

# 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 engages Civil Society Organizations

written by NEC Press | March 28, 2025



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.

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# NEC Engages Political Parties in Crucial Electoral Preparations

written by NEC Press | March 28, 2025



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.

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# NEC Press Conference and Website Launch

written by NEC Press | March 28, 2025



**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.

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# NEC Concludes Operational Planning Retreat in Entebbe

written by NEC Press | March 28, 2025



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.

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## **BRIDGE Training Completed Successfully in South Sudan For SHECs**

written by NEC Press | March 28, 2025



Juba- From October 1<sup>st</sup> 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.