

BRIDGE Training Program Successfully Implemented In South Sudan

written by NEC Press | July 1, 2024

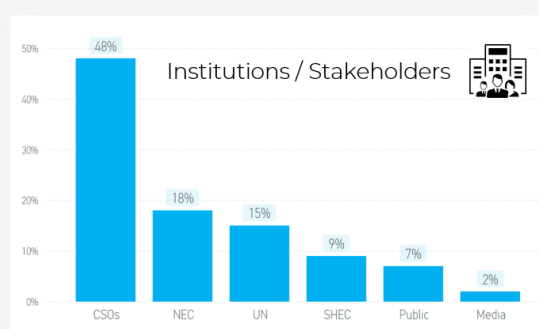
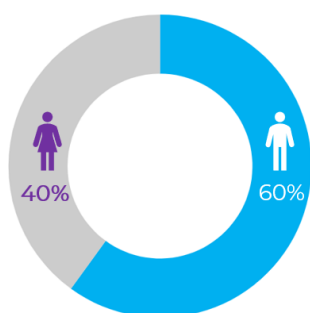


Between 22 April and 28 June 2024, the United Nations Integrated Electoral Assistance Team (IEAT) implemented a comprehensive training program in South Sudan utilizing an international election training curriculum, Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Election (BRIDGE). BRIDGE is an international election training curriculum developed by five global partners: the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC); UNDP; UN DPPA; International IDEA; and IFES. In total, 26 BRIDGE training events were held: **Introduction to Electoral Administration (3 days); Building Institutional Excellence in Elections (5 days); Operational Planning; Train the Facilitators (10 days) ; Civic and Voter Education (4 days); and Access to Electoral Processes (3 days).**

This training program was the largest BRIDGE training program in its 25-year history as the pre-eminent global curriculum

for training election stakeholders. BRIDGE was welcomed and positively evaluated by the participants. The trainings provided an opportunity for electoral stakeholders to meet and discuss various electoral thematic areas within a broader electoral-cycle approach. The program strengthened the capacity and knowledge of the newly re-constituted National Election Commission (NEC) and newly recruited staff. Training included a range of stakeholders, including youth organizations, women organizations, disability persons organizations and faith-based organizations. Events were held across the country in all ten (10) states of South Sudan and the Greater Pibor Administrative Area.

A total of 679 participants (60% male, 40% female) were trained in different BRIDGE modules. Nearly half of the *participants* (48%) were from civil society organizations, followed by representatives of National Election Commission (18%), State High Election Committees (9%), State-level government authorities (7%), Media (2%), and United Nations (15%).



In addition to providing vital foundational training to 679 participants, the program also created a pool of 19 trained

facilitators from the NEC, civil society, and UN IEAT national staff, with skills to develop and implement training programs, and potential to become fully accredited BRIDGE facilitators in the future. Three national facilitators were provided the opportunity to facilitate BRIDGE training and one received workshop level accreditation. The trainings increased awareness among the stakeholders on strategies for inclusion of women, youth, persons with disabilities, internally displaced persons and refugees in electoral process. The program enhanced understanding among stakeholders on delivery of civic and voter education programs and messages. Electoral officials, civil society organizations and other stakeholders expressed the need for continued training.