

**2012 ECOSOC Substantive Session
Integrated Support to South Sudan: Capacity Building and Core
Governance Functions
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Mr. Chairperson, participants and colleagues;

1. Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to this discussion on integrated support to South Sudan for capacity building and core governance functions. Let me start by saying that I can only affirm the positions stated by the Honourable Deputy Minister regarding the current development challenges in South Sudan
2. With the dire statistics mentioned regarding maternal mortality, literacy and access to basic education, the Government of South Sudan is indeed faced with the enormous task of providing basic services to her citizens, whilst also facing a very small pool of skilled labour positioned to provide it.
3. Alongside the UN Country Team and the Mission in South Sudan, UNDP has provided capacity development support of 2 kinds. The **first** is a surge capacity designed to provide immediate support to strengthen the provision of services, and the establishment of core functions of the State. The **second** kind of support is mentoring and coaching provided through the GoSS – IGAD Initiative.

4. As noted by the Honourable Minister, the necessary institutions of the State have been established. What remains a challenge is having the adequate skills sets and competencies for these institutions to effectively provide service, particularly at State levels.
5. **Through the Rapid Capacity Initiative (RCPI)**, UNDP has deployed specialists to support core functions of the State, which were identified through a consultative process, and which functions are seen to be necessary to ensure stability of the State.
6. Amongst these are revenue specialists who supported an average revenue increase of 138% in 5 target states; urban planners who have recently supported land demarcation for 28,000 new residential plots for residents and local returnees; and financial management & treasury specialists who have supported 9 out of the 10 States to complete annual work plans and budgets. We also have rule of law specialists who have supported a registration and vetting exercise for the South Sudan Police and Prisons Services, with more than 70% and 35% completion for police and prisons, respectively.
7. **Under the IGAD programme**, to date 164 civil servants contributed from Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia have been embedded, and twinned with the South Sudanese counterparts, and provide mentoring and coaching support to improve business processes, and provide efficient services.
8. 70% of the IGAD CSSOs are in the health sector, and include surgeons, midwives and radiologists. We have also supported the placement of human resource and organizational development specialists, and legislative drafters. Whilst this programme is just completing its first year, 2 external reviews have affirmed the positive contribution on the civil service culture in GoSS where they are located, and in some instances –

provided mentoring support to entire departments such as in hospitals.

9. **So what are the challenges and gaps? Let me confine myself to describing two.**
10. Mr. Chairman, **first there is the challenge of demand exceeding supply.** With the limited scope and reach of the State in terms of infrastructure and available staff, particularly to State and County levels, where the majority of South Sudanese live and work; there is a challenge to providing capacity development support to State institutions that are unable to reach the citizenry, in the first instance. There remains the risk that while the State may become more efficient and effective, it will still not service the majority of the populace.
11. In addition, there is a limited “supply” of technical support of a durable kind. While RCPI and IGAD have together deployed more than 250 specialists; and I am aware that more than 100 midwives have been deployed through the UNFPA programme. Given the statistics cited by the Honourable Minister the assistance deployed remains minimal when compared to countries such as Timor Leste and Mozambique immediately following their own cessation of hostilities.
12. Thus not only does the limited scope and reach of the State present a challenge; but so does the insufficient longer term capacity development intervention. **There is need to consider more innovation, including tapping into the wealth of South Sudanese in the Diaspora to contribute to the State Building effort.**
13. The **second challenge is integration of support at conceptual level** that would enable an exit strategy that leaves South Sudan with an increased capacity to deliver services.

14. As noted by the Honourable Minister, a corollary to the capacity development support is the implementation of a substantive reform agenda within the public service. There remains a critical need to adopt the necessary policy decisions to rationalize the civil service through a structured review and vetting process, to ensure that there is a right size and capability fit of all staff. Without such reform, the impact of capacity development support may be limited due to a lack of sufficient numbers of adequately qualified personnel to mentor, coach or train.
15. In this regard the Medium-Term Capacity Development Strategy, which is an integral part of the South Sudan Development Plan, needs adequate investment alongside capacity surges and training support. To date there has been limited intervention from any quarter for this strategy.
16. Similarly, key policy issues such as decentralization and the consequent structure, roles and responsibilities of local government still require clarity in some aspects; which would in turn determine the size, scope, skills and competencies of the local governments.
17. My point here is that there is need to integrate the frontline surge capacity development support with resolution of key policy questions to better position Government of South Sudan and its partners to transcend “gap filling” and root interventions in a concrete State-building agenda. **Again, consideration of the South Sudanese Diaspora contributions may be key here.**
18. In this regard, both the UNDP interventions described have been careful to place support both at the frontline services level, and in the national institutions such as the ministries of finance; of Labour, Public Service and Human Resources Development and the Ministry of Interior.

19. Mr. Chairman, allow me to close with one comment on the impact of the current austerity measures in South Sudan on capacity development efforts.

20. As we know, and as alluded to by the Honourable Minister, the austerity measures present a substantive reduction in resources directed to development interventions. This will necessarily include reduction in investment in the large reform agenda proposed by the South Sudan Development Plan.

21. But it is at this very juncture that there is an increased need to have a closer view in the allocation and use of public resources, and avail the necessary capacity to do so. As stated by the Honourable Minister, it is the GoSS objective to build a democratic, transparent, and accountable government.

22. In this regard, I would like to suggest that the austerity context only heightens the importance of continued focus on prioritized planning, effective financial management and accountability, and expansion of State revenue mobilization capacity. As such, we must ensure that this new context does not mean an erosion of gains made either during the period of the comprehensive peace agreement, or indeed the first year of independence for South Sudan.

23. UNDP is happy to note that the GoSS has now called for dialogue with international partners in a re-prioritization process of the South Sudan Development Plan, linked to core functions in this new austerity context.

24. Thank you once again for the opportunity to contribute to this special session on South Sudan.