



# USAID | SOUTH SUDAN

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## DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE

### OVERVIEW

In the post-independence era, USAID democracy and governance assistance in South Sudan seeks to strengthen government institutions and human capacity at the national and subnational levels, while supporting active engagement by South Sudanese citizens with their government at all levels.

Stability in the country will depend largely upon the ability of the Government of the Republic of South Sudan (RoSS) to meet public demands and communicate effectively to citizens. The greatest development challenge is to help the RoSS govern in a transparent and accountable manner while responding to public needs and demands as well as engaging citizens. A significant democratic challenge for South Sudan, which has been dominated politically by the Sudan People's Liberation Movement that rose out of Sudan's civil war, is the growth of democratic competition among political parties.



USAID provided comprehensive assistance for the January 2011 referendum on self-determination for South Sudan.

### STRATEGY

USAID is targeting the specific institutions, processes, and actors that have played a critical role in advancing stability and building governance capacity during the 2005 to 2011 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) period. At the same time, USAID is supporting South Sudan's efforts to create a permanent constitution and improve citizen participation and oversight.

### INVESTMENTS

#### ENHANCING POLITICAL COMPETITION

Democratic institutions, processes, and political parties are critical for the creation and stability of a legitimate and democratic government. USAID investment promote a constitutional and legal framework for elections in the Republic of South Sudan; transparent, effective and impartial elections administration; and the development of viable, representative political parties who represent their constituents and gain office without exploiting ethnic rivalries or resorting to violence.

#### STRENGTHENING CORE GOVERNANCE INSTITUTIONS

USAID will continue to strengthen key governing institutions and support the incorporation of democratic structures and principles into the public sector to enable an effective and democratic government in South Sudan. In particular, USAID support seeks to enhance capacity in RoSS-identified priority areas—namely, executive leadership, development of the country's legal framework and the rule of law, and public service capacity building. A key component of current support for governmental reform is technical assistance to strengthen core functions of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, such as budget preparation and execution, establishing South Sudan's tax administration, and undertaking procurement reforms. This support includes increasing the use of an automated Financial Management Information System at the central level and in all ten states, which will greatly increase transparency in government spending. USAID technical assistance has been critical in transforming the Bank of Southern Sudan into a fully functioning Central Bank, and assistance will continue to strengthen its ability to promote macro-economic stability and regulation of the financial sector. Since petroleum accounts for a significant share of South Sudan's public revenue, USAID will continue to work with the Ministry of Petroleum and Mining to improve its management of key elements of the petroleum sector.

At the local level, democratic governance and delivery of essential public services is the foundation upon which developmental and economic marginalization can be addressed. USAID launched a decentralization program to build the capacity of state and local government to strengthen service delivery in states along the fragile north-south border, where stability in the post-independence era is critical. USAID assistance has provided tangible peace dividends while building basic state and local government capacity and increasing transparency by linking communities to local government. This support will continue with the recently approved transition strategy.

## **INCREASING CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT WITH GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS**

Ensuring that citizens have the space and means to engage with government at all levels to peacefully express needs, concerns, and opinions is essential to effective, inclusive, and accountable governance. A strong, vibrant civil society is one of the primary means through which citizens engage with their government, through advocacy on behalf of citizens and by monitoring the degree to which the government represents its people. Therefore, USAID seeks to build functional, organizational, and technical capacity of civil society organizations to fill these critical roles. In addition, USAID strongly supports efforts to educate citizens about their government and the key processes, such as constitutional development and elections, in which their participation is essential.

Media independence and freedom of information are integral to creating an informed citizenry that is knowledgeable about its rights and responsibilities and is able to hold its government accountable. To increase the availability of quality information, USAID supports the development of professional media and provides technical assistance to RoSS agencies to strengthen their strategic communications capacities. Partners include the RoSS Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Sudan Radio Service shortwave and FM radio, and six community FM stations in South Sudan. The Sudan Radio Service FM station in Juba serves as a journalism training center. USAID assistance has helped to develop a media regulatory framework, establish public information radio and TV journalist training, and distribute solar-powered, wind-up radios to isolated communities in South Sudan.

## **SUPPORTING PARTICIPATORY CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

South Sudan has a historic opportunity to develop a new permanent constitution that provides for fair representation among the country's various groups, who have historically been divided. An inclusive, consensus-building process will be essential for stability. The constitution and the process through which it is drafted will establish the architecture and formal framework for political processes and governance. It will also determine the powers and functioning of the government as well as the rights and responsibilities of citizens. Given the historic role of USAID in supporting the CPA and drafting the first interim constitution of South Sudan, the RoSS has asked USAID to support this process.

USAID will provide critical assistance to the RoSS to preserve democratic principles in the permanent constitution and seek broad citizen participation in the constitutional development process. Technical assistance to legal drafting of a permanent constitution will be provided as well as support to the:

- Executive and relevant ministries and offices to design and implement an inclusive constitutional development process;
- RoSS to engage effectively with civil society, the media, and political parties regarding the constitutional process;
- RoSS to communicate strategically with the public regarding the constitutional process.

USAID will also target citizens to deliver civic education, workshops, and other information sharing to ensure that key stakeholders have the basic knowledge and understanding necessary to participate in the constitutional process. Additionally, support to key stakeholders regarding how to effectively share concerns and views about the constitution and the constitutional process with the RoSS will be provided by USAID.