**Governance & Economic Management Support (GEMS) Project**

**Project Number: 00120769**

**2020 Annual Report**

**(February 2021)**

****  
***Political Parties Forum Workshop at Yam Hotel, Juba on 27 February 2020***

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| **Project Summary** | **Country: Republic of South Sudan**  **Project Duration: August 2019 – December 2022**  **Project Budget: US$ 28,429,550**  **Annual Budget 2020: US$6,312,603**   |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Donor: Norway** | **Annual budget US$: 6,312,603** | | **Expenditure for 2020** | **US $2,465,060.18** |   **Contact Persons:**  **Samuel Doe, UNDP Resident Representative**  **Tel.: +211 920 694 101, Email:** [**samuel.doe@undp.org**](mailto:samuel.doe@undp.org)  **Allan Poston, GEMS Project Manager**  **Tel.: +211 92 069 4134, Email:** [**Allan.poston@undp.org**](mailto:Allan.poston@undp.org) |
| **Responsible Parties:**Ministry of Finance and Planning; Ministry of Public Service and Human Resource Development; and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. | |
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# **Acronyms**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| AWP | Annual Work Plan |
| ARCSS | Agreement on the Resolution of the conflict in the Republic of South Sudan |
| BOQ | Bill of Quantity |
| CPA | Comprehensive Peace Agreement |
| CA | Change Agent |
| CPD | Country Programme Document |
| CSOs | Civil Society Organisations |
| GEMS | Governance and Economic Management Support |
| IDP | Internally displaced person |
| JEM | Justice Equality Movement |
| MDA | Ministries, Departments and Agencies |
| MoFP | Ministry of Finance and Planning |
| MOFA&IC | Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation |
| MoPS&HRD | Ministry of Public Service and Human Resource Development |
| PPC | Political Parties Council |
| RFP | Request for Proposal |
| R-ARCSS | Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan |
| R-TGoNU | Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity |
| SSEs | Special Skills Experts |
| SSCA | South Sudanese Change Agent |
| SLM | Sudan Liberation Movement |
| SRF | Sudan Revolutionary Front |
| SRSG | Special Representative of the Secretary General |
| T2T | Train to train |
| ToR | Terms of Reference |
| UNCF | United Nations Corporation Framework |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNMISS | United Nations Mission in South Sudan |
| UNSCR | United Nations Security Council Resolution |

# **Executive Summary**

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)’s Governance and Economic Management Support (GEMS) project is a multi-year project funded by the Government of the Royal Kingdom of Norway to run from August 2019 to December 2022. The aim is to support the Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity (R-TGoNU) to implement the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS) and set the country on a pathway of sustainable peace and development. The project is aligned to the National Development Strategy NDS (July 2018 – June 2021), the New Deal Compact of engagement with fragile states, the South Sudan Vision 2040, the UN Civilian Capacities Initiatives (CivCap) 2014, the United Nations Cooperation Framework (UNCF) 2019 – 2021, and UNDP Strategic Plan (2018 – 2021) Signature Solution 1: Keeping people out of poverty and Signature Solution 2: Strengthening effective inclusive and accountable governance.

The GEMS project supports capacity strengthening of strategic national institutions established and/or reformed by the R-ARCSS, building on best practices and lessons learned from the previous UNDP Regional Initiative for Capacity Enhancement Project through IGAD. The GEMS project complements the work done on capacity building initiatives implemented at the subnational level within the Partnership for Recovery and Resilience Framework with support from other development partners.

The project aims to bolster key economic, governance and accountability functions of the institutions of R-TGoNU with priority focus on Chapter IV of the R-ARCSS, especially the public finance management reforms and effective public resource management. The project recruits and deploys Special Skills Experts (SSEs) to key Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) with the core objective of training, coaching, and mentoring the identified Change Agents (CAs) and staff employed in the public service institutions.

However, the slow pace of implementation of the R-ARCSS and the COVID-19 Pandemic have affected the implementation of the project, especially the recruitment of Special Skills Experts, delayed until the last quarter of 2020.

**Key Achievements:**

**Support to Ministry of Finance and Planning (MoFP) and Public Financial Management (PFM) Mechanisms**. National planning and aid coordination processes were reactivated at the MoFP as a result of the work of GEMS Project deployed Economics Specialist. The MOFP capacity was enhanced resulting in development of the FY 2020/2021 budget that is aligned to NDS 2018-2021 and R-ARCSS 2018. GEMS Project technical and advisory support enabled the MoFP to have a high-level policy dialogue with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on macroeconomic policies and the COVID-19 response. The project also supported the assessment of the socioeconomic impact of COVID 19 on South Sudan, development of the utilization plan for the implementation of the Rapid Credit Facility (RCF) and the NDS review process (roadmap). Furthermore, the project funded a 3-day workshop on aid data management where 30 (12 females) participants from government institutions gained a better understanding of the importance of enhanced aid data management for effective planning, the best practices required and the potential challenges for the development of a more suitable aid management system. Participants also attained knowledge of the Aid Information Management System (AIMS) as a critical tool for aid data management and aid coordination. This resulted in the review of the old AIMS documentation and processes.

**Initiated Inter-Party Dialogue to consolidate Best Practices of Capacity Building:** In partnership with UNMISS, UNDP organized a two-day (27 – 28 February 2020) inter-party dialogue workshop attended by 69 (29 female) participants drawn from registered active political parties in the country. This initiated political parties intra and inter party dialogue and discussed the comparative best practices of capacity building for consolidating R-ARCSS implementation with a focus on technical aspects.

**Capacity Assessment of the Ministry of Public Services Validation workshop organized:** UNDP convened a workshop on 18 June 2020 to validate the assessment report of Ministry of Public Service and Human Development (MPS&HRD) and review its strategic plan and mandate in implementing R-ARCSS with an aim to deliver public service effectively and efficiently during the transitional period. The workshop was attended by 20 (9 female) participants drawn from MoFP; Youth and Sport (MoYS); Gender, Child and Social Welfare; General Education and Instructions; and Agriculture and Food Security in addition to nine senior managers of Public Service and Human Resource Development; and Labour ministries. The result of this validation included the acceptance of SSEs and the Strategic Plan of the Ministry was reviewed with the incorporation of R-ARCSS provisions taking into account its division and formation of the Ministry of Labor as an independent entity as provided by the R-ARCSS.

An additional validation workshop was conducted for MoFP to validated the capacity assessment conducted by UNDP on 30 June 2020 and attended by 15 (2 female) including the Minister and the Deputy as well as the Undersecretary for Economic Planning, 7 senior managers of the Ministry and the Ebony Center for Strategic Studies. The workshop paved the way for the MoFP to present their request for recruitment and deployment of the SSEs to bridge the gaps identified during the assessment of MoFP.

**Awareness creation** **on the permanent constitution making process for Civil Society Organization (CSOs, , political leaders, and women and youth leaders Conducted:** The GEMS project in collaboration with UNMISS Political Affairs Division, organized 4 workshops in the third and fourth quarters of 2020 for 34( 12 females) CSO Leaders, 25 Political Leaders, 24 Women Leaders and 60 Youth Leaders to prepare for their participation in the permanent constitutional making process as provided for in the R-ARCSS. The GEMS project contracted facilitators and researchers who presented papers on “Federalism and Constitution” and “Internal Borders and Federalism”. The participants gained knowledge, methods, and strategies to effectively engage in South Sudan’s constitution-making process with an evidence-based understanding of federalism and the importance of demarcated internal borders.

**SSEs recruited**. The GEMS project recruited and deployed 12 SSEs (1 female) to Ministry of Finance and Planning PFM Secretariat (5), Ministry of Cabinet Affairs (1), Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation(1), Ministry of Interior(1), Ministry of Federal Affairs(1), Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare(1), Ministry of Labour (1) and Political Parties Council(1) based on approved Terms of References (ToRs) in the last quarter of 2020.

**Institutional Readiness Assessments.** The GEMS project hired a consultant in December 2020 to assess the ICT infrastructure of the aid management system in MoFP. The assessment discovered the existence of a 2013 digital system. This system was managed by an international firm with support from the World Bank. Based the findings of the assessment report, it was recommended and endorsed by the Ministry that a locally managed digital system be developed.

Similarly, a consultant was also hired in December 2020, to assess and ascertain the institutional readiness of 12 MDAs (6 in the Economic Cluster and 6 in the Governance Cluster). Once completed and validated, the report will guide the deployment of the second batch of SSEs.

A local company was also contracted in December 2020 to review and update the 2007 Master Public Service Training Curriculum. Once completed and validated, the reviewed and updated curriculum will guide the training courses offered to civil servants by MoPS&HRD.

**Challenges**:

* **COVID–19 Pandemic and Adverse Effect on the Economy and Government**. As the spread of COVID-19 in South Sudan was confirmed, lockdown measures were introduced with restrictions to government institutions operations to half a day with minimal physical presence of staff in offices. UNDP also placed staff on telecommuting. These restrictions made most business engagements possible only on virtual flatforms, but with weak internet accessibility in the country, most activities could not be achieved. Furthermore, the severe negative socioeconomic impact of COVID-19 has resulted in a depressed fiscal space, undermining the government’s ability to make the investments necessary to implement the R-ARCSS. Several months of salary arrears remains a disincentive to potential CAs, who are critical for the success of the project.
* **Inexperienced and inadequate skills and knowledge.** Many government officials in various MDAs do not have experience and skills necessary to draft ToRs for SSEs and other types of support provided by the GEMS project. This made the consultation process for development of ToRs lengthy and slow, requiring a significant number of interventions and sensitization meetings with MDAs. Only 15 ToRs were approved out of initial 21 requests from Governance/Service (13 positions) and Economic (8 positions) clusters.
* **Delay in the recruitment and deployment of SSEs**. Slow response in reviewing and approving the TOR and similar administrative measures by many MDAs negatively affected the GEMS project to quickly recruit and deploy SSEs to train, coach and mentor CAs and staff of RTGoNU as detailed in the 2020 Annual Workplan (AWP).

Additionally, despite the projectundertook several sensitizations for MDAs and guaranteed readiness to receive and work with SSEs, the many changes, absences, and interruptions of MDAs led to delays in the progress made by GEMS Project Management Team and SSEs.

**Budget**

The provisional cumulative project expenditure for the year 2020 is US$2,465,060.18 representing a delivery rate of 58.67 per cent of available resources of $4,201,642.74 and 39.05 per cent of the annual budget of US$.6,312,603.

(Pending end of 2020 financial reporting period).

# **Situational background**

The 2018 R-ARCSS brought renewed impetus towards stabilizing the fragile situation in the country. Since the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) through to independence in 2011, South Sudan remained a country in transition and confronted by immense political, institutional, social and economic challenges of recurring conflict. Following independence, South Sudan witnessed two successive violent conflicts in 2013 and 2016 soon after the initial signing of the original ARCSS in 2015.

The R-ARCSS offers more promise and a positive outlook on the progress of peace building process in the country. The parties to the conflict seem more invigorated towards implementation of the pre-transitional period with the R-TGoNU mandated, among other things, to implement the R-ARCSS with a renewed promise of no return to war, reintegrate refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), undertake legal and institutional reforms, enforce accountable economic governance and improve service delivery to citizens. There are opportunities to strengthen governance systems, management of public funds, optimise service delivery and stabilise the economy.

In February 2020 the country entered its transitional period of government, with the partial formation of R-TGoNU. However, key R-ARCSS activities such as reconstitution of the Transitional National Legislative Assembly, appointment of the 10 state governors, formation of unified national security forces, formation of 10 states, 3 administrative and county governments, and reconstitution of the judiciary as stipulated by the R-ARCSS are delayed beyond the agreed timelines. Despite the slow implementation of R-ARCSS provisions and delays in the realization of critical milestones, institutional capacity building and legislative reforms to enable delivery of institutional mandates and successful implementation of the R-ARCSS remains a top priority of the parties of the R-TGoNU.

During the reporting period, the parties of the R-TGoNU made some progress by appointing governors and their deputies, in addition to agreeing on the allocation of responsibilities and sharing portfolios in states /counties. In the same period, the Republic of Sudan's Transitional Government and the Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF), signed[[1]](#footnote-2) a peace agreement in Juba in October 2020 aimed at ending nearly two decades of conflict, although the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement-North faction of Abdel Aziz Al Hilu and Sudan Liberation Movement faction of Abdel Wahid Al Nur, who are leading armed movements had declined to be part of this agreement. This may delay the laying of foundation for democratic transition and economic reforms in the Sudan as well as the opening of borders for free movement and economic exchanges with South Sudan.[[2]](#footnote-3)

# **2. Progress towards development results**

## **Contribution to longer term results**

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| 1. **Country Programme Document (CPD) Outcome 1:** Strengthened peace infrastructures and accountable governance at the national, state and local levels. |

***Summary achievements based on CPD Outcome 1 targets***

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| **2019 CPD outcome target** | **Summary achievement** | **Status:** *Fully, Partially, Not Achieved[[3]](#footnote-4)* |
| **Target 1.3.1:** Extent to which governance institutions have requisite capacities and independence to deliver reforms and core functions, (Baseline 1 and Target 3) | **1**  UNDP recruited and deployed 12 SSEs and they are in the process of providing capacity building and cotching service. The MDAs has now limited capacity as the SSEs are deployed late. | Partially Achieved |
| **Target 1.3.2:** Number of institutional frameworks implemented to promote the participation of women and marginalized groups in reform processes, (Baseline 0 and Target 2) | Not achieved due to late recruitment and deployment of SSEs to enhance the capacities of the CAs in MDAs to review and harmonize existing and new legal frameworks, organizational structures. | Delayed |
| **Target 1.3.3:** Number of national South-South and triangular cooperation partnerships delivering measurable and sustainable benefits, (baseline 1 and Target 4) | Not achieved due to delay in recruitment and deployment of International SSEs, especially with restrictions and fears associated with COVID-19. | Delayed |
| **Overall** | | **Delayed** |

## **Progress towards project outputs**

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| **Project Output 1:** **Functional and technical capacity provided to key national governance institutions.** |

*Summary achievement against 2020 Annual Work Plan (AWP) target*

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Indicator** | **Annual Output Target (2020)** | **Summary Achievement** | **Status:**  *Fully, Partially, Not Achieved* |
| **Indicator 1.1.1.1:** Proportion of the South Sudan Change Agents who self-report increased skills following capacity building by deployed experts; (Baseline; 0) | 50 percent | Not measured in 2020 due to late SSEs deployment | Delayed |
| **Indicator 1.1.1.2:** Number of governance MDAs provided with technical and functional support; (Baseline; 0) | 21 | 5 | Partly achieved |
| **Indicator 1.1.1.3:** Proportion of targeted framework reviews (legal/institutional) that have been completed; (Baseline; 0) | 50 percent | 0 | Delayed |
| **Indicator 1.1.2.1:** Number of South Sudanese civil servants trained/coached/mentored through the Train to Train initiative; (Baseline, 30) | 300 | 0 | Delayed |
| **Indicator 1.1.2.2:** Number of South Sudan civil servants trained at the newly rehabilitated centre[[4]](#footnote-5) and Juba University; (Baseline, 0). | 300 | 0 | Delayed |
| **Indicator 1.1.2.1:** Existence of a Political Parties Council; (Baseline, 1) | Yes | 1 | Achieved |
| **Indicator 1.1.2.2:** Number of inter-parties’ seminars and dialogues organized; (Baseline, 1) | 5 | 1 | Partially achieved |
|  | **Overall status** | | **Delayed** |

**Description of Results**

**Indicator 1.1.1.1: Proportion of the South Sudan Change Agents who self-report increased skills following capacity building by deployed experts; (Baseline; 0).** No mentoring and coaching activity was done with the CAs during the reporting period as the project recruited and deployed 12 SSEs in quarter four of 2020 to targeted MDAs to coach and mentor CAs in order to enhance and improve their skills. A female SSE was deployed to the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare. Six male SSEs were deployed (one each) to the Ministry of Cabinet Affairs, MOFA&IC, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Federal Affairs, Ministry of Labor and Political Parties Council. Five males were deployed to MoFP to support the Public Finance Management mechanism with special focus on the Economic, Services, Security and Gender Clusters, and coordination of the aforementioned clusters of the PFM Secretariat. Since there were no capacity building activities conducted in the year 2020, none of CAs reported improvement in their skills. However, with the deployment of the 5 SSEs to the PFM Secretariat, the quality of agenda setting, minutes preparation, resolution writing and reporting are expected to improve for the PFM mechanisms.

**Indicator 1.1.1.2:** **Number of governance MDAs provided with technical and functional support; (Baseline; 14).** Five governance MDAs received highly experienced SSEs and 14 MDAs including Governance, Services, and Economic Clusters were provided with limited basic stationary in October 2020. This was done to enable them function responsively, especially during consultative exchanges of notes on TORs on the basis of which the deployment of SSEs and identification of CAs, and to ease the other official duties of the civil servants. The beneficiaries were MoPS&HRD, Ministry of Labor, Ministry of Cabinet Affairs, Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology, MOFA&IC, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare, Ministry of Trade and Industry, National Bureau of Statistics, Anti-corruption Commission, National Elections Commission, National Constitutional Review Commission and Political Parties Council.

**Indicator 1.1.1.3: Proportion of targeted framework reviews (legal/institutional) that have been completed; (Baseline; 0)**. MoPS&HRD strategic plan (1) was reviewed taking into consideration its new mandate in implementing the R-ARCSS and how to deliver public service effectively and efficiently during the transitional period.

**Indicator 1.1.2.1: Number of South Sudanese civil servants trained/coached/mentored through the Train to Train initiative; (Baseline, 30)**. In 2020, there were no training of Train to Train (T2T) conducted by MoPS&HRD due to delays in deployment of SSEs and identification of CAs.

**Indicator 1.1.2.2: Number of South Sudan civil servants trained at the newly rehabilitated centre and Juba University; (Baseline, 0)**. No training of the civil servants took place in 2020 as the Civil Service Training Centre has yet to be rehabilitated and no agreement has been reached with the University of Juba on trainings. However, UNDP and government engineers endorsed the design and bill of quantity (BOQ) for the rehabilitation of the Training Centre and is pending approval of the donor to enable the launch of the procurement process for the identification and selection of contractors. The GEMS project contracted a local company, the Centre for Strategic Policy Studies (CSPS) in December 2020 to review and update the 2007 Master Public Service Training Curriculum, aligning it with R-ARCSS and new trends of public administration. Once the review and update of this curriculum is completed and endorsed, the schedule for training of the staff and T2T will commence even if the centre is not yet rehabilitated to host training.

**Indicator 1.1.2.1:** **Existence of a Political Parties Council; (Baseline: 1)**. The South Sudan Political Parties Council (PPC) exists with the role of registering Political Parties in the country and regulating them for competitive multiparty democracy. The GEMS project deployed one SSE in December 2020 to train, coach and mentor the CAs and other PPC staff.

**Indicator 1.1.2.2:** **Number of inter-parties’ seminars and dialogues organized; (Baseline, 5)**. One inter-Party Dialogue workshop was organized that attracted 69 (29 female) participants from registered functional political parties in the country. This resulted in political parties initiating intra and inter party dialogue, discussed the comparative best practices of capacity building for consolidating R-ARCSS implementation with focus on technical aspects of reforms.

In a related development, the project in collaboration with UNMISS Political Affairs Division , conducted 4 workshops in which 2 facilitators and 2 researchers took participants (34 (12 females) CSO leaders, 25 (9 females) political leaders, 24 women leaders and 60 (20 females) youth leaders. Through “Federalism and Constitution” and “Internal Borders and Federalism”. Hence, participants gained understanding of federalism, the importance of demarcated internal borders and also knowledge, experience, methods and strategies to effectively engage in the constitution-making process in South Sudan.

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| **Project Output 2:** **Functional and technical capacity provided to key national economic management and accountability institutions.** |

*Summary achievement against 2020 Annual Work Plan (AWP) target*

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Indicator | **Annual Output Target (2020)** | **Summary Achievement** | **Status:** |
| **Indicator 2.1.1.1:** Number of senior civil servants trained on economic management and accountability systems; (Baseline, 0) | 78 | 12 | Partially achieved |
| **Indicator 2.1.1.2:** Proportion of targeted framework reviews (legal /institutional) that have been completed with UNDP support (Baseline 0) | 50 percent | 0 | Delayed |
| **Indicator 2.1.1.3:** Number of economic management and accountability MDAs provided with technical and functional support by UNDP; (Baseline, 0) | 12 | 1 | Partially achieved |
|  | **Overall status** | | Delayed |

**Description of Results (based on each indicator)**

**Indicator 2.1.1.1:** **Number of senior civil servants trained on economic management and accountability systems; (Baseline, 0)**. Through the Economics Specialist deployed at the MoFP, the GEMS project supported the Directorate of Macroeconomic Planning and Aid Coordination and the Department of Sectoral Planning to train Twelve (4 female) civil servants planning officers from government spending entities in developing annual plans for the national budget. The team from MoFP was provided guidance and tools (budget preparation guidelines) to enable them support MDAs to develop their plans.

Additionally, the project conducted sensitization meetings with leadership and senior managers (Ministers, Chairpersons, Undersecretaries, Secretary Generals and Director Generals). This generated positive responses by many MDAs with requests for support through SSEs under UNDP contract modality for national experts. As a result, 5 male Public Finance Management SSEs were recruited in the last quarter of 2020. Some basic stationaries were provided to Ministry of Trade and Industry, and National Bureaus of Statistics.

The GEMS project funded a 3-day workshop on Aid Data Management organized by the officials of MoFP where 30 (12 females) from government institutions gained a better understanding of the importance of enhanced aid data management for effective planning. Participants attained knowledge of the Aid Information Management System (AIMS) as the critical tool for aid data management and aid coordination.

**Indicator 2.1.1.2:** **Proportion of targeted framework reviews (legal /institutional) that have been completed with UNDP support (Baseline 0)**.

No legal or institutional framework was reviewed during the period under report. However, the project developed ToRs, recruited and deployed the first cadre of SSEs. In addition, there was an assessment conducted by an international expert contracted by UNDP where key institutional frameworks, structures, syntheses, skills and symbioses were identified for support through the GEMS project. In discussions with the EITI Secretariat, the project identified pathways to strengthen South Sudan’s capacity to sign up to the EITI (Activity 2.1.5) and began engaging with the Ministry of Petroleum, Ministry of Mining and the MoFA&IC to operationalize the activity.

**Indicator 2.1.1.3:** **Number of economic management and accountability MDAs provided with technical and functional support by UNDP; (Baseline, 0)**. The Anti-Corruption Commission is an accountability institution that benefited from the stationery that was distributed in October 2020. While the MoFP received technical advisory support from GEMS through the deployment of the Economics Specialist at the Ministry. This support contributed to the following:

1. The project supported policy dialogue in the MoFP to reactivate national planning processes. Technical advisory support was provided for the process of aligning the National Development Strategy with the R-ARCSS. The objective is to ensure that the national budget is responsive to the R-ARCSS.
2. There was an improvement in economic management. For the first time since the FY 2013/2014 budget, MoFP developed annual plans for the draft FY 2020/2021 national budget process. Budget preparation guidelines were also developed to guide the government spending entities in preparing their budgets.
3. Socioeconomic impact assessment was conducted. MoFP was supported to undertake a rapid analysis of the potential socioeconomic impact of COVID 19 on South Sudan. The analysis contributed significantly to the preparation of the draft FY 2020/2021 national budget and the application for the Rapid Credit Facility with the IMF.
4. The project also enabled MoFP to reactivate aid coordination functions and strengthen partnerships. With support from GEMS, MoFP convened a high-level government-partners’ policy dialogue to discuss national priority issues, including the economic response to the COVID 19 pandemic. Additionally, the project supported MoFP to convene the Aid Data Management forum to better coordinate the management and use of aid data in the country.
5. Through the Economics Specialist at MoFP, the project provided advisory support to the MoFP as Chair of the PFM Oversight Committee, including contributing to the drafting of the ToRs for the PFM governance structure and providing coordination support for the PFM Oversight Committee. Furthermore, the Economic Specialist provided technical backstopping to the PFM Oversight Committee in preparing the application and utilization plan for the Rapid Credit Facility (RCF).
6. National Development Strategy was revisited for review. Chapter IV of the R-ARCSS requires MoFP to review the NDS. GEMS through the Economic Specialist supported MoFP in developing the concept note and ToR for the NDS review process. Additionally, the NDS Secretariat at MoFP was trained to facilitate fragility assessment consultations to inform the NDS review process.
7. The GEMS project has discussed and agreed on a concept note and strategy to support the National Bureau of Statistics. The support will focus on strengthening the gathering and dissemination of key economic statistics (Consumer Price Index) to inform economic governance.

In addition, six ToRs for SSEs to be deployed in MoFP were approved for advertisement in the third quarter of 2020 and recruitment for those to be deployed in PFM was completed for 5 SSEs.

* 1. **Success Story**

**Gems project support enabled Ministry of Finance & Planning to access additional resources form IMF and improve national planning system.**

The National Ministry of Finance & Planning (MoFP) is one of the thirty-five Ministries of the Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity (RTGoNU) and a key institution in the Economic Cluster. Chapter IV of the R-ARCSS has tasked the MoFP to facilitate the economic and financial reforms guided by the Public Financial Management & Accountability Act of 2011. The MoFP and the Government in general has had difficulties in obtaining resources from international lenders following the austerity measures of 2012 after the shutdown of oil production and the impact of the 2015 conflict on oil production. An important concern for 2020 was the requirement for a high-level, competent, and effective oversight mechanism to manage revenues collection, budgeting plans, financial allocation and expenditure as key provision in Chapter IV of the R-ARCSS.

Through the GEMS Economic Specialist seconded in the MoFP, the project enabled the Government of South Sudan to move forward on Public Financial Management (PFM) reforms. With guidance and technical advice of the project, the Minister of Finance and Planning established the PFM Oversight Committee, PFM Technical Committee, and PFM Secretariat in May 2020. The GEMS project supported the PFM Oversight Committee in preparing the application and supporting technical documents for emergency funding, the Rapid Credit Facility (RCF), from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The GEMS project was instrumental in the development of the RCF utilization plan which outlined the Government’s priorities and strategy for the use of the RCF. This contribution from the GEMS project was critical in enabling the Government to secure 52.3 million USD in emergency funding under the RCF with the promise for additional loans for stabilizing the market and dealing with the effects of Covid-19 and flooding in South Sudan.

Support by the GEMS project to the MoFP continued with the development of the National Budget Plan for FY2020/2021, this was the first National Budget Plan since FY2013/2014. It is now a condition for each public institution to present its annual budget based on this budget plan, an activity that was not adhered to in previous years. To sustain the result, there is a need to replicate this endeavour to state level so as to establish a strong institution functioning throughout the country.

# **Cross Cutting Issues**

## **Gender results**

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| **Gender results** | **Evidence** |
| **Gender result 1:** Twenty-nine female members from various political parties participated in inter-party dialogue through informal discussions and sharing best practices, examples and capacity-building among the members. This arena was mail dominated and the project take effort to change the landscape. | **Evidence 1:** Political Parties workshop report. |
| **Gender result 2:** the project encouraged women participation in the constitution making process so as to increase the voice the marginalized groups because of gender. Twelve leaders of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), 24 Women leaders and 20 female youth leaders gained skills, experiences, methods and strategies to effectively engage in the constitution-making process in the country. 25 women leaders also attended a workshop for Women Representatives in the R-ARCSS Institutions/ Mechanisms on the Constitution making process. | **Evidence 2**: Constitution making preparatoryworkshop reports compiled in collaboration with UNMISS Political Affairs Department, Ideas International and UN-Women. |
| **Gender result 3:** 12 women participated in Aid Management System (AIMS) workshop organized by the officials of Ministry of Finance and Planning where they gained a better understanding and challenges in putting this system into suitable practices. | **Evidence 3:** AIMs 3-day workshop with presentations and discussion on aid management systemand how to improve it based on locally developed IT software. |
| **Gender result 4:** Recruitment of female SSE for Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare and another female SSE. This will encourage other women to be part of the SSEs program which is still dominated by men. | **Evidence 4**: UNDP procurement process for recruitment of national experts based on individual contract modality. |
| During the reporting period, a joint UNDP/UNMISS/UNwomen Women’s Leaders’ Consultative Workshop and a workshop for Women Representatives in the R-ARCSS Institutions/Mechanisms on the Constitution making process, were conducted to solicit the views of women in the constitution making process. As a result, women were able to identify capacity gaps and propose possible means and strategies for enhancing the identified capacity gaps and to identify priorities and entry points for effective women’s participation in the permanent constitution-making process. | Workshop reports |

Guided by the United Nation Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 and UNDP Gender Equality Strategy and Programming Standards, the project has a gender mainstreaming strategy to strengthen gender-specific interventions and address gender concerns during the recruitment of SSEs, selection of CAs and in developing, planning, implementing and evaluating policies and programmes that relate to gender considerations as required by revitalized peace agreement.

## **Partnerships**

The MoPS&HRD, MoFP and MoFA&IC, are the key implementing partners and lead government agencies. Through these ministries, the government participates in the definition of priority areas, project resource allocation and reporting, joint monitoring and evaluation for the 38 MDAs identified in the Project Document.

The project collaborates with other UNDP projects, which include Access to Justice and Rule of Law, Peace and Community Cohesion, Public Financial Management, Recovery and Stabilization, the Global Fund. Additionally, the project collaborated with UNMISS Civil Affairs and Political Divisions in terms of security and logistics support and holding joint workshops.

As the project looks to increase focus on supporting PFM reforms, opportunities to collaborate with relevant stakeholders (including World Bank, IMF, ???PFM donor working group) will be explored.

## **Environmental Considerations**

Substantive implementation of the GEMS project in regard to environmental considerations has not commenced due to delays in the formation of R-TGoNU. All UNDP programmes and projects adhere to the objectives and requirements of the Social and Environmental Standards (SES). The SES objectives are to: (a) strengthen the quality of programming by ensuring a principled approach; (b) maximize social and environmental opportunities and benefits; (c) avoid adverse impacts to people and the environment; (d) minimize, mitigate, and manage adverse impacts where avoidance is not possible; (e) strengthen UNDP and partner capacities for managing social and environmental risks; and (f) ensure full and effective stakeholder engagement, including through a mechanism to respond to complaints from project-affected people.

The GEMS project will continue to encourage the use of green energy where feasible and support the development of frameworks that contribute to strengthening of environmental governance. The project has engaged the MoPS&HRD on renovation of the Civil Service Training Centre, which will consider environmental factors in terms of provision of solar power.

## **Sustainability**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Results achieved** | **Sustainability** |
| Through facilitation of inter-party dialogue, the project is contributing towards enhancing trust building among political parties and actors, an attribute which is useful for sustaining peace during and after the transitional period. | In partnership with UNMISS, the project facilitated one inter-party dialogue in 2020 through sharing of best comparative practices and examples. South Sudan Political Parties Council, a body responsible for political parties’ registration in South Sudan, participate proactively. Bringing together political parties and political parties council will lead to sustainability because the council shall be able to organize and conduct inter-party dialogues. |
| Ownership of the TORs for recruitment and deployment of SSEs in various MDAs, and also the identification of CAs. | With ownership of the TORs for recruitment and deployment of SSEs in various MDAs, and also the identification of CAs, the government institutions are ready to benefit from GEMS project and adopt the corporate modality of governance for long-terms. |

## **South to South and Triangular Cooperation**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Country** | **Type of cooperation** |
| There was no South to South Triangular Cooperation occurred in the reporting period | none |

## **Strengthening national capacity**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Results achieved** | **Institution** | **National capacity strengthened** |
| Enhanced knowledge for planning and budget preparation | MoFP, government spending entities | Relevant trained staff of MoFP were able to participate in the budget process for the (FY 2020/21). |
| Increased knowledge and skills of 69 (29 female) South Sudanese members of political parties on inter-party dialogue through sharing of best practice examples. | Political Parties Council (Overall targeted 7 inter-parties’ seminars and dialogues). | 69 (29 females) South Sudanese members of political parties able to engage in inter party dialogue and sharing of best practices. |
| More women and youth engagement in preparation for constitutional making process. | Civil Society Organizations, Political Parties, Women Organizations, and Youth Organizations. | 34 Civil Society Leaders, 24 Women Leaders, 25 Political Leaders and 60 Youth Leaders engaged collectively in constitutional making process. |

# **Monitoring and Evaluation**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **M&E activity** (monitoring visit, evaluation, review exercise) | **Key outcomes/ observation** | **Recommendation** | **Action taken** |
| No M&E activity took place due to delays in the formation of R-TGoNU and COVID-19 pandemic. | No monitoring undertaken | No recommendation(s) | N/A |

# **Risk management**.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Risks** | **Mitigation Measures** |
| **Political Risk** The biggest risk posed to the project is the delay in the formation of the unity government. The non-formation of R-TGoNU was an indictment on the legitimacy of institutions the project seeks to support and brings to question the sustainability and impact. | To mitigate this risk, the project provided advocacy support to complement the offices of the UN SRSG in advocating for the formation of R-TGoNU. To help improve trust amongst parties to the agreement, the project together with UNMISS established the Political Parties Forum as a platform for consistent engagement amongst parties to the agreement to begin discussion on some of the critical policy reforms articulated in the agreement. |
| **New Risk:** Another risk to the project is that the R-TGoNU might be a marriage of convenience which focuses on preparing the next political battle - the elections. It therefore may lack a clear development agenda to address the root causes of the conflict. | Through the project, engagement was been held amongst all the parties to the agreement and other relevant stakeholder. A retreat of the R-TGoNU has been planned to develop a development compact with clear targets and responsibilities during the transition period.  The R-TGoNU will need to reorient itself and demonstrate higher levels of resolve towards development and implementation of the substantive agenda of the R-ARCSS. This orientation will demand improved cohesion, collective thinking, joint action and common messaging. It is important, at the very outset, efforts be put on forging a common agenda based on clear analysis and shared understanding of these challenges and prospects as well as their priorities for the future. |
| **Fiduciary/Reputational Risk:** Lack of consumables, delayed salaries, lack of sitting allowances and other remunerations associated with government institutions and political appointments, and demoralized public servants in many MDAs. | In line with existing UNDP policies and procedures, the project is designed to not pay for salaries, sitting allowances or any other remuneration associated with political appointments and public servants. The project will not also cover retroactive expenses associated with pre-transitional or transitional period. In addition, activities and ad-hoc requests emerging outside the purview or the scope of the project/AWP approved by the Project Board, will not be eligible for funding through the project. As such, requests from MDAs and individuals will not be entertained under the project, unless as authorised by the Project Board. |

# **Challenges**

* **COVID–19 Pandemic and Adverse Effect on the Economy and Government**. As the spread of COVID-19 in South Sudan was confirmed, lockdown measures were introduced with restrictions to government institutions operations to half a day with minimal physical presence of staff in offices. UNDP also placed staff on telecommuting. These restrictions made most business engagements possible only on virtual flatforms, but with weak internet accessibility in the country, most activities could not be achieved. Furthermore, the severe negative socioeconomic impact of COVID-19 has resulted in a depressed fiscal space, undermining the government’s ability to make the investments necessary to implement the R-ARCSS. Several months of salary arrears remains a disincentive to potential CAs, who are critical for the success of the project.
* **Inexperienced and inadequate skills and knowledge.** Many government officials in various MDAs do not have experience and skills necessary to draft ToRs for SSEs and other types of support provided by the GEMS project. This made the consultation process for development of ToRs lengthy and slow, requiring a significant number of interventions and sensitization meetings with MDAs. Only 15 ToRs were approved out of initial 21 requests from Governance/Service (13 positions) and Economic (8 positions) clusters.
* **Delay in the recruitment and deployment of SSEs**. Slow response in reviewing and approving the TOR and similar administrative measures by many MDAs negatively affected the GEMS project to quickly recruit and deploy SSEs to train, coach and mentor CAs and staff of RTGoNU as detailed in the 2020 Annual Workplan (AWP).

Additionally, despite the projectundertook several sensitizations for MDAs and guaranteed readiness to receive and work with SSEs, the many changes, absences, and interruptions of MDAs led to delays in the progress made by GEMS Project Management Team and SSEs.

# **Lessons Learned**

* **Continuous follow up, provide support and guidance to targeted MDAs staff.** There is need for the GEMS project team to continuously follow up, provide support and guidance to MDAs staff in drafting comprehensive ToRs on time for SSEs to be deployed to train, coach and mentor CAs based on institutional readiness to review and formulate policies and regulatory frameworks.
* **Working remotely from home**. Due to Covid-19 pandemic, the GEMS project staff including SSEs, should learn on how to work and implement the project remotely even during the time of lockdowns. To accomplish this, solid internet connectivity is necessary to be available with use of good computers including a solid internet link with MDAs.

# **Conclusions and Changes in Way Forward**

As described in this report, most of the GEMS project targets were not achieved due to delays in the formation of R-TGoNU and challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, the uniqueness of this project lies in its strategic approach to capacity enhancement of South Sudanese CAs through training, coaching and mentoring by highly qualified SSEs. This has been manifested by the requests received from various MDAs and as informed by capacity assessments and alignment of the GEMS project with Chapter I and IV of the R-ARCSS.

Programmatically, GEMS in 2021 will respond to some of the emerging critical needs of the key governance and economics MDAs in the country through the deployment of more hybrid SSEs from national and international experts in the spirit of South-South cooperation. The project will focus on Output 2, which deals solely with economic management and accountability institutions that are strategic in bolstering the national economy. The project will strengthen its communication strategy to broaden GEMS project’s visibility and popularize its scope, opportunities, and results through PFM mechanisms and CAs.

Operationally, the GEMS Project Executive Board (PEB) needs to be established in 2021 based on pragmatic TORs with a provision of clear modalities of implementation. Additionally, the project must continuously strive to maximize value-for-money through streamlining processes, diversifying, and strengthening partnerships, resource mobilization and collaboration with development partners.

Appreciating the challenges, risks and lessons learned, the GEMS project envisions surge recruitment and deployment of SSEs to the targeted and prioritized MDAs during the 1st and 2nd quarters of 2021 while taking into consideration WHO/MOH Covid-19 pandemic protocol and guideline. The GEMS project team will balance its move, accelerating the process when deemed necessary and slowing it down when there are critical challenges faced.

Focusing the GEMS project to supporting the PFM cycle through rigorous engagement with MoFP and the line institutions to prioritize the economic reforms guided by the provisions of Chapter IV of the R-ARCSS in collaboration with Office of Vice President for Economic Cluster and international partners.

Work closely with the Office of the First Vice President to create high-level influence on professionalizing the channels of coordination for effective engagement among the MDAs in Governance Cluster guided by provisions of Chapter I of the R-ARCSS.

Encourage continuous inter-party dialogue on emerging issues of governance and economy, enhanced by sharing of comparative experiences of best practices in the region and beyond within the modality of South-South cooperation.

Start thinking of replicating the success stories of GEMS project at levels of the10 States.

# **Financial Summary**

(Pending end of 2020 financial period).

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Outputs / Activity Result** | | **Annual Budget, US$ (Jan – Dec 2020)** | **Expenditures, US$ (Jan - Sept 2020)** | **Expenditures, US$ (Oct - Dec. 2020)** | **Cumulative Expenditures, US$ (Jan - Dec 2020)** | **% Expenditures (Cumulative)** |
|  |
| **A** | **B** | **C** | **D=B+C** | **D/A\*100** |  |
| **Output 1: Effective implementation of R-ARCSS** | | | | | | |  |
| **AR 1.1.1.1** | Deploy 20 SSEs to Governance and Services MDAs. | 810,700.00 | 121,414.30 | 531,838.25 | 653,252.55 | 80.58% |  |
| **AR 1.1.1.2** | Deploy Governance Advisor to mentor and support the Government Cluster Leads in overseeing and coordinating the activities of relevant MDAs | 284,143.48 | 117,700.18 | 63,340.87 | 181,041.05 | 63.71% |  |
| **AR 1.1.1.3** | Provide 14 ministries with networking, coordination and information sharing capacity. | *520,000.00* | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00% |  |
| **AR 1.1.1.4** | Identify and build capacity of 546 South Sudanese civil servants (CAs) in 26 institutions | 43,200.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00% |  |
| **AR 1.1.1.5** | Review and upgrade legal and institutional frameworks to promote institutional effectiveness | 24,000.00 | 1,203.50 | 513.00 | 1,716.50 | 7.15% |  |
| **AR 1.1.1.6** | Facilitate missions for learning and experience sharing to strengthen South-South cooperation on key and emerging governance issues | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |  |  |
| **Sub-total 1.1.1** | | **1,682,043.48** | **240,317.98** | **595,692.12** | **836,010.10** | **49.70%** |  |
| **AR 1.1.2.1** | Rehabilitate civil service training centre in Juba | 50,000.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00% |  |
| **AR 1.1.2.2** | Provide accredited specialised training programmes to public sector personnel | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |  |  |
| **AR 1.1.2.3** | Pilot the Train-to-Train (T2T) modality to train and mentor service employees in targeted institutions | 81,000.00 | 0.00 | 59,500.00 | 59,500.00 | 73.46% |  |
| **AR 1.2.3.4** | Support the Civil Service Commission and Salary and Remuneration Commission to deliver on their mandates. | 40,000.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00% |  |
| **Sub-total 1.1.2** | | **171,000.00** | **0.00** | **59,500.00** | **59,500.00** | **34.80%** |  |
| **AR 1.2.1.1** | Building the capacity of the political leadership for national consensus on governance and economic issues & capacity building of the Political Parties Council for effective engagement with members | 14,000.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00% |  |
| **AR 1.2.1.3** | Organize workshops, conferences around key emerging governance issues to enrich the implementation of R-ARCSS | 47,500.00 | 4,223.00 | 0.00 | 4,223.00 | 8.89% |  |
| **Sub-total 1.2.1** | | **61,500.00** | **4,223.00** | **0.00** | **4,223.00** | **6.87%** |  |
| **Output 1 Sub-total** | | **1,914,543.48** | **244,540.98** | **655,192.12** | **899,733.10** | **46.99%** |  |
| **Output 2: Improved economic management** | | | | | | |  |
| **AR 2.1.1.1** | Deploy 10 SSEs to Economic Cluster MDAs | 616,657.11 | 250,538.73 | 197,653.78 | 448,192.51 | 72.68% |  |
| **AR 2.1.1.2** | Deploy Economics Advisor | 163,404.00 | 0.00 | 142,845.00 | 142,845.00 | 87.42% |  |
| **AR 2.1.1.3** | Identify and build capacity of 254 South Sudanese civil servants (Change Agents) in 12 Economic Cluster MDAs | 18,000.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00% |  |
| **AR 2.1.1.4** | Review and upgrade legal frameworks to promote effectiveness of accountability, and economic management institutions | 24,000.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00% |  |
| **AR 2.1.1.5** | Enhancing capacity in management and implementation of Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) | 40,250.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00% |  |
| **AR 2.1.1.6** | Capacitate national statistical systems to promote informed decision making on economic governance. | 45,000.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00% |  |
| **AR 2.1.1.7** | Facilitate regional missions for learning and experience sharing on key and emerging issues on economic management and accountability. | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |  |  |
| **AR 2.1.1.8** | Organize workshops, conferences around key emerging economic management and accountability issues to enrich the implementation of R-ARCSS | 22,500.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00% |  |
| **AR 2.1.1.9** | Establish and operationalize a development aid management system | 64,000.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00% |  |
| **Output 2 Sub-total** | | **993,811.11** | **250,538.73** | **340,498.78** | **591,037.51** | **59.47%** |  |
| **Project Management and Oversight** | | | | | | |  |
|  | Project Management | 896,481.46 | 447,945.33 | 324,241.86 | 772,187.19 | 86.14% |  |
|  | Oversight and Communication | 85,575.00 | 22,804.07 | 63,693.00 | 86,497.07 | 101.08% |  |
| **Sub-Total Project Management and Oversight** | | **982,056.46** | **470,749.40** | **387,934.86** | **858,684.26** | **87.44%** |  |
|  | General Management Support (8%) | 311,231.70 | 70,980.93 | 44,624.38 | 115,605.31 | 37.14% |  |
| **Grand total** | | **4,201,642.74** | **1,036,810.04** | **1,428,250.14** | **2,465,060.18** | **58.67%** |  |

1. Sudan's govt., armed groups to sign final peace deal on Oct. 2. <https://news.cgtn.com/news/2020-09-07/Sudan-s-govt-armed-groups-to-sign-final-peace-deal-on-Oct-2-TAeDgK77A4/index.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Is the Juba Peace Agreement a Turning Point for Sudan? <https://www.chathamhouse.org/2020/09/juba-peace-agreement-turning-point-sudan> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Scale: 1: limited capacity; 2: some capacity; 3: high capacity [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Civil service training center under the ministry of public service [↑](#footnote-ref-5)