Skills Development
Increases Employability and Social Inclusion of South Sudanese Youth

INSIDE:

DUK Padiet Community Radio Preaches Peace and Reconciliation in South Sudan

Skills Development Increases Employability and Social Inclusion of South Sudanese Youth

South Sudan Launches Revised National Development Strategy, 2021-2024
GOV’T, UN, DONORS ELEVATE AWARENESS AND RESPONSE TO GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN SOUTH SUDAN

In a bid to elevate awareness and response to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in South Sudan, a high-level delegation of officials from the United Nations, development partners and Government led by the Vice President and Chair of the Gender and Youth Cluster Rebecca Nyandeng de Mabior, made an advocacy visit to the country’s specialized GBV and Juvenile Court.

The Vice President underscored the need for psychosocial support to deal with trauma and other war effects and called for increased collaboration between health care providers, law enforcement agencies, and community leaders in addressing GBV.

The need for a society-wide approach was also emphasized by Ambassador Jelte van Wieren of the Kingdom of Netherlands saying, “all individuals – including community leaders, political leaders, parents and teachers, both women and men – must take their responsibility in fighting for a culture in which SGBV is not accepted by holding each other accountable.”

Stakeholders noted the need for an increased role of men in addressing SGBV and condemned the practice of marrying off young girls to people who have sexually abused them and called for speedy delivery of justice to end the culture of impunity.

The court seeks to mitigate violence against women and girls, a distressing human rights violation that hinders the fulfillment of women’s and girls’ human rights and development. In South Sudan, about 65 percent of women will experience some form of SGBV in their lifetime.

Addressing GBV and Juvenile offences

Working with the Government, UNDP is strengthening national institutions to address GBV and juvenile offences. UNDP supported the establishment of the first specialized GBV and Juvenile Court in South Sudan in December 2020 and donated two vehicles to curb the high rates of absenteeism of judicial staff and to ease transportation of inmates from police and prison facilities. UNDP is also supporting the deployment of mobile courts to locations with limited judicial presence to fast-track reporting and adjudication of cases and is in the final stages of constructing a waiting room for GBV victims set to appear before the court.

"People have been staying under the trees, braving the heat and scorching sun as they wait for their trial. Now they will have a comfortable place to wait for their trial," said Justice Kulang Jeroboam, of the Court of Appeal during the commissioning of the construction in April 2022.

The GBV court is supported by the Government of South Sudan with funding from the Government of the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

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In response to sustained inter-communal violence in some places, causing disharmony, displacements, fatalities and destruction of property in some parts of South Sudan, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is using community media to strengthen community ties, restore broken relations and curb social evils. On June 9th, 2022, UNDP commissioned Duk Padiet Community Radio located in Jonglei, one of the ten states that make up South Sudan. UNDP constructed the radio in partnership with UNESCO, with funding from the governments of Sweden and Korea. The station is currently transmitting across a radius of 40 kilometers and broadcasts in Dinka, Nuer, Arabic and English languages.

Changing negative perceptions

The station has a rich programme offer that promotes peace and addresses other contemporary issues such as health, reproductive health, laws, culture and diversity. The programmes include Youngsters Forum for the school children and Let’s Talk About Us which focuses on issues affecting the girl child, early marriage, sexual harassment and reproductive health issues. The station has already received praises for changing lives and perceptions,

"Before this programme, most community members say they didn’t know that a girl becomes mature when she reaches 18 years! People used to think that once a girl develops breasts – whether she is 10 or 12 years, she is ready for marriage. The community used to think that even though she is nine years as long as she is tall, she is ready for marriage. She would be led into marriage either willingly or by force,” Daniel Deng said, in commendation of the radio’s influence on the community.

The decision to establish the radio was identified by the community in 2018 to serve as a medium for information exchange and resolve issues amicably. The radio has been on air since November 2020; however, due to the massive floods that affected the area, the commissioning of the radio was delayed until June 2022.

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UNDP, STANBIC BANK PARTNER TO UNLOCK ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES AND DRIVE SUSTAINABLE GROWTH IN SOUTH SUDAN

The partnership fulfils the aspirations of world leaders who in the declaration of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development emphasised Public Private Partnership as key to achieving the SDGs.

Stimulating growth and enhancing business competitiveness

Dr. Samuel Doe, the UNDP Resident Representative, welcomed the partnership, saying that it fulfils the aspirations of world leaders who in the declaration of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development emphasised Public Private Partnership as key to achieving the SDGs.

He also underscored the role of the private sector noted, “Development organizations like UNDP can catalyze economic development, but it takes the private sector to grow and sustain the gains. We come together today in this realization that we need each other for the progress and prosperity in South Sudan.”

In agreement, Mr. Charles Mudiwa, Chief Executive Officer of Stanbic Bank Kenya and South Sudan, said, “Stanbic Bank believes in leveraging partnerships with shared goals and values to foster growth and development. The bank has entered several partnerships with governments, non-profit organizations and the private sector in a bid to drive maximum impact of targeted initiatives”.

Destitution and lack of empowerment opportunities are among the factors sustaining the vicious cycle of violence especially among the youth. Addressing them will thus foster enduring peace.

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SKILLS DEVELOPMENT INCREASES EMPLOYABILITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION OF SOUTH SUDANESE YOUTH

Unemployment in South Sudan is estimated at 11 percent of the population while youth unemployment is estimated at 50 percent. Youth unemployment is caused by low levels of education, limited skills, skills mismatch with industry requirements, and a weak economy. Reliance on imported skilled labour from neighbouring countries further entrenches the problem of unemployment among the youth who constitute about 73% of the country’s population.

Destitution, lack of skills and economic empowerment opportunities among young people are some of the triggers of violence, as they make youth targets for recruitment by armed groups and gangs. Therefore, skilling and empowering youth is critical to sustaining peace, stability and sustainable development in South Sudan.

Through the Skills for Youth Employability and Social Inclusion project, UNDP in partnership with the African Development Bank, the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Government of South Sudan are enhancing youth employability and the social inclusion of disadvantaged youth through the provision of demand-driven vocational skills, internship and job placement opportunities. Since its inception in July 2020, the project has provided career guidance, counselling and internship placement and apprenticeship opportunities to 2,452 youth and deployed 742 graduates to benefit from internship and employment opportunities with government, the private sector, CSOs and international development organizations.

Partnership with 127 private sector companies have been established for further skills development and industrial experience through internship and job placement.

The project’s first cohort comprised 572 (of whom 194 were female). Out of these, 449 (170 female) graduated in September 2021 after training in Electrical Installation, Solar Installation, Plumbing and Pipefitting, Hospitality, Bakery and Pastry, Hairdressing, Beauty Therapy, Customer Care and Painting. Then, 628 youth (265 female) out of the second cohort of 814 (369 female) trainees graduated in June 2022, bringing the total number of beneficiaries to 1,077 (435 female).

Expansion of vocational training

In response to an increasing demand for safe and affordable means of transportation, a new study discipline of Motorbike Riding (boda boda) has been introduced at the Juba Multi-Service Training Centre (MTC) effective May 2022. UNDP worked with the Ministry of Labour to develop the training module, establish the training field, and donated two motorcycles to benefit an initial 200 youth.

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Ms. Mary Hillary Wani Pitia, the Under-secretary, Ministry of Labour, during the handover of motorcycles from UNDP. Looking on are MTC officials. Photo: UNDP/ Michael Mubangizi

Ms. Mary Hillary Wani Pitia, the Under-secretary, Ministry of Labour, appreciated the UNDP and AfDB for the support, saying the new course will not only provide increased livelihood opportunities but also improve road safety and reduce accidents.

“As a means of livelihood, many youths are riding boda bodas but we have also witnessed a lot of accidents because the youths are not well trained in the use of boda bodas. So, the training and skills acquired will help the youth to avoid unnecessary accidents, enhance road safety and save lives.”

TESTIMONIES OF BENEFICIARIES

Isaac Wani,
Chef, Jebel Lodge Hotel, Juba, South Sudan

University Graduate dreams big dreams after vocational training

A graduate of Procurement and Logistics, Isaac studied Bakery and Pastry after losing a job and finding it difficult to look after his wife and child. He did his internship at Jebel Lodge Hotel, Juba, South Sudan where he was also offered a job as a Chef.

“I now can take care of my family, pay my house rent, support my daughter and my extended family. So, I am really happy,” recounts Wani who has plans of establishing a bakery and appreciates UNDP, AfDB, MTC and partners for the support. He adds: “What they have done to us is more than giving fish to a person; it’s teaching us how to fish. The training was free of charge. There was no amount of money that we were asked to pay.”

As a university graduate, Wani says it wasn’t easy for him to enroll for a vocational course: “But I was persuaded by the practical and hands-on training compared to the university education which was more theoretical. It was also an opportunity for me to expand and diversify my skills.” Given, his plans of starting a bakery, he says all the skills he has acquired will come in handy in running his business.
Ayuen is now self-reliant Cashier and Waitress, House of Josman, South Sudan

Ayuen Kuol Athuai trained in Bakery and Pastry and currently works as a Cashier and Waitress at House of Josman, in Juba, South Sudan where she was retained and given a job after her internship. “At least now I am able to help my family members at home, my siblings and to meet my personal needs. I don’t need to ask for help from anyone.”

Ayuen, who completed senior four but couldn’t continue because of lack of school fees, says her training and internship were both practical: “I learnt how to make pizzas, cakes, burgers and to use equipment like ovens, blenders and microwaves.” During the internship, she served at executive functions, handled cash and payments which improved her confidence and prepared her for the world of work.

School dropout ventures into self-employment
Angelo Safri Ceasar

He stopped in Primary Eight and wouldn’t continue because he lacked school fees. He is now a proud owner of Celebrity Hood Salon, Juba which he started thanks to the skills acquired during the Hairdressing training. He employs two other youth, and the salon specializes in plaiting hair and making dreadlocks. Before the training, Angelo had tried different casual jobs including riding a boda boda to support his parents and siblings. From his daily take-home of between SSP 10,000 and SSP 15,000 (USD 21 and USD 33), he is able to support his family and has plans of opening other branches and also venture into other businesses. “I am happy to be working on my own,” he says, adding, “I don’t have a family or my own children, but I help my father, mother and siblings, especially on school fees.”
A boost to food security in South Sudan as nine ventures bag US$200,000 in WFP-UNDP’s IGNITE Food Systems Challenge

The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have awarded funding to nine ventures in a competition aimed at strengthening food systems in South Sudan by improving access to food and nutrition and empowering the most vulnerable producers and consumers.

Most families in South Sudan rely on subsistence farming to survive, but a significant amount of the food produced is lost through post-harvest losses and the country relies heavily on food imports to feed its population. This innovation serves to boost the agricultural sector and encourage South Sudanese youth to engage in activities that positively influence local food systems.

Each of the winning ventures was awarded up to US$40,000 to scale up their projects and positively impact food security in the world’s youngest nation.

Beneficiaries speak out

The nine winning ventures are: South Farmers Company Limited, Ubuntu Farms, Green Farms, Hagana Agro Processing Company, Nile Agro-Tech and Seed, Asal Saleh Bee, Eco Friends and Kanybek and Rainmaker.

A women’s association that empowers vulnerable women economically through livelihood activities is among the winners. Mildred Lawino Ocida from Nile Agro-Tech and Seed has been training women to grow their own food.

“With this grant, we hope to increase vegetable production and install solar-powered refrigerators at our storage facilities,” Mildred said.

“Many South Sudanese youths have lost hope. Yet there is opportunity in agriculture, and I encourage them to get into agribusiness,” she said.

Another winner – James Nyikole from South Farmers Company Limited plans to use the funds to develop his company’s capacity to produce hatching eggs and chicks.

“At the moment, we import hatched eggs from Turkey, and half of the cost goes into transportation. With this support, we will be able to produce hatching eggs right here in Juba,” James said.

The winning package also includes a six-month acceleration programme that offers technical support and mentorship tailored to the needs of each entrepreneur to enable them to expand their food systems solutions to scale and create job opportunities for young people.

Launched in South Sudan on 19 November 2021, the IGNITE Food Systems Challenge sought to discover and promote locally driven solutions to food systems challenges. 

Read more
SOUTH SUDAN RESETS DEVELOPMENT AGENDA TO REKINDLE HOPE THROUGH THE TRIPLE NEXUS LENS

The Government of South Sudan has launched a Revised National Development Strategy (R-NDS) designed to consolidate peace, stabilize the economy, and drive sustainable development over the years of 2021 to 2024.

Designed with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)’s support, the R-NDS seeks to put the country on a sustainable development path and promises a robust re-engagement and collaboration with the country’s development partners to achieve Sustainable Development.

Under the overarching theme of “Consolidate Peace, Stabilize the Economy,” the strategy expresses national aspirations to gradually move from dependence on humanitarian aid to a development path and seeks to realize its goal through adopting the humanitarian, development and peace nexus approach.

The R-NDS prioritizes strengthening institutions for transparent, accountable, and inclusive governance, fostering macroeconomic stability, laying the foundation for the diversification of the economy and reducing dependency on oil. Other priorities are increasing support to the social sector for human capital development, building critical infrastructure for sustainable development, including roads, energy and public buildings and broadband capability, protecting the vulnerable populations, and empowering women and youth as drivers of growth and nation-building.

**A call to focus on service delivery**

The strategy recognizes linkages between governance, peace, economic growth, delivery of social services such as health, education and social safety nets and human capital development.

In the preface to the R-NDS, President Salva Kiir said, “Confronting the challenges in our health, education and food security sectors should be our new liberation struggle. It should mobilize our collective action, no matter one’s political persuasions.”

The President also urged state and local governments to draw their priorities from the strategy.

Dr. Samuel Doe, the UNDP Resident Representative, said, “The Revised National Development Strategy is an important means through which the Sustainable Development Goals can be prioritized and achieved, and this is why UNDP supported its formulation and other planning frameworks.” The strategy was officially launched by the First Vice-President Dr. Riek Machar Teny who represented the President.

Read more
A total of 251 inmates have graduated after completing a transformative vocational training designed to rehabilitate prisoners, increase prospects of employment and support re-integration of ex-offenders on release, reduce recidivism, de-congest prisons and improve community safety.

The sixth batch of 126 inmates from Juba Vocational Training Centre graduated on April 14, 2022, at Juba Central Prison while the second batch of 125 inmates at Wau Vocational Training Centre graduated on 28 April 2022. The graduates completed nine months' training in different fields such as food processing, plumbing, electrical and auto mechanical skills, tailoring, hairdressing, carpentry, masonry, metal work, fashion design and agriculture and were given start-up kits after release to enhance their ability to establish and sustain small-scale business ventures.

Cumulatively, 949 adult inmates, 137 juveniles and 197 prison officers have graduated from this programme since 2016. Of the graduates, 438 adults and 51 juveniles have been released back to the community between 2016 and 2021 with no known reoffending cases amongst them.

Funded by the Kingdom of the Netherlands, this initiative is a collaboration of UNDP, the National Prisons Service of South Sudan (NPSSS) under the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of General Education and Instruction, and the Ministry of Labour.

Graduates urged to use skills acquired

Speaking during the graduation at Juba Central Prison, Hon. Mahmoud Solomon Agok, the Minister of Interior, congratulated the graduates and urged them to use the skills acquired to better themselves, their families and communities.

Dr. Samuel Doe, the UNDP Resident Representative, commended the initiative for the tangible results leading to business start-ups and employment of released inmates by reputable organizations.

Ambassador Jelte Van Wieren of the Kingdom of Netherlands to South Sudan noted that countries which focus on reforming inmates are more secure and have less cases of recidivism than those that dwell on retribution.

Presently, a total of 349 inmates and 38 prison officers are undergoing training in Juba, Wau and Malakal Vocational Training Centers.

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UNDP, UNEP, SOUTH SUDAN GOV’T SIGN USD 9M PROJECT TO RESPOND TO CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS

The Government of South Sudan through the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) have signed a memorandum of understanding for the implementation of a USD 9,121,420 four-year project designed to increase the resilience of vulnerable communities to the impacts of climate change. This project operationalizes the priorities identified within South Sudan’s National Adaptation Plan (NAP), particularly on agriculture, disaster risk reduction, environment, water resources, policy and institutional frameworks. Interventions designed to increase the capacity of the government to drive climate change adaptation; upgrade the national meteorological network and support the production of short-range forecasts and increase the provision of ecosystem goods and services will also be implemented.

With only 55% of the population having access to safe drinking water, the project seeks to improve access to water for agriculture, livestock and human consumption through construction of boreholes and establishment of water-harvesting infrastructure to provide water for livestock belonging to 30,000 pastoralists. The construction of subsurface dams will also improve rainwater infiltration, benefiting 15,000 male livestock farmers.

**Geographical coverage**

The project will be implemented in two states; Terekeka (Central Equatoria State) and Kapoeta (Eastern Equatoria State) which are severely affected by climate change. Terekeka is impacted by seasonal flooding, erratic rainfall and frequent dry spells while Kapoeta is directly affected by drought events and flash floods.

The MoU was signed at UNDP offices on 13 April 2022, by Joseph Africano Bartel, the Undersecretary, Ministry of Environment and Forestry and Dr. Samuel Doe, UNDP Resident Representative.

From rising temperatures and the increasing severity of drought and flood events which disrupt livelihoods, South Sudan is extremely vulnerable to climate change impacts. Such impacts are compounded by widespread food insecurity, a macroeconomic crisis, capacity-constrained institutions and fragile governance in the post-conflict country.

This project builds on other successful initiatives on strengthening national resilience and response to climate change that UNDP supported.

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A total of 73 young South Sudanese entered into the world of diplomacy after completing a three-month graduate programme as the first merit-based recruited cohort for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

The graduates join a team of professionals who represent the country internationally. Their training was initiated to enhance the reforms in the key public institutions through UNDP’s Governance and Economic Management Support (GEMS) project.

“As part of our institutional reforms, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs recruited candidates fairly and transparently based on public service rules and regulations for the first time,” Hon. Mayik Ayii Deng, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, said.

The conflict in South Sudan, especially over the past three decades, has displaced many South Sudanese to find protection across the African continent and abroad in Europe, the United States of America, South-East Asia and Australia. Many of the graduates have come back to South Sudan due to relative stability. As a result, the graduates bring back to South Sudan a rich tapestry of cultures, languages and global perspectives from regions where they fled or where their parents migrated.

“I always felt like I was an international citizen. I was here [South Sudan] in then Sudan, then moved to the United States and Kenya. After independence, I decided to come back home... I think this graduate programme is a wonderful start. It is a mix of talented and highly professional people from all over South Sudan. Everyone here is for the specialized qualification, and not based on tribal favour or bias,” Aduot Ayieny, one of the graduates, said.

The graduates were encouraged to brace themselves for the calling,

“The world has become more complicated, and your duties will be more complex as you will be dealing with politics, culture, trade and climate change,” Christian Badder, EU Ambassador to South Sudan, said.

UNDP South Sudan Resident Representative Samuel Doe said, “Global diplomacy is development diplomacy. The purpose of your training is to advance global solidarity and peaceful coexistence and we hope you carry that on in your career,” he said.

Read more
The war in Ukraine threatens to devastate the economies of many developing countries; it has already caused untold suffering and is deepening existing vulnerabilities and inequalities across the globe.

But how will this war affect the economy of the world’s youngest nation? To answer this, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in South Sudan has prepared a policy brief on the potential impact of the war in Ukraine on the economy of South Sudan.

The findings show that like many other countries, South Sudan will feel the effect of the war in several ways, especially in increased food and fuel prices. But there is a silver lining in every dark cloud. Given South Sudan’s dependence on oil, a positive impact is inadvertently possible through increased fiscal space arising out of a global rise in the oil price.

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UNDP STAFF MEET TO RE-IMAGINE DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH SUDAN

It was all joy, bonding, relaxing, energy, enthusiasm, open sharing and reflection as the UNDP South Sudan staff met for a retreat, the first in two years owing to the COVID-19 pandemic which limited physical gatherings.

Under the theme, “United to Transform Lives”, the three-day retreat held between 15 June 2022 and 17 June 2022, brought together around 200 staff members from all units and field offices to reflect on the important work that they do together in support of the country’s development agenda.

In line with the theme, staff vowed to unite and transform lives through implementation of impact-driven programmes in support of the country’s ambition of transiting from a humanitarian to a development trajectory.

Key at the retreat were rousing remarks by Sara Beysolow Nyantiki, the Deputy Special Represen-
Sara Beysolow Nyanti, the Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary General, UN Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator, who inspired, challenged and encouraged the team to take the UNDP place in the development space, put people first and drive the country’s development agenda forward.

Dr. Samuel Doe, the UNDP Resident Representative, didn’t hide his joy and delight at the display of energy and enthusiasm. “I am pleased to see teams that drive our work, regroup from units and field offices and re-think how UNDP is repositioned to support the country’s transition to a sustainable development path,” he said.

The interactive retreat activities ranged from presentations, team-building activities, icebreakers and energizers, and animated brainstorming and reflection sessions.
QUOTE

We should not underestimate the challenges that this process will have to endure. It will not be easy. Speaking truth to power, speaking about pain and hurt, seeking reconciliation and healing, are all difficult steps to take... It is, however, essential for any country coming out of war, whose people have the desire and ambition to move to a peaceful future together.

Mr. Jelte van Wieren

Mr. Jelte van Wieren, Outgoing Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to South Sudan on the establishment of Commission for Truth, Healing and Reconciliation

COMING SOON

Jobs & Opportunities Fair 2022
When: August 12, 2022;
Where: Juba Multi-Service Training Centre (MTC)

Launch of 2021/22 UNDP’s Global Human Development Report (HDR),
When: Thursday, 8 September 2022
Where: New York