



CALL for PROPOSALS

Title: Strengthening Duty Bearers Capacities on South Sudan Electoral Process, Promoting Freedom of Expression and Access to Information During Elections

Background

Within the framework of UNESCO's action to strengthen free, independent, and pluralistic media UNESCO seeks a national partner to support implementation of the South Sudan Electoral Project.

The project aims to strengthen national institutions, platforms, and processes in support of free, fair, credible, peaceful, and inclusive electoral processes in South Sudan that establish legitimate representative institutions. The project contributes to electoral and broader priorities of South Sudan's Revised National Development Strategy, the Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS), and the corresponding August 2022 Roadmap, which envisage free and fair elections reflecting the will of the people as a key component of the peace agreement.

The project results are structured around five inter-related outputs, to be implemented by UNDP, UNMISS, UNESCO and UN Women in partnership with the National Elections Commission and a range of other state and non-state actors:

1. Establishment of an enabling legal framework for free, fair, and inclusive elections supported.
2. Strengthened institutional capacities for professional, transparent, and accountable election management.
3. Inclusive participation fostered through enhanced rights and access to information.
4. Enhanced environment for maintaining security and mitigating violence during elections.
5. Strengthened effectiveness in planning and implementing electoral processes for all citizens.

Strengthening mechanisms that protect citizens' fundamental freedoms and advance their access to information help to create an environment in which genuine electoral participation can take place. Beyond specific electoral rights, such as the right to vote and stand for election, "participation in the electoral process cannot be effective unless a wide range of rights are respected: freedom of expression and opinion, freedom of peaceful assembly, freedom of association, freedom of movement, freedom from discrimination, and freedom from fear and intimidation." National authorities, civil society, faith-based organisations, community groups and the media all play crucial roles in educating the public to enable them to exercise their rights and in mobilizing participation.

Promoting access to accurate and impartial information through media

The media is a central and powerful force in electoral processes. It is a primary means for communicating information to citizens, provides space for debate and becomes a tool for contestants to persuade voters to vote for them. Media can also be a watchdog and pillar of transparency, that can activate public pressure for accountability. With the media holding such a dominant role in shaping public opinion, there is always the risk that it will be co-opted and distorted for political ends.

As appropriate to UNESCO's communications mandate and area of expertise in relation to access to information and capacity building of the media, UNESCO will lead on implementing this sub-output. The project will aim to develop the capacity of journalists and editors, particularly women journalists, to deliver professional, accurate, impartial, conflict-sensitive and gender-sensitive reporting on elections, as well as building capacities of community radio stations in election broadcasting. Alongside this, the project will work to promote understanding of the positive role of media in electoral processes and principles of freedom of information and access to information, through awareness raising for different stakeholders, including security personnel, line ministries, commissions, media houses, journalists and particular focus will be given to engaging youth constructively in local media activities around elections, and strategies for responding to mis/disinformation and hate speech, particularly against women.

Terms of Reference

Under the authority of Head of Office and direct supervision of the Communication and Information Specialist, the contractor shall be expected to:

1. Train 40 duty bearers (State Ministers of Information, parliamentarians, security representatives) on democratic processes, freedom of expression, promote access to accurate information and role of media during elections.
 - i) At least 20 participants will be invited from the States to be part of the 2-day training. Participants will be drawn from Upper Nile State, Western Bahr El Gahzal State, Northern Bahr El Gahzal, Warrap, Eastern Equatoria State, Lakes State, Unity State, Jonglei State, Western Equatoria State, Pibor, Ruweng and Abyei Administrative Areas.
2. Mobilise and train 35 Station Managers and editors on their role in promoting access to information during elections.
 - i) 20 Participants will be drawn from 10 states and 3 Administrative areas (2 station managers per location)
 - ii) Conduct a 2-day training for the station managers in Juba on their role in promoting access to information for communities during the electoral process, ensuring that no one is left behind.

- iii) The training will also be opportunity to develop a training outline for journalists and media houses on electoral reporting.
 - iv) The training will also present an opportunity to establish a coordinated working group for information sharing and coordination of capacity building efforts on electoral processes and promotion of Access to Information.
3. In close collaboration with the relevant government entities, media houses and CSOs, support development of electoral reporting guide for journalists.
 - i) Hire expert to support with development of the guide and consultation with relevant entities/stakeholders.
 - ii) Conduct validation of the guide with the aim to support its adoption.
 4. Ensure equal gender representation during project implementation (50:50 representation of men and women)
 5. In close consultation with UNESCO, the selected partner shall prepare the programme/agenda for the 2 workshops and training materials to be used during the project.
 6. Identify and engage media trainers/experts (1 expert from within the region and 1 national expert) to facilitate the capacity building workshops on electoral reporting, conflict sensitive, gender responsive reporting, MIL, fact checking, countering hate speech, ethical and accurate reporting.
 7. Develop training materials to be based on UNESCO publications on Electoral Reporting, coverage, democratic processes, Freedom of Expression, Access to information, safety of journalists, etc.
 8. Develop evaluation forms to be filled by participants to assess their learning progress during the trainings and obtain feedback/recommendations to inform next interventions.
 9. Prepare and administer evaluation forms/questionnaire to assess the benefits of the training to the target beneficiaries and a basis to guide future engagement.
 10. Carry out all logistics related for the success of the activities, such as identify venue, print visibility material, mobilize gender balanced participants, gender balanced panellists, community radio stations and key stakeholders to participate.
 11. Ensure visibility of the activities is done through banners, social media platforms, web articles, newspapers, radio talk shows with a view to raise awareness on constitutional issues.

Expected Outcomes

It is expected that, as a result of the activities:

1. Key recommendations and action plans from duty bearers and beneficiaries will be obtained, with the view to strengthen and identify future priority areas of intervention during the electoral process.

2. The beneficiaries trained and equipped with skills on democratic practices, freedom of expression, Access to Information, safety of journalists and the role of the media during the electoral process and promote access to information.

Deliverables

- a. Submit to UNESCO by 31 January 2024 a detailed work plan, draft training programme, training materials, list of participants, CVs of the selected international and local expert upon which the 1st instalment of 33% shall be made.
- b. Submit to UNESCO by 30 March 2024 a detailed progress report on accomplished activities including high resolution photos and article upon which the 2nd instalment of 50% shall be made.
- c. Submit to UNESCO by 31 July 2024, final detailed activity report plus recommendations from the beneficiaries, final Electoral Journalists reporting guide, high-resolution photos, press articles, financial report, and receipts accounting for project funds upon which final payment of 17% shall be made.

Deliverables	Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A detailed work plan, draft training programme. • Training materials. • list of participants. • CV for the selected international and local expert. 	31 January 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed progress report on accomplished activities including high resolution photos and article 	30 March 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final detailed activity report plus recommendations from the beneficiaries • Final Electoral Journalists reporting guide. • High-resolution photos. • Press articles. • Financial report including receipts accounting for project funds. 	31 July 2024

Admission Requirement

- Proposals and Budget must be sent no later than the deadline for submitting applications referred to in the document.

- Proposal must be submitted in writing, submitted in English.
- Eligible activities Project proposals and workplan may be submitted for the activities described in Part 1-3. Proposals should match the specific description of the action.
- Budget should be clearly developed and broken down per location areas indicated above.
- Grant applications are eligible if submitted by: - A non-profit organization/CSO.

Failure to comply with the above requirements will lead to the rejection of the application.

Exclusion from participation:

Applicants will be excluded from participating in the call for proposals if they are in any of the following situations:

- They have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authority can justify including by decisions of the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission, and Ministry of Labour.
- They are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, or have suspended business activities.
- They or persons having powers of representation, decision making or control over them have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment of a competent authority which has the force of res judicata.

Eligibility/ Award Criteria

Only proposals that meet the eligibility, exclusion and selection criteria will be further assessed based on the below award criteria.

Criteria	Mark Maximum Point)
Relevance of application in relation to the activities in part a) and expected outputs	25 points
Experience carrying out similar activities with regards to working with journalists/media sector	25 points
Presentation of expected results, expected impact and sustainability of the action	15 points
Time schedule of the action (work plan); management arrangements	15 points

Coherence, relevance, and proportionality of the estimated budget in relation with the proposed action	20 points
Maximum total score	100 points

Implementation period: The estimated duration of the action is 3 months. Activities shall start on the day both parties sign an agreement.

How to Submit

<p>Submit your proposal and budget to implement stated activities. via. procurement.juba@unesco.org by 15 Dec 2023, 4:00 PM (CAT)</p> <p>Note: Indicate in the Subject line title of the proposal for which you are applying</p>

UNESCO accords priority to gender equality in all fields of competence. Therefore, the contractor shall ensure equal opportunities are given to the participating women and men during the training.

Annex: Publications

- Media + Elections: An Electoral reporting handbook: [media elections an elections reporting handbook en.pdf](#)
- Elections in Digital Times, A guide for Electoral Practitioners: [Elections in Digital Times A guide for Electoral Pratiitioners.pdf](#)
- A handbook for Journalists during Elections
- Briefer on Human Rights and Elections for Journalists
- Media and Information Literate Citizens: Think Critically, Click Wisely! : [MIL Think Critica Click Wisely.pdf](#)
- Guidelines for Elections Coverage
- Media and Information Literacy in Journalism: A Handbook for Journalists and Journalism Education
- Free Online Course: Information and Elections in the Digital Era. <https://journalismcourses.org/course/information-and-elections-in-the-digital-era/>