

**Mid Term Evaluation**  
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## List of Acronyms

BDS	Business Development Centres
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DAC	Development Assistance Criteria
EQ	Evaluation Questions
GDI	Gender Development Index
GE	Gender Equality
GEWE	Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
GRES	Gender Result Evaluation System
HDI	Human Development Index
HR	Human Rights
IL	Intervention Logic
KII	Key Informant Interviews
LG	Local Government
LNOB	Leave no one behind
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
MSC	Most Significant Change
MSE	Medium Sized Enterprises
RACER	Relevant, accepted, credible, easy to monitor and robust against manipulation
RBA	Rights Based Approach
R-ARCSS	Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan
R-TGoNU	Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Available at an Acceptable Cost, Relevant and Timebound
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
VTC	Vocational Training Centers

<b>Project Name:</b>	<b>Youth Employment and Empowerment through Private Sector and Value Chain Development</b>			
<b>Donor(s):</b>	Kingdom of the Netherlands			
<b>Implementing agency/Agencies:</b>	UNDP			
<b>Key Project Partners:</b>	Ministry of Labour			
<b>Project Duration</b>	From	December 2018	to	December 2022
<b>Total allocated Budget</b>	USD15,450,710			
<b>Evaluation Type (mid-term or final)</b>	Mid Term			
<b>Evaluator Name(s)</b>	Charlemagne Gomez and Simon Wandalo			
<b>Evaluation Duration</b>	From	March 2021	to	October 31, 2021
<b>Review covering Project activities:</b>	From	December 2018	to	October 31, 2021 (financials until December 31, 2021)

**Figure 1: Overview of the project**

## Executive Summary

The Project ‘Youth Employment and Empowerment through Private Sector and Value Chain Development – YEPP has a total allocated budget of USD 15,450,710. As of December, 31, 2021, USD 12,174,061 has been spent, which accounts for 79% of the total budget. The Project commenced in December 2018 and is due to end in December 2022. The overall objective of the Project is to bring together the relevant stakeholders together around its overall objective – empowerment of youth in five targeted locations Bor, Jubek , Rumbek, Torit and Yambio by nurturing their entrepreneurial culture and market-linked skills and enhance their employability and productive engagement in economic activities. It also seeks to increase productivity and labour absorptive capacities of agriculture and natural resource-linked value chains and private sector enterprises with a focus on young men and women.

**Impact: Improved well-being, resilience and peaceful co-existence among youth in and around targeted areas in South Sudan**

**Outcome One: Increased employability and engagement in productive economic and livelihood initiatives for young men and women in targeted areas**

**Output Two: Increased productivity and Incomes for young men and women in targeted areas**

UNDP has commissioned the mid-term review (MTR) to provide an independent assessment of the performance of the Project. The evaluation examined evidence of whether, why and how the results are linked to the UNDP intervention and identified factors that have driven or hampered progress. This report therefore provides an overview of the success of the intervention to date and examines the cause and effects links between the inputs and, activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts. Key

findings and conclusions derive from the answers to the seven key Evaluation Questions developed by the evaluators and agreed during the Inception (see Annex II).

The first infections from COVID-19 were discovered at the end of 2019 in Wuhan, China; by March 2020, the outbreak was classed as a pandemic by the World Health Organization, the virus had spread to almost all corners of the world, and by May 2020, many of the countries were forced into confinement whereby social distancing was encouraged and the use of facemasks to reduce the spread of the virus was introduced. The COVID-19 has a significant impact on countries’ economies all around the world as well as being responsible for over 5 million deaths to date. The pandemic has not only had important impacts on countries but has also limited projects outputs and subsequent impact due to the enforcing of lock down rules. This also inevitably has an impact on how evaluations are currently being conducted.

In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the evaluation spanned from March to November 2021, and data from Project partners was collected through semi-structured interviews and eleven small focus group discussions between July and October 2021. The evaluation faced a number of limitations, including the inability of the international evaluator to travel to South Sudan, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and a delay in finding a suitable national consultant. The evaluation also experienced delays in accessing many of the interlocutors in a timely manner, and therefore interviews did not commence until July 2021. The majority of the interviews took place in the field via in-person interviews, although a small number of interviews were also held remotely. Unfortunately, the response from some of the interlocutors was not forthcoming, therefore the evaluators did not always have the chance to hear key stakeholders’ viewpoints first hand. A first draft of the report was provided in September 2021 and the final draft of the report was provided at the beginning of December 2021.

The evaluation utilized a mixed-method approach for data collection and data triangulation. The evaluation exercise was informed by a number of lines of evidence including a comprehensive desk review of over 30 documents, the holding of semi structured interviews as well as holding a number of in-person focus groups both in Yambio and Bor. In total, the evaluators were able to interview 96 persons, including 46 males and 50 females. (89 Key Informant Interviews and seven focus group/group meetings, including two focus groups comprising of only females). The evaluation matrix in Annex II outlines the indicators as well as the sources and data collection tools utilized. This included the utilization of already established indicators outlined in the results framework as well as the application of an additional number of indicators in order to denote relevance, impact and sustainability. The utilization of a mixture of sources ensured diversity of perspectives and allowed the evaluators to cross check information to ensure data accuracy as well as gaining a broader picture of the context as well as the performance of the project. The intervention was evaluated against five DAC evaluation criteria, namely relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and coherence.<sup>1</sup> The MTR also assessed the consideration given to gender equality and human rights in the intervention's design and implementation. The MTR covers the entire period of the project from its start in December 2018 until October 31, 2021.<sup>2</sup>

**The evaluation came to the following findings and conclusions:**

#### **RELEVANCE**

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The overall **relevance of the project is deemed as satisfactory**; the project **correctly identified the needs of the direct and indirect beneficiaries** although as a result of the pandemic key activities have been delayed and **only now are the direct beneficiaries reaping**

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<sup>1</sup> Impact was not included as a criterion as this is a midterm review and therefore it would be difficult to ascertain the impact of the project at this stage.

**some of the benefits of the training** by being placed in jobs/internships etc. All the key state institutions were consulted prior to the design of the project and have been involved in its development.

The **logical framework is considered adequate** although some of **the indicators at the level of Outcome Two could be reframed as they are not a relevant indicator of success as many persons are unable to access credits and therefore the non-attainment of this particular indicator would not necessarily mean failure of the project**. Many of the qualitative Indicators **were disaggregated by gender**, however there was **no specific gender result included and gender sensitive indicators were not included in the results framework**. Furthermore, all indicators were qualitative; a mix of both qualitative and quantitative indicators are recommended for such projects. The outcome indicators under Outcome Two **are not adequately tracked** and perhaps in the onslaught of the COVID pandemic are not the most relevant to denote the results from the activities under outcome two. To this end the MTR concludes that as the majority of the indicators are quantitative in nature and only refer to quantities or percentages, they will not always clearly denote progress towards results, particularly if they are not achieved. Surveys denoting activities prior and after the training or an increase in positive returns could be more acceptable and more easily measurable.

#### **EFFECTIVENESS**

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The overall **effectiveness of the project is rated as satisfactory**. It is important to note that the **project is essential and has been pivotal in building vocational skills** amongst the youth. While **many of the indicators are being met and sometimes surpassed**, and the majority (except output 2.1.4) are on track to be achieved, the delays in implementation and the many challenges faced with regards to the start up the project, the procurement and the

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<sup>2</sup> Please note that the financial update covers the period up until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021.



necessity to write the curriculum almost from scratch has meant that **progress has been slower than anticipated**. The impact of COVID-19 and indeed the size and state of the local economy are also contributing factors to the **challenges faced by the project**.

To date, the project has trained 4,634 persons, which has **surpassed expectations**. A total of 2,421 have been trained for the community-based training, with 49% of these being women. A further 2,280 have received vocational training, 440 (19%) of these participants were women. A high number of persons **have also graduated, and the dropout rate has been relatively low** particularly amidst the background of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many of the currently established indicators under Outcome One will more than likely be achieved, however output 1.1 under outcome one does not yet look to be on track. At present, only a fraction of persons who have been trained are now in part time or full-time work and thus a strategy to ensure job creation as well as linking trainees to jobs needs to be strengthened and mapped out in order to establish an appropriate and feasible timeline to increase the number of trained persons engagement in livelihood activities. **It is therefore essential that the remainder of the project concentrates on Outcome Two as the overall effectiveness of the project and achieving outcome one is equally reliant on the activities and outputs under Outcome Two**

Vocational trainings under the project has largely consisted in trainings of approximately two to four months. Upon consultation with the beneficiaries, the **courses provide basic notions** of the vocational area they are being trained in, but the **majority** of the persons consulted with (80%) stated that they would **consider it beneficial to either have longer length courses or the assured linkages of further training in the guise of an internship/ on the job placement**.<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that internships and placements of graduates have recently increased and a proportion of those

trained are now placed in different business and companies according to their acquired skillset. While this is not possible for all, the support from the hubs is essential, to build the confidence of the trainees as well as linking them with different organizations and networks in order to not only practice their new-found skill but to network and publicize their work and provide them with the possibility to network for new opportunities. **Given the current context, it is important to improve the overall governance framework on skills development in the country.**

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## EFFICIENCY

The **efficiency of the project is rated as satisfactory**. The project has experienced a number of important delays, but many of the **activities are completed, and the project is on track to achieving quantitative output indicators**. The project experienced delays due to challenges with recruitment and persons leaving as a result of COVID-19. At the time of MTR, a new project manager had come on board and a monitoring and evaluation officer was under recruitment. The **recruitment of state coordinators has been vital and they have played a double hatted role** in coordinating the work of UNDP and as liaison persons between projects. This has also contributed to the overall efficiency of the project, despite the challenges. Other **key delays** were to do with persistent delays in the **delivery of the essential materials** as well as delays to the services provided by UNIDO. Notwithstanding, the **project has now resolved these issues and procurement is now done locally** at the state level, which allows the **process to be far more efficient**.

The quality of the reports contained **adequate reference to outputs at activity level**, although not all activities as described in the project document and evaluation matrix were included. The reports included photographs and human stories and **provided the reader with a good overview of the activities and effectiveness of the activities to date**. The

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<sup>3</sup> The field mission took place at the end of July 2021, therefore more placements have become available. It is

unclear as to how many persons who were interviewed in July 2021, have now gained an internship/placement.

reports **firmly highlighted the challenges and recognized the lessons learned** and ensured an executive summary of the activities per year. Nevertheless, the inclusion of the outcome indicators and the progress towards them would have further strengthened the reports and permitted a greater understanding as to the progress and current trajectory towards achieving the overall outcome of the project. **Reporting on gender results could also go beyond the number of women trained** and describe in more detail how their lives were impacted upon.

An adequate evaluation matrix and tracking report was established, **and output indicators have been diligently tracked throughout the project**. Nonetheless, given the sheer numbers of participants and the importance of breaking down and analyzing the numbers in order to ascertain the overall impact of the project, **a more robust system to examine the overall achievement of the outcomes is needed**. Furthermore, while data was disaggregated by gender, the overall impact of the project on women has yet to be fully analyzed, therefore it is difficult to ascertain if there are any particular weaknesses or challenges that women are facing in engaging in employment.

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## SUSTAINABILITY

The **sustainability of the project is deemed moderately satisfactory**. The overall assessment highlights the development and implementation of an updated curriculum which has been endorsed by the key stakeholders. This has allowed vocational training in a number of key areas and enabled the curriculum to be somewhat harmonized. The rehabilitation and equipping of the Vocational Training Centers have been pivotal in enabling the States to impart classes and vocational courses in the chosen fields. The use of these centers will go far beyond the lifetime of the project as will the curriculum. The overall ownership of the ministries is strong, however the reconstitution of the states did impact on some of the ministries at state level, whereby persons were replaced, and therefore relationships with new persons would need to be further strengthened in order

to ensure full ownership of the results for the future.

With regards to the direct beneficiaries, while an important number of persons have been trained, the linkages to creation and engagement with employment opportunities still needs to be strengthened in order to achieve some of the high targets the project has set itself. Even stronger linkages with key companies, businesses, as well as credit centers and the creation of a small grants scheme as well as ensuring guided advice and support for all graduates is needed to mitigate frustration which is evident amongst those who have not yet been linked to further employment opportunities. It is important, nonetheless, to acknowledge that this is a long-term project where some of the dividends of the trainings will only take place in the medium and long term. Therefore, management of expectations coupled with a strategic roadmap for the continuation of trainings in the future and how the participants will be linked to future employment is essential.

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## GENDER AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The overall approach to gender and human rights is deemed to be **moderately satisfactory**, while the project made great efforts to target women, the overall design of the project was not aimed at ensuring transformative change for women, but its results were rather gender targeted.

A total of 2,421 women were targeted under the vocational courses, which accounts for 35% of the participants and under the community-based trainings, female participants made up 35% of the overall persons being trained. (1,634 women).

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The project makes the following recommendations listed in the table below:

Figure 2: Overall Recommendations for the YEEP

Recommendation	Linked to Conclusion/ criterion	Recommendation addressed to	Comments on Recommendations	Priority Status
<b>1. Revise the Logical Framework to incorporate a mixture of qualitative and quantitative indicators in order to better reflect the key outcomes of the project and ensure the use of gender specific indicators to track progress on women ensuring a gender analysis to identify lessons learned and best practices to date</b>	Key Conclusion – Relevance (Design of Framework)	UNDP in line with the key institutions and engagement of other key institutions	At present while there are numerous activities taking place, some of the indicators do not adequately reflect the overall outcomes envisaged and therefore it is important to revisit the indicators to ensure a mix of qualitative and quantitative indicators which not only reflect the number of persons impacted upon but qualitative information which denotes the change which is sought by the project.	High
<b>2. Ensure stronger collaboration between the key institutions at both juba and field level</b>	Key Conclusion – Relevance	UNDP and Ministry of Labour	While it is acknowledged that the Ministry of Labor at Juba level is very satisfied with the project, the MTR did sense weaker ownership of the project by some of the ministries at the local level, to this end it would be important to further strengthen the project in developing key joint strategies and recognition of challenges and bottlenecks in implementation, particularly in the individual states. This is particularly pertinent at the local level whereby there are sometimes frequent changes in the DG, and the momentum of the project and its overall goals needs to be further owned by the institutions which preside over the VTCs.	High
<b>3. Development of a long-term strategy to ensure harmonious competency standards for all training courses in the future.</b>	Key Conclusion - Sustainability	UNDP and key implementing partners	Given the importance and high relevance of the project, and the hard work that has already been made to develop the curriculum etc, there is a need to improve the overall governance on skills development and vocational training for the long term to ensure that competency standards are ensured and are available to enable recognition of prior learning, modular and ladder training and have a strategy for long term learning in the country. (please also see under recommendation 8 below)	High
<b>4. Promote further linkages between a number of key companies</b>	Key Conclusion	UNDP, and key	While the project will reach many of its targets, the overall outcome may be somewhat impossible for all types	High

or with key professions to promote further learning in key fields as well as Create linkages and networking with a number of banks and credit loan companies	Three - Effectiveness	companies in the country	of vocational training especially in the time frame left. A selection of professions should be chosen whereby participants can be adequately placed and are enabled to continue their learning through on the job learning in order to enhance their overall ability to access these markets in the future and to manage the frustrations that are already building. It is equally vital that accessibility to credit becomes more widespread and structured. To this end, UNDP should seek partnerships with specific groups in order to promote the distribution of loans and access to credits	
5. Pilot a number of schemes whereby small grants are offered and further training given to promote MSEs	Key conclusion Three- Effectiveness and Key Conclusion Four and Five	UNDP, i-Hubs and expertise on small enterprises	Small ventures for food production, agriculture, tailoring could be promoted at the community level in order to provide subsistence to family and to build on their skills which are easily transferrable for small business which rely on small networks. It is important to actually support these ventures with start-up kits beyond materials, but with advice and support to get these off the ground. (look towards a recent project in Bosnia under Women in elections which promoted women's small business for food production, soap production etc.)	High
6. Continuation of competition whereby youth are encouraged to innovate and come together (as the previous innovation challenge). Creation of a yearly event whereby business with trained recipients could be promoted	Key conclusion three four and five	UNDP and local partners	Promotion of a business week with a theme on the sustainable development for youth, whereby youths present themselves and an award is given for different categories, ensuring gender sensitivity and equal opportunities for women. (on the same basis of the innovation challenges) Different organisations can be invited to present as well as youth coming up with green products etc	
7. Concentrate on outcome two in the remainder of the project tenure by promoting linkages, and other opportunities for persons already trained, as well as ensuring strengthened linkages with the AFDB project.	Key conclusion Four - Effectiveness	UNDP, AFDB and other UNDP projects	It is vital that the persons already trained are further linked up with local business and gain more qualifications and experience in their chosen field. Outreach to companies which have largely employed foreigners should also be tapped into, in order to promote national ownership.	High
8. Further strengthen the impact of the project by holding a series of workshops with key institutions, companies and other organisations which could feed into the results. A possible output	Key Conclusions four and five - effectiveness	UNDP and key company ies	It is vital at the half way point to promote further and stronger ownership by key companies, credit companies etc Possible collaboration beyond the life time of this particular project should be envisaged, and possible strategies and ways forward should be discussed with a plethora of stakeholders to ensure an effective	High

could be a roadmap over the next five years			strategy plus buy in from key stakeholders.	
<b>9. Consideration of a no cost extension if the next quarters does not bear the fruits envisaged</b>	Key conclusion four – and five effectiveness	UNDP and Donors	To date while progress is there, the persons already trained still need to be linked with other opportunities, the fact that only a year is left and COVID has had such a devastating impact on the project, and given the new COVID variant and its possible ramifications on the project consideration of a no cost extension needs to be a possibility.	High
<b>10. Consideration of a follow up project by ensuring baseline data and analysis of bottlenecks and challenges to feed into a future project</b>	Key conclusions four - effectiveness		While many of the targets will be achieved, the design and the numerous bottlenecks faced by the project as well as the need for an informed and current analysis of the successes and lessons learned so far means that there is an increasing frustration amongst the beneficiaries. The short length of the courses also mean that it is very difficult that they are able to exercise their vocation, thus it is imperative that there are follow on activities to increase and strengthen their capacity in the vocation they have studied	High
<b>13. Strengthening of support to persons, particularly women in Juba, particularly in jobs which are currently overwhelmed by foreigners</b>		UNDP and UN women and local analysis	Out of the five states, Juba potentially has the most amount of jobs to offer, but to date has offered the least amount of trainings. These trainings have been more focused on male oriented professions and as a result very few women were able to take part. Given the enormous potential in Juba, a hybrid of vocational courses/community courses could be encouraged in order to address women's challenges in accessing the training courses.	High
<b>15. Undertake an analysis of the progress so far, identifying which particular states and which particular courses have promoted the overall outcomes the most</b>	Key conclusion nine - Sustainability	UNDP and key NGOs based in the states	It is important to note that at the mid way stage many of the indicators seem to be on track. This is positive; however it is important to understand where lessons need to be learned, and best practices highlighted. It would be important to understand which states have the highest success stories and if there is anything the project can learn from these particular states and/or specific courses. This would be particularly pertinent for the job placements, and where the correlation between job placements and persons trained has been the most successful.	Medium High
<b>16. Ensure an effective and gender sensitive monitoring and evaluation framework, including with the use of most significant change stories and the</b>	Key conclusion eight – efficiency/ Monitoring	UNDP and UN Women and M & E with key stakeholders	The possible reworking of key indicators would also benefit from a gender and human rights sensitive monitoring and evaluation framework, which does not only collect numbers of persons trained,	Medium/High

possibility of using outcome mapping to map outcomes particular in complex results such as creation of jobs.			<p>but using info graphs and datasheets is able to track progress in certain areas, particularly the areas where youth could benefit from most. This would depend on the different areas as well as different amongst men and women. Utilising the data collected to date, information should be analysed in order to inform a follow-on project</p> <p>The project is applauded for its inclusion of human-interest stories, but a more robust mechanism for monitoring and evaluation whereby a collection of Most Significant Change (MSC) stories are collected would better capture the ways that people have been empowered and are subject to more empowerment opportunities than prior to the project</p>	
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## 1. Overview

### 1.1 Introduction

In March 2021, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) South Sudan commissioned a midterm review of its intervention *Youth Employment and Empowerment through Private Sector and Value Chain Development*. Ms. Charlemagne Gomez, an international consultant was contracted to carry out the review. Given the fact that Ms. Gomez was unable to travel to South Sudan as a direct consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, in May 2021, a national consultant, Mr. Simon Wandaloo was also contracted to carry out the field work and to contribute to the evaluation. The team of evaluators hereby present the final midterm review report which outlines the methodology utilized during the entirety of the review as well as the key findings and conclusions and a set of recommendations to be carried forward.

The review officially commenced on March 27, 2021 with a kick-off meeting with the Evaluation Reference Group. The review was programmed to be finalized in May, however as a result of the delays in finding a national consultant the review only really got off the ground in June. Given the unavailability or delays in receiving the replies by the stakeholders for interview requests, the final interviews only took place in the last week of July 2021. The national consultant was able to visit two project sites, one in Yambio and Bor. Unfortunately, due to demonstrations by youth at the time of the scheduled visit, a field visit to Torit was cancelled. The review has three key deliverables: i). Inception Report; ii). Draft Report and iii). Final Report.

### 1.2 Context

The 2018 Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) heralds a key milestone in South Sudan's tumultuous history. The R-ARCSS has contributed to establishing a sustainable truce at the national level, between the parties to the agreement. Notwithstanding,

the transition period established under the R-ARCSS, which comprises of the pillars of security sector reform, establishment of necessary unified forces, a constitutional process and eventual elections, transitional justice, and accountable state finances and public management has faced a number of considerable delays. It should be noted that the delayed establishment of the Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity (R-TGoNU) and resolution on the return from 32 to 10 states resulted into the complete reconstitution of the state government and for several months (almost a year) there were no State Ministers nor anyone with a clear mandate over the states. As a result, the entire leadership in the states are new and as a result of the power-sharing formula under the R-ARCSS, this reconstitution has had a crucial and significant impact on the project. Coinciding with these delays several subnational and local conflicts have remerged. The impact of environmental factors and climate changes have also resulted in flooding and droughts which consequently provoked conflicts over pasture and livelihoods. Such an example was the flooding in Jonglei State from July 2020 to Feb 2021, particularly in Bor which resulted in the displacement of 60% of the population to higher grounds in nearby areas. Vocational training centers and markets access was severely impacted which contributed to further delays in trainings. In addition, the upcoming elections, due at the end of the transition period, may possibly reignite a few conflicts and could potentially cause ethnopolitical divisions. Furthermore, tensions are running high due to several critical persons in the government and the security sector remaining unpaid due to the current economic crisis. These are all factors that could influence the eventual outcome of the transition period. Notwithstanding it is important to note, that while tensions run high, decades of civil war has imprinted a mutual desire for peace among all communities, and civil engagement is at all-time high, to this end, despite the challenges, South Sudan is endeavouring to foster peace and social cohesion to support the transitional process.

South Sudan comprises of ten states and is said to be home to over "60 different major ethnic

groups, and the majority of its people follow traditional religions.”<sup>4</sup> It has an estimated population of between 7.5-10 million and its two official languages are English and Arabic. The country descended into civil war in 2013 amongst a rift in the higher echelons of the government, this triggered fighting amongst supporters and divided the country along ethnic lines. A 2018 peace agreement has delayed the much-expected national elections. The freedom house 2020 report provided an overall ranking of -2/100 and stated that the country was not free. The overall ranking was only four points lower in 2019.

In 2019, South Sudan’s Human Development Index (HDI) was ranked at 0.433 which puts the country in the low human development category, although it is worth noting that its HDI has increased a value of 5.6 per cent since 2010. Similarly, the gender development index (GDI) is ranked at 0.842 placing it in group 5. According to the World Bank Report gender equality in South Sudan was reported at 0.3333% in 2020. Early and forced marriage is rampant and South Sudan has one of the highest maternal mortality ratios, and gender-based violence both in the home and as part of the conflict are high.

The first infections from COVID-19 were discovered at the end of 2019 in Wuhan, China; by March 2020, the outbreak was classified as a pandemic by the World Health Organization, the virus had spread to almost all corners of the world, and by May 2020, many of the countries were forced into confinement whereby social distancing was encouraged and the use of facemasks to reduce the spread of the virus was introduced. The COVID-19 has a significant impact on countries’ economies all around the world as well as being responsible for over 5 million deaths to date. The pandemic has not only had important impacts on countries but has also limited projects outputs and subsequent impact due to the enforcing of lock down rules. This also inevitably has an impact on how projects are currently being conducted. To this end, the humanitarian crisis has been

further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and floods, and as a result “South Sudan is currently facing its highest level of food insecurity and malnutrition in a decade.”<sup>5</sup>

While South Sudan is rich in terms of natural resources, approximately 50 per cent of the total 64.7 million hectares of land is suitable for cultivation. Nonetheless only a small percent (four percent) is cultivated by smallholder subsistence farmers. According to the UNOCHA 2019 Humanitarian Response Plan more than 80% of South Sudanese live under the absolute poverty line. Women are disproportionately impacted. Relative peace has come to the country as a result of the Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS), and has laid the foundation for ceasefire and negotiations for a transitional political roadmap that has led to the formation of the Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity (R-TGoNU) in February 2020. Notwithstanding, the scars of war, poverty and a society recovering from a long-standing conflict are evident. The country is endeavouring to transition, however inevitably high unemployment, particularly amongst the youth, tends to compound the situation and turning to violence and criminal practices thrives in such an environment. Youth, account for a high percentage of the population whereby 60% are under 25. Given the context and environment and high levels of poverty, the “so called youth bulge may pose a threat to the volatile peace and security situation should the youth not be able to engage in their communities and contribute to their livelihoods and those of their families. The recent UNDP study on understanding youth subcultures in South Sudan alludes to the fact that while a number of common denominators do not define South Sudan’s youth, there does appear to be a “sense of tiredness and not having enough, as well as a desire to take matters into their hands. The box below highlights some of the issues which are fuelling this motivation:

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-14069082#:~:text=Made%20up%20of%20the%2010,South%20Sudan%20to%20an%20end.>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/NewsDetail.aspx?NewsID=26881&LangID=E.>



Limited and unprotected livelihood options;  
 Lack of quality education and adequate vocational training;  
 increase in bridal prices and with it a rise in the incentives for early and forced marriage as well as intercommunal conflict;  
 Entrenched systems of patronage that define/limit access to resources and services, and which have led to a system of use and abuse of youth;  
 Lack of rule of law, a sense of disenfranchisement and lack of trust in authorities as a result of the above;  
 Lack of say in decision-making processes, with educational and governance systems designed to perpetuate those in power;  
 Unresolved traumas as a result of uninterrupted violent conflict and loss of the protective networks (family, community) that traditionally guaranteed protection and support; and  
 The creation of vicious cycles of violence and fragmentation as a result of the collective and reinforcing qualities of the above issues.

It is posited that “the protection of youth during conflict and post-conflict and their participation in peace processes can significantly contribute to the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security” and that the “rise of radicalization to violence and violent extremism, especially among youth, threatens stability and development, and can often derail peacebuilding efforts and further foment conflict”.<sup>6</sup>

The Revitalised TGoNU aims to curb such an effort and to ensure no return to war, ensuring the reintegration of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), instill and implement policies and seek institutional and legal reform. To this end, the integration of women, youth, minorities in these endeavors is vital.

Furthermore, March 2020 saw the proclamation of COVID-19 as a pandemic with unforeseen impacts on the everyday lives of persons worldwide. South Sudan was no exception, and schools and training centers were closed, and public gatherings prohibited. In June 2020, a national curfew was imposed, and curfews are still imposed/declared intermittently. The pandemic and the devastation it has ravaged has also impacted upon employment opportunities and has only exacerbated the crisis that South Sudan was facing prior to the pandemic. It is thought that at least 60% of small business have ground to a halt. Food prices have escalated, and movement restrictions have brought the country more or less to a standstill and many businesses have closed and many have lost their jobs and income. The relevance of the youth empowerment and employment through agricultural and value chain development has never been so pertinent.

### 1.3 Description of the Intervention

The intervention under review, entitled “Youth Empowerment and Employment through Agricultural and Value Chain Development Project” commenced in December 2018 and is due to conclude in December 2022. The project is currently at its midterm mark. The intervention had a total allocated budget of USD15,490,955<sup>7</sup> and its overall objective is to empower youth in five targeted locations Bor, Jubek, Rumbek, Torit and Yambio by nurturing their entrepreneurial culture and market-linked skills and enhance their employability and productive engagement in economic activities. It also seeks to increase productivity and labour absorptive capacities of agriculture and natural resource-linked value chains and private sector enterprises with a focus on young men and women.

<sup>6</sup> UNSCR 2250 and the Youth Peace and Security Report “The Missing Peace”

<sup>7</sup> It had an original forecast budget of total

USD15,450,710 as foreseen in the project document however with exchange rates the overall amount has slightly fluctuated

**Impact: Improved well-being, resilience and peaceful co-existence among youth in and around targeted areas in South Sudan**

**Outcome One: Increased employability and engagement in productive economic and livelihood initiatives for young men and women in targeted areas**

**Output Two: Increased productivity and Incomes for young men and women in targeted areas**

## **2. Purpose and Scope of the Evaluation**

### **2.1 Purpose**

According to the United Nations Evaluation Group, in order to ensure quality, all interventions should be systematically evaluated on the quality and the results of interventions in the context of an evolving cooperation policy ensuring a specific focus on result-oriented approaches and the contribution towards the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SGD 1, 2, 8, 9 and 16. To this end, the present mid-term review covers all the project locations and examines evidence of whether, why and how the results are linked to the intervention and has identified factors that have driven or hampered progress. The MTR documents lessons learned for improving project design, relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness and potential impact for the remaining period of the project. The review, therefore, provides an overview of the success of the intervention to date and examines the cause and effects links between the inputs and activities, and outputs, outcomes and possible and potential impacts. Ultimately the review serves accountability purposes; and will enable decision making and; provide learning and management purposes for the remaining period of the project.

### **2.2 Specific Objectives**

The main objective of this MTR is to provide an overall independent assessment of the

performance of the intervention, paying particular attention to the overall results against stated objectives and to the reasons underpinning such results, and key lessons learned, conclusions and related recommendations in order to contribute to the remaining project period.

The MTR independently examines the extent to which progress has been made towards the achievement of results and assesses the emerging impact and success of the intervention. In addition, it draws upon the information in order to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of project management and to what extent the management was able to adapt to address challenges in implementation, as well as adapt to the context in which the intervention is implemented, particularly in the current COVID pandemic. Furthermore, the mid-term review seeks to understand whether the design is optimally linked to achieving the intended objective, considering external factors that were contributing to or were constraining the delivery of outcomes and provides suggestions for revision of indicators or specific activities/outcomes.

Further, the mid-term review has ensured gender sensitivity and human rights sensitivity by examining how the design of the intervention, its implementation and delivery considered the needs of both women and men and what was the impact upon them. This has resulted in the recommendations on how to better mainstream gender and human rights for future activities under the auspices of the project and to examine to what extent the project warrants a gender marker level of two.

### **2.3 Intended Audience**

The present MTR is principally aimed at the implementing partners, UNDP and the responsible party UNIDO, as well as the Government of South Sudan, the Vocational Training Centers (VTC) and the Government of the Netherlands. It is also anticipated that the review will also serve the key beneficiaries of the project and the main stakeholders striving

to promote youth employment and empowerment in South Sudan.

## 2.4 Limitations

The review faced some challenges and limitations in assessing the project. The MTR was conducted in the height of the COVID pandemic, and this restricted the international evaluator from travelling to South Sudan. The initial stages of the mid-term review also suffered from a number of setbacks including the availability of a national consultant and the issuing of his contract. Obtaining access to emails of persons to be interviewed and establishing contact with each of the suggested interlocutors has been a major challenge. While emails were given towards the start of the review, the review team received only a few responses, The UNDP country office kindly provided support by writing to all of the possible interlocutors making a formal introduction and providing an explanation of the overall scope of the review. Unfortunately, this did little to yield a substantial number of responses, despite the MTR team following up several times with emails and a number of phone calls. To this end, the MTR team were able to interview a relatively high number of persons in the two site visits but the number envisaged in Juba did not represent all of the key institutions and therefore the evaluation was followed up with emails and an additional briefing session by the project.

## 3. Approach and Methodology

### 3.1 Evaluation Approach

In line with the established priority and methodology of United Nations Evaluation Group to conduct quality evaluations that ensure high utility of the results acquired from the exercise, the evaluation adopted the principles of a Utilization-Focused Evaluation - which entailed collecting and analyzing the information from the different interlocutors as well as receiving their suggestions and recommendations based on their opinions in order to inform the remaining part of the

project's implementation and the way forward for future support to youth and employment needs.

The evaluation utilized a mixed-method approach for data collection and data triangulation. The mid-term review exercise was informed by a number of lines of evidence including a comprehensive desk review, the holding of semi-structured interviews as well as holding a number of focus groups. In total, the evaluators were able to interview 96 persons, including 46 males and 50 females.(Please see Annex V for a full list of persons interviewed). The MTR team has therefore tried their best to ensure an independent, and balanced evaluation based on the entirety of the interviews held with persons in the field, in Juba and the subsequent conversations held with the project.

The evaluation matrix in Annex II, outlines the indicators as well as the sources and data collection tools utilized. While there were already a number of key evaluation questions outlined in the ToR, the evaluators added to these questions in order to ensure a relatively robust assessment of the six OECD/DAC criteria. The intervention was evaluated against five of the DAC evaluation criteria, namely relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and coherence. Given the fact that the evaluation was that of a mid-term review, the ToR did not include impact. The review also assessed the consideration given to Gender Equality and Human Rights in the intervention's design and implementation.

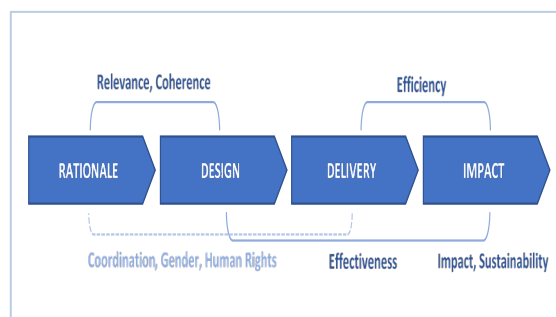


Figure 3: Analytical Framework for the project “YEPP Project”

### 3.2 Data Collection and Analysis

The data collection toolkit that was utilized during both the desk review and field phases included the collection of quantitative as well as qualitative data/information. The MTR undertook a comprehensive desk review, which involved all documentation from the project, as well as the examination of a number of key documents in relation to youth and conflict in South Sudan. A number of documents were recently received which provided the most actualized figures. The review also examined reports, articles from other service providers affording support to youth employment as well documents and news articles available online. The 96 interviews mainly comprised of semi structured key informant interviews, complimented by an initial introductory briefing as well as email follow up as stated above. A total of seven focus groups also took place. Preliminary findings to the specific sub-questions were derived from the triangulation of the three lines of evidence obtained during the desk review and confirmed during the field phase using a mixed-method collection. The data gathered informed the final answers to the Evaluation Questions and, in turn, the assessment of each evaluation criterion.

## 4. FINDINGS

### 4.1 RELEVANCE

*Relevance assesses the extent to which the intervention objectives and design respond to beneficiaries, global, country and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities, and continue to do so if circumstances change. The following section will therefore assess how clearly the projects goals and implementation are aligned with the beneficiaries and stakeholder needs, and the priorities underpinning the intervention.*

*The MTR finds that the criterion of relevance is deemed satisfactory. The rationale of the project largely addressed the needs of the beneficiaries as well as the communities/South Sudan. The project correctly identifies the importance of adopting a multifaceted*

*approach that enables access to the markets and the creation of opportunities as well as providing youth with vocational courses in a range of subjects such as car mechanics, hairdressing, construction, bakery etc. The courses selected were based on the findings of the two studies conducted on labour market and the agriculture value chains study. The project was quick to draw from important lessons learned and thus garnered support to target a wider range of institutions in order to promote ownership, although as will be seen below, there are some gaps on how to ensure effective ownership of the results of the project. VTCs are run by several different ministries, which means that at the field level the issue of ownership waived according to the institution. This was particularly pertinent subsequent to the reconstitution process whereby a number of persons were replaced and were therefore not as familiar with the project.*

*While a wider net was cast with regards to ensuring more job opportunities, the project could benefit from more targeted and informed approach on how opportunities can be created given the current backdrop of the COVID pandemic and its enduring consequences. The overall theory of change was adequate and identified correctly many of the risks associated with the project. Nonetheless, the pandemic and its impact on the economy and the delays suffered by the project has contributed to frustration felt by an important number of the direct beneficiaries consulted. While many of the participants from the course have found the training to be useful, the persons consulted at the time of interview had not been able to enter a placement or employment opportunities and are somewhat worried as to what their future will bring.*

The overall design of the results framework followed conventional UNDP frameworks which tend to only include quantitative indicators. Some of the indicators established were also sometimes not the most relevant according to the output results or did not denote the established change at the result level. This was particularly pertinent at the level of outcome two, whereby the MTR did not find pertinent tracking of the indicators at outcome level.

Furthermore, for example, output indicator 2.2 is not deemed the easiest and most relevant indicator to track. As is noted under effectiveness, it is very difficult for youth to access loans, therefore the number of youth paying back disbursed loans might not necessarily depict the success of the project as the number of persons paying back loans would probably be low. The MTR finds the overall design of the results framework to be adequate but could benefit from a revision in order to include more nuanced indicators in order to measure the attainment of the outcomes established, as some of the indicators could in fact downplay the success of the project rather than showcase it. It should be noted however that the project correctly identified the needs of the beneficiaries and the multifaceted approach required to ensure that the results envisaged are translated into jobs and job creation opportunities.

**Rationale:**

**The project correctly identifies the need to adopt a multifaceted approach towards youth employment in South Sudan**

The design of this project centers around the agenda of empowering youth to provide basic services as a means to serve the nation and to respond to the emerging gap of demand for basic services at different levels within the country. Today, South Sudan as a nation is growing and demand for basic services has increased but due to limited and/or a deficit in adequate skills among the youth, most of the basic services are sub- contracted to either a few national or international companies which have the required capacity to deliver. This leads to unfair practices whereby youth are exploited economically or due to their lack of skills are rendered jobless.

The International Labor Organization (ILO) notes that persistent youth employment and underemployment carry very high social and economic costs and threaten the fabric of societies; failure to generate sufficient decent jobs can result in long lasting scarring effects on

young people. To this end it is essential to invest in youth employment and empowerment. To promote youth employment, it is not only important to train them in specific areas, but also provide access to financial services, land, markets and market information and social networks through which one can acquire jobs or business opportunities. To this end, a design of the project should seek to positively contribute towards restoring livelihoods and reinvigorating local economies, create jobs whilst empowering youth for their productive engagement in local economic activities.

**There is a definite correlation between youth employment and conflict in the South Sudanese setting.**

It is estimated that 73 per cent of the population in South Sudan is under 30, which has the potential to impact negatively on both the economy and the peace of the country. According to the World Bank, currently two-thirds of South Sudanese aged 15-24 years enter the labor market every year and 19% of those actively engaged in job searches do not find work. This increases to 30% when one includes those who do not actually look for work. Unemployment which often leads to frustration is considered to inevitably contribute to higher levels of social unrest and potentially contribute to increased levels of conflict. This finding is evidenced by the report by Search for Common Ground on “how to build a constituency for peace in South Sudan 2017” – “youth are considered to be instigators of violence; nonetheless a recent study revealed that 67.7 per cent of youth prefer dialogue or non-response to deal with conflicts.”<sup>8</sup> While this may be true, it would be important to facilitate this type of dialogue or to provide an outlet whereby frustrations can be vented and hope for the future can be expected.

Conflict has had a significant impact on the stability of South Sudan. Since 1955, South Sudan has only passed 19 years without

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<sup>8</sup><https://www.sfcg.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Building-a-Constituency-for->



experienced gross instability.<sup>9</sup> The R-ARCSS in 2018 shows good progress of restoring and maintaining peace. Nonetheless, the preexistent conflicts have had devastating demographic effects, with the 1983-2005 struggles resulting in over two million deaths (76% of these emanating from South Sudan) and the displacement of millions more. To this end, mortality, fertility and conflict induced migration has shaped enormously the present demographics of youth.

The project recognized this and sought to positively contribute towards restoring livelihoods and reinvigorating local economies by creating jobs at the same time as empowering youth for the productive engagement in local economic activities, although as stated below the creation of jobs and opportunities seems to be the most challenging. This has become increasingly pertinent given the context post the height of the COVID pandemic.

In the YEOP design, an extensive approach was considered to ensure that the majority if not all categories of youth directly or indirectly benefited. Considering the limited development of the country, the project was designed to be implemented in at least five state capitals within the Republic of South Sudan. These capitals act as centers where youth from the states could easily access the project. In particular, the project targeted Lakes state (Rumbek), Western Equatoria (Yambio), Central Equatoria (Juba) and Eastern Equatoria (Torit) and Jonglei State (Bor) where the vocational training institutes were established. Within these State capitals, the project also focused on training the community women, youth and men on identifying and utilizing available chances and resources to create employment. In Jonglei state, identified groups were trained in fish smoking, skin & hides preservation, hospitality, food processing and preservation, milk processing and selling while in Yambio, groups

were trained in animal husbandry, food processing, and apiculture/honey processing. These types of trainings were in addition to vocational training institutions which train youth in plumbing, electricity, auto-mechanics, welding, computer, motorcycle maintenance, carpentry, tailoring, masonry, and brick laying etc.

The project envisaged two phases, with Phase One foreseeing the undertaking of several feasibility studies for the proposed project components, conflict analyses, social and environmental standards assessments to engage with key stakeholders within the targeted states. And Phase Two to fully implement the proposal and tested project components<sup>10</sup>. As a result of the difficulties in finding a responsive submission to undertaking the labor market and the natural resources management study that were foreseen in the project document; the process was re-advertised after the selected firm withdrew due to its inability to deliver on the study according to the established timelines. Nonetheless, the agricultural value chain study and the Labor Market were finalized by August 2020 and were utilized for undertaking new skills in VTC and community-based trainings. In order to mitigate the delay in the finalization of the studies, local assessments and consultation with partners and stakeholders were conducted within the first year of implementation instead.

The Ministry of Labor enjoys a close partnership between UNDP and the project. The State Minister of Education, (not all of VTCs come under the auspices of the same ministry for example in Torit and to some extent Yambio, the ministry of education has control over the VTCs) was also fully engaged in the project implementation. However, when the reconstitution of the states and state governments occurred, all of the state ministers, deputy governors, and governors who were previously engaged with the project, were replaced. This has meant a different dynamic at the level of the different ministries

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<sup>9</sup> Source:  
<https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/South-Sudans-demography.pdf>.

<sup>10</sup> Project Document – Page 8 – Implementation Approach.

and therefore while a wide range of stakeholders were consulted, the overall ownership of the results varies according to the state. In some of the states, many of the new state officials are only now familiarizing themselves with the project

The level of consultation is also illustrated by a number of anecdotes that were relayed to the MTR team, whereby state government's particularly, while on board with the overall objective of the project, often times request monetary compensation for promoting the project. While the evaluation could not find stark evidence as to whether state governments received any types of benefits/payments, there was definitely a consensus whereby state governments had at least tried to gain more leverage over the project by demanding some type of compensatory reward for being involved with the project.

The project has one overall objective, two key outcomes with a total of 3 outputs (two under Outcome One and one under Outcome Two).

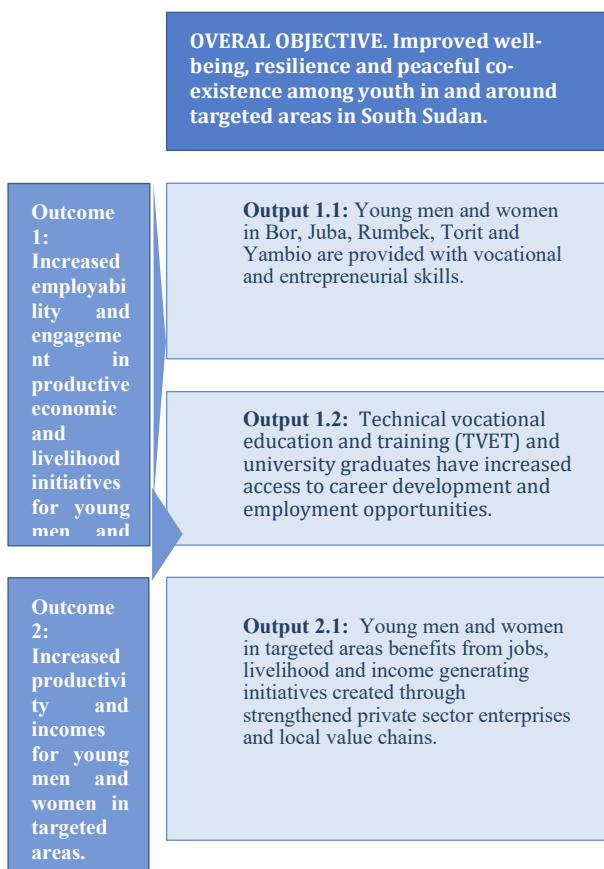


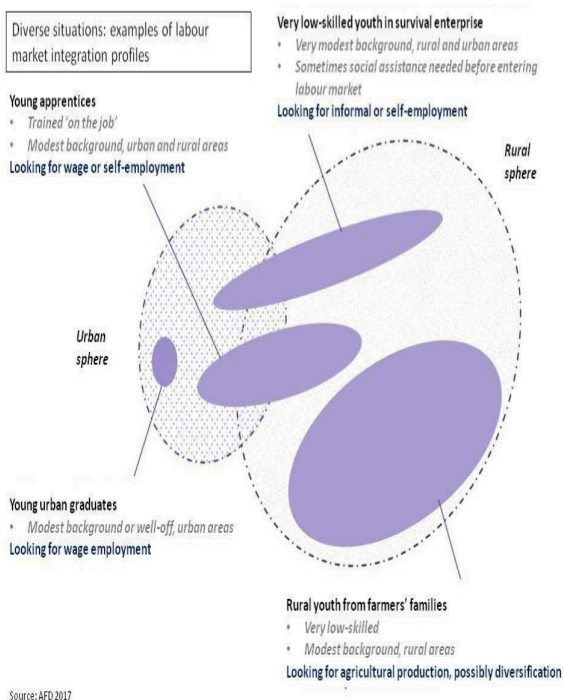
Figure 4: Key assumptions of the project

Key Assumptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The political and security situation in targeted hubs of stability will remain stable with no foreseeable shocks that may lead to population displacement from the targeted areas and or undermine access to the targeted hubs.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State governments will cooperate with project actors for promoting enabling business and investment conditions, and coordinating the efforts of various actors, and have the political for relevant pro-business legislative reviews and policy implementation.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Availability and access to materials for value chain development, and growing interest and acceptance of locally produced products within and outside the targeted hubs of stability.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local private sector enterprises will use local employment platforms and job fairs to promote higher supply and demand of labor and related matchmakings.</li> </ul>

The project had a number of assumptions, and while these are considered in the overall design of the activities, delays in project delivery have had some impact on where the project is currently at. As a result of the delays, Outcome 1.2 and Outcome 2.1 were yet to come into full fruition, when the interviews took place. The COVID 19 pandemic had a significant impact on these activities whereby the training institutions were shut down for almost nine months and thus the project has fallen behind with some of the established indicators and overall intended results. Nonetheless, the project has now caught up and the trainings have now been finalized.

### 3.1.1. Theory of change

The theory of change categorized the target environment into two spheres i.e urban sphere and rural sphere. In the two spheres, the project targeted the youth looking for wages or self-employment, youth looking for informal employment, rural youth from farmers families and young urban graduates/looking for wage employment as follows:



## Theory of change

The theory of change was underpinned by the fact that, “ If local private sector enterprises, agriculture, natural resources-linked value chains and services for young men and women are enhanced and If youth are provided with vocational, technical and entrepreneurial skills, psychosocial and business management advisory support; Then, new business and income generating opportunities will be created while productivity and labor absorptive capacities of new and existing local private sector enterprises and value chains will be boosted; and Then employability and engagement in economic and livelihood initiatives AND productivity and incomes for young men and women in targeted areas will be increased resulting in improved well-being, resilience and peaceful co-existence among youth in and around targeted areas in South Sudan”. While this theory is well stated and with all good intentions and expectations, the COVID pandemic has of course had an impact on the project. Furthermore, it would be important to ensure that the analysis relied on at the start of the project to feed into the types of courses and gaps in the job markets are revisited to ensure that sufficient emphasis are on the most needed vocational, technical and entrepreneurial skills,

particularly taking into account the impact of the COVID pandemic as well as the results thus far to ensure that these gaps are being adequately filled according to what is available with regards to the creation of value chains and the vocational training skills needed.

## Design

**The project design is relatively effective to address the issues identified to be addressed by the Project**

The overall design of the project recognizes some of the key elements needed to address youth employment and empowerment, although there are some concerns that the sheer number of persons targeted under the capacity aspect of the project will not necessarily correspond to the number of persons who could result in being employed. The lag times within the labour market, the size of the economy, socio-political context, and other nuances that are outside the control of the Project will mean that not all persons trained will find employment within the timespan of the project. However, the number trained constitute a larger number of skilled manpower as opposed to unskilled labour. Training aims to build a skilled labour force and casts a wider net for people to be ready to be (more) productive for the future as and when the South Sudanese economy and job market grows stronger.

As reiterated above, COVID-19 pandemic has inevitably also had a negative impact on the project with regards to ensuing delays in finalizing the training and its impact on the overall economy. Delays were also experienced in starting up the project. (This will be further elaborated under effectiveness and efficiency). Nonetheless, **it is important to emphasize that despite these challenges, target rates have often times been surpassed despite the rules of social distancing which limited the size of the training courses.**

**The overall quality of the results framework is deemed adequate, but the inclusion of indicators which are RACER (relevant,**



**acceptability, clarity, easiness and robustness) is not always evident.**

The current quality of the intervention logic is adequate although there are certain aspects of its formulation, which could be further strengthened to ensure that all planned outcomes and outputs are coherent and feasible. The results framework has two key outcomes, three outputs, two under output one and another one under output two. When examining the activities envisaged, the connection with the overall objective of the project is very evident, however, to date the MTR finds that there is some disconnect between the beneficiaries benefitting from vocational training and an increase in skills resulting in better economic opportunities. While numbers are well reflected in the reports, the interviews revealed a more negative outlook on the prospects of utilizing the skills acquired. It should be noted that beneficiaries were interviewed both in Yambio and Bor as well as Juba. The number of beneficiaries is impressive in that an important number of persons have been trained in a number of different vocational skills, nonetheless it is difficult to ascertain to what extent the level of skills acquired is sufficient to actually work in the field they are being trained in, as many at the time of interviews were still awaiting to engage in employment. Almost all of the stakeholders consulted commented on the short length of some of the courses and stated that it was only enough for recipients of the training to acquire basic skills, and therefore practical placements, internships or some kind of continuation was deemed necessary and useful to enable the beneficiaries to ensure their skills are honed and inevitably not lost. As a result of the pandemic, many of the persons spoken to during the field stage (Late July 2021) had not yet been matched up with placements or undergone further practical training.

#### **Relevance of the action to UN policy and strategic priorities as well as the SDGs**

The action is very relevant to a number of UN policies and strategic priorities.

**Figure 5: South Sudan National Development Strategy (2018-2021)**



The National Development Strategy is guided by the following principles: i) Peace, Security and Rule of Law; ii) Democracy and Good Governance; iii) Socio-economic Development and iv) International Compacts and Partnerships. The latter two principles are particularly relevant with particular emphasis on economic recovery and management of inflation, economic diversification, empowerment of women and youth, improving the quality of education and expanding training opportunities. Under the fourth principle, coordination of development aid, humanitarian work should go hand in hand with development and public-private partnership for sustainable development. These principles should contribute to the overall objective of the strategy, whereby peace is consolidated, and the economy stabilised. Furthermore, the Development Strategy includes a number of cross cutting issues, one of these includes empowering youth to address unemployment challenges. To this end, one of the key strategic priority actions in this area is to “coordinate and train all the targeted groups (staff, youth and women) in the relevant fields for efficient and effective participation in nation-building and state building.

#### **United Nations Cooperation Framework (2019-2021)**

The United Nations Cooperation Framework has the overall aim of building resilience, capacities and institutions needed to achieve four priority outcomes: i) Building peace and strengthening governance; ii) improving food security and recovering local economies; iii) strengthening

social services; and iv) empowering women and youth. This looks towards long term sustainable development which is in line with African Union Agenda 2063 and Development goals, including “the promotion” of goal 16 to leave no one behind (LNOB).

## 4.2 EFFECTIVENESS

*Effectiveness is defined by examining whether the intervention has achieved its objectives. This section provides insight into whether the project attained the envisaged results, the process in which this was done, what factors were decisive in this process and whether there were any unintended effects.*

The project had three key outputs and a total of 18 activities<sup>11</sup> under two core outcomes. Each of the activities had an established indicator with its own individual target, nonetheless only indicators for the outputs were reported upon in the annual reports.<sup>12</sup> To this end the following section only highlights the activities referred to in the annual reports, which accounts for a total of 10 activities. The results framework did provide an overall impact indicator - *improved well-being resilience and peaceful co-existence among youth in and around targeted areas in South Sudan* - and a total of five indicators for the two outcomes. Reference is made to the overall trajectory of the outcome in the following section. Furthermore, the MTR established a number of indicators<sup>13</sup> in order to ascertain whether project objectives and results had been achieved. This assessment coupled with the established performance indicators under each of the activities (as per the ones reported upon) has allowed the MTR to undertake a more in-depth assessment of each of the activities utilizing additional lines of evidence. In addition, data provided by the project, has facilitated the examination of a particular

output and whether it will achieve the results foreseen.

To this end, the MTR subsequently highlights whether each result appears to be on track to be completely reached by the end of the project. With regards to the overall performance of the project thus far, the MTR has found that under Output One, the overall result has been achieved with all of the three targets being fully achieved. Outputs 1.2 and 2.1 are more difficult to assess, as while many of the indicators are likely to be met, the overall results have been affected by delays in implementation as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic and some problems with regards to procurement of goods and services. **Challenges with regards to procurement have now been dealt with and the project is now on a positive trajectory and the bottlenecks previously experienced seem to be solved and thus with a strategic approach to utilize the remaining time left, these two outputs seem to be on track.**

**The following sections will outline the overall result of each individual outcome and describe how the individual activities under each of the outputs contributed to the overall result. Given the overall assessment as described below, the mid-term evaluation rates the criterion of effectiveness as satisfactory.**

The initial phases of the project were stalled due to a number of difficulties, including in finding an initial service provider who could undertake the studies on market linked labor skills and requirements for private and public enterprises.<sup>14</sup> As the project was unable to find a suitable company in time, the project initially relied on a local assessment in consultation with the states.

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<sup>11</sup> Please note that the results framework had a total of 18 activities, but annual reports included two additional activities in order to distinguish between activities on women and youth under Output Three and an additional activity under procurement for Output Four. Both these additional activities did not establish individual indicators.

<sup>12</sup> The monitoring and evaluation tracking system does track the other indicators to some extent however there is

no reference to these in reports and it is therefore difficult to ascertain whether all targets have been met.

<sup>13</sup> See evaluation matrix in inception report and as included in annex II of this report.

<sup>14</sup> As stated above, the process was relaunched but to the COVID-19, the engagement of these services was somewhat delayed and the approach had to be revised to take into consideration the restriction on movement.

Figure 6 below cites the population according to each of the 5 states, as one can see on Jonglei (Bor) followed by Central Equatoria (Juba) have the highest populations. It should be noted that this data is from 2010, and perhaps the populations are different today. The number of persons trained compared to overall population does not always appear to be commensurate, however the number of persons targeted in each of the states was reliant on the local context. In Jonglei State for example, it is one of the states most affected by inter-communal violence and has resulted in the displacement of the majority of the population. Furthermore, in Juba, where the majority of jobs probably exist, a disproportionate number of persons were trained compared to the other areas. To date, Juba has had the least number of persons trained.

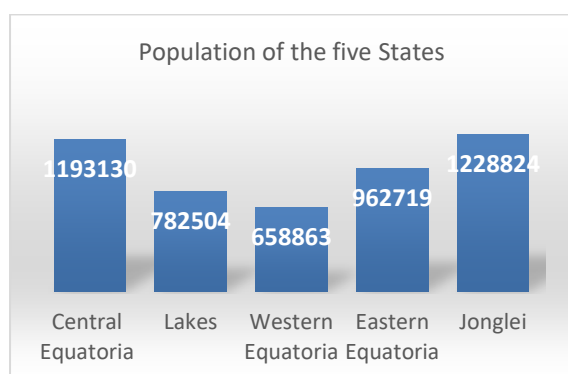


Figure 6: Population according to the 2010 census

## PROJECT OUTCOME ONE: INCREASED EMPLOYABILITY AND ENGAGEMENT IN PRODUCTIVE ECONOMIC AND LIVELIHOOD INITIATIVES FOR YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN IN TARGETD AREAS.

There are a number of different figures as to what proportion of graduates are engaged in some type of employment. The pandemic has hit the economy hard and many of the small business have closed down. At the time of the filed phase, very few of the persons consulted had found some type of job. The pace has picked up since the summer whereby more and more firms are placing youth, nevertheless, in order to reach the target of 85% it seems very ambitious and will requires a robust and strategic approach as well as close monitoring

by the project to ensure that these figures are achieved.

**Outcome Indicator 1.1. Proportion of youth graduates that are productively engaged in part-time, fulltime or self-employment disaggregated by gender.**  
**Final Target: 85%**  
**Accumulative Result: 32.7%**

**Status: With the COVID pandemic and the losses of jobs and economic opportunities a strategic approach is needed to reach the overall figure by end of project.**

**Outcome Indicator 1.2. Percentage of trained youth demonstrating increased competencies in training programme skills, disaggregated by gender.**  
**Target: 80%**  
**Accumulative Result: 68%**

**Status: On track**

As has been evidenced above over 4,634 persons have undergone training either under the community-based training or through vocational training. As of October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021, a total of 3,154 persons had graduated. All the persons who had undergone community-based training had graduated, while with the vocational training, there will still some batches which were still pending their graduation. Nonetheless, on average 93% of persons tended to graduate, and principle reasons for not graduating was due to dropping out of the course rather than not acquiring the sufficient skills.

**Output 1.1 Young men and women in Bor, Jubek, Rumbek, Torit and Yambio are provided with vocational and entrepreneurial skills.**

**Output Indicator 1.1.1 Number of enrolled youth that complete the vocational, technical and entrepreneurship skills training, disaggregated by gender and location.**  
**Final Target: 6,250**  
**Accumulative Result: 4,634**  
**Status: On Target**

**It is of note that under Output 1.1. a significant number of persons have been trained and their overall potential employability has significantly improved compared to prior to the project.**

The project suffered from a number of challenges at its initial stages, these included delays as a result of the vocational modules needing to be updated and the necessity to rehabilitate the VTCs;<sup>15</sup> this meant that key activities were delayed somewhat. This was further compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic which meant that many of the students did not graduate in the same year as commencing their courses (2019 and 2020).

This as a result delayed the second batch of courses whereby some of the participants were only able to graduate in August/September 2021. Juba has an established vocational training center, and therefore the project mainly worked with linking the youth to job opportunities and attachments. In Rumbek vocational center, operations were yet to start. At the mid-way point, indicators predicted that 62.5% of the youth graduates would be productively engaged in part-time, full time or self-employment, but this is not yet the case. This is to be expected given the number of losses in small businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic and has meant that less opportunities are available. It is estimated that approximately 60% of the small SMEs have closed down as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic. To this end, the second half of the project will need to bridge the gap between the high number of persons graduating from the trainings and

ensure that important linkages with internship placements and other opportunities are increasingly available. This process has already begun.

During the pandemic, it should be noted that a number of temporary jobs were created through the making of masks, - till July 2021, the team of 523 tailors had provided 1,023,847 masks. The patent of the masks was then provided to government who used it to produce more masks. In order to distribute the masks, state level task forces were set up, these normally included UNICEF, UNMISS and a number of other ministries dependent on the actual State. With the rise in cases of COVID, the project was able to quickly mobilize itself and rally its way around the design and the production of the masks. Masks were not only provided in Juba but the other five locations of the project plus Aweil. This incentive contributed to saving lives of South Sudanese, ensured that the government could produce sufficient and a reliable number of masks quickly plus also provided on the job skills for over five hundred persons (78% women).



A majority of the beneficiaries as well as a number of interlocutors consulted during the MTR expressed a concern as to the overall

<sup>15</sup> It is important to note that such delays were not anticipated during the project design but was undertaken

by the project team as it was considered as critical to ensure delivering standardized vocational skills training.

impact of the institutional courses, although the MTR does not have an insight if there is concern with regards to a particular type of course or the courses in general. At the time of interviews, many of the interlocutors were concerned with the overall length of the courses, stating that they sometimes felt they were insufficient to provide all the necessary skills and knowledge required. This was particularly pertinent for those fields that are more technical in nature, such as electrician, plumbing and auto repair.<sup>16</sup> To this end, those that are now placed in internships, in enterprises/ workshops/ companies are now benefitting from the skills they have learned during the trainings and are able to put these into practice.

While start up kits were provided, given the problems with procurement, many of the startup kits were delayed. Furthermore, the persons consulted believed that they would be given individual start up kits, while in essence, startup kits are provided for and shared between a group. Some of the beneficiaries opined that the sharing of kits made it difficult to branch out and establish their own businesses. Furthermore, while the majority of the beneficiaries consulted expressed an appreciation for the acquiring of a new skill, many were at a loss as to how they would use their new skills in the short and mid-term future. The interlocutors expressed fear as to whether the acquired knowledge was sufficient and many stated that they lacked the established network in their field of training to ensure that they were able to start a business using their acquired skill.

Confidence was also key, and many felt that they lacked the confidence to impart their skill, despite all graduates having in their majority passed with high assessments on their abilities according to the established criteria of the courses. The next phase of the project is therefore paramount, whereby persons who have undergone basic training in their chosen field are linked to either internships or

companies which could promote the use of their skills. In the recent opening session of the VTC in Juba, for example, the youth had painted the façade of the building, and provided the catering. Furthermore, bathrooms that had been in disrepair were subsequently repaired by the youth trained; this helped build their confidence and illustrates the usefulness and the capacity that has been built. Confidence to reach out and utilize the acquired skill as well as the ability to network with different institutions, NGOs and even UN agencies is an absolute to promote the continuation of the training of the participants. During the field visits, it was found that connections with other organizations has been minimal, although as can be seen in the table below, an increasing number of persons are now being placed with different companies from the different vocations, however there is still more work to be done to really ensure that the large amount of persons trained are linked up somehow with placements or further on the job training schemes or are supported to establish their own small businesses.

In all the five target areas, vocational training schools were established in Torit, Yambio, Juba and Bor (being fully operational at the time of site visits). Rumbek was still under construction and operationalization had not commenced at the time of writing. South Connect, the company in charge of providing the skills is currently setting up the hubs in various vocational schools within the five target locations.

The Project exceeded its original targets with respects to how many persons have been trained and is on target to meet the established targets by the end of the project. According to the latest data, 4,634 persons have been trained, 1634 of these being women.<sup>17</sup> Out of these 4,634 persons 3,154 persons have actually graduated. Graduation figures are far lower than the number of persons who have actually been trained principally because many of the trainees have not yet graduated or were about

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<sup>16</sup> It should be noted that interviews were conducted at the end of July 2021, and very few of the persons consulted had been placed with a Company or internship opportunity.

<sup>17</sup> These are the figures provided by the project, nonetheless in the project board meeting it refers to 6,091 persons being trained on vocational skills and agri value chain for 2020 and 2021.



to graduate at the time of gathering the data. As can be seen from the table below, in Rumbek 100 per cent of the persons have graduated; the 14 days courses are mobile-based trainings and the very nature of the training and the modules taught, allowed for a 100 per cent graduation rate. The community-based trainings in all five states have continued parallel to the institution-based trainings and where possible tends to target women and girls. (49% of the participants were women).

### Community Based Courses

A total of 2,421 persons underwent short-term community courses (49% were women). A very high percentage of persons graduated from these courses (99%) While in most states, graduation almost always met 100%; figures in Bor recorded a lower graduation rate, for example, in the course for *commercial food and processing and general hospitality*, a total 83.65% males and 72.97% females graduated.

In the course of *introduction to commercial food*, the male graduation rate was also under 100% with 96.23% of males graduating. The graduation figures were normally dependent if a person had dropped out of the course, rather than failing the actual course: standard skill assessments were undertaken subsequent to the trainings – from the information gathered there were no records of persons failing courses. Some suggest that many of these dropouts may have been as a result of the difficulties in obtaining transportation; especially amongst the women who found it more difficult to access the courses while attending their domestic duties. The project initiated a deliberate strategy of making agricultural value chain trainings to be community-based in order to respond to gender and women's concerns (women have to take care of children and so having the training conducted in their community makes it more accessible and therefore dropouts were considered to be reduced).

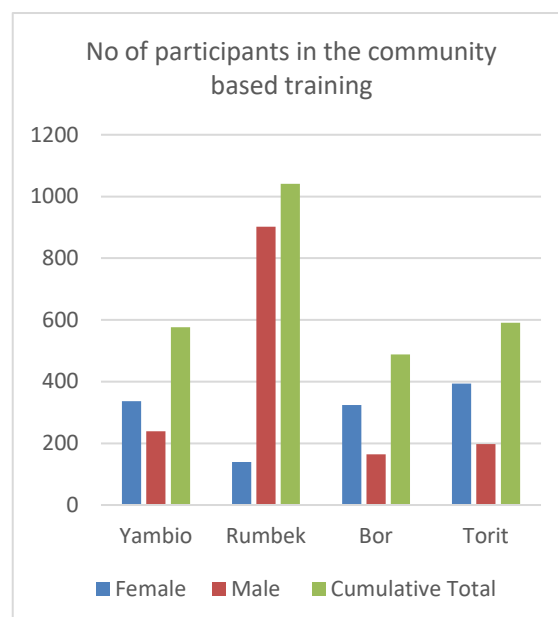


Figure 7: Community based Trainings

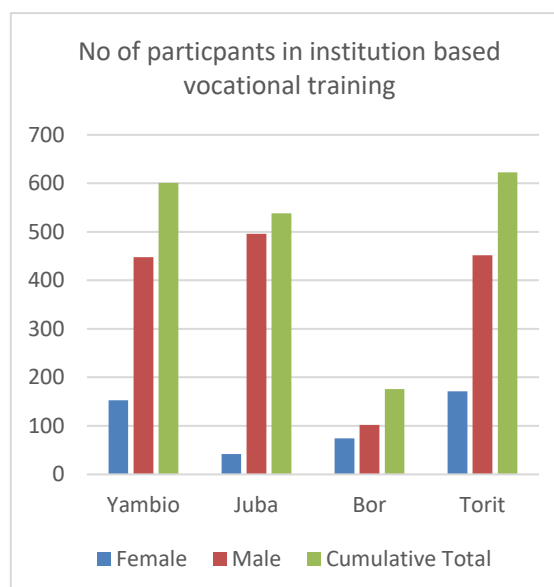
### Institutional Courses

The most popular attended courses were those on motorcycle and car mechanics as well as masonry and tiling and plumbing while the least attended were those on customer care, and irrigation and pipe fitting as well as CCTV. More research needs to be done in order to ascertain if there is a correlation between offer and demand of these particular skills in each of the respective states. Some of the other courses are very specialized, such as solar installation, CCTV, so it is only natural that only a few persons took up these courses offered. It should be noted that hairdressing and hotel reception work, for example, are according to interlocutors traditionally undertaken by nationals of neighboring countries and therefore requires a push for more local / South Sudanese to undertake these types of course to learn these trades and for them to be introduced to these lucrative sectors especially in Juba. Although courses in hairdressing were quite popular in Torit, they were normally short in duration (Rumbek). No hairdressers' courses were recorded as having taken place in Juba for example.

The institution-based courses were more detailed in nature, and on average were two to four months long. It is worth noting that ILO often recommends that vocational courses

should be at least six months long to adequately prepare the participants for the skills they require. Nonetheless the project ensured that the project and its objectives adapted to the local context. This is particularly pertinent given the level of education/literacy in the country coupled with the already high proportions of unemployment. Furthermore, given the unique context of the country, and the trauma that many have undergone due to the conflict and continue to suffer, many of the youth were unable to engage with the project for long periods when they had to provide and look after their families. (furthermore, many participants resided with relatives in the capitals of the state and had to return to their families) To mitigate the reduction in the length of the courses, the overall proportion of practical lessons was increased over theory to respond to the low literacy rate. The training modules therefore adopted a competency-based training approach and incorporated five non-core technical competency modules on Basic Literacy and Numeracy, Work Life Skills, Human Rights, Entrepreneurship, and Peace and Development. The evaluation found that the subscription of the competency-based adapted modules was followed. This was further complemented by the establishment of a standardized assessment methodology to evaluate the performance of trainees and to serve as a quality assurance mechanism.

**A total of approximately 2,280 persons (1,498 males and 440 females) have undergone these courses, with 19% being female participants. These more intensive courses have not yet started in Rumbek. The longer-term courses did take place in the other four states, but as a direct consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic many of these courses were delayed and second batch of trainees only graduated in August/September 2021. A number of the courses were also delayed due to the non-arrival of essential material for the training. The procurement of practical training material was imperative given the fact that the courses are practical in nature. This was particularly pertinent especially given the fact that many of the trainees are illiterate and therefore courses have been adapted to ensure that theory-based teaching was kept to a minimum.**



**Figure 8: No of participants in vocational course**

It is important to note that an important number of persons have been trained, and after the delay caused by the COVID the project is now starting to place some of these persons in related jobs. The table under Annex I illustrates the number of persons who have currently been placed in jobs as compared to the number of persons trained in that particular skill.

**Output Indicator 1.1.2. Promotion of young entrepreneurs utilizing innovation centers, business incubators and development hubs for skills enhancement.**  
**Final Target: 70%**  
**Accumulative Result: 60%**  
**Status: On track**

In 2019, a total of 50 youth entrepreneurs were supported from top level global coaching and mentoring seconded to the Tony Elumelu Foundation. The youth were supported by a startup fund of USD 5,000 to implement ideas and business plans. In 2019, YEEP identified two locations for the One-Stop-Business, Employment and Innovation Centers. Of the aforementioned 50 youths, 60% of them successfully completed the training in the first quarter of 2020. Furthermore, of the 3,831 youth who had completed the community-

based agriculture and natural resource value chains training programme, benefitted from the provision of entrepreneurship and business development. Two online portals were completed. The Employment Portal is hosted by Ministry of Labour and is linked to business networks and the Chamber of Commerce. All hubs for the integrated business, employment and Innovation Hubs were completed by 2021 (except Rumbek).

**Output Indicator 1.1.3 Proportion of youth previously involved in conflict recruited for skills training disaggregated by gender.**

**Final Target: 30%**

**Accumulative Result: 11%**

**Status: Off track**

In 2019, a total of 26 youths including 9 females previously involved in conflict in Yambio associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups were made part of the vocational skills trainings. In 2020 YEEP was able to identify 569 persons involved in conflict to be amongst the beneficiaries of the project. It should be noted, as the information is sensitive there could be more persons who have benefitted from the training but have not been identified as youth previously involved in conflict.

### **Output 1.2. Technical, vocational education and training (VTET) and university graduates have increased access to career development and employment opportunities.**

Output 1.2. relies on the basis that demand driven training interventions that closely involve employers are more likely to be successful than training interventions that do not include employers. To this end, the project envisaged developing links between skills training and jobs skills demanded in the labor market. This encompassed two focus areas: a) Link skills training to the job skills demanded in the labor market and b) Establish career advice and placement services (CAPS) centers in the five target areas that will offer a full range of careers and job placement services.

The output also foresaw the undertaking of

continuous labor market surveys in the five states in order to identify potential employment opportunities. This was said to be carried out in conjunction with the local authorities, line ministries, private sector, Chamber of Commerce at the state levels, UN agencies, including ILO and UNIDO and other development partners. The survey identified and created a database on potential areas of employment/livelihoods, particularly for the unemployed skilled youth, youth farmers groups and youth business groups. The MTR was unable to obtain information on how this is being utilized presently.

In regard to output 1.2. youth demonstrating increased competencies in training programme skills, it was anticipated at 70% by 2021 - the baseline value for this indicator was 10%. The project measured these competences through training assessment reports issued at each institutional training to ensure that skills acquired under the courses have been transferred. Trainees undergo theory and practical lessons after which they are assessed and can only graduate if they are able to reach a certain level. As was aforementioned, a relatively high percentage of persons graduated. Each graduate has to demonstrate a number of competencies according to the type of course. Persons normally undergo a continuous assessment (40%) and a final evaluation (60%) and are provided with a score as illustrated under figures 9.

Marks (%)	Letter grade	Performance level
85 – 100	A	Distinction
75 – 84	B+	Credit
70 – 74	B	
60 – 69	B-	Pass
55 -59	C	
50 – 54	C-	Below 50% not competent, advise to sit for the modules/units failed
Below 49	Fail	

**Figure 9: Grading System**

When examining general figures for each of the states for the vocational courses, we see that for those that have reached graduation, Torit is the



only place where all persons graduated. In Juba, Bor and Yambio, more males tended to graduate than women. The non-graduation rates were normally influenced by dropout rates, and therefore it would seem apparent that the COVID-19 had a more important impact on women than men, and they were unable to complete the course.

By August 2021, 3,154 of the persons trained had already graduated. It should also be of note that far fewer women attended VTC courses in Juba than any of the other three states. Gender dynamics were of course more pronounced as regards to the nature of the training courses.

The types of courses also determine the proportion of each gender in the course. There are courses which are traditionally more masculine and though the Project tried to break these perception and cultural barriers, the shift in beliefs and behaviour takes time.

Furthermore, due to the traditionally heavier social and domestic burdens on girls and young women, access to the more formal and institutionalized, town-centric courses in the VTCs is more challenging for women.

In this regard, mobile training courses appear to be more appealing to women trainees.

**Output Indicator 1.2.1 Number of skills training graduates that secure jobs from UNDP supported private sector enterprises and value chains disaggregated by gender.**  
**Final Target; 1,600**  
**Accumulative Result: 324**  
**Status: Needs a further push to ensure achieving the target**

Under output 1.2.1. At the time of writing, only one cohort of students had graduated, and another cohort was just about to graduate, therefore it is only in 2021 that South Connect which has been hired for linking private sector companies for internships and job placements for youth. The evaluation team was unable to communicate with a wide enough range of persons in order to understand if and how skills

had been matched. In 2020, the annual report states that due diligence assessments had been initiated on an initial batch of 37 private sector companies and to date all of these have been approved. This number has now increased to an astounding 163 companies and is continuing to grow. While the percentages are relatively low in some areas, other areas such as mechanics in both Yambio and Juba are relatively high. While annex I below states that 39% of the persons trained have job placements, it is important to note that the real figure stands at less than 7% as 4,634 persons have been trained and 324 have been given job placements. It should be noted however that other placements have been made, but not all of these are reflected in Annex I.

**Output Indicator 1.2.2. Proportion of tertiary education students in the targeted locations receiving career guidance and mentoring through the CAPS disaggregated by data.**

**Final Target: 60%**

**Accumulative Result: 3 hubs constructed and 5 hubs equipped to start supporting CAPs.**

As a result of the pandemic, the job fairs were suspended. In preparation to the conduct of this service once trainees were graduated, the project initiated the construction of integrated business, employment and innovation hubs in Bor, Rumbek, and Juba (in 2019, Yambio and Torit were completed). The finalization of these hubs was done in 2021, with the exception of Rumbek.

One of the other key successes of the project was the holding of three job fairs conducted in three states (Yambio, Torit and Bor). It was the first time that such an event took place. In Bor there was a total of 1,294 males and 1,069 females; Torit, 1,540 males and 960 females, and in Yambio 1,607 males and 1,625 females. For the quick job counselling and/or entrepreneurship briefing in Bor there were 1,555 males and 22 females, Torit 742 males and 514 females and in Yambio 808 males and 541 females. According to the 2020 Annual

Report, 3,060 youth received services through career guidance and counselling in the job fairs conducted. This number was said to represent 38 per cent of the total number of youths who participated in the job fairs. According to the latest project board meeting approximately 3,500 persons have undergone CAPS, Business planning to date.

**Output Indicator 1.2.3. Number of Jobs traded through job fairs**  
**Final Target: 600**  
**Accumulative Result: 415**  
**Status: On track although the COVID-19 pandemic needs to be taken into consideration**

Under indicator 1.2.3 the 2020 annual report cites that a total of 415 jobs were traded in the three job fairs. Of those, at least 116 positions had been filled with another 75 positions in the pipeline.

## **PROJECT OUTCOME TWO: INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY AND INCOMES FOR YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN IN TARGETED AREAS**

Outcome Two envisaged engagement with a number of different institutions as well as creating a conducive environment for viable Value chains and private sector enterprise. A creation of economic zones and providing spaces for youth entrepreneurs to start and expand businesses was also encompassed in the planning. The evaluation has no data as to whether the outcome indicators under Outcome Two have been achieved; the monitoring and evaluation matrix only refers to the indicators at output level. Nonetheless, with regards to outcome indicator 2.3., as can be seen below it would seem that it is making good progress.

***Outcome Indicator 2.1. Proportion of supported youth registering positive returns from their investments disaggregated by gender***

***Final Target: 60%***

***Outcome Indicator 2.2. Proportion of supported youth paying back disbursed loans within prescribed timeframes disaggregated by gender.***

***Final Target: 95%***

***Outcome Indicator 2.3. Proportion of supported youth entrepreneurs that employ other youth in their businesses***

***Final Target: 40%***

As will be illustrated under the four outputs of Outcome two, outputs 2.1.1, 2.1.2 and 2.1.3. seem to be on track to achieve the established targets by the end of the project. Notwithstanding, the evaluation did sense a general frustration by the persons consulted as to whether the courses do actually lead to employment possibilities and opportunities. During the interviews, a number of interlocutors stated that there would not necessarily be enough placements for all the persons trained, and these interlocutors indicated the importance of promoting self-employment and the creation of a cadre of entrepreneurs. The over reliance on the creation of entrepreneurs seemed to be somewhat disproportionate, many of the respondents considered that they did not have sufficient technical skills vis a vis those required to effectively exercise in many of these vocations. Furthermore, a lack of credit facilities and networks as well as a distrust of the formal banking sector (at least in Yambio Country) has left the interlocutors consulted express concern as to how effective the courses will be to enable them to nurture an entrepreneurial culture and enhance their employability in the chosen area of vocation. These problems are further exacerbated by a nascent banking and finance sector- the inexistence of a credit rating bureau, lack of

branches, weak rural banking sector, weak cooperative sector, and a lack of availability of banking and finance services as one goes farther from Juba or the administrative. To this end it is unclear as to what extent there will be increased productivity for young men and women in targeted areas, particularly with regards to long term prospects in order to ensure that frustration does not escalate. To this end, follow up support projects such as the Youth Enterprise Development and Capacity Building (YEDCB) Project supported by the African Development Bank will be vital.

**Output 2.1. Young men and women in targeted areas benefit from jobs, livelihood and income generating initiatives created through strengthened private sector enterprises and local value chains.**

**Output Indicator 2.1.1. Number of New Jobs created through value chains and private sector enterprises supported by UNDP.**

**Target: 2,700**

**Accumulative Result:**

**Status:**

The project document outlines that 40 per cent of graduates set up their own businesses whilst the others are either absorbed by the private and public sector or not engaged at all. The project envisages the creation of microenterprises or employment through MSMEs. This could inevitably contribute to an increase in household income and then trickle down to help facilitate the growth of new and existing private sector enterprises and MSEs in the selected value chains according to their growth and employment potentials based on results of local consultations and feasibility assessments. In many of the conversations that were maintained with the MTR team there was sometimes a general assumption that many of the graduates would indeed set up on their own, and the project had not yet found ways to promote the growth of new and existing private sectors. Although the project has reached out to a number of them as referred to under output 1.2.

**Output Indicator 2.1.2. Number of MSEs created by supported youth**

**Final Target 100**

**Accumulative Result: 60**

**Status: On track**

Under indicator 2.1.2. A number of Micro and small-scale enterprises have been created, these include now 60. In 2020, a total of 53 small-scale enterprises (MSEs) were supported with technical and financial support from UNDP. The project managed to channel 50 youth entrepreneurs (15 of the participants seconded from the innovation challenges) to benefit from global coaching, mentoring and networking and startup capital through the Tony Elumulu Foundation (TEF). Another activity focused on the involvement of 110 youth whereby in Juba and Yambio, youth put ideas forward on food security and there were six winners who were then selected for incubation. The three winners from Juba have been organized and are being supported with seed grants to incubate their ideas.

**Output Indicator 2.1.3. Proportion of trained youth engaging in livelihood and income generating activities**

**Final Target: 60%**

**Accumulative Result: 35%**

**Status: Needs a boost in order to ensure achievement**

2.1.3. looks at the proportion of trained youth engaging in livelihood and income generating activities, at the end of 2020 the activity was still ongoing, however the indicator tracking table states in the last quarter of 2020, 35% of persons have become involved in income generating activities.

**Output Indicator 2.1.4. Number of youth-oriented facilities benefiting from clean energy solutions**

**Final Target: 16**

**Accumulative Result: 3**

**Status: Off track**

2.1.4. looks at the number of youth-oriented facilities benefitting from clean energy solutions. To date only three out of 16 (Bor, Torit and Yambios VTCs) are partially supported by solar energy. In July 2021, details were presented to the Project Board which has recommended the mobilization of additional resources. The VTCs were equipped with solar panels to provide electricity to power lighting and equipment within the centers, the boreholes are powered by either wind or solar energy.

### 4.3 EFFICIENCY

The projects efficiency is deemed as **satisfactory**. While COVID and challenges with procurement have hampered progress in the first year of the project, solutions have been sought and procurement as well as finalisation of the first two cohorts of training has been achieved in 2021. Due to COVID-19, very few board meetings have taken place and recruitment in some areas of the project has faced problems. Nonetheless 2021, saw the recruitment of a project manager and of a M & E specialist which will improve the efficiency of the project. Furthermore, it is worth noting that the quality of the reports was reasonably high, and while more reference as to how the outputs are contributing to the outcomes, reports utilised results-based reporting as well as including a wide range of photos and human-interest stories. More reporting on gender could be encouraged, however weaknesses in gender reporting and the projects ability to report on gender transformative results lays mainly with the initial design of the project.

#### Use of resources

**The activities and outputs have been delivered with fewer resources without reducing quality and quantity.**

The project endeavored to reduce costs by maximizing resources, particularly in the field. This included the sharing of offices in the field, the contracting of UNVs and applying due diligence in the area of procurement. The overall rating of the efficiency of the project is rated as satisfactory. As of 31<sup>st</sup> December, the delivery stands at 79%.

The project despite COVID has been able to complete many of its key activities and is on track to meet most of its indicators. The annual reporting ensures a high quality of details pertaining to the results framework and the overall achievement of the outputs to date, but does not really outline to what extent the outputs will contribute to the outcomes and whether the established outcome indicators are on track to be accomplished. Gender is disaggregated at the levels of outputs; it still does not give an overview on how the project is impacting on women beyond the numbers of how many women have been trained.

	Budget	Delivery as of 31 December 2021 (Expenditure + Commitment)	%
Netherlands	9,424,953	7,989,197	85%
AfDB	2,041,400	1,331,704	65%
UNDP	4,024,602	2,853,159	71%
Total	15,490,955	12,174,061	79%

Figure 10: Overall funding as of December 31, 2021

The project had an anticipated budget of approximately USD 15,450,710 (the overall amount has been subject to slight fluctuation due to the exchange rate and the current budget is at USD 15,490,955). The Kingdom of the Netherlands in South Sudan signed a general agreement which came into force on 1 December 2018 and is due to expire on 31 December 2022 and has pledged the highest percentage overall amount of USD 9,424,953. An initial payment of USD2,000,000 was provided upon the signing of the agreement and the general agreement stipulates that subsequent payments will be made every 12 months on the basis of a request for payment.

Year	Funds received from the Netherlands
2018	USD 2,000,000
2019	USD 3,337,832
2020	USD 2,507,688
2021	
<b>Total</b>	<b>USD7,845,520<sup>18</sup></b>

Figure 11: List of tranches received from the Netherlands to date

**The project has experienced some difficulties in recruitment; however, the project now enjoys a full contingent of staff to enable adequate oversight of the project.**

The project envisaged the following positions for the project:

- 1 Programme Coordinator
- 5 Field Coordinators (one in each state)
- 1 Senior Programme Advisor (cost-shared)
- 1 Programme Associate (cost-shared)
- 1 Finance Associate (cost-shared)
- 1 Admin/Logistics Assistant (cost-shared)
- 1 Driver

The importance of ensuring field presence, given the complexity and the fact that not all of the states are considered to represent a microcosm of Juba and/or South Sudan cannot be underestimated. An international is assigned to each of the five states<sup>19</sup> and have overall responsibility for the day to day implementation of the project in coordination with relevant UN, civil society and government institutions in their respective regions. Their presence has proven instrumental to ensure effective liaison between the VTCs, State government, private business etc. Their international status has also proven paramount to ensure neutrality and to dissuade corrupt practices, which as aforementioned the field coordinators are all UNVs and this of course drives down the cost

<sup>18</sup> Please note that this figure slightly differs from table 10, due to the fluctuation of the exchange rate taken at the time.

<sup>19</sup> Bor, Torit, Yambio, and Rumbek. An international is yet to be assigned to Jubek, however the project is currently in the process of finalising the recruitment – (July 2021)

<sup>20</sup> Daniel Kir is the STARR Team Leader and he has (and continue) to provide support to the project. Daniel deals mainly with compliance and operational matters while

A number of the other positions (as seen above) were shared between other projects and this has also meant savings in the areas of office costs but has also contributed to the overall efficiency of the project as the projects feed information into each other and utilize the relevant resources in order to push the progress of the project.

The project has experienced some difficulties in recruitment, and it was not always easy to find key persons to be deployed in the field, and the recruitment of the field coordinators took time, which inevitably impacted on the overall efficiency of the project. A Juba/Project Coordinator arrived in May 2019 but moved to another project by November 2019. Attempts were therefore made to find a new Project Coordinator and, in the meantime, the STARR team led by the Senior Programme Coordinator (Jose Manzano) and the Team Leader (Daniel Kir) provided leadership in project implementation.<sup>20</sup> A Project Coordinator (detail assignment - Gugulethu Dlamini) was deployed in January - July 2021 with remote support continuing until the arrival of the new Programme Coordinator in September 2021.

### Procurement

Procurement has been the Achilles heel of the project, whereby it has been very difficult to attract good quality offers and apply proper due diligence without resulting in delays to the process. This has led to the slowing down of implementation in some cases, and in others has stopped implementation completely and/or has led to enormous frustration amongst the beneficiaries.

As is illustrated under effectiveness, many of the vocational trainings are based around the learning of certain trades with the use of practical tools. Not all these types of tools are

Jose Manzano deals with technical matters, strategic engagement and partnerships. Daniel was not interim project manager because the management of the project was shared as indicated. Both Daniel and Jose work on the project as part of the wider unit portfolio.



available in South Sudan, are of good quality and/or available in larger quantities. Given the practical nature of the trainings, it is paramount to have access to consumables on which to practice, and to learn how to use them. Some of the interlocutors commented that there were a number of trainings which started and due to the slow procurement process, the required material was either not available or more quantity was needed. This has slowed down implementation and also in the quality of training, whereby not all beneficiaries had consistent access to the tools. Furthermore, startup kits which should be provided to the graduates have not always been available and this has thus resulted in the inability of many of the graduates to set up business of their own, furthermore given the difficulties in accessing these start up kits, individual start up kits are not available but have to be shared. The handing over of individual start up kits was miscommunicated/misconstrued by the trainees, and as a result has ended in frustration as they do not or are unable to share start up kits due to practical arrangements.

The Project is a direct implementation modality whereby UNDP is the implementing partner for the Project, nonetheless in order to capture best practice and the required experience, an agreement with UNIDO was entered into whereby they were engaged as a responsible party (building on comparative advantages of already engaging with GoSS).

However, the agreement did not include the procurement of materials. Furthermore, the presence on the ground was relatively thin and initially UNIDO relied on MOU / service contracts with local training centers which impacted on the overall efficiency of their role. The UNIDO asked for a number of no cost extensions in order to have time to perform their role but were unable to deliver on the agreed targets. They asked for a cost extension in June 2021 (the third request for project extension following the granting of two no-cost extensions), but unfortunately, UNIDO failed to deliver on the outputs and the partnership arrangement was terminated.

## **Organisation Efficiency and Monitoring Efficiency:**

The project has an overall duration of 4 years, and to date implementation is a little over the halfway mark. As is illustrated above in Figure 10, the delivery (expenditure + commitment) is at USD 12,174,061 as of December 31, 2021. A total of USD 7,845,520 has been given to the project by the Kingdom of the Netherlands thus far.

The results framework is referred to in each of the annual reports thus far, and there is effective reporting on the progress of indicators at the output level. Notwithstanding, it is of note that there are various discrepancies in reference to the outputs which has the potential for confusion. The Project document outlines a total of 18 indicators over three different outputs and these are reflected in the annual reports. Activities which are highlighted in the project document have also been assigned indicators although these are not cited in the annual reports, nor in the project document or the results framework and are also not referred to at all in the project document. The individual activities are costed in the multiyear work plan and their progress in relation to their assigned indicators are tracked in the M & E framework. The achievement of indicators at outcome, output and individual activities are illustrated in Annex III. The monitoring and evaluation indicator tracking table contains three useful tables, one tracking the project at output level, utilizing the same outputs in the financial reports, a second page where it refers to the same titles of outputs but under a different numbering and an activity tracking table

### **The monitoring of the results was conducted in an effective and efficient way, although more robust tools could be included to track progress towards the final outcomes**

As stated above, quite a vigorous monitoring and evaluation framework was designed. This assured a reliable tracking of all of the indicators. To date, the evaluation has received the progress of all indicators till December 2020.

Notwithstanding, while there is tracking of numbers of persons trained, linkages between

the numbers of persons trained and those still in need of further support with job placements etc is more difficult to trace. If one looks under the number of persons placed to date in job placements, it is relatively small, therefore a full time monitoring and evaluation specialist should design a number of tools to enable easy and effective analysis of the data to measure impact and to track progress beyond how many persons have been trained. A system to ensure linkages between the types of vocations trained with job placements, internships and learning opportunities is not apparent and could yield a better flow of information and tools to track progress towards the overall objective. Figures which have been kept by the project are informative, however it is essential that these are regularly updated and checked for anomalies regularly.

**Governance mechanisms were deemed as adequate and ownership at the Ministry Level is considered strong.**

While the number of project board meetings was not stipulated in the project document, three project boards have taken place since the commencement of the project. The first one took place on the 28<sup>th</sup> October 2019, the second one more recently in July 2021 and the latest one on 21<sup>st</sup> December 2021. As a direct result of the COVID pandemic, a board meeting did not take place in 2020.

As the lead ministry of the YEPP, the Ministry of Labor were firmly in the lead and enjoys a close partnership with UNDP; the Ministry of Labor is fully engaged and satisfied with the project.

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The Ministry and its state VTCs and structure are the main channels of which project activities are delivered and the MoL considered itself to be the forefront in the development of the modules, systems, etc. and in many aspects of the project.

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## Monitoring

Annual reports have been provided for each of the two years of implementation. The annual reports inform on the progress towards project outputs, including the achievement of indicators at output level, and the inclusions of human-interest stories. There is also a section on risk management, challenges and lessons learned as well as the financial summary. The project reports do not reflect on progress towards the overall outcome. Nonetheless the reports provide a good outline of the activities however it is sometimes difficult to ascertain what is the overall impact on the beneficiary's lives, although it is still early days. It should be noted, that as a result of the delays suffered by the project, and the heavy impact that the COVID-19 has had on the local labor market; the project is only now entering the second phase of the intervention, whereby the recipients of the trainings are only now beginning to reap the rewards of the training they have undergone. (Please see above under effectiveness)

While a number of systems were in place whereby the different ministries were able to evaluate the quality of the trainings, the persons consulted considered that evaluation of the quality of trainings was not evident While each individual training participant is indeed assessed according to their individual performance, the project could benefit from a more formal mechanism whereby the individual participants could share their satisfaction with the course content and any concerns they might the guise of assessment and/or feedback forms.

## 4.4 SUSTAINABILITY

*This section assesses the sustainability of the outputs and whether the design ensured that sustainability of the achieved results was considered, including whether the intervention considered partner capacities and built ownership during the tenure of the project as well if there was willingness and capacity to sustain financing and support of the beneficiary institutions at the end of the project.*

The overall sustainability of the results is deemed as moderately **satisfactory**. To date YEEP has trained approximately 4,364 persons in a variety of skills. These are skills that the beneficiaries have received as part of the project, and over time, many of these persons will utilise these skills acquired to sustain them financially and allow their families to live in dignity. While at this stage, particularly as a result of the devastating economic impacts from COVID, how many of these persons will actually be able to utilise these skills is still unknown. The impact from these trainings are more than likely to be seen over the mid and longer term. In order to ensure that these beneficiaries reap the rewards of the trainings, the second half of the project is pivotal to make essential links with a variety of organisations and companies in order to provide opportunities to those who have graduated. While the distribution of start-up kits has been foreseen, it is important to link up the persons sharing start up kits to ensure the greatest benefit therefrom. Furthermore, guidance through CAPS, possibilities of loans and other key information to the persons who have graduated is essential to ensure sustainability of the results.

On the policy side and infrastructure, the project has enabled the finalisation of the VTCs and has provided the essential equipment for their operationalisation. These buildings can be used for generations to come and will require minimal upkeep. Furthermore, the development of an established and approved curriculum is a positive step and the ministries concerned can continue to use these curriculums by ensuring harmonious competency standards for all trainings in the future.

**The overall approach in training and the effective development of the curriculum has promoted a long-term strategy to ensure the continuation of trainings.**

The project ensured the development of a curriculum for a wide range of vocational skills. YEEP was able to review and update the national training modules in 12 trades which meant that the curriculum was standardized. A number of

teachers in vocational training also received refresher training on the delivery of competency-based training modules. The different ministries were consulted, and the curriculum has been endorsed by all of the ministries involved. As aforementioned, the former curriculum had to be updated and therefore the project presented a great opportunity in devising specific vocational courses for a wide range of skills and have paved the way for a generation of courses in the future, as well as ensuring sufficient persons are trained to impart them.

Given the importance and high relevance of the project, and the hard work that has already been made to develop the curriculum etc, there is still a need to improve the overall governance on skills development and vocational training for the long term to ensure that competency standards are ensured and are available to enable recognition of prior learning, modular and ladder training and have a strategy for long term learning in the country.

**Key Infrastructure has been rehabilitated and equipped and will allow trainings to continue into the future.**

The Vocational Training Centres (VTCs) in the five States (At the time of writing - Rumbek is still to be finalised) have been rehabilitated and equipped with tools and training equipment to facilitate the conduct of vocational skills training in key areas such as carpentry, masonry, and electrical engineering.

**Ownership of the results is largely strong, but the reconstitution of the states has meant that some of the persons previously involved in the development of the project are no longer working in these ministries and new relationships need to be honed.**

Given the youth bulge present in South Sudan, the ministries involved in the project were acutely aware and understood the importance of empowering youth and offering them an alternative to be able to contribute to their livelihoods by utilising their acquired skills.



The project has benefitted from a close relationship between the Ministry of Labor and UNDP. As a result of this relationship the ownership of the results is reasonably high. As aforementioned under relevance, the reconstitution of the states and state governments meant that all of the state ministers, deputy governors, and governors who were previously engaged with the project, were replaced. This has meant a different dynamic at the level of the different ministries and therefore while a wide range of stakeholders were consulted and are fully aware of the project and its results, the overall ownership of the results varies according to the state. In some of the states, many of the new state officials are only now familiarizing themselves with the project and therefore it is essential to strengthen the relationship between the project and these ministries in order to ensure the sustainability of the results.

**The beneficiaries are appreciative of the courses they have attended but expectations need to be managed especially in the context of COVID pandemic.**

The overall objective of the project is to empower youth in the five targeted locations through the nurturing of their entrepreneurial culture and market linked skills to enhance their employability and productive engagement in economic activities. As was illustrated under effectiveness, the project has succeeded in providing trainings to nearly 5,000 persons, **exceeding their overall expectations** especially considering that the project did not start in the timeframe anticipated and the overall impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on implementation.

The target beneficiaries are very appreciative of the courses they have attended, however as a result in the delays in implementation, particularly the second phase of the project and the negative impact of COVID on small businesses and the local economy, there is an increasing frustration amongst the youth, that despite the time invested in the courses, only a small minority up until now have seen the real fruits of that investment. It is important to note, that the project is currently at its midterm point

and has experienced a number of delays in its implementation, and therefore strategies are currently being put in place to provide the beneficiaries with concrete steps in accessing jobs in their chosen field. The late delivery of startup kits as well as the inaccessibility of participants to obtain an individual start up kit, have meant that some of the persons consulted did not feel in the position to start their own businesses and would require further support in this regard. While the short courses are deemed the most appropriate according to the conditions and operational concerns on the ground, some of the persons consulted considered that the length of the courses is insufficient to acquire the technical as well as practical skills needed to work in the chosen vocation. Competency tests were largely undertaken at the end of each course, but perhaps the biggest gap was the overall confidence and practical experience that they are able to master their chosen trade and more importantly make a living out of their acquired skills.

To this end, the linking of graduates to jobs, potential opportunities as well as undergoing CAPS is essential to improve their chances. A mapping of the opportunities currently available as well as looking at the States and/or courses which have had the most success would be key to unlocking potential strategies in the future.

While individual start up kits are not available, assurances that the persons sharing of startup kits are the most relevant, i.e. living in the same districts etc., and support to individual groups to ensure startups such as access to a small grant or an internship would be a potential to enable individuals and small groups to make a livelihood.

It is worth mentioning that the acute shortage of credit and the circumstances prevailing in the country, credit is rarely provided to youth in general. This means that very few persons will have the funds to start their own business; stronger linkages with financial companies offering loans and a drive to increase the number of loans would be essential as not all persons will be able to find internships.

While prior to the end of the project it would be difficult to ensure that all graduates have jobs, a strategy for the mid to long term to build on the skills already acquired and mapping the key strategies needed to link persons with jobs is essential. A future project should not only concentrate on training but assuring that persons trained have access to jobs. The potential for conflict if a large number of persons are trained and no potential for jobs is alarming, therefore it is essential to devise a midterm strategy to decipher how to put those trained in jobs or some type of employment. A comprehensive strategy needs to be put in place to ensure even more linkages with key organizations, CSOs, and business to encourage them to take on newly capacitated trainees.

#### 4.5 Gender and Human Rights

The overall approach to gender and human rights is deemed to be **moderately satisfactory**, while the project made great efforts to target women, the overall design of the project was not aimed at ensuring transformative change for women, but its results were rather gender targeted.

South Sudan is signatory to the majority of the key human rights treaties, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)<sup>21</sup> (however they have not signed the optional protocol). As of December 2021, 32.4% per cent of seats in parliament are held by women which means that the number of female parliamentarians are higher than the global average of 25.9%,<sup>22</sup> and places them well above countries such as Australia and United States; it also places them in eleventh position in the whole of Africa. Nonetheless, women in South Sudan still face numerous challenges. According to UN Women, 51.5% of women aged 20-24 years old were married or in a union before age 18. The adolescent birth rate is 158.1 per 1,000 women and 26.7% of women aged 15-49 reported that they had been subject to physical

and/or sexual violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months. Reproductive rights are also low, with only 4% of women having their need for family planning met with modern methods. Other key areas such as unpaid care and domestic work, key labor market indicators and gender pay gap are not available, so it is difficult to even monitor the implementation of SDGs from a gender perspective. While many of these figures are missing, gender inequality in education and gender disparities as well as the prevalence of GBV are significant. All these gaps and inequalities inevitably lead women's ability to find jobs and a livelihood for their families virtually impossible. This is further exacerbated by cultural norms, early marriage, bride price and patriarchal norms dominating society.

COVID-19 has seen an increase in poverty which is further fueled by unemployment, particularly youth and of course amongst women. A number of reports have alluded that "women are highly marginalized from the labor market in general and women's participation in the labor force was 33% in 2014, compared to 76% of men and overall women were more than twice as likely to be unemployed as compared to men. Both women and youth living in rural areas were more than four times likely to be employed when compared to those living in urban areas."<sup>23</sup> To this end, economic empowerment of women and access to employment is of course very pertinent, especially in the backdrop of COVID pandemic, whereby women have been disproportionately affected by job losses and further difficulty in accessing their economic rights.

UNDP has an overall commitment to eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions under its strategic plan 2018-2021 and women's empowerment and gender equality is part of six signature solutions.

The UNDP has a long history of promoting gender in their projects and is of course the harbinger behind the support to different

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<sup>21</sup> 30 Apr 2015 (a)

<sup>22</sup> <https://data.ipu.org/women-ranking?month=11&year=2021>

<sup>23</sup> <https://blogs.worldbank.org/africacan/sudans-women-and-youth-are-severely-economically-deprived-study-sudanese-market-trends>

countries on implementing and monitoring the SDGs. In this instance, No Poverty, (SDG 1), Gender Equality (SDG 5) and Decent Work and Economic Growth (SDG 8) are particularly pertinent. At the same time, UNDP invests in its own organizational transformation by promoting leadership for gender equality, endeavors to promote the Gender Equality Seal to incentivize its units to integrate gender equality and ensuring that its programmes progressively address gender equality issues. UNDP is of course committed to creating inclusive, diverse and safe working environments: With the Gender Parity Strategy 2018-2021; UNDP aims to reach gender parity across all levels of the organization; UNDP does not tolerate sexual exploitation and abuse or harassment and abuse of authority.

UNDP also looks towards its commitment to make gender equality, a basic human right and a necessity for a sustainable world, a reality. It confirms that women's empowerment and gender equality are vital to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable development. In particular, the strategy delineates UNDP's commitment to the following:

- Strengthen UNDP interventions tackling structural changes that accelerate gender equality and women's empowerment;
- Strengthen the integration of gender equality into UNDP's work on the environment, energy and crisis response and recovery;
- Better align UNDP programming with the centrality of gender equality and women's empowerment to the achievement of sustainable development; and
- Build upon institutional mechanisms for gender mainstreaming such as the Gender Equality Seal and the Gender Marker, which provide measurable standards and incentives to drive development progress.

<sup>24</sup> A gender-sensitive indicator is simply an indicator that measures gender-related changes in society over time. By identifying the changes in the status and roles of women and men that we want to achieve and knowing how we will measure them, we can analyse our programme outcomes to see whether we are contributing to gender equality.

UNDP aims to ensure programmes are gender specific and has adopted the practice of grading its programmes according to the specific gender marker.

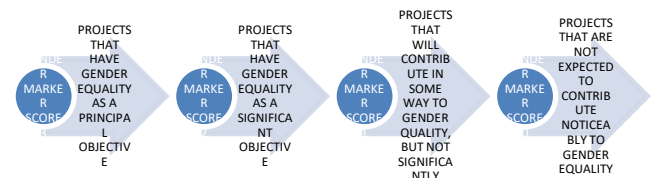


Figure 12: Overview of UN Gender Marker

YEPP was assigned a gender marker of two. In essence to merit a gender marker of two, at least one specific objective should have examined gender. While Output two did mention young men and women, there was no reference to gender specifically or women specifically. The theory of change did not provide any mention whatsoever of gender and there was no specific reference to a gender analysis being undertaken prior to the project. None of the indicators utilised a gender specific indicator,<sup>24</sup> however where possible especially in overall figures, numbers of recipients reached were disaggregated.

In order to determine whether a particular result contributes to gender equality and women's empowerment, a series of tools have been developed in order to determine the type and quality of the gender results.

The two tools developed are mentioned below under Figure 13. The first tool is the Gender Results Effectiveness Scale (GRES) whereby

Using gender-sensitive indicators can also help us to understand how changes in gender relations happen, which enables more effective planning and delivery of future work.

individual results can be examined. The GRES is used to categorize results by the type of gendered change advanced, and its effectiveness in transforming gender relations. The scale has five different points demonstrated in Figure 14 below. This scale is utilized to determine the overall focus of each result and has also been used to measure the type of change expressed in relation to Gender Equality (GE) and Human Rights (HR) results captured in the body of the projects.

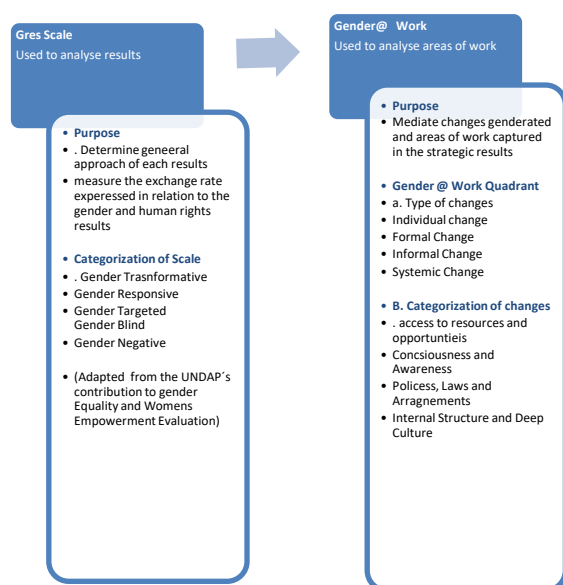


Figure 13: Overview of the two tools

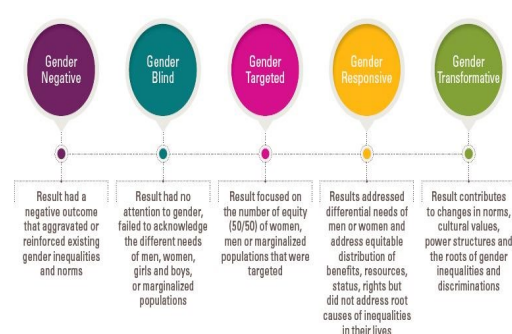


Figure 14: Gender Results Effectiveness Scale (GRES), adapted from the UNDP's contribution to GEWE evaluation

The GRES scale demonstrates the extent of the effectiveness of each of the results. However, this does not indicate the type of results recorded and whether there is an emphasis to report on a certain type of result, which could be correlated to a certain theme such as youth employment or indeed with the SDGs.

When examining gender and to what extent outputs have contributed to a change in mindsets, the Gender at Work Framework can be utilized in order to examine what are the key drivers of change. The framework looks at the interlinkages between individual/systemic changes and informal/formal changes. The framework is said to “highlight the interrelationship between equality, organizational change and institutions or “rules of the game” held in place by power dynamics within communities.<sup>25</sup> It helps to “identify and connect internal process to understand and strategize for change across organizational dynamics and broader systems.”<sup>26</sup>

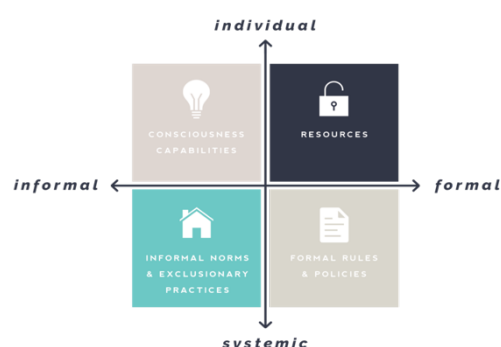


Figure 15: Gender at Work Framework

Under YEEP while we can see that a number of women were individually selected to undergo training, particularly under the community-based training courses, many of the systemic barriers towards gender and women's employment were not altogether addressed in the design of the project. As can be seen below, very few women were targeted in the male oriented jobs and as a result of the problems

<sup>25</sup> Gender at Work, <https://genderatwork.org/analytical-framework/>.

<sup>26</sup> Aruna Rao and others, *Gender at Work: Theory and Practice for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Organizations* (Oxon and New York, Routledge, 2016).

many women face in getting to/accessing the trainings, women were more targeted under the community-based trainings. While this is of course a positive move, it still does not address the other quadrants in the framework. To this end, the project adapted to the circumstances, but was unable to change mindsets with regards to possible rules and policies within organizations and/or the informal norms which leads to exclusionary practices especially with regards to women.

In total, out of 4634 persons who were trained in both vocational and community courses, 1,634 of them were women. This accounts for approximately 35% of the total recipients of the training. As of 31<sup>st</sup> October, 83% of those women had graduated.

Vocational training courses took place in four States, and as can be seen from figure 15 below; in total women accounted for 30% of the overall trainees. Bor had 23 women trained, amounting to 13% of the overall trainees. Torit had the highest number of women with 171 women being trained accounting for 27%. Yambio also had a relatively high number, with a total of 153 women being trained accounting for 25% of the trainees in Yambio. Juba was by far the worst, with only a total of 42 women amounting to only 8 per cent. The relatively low figures are explained by the fact that women were not always able to assess the courses due to their role fulfilling other duties in their family or domestic work. Very few women could afford to take three months training and furthermore it was sometimes difficult for women to come to the State capital to assess the course. It is unclear why there were so few women in Juba compared to the more rural states of Yambio and Bor.

Yambio assured a mix of vocations for women, there were only a few vocations where women were not trained. These included motorcycle repair, food dryers and beehives, school furniture, plumbing and solar system installation. The most popular amongst the women surpassing the number of men taking these courses were tiling and painting.

In Juba, a number of women tried many of the courses, although no woman undertook the course of cooling system, auto electrical, basic automotive, welding and metal fabrication, carpentry and joinery, basis automotive and plumbing and pipe fitting. The most popular course undertaken amongst the women was ICT (11 women as compared to 51 males).

In Bor, women did not attend the majority of the professions. The most popular course was tailoring whereby 18 women as compared to one man undertook the course; and basic computer application 4 women compared to 8 males; and one woman also trained under basic automotive mechanics diesel and petrol engines.

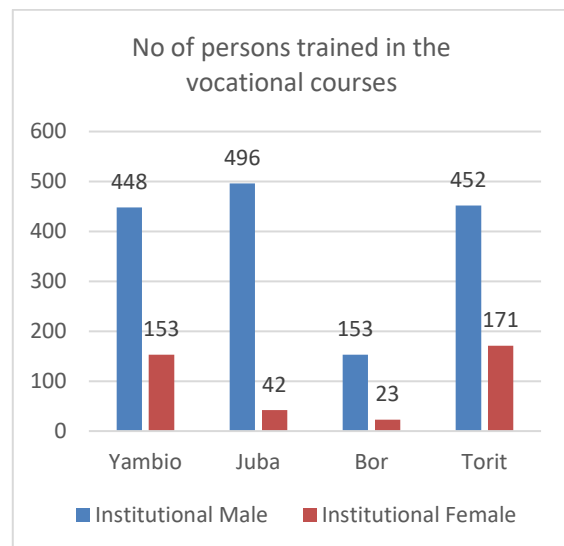


Figure 16: Number of males/females trained in the vocational courses.

The community-based trainings tell a different story, and in total 1,194 women were trained out of a total of 2421 accounting for over 49% of the trainees. In three states, Yambio, Torit and Bor, the number of women surpassed the number of males.



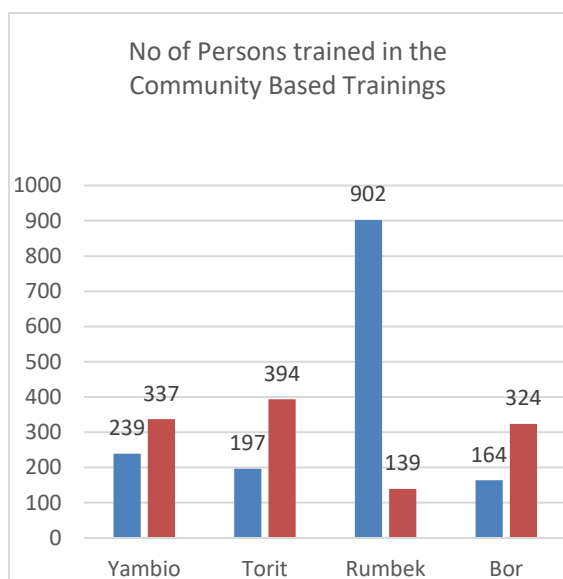


Figure 17: Number of persons trained in CBTs

Torit had the highest number of females being trained, with 394 women being trained against 197, therefore accounting for 67% of the recipients. In Torit all seven courses offered had more women than men, the most popular course with 98 women was “Introduction to Baked Goods”, “Confectionary and Pastry” followed by “Introduction to Apiculture, Honey Processing, Packaging and Branding” with 96 women attending the courses.

In Bor, a total of 324 women against 164 men were trained, accounting once again for 66% of the recipients. Bor had similar courses and all courses had more female participants than males. The most popular both amongst women and men, was the course on the “Introduction for commercial food preservation and processing.”

In Yambio, 337 women against 239 males were trained, women accounted for 59%. The most popular course was “introduction to baked goods.” Women also superseded men except in the apiculture, honey processing, packaging and branding courses, whereby there were 94 males compared to 37 females. In Rumbek, the first batch did not train any women at all and in the second batch a total of 139 women as compared to 490 males were trained.

## 5. Conclusions

**Key conclusion One:** The overall **relevance of the project is deemed satisfactory**; the project **correctly identified the needs of the direct and indirect beneficiaries** although as a result of the pandemic key activities have been delayed and **only now are the direct beneficiaries reaping some of benefits of the training** by being placed in jobs/internships etc. All institutions were widely consulted prior to the intervention. To carry the gains of the project forward, a strategic and inclusive roadmap needs to be set out. The current economic situation, the impact of the pandemic and the delays to the project may well result in the need to strengthen the resolve of the different institutions to ensure that the benefits achieved to date can be reaped by the beneficiaries in the future.

**Key Conclusion Two:** The **logical framework is considered adequate** although **some of the indicators are not necessarily relevant and/or appropriate in order to measure the established outcomes of the project**. Many of the quantitative Indicators **were disaggregated by gender**, however there was **no specific gender sensitive outcome or output formulated**. Furthermore, the activities all contained quantitative indicators as did the outcome indicators, a mix of both qualitative and quantitative indicators are recommended for these types of projects. The indicators under Outcome Two **are not adequately tracked** and perhaps in the onslaught of the COVID pandemic are not the most relevant to denote the results from the activities under outcome two. As the majority of the indicators are quantitative in nature and only refer to quantities or percentages it may be difficult to decipher the real impact on the beneficiaries through quantitative indicators alone.

**Key Conclusion Three:** The overall **effectiveness of the project is rated as satisfactory**. It is important to note that the **project is essential and has been pivotal in building vocational skills** amongst the youth. While **many of the indicators are being met and sometimes surpassed**, and the majority (except one) are on track to be achieved, the delays in implementation and the many challenges faced



with regards to the start up the project, the procurement and the necessity to write the curriculum almost from scratch has meant that **progress has been slow** to assure that the established outputs will contribute to the established outcomes by the end of the project. The frustration amongst the key beneficiaries of the project is rising as the training has not yet translated into new economic activities. Furthermore, given the current context of the COVID pandemic, the delays in implementation and the losses to the economy, frustration amongst the recipients needs to be acknowledged and where possible, addressed.

**Key Conclusion Four:** To date, the project has trained 4,634 persons, which has **surpassed expectations**. A high number of persons **have also graduated, and the dropout rate has been relatively low** particularly amidst the background of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many of the currently established indicators under Outcome One will more than likely be achieved, however output 1.1 indicator under outcome one (Proportion of youth graduates that are productively engaged in part-time, full time or self-employment disaggregated by gender) does not yet look to be on track. At present, only a fraction of persons (approximately 7%) who have been trained are now in part time or full-time work and thus a strategy to ensure job creation as well as linking trainees to jobs needs to be strengthened and mapped out in order to establish an appropriate and feasible timeline to increase the number of trained persons engagement in livelihood activities. **It is therefore essential that the remainder of the project concentrates on Outcome Two as the overall effectiveness of the project and achieving outcome one is equally reliant on the activities and outputs under Outcome Two.**

**Key Conclusion Five:** Given the context of South Sudan, vocational training under the project has largely consisted in trainings of approximately two to four months. Upon consultation with the beneficiaries, the courses provide basic notions of the vocational area they are being trained in, but the majority of the persons consulted with (80%) stated that they would consider it beneficial to either have longer length courses or the assured linkages of further training in the

guise of an internship/ on the job placement. While this is not possible for all, the support from the hubs is essential, to build the confidence of the trainees as well as linking them with different organizations and networks in order to not only practice their new-found skill but to network and publicize their work and provide them with the possibility to network for new opportunities. **Given that there is little over a year for the finalization of the project and given the latest omicron variation of the COVID-19 virus, the project needs to be linked to a longer-term goal in order to ensure that the gains already made endure past the finalization of the project.**

**Key Conclusion Six:** The **efficiency of the project is rated as satisfactory**. The project has experienced a number of important delays, but many of the activities have been able to take place, and the project is on track to achieve many of its quantitative output indicators. The experienced delays included challenges with recruitment and persons leaving as a result of COVID-19. As of writing, a new project manager had come on board and a monitoring and evaluation has recently been recruited. The recruitment of state coordinators has been vital, and they have played a double hatted role in coordinating the work of UNDP and as liaison persons between projects. This has also contributed to the overall efficiency of the project, despite the challenges. Other key delays were to do with persistent delays in the delivery of the essential materials as a result of UNDP procedures needed to provide due diligence of the quality of the process as well as delays to the services provided by UNIDO. Notwithstanding, the project has now resolved these issues and procurement is now done locally at the state level, which allows the process to be far more efficient.

**Key Conclusion Seven:** The quality of the reports contained adequate reference to outputs at activity level, although not all activities as described in the project document and evaluation matrix were included. The reports included photographs and human-interest stories and provided the reader with a good overview of the activities and effectiveness of the activities to date. The

reports firmly highlighted the challenges and recognized the lessons learned and ensured an executive summary of the activities per year. Nevertheless, the inclusion of the outcome indicators and the progress towards them would have further strengthened the reports and permitted a greater understanding as to the progress and current trajectory towards contributing to the overall outcome of the project. Reporting on gender results could also go beyond the number of women trained and describe in more detail how their lives were impacted upon.

**Key Conclusion Eight:** An adequate evaluation matrix and tracking report was established, and output indicators were diligently tracked throughout the project. Nonetheless, given the sheer numbers of participants and the importance of breaking down and analyzing the numbers in order to ascertain the overall impact of the project, a more robust system to examine the overall achievement of the outcomes is needed. Furthermore, while data was disaggregated by gender, the overall impact of the project on women has yet to be fully analyzed, therefore it is difficult to ascertain if there are any particular weaknesses or challenges that women are facing in engaging in employment. It is unfortunate that so few women were targeted in Juba for the Vocational courses (no community-based courses were available) and the courses undertaken were in non-traditional sectors where women would not normally be employed.

**Key Conclusion Nine:** The sustainability of the project is deemed **moderately satisfactory**. The development of curriculum and the rehabilitation of the VTC are pivotal to ensuring long term sustainability. There may be a need to ensure the Development of a long-term

strategy to ensure harmonious competency standards for all training courses in the future. From the perspective of the beneficiaries (i.e. participants of the courses) while it is acknowledged that an important number of persons have been trained, the linkages to ensuring the creation and engagement with employment opportunities still needs to be strengthened in order to achieve some of the high targets the project has set itself. The Engagement of the key stakeholders is strong, however as aforementioned, the trainings in the future (once there is a clear correlation between training and creating employment opportunities) will be reliant on mapping out the available opportunities for internships/employments. It will essential to match the persons trained with the appropriate businesses and companies to ensure that the recipients of the trainings are enabled to earn a livelihood out of their acquired skills.

**Key Conclusion Ten:** Gender and human rights are deemed to be **moderately satisfactory**. The project did make important efforts to ensure that women were able to assess courses. This resulted in 49% (2421 women) of the community-based trainings being undertaken by women. The number of women targeted under the vocational trainings was rather less, and stood at 1,634 women which accounted for 35% of the total recipients of the vocational courses. However, given the context and the challenges that women face in South Sudan this is commendable. Nonetheless, the overall design of the project did not include a specific output or outcome geared towards women, which made the overall results of the project rather gender targeted than gender transformative.

## 6. Recommendations

Recommendation	Linked to Conclusion/criterion	Recommendation addressed to	Comments on Recommendations	Priority Status
<b>2. Revise the Logical Framework to incorporate a mixture of qualitative and quantitative indicators in order to better reflect the key outcomes of the project and ensure the use of gender specific indicators to track progress on women ensuring a gender analysis to identify lessons learned and best practices to date</b>	Key Conclusion One – Relevance (Design of Framework)	UNDP in line with the key institutions and engagement of other key institutions	At present while there are numerous activities taking place, some of the indicators do not adequately reflect the overall outcomes envisaged and therefore it is important to revisit the indicators to ensure a mix of qualitative and quantitative indicators which not only reflect the number of persons impacted upon but qualitative information which denotes the change which is sought by the project.	High
<b>2. Ensure stronger collaboration between the key institutions at both juba and field level</b>	Key Conclusion One – Relevance	UNDP and Ministry of Labour	While it is acknowledged that the Ministry of Labor at Juba level is very satisfied with the project, the MTR did sense weaker ownership of the project by some of the ministries at the local level, to this end it would be important to further strengthen the project in developing key joint strategies and recognition of challenges and bottlenecks in implementation, particularly in the individual states. This is particularly pertinent at the local level whereby there are sometimes frequent changes in the DG, and the momentum of the project and its overall goals needs to be further owned by the institutions which preside over the VTCs.	High
<b>3. Development of a long-term strategy to ensure harmonious competency standards for all training courses in the future.</b>	Key Conclusion Nine - Sustainability	UNDP and key implementing partners	Given the importance and high relevance of the project, and the hard work that has already been made to develop the curriculum etc, there is a need to improve the overall governance on skills development and vocational training for the long term to ensure that competency standards are ensured and are available to enable recognition of prior learning, modular and ladder training and have a strategy for long term learning in the country. (please also see under recommendation 8 below)	High/Medium
<b>4. Promote further linkages between a number of key companies or with key professions to promote further learning</b>	Key Conclusion Three - Effectiveness	UNDP, and key companies in the country	While the project will reach many of its targets, the overall outcome may be somewhat impossible for all types of vocational training especially in the time frame left. A selection of	High

in key fields as well as Create linkages and networking with a number of banks and credit loan companies			professions should be chosen whereby participants can be adequately placed and are enabled to continue their learning through on the job learning in order to enhance their overall ability to access these markets in the future and to manage the frustrations that are already building. It is equally vital that accessibility to credit becomes more widespread and structured. To this end, UNDP should seek partnerships with specific groups in order to promote the distribution of loans and access to credits	
<b>5. Pilot a number of schemes whereby small grants are offered and further training given to promote MSEs</b>	Key conclusion Three- Effectiveness and Key Conclusion Four and Five	UNDP, i-Hubs and expertise on small enterprises	Small ventures for food production, agriculture, tailoring could be promoted at the community level in order to provide subsistence to family and to build on their skills which are easily transferrable for small business which rely on small networks. It is important to actually support these ventures with start-up kits beyond materials, but with advice and support to get these off the ground. (look towards a recent project in Bosnia under Women in elections which promoted women's small business for food production, soap production etc.)	High
<b>6. Continuation of competition whereby youth are encouraged to innovate and come together (as the previous innovation challenge). Creation of a yearly event whereby business with trained recipients could be promoted</b>	Key conclusion three four and five	UNDP and local partners	Promotion of an event promoting employment opportunities and development for youth, whereby youths present themselves and an award is given for different categories, ensuring gender sensitivity and equal opportunities for women. (on the same basis of the innovation challenges) Different organisations can be invited to present as well as youth coming up with green products etc	
<b>7. Concentrate on outcome two in the remainder of the project tenure by promoting linkages, and other opportunities for persons already trained, as well as ensuring strengthened linkages with the AFDB project.</b>	Key conclusion Four - Effectiveness	UNDP, AFDB and other UNDP projects	It is vital that the persons already trained are further linked up with local business and gain more qualifications and experience in their chosen field. Outreach to companies which have largely employed foreigners should also be tapped into, in order to promote national ownership.	High
<b>8. Further strengthen the impact of the project by holding a series of workshops with key institutions, companies and other organisations which could feed into the results. A possible output could be a roadmap over the next five years</b>	Key Conclusions four and five - effectiveness	UNDP and key company ies	It is vital at the half way point to promote further and stronger ownership by key companies, credit companies etc Possible collaboration beyond the life time of this particular project should be envisaged, and possible strategies and ways forward should be discussed with a plethora of stakeholders to ensure an effective strategy plus buy in from key stakeholders.	High

<b>9. Consideration of a no cost extension if the next quarters does not bear the fruits envisaged</b>	Key conclusion four – and five effectiveness	UNDP and Donors	To date while progress is there, the persons already trained still need to be linked with other opportunities, the fact that only a year is left and COVID has had such a devastating impact on the project, and given the new COVID variant and its possible ramifications on the project consideration of a no cost extension needs to be a possibility.	High
<b>10. Consideration of a follow up project by ensuring baseline data and analysis of bottlenecks and challenges to feed into a future project</b>	Key conclusions four - effectiveness		While many of the targets will be achieved, the design and the numerous bottlenecks faced by the project as well as the need for an informed and current analysis of the successes and lessons learned so far means that there is an increasing frustration amongst the beneficiaries. The short length of the courses also mean that it is very difficult that they are able to exercise their vocation, thus it is imperative that there are follow up activities to increase and strengthen their capacity in the vocation they have studied	High
<b>11. Strengthening of support to persons, particularly women in Juba, particularly in jobs which are currently overwhelmed by foreigners</b>		UNDP and UN women and local analysis	Out of the five states, Juba potentially has the most amount of jobs to offer, but to date has offered the least amount of trainings. These trainings have been more focused on male oriented professions and as a result very few women were able to take part. Given the enormous potential in Juba, a hybrid of vocational courses/community courses could be encouraged in order to address womens challenges in accessing the training courses.	High
<b>12. Undertake an analysis of the progress so far, identifying which particular states and which particular courses have promoted the overall outcomes the most</b>	Key conclusion nine - Sustainability	UNDP and key NGOs based in the states	It is important to note that at the mid way stage many of the indicators seem to be on track. This is positive; however it is important to understand where lessons need to be learned, and best practices highlighted. It would be important to understand which states have the highest success stories and if there is anything the project can learn from these particular states and/or specific courses. This would be particularly pertinent for the job placements, and where the correlation between job placements and persons trained has been the most successful.	Medium High
<b>13. Ensure an effective and gender sensitive monitoring and evaluation framework, including with the use of most significant change stories and the possibility of using outcome mapping to map</b>	Key conclusion eight – efficiency/ Monitoring	UNDP and UN Women and M & E with key stakeholders	The possible reworking of key indicators would also benefit from a gender and human rights sensitive monitoring and evaluation framework, which does not only collect numbers of persons trained, but using info graphs and datasheets is able to track progress in certain	Medium/High

outcomes particular in complex results such as creation of jobs.			<p>areas, particularly the areas where youth could benefit from most. This would depend on the different areas as well as different amongst men and women. Utilising the data collected to date, information should be analysed in order to inform a follow-on project</p> <p>The project is applauded for its inclusion of human-interest stories, but a more robust mechanism for monitoring and evaluation whereby a collection of Most Significant Change (MSC) stories are collected would better capture the ways that people have been empowered and are subject to more empowerment opportunities than prior to the project.</p>	
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## 7. ANNEXES

### Annex I – Number of persons trained vis a vis person who have gone on to obtain jobs

S/N	Business Trades	Total of Job Placements	Total number persons trained	Male	Female	% of persons who have gone on to obtain jobs
<b>Western Equatoria – Yambio</b>						
1	Mechanics	41	59	39	2	69%
2	Carpentry	45	30	45	0	67%
3	Welding	9	55	9	0	16%
4	Catering and Hospitality	17	237	5	12	7%
5	Salon and Beauty Therapy	19	0	0	19	N/A
6	Tailoring	11	61	4	7	18%
		142	442	102	40	32%
<b>Central Equatorial – Juba</b>						
1	Electrical	10	47	4	1	21%
2	Mechanic	8	13	15	1	62%
3	Brick Lay	6	28	19	0	21%
4	Logistic	7	N/A	7	37	N/A
5	Hotel Management	3	N/A	20	17	N/A
6	Finance	5	N/A	0	2	N/A
7	Pump attendant	2	N/A	8	2	N/A
8	Nursing	10	N/A	1	0	N/A
		131	76	74	57	58%
<b>Eastern Equatorial – Torit</b>						
1	Mechanic	10	50	8	2	20%
2	Carpentry	8	27	8	0	30%
3	Welding	6	20	3	0	30%
4	Catering and Hospitality	7	128	5	2	5%
5	Salon and Beauty Therapy	3	20	0	3	15%
6	Tailoring	5	60	2	5	8%
7	Bookshop	2	N/A	1	1	N/A
8	Building Construction	10	N/A	33	18	N/A
<b>Subtotal</b>		51	305	33	18	16%
<b>Grand Total</b>		324	823	207	117	39%

RELEVANCE	1. To what extent did the project design and objective respond to the needs of the direct and indirect beneficiaries?			
Rationale	Extent to which the action design ensured the ownership of objectives by the key beneficiaries through the TOC and intervention logic	Level of involvement of the implementing partners officials in action design Consistency of action design with institutions policies Integration into the action's intervention logic of needs as expressed by beneficiaries and in line with previous support	Baseline data report Project documents policy documents	Review of project documentation Review of key beneficiaries' policy documents and strategic priorities KII with beneficiaries
	Relevance of the action to UN policy and strategic priorities as well as the SDGs	Consistency of the action intervention logic with UNDAF, UN policy, UNDP strategic objectives including Gender Policy and in line with human rights and SDG 1,2,8 9 and 16	UNCF UNDP strategic documents CPD National Development Strategy (NDS)	Review of documentation Interviews with UN country office and project document
	Extent to which the action design considered lessons learnt from similar support	action design was explicitly informed by successes and failures of similar programmes in support to youth employment	Project documents Amendments to the project	Review of documentation Interviews with UN country office and project and implementing partners
Design	Was the project design effective to address the issues identified to be address by the Project	TOC/Intervention Logic addressed key issues	Results Framework Project Document	Desk Review
	Is the project life span sufficient to achieve its goals?	Number of activities not done due to time limitations Quality of implementation affected by time constraints	Reports Primary Data	Desk Review Questionnaires
	Are the activities relevant to enable the project achieve the intended objectives or results?	Number of adjustments to project activities due to relevance	Reports	Desk Review

	Robustness of the action's intervention logic	Causal links foreseen between inputs, activities, expected results and objectives proved realistic through delivery. The scope and complementarity of the action's component were commensurate with expected outcomes.	Intervention logic Revisions /amendments of Project Document	Review of project documentation KII with Project Staff and key beneficiaries
	Consideration given to Human Rights and Gender Equality issues through all components of the action and its contribution to the civic and human rights of target groups?	The Intervention Logic promotes a right-based observation Gender Equality is mainstreamed in the Intervention Logic Indicators are gender disaggregated where relevant.	Project documents Identification/formulation report Monitoring and evaluation framework	Review of project documentation KII Project Team
Assumptions	Validity of assumptions and risks as initially identified	Initial assumptions realised Adequacy between risk identification including planned mitigation measures and actual obstacles in delivery.	Intervention Logic (initial) Intervention Logic (revised) Project reporting Monitoring and evaluation reports	Review of project documentation KII baseline documentation, Project Team, UNDP CO, DP

CRITERIA	EVALUATION QUESTION	INDICATORS	SOURCE OF EVIDENCE	METHODOLOGY
COHERENCE	<b>2. To what extent was the intervention consistent and complementary with other interventions providing support</b>			
External Coherence	Coherence of the action design with prior and existing, related interventions by other entities and other development partners	Project design took account of existing interventions	Project formulation reports Project documents Documentation on other interventions	Review of project documentation and identification/formulation reports KII with UNDP, other UN agencies, DPs
	Coordination with other entities providing support to youth empowerment	Existence of coordination mechanisms/forums Effectiveness of coordination mechanisms/forums Frequency of coordination through delivery, where relevant	Project documents Project Reporting	Review of project documentation KII with UNDP, other UN agencies, DP, implementing partners, beneficiaries

CRITERIA	EVALUATION QUESTION	INDICATORS	SOURCE OF EVIDENCE	METHODOLOGY
EFFECTIVENESS	3. To what extent have project objectives and results been achieved? What were the key challenges and enabling factors?			
The Results	Extent to which the project achieved progress against the established indicators under outcomes one and two	See project indicators and to what extent they have been achieved to date – are they on track to be achieved		Comparative Robust desk review of UNDP project documentation Interviews of KIIS including other Un Agencies, Local Government, Universities, project staff, ,Implementing partners and civil society etc
	Extent to which the projects approach and actions contributed to projects outputs and outcomes?	See projects results framework – are they on track to be achieved.	Project document	
	Extent to which the project managed to contribute to gender equality, empowerment of women and realisation of human rights?	Indicators in the results framework Overall number of women impacted by the project Overall participation of women in the project	Analytical articles on the process Project Reporting Monitoring and evaluation data Statistical data	
	Extent to which project has elevated cooperation between relevant institutions?	Number of meetings between key institutions		
	The extent to which the programme outreached to marginalized groups (ie Persons with disabilities (PWD), returnees, Internally Displaced Persons (DP), minorities	Alignment of project according to a civic and human rights perspective Level of participation of participants in project planning, implementation and follow up Examples of positive or negative discrimination Transparency of the implementation Existence of accountability mechanisms	Narrative reports Statistical data	
	What were the key challenges and enabling factors?	(assessment derives from the above)		
	In which area was the action most successful in contributing to foster	(assessment derives from the above)		

CRITERIA	EVALUATION QUESTION	INDICATORS	SOURCE OF EVIDENCE	METHODOLOGY
EFFICIENCY	4. To what extent have resources (financial, Human and technical) been allocated strategically and were they managed effectively?			
Use of Resources	Extent to which the activities and outputs could have been delivered with fewer resources without reducing quality and quantity.	Sufficient number of staff allocated to the project on a full time basis Quality of the staff and the experience	Financial and narrative reports Original budget Other similar interventions approaches	Robust desk review of the project documentation including financial reports and Terms of Reference KIIs with the UNDP project staff and Netherlands, Japan KII with key beneficiaries
	Extent to which the rate of delivery and issuance of the budget were timely and sufficiently effective to achieve the planned results.	Expenditure of the overall budget each year is in line with scale and scope of expected results Number of Delays in activities due to be delayed spending of budget	Financial and narrative reports Annual Work Plans	Robust desk review of the project documentation including financial reports and narrative reports KIIs with project staff KIIs with UNDP, Netherlands and Japan and key beneficiaries
	Extent to which bottlenecks or challenges existed and hindered resources being used appropriately.	The budget and workplans were approved on a regular basis and in line with the workplans stablished work plans are delivered on time and implemented	Annual work Plans Narrative Reports	Robust desk review of the project documentation KIIs with Project staff, Netherlands and Japan and key beneficiaries
Organisational efficiency	Extent to which the management/governance mechanisms established were sufficient to oversee the programmatic and financial management of the intervention.	Governance/management mechanism established and adhered to Efficient oversight of project Budget within established parameters	Project Board Meetings Narrative Reports Financial Reports	Robust desk review of the project documentation KIIS with project staff, UNDP, Netherlands and Japan and Key beneficiaries
	Extent to which are workplans realistic and are they delivered in a timely manner.	Feasible workplans are developed and implemented Workplans are considered realistic and relevant Workplans are developed and approved on time	Financial and Narrative Reports Training Reports Annual Workplans	Desk review of the Project documentation KIIs with project staff, UNDP and key beneficiaries



	Extent to which the project design, management, human resource kills and resources were adequate?	Key weaknesses identified Key strengths identified	Financial and Narrative Reports Training Reports Knowledge products	Desk review of the Project documentation KIIs with project staff, UNDP and key beneficiaries
Monitoring Efficiency	Extent to which the log frame was utilised to guide implementation and as a monitoring tool.	Baselines, indicators and targets were established Results based management reporting was utilised	Narrative reports Log Frame	Desk review including Log frame, desk review of narrative reports KIIs with UNDP, Project Staff and DPs
	Extent to which the monitoring of the results was conducted in an effective and efficiency way?	Key results were described in the narrative reports The existence of a monitoring and evaluation framework	Narrative reports Log Frame	Robust desk review of the project documentation, log frame KIIs with UNDP staff and DPs
	Extent to which the action was able to adapt to evolving needs and context, particularly COVID-19.	Implementation of a risk management strategy Challenges were referred to in reports and Project Board meetings.	Narrative reports Project Board reports Log frame	Robust desk review of the project documentation, log frame KIIs with UNDP, DPs, and key beneficiaries
	The extent which the reporting on the implementation of donor assistance was adequate.	Adherence to the templates established at the beginning of the mission	Narrative reports Templates	Project documentation, log frame KIIs with project staff and DPs

CRITERIA	EVALUATION QUESTION	INDICATORS	SOURCE OF EVIDENCE	METHODOLOGY
SUSTAINABILITY	5. To what extent did the beneficiaries take ownership of the project? Will they be able to sustain the results of the intervention (programmatically, politically and financially)?			
	Extent to which the beneficiaries have endorsed the results of the intervention thus far.	Extent to which there is a development of systems and procedures at policy level Extent to which the beneficiaries and beneficiary institutions understand and promote youth empowerment	Project Documentation Narrative Reports Beneficiaries EOM reports on electoral process Questionnaires	KIS with key beneficiaries as well as external actors Desk review of relevant documentation Conducting of surveys of key beneficiary institutions
	The extent to which the capacities of relevant government institutions have been strengthened to sustain the results of the project	Extent of challenges to overcome or potentials to be unlocked in the future? Change in policies		
	What needs to be changed to ensure sustainability? What financial, economic, social, environmental, and institutional capacities of the systems are needed to sustain the benefits?			
	Extent to which sustainability can be achieved given the key considerations of COVID-19 related context.			

CRITERIA	EVALUATION QUESTION	INDICATORS	SOURCE OF EVIDENCE	METHODOLOGY
GENDER AND HUMAN RIGHTS	6. How well has the action addressed the issues of human rights concerns, gender inclusion, women's equality and empowerment across all aspects of the intervention's design, development, implementation and its management?			
	Extent to which the action has ensured that gender issues and participation of vulnerable/disadvantaged groups are mainstreamed?	Space allocated to gender and vulnerable/disadvantage groups participation in election in the activities Space allocated to gender and vulnerable/disadvantaged groups 'participation in elections in training/methodology documents	ProDoc Narrative Reports Training /workshop Reports	Desk review of EOM reports KIIs with persons trained, recipients of workshops etc
	Extent to which the rights-based approach has been followed in the identification/formulation documents?	Five principles of the RBA have been applied	ProDoc Narrative reports	Desk review to ascertain if reference has been made KIIs with UNDP
	Extent of the impact the intervention has on the permanent and real attitudinal and behavioural change conducive to HR and GE by the beneficiaries of the action?	The extent to which gender and other issues are covered in the activities and key outputs of the action	Narrative Reports	Desk review of documentation including relevant articles, UN agencies, UN Women KIIs with key beneficiary institutions, CSOs, Women's Groups, other relevant CSOs
	Extent to which the rights-based approach has been followed in the identification/formulation documents?	Five principles of the RBA have been applied	ProDoc Narrative reports	Desk review to ascertain if reference has been made KIIs with UNDP

### Annex III – Overall Results Framework

Indicator	Baseline	Target (2021)	Achieved/Comments
<b>Project Outcome One: Increased employability and engagement in productive economic and livelihood initiatives for young men and women in targeted areas</b>			
1.1. Proportion of youth graduates that are productively engaged in part-time, full time or self employment disaggregated by gender.	40%	80%	32.7%
1.2. Percentage of trained youth demonstrating increased competencies in training programme skills, disaggregated by gender and type of skill.	10%	70%	A total of 4, 284 persons have been trained as of 31 <sup>st</sup> October 2021 with a graduation rate at approximately 99%.

Indicator	Baseline	Target (end of project)	Targets reached in 2019	Targets reached in 2020
<b>Project Output 1.1.: Young men and women in Bor, Jubek, Rombek, Torit and Yambio are provided with vocational, technical and entrepreneurial skills.</b>				
1.1.1. Number of enrolled youth that complete the vocational, technical and entrepreneurship skills training, disaggregated by gender and location.	250	6,250	1,409 (553 women)	4,851 (3,388 women)
1.1.2 Proportion of young entrepreneurs utilizing innovation centres business incubators and development hubs for skills enhancement.	0	70%	0	60% of young entrepreneurs seconded to the Tony Elumel Foundation at beginning of year benefitted from global mentoring and networking. 79% of youth provided with entrepreneurship training as part of the training programme
1.1.3 Proportion of youth previously involved in conflict recruited for skills training disaggregated by gender	0	30%	1%	11%

Indicator	Baseline	Target (2021)	Reached targets in 2019	Reached targets in 2020
<b>Project Outcome Two: Increased productivity and incomes for young men and women in targeted areas</b>				
2.1. Proportion of supported youth registering positive returns from their investments disaggregated by gender.	0	60%	Awaiting information	
2.2. Proportion of supported youth paying back disbursed loans within prescribed timeframes disaggregated	0	95%	Awaiting information	

by gender				
2.3. Proportion of supported youth entrepreneurs that employ other youth in their business	0	40%	Awaiting information	

Indicator	Baseline	Target (end of Project)	Targets Reached 2018	Targets reached in 2020
Project Output 2.1 Young men and women in targeted areas benefit from jobs, livelihood and income generating initiatives created through strengthened private sector enterprises and local value chains				
2.1.1. Number of new jobs created through value chains and private sector enterprises supported by UNDP	0	2,700	On track	1,432 new jobs were created by skills training graduates who established private businesses within the agriculture and natural resource value chains. 107 new jobs were created by the expansion of these businesses.
2.1.2. Number of new MSEs created by supported youth	0	100	On track	60 new MSEs were formed in addition, 36 cooperative groups have been established and 25 VLAs formed.
2.1.3. Proportion of trained youth engaging in livelihood and income generating activities (individually or in groups)	0	60%	On track	35% of the trained youth graduated, received start up kits entrepreneurship training and running their own businesses.
2.1.4 Number of youths-oriented facilities benefitting from clean energy solutions	0	16	Needs further support	3 vocational training centers equipped with solar power

## Annex IV – List of persons interviewed

Location	Position	Organization	Number	Sex	Category
<b>Bor</b>					
	Minister	Ministry of labor	1	Male	KII
	Director General	Ministry of Labor	1	Male	KII
	Chairman and his team	Chamber of Commerce	7	Male	FGD
	Director General	Ministry of Youth and Sports	1	Male	KII
	Group Leader	Skin Group	1	Female	KII
	Group leader	Livelihood Group	1	Female	KII
	Group leader	Hair/saloon Group	1	Female	KII
	Group leader	Milk Group	1	Female	KII
	Group leader	Tea making Group	1	Female	
	Group leader	Fish selling Group	1	Female	KII
	Group leader	Vegetable growing group	1	Female	
	Group leader	Cafeteria/food making Group	1	Female	KII
	Group leader	Charcoal Group	1	Female	KII
	Food preparation and preservation	Lang bar Group	7	6 Female 1 Male	FGD
	Food preparation and preparation	Hai Mach far	4	Male	Group Meeting
	Director General	Minister of Trade	1	Male	KI
	Principle	Vocational Training Centre	1	Male	KII
<b>Juba</b>					
	Chairperson and team	South Connect	4	Male	Group Meeting
	Entrepreneurs	South Connect trainees	7	5 male/2 female	FGD
	Rev. John Dau	Director Ministry of Labor	1	Male	KII
	D/Country Representative-UNDP	Deputy representative for UNDP	1	Female	KII
<b>Yambio</b>					
	Head of field operations (HOFO) UNMISS	United Nation's Mission in South Sudan.	1	Male	KII
	State minister of Labor	Minister of Labor and Trade	2	Female	KII
	STO	STO	2	Male	KII
	Principle	Yambio VTC	1	Male	KII
	Selected granduants	Yambio VTC	1	Male	KII
	Group members	Tailor groups	1	Female	KII
	Broindery Group	members	4	Female	Group Meeting
	Representatives	STO organization	2	Female	KII
	Saloon Group	Two female Representatives	2	Female	KII
	State Minister for Peace	Minister	1	Male	KII
	Group	Poultry farming Group	11	Female	FGD
	Representative	Vegetable production	1	Female	KII
	Representative	Catering and food preservation	1	Female	KII



Name	Organisation	Position	Sex	Location
Mr Samuel Doe	UNDP	Resident Representative	Male	Remote
Ms Christy Ahenkora	UNDP	Deputy Resident Representative	Female	Remote
Judy Wakahiu	UNDP	Team Leader, PMSU	Female	Remote
Mr Daniel Kir	UNDP	Team Leader	Male	Remote
Mr Jose Manzano	UNDP	Senior Programme Advisor	Male	Remote
Ms Margaret Sadia	UNDP	Financial Management	Female	Remote
Ms Luna Nagatomo	UNDP	Project Coordinator	Female	Remote
Ms Margaret Sadia				
Mr Richard Aludra	Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands		Male	Remote
Mr Michiel Smeet	Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands		Male	Remote
Mark Anthony	South Connect Company		Male	In-person
Gugulethu Dhlamini	UNDP	Project Specialist	Male	Remote
Tawanda Napwanya	UNDP	Former Project M & E Officer	Male	Remote
Juma Charles	South Sudan Chamber of Commerce Industry and Agriculture	Director	Male	Remote
Pauline Carreon Murimi	UNDP	State coordinator	Female	Remote
Sayed Nadeem	UNDP	State Coordinator	Male	Remote
Walusungu Ngulube	UNDP	State Coordinator	Female	Remote
Andres Goodwin	UNIDO	Project Coordinator	Male	Remote
Betram Kuol	St Vincent Paul society		Male	Remote
Marina Verluise	Academy for Professional Development	Co founder and Board member	Female	Remote
Lucy Elundah	UNDP	Security specialist	Female	Remote
Godfrey Otobi	UNHCR		Male	Remote

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