEC's strategies and priorities.
- Define the method for drafting of the operational plan.
- Discuss Voter Registration and boundary delimitation processes and their implementation.
- Discuss the way forward towards Civic Voter Education and Education and Engagement
- Define the way forward for the review of the budget.

The outcome of this retreat was a ***communiqué*** and a set of action points that presented a coherent position that would guide the next set of engagements with the Government and other stakeholders. This engagement is aimed at strengthening the understanding of the challenges around the organization and conduct of the electoral process under the current conditions and it is expected that this understanding will foster informed and timely decision-making.

BRIDGE Training Completed Successfully in South Sudan For SHECs

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Juba- From October 1st to October 17, 2024, chairpersons, deputy chairpersons, and members of the High Committees, staff members from the National Elections commission and representatives from various civil society organizations from all 10 states participated in a training program focused on electoral administration.

This initiative is part of a broader effort to enhance the electoral process in South Sudan, facilitated by BRIDGE (Building Resources in Democracy, Governance, and Elections), a comprehensive capacity development curriculum for election management bodies worldwide. This program was conducted in two

phases and was attended by 72 participants.

These trainings are aimed at equipping South Sudan's electoral stakeholders with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively manage upcoming elections in the country.