



2022 ANNUAL REPORT

SOUTH SUDAN

About UNDP in South Sudan



South Sudan is land of diverse cultures as shown by this troupe of dancers during the Culture Day Celebrations.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is the leading United Nations organization fighting to end the injustices of poverty, inequality and climate change. Working with our broad network of experts and partners in 170 countries and territories, we help nations to build integrated and lasting solutions for people and the planet.

UNDP has been working in South Sudan for over 50 years, supporting efforts to achieve sustainable development, building and strengthening resilience to crises and shocks, safeguarding development gains, fostering good governance, building lasting peace, protecting the environment, creating opportunities for empowerment, and addressing the legacies of conflict.

With the formation of the independent Republic of South Sudan in July 2011, UNDP established a Country Office and has been working with the government and other partners to build more resilient, just, accountable, transparent, inclusive and sustainable institutions that can deliver services and improve the quality of life for all citizens.

Over the years, our programmes have evolved around increasing access to justice, promoting good governance and strong institutions, peace and community cohesion, and human and local economic development. Additional programmes foster inclusive growth, climate change, clean and sustainable energy, gender equality, and women and youth empowerment.

2022 was the final year of implementation of our 2019–2021 Country Programme Document (CPD), which was extended until 2022. The country office is now transitioning to a new development framework that seeks to support South Sudan transition out of Humanitarian Assistance to sustainable peace and development. The programme is premised on consolidating and advancing development gains in this Decade of Action, 2020–2030.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AfCFTA - Africa Continental Free Trade Area	MoH - Ministry of Health	SEA - Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
AfDB - African Development Bank	MoI - Ministry of Interior	SGBV - Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
AIDS - Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome	MoJCA - Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs	SPU - Special Protection Units
ANC - Antenatal Care	MoPS&HRD - Ministry of Public Service and Human Resource Development	SSEs - Special Skills Experts
ART - Antiretroviral Therapy	MPI - Multidimensional Poverty Index	SSNPS - South Sudan National Police Service
ARV - Antiretroviral	NAC - National Audit Chamber	SSP - South Sudanese Pounds
CPD - Country Programme Document	NDS - National Development Strategy	STaRR - Stabilization, Resilience and Recovery
CSDs - Civil Society Organizations	NEPWU - National Empowerment of Positive Women United	TB - Tuberculosis
EAC - East African community	NFM - New Funding Mechanism/Model	TVET - Technical and Vocational Education and Training
ECC - Emergency Call Center	NCAC - National Constitutional Amendment Committee	UN - United Nations
EIF - Enhanced Integrated Framework	NGOs - Non-Governmental Organizations	UNDP - United Nations Development Programme
EGA - External Quality Assurance	NPSSS - National Prisons Services of South Sudan	UNFPA - United Nations Population Fund
GATC - Government Accountancy Training Center	NBS - National Bureau of Statistics	UNHCR - United Nations High Commission for Refugees
GDP - Gross Domestic Product	NRA - National Revenue Authority	UNICEF - United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
GF - Global Fund	NTP - National TB Control Programme	UNMISS - United Nations Mission in South Sudan
GFATM - Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria	PaCC - Peace and Community Cohesion	UN-OCHR - United Nations Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights
GPAA - Greater Pibor Administrative Area	PCRC - Police Community Relations Committee	UNPOL - United Nations Police
HIV - Human Immunodeficiency Virus	PFM - Public Financial Management	UN Women - The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
HMIS - Health Management Information System	PIRR - Partnership for Recovery and Resilience	USD - United States Dollars
HRP - Humanitarian Response Plan	PLHIV - People Living with HIV	VSLA - Village Savings and Loans Association
HSS - Health System Strengthening	PMTCT - Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission	VTC - Vocational Training Centre
IDPs - Internally Displaced People	PWDs - Persons with Disabilities	WFP - World Food Programme
IOM - International Organization for Migration	R-ARCSS - Revitalized Agreement for the Resolution of Conflict in South Sudan	WHO - World Health Organization
JoSS - Judiciary of South Sudan	R-NDS - Revised National Development Strategy	YEPP - Youth Employment and Empowerment
MDAs - Ministries, Departments and Agencies	RTGoNU - Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity	
MDR-TB - Multi Drug Resistance Tuberculosis	SDGs - Sustainable Development Goals	
MoFA&IC - Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation		
MoFP - Ministry of Finance and Planning		
MoGCSW - Ministry of Gender, Child, and Social Welfare		

MESSAGE FROM THE RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE

In 2022, the Government and people of South Sudan, together with national and international partners, continued to respond to the increasing humanitarian and development needs and the quest for peace while laying foundations for sustainable development in the country. Armed hostilities at the sub-national level and recurrent climate-induced natural disasters persist, resulting in mass displacements and deprivations of essential livelihood support and services as well as disruption of social cohesion in most parts of the country. Amidst these complexities, UNDP remained steadfast in accompanying the people of South Sudan in their pursuit for peace, state-building, and progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This report showcases our cumulative work—results, challenges, and lessons learned over the years, with 2022 in focus. We share it with you for your information, further support, guidance, and constructive critique as necessary so that together we can better shape UNDP's service to South Sudan.

Progress so far achieved through these interventions gives us hope for the future of sustainable development in the country. We are grateful for the overwhelming support we continue to receive from the Government and people of South Sudan and our development partners, without whom we would not have achieved these results.

As we look forward, we are reminded by the words of the UN Special Representative for the Secretary General in South Sudan – Nicholas Haysom that, “2023 would be a ‘make or break’ year for sustaining peace and laying foundations for a thriving society.” The year ushers in the 24-month extended period for the Peace Agreement and four critical benchmarks must be achieved in 2023—agreeing a permanent constitution that will define the nature and future for the world's youngest state, constituting and deploying a national army, formulating and establishing a home-grown model for transitional justice as a pathway to reconciliation and

nation-building, and finalizing preparations for the country's first general elections scheduled for December 2024. These are no easy tasks to achieve in twelve months in an extremely fragile context where climate change impacts and intercommunal violence connive to perpetuate insecurity and vulnerabilities. But the with resilience and fortitude of the people of South Sudan, if given full expression and if political will is mobilized, the tasks should be achieved and a new dawn should be in sight come December 2024.

UNDP stands ready to continue its accompanying role in collaboration with our development partners and sister UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes. Our new Country Programme which to be launched in 2023 will guide our continued efforts—to adapt, be flexible, work smarter, and respond at scale in promoting good and accountable governance, sustainable livelihoods through durable solutions, economic stability, intra and inter-community cohesion and nation-building, and climate resilience—for a peaceful, dignified, and self-reliant South Sudan.

Our work and achievements would not have been possible without the selfless hard work of the great UNDP team in South Sudan, of whom I am both proud and honored to lead. Team UNDP South Sudan will always strive to deliver, come what may! In their respective roles and capacities, they have exhibited the utmost passion, professionalism, bravery, and dedication in service—ensuring people even the farthest are reached and working tirelessly with government ministries, departments, and agencies. To learn more about this formidable Team's work in and with the people of South Sudan, I invite you to read this 2022 Annual Report.

Yours sincerely,



Samuel Gbaydee Doe (PhD),
Resident Representative,
UNDP in South Sudan



COUNTRY CONTEXT

The Republic of South Sudan became the world's youngest nation and Africa's 54th country in 2011. However, outbreaks of civil war in 2013 and 2016 have undermined the post-independence development gains it made and worsened its humanitarian situation. More than a decade after independence, South Sudan remains impacted by fragility, economic stagnation, and instability. The situation is exacerbated by widespread poverty, inter and intra-communal conflict, displacement, and natural disasters.

South Sudan's vulnerability to climate change compounds the country's humanitarian situation, jeopardizes recovery, and undermines development efforts. Since its independence in 2011, the country has suffered severe droughts (2011, 2015) and floods (2014, 2017, 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022), resulting in high numbers of casualties, displacements, and loss of livestock — severely impacting people's livelihoods. According to the 2022 Humanitarian Response Plan, an estimated 8.9 million people needed humanitarian assistance. Women and children continued to be the most affected.

Incremental progress, albeit slow, has been made since the signing of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) in September 2018 and the formation of a Transitional Government of National Unity in February 2020; both of which have contributed to recovery, stability and peacebuilding. A series of encouraging reforms have been undertaken to support longer term stability and development outcomes, key among these was the extension of the Peace Agreement that was due to expire in February 2023. In 2022, the parties to the 2018 Revitalized Peace Agreement adopted a road map extending the transitional period for two more years and postponing elections until 2024. The two-year extension of the R-ARCSS to February 2025 is to allow the government to meet key milestones in the Peace Agreement. Thus far, it has created room for six laws, which will pave the way for constitutional, electoral, and institutional reforms, to be enacted. It also allowed for Phase I of the transitional security arrangements to be completed.

Strengthening service delivery institutions, governance, and economic and public financial management systems are critical as the country seeks to build resilience against future shocks and lay down the foundation for a diversified, inclusive, and sustainable development – UNDP South Sudan is working hand in hand with the government to make this a reality for all South Sudanese.

SOUTH SUDAN AT GLANCE



ESTIMATED POPULATION

12.5 million

(Approximately 74% Youth)



TOTAL LAND AREA

644,330 km²



LABOR FORCE

4,177,392

(13% Unemployment rate)



ESTIMATED ARABLE LAND

90%



ESTIMATED FOREST AREA

11.3%



ESTIMATED WETLAND AREA

57,000 km²

(Largest wetland in Africa)



GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT (GDP)

\$4.7 billion



FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENTS (FDI)

\$6.75 million



HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX (HDI)

0.385

OUR WORK IN SOUTH SUDAN: 2022 OVERVIEW



UNDP's work in South Sudan spans the entire country with physical presence in eight out of the ten states and three Administrative Areas (AAs). Working in collaboration with the United Nations (UN) system and in line with UNDP's global strategic plan, UNDP's mandate in South Sudan is to accompany the government and people to end poverty, build democratic governance, rule of law, and inclusive institutions.

Our work aligns with the South Sudan's Vision 2040, the United Nations Cooperation Framework (UNCF 2019 - 2021), the UNDP Global Strategy, and the South Sudan Revised National Development Strategy (R-NDS). The R-NDS seeks to consolidate peace and stabilize the economy and strengthen core government functions, while South Sudan Vision 2040 seeks to build a prosperous, productive, and innovative nation with improved efficiency and effectiveness of the public sector and a strong, effective, inclusive, and accountable governance.

Core areas of contribution to South Sudan in 2022

- Supporting the constitution-making, electoral and parliamentary processes to strengthen these institutions to promote inclusion, transparency, and accountability.
- Developing capacities across the national and state/Administrative Area (AA) government ministries, departments, and agencies to integrate peace, livelihoods and social security initiatives in development plans and budgets.
- Empowering leaders at national, state/AA, and local levels to gain knowledge in public finance and non-finance assets acquisition and management to build productive capacities and sustained social-economic livelihoods.
- Empowering all South Sudanese particularly the poor, women, people with disabilities and displaced to gain universal access to basic services.
- Analyzing progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) using Innovative and evidence-based solutions.
- Building institutional capacities at national and sub-national levels to promote and strengthen inclusive local economic development and deliver basic services including HIV/AIDs and related services.
- Ensuring core government functions and inclusive basic services to enhance stabilization and durable solutions to political, social, and economic challenges.
- Strengthening capacities and functions of rule of law and national human rights institutions
- Supporting gender-responsive solutions to crises, risks, and adaptation.
- Strengthening government and citizens for reconciliation, reintegration and peaceful conflict management and prevention.

2022

HIGHLIGHTS



- In partnership with the Governments of Sweden, France, and the UN Peacebuilding Fund, we supported the development of the South Sudan Peacebuilding Strategic Framework, launched the implementation of the Community Violence Reduction (CVR), and contributed towards the development of the Women Empowerment Bill and the National Action Plan on Gender and Security Sector Reform. The innovative CVR initiative aims to change the mindset of civilians (especially youth) against the possession and use of small arms and light weapons, increase their agency as peace actors and facilitate their reintegration in communities by involvement in productive economic activities. The Peacebuilding framework and support to local infrastructures of peace allowed UNDP to scale up trauma healing, psychosocial support, and conflict early warning and prevention through community-based peace committees and trauma counsellors.
- UNDP's partnership with Norway enabled the Government of South Sudan to build and/or strengthen public institutions focused on economic governance during the reporting period. The rollout of the Public Finance Management (PFM) 11-point agenda saw gradual progress in budget preparation and execution, computerization of payroll records of the civil service, exponential increase in mobilization of non-oil tax revenue in supported states, the launch of the Government Accountants Training Center (which graduated over 400 accountants), and the setup of networks of Under-Secretaries and Directors-General. With support from the African Development Bank and the Government of Japan, UNDP extended the PFM reform agenda to the States and Administrative Areas with focus on revamping State Revenues Authorities. It was rewarding to see State governments deploying mobilized tax revenues to augment the salaries of teachers and health workers and the construction of feeder roads. Norway's support also made it possible for the Government of South Sudan, through the National Constitutional Review Committee (NCRC), to review 14 laws to support implementation of the R-ARCSS.
- The support from Global Fund considerably reinforced UNDP's contribution to health system strengthening and the expansion of integrated HIV/TB services to more health facilities. This enabled more people to access services across the country despite impassable road conditions and insecurity. Partnership with community-based organizations proved invaluable in reaching remote areas and the most vulnerable populations. With additional support from Global Fund, UNDP transitioned 27 health facilities to renewable solar energy.
- Our partnership with the Kingdom of the Netherlands and funding from the Peacebuilding Fund enabled us to provide leading support to critical benchmarks for South Sudan's Peace Agreement and extended roadmap including reforms of the judiciary and security sector, launching the constitution-making process, preparing the legal framework for the establishment of the mechanisms for transitional justice, and the extension of rule of law institutions (police, corrections, courts) and essential justice and police services ensuring that 6,128 people received access to justice,

5,867 individuals were provided with legal aid services and over 3,000 pretrial detainees released early from detention places across the country. We also supported the reform of key laws including the Family Bill, the South Sudan Human Rights Commission and civil society organizations to play their oversight role.

- South Sudan is amongst the eight most vulnerable countries in the world to climate change impact. UNDP and UNEP launched a project during the period under review to strengthen the capacity of government and communities to adapt to climate change. The four-year project will support the Ministry of Environment and Forestry to build capacity to monitor, predict and adapt to climate change, especially its impact on the agriculture sector.
- The Kingdom of Netherlands and the African Development Bank (AfDB) supported UNDP to champion an innovative approach to youth and women empowerment anchored on skills development, employment generation, and private sector development giving hope and opportunities to over 12,000 youth (men and women), laying foundation for developing endogenous private sector base, and diverting energy away from violence. The UNDP programme on youth and women employment and empowerment has become the largest intervention for youth economic empowerment in South Sudan.
- UNDP's partnership with the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) is continuing to support the Government of South Sudan in creating a conducive business environment and facilitating market access for goods and services produced in the country. The identification of Aid-for-Trade priorities has stimulated economic diversification through the publication of the Diagnostic Trade Integration Study Update flagship report. This also facilitated the establishment of E-commerce, ushering in the era of digital trade and allowing local enterprises and businesses to access national and regional markets and take advantage of the benefits from the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA).
- The revival of the Governors' Forum in 2021, after eight years contributed to an advancement in the implementation of the peace agreement and will continue to accelerate the implementation of the Roadmap 2022 to deliver on the promises of 2018 Revitalized Peace Agreement Matrix, including re-unification of organized forces, a participatory permanent constitution-making process, organized return of refugees and internally displaced persons to their places of origin, and elections at the end of the roadmap extension, amongst others. Under the theme "Accelerating the implementation of Revitalized peace agreement in accordance with roadmap 2022", the 6th Governors Forum encouraged the parties, stakeholders, and guarantors of the agreement to exert more efforts to implement the roadmap extension.

2022

IN NUMBERS



96,736

women and youth were empowered by skills training in different trade crafts.



341,550

people were reached with messages to engage in the permanent constitution making process.




More than 3,100

provided with enhanced technical and functional skills through competency-based training and general education.



26,133

received psychosocial support to deal with trauma associated with exposure to conflicts and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).



101

TB diagnostic and treatment centres supported through the TB Control Programme throughout the country.



11,864

youth involved in peacebuilding initiatives.




2,224,534

people received legal, human rights and crime prevention information through community discussions and radio outreaches.



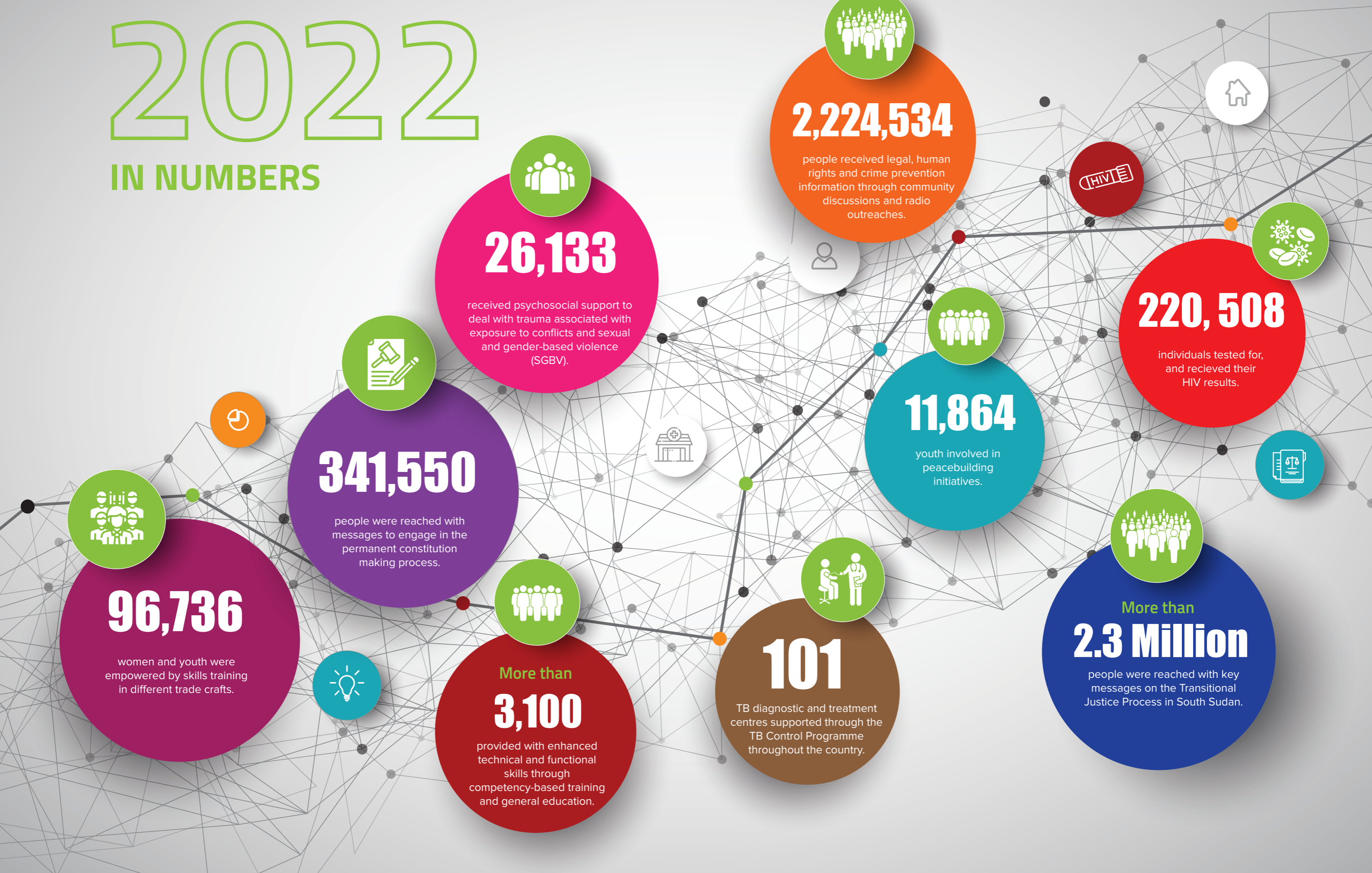
More than 2.3 Million

people were reached with key messages on the Transitional Justice Process in South Sudan.



220,508

individuals tested for, and received their HIV results.



2022

PROGRAMMATIC OVERVIEW

Our 2022 programme offer drew from the 2019–2021/2022 Country Programme Document (CPD) that outlined our contribution to national development aspirations and served as the primary unit of accountability to the executive board for alignment of results and the resources given to the programme at country level.

Its main goal was to contribute to the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions, foster peace, build resilience to crises and shocks, and safeguard development gains.

The programme had three interlinked and mutually reinforcing pillars:

- Strengthened peace infrastructures and accountable governance.
- Inclusive, risk-informed economic development; and
- Strengthened institutional and community resilience.

These pillars contributed to the delivery of the Country Office's value proposition of 'Building a peaceful, just and prosperous South Sudan'.

Our work in 2022 contributed immensely towards national development results and progress towards peace and development in South Sudan.

This compilation is a summary of our impact and contribution to the development agenda for South Sudan despite the disruptions occasioned by a worsening humanitarian situation, increasing development needs, frequent climatic shocks such as floods and drought, and a fluid security and political situation.

This section provides our programmatic overview in 2022, highlighting key results in each area of intervention that we engaged in.



Through the women's economic empowerment program, Awut recieved seed funding to grow her tea business.



PROGRAMME: A2J



ACCESS TO JUSTICE, SECURITY, AND HUMAN RIGHTS STRENGTHENING

UNDP's Access to Justice, Security and Human Rights Strengthening Programme aims to strengthen the rule of law in South Sudan by providing technical, policy and capacity building support to the rule of law actors to increase access to justice and security and promote accountability for human rights violations. The programme represents the third phase of UNDP's programming in the rule of law area and access to justice since 2013 forming an integral element of the country's peacebuilding and long-term development process after several years of conflict.

Guided by international human rights standards and principles, the programme adopts a sector wide approach to achieve five interrelated outputs across the ten states and three Administrative Areas (but with field presence in eight locations) in close collaboration with national partners to ensure national ownership and sustainability of results. UNDP works with the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), UN Women, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UNESCO and UNICEF to achieve the program's objectives, through joint projects.

The programme contributes to the realisation of outcome one of the UNCF (2019 to 2022) that seeks to strengthen peace infrastructures and accountable governance. It also supports the achievement of UNDP's commitments to address the evolving needs of South Sudan's justice and security sectors. Priority is given to providing support to national institutions, promoting a people-centred approach in delivering justice and introducing security measures, and empowering citizens to exercise their rights which are complemented by assistance in the areas of permanent constitution-making, transitional justice, judicial and security sector reforms.

RESULTS HIGHLIGHTS

 **341,550**

people were reached with messages on their role in determining their permanent constitution.

 **More than 2.3 MILLION**

people were reached with key messages on the Transitional Justice Process in South Sudan.

 **More than 2.2 MILLION**

people received legal, human rights and crime prevention information through community discussions and radio outreaches.

 **5,713**

disadvantaged and vulnerable people gained access to justice & legal aid services.

 **917 INMATES**

were trained in vocational skills, and on rehabilitation, livelihood, and successful social reintegration into their communities upon release.



5 GENDER EQUALITY



8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



IMPROVING ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND STRENGTHENING HUMAN RIGHTS FOR ALL

Local community members performing during the grassroots CTRH consultations

Photo@UNDP/ Sarah Abraham

PROGRAMME: GEMS



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- 1 NO POVERTY
- 2 ZERO HUNGER
- 3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
- 4 QUALITY EDUCATION
- 5 GENDER EQUALITY
- 6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION
- 7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY
- 8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
- 9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
- 10 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES
- 11 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION
- 12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION
- 13 CLIMATE ACTION
- 14 LIFE BELOW WATER
- 15 LIFE ON LAND
- 16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS
- 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

- 5 GENDER EQUALITY
- 8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
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STRENGTHENING CAPACITY FOR IMPROVED EFFICIENCY

UNDP RR Dr. Samuel G. Doe handing over ICT equipment to the Minister of Finance and Planning.
Photo@UNDP/Amos Agiro

GOVERNANCE AND ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

The Governance and Economic Management Support (GEMS) project (August 2019 - December 2022) was designed to contribute to strategic and administrative reforms during implementation of the (R-ARCSS) to set the country on a pathway of sustainable peace and development based on these outcomes:

- Strengthened capacity of key national institutions for effective implementation of R-ARCSS with attention to Chapter I for efficient governance systems and optimal service delivery to the people of South Sudan.*
- Bolstered key accountability functions with attention to Chapter IV of the R-ARCSS for improving key economic and financial reforms for effective resource management leading to economic stabilization.*

The project has deployed 13 national Special Skills Experts (SSEs) in government institutions to coach, train, and mentor Change Agents (CAs) in implementing the reforms for the success of the R-ARCSS through the Governance Cluster, Economic Cluster, Customs and Border Police, Administration and Policy, Training and Human Resource Development, Payrolls Management, Pension and Records, Public Finance Management (PFM). SSEs provide support to Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) of Revitalized Government of National Unity (RTGoNU) regarding alignment of activities related to 11 priority areas and the 11 crosscutting PFM-Reforms in the Country.



State Legislative Assembly members during the state development plan launch in Wau. Photo@UNDP

RESULTS HIGHLIGHTS

14 LAWS AMENDED & REVIEWED

supported the National Constitutional Amendment Committee (NCAC) to review and amend 14 bills.

More than 3,100 CHANGE AGENTS & CIVIL SERVANTS

capacitated with enhanced technical and functional skills through competency-based training and general education.

235 RESOLUTIONS ON PFM REFORMS

issued by the Public Financial Management Oversight Committee to implement 13 Public Financial Management (PFM) priorities.

4 MASTER CURRICULA DEVELOPED

Revised and updated curricula for Public Accountants, Public Service, Parliamentary Service and The Institute for Diplomatic Service.

INSTITUTION SYSTEMS-DIGITIZATION

supported the development of the electronic payroll system (SSEPSII) and The Aid Information Management System (AIMS).

PROGRAMME: GLOBAL FUND



3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



9 INDUSTRY INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE



17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



BUILD BETTER AND STRONGER HEALTH SYSTEMS

The warehouse manager showcase medicine to be distributed to the local health facilities. Photo@UNDP

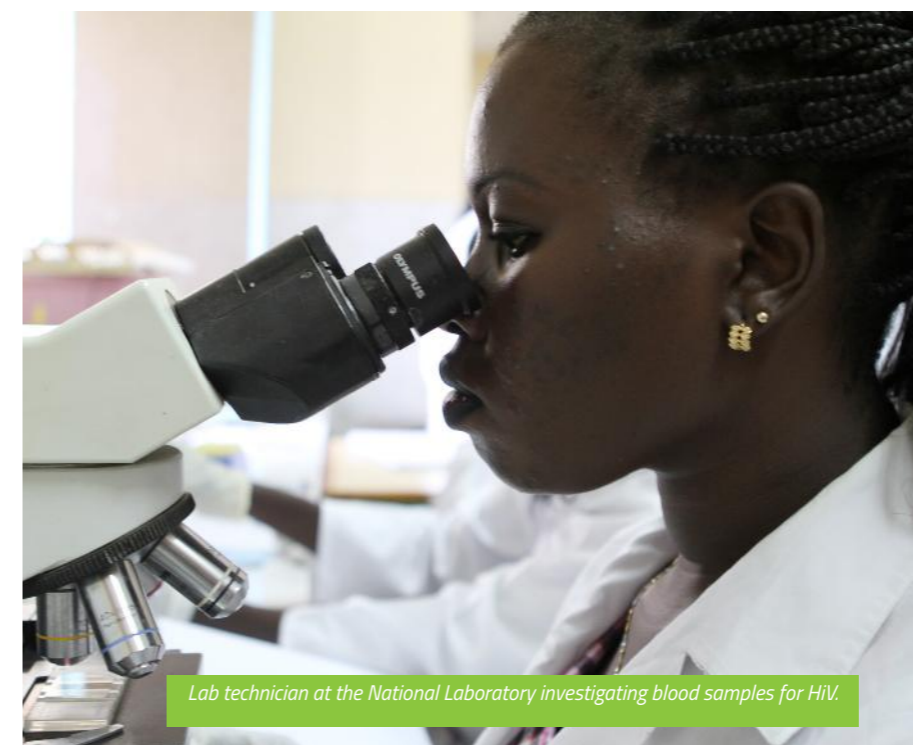
GLOBAL FUND

The ongoing Global Fund (GF) programme also known as the New Funding Model 3 (NFM3) covers the years 2021-2023. It aims to reduce new human immune virus (HIV) infections and reduce deaths among people living with HIV by 50 percent by 2023 (from 2010 levels) and reduce tuberculosis (TB) prevalence by at least 30 percent (relative to 2019).

To realize these objectives, the programme in 2022 worked to scale up HIV and TB services through differentiated service delivery strategies with emphasis on mixed facility-based and community-led interventions. With GF's support, 10 new sites for facilities offering HIV and TB services were established, increasing the number of existing service outlets from 161 to 172 by December 2022.

The interventions entail full integration of HIV, TB, and other disease programmes; enhancing the roles of people living with HIV (PLHIV), TB survivors and community networks including 'boma' (community-level) health workers in health facilities and communities; mobile TB and HIV services and community-led treatment services; while ensuring that implementing partners are closely monitored and coordinated with the Ministry of Health (MoH).

The programmes has been instrumental in strengthening national health systems' capacity, including laboratory services, supply chain management, health management information systems and human resources for health, as well as leadership and coordination at the MOH and SSAC.



Lab technician at the National Laboratory investigating blood samples for HIV.

2022 RESULTS HIGHLIGHTS

 **220,508**

individuals got tested and received their HIV results.

 **56,059**

people living with HIV receiving life-saving antiretroviral therapy (ART).

 **58%**

reduced death rate among people living with HIV.

 **66,959**

Sex workers and other vulnerable populations were reached with HIV prevention kits and services through networks of PLHIV.

 **101**

TB diagnostic and treatment centres supported through the TB Control Programme.

PROGRAMME: PaCC



5 GENDER EQUALITY



8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



DANCING FOR PEACE

A traditional dancer during the Cultural Peace Day celebrations. Photo@UNDP/Amos Agiro

PEACE AND COMMUNITY COHESION

The Peace and Community Cohesion (PaCC) project (Phase II) contributes to reducing and mitigating national and local level conflict and insecurity by supporting the central and subnational governments and authorities to invest in initiatives that address key drivers of conflicts.

PaCC works with communities, the central and subnational governments, and grassroots authorities to:

- Establish and enhance the capacity of peace infrastructures to manage conflicts peacefully.
- Deepen social, cultural, and economic cohesion among communities to foster healing, reconciliation, and peaceful coexistence.
- Empower citizens, with added emphasis on women, youth and other marginalized groups for voice, agency and participation in governance and peacebuilding initiatives and demand accountability.
- Implement legal, policy and civilian frameworks on small arms and light weapons; and promote conflict-sensitive access, use and control of natural resources by pastoral and farming communities in targeted conflict clusters.

The project also reinforces community relationships by identifying and strengthening cultural, social, and economic connectors that make communities resilient and reliant on each other in times of both peace and conflict.

PaCC employs an integrated and gender-sensitive approach to effectively support the communities in preventing, managing, and resolving conflict in a non-violent manner.

Overall, the project contributes to the UNDP's efforts to 'Strengthen peace infrastructures and accountable governance at the national, state, and local levels of South Sudan.



Youth celebrating the National Unity Day through sports, in Juba town. Photo@UNDP

2022 RESULTS HIGHLIGHTS

 **26,133**

received psychosocial support to deal with trauma associated with exposure to conflicts and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).

 **4** CATTLE MIGRATION AGREEMENTS

facilitated over community dialogues and consultations, leading to a reduction in conflicts relating to seasonal cattle migration and movement of traders.

 **AFFIRMATIVE ACTION BILL**

supported the preparation and presentation of the bill to ensure gender-responsive, inclusive, and accountable governance.

 **11,864**

youth involved in peacebuilding initiatives.

 **565** CASES RESOLVED

supported local peace committees and structures to monitor, follow-up and respond to cases and possible drivers of conflict in their communities.

PROGRAMME: SPACE



5 GENDER EQUALITY



8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



ENHANCING DEVELOPMENT AT THE GRASSROOTS LEVEL IN SOUTH SUDAN

The Governor of Western Bahr El Ghazal endorsing the State Development Plan at the launch.

Photo@UNDP/Amos Agiro

STRATEGY, POLICY AND CAPACITIES FOR ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT

Evidence for Economic and Social Transformation

The Evidence for Economic and Social Transformation project (EEST) supports macroeconomic-level policy work with the Government of South Sudan. EEST is designed to support the Government to reinforce accountability mechanisms and mainstream the R-ARCSS into the R-NDS and support the NDS's implementation and monitoring.

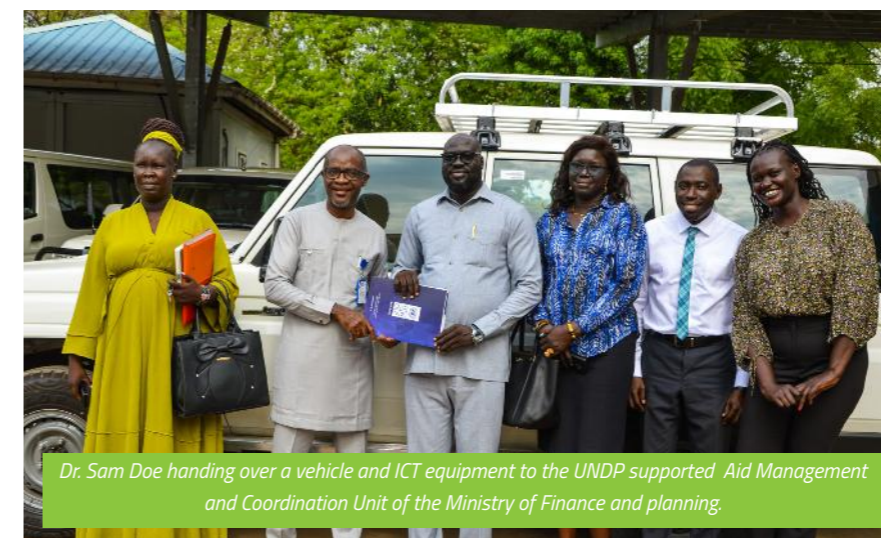
Using a participatory approach, the project mobilizes critical development stakeholders to leverage the R-NDS and its implementation through the national budget and public investment programs to support the RTGoNU EEST works to ensure that:

- Local economies are recovered through improved conditions and coping strategies to end severe food insecurity.
- Government capacities are developed to integrate the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Climate Agreement, and other international agreements; and to analyze progress towards the SDGs, using innovative and data-driven solutions.

UNDP coordinates with national counterparts led by the Ministry of Finance and Planning (MoFP) to implement the project and ensure national ownership. In 2022, the project focused on economic advisory services, aid coordination, and public financial management reforms.

EEST engages the Government and provides advice on the importance of strengthening national planning processes to guide economic recovery and development. The project further supports the Government in organizing and delivering the country's development objectives as stipulated in the R-NDS.

EEST works with key stakeholders, including relevant government institutions and development partners supporting national planning processes and public financial management reforms.



Dr. Sam Doe handing over a vehicle and ICT equipment to the UNDP supported Aid Management and Coordination Unit of the Ministry of Finance and planning.

2022 RESULTS HIGHLIGHTS



SOUTH SUDAN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

supported the preparation and launch of the Revised National Development Strategy and the state development plans.



STRENGTHENED REVENUE MANAGEMENT

built the capacity of the National Revenue Authority finance team to strengthen revenue mobilization and management.



ECONOMIC POLICY DIALOGUES

supported High-level Policy Dialogue Forums to establish an ideal platform to advance key policy discussions between the Government and its development partners.



NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK

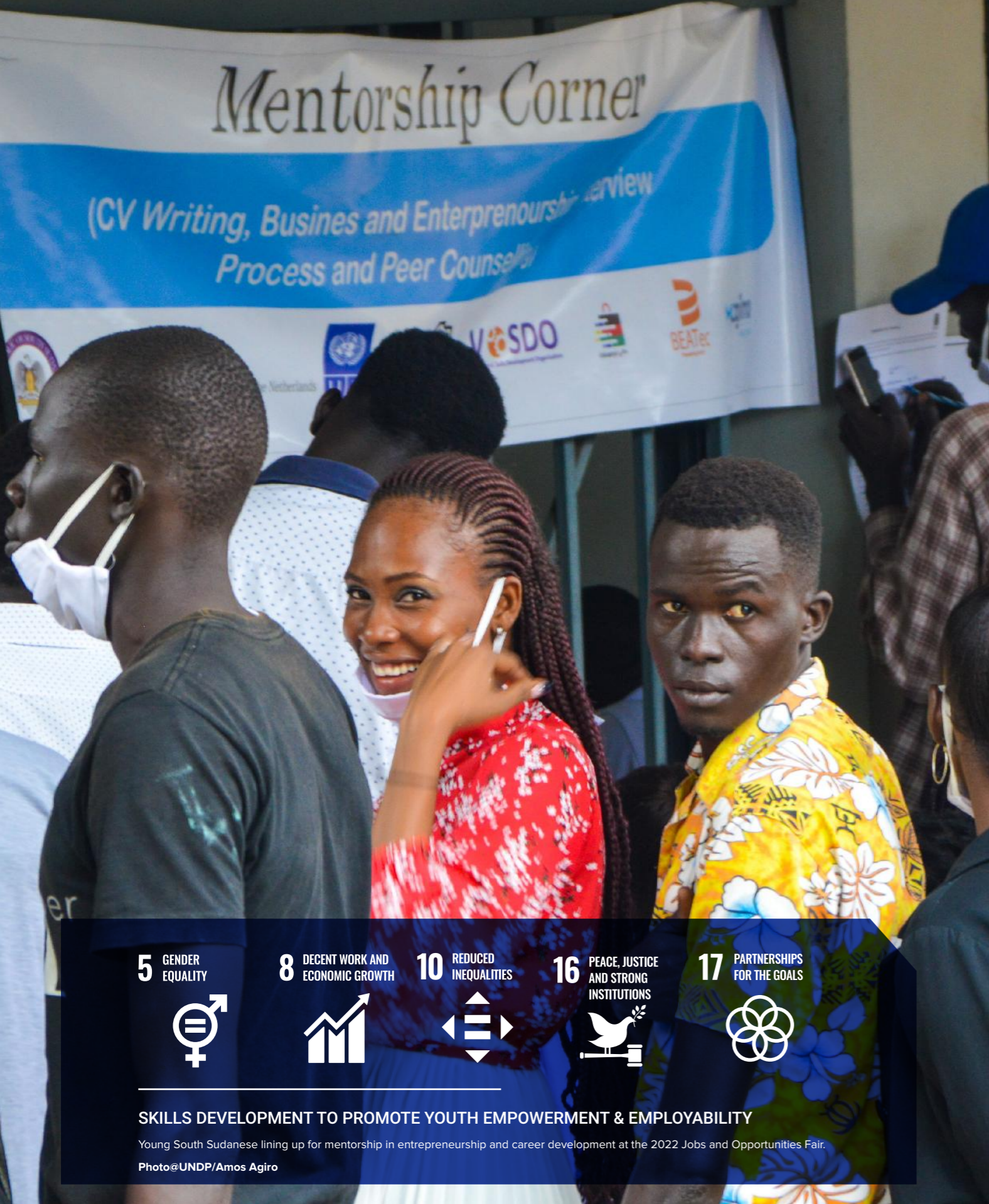
supported the Ministry of Finance and Planning in developing a National Planning Framework.



DATA COLLECTION & MANAGEMENT

supported the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) in collecting, analyzing, publishing, and disseminating statistical data.

PROGRAMME: STaRR



5 GENDER EQUALITY



8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



SKILLS DEVELOPMENT TO PROMOTE YOUTH EMPOWERMENT & EMPLOYABILITY

Young South Sudanese lining up for mentorship in entrepreneurship and career development at the 2022 Jobs and Opportunities Fair.

Photo@UNDP/Amos Agiro

STABILIZATION, RESILIENCE AND RECOVERY

The Stabilization, Resilience and Recovery (STaRR) unit's recovery and resilience portfolio contributes to strengthening community and nation-building by enhancing vocational and livelihood skills as well as adopting coping and transformative mechanisms to recover from and build resilience against shocks and stresses. The STaRR portfolio seeks to empower communities by enhancing livelihoods through the creation of employment opportunities for women, youth, and vulnerable groups such as IDPs with support from the private sector; supporting agricultural value chain development; re-establishing higher

education learning opportunities; improving productive social safety nets and expanding agricultural markets and trade opportunities.

The STaRR projects also provide support to government agencies through capacity-building and training related to economic development through inclusive trade and private sector development, e-commerce initiatives, and addressing current and future impacts of climate change. All these efforts are essential toward ensuring the progressive transformation of South Sudan to finding durable peace and sustainable development solutions.



Vocational training graduation.



South Sudan jobs and opportunities fair.



Consultative workshop on diagnostic trade.



Vocational skills training at the torit vtc.

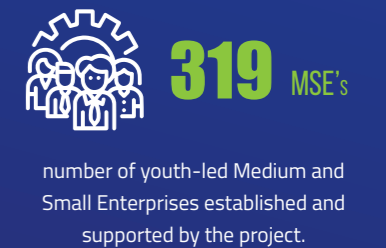


E-Commerce hub demo for the VIP guests.

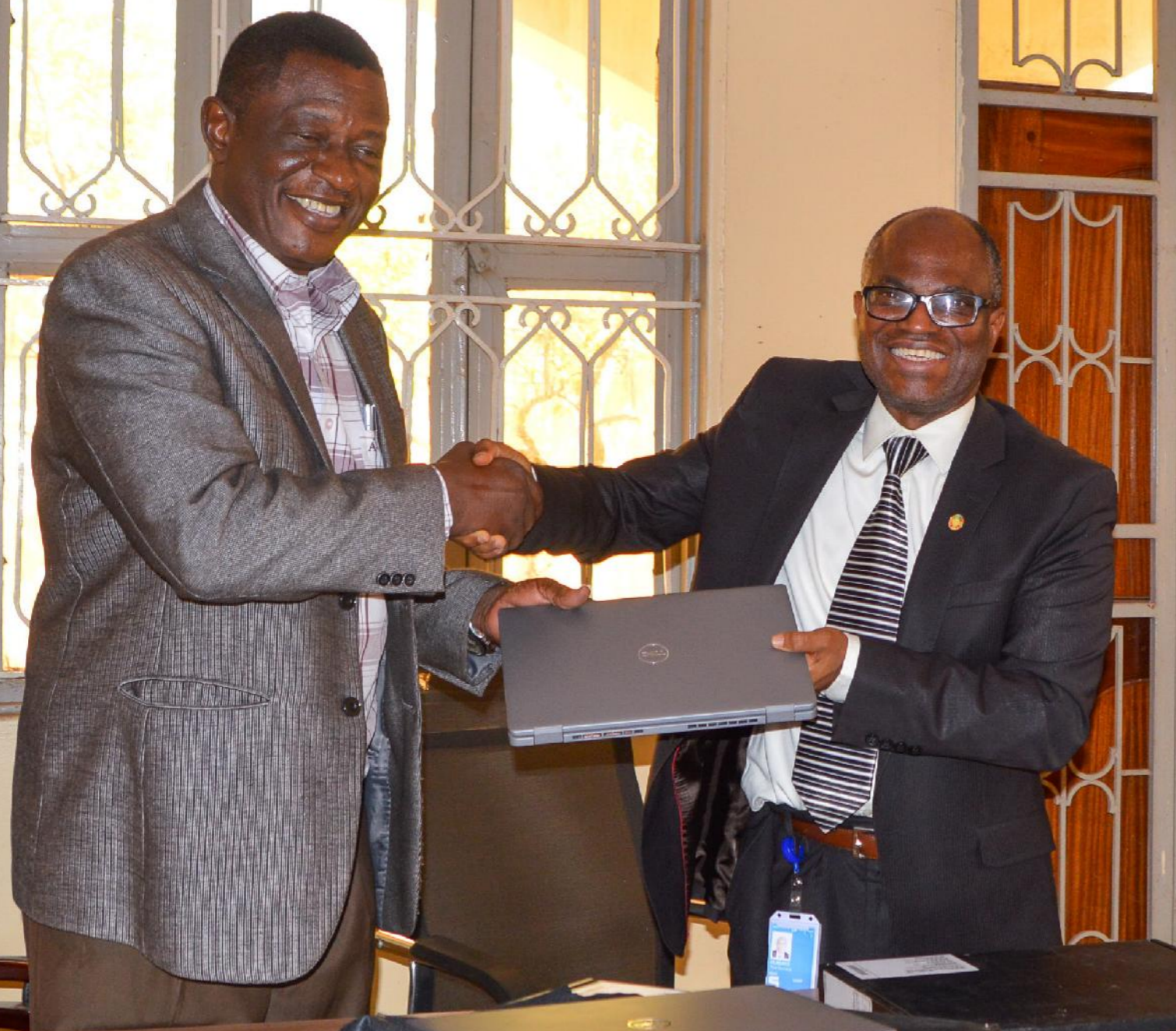


Official launch of the e-commerce hub.

2022 RESULTS HIGHLIGHTS



PROGRAMME: CORE GOVERNANCE



5 GENDER EQUALITY



8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT TO PROMOTE EFFICIENT SERVICES DELIVERY

UNDP DRR – Mr. Titus Osundina handing over ICT equipment to the Ministry of Federal Affairs to strengthen the capacity of the ministry.

Photo@UNDP/Amos Agiro

STRATEGIC GOVERNANCE SUPPORT PROJECT

UNDP's Strategic Governance Support programme aims at setting the country on a pathway to sustainable peace, development, and improved well-being for its citizens by targeting specific structures and institutions integral to the implementation of the Revitalized Peace Agreement (R -ARCSS); to address gaps in skills, knowledge and organization; encourage dialogue and consensus building, and strengthen accountability.

Seeking to build on the successes, achievements, and lessons learned from the Local Government Recovery Programme (LGRP) and Civil Service Support Officers (the Republic of South Sudan Inter-Government Development and recent Reforms brought about by the Revitalized Peace Agreement, the programme is devoted to capacitating legislative bodies, strengthening local governance structures, and supporting inter-governmental relations to expand services to those left furthest behind. Furthermore, it is also committed to supporting interventions that lay a foundation eventual transparent, inclusive, and credible elections.



H.E. President Salva Kiir officially opening the 6th Governors' Forum.



UNDP DRR - Mr. Titus Osundina delivering remarks at the capacity building training for state legislative assemblies.



State Governors during the 6th Governors' Forum.

2022 RESULTS HIGHLIGHTS



6th GOVERNORS' FORUM

Accelerating the Implementation of the Revitalized Peace Agreement in Accordance with the Roadmap 2022.



CAPACITY BUILDING

Supported induction training for states level legislative assemblies and Clerks of State Legislative Assemblies.



POLICY PLANNING & SUPPORT

Supported the development of the Strategic plan to operationalize the Federal Policy Document.

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES



“A young man in Yambio making a livelihood from beadwork, a craft traditionally believed to be for women, in South Sudan,



UNDP South Sudan DRR-P and DRR-O leading mens fight against gender violence.



Dr. Samuel Doe with CO colleagues celebrating international Women's Day.

RESULTS FOR GENDER

Gender Mainstreaming in UNDP South Sudan Country Office 2022.

Gender equality and women empowerment is at the core of UNDP's interventions and mainstream gender in all its interventions. UNDP mainstreams gender through direct interventions that aim to empower women and girls and address gender concerns by developing, planning, implementing, and evaluating all policies and programs. The CO continues its commitment on gender mainstreaming and targeted gender actions and, in 2022, 87 percent and 7 percent of projects are GEN-2 and GEN-3 respectively.

UNDP South Sudan is a member of the UNCT PSEA Taskforce and adapted a

zero tolerance on sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) of authority as well as sexual harassment in workplace. There are two gender SEA focal persons at the national level and representatives at the field level.

Gender Capacities: UNDP has a dedicated Country Office gender focal person and a gender focal working group comprising of members from different units and departments.

UNDP South Sudan received a *bronze certification* in the gender seal which ended in 2019 and aims to obtain a silver or gold certification in subsequent years.



A **Gender Strategy (2022-2023)** aligned with UNDP's global gender strategy was developed. A gender mainstreaming status assessment was done as a baseline for the development of the strategy.

2022 RESULTS HIGHLIGHTS



WOMEN-LED COMMUNITY POLICING

through UNDP support, **26,161** community policing platforms are women-led.



13,861

people supported on economic empowerment, creating employment opportunity and through women and youth focused initiatives.



GENDER EQUALITY & FAMILY BILLS

supported the drafting of the Min. of Gender to draft the Gender Equality and Family Bills, 2022.



AFFIRMATIVE ACTION BILL

supported Gender Affirmative Action Bill for the implementation of the 35% gender provision for women representation.



The winners of the Food Systems Innovation challenge in South Sudan.



The winners of the South Sudan Innovation Challenge supported by UNDP.

THE ACCELERATOR LAB

Citizen-Led Innovations-Technology enabled economic empowerment, creative food system solutions, and innovative business resilience

UNDP Accelerator Lab is championing technology, creativity, and innovation in reaching the sustainable development goals in South Sudan. The Accelerator Lab is helping to scale impact at national and community level by supporting communities to build inclusive, ethical, and sustainable innovative solutions to humanitarian and development challenges in their own unique ways merged into digitalization and technologies that

work for them making them adaptive and more resilient.

Through the Accelerator lab technologies to enable financial and digital inclusion, innovative sustainable STEM-based products to creative food systems and business resilience schemes to address decade long challenges in South Sudan are identifies, tested, and supported to work for the benefit of communities.



UNDP South Sudan's Accelerator lab in 2022 piloted an innovative financial services project called *Digitizing the Sudan's Sanduk Saving's* scheme. The initiative brought together the Sudan and South Sudan's Accelerator Labs in a joint experiment to digitize traditional grassroots saving scheme called the Sanduk utilized by cross-border traders and local women saving's groups in Warawar, NBGS. Approximately 70 percent of the participants were women smallholder traders.

2022 RESULTS HIGHLIGHTS



More than **1,000**

participants in the UNDP supported EAC Digital Innovation challenge for business resilience.



131 PEOPLE

provided with financial and digital literacy training as well as skills on mobile money usage.



The Accelerator Lab provided mentorship and design skills training to 30 participants in the run up to the national final, as well as mentorship and pitch deck refining to the two national champs. Through this support, one of the finalists from South Sudan emerged as the winner of the regional EAC Digital Innovation Challenge.



Severe floods in 2022.



Severe drought in 2022

ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE & DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT

South Sudan is extremely vulnerable to climate change impacts. Rising temperatures and the increasing severity of drought and flood events have a negative impact on the lives and livelihoods of the people in South Sudan. The impacts are compounded by widespread food insecurity, conflict, and a macroeconomic crisis. National institutions and inadequate warning systems make it difficult to predict and share information about climate hazards. As a result, people continue to struggle to adapt to changes in the environment.

Geared towards building the resilience of people against climate shocks and stresses through mitigation and adaptation measures, UNDP's climate programme provides the enabling environment for policy and programmatic engagements on environmental protection and sustainable use, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and disaster risk management. It is the main mechanism for the country's engagement and commitment under the Paris Agreement and related international frameworks like the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.



To continue the search for climate change solutions and to build the next generation of experts, the University of Juba will establish a Climate Change Centre within the School of Natural Resources and Environmental Studies. As part of this project, they will develop a research-based curriculum for a master's program in climate change.

2022 RESULTS HIGHLIGHTS



UN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE

supported South Sudan's representation in **COP 25 & 26**, on climate change.



CLIMATE PLEDGES: PARIS AGREEMENT

supported development and submission of South Sudan's 2nd Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC).



MONITORING CARBON EMISSIONS

established an iMRV system to allow for the monitoring of carbon emissions.



CLIMATE KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS

developed flagship knowledge products on climate and climate change.



Solar Power installation at the Police Headquarters in Juba.



Solar Panel installation at the National Laboratory.

GREENING THE BLUE

Exploring clean and sustainable modern energy for South Sudan

With an acute shortage of power supply, South Sudan is one of the world's least electrified countries. Solar power can turn this around by providing solutions and opportunities to drive the young nation toward sustainability. The current industrial reliance on fossil fuel-run generators is not financially and environmentally sustainable. Solar power can; a) help expand and diversify South Sudan's energy sector and contribute to a green pivot that will help

soften the crippling dependence on firewood and fossil fuel; and b) unlock numerous near-term and longer-term benefits in crucial sectors like public service, education, and health care in South Sudan. UNDP - Information and Technology Management solar power partnership project seeks to leverage the advantages that solar energy brings to the energy sector in South Sudan to drive sustainable development.




Key Benefits:

- Ensure/ Encourage 24hr service delivery in health facilities.
- Safe childbirth - ensures that women can safely deliver their babies, especially at night or in areas without power.
- Continuous testing in laboratories.
- Backup power during surgeries and other delicate procedures.
- Ensure optimal conditions for proper storage of vaccines and reagents etc.



Solar panels installed at the Oil Cottage in Wullu, Lakes State.

2022 RESULTS HIGHLIGHTS

-  Solarization of **27** health facilities across 6 states in the country.
-  Solarization of key national installations: **the National Public Health Laboratory and the Central Medical Store.**
-  Solarization and digitization of **3 State Revenue Authority offices** for efficient revenue collection and management.



UNDP Contractor for Solar Installation.

RESOURCES MOBILIZED IN 2022

In 2022, successful resource mobilization efforts raised US\$120,373,975. The main and regular sources of non-core funding were the Global Fund, The Netherlands, Sweden, Norway, Japan, the AfDB and the UN Peacebuilding Fund.

The CO also received funds from new donors such as the USA, European Union, France and UK and is in the process of negotiating cost-sharing agreements with potential funding from China, the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the Global Environment Facility.

Below is a summary illustration of our resources performance in 2022:

RESOURCES MOBILIZED



US\$ 120,373,975

BUDGET

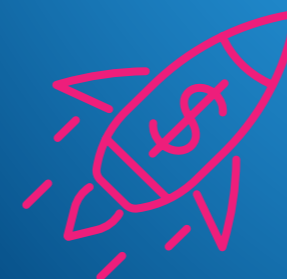


US\$ 93,014,339

EXPENDITURE IN 2022



US\$ 88,381,866



CO DELIVERY: 95.02%

PARTNERSHIPS FOR DEVELOPMENT



Dr. Samuel Doe together with the Chairperson of the Peace Commission (Middle), Representative of SIDA(Left) and other government representatives inaugurating the peace center in Rumbek.



The Government of South Sudan

Government institutions at National, State/ Administrative Area and sub-national levels

United Nations Country Team



Bilateral and Multilateral Partners

- Government of Netherlands
- Government of Sweden
- Government of Norway
- Government of Japan
- Government of Germany
- Government of France
- Government of United Kingdom
- Government of Canada
- Government of United States of America
- Government of Korea
- Government of China
- European Union
- Government of Denmark



TAKING CARE OF OUR PEOPLE

At UNDP South Sudan, we are people centric - aligning with UNDP's Global People Strategy, we continuously strive through new and innovative ways to positively impact on the working environment and the well-being of staff – in these difficult and extenuating circumstances - ultimately contributing to the office's ability to deliver impressive development results. In recognition of these efforts, we were awarded the prestigious 2021 People Award! for our efforts in Implementing People for 2030.

As a people centered office, we are keen to ensure staff growth and development. South Sudan Country Office has for the last couple of years invested in lateral and vertical movements of staff who have served for exceptionally long periods in the same position and department. This career strategy is intended to enhance the capacities of national staff to enable them to build upon their career visions and pathways. Over the years, over thirteen staff members have been supported through mentorship, coaching and on-the-job trainings through work placement opportunities, to move from one position or unit to another and to move up into higher positions of increased responsibility and remuneration.



PEOPLE HIGHLIGHTS

JUMA SAIDI

Driver >>> Finance Clerk



MARGARET SADIA

Payroll Assisant >>> Programme Finance Analyst



EDNA MADISON

Security Guard >>> HR Associate



HENRY BIDS

Security Guard >>> Admin Associate





PROGRAMMATIC CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

South Sudan is characterized by recurrent conflicts of various nature and magnitude and natural disasters exacerbate breakdown of the economy and livelihoods and obstruct the already insufficient institutional capacity to react to the crises.

- >> Globally, there is a stagnation of development assistance in and to protracted emergency settings such as South Sudan although there is increasing expenditure on relief. This poses a threat to efforts to ingrain and sustain development in these contexts. Development can no longer wait; thus, relief should not be a substitute for development but rather a complement to progress sustainable development in protracted crisis situations.
- >> In the wake of the complex emergencies, South Sudan's development budgets have collapsed, and humanitarian assistance is the only substantial aid being received. However, the widespread physical, institutional, and social destruction that resulted from the protracted political crises, require a new and robust political consensus and innovative ways of working to sustainably address the immediate and long-term needs of the country and its people.
- >> Overall, there is need for sustained public action and an unflinching support for international mandates. This consensus should be linked, moreover, to a new ethics of working in protracted crises and of engaging in the complexities of internal socio-political conflicts. In this respect, solidarity among partners is required as a guiding hand to planning and executing effective programmes.
- >> There is the need for increased investment in improving food security and service delivery to transform the lives of ordinary citizens as bedrocks to sustaining peace and development. Consequently, improving public financial management is critical to achieve economic and social ambitions articulated in the R-ARCSS and the National Development Strategy.



Celebrating Women in uniform day, in support of security sector reforms to advance gender equality in security institutions.

CONCLUSIONS

There is need for new approaches and solidarity among actors to develop and implement progressive policies crucially required to build and sustain political and socioeconomic stability to help South Sudan to deliberately move away from protracted crises and aid dependency. Hence, the supporting transitory policies and actions need to be established and effected working with indigenous structures at the helm of the decision-making.

More importantly, development and relief programming require integration across all actors and sectors to sustainably address the cycle of constant emergencies in South Sudan and usher in sustainable development.

Obviously, serious questions of resource adequacy and appropriateness of programming ought to be asked. Indeed, the international demands for development and humanitarian aid are competitive and regionally polarized making it necessary for strategic political consensus to be built by donors, aid agencies, and partners with Government oversight at country level. This collective consensus would need to re-establish urgency of collective international responsibility for eradicating conflict and poverty in South Sudan.

Therefore, it is critical that Humanitarian aid programmes and projects are conceptualized, planned, and implemented alongside development for South Sudan to wean itself off the long-term aid dependencies that consequently undermine home-grown coping strategies and increase vulnerabilities.

Additionally, for all aid to reap the intended benefits, there needs to be functioning civil and social administration, physical infrastructural systems, and a reasonable economic system for sustainability. There is a need to invest in local leadership through new approaches and skills to deal with prolonged and unprecedented crises.

Accordingly, the advantages of the triple nexus approach to tackle peace, humanitarianism, and development can be

explored and harnessed for actors to not only meet needs, but also to reduce vulnerabilities and better manage risk in efforts to secure a better trajectory towards sustainable development. Clear demonstration of strong government commitment to embracing sustainable development approaches that work for South Sudan.

The Impact of Humanitarian Assistance and State Building in South Sudan: Lessons Emerging from the Nexus Programming, a joint flagship study between UNDP & WFP, organized a Research Workshop in August 2022. The workshop discussed the Humanitarian, Development and Peace (HDP) conceptual framework in South Sudan. Plenary discussions, research findings, and reactions to the study findings by participants revealed the heightened need for the development and delivery of basic services through permanent structures; (re) construction of a strong economic foundation; improved access to justice and the rule of law, peacebuilding, social cohesion, and the social contract. The final workshop report would be published in 2023.

According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) 1.5 billion people live in disaster-prone countries, mostly with protracted insecurity and violence. Consequently, disaster risk reduction and risk management need to be addressed within development programming to mitigate the devastating outcomes of unprecedented conflicts and disasters. On its part, UNDP in South Sudan will continue to plan, develop, and implement strategic programming that factors in the country's humanitarian assistance requirements whilst building the proper foundations to complement long-term development objectives and build resilience of the country and its citizens. Attention will be paid to programming approaches that shift mindsets and actions towards long-term extended assistance programming, which build aid independence by addressing root causes of South Sudan's problems in tandem with humanitarian aid to contribute to alleviating recurring crises..



UNDP and UNWOMEN working with the Office of the Vice President and various ministries to advocate for women's leadership and political participation in the transitional Government

LOOKING FORWARD

UNDP appreciates the strong partnerships with the Government and people of South Sudan, international development partners, the private sector, and civil society organizations. Leveraging on these partnerships and the extensive experience in promoting inclusive and sustainable human development, unique expertise in supporting economic stability and public financial management, UNDP South Sudan will scale-up its work on poverty reduction, democratic governance, environment and energy and crisis prevention and recovery while boosting support to rule of law and governance.

In the coming year, UNDP will support the country's first ever democratic elections and continue contributing to the Constitution-making process.

Learning lessons from the evaluation of the last country program document (CPD 2019-2022), UNDP in South Sudan plans to review its projects to develop more sustainable programme models suitable for the country's context.

The UNDP plans to continue develop and strengthen its work in six key areas. 1) Support to peacebuilding through interventions that address linkages between community expectations and national peace processes. 2) Strengthening the capacities of key and reform processes. 3) Scale up, in scope and impact, the livelihoods and employment projects especially targeting youth and women 4) Build on the efforts to promote women's security and access to development resources. 5) Engage the private sector to provide employment and social services. 6) Expand UNDP's field offices to build an area-based sustainable development approach that leaves no one behind.



South Sudan suffered yet another severe drought in 2022 - Inset, a local farmer in Jonglei tilling his farm in anticipation of the rains.

IMPACT STORY



Wrestlers competing during the National Youth Day Celebrations in Juba

Digitizing an Indigenous Savings Scheme to Enable Financial Inclusion

>> *The Warawar Peace Market's Sanduk*

The South Sudan-Sudan border often suffers from multiple fragilities, ranging from floods, border insecurity, currency instability coupled with the lack of financial and physical infrastructure. Communities in these areas rely on informal cross-border trade for socio-economic survival.

Access to finances to start and run their petty trades is a major challenge. There are no financial institutions in the area and the local microfinance schemes provide high interest rates loans. These challenges cause the populace, especially the youths and female cross-border traders to be left behind as they own no assets against which to borrow and hence cannot afford the loans.

Against this background, UNDP's Accelerator Lab in South Sudan embarked on a social innovation experiment in Warawar, South Sudan, to help promote financial inclusion and reduce interest rates.

The *Warawar Peace Market* is nestled at the border area of South Sudan and Sudan in the north-east. The market is a hub of cross-border trade, attracting traders from both countries. The market is important for more than just the trading going on, it is a symbol of peace and unity between the two countries and among the people; it is also symbolic of the long history shared by the two countries.

Despite its importance, the market's operations are largely informal and lack infrastructural development, including formal financial institutions. This situation gives the traders no options for accessing capital finance or social security funds.

Traditionally, cross-border traders in *Warawar Peace Market* have relied on a unique form of financial association known as the *sanduk*. For generations, the *sanduks* have played a vital role in South Sudan, serving as a form of social capital and financial security.

Sanduk in Arabic means a box. The *sanduk* functions by pooling the savings of members and lending the funds to those in need

at an interest rate that is agreed upon by the group. The scheme operates on informal principles. Members of a *sanduk* contribute small amounts of money on a regular basis. The funds are held in the *Sanduk* until a member needs a loan.

However, the loans are typically granted at high-interest rates making it difficult for most of the entrepreneurs and traders to access and thrive and some of the traders end up accumulating high debts. Moreover, the available funds in circulation on the market are very limited.

The experiment

Based on the challenges caused by the high interest rates charged by *Sanduks* for cross-border traders and entrepreneurs, the Africa Borderlands Centre and UNDP Accelerator Lab in South Sudan embarked on an experiment to innovatively digitize the *sanduk* to promote favorable conditions for financial inclusion and access to current and potential traders in and around the market.

The experiment aimed to digitize the *sanduk* by mapping the traditional concept onto a mobile digital platform to enhance the accessibility and efficiency of the traditional system which will create group financial profile that eventually can be used in accessing bank loans.

The *sanduk* groups were divided into two groups: the experimental and the control group. The experimental groups were created for a mobile digital wallet mimicking the traditional analog concept, to facilitate their transactions, which enabled them to access these services of m-Gurush, a private mobile money system in South Sudan. The digital *sanduk* system allowed members to save and borrow money with ease, using the created application on their mobile phones. This system enhanced digital financial inclusion, particularly for women who traditionally have limited access to financial services.

Results of the experiment

- Reduced interest rates charged by the sanduks to members. At the beginning of the innovation experiment, in December 2021, sanduk interest rates in Warwar Peace market were averaging at a staggering 30%, by the end of 2022, the interest rates were ranging between 15-20%. Members of the sanduk's attributed this drop to competition from the experimental sanduk groups that participated in the intervention.
- The reduction in interest rates has seen new members joining the sanduks.
- Increased lending power for sanduk operators as more members joined the scheme.
- More people, especially those who were financially excluded and or had limited access to formal financial services were able to access emergency loans for non-business-related purposes including for medical and school fees.

The control group sanduks also recorded significant success in savings, new members, and an increase in the resource pool of capital that members can access. The intervention created healthy competition between the *sanduk* groups, promoting innovation, and resulting in better outcomes for all members. The digitization of the *sanduk* has revolutionized the traditional system, enabling members to access credit with ease, promoting financial inclusion and empowering individuals, particularly women.

Overall, the impact of the experiment has been significant, both in terms of access to micro loans, reducing interest rates, and enhancing digital financial inclusion. The experiment has demonstrated that innovation can play a critical role in improving financial services in Africa, particularly in rural areas. By digitizing traditional financial services such as the *sanduk*, communities can gain access to the financial tools they need to improve their livelihoods and build a better future for themselves and their families.

The experiment further demonstrates the potential of technology and innovation to enhance financial inclusion, promote access to credit, and reduce interest rates. Digitization of traditional financial systems in Africa, and beyond, highlights the potential of innovation and technology to enhance financial inclusion and promote economic development.

Bakita's testimony

Bakita is the chairperson of Akut Ci Mat, one of the *sanduks* and a dynamic trader at Warwar Peace Market. She operates a tea kiosk and provides lodging services to cross border traders. Before the innovation experiment in 2021, her lodging accommodation had 14 rooms. About 18 months later as a result of the innovation experiment, she managed to easily secure more loans and expanded her lodge to 22 rooms.



This experiment has been a game-changer for me. It has enabled me to access more loans, which I used to increase my hotel capacity. I now have more rooms, which means more business for me. My fellow traders can now have a comfortable and affordable place to stay while conducting their businesses at Warwar Peace Market and the digital money is providing security for my money.

**Bakita,
Trader and Entrepreneur**



Bakita, a trader and entrepreneur who has benefitted from "*Sanduk*". She is the proud owner of a tea kiosk and a hotel in Warwar.

Bakita in front of her hotel.

The new wing of eight rooms that Bakita constructed.





The United Nations Development Programme
Plot 21, Ministries Road, Juba
South Sudan

 communications.ss@undp.org

   [@undpsouthsudan](https://twitter.com/undpsouthsudan)