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Evaluation of USAID/South Sudan Electoral Support Initiatives

April 2015

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EVALUATION OF USAID/SOUTH SUDAN ELECTORAL SUPPORT INITIATIVES 2009 – 2014

IFES SUDAN ELECTORAL ADMINISTRATION SUPPORT PROJECT
(SEASP)

April, 2015

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ACRONYMS

ARC	Abyei Referendum Commission
BRIDGE	Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections
CBO	Community Based Organization
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
COR	Contracting Officer's Representative
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DG	Democracy & Governance
DI	Democracy International
EMB	Election Management Body
EU	European Union
GoS	Government of Sudan
GoRSS	Government of the Republic of South Sudan
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IR	Intermediate Result
IRI	International Republican Institute
LTTA	Long Term Technical Assistance
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MESP	Monitoring and Evaluation Support Project
MSI	Management Systems International
NCC	National Constitutional Conference
NCP	National Congress Party
NCRC	National Constitutional Review Commission
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NEA	National Elections Act
NEC	National Elections Commission
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
PILPG	Public International Law & Policy Group
PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan
PPC	Political Party Council
PPLF	Political Party Liaison Forum
RoSS	Republic of South Sudan
SEASP	Sudan Election Administration Support Program
SHEC	State High Elections Committee
SOW	Scope of Work
SPLA	Sudan People's Liberation Army
SPLM	Sudan People's Liberation Movement
SPLM/A	Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army
SPLM-DC	Sudan People's Liberation Movement - Democratic Change

SPLM-IO	Sudan People’s Liberation Movement – In Opposition
SSCC	South Sudan Council of Churches
SSHEC	Southern Sudan High Elections Committee
SSRB	Southern Sudan Referendum Bureau
SSRC	Southern Sudan Referendum Commission
SSuNDE	South Sudanese Network for Democratic Elections
STTA	Short Term Technical Assistance
SUCCESS	Systems to Uphold the Credibility and Constitutionality of Elections in South Sudan
SuNDE	Sudanese Network for Democratic Elections
TCRSS	Transitional Constitution of the Republic of South Sudan (2011)
UDF	United Democratic Front
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNIRED	United Nations Integrated Referendum and Elections Division
UNMIS	United Nations Mission in Sudan
UNMISS	United Nations Mission in South Sudan
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
USSES	United States Special Envoy to Sudan
USSESS	United States Special Envoy to South Sudan
VR	Voter Registration

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The successful implementation of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between the Government of Sudan (GoS) and the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) represented a truly internationally-coordinated effort. Countries from around the globe and multi-lateral organizations invested considerable resources – financial, human, material, and other – to usher the process through and ensure its completion. Within this broad-based, international initiative, the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) played an instrumental role, providing technical support, guidance, advice, and procurement and commodity support for the conduct of the CPA's most important milestone events: the 2010 elections and the 2011 referendum. While IFES was not alone in this support, many observers and actors both within and outside of South Sudan claim that without it, the full implementation of the CPA may not have been possible.

After nearly five years of uninterrupted and critical support, IFES ceased its operations in South Sudan in September 2013. The \$70 million Sudan Electoral Administration Support Project (SEASP), funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), proved to be a fundamental pillar in ending decades of war between Northern and Southern Sudan. Less than three months afterwards, however, South Sudan fell into the grips of a cruel civil conflict, driven by deep-rooted divisions within the new country's ruling party. Eighteen months later, a precarious and fragile cease-fire agreement is in place, but as the people of South Sudan struggle to recover, the underlying causes of the conflict remain firmly in place and fully intact.

To gauge the success of SEASP, identify lessons-learned, and formulate recommendations for potential future assistance in South Sudan, USAID commissioned Management Systems International (MSI) to perform and conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the IFES-implemented electoral technical assistance initiative. While initially designed as a two and a half year project (February 2009 – September 2011), SEASP was extended by one year twice, ostensibly to provide related support in the construction and development of the new country.

Among the most important and significant findings, the evaluation team determined that:

- USAID's original project design, mixing high-level technical assistance, robust procurement/commodity support, and flexibility proved exceptionally effective. This tailored approach represents an important lesson-learned for USAID, as it did not simply replicate previously-implemented models, but rather formulated a specific strategy for a very unique set of circumstances.
- IFES' ability to understand and assimilate USAID's strategic approach, field high-caliber, politically-savvy electoral experts, and effectively manage an ambitious and technically-complicated project, ensured not only a well-disciplined implementation of the initiative, but also good working-relationships with USAID, the government of the United States (USG), local counterparts, and other technical assistance providers and implementing partners.¹
- Despite the originally planned two and a half year implementation timeframe (February 2009 – September 2011), IFES' strong implementation capacity and flexibility left it very

¹ While sometimes tense, USAID's and IFES's relationship with the UN and its agencies was handled professionally. Disagreements and/or differing opinions did not constitute substantial obstacles to meeting overarching – and shared – goals and objectives.

well-positioned to extend the life of the project and continue providing assistance during the post-referendum/independence period.

- Initiatives that were complementary of and/or related to IFES' efforts, such as those related to civic/voter education, had a significant impact on the general population, as Southern Sudan had never before experienced an electoral process, or related events.
- The overarching objective of the USAID/IFES electoral assistance strategy had a very strong mission-critical focus: support for the implementation of the CPA, and more specifically the organization and conduct of the 2010 elections and ultimately, 2011 referendum.
- Without a permanent electoral authority until 2012², implementation efforts were complicated. However, although sustainability was not possible –or even considered – within the mission critical framework of the initial assistance strategy, the general unpreparedness and lack of a USAID post-referendum democracy and governance strategy resulted in a loss of momentum.
- Despite USAID/IFES efforts, post-referendum/independence euphoria in South Sudan did not contribute to an adequate and/or conducive environment for building democracy and its institutions. New authorities were, understandably, preoccupied with the financial, technical and administrative issues of seceding from Sudan. Once in office, the SPLM/A became – and continues to be – less inclined to exposing itself to potentially losing power.
- Although technically sound, the 2010 elections were highly dubious, marred by widespread irregularities and manipulation of final results. But given the fact they were a necessary step to get to the 2011 referendum, they were not contested, questioned, or otherwise challenged, resulting in the entrenchment of one-party rule in South Sudan, which, in turn, is the cause of today's current crisis.
- Internal instability, Sudan's efforts to sabotage its progress and very tight financial constraints, has left South Sudan in a particularly vulnerable position, rendering democratic building and strengthening efforts largely ineffective at this time.

Based on its findings, then, the evaluation team concluded that the SEASP was extraordinarily successful. The project's focus and design, coupled with the robust provision of commodity support and technical assistance resulted in a highly successful model. It's important to note that the IFES-implemented project not only met the overarching technical, political and diplomatic objectives of the overall USG/USAID strategy, it also contributed to averting a war between Northern and Southern Sudan.

But the staunchly mission-critical and immediate term focus of the initiative resulted in the emergence of the Republic of South Sudan without any strategic plan for its construction and development. Less than four years from its independence, South Sudan is far from where its people dreamt it would be after so many years of struggle. Political instability, a worsening security situation, and financial challenges have pushed the new country into a very uncertain and dangerous corner.

Despite the great technical success in ensuring the implementation of the CPA, the shortsightedness and complete lack of planning for post-referendum/independence South Sudan was neglectful. If USAID's – and indeed, the broader international community's – strategic approach was to ultimately conduct a successful referendum, than the mission was incomplete in its conception. Significant resources were contributed and expended into essentially guaranteeing the creation of South Sudan. But once South Sudan emerged, there were little, if any, construction

² It is important to note that there were no permanent electoral authorities in Southern Sudan for the 2010 and 2011 processes. Both the 2010 elections and the 2011 referendum were organized and conducted by *ad-hoc* commissions. The South Sudanese National Elections Commission (NEC) was not created and established until 2012.

plans in place. The few plans that did exist were formulated on the mistaken assumption that South Sudan was a post-conflict environment, when, in fact, the conflict has never ceased.

South Sudan will continue to need – and will remain completely reliant on – the assistance of the international community for years to come. A revised constitution will eventually be drafted, and elections will necessarily take place. Without the close collaboration of the international community, however, no electoral exercise or related events will be possible.

As a result of the findings identified and the conclusions reached, MSI evaluators and electoral experts have formulated a series of recommendations aimed at improving electoral assistance strategies for South Sudan in the future. In its conduct of a wide-reaching and comprehensive assessment, the evaluation team has formulated recommendations for project implementers, USAID, and the National Elections Commission (NEC). While many of the recommendations outlined in this report may require longer-term efforts – and may be dependent on political factors in South Sudan – others are immediately actionable items, particularly those referring to the NEC. Among the recommendations included in this report, the evaluation team would like to highlight the following:

Recommendations for USAID

- With a very fragile cease-fire currently in place, immediate focus must be placed on facilitating comprehensive and long-lasting peace in South Sudan. Attempts at providing any type of electoral assistance at this time, however modest they may be, could be misinterpreted, sending the wrong message.
- USAID re-engagement and any future electoral support must be predicated by genuine, concrete and clear commitments from the GoRSS, including political and financial overtures. However, USAID should maintain open and fluid channels of communications with the country's electoral authorities.
- Given the particularities of a conflict/post-conflict environment, a higher degree of continuity on the part of USAID democracy and contracts officers would prove beneficial. One-year tours are insufficient to secure continuity and consistency.
- Comprehensive, joint end-of-mission debriefs should be conducted between USAID, implementer(s), and beneficiaries to ensure efficient hand-over and preservation of gains.
- USAID should conduct mid-course project evaluations, allowing for effective political situation analyses, course corrections, and resource allocations.
- USAID should seek to incorporate into its programming the Convention on the Elimination of All Types of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). The CEDAW has important implications for constitutional and electoral reform in South Sudan and can be used as a reference point for developing customized performance indicators.
- Future implementer(s) should ensure solid information management and knowledge transfer efforts are built-in to technical assistance initiatives.

Recommendations for Government/NEC

- Despite budgetary constraints and challenges, the NEC should assign a permanent liaison officer for all 10 State High Election Committees, and prepare action plans for each, including professional development and training strategies for staff.
- The NEC should immediately undertake thorough inventory exercises to determine what assets (equipment, human, financial, materials, documents) it has at its disposal, both at the central and state levels.

- The NEC should develop and implement a technology modernization initiative for its Juba headquarters and the country's 10 SHECs. By installing a relatively inexpensive intranet system, the NEC can link all of its internal offices and departments and SHECs. An institutional intranet would also increase information management and knowledge transfer efforts, store and make readily available important documents, and facilitate greater coordination and communications among staff and the state offices.

Finally, the evaluation team believes that despite the USG's decision to indefinitely suspend direct assistance to the GoRSS, engagement with local authorities, however modest, must remain firmly in place. Understanding that conditions for full and unhindered technical assistance engagement are not currently in place, the evaluation team does believe there are a series of uncompromising, yet effective, strategies that can be implemented to remain reasonably involved in the development of the NEC and the 10 SHECs. Among others, some of these strategies are:

- Current USAID implementing partners should remain thoroughly involved, particularly in their work with local civil society and faith-based organizations. Without the ability to work with GoRSS authorities directly, locally-based organizations can be an important source of current, on-the-ground information and knowledge. Efforts to strengthen the capacity of local civil society organizations should be initiated.
- During this period, USAID implementing partners can create, build and/or expand civil society networks throughout the country. Civil society and NGO representatives can be trained on various issues related to political processes in the country, i.e. electoral, constitutional, etc.
- Information-gathering activities should be considered and expanded. Nationwide polling and focus group initiatives can serve as valuable tools during this uncertain period.
- Relying on Internews' existing capacity and platform, public information campaigns related to democracy and governance issues can be designed and implemented. Information compiled from the above-mentioned polling and focus group activities can be used to inform and design these efforts.

FOREWORD

MSI's evaluation team would like to thank the USAID/South Sudan Mission for its support in the course of this assessment. Particular thanks are owed to Director Alexious Butler of the Democracy and Governance Office, whose constant availability and readiness to assist were instrumental in the accomplishment of this evaluation. Special thanks also to Patrick Riruyo and Victor Lako of the USAID/South Sudan Democracy and Governance team for their support in organizing meetings and providing valuable background documents.

We are especially grateful to Paul Temple, Geoffrey Olupot, Ben Parker, and the rest of the MSI staff for their invaluable support in coordinating logistics and scheduling; this evaluation would not have been possible without their dedication. The evaluation team would also like to express its gratitude to the Democracy International team in Juba, who was incredibly helpful and generous, providing us with important information and insights, and facilitating the conduct of our focus group activities.

Finally, it is our hope that this report can help USAID, IFES, the NEC, and future electoral assistance providers to place USAID's historical support to the South Sudanese electoral authorities in perspective and to identify ways in which future programming can build on its successes and further the development of the country's democratic construction.

Washington, DC

April 2015

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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF EVALUATION

The overarching goal of this final performance evaluation³ is to assist the USAID/South Sudan Mission in reaching decisions related to future investment in support of electoral processes. To achieve this, the evaluation had two lower-level purposes: (1) to determine the project's achievement of project goals and results, and associated underlying reasons for achievement and/or non-achievement, and; (2) to document lessons learned and best practices to inform future programming of similar project activities.

AUDIENCE AND INTENDED USERS

The evaluation's target audience is USAID. More specifically, the South Sudan Mission – and the Democracy and Governance team in particular – is interested in determining if the project achieved its goals. In an effort to inform potential programming in the future, this evaluation also documents lessons learned, aimed at identifying what strategies worked, and what things can be done better in the future. In addition, the USAID/Africa Bureau hopes to gain insights regarding the effective design of electoral interventions suitable for post conflict settings.

MSI's evaluation team believes the contents of this report will also be useful to the project's implementer, IFES, as well as its beneficiary, the GoRSS, particularly the NEC. Finally, the evaluation team also encourages USAID to share the findings – and the recommendations in particular – of this report with the implementer of the current election assistance project, Democracy International (DI).

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

1. Did the project achieve the right focus and balance in terms of design, theory of change/development hypothesis, and democratic needs of South Sudan?
2. What were the intended and un-intended results of project interventions?
3. To what extent was the IFES' operational model cost efficient and cost effective in achieving project expected results?
4. What have been the specific and differential effects of IFES project on male and female in terms of electoral results produced?
5. To what extent was the use of technical assistance and training strategy, and the procurement of election commodity approach sustainable?
6. Has implementation responded flexibly to changing circumstances?

³ USAID defines performance evaluations as those that 'focus on descriptive and normative questions: what a particular project or program has achieved (either at an intermediate point in execution or at the conclusion of an implementation period); how it is being implemented; how it is perceived and valued; whether expected results are occurring; and other questions that are pertinent to program design, management and operational decision making.' (USAID Evaluation Policy, Answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), Issue 1, March 25, 2011, http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pnadu535.pdf)

BACKGROUND

When the predominant objective of the 2005 Sudanese Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was met, a new nation was born. After years of bloody wars, constant famine, and genocide, the peoples of Southern Sudan now had their own, independent country: the Republic of South Sudan. With so much promise on the horizon – and the unwavering support of the international community on the table – South Sudan was bound for success. Seemingly, at least, the historic momentum it gained had primed it for a bright future.

The post-referendum euphoria, however, was followed by a post-independence hangover, which in turn led to a complete falling asleep at the wheel. While the South Sudanese most certainly got to their destination, once there, no one – including the international community – seemed to know what to do. Now that South Sudan had voted for and gained its secession from the North, no one knew exactly where the new country was headed; quite simply, no one had planned for that likely scenario.

Less than four years from its independence, South Sudan continues struggling to get-up on its own two feet. Internal power struggles have thrown the country into a dangerous spiral of violence, uncertainty and instability. A highly militarized political class and system – coupled with highly politicized military and paramilitary structures – continues exploiting ethnic rivalries that recently led to a particularly brutal outbreak of civil war in December 2013. With no democratic culture, little respect for the rule of law, and only weak – if, at all existent – democratic institutions in place, the country faces critical short, mid, and long-term challenges. Even the dramatic drop in international oil prices represents a cruel turn of events for the nascent nation; South Sudan was relying on oil revenues to fund its construction.

POLITICAL CONTEXT

IFES initiated its operations in Sudan in 2009, primarily to support the electoral processes outlined in the CPA between the Government of Sudan (GoS) and the Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement (SPLM). Among other things, the agreement called for general elections, held in April 2010, and subsequently, the 2011 referendum to determine Southern Sudan's secession from the North, or its definitive unity with the Khartoum-led government. As a result of the January 2011 referendum, Southern Sudan formally gained and declared its independence in July of the same year, joining the community of nations as the world's youngest country, as the Republic of South Sudan.

Since then, however, South Sudan has faced seemingly insurmountable challenges. Not only has it struggled to build a new nation – along with its democratic institutions – essentially from scratch, but it has also had to deal with many unsettled issues and disagreements among the country's power elite. Coupled with active efforts by Sudan to sabotage its construction and development, South Sudan is in a particularly precarious situation. It now ranks 171st out of 175 countries in Transparency International's 2014 Corruption Perception Index⁴. The 2015 World Freedom Report⁵ qualifies it as “not free,” and Foreign Policy's 2014 Fragile State Index⁶ describes it as “the world's most fragile country.” According to the World Bank, South Sudan ranks well below the Sub-Saharan Africa mean in terms of life expectancy, primary school enrollment, and gross national

⁴ www.transparency.org/cpi2014/results

⁵ www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world

⁶ www.foreignpolicy.com/fragile-states-2014/#rankings

income per capita.⁷ Indeed, South Sudan's independence came at an extremely high cost. Now, its future, unfortunately, faces staggering costs, as well.

South Sudan's current civil war, which broke-out in December 2013 as a result of power struggles within the ruling-party, has resulted in approximately 10,000 civilian and combatant deaths⁸. An additional 1.5 million persons⁹ have been displaced. According to UNICEF, approximately 12,000 children are being used as soldiers by both sides¹⁰. Ongoing peace talks in Addis Ababa between the two warring factions, the GoRSS (the SPLM/A) and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-In Opposition (SPLM-IO) were suspended without an agreement on March 6.

While the 2005 CPA did not necessarily call for the secession of the South from Sudan, it did outline the process for that particular outcome to almost-inevitably happen. Initially, the arrangement allowed for power and wealth sharing between the SPLM and the National Congress Party (NCP) of the North. Additionally, the agreement called for elections that could potentially usher-in the "democratic transformation" of Sudan and "make unity attractive". If unity resulted unattractive to Southerners, they would have the option to vote for secession in a subsequent referendum.

Ultimately, the elections, which were initially intended to be held no later than July 2009, were delayed and held in April 2010, only eight months before the January 2011 referendum. But rather than democratically transforming the country, the elections further entrenched the SPLM in Southern Sudan and the NCP in Northern Sudan. In fact, in terms of seat allocation in the National Legislative Assembly and the Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly, political representation was less pluralistic than it had been under the allocations negotiated in the CPA.¹¹

Of the 2010 elections, the Carter Center noted that "intimidation and violence in some areas of Sudan undercut inclusiveness, civic education was insufficient, the inaccuracy of the final voter registry prevented full participation in the process, [and] insufficient materials were provided to many polling stations."¹² Despite these – and other – well documented irregularities, including the widespread manipulation of results, this process and its results were ultimately recognized as sufficiently legitimate. Recognizing that the process was a needed step toward referendum, the 2010 elections were allowed to stand, both in Sudan, and among the international community.

Whereas both the SPLM and NCP had accepted a delay in the 2010 elections, the SPLM would not accept a delay of the referendum. Failure to hold the referendum on time seriously risked the outbreak of war between the CPA signatories. However, despite severe time constraints and logistical challenges, the referendum was peacefully held in January 2011. IFES' support – and that of other assistance providers – was seen as key to preventing a delay.

IFES' ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE INITIATIVES

IFES' electoral technical and commodity assistance had a very clear goal: ensuring the conduct of the 2011 referendum. Within this ultimate strategy, the Sudan Electoral Administration Support Project (SEASP) had two specific objectives: 1 – to strengthen the capacity of election management bodies in Sudan to administer credible elections and referenda, and; 2 – to provide election related commodities needed to ensure the success of these key political processes.

⁷ www.data.worldbank.org/country/south-sudan#cp_wdi

⁸ "South Sudan peace talks break up, mediator berates leaders", Aaron Maasho, Reuters, Mar 6, 2015.

⁹ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs – South Sudan Situation Report No. 78.

¹⁰ "Why South Sudan's children are fighting again", IRIN, Feb 12, 2015.

¹¹ "Assessment of USAID Support to The January 2011 Southern Sudan Referendum on Self-Determination", Jeremy Eckstein et al., Management Systems International, Oct 2011, p. 9.

¹² "Observing Sudan's 2010 National Elections April 11-18, 2010", The Carter Center, p. 3

The first step in reaching the referendum was the conduct of the 2010 elections. To that end, IFES first deployed a multi-disciplinary team of elections experts to both Northern and Southern Sudan to provide assistance in the organization of the contests. In and of itself, this is a testament to IFES' flexibility, organizational and operational mobility, and technical creativity. While the Khartoum government was seemingly committed to the successful and transparent conduct of this process in Northern Sudan, various sources interviewed by the evaluation team commented that this interest was less so for Southern Sudan. As a result, IFES served an important and key role in filling this technical gap. And while IFES' technical contributions for this process were sound, appropriate and considerable, the election itself was nowhere near free, fair, and transparent. Numerous statements and reports by both local and international observers – The Carter Center (TCC), in particular – question the integrity of the process, although ultimately recognizing its results. In the end, however, the goal for the Southern Sudanese, and indeed the international community, was to get to the 2011 referendum.

Preparations for the referendum began almost immediately following the 2010 elections. Like the NEC (still based in Khartoum for the referendum), the Southern Sudan Referendum Commission (SSRC) and Southern Sudan Referendum Bureau (SSRB) received significant technical and material support from IFES, and other donors, including the United Nations (UN). For this process, IFES' operational center of gravity shifted to Southern Sudan. In that regard, IFES ramped-up its Juba-based team, bringing-in more technical experts, providing significant support to the SSRB, and spearheading highly sensitive activities, such as voter registration and results transmission processes. Without a doubt, IFES contributions – both technical and material – were proven indispensable.

METHODOLOGY

The evaluation questions focused on the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of the project. The methodology for the evaluation was largely qualitative. The team utilized project records and secondary data from multiple sources and conducted a series of Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), Group Interviews (GIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). To supplement the qualitative data, the team also reviewed existing quantitative data related to: voter registration, voter turn-out, civic and education materials and events, training activities, public opinion surveys and other polling information.

Recognizing the three distinct phases within which IFES implemented its 2009-2013 project, the evaluation team conducted the assessment focusing on these three stages as well: the 2010 elections, the 2011 referendum, and the post-referendum/independence period. Given the very unique and changing circumstances, requirements, and conditions in each of these phases, IFES' assistance also adapted and adjusted to the emerging needs. In that regard – and for the purposes of this study – the evaluation team first examined each phase separately and then comprehensively as the sum of all its parts.

The evaluation was divided into four main stages: 1 – desk review and team planning; 2 – data collection; 3 – data analysis; and 4 – report drafting.

DESK REVIEW AND TEAM PLANNING

Once commissioned, the team convened in Washington, DC on February 25, 2015 and held an initial round of meetings with IFES, USAID and USAID implementing partners for South Sudan democracy & governance programs. Shortly thereafter, the team deployed to Juba, South Sudan, arriving in-country on March 1.

After arriving in-country, the evaluation team began a thorough desk review of project and other related documents. Subsequently, the team continued permanently identifying and reviewing additional primary and secondary documents throughout the course of the evaluation. A list of the sources for the desk review is included in *Section IV, References A*.

In a March 6 meeting with the Mission, the evaluation team presented the key points and gaps that had been – up to that point – identified. During this meeting, the team also presented to the Mission a proposed methodological approach for the conduct of the evaluation, including categories of target respondents and a work plan. This plan was duly approved by the Mission.

The methodological design emphasized a qualitative approach using snowball¹³ and purposive sampling¹⁴. It identified five categories of target respondents: 1 – USAID; 2 – IFES; 3 – direct project beneficiaries (electoral management bodies and the National Constitutional Review Commission- NCRC); 4 – other USAID and non-USAID implementers of electoral and constitutional assistance and; 5 – additional stakeholders (including civil society organizations, political parties, voters and the media). During the course of the evaluation, the team identified and met with several additional “knowledgeable others”, including religious leaders and faith-based organizations.

¹³ Snowball sampling is about identifying information rich key informants and critical cases by asking well situated people (e.g. USAID, IFES, other implementers, in this case) whom to meet.

¹⁴ Purposive sampling is sampling for information richness. The sample (which can be extremely small) can show a lot about issues of central importance to the evaluation or inquiry, and help to make sense of patterns that exist.

DATA COLLECTION

The evaluation team conducted approximately 54 interviews, not including focus group activities. *(Please refer to Annex XX for Additional Information)* Data was collected using semi-structured tools, prepared in advance. The team conducted interviews in Washington, DC, Juba, and in two of South Sudan's 10 states, namely, Western Bar El Ghazal and Northern Bar El Ghazal. The purpose of these state visits was to meet with recently-named state-level election officials, and conduct focus group activities with civil society representatives and other local actors.

The table below summarizes the source, method and number of data collection meetings.

Source ↓	Method→	KII	GI	FGD	Other	Total
USAID		8	2			10
IFES		8	1			9
U.S. Dept. of State		3				3
Project beneficiaries		5	3			8
Additional stakeholders		1	1	3		5
Other implementers		5			9	14
Knowledgeable others					5	5
	Total	30	7	3	14	54

DATA ANALYSIS

The team used different qualitative analysis methods to arrive at conclusions and recommendations. The most frequent methods were content, pattern and trend analysis¹⁵ to identify themes emerging from data collection and document review exercises; and response convergence/divergence analysis¹⁶ to determine where target groups exhibited similar or differing responses. The main strength of the methodology was the diversity of data collection sources which enhanced confidence in the findings. Primary data were drawn from two groups of direct project beneficiaries (national and state level election officials and NCRC), as well as numerous other electoral stakeholders, implementers, and others with deep contextual knowledge and experience.

LIMITATIONS

The evaluation was conducted 18 months after the completion of the IFES project. This time lapse, along with defining events in the county during this period (including the outbreak of violence in December 2013, and the US decision to suspend all support to the GoRSS) certainly impacted the recall and views of respondents. It also impacted the availability of some target groups and individuals. Thus, the evaluation's findings need to be considered in this light. Similarly, despite the best efforts of USAID and the evaluation team, there was a risk that the evaluation could be misread as a signal of imminent US plans to resume support to electoral and

¹⁵ Relying on the various sources of information (documents, KII's, GI's and FGD's) the evaluation team identified coinciding trends, results, and/or behaviors. When scientific and/or quantitative data is not available, this method is very accurate and particularly effective for evaluations of this nature.

¹⁶ Convergence/divergence analysis refers to validating information from multiple sources, or evaluating further if information is divergent or contradictory. If results are divergent/contradictory, evaluation would focus on identifying reasons/causes for differences.

constitutional bodies in the country. The evaluation team understands that at the time of this writing, democracy and governance assistance to the GoRSS remains suspended.

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, & RECOMMENDATIONS

IFES' 2009-2013 project covered three unique and distinct phases: the 2010 elections, the 2011 referendum, and the post-referendum/independence period. However, it is important to note that IFES' original scope did not contemplate any activities or support for the post-referendum period. The scope of IFES' original project encompassed only the February 2009 – September 2011 timeframe, ultimately only covering the 2010 elections and the 2011 referendum. IFES did subsequently request and was granted two, one-year no cost extensions (NCEs), prolonging the project through September 2013.

Each of these three phases brought with them completely different sets of circumstances and challenges. In undertaking this assessment, the evaluation team determined it was important to draw these distinctions. Thus, the questions being addressed in this evaluation cannot be seen as one-dimensional; different issues and matters were looked at and analyzed for each question and within the context of each distinct phase. Subsequently, these phases were examined comprehensively, as the whole of the IFES 2009-2013 project.

QUESTION 1: DID THE PROJECT ACHIEVE THE RIGHT FOCUS AND BALANCE IN TERMS OF DESIGN, THEORY OF CHANGE/DEVELOPMENT HYPOTHESIS, AND DEMOCRATIC NEEDS OF SOUTH SUDAN?

To answer this question, it is important to first note that the ultimate goal of USAID's democracy and governance strategy in Sudan – including the IFES' technical assistance project – was the implementation of the 2005 CPA, and perhaps more specifically, the 2011 referendum¹⁷. IFES' project – along with USAID's overall strategy – had a very mission-critical focus. It was not designed for long-term nation, or institution building. Nor was it intended to meet the “democratic needs of South Sudan.”

Findings

Within the strategic framework formulated by USAID, IFES' project strategy, operational structure, and implementation approach were consistent with and applicable for the ultimate goal. Recognizing the milestones necessary to reach the 2011 referendum, IFES first provided substantial assistance for the conduct of the 2010 elections. While far from free, fair, and transparent, these elections were technically sound, and ultimately, recognized by both the Northern and Southern Sudanese, as well as the international community.

With significant international assistance, the Khartoum-based electoral authorities conducted voter registration and education campaigns and ensured materials were widely distributed throughout the country, including in Southern Sudan. With substantial assistance from IFES, the NEC also designed and developed a reliable results transmission and tabulation system. Technically speaking, the elections were sound. Voters were allowed to vote and candidates allowed to stand for election. But, once election results started pouring into to the national processing center in Khartoum, Sudanese government authorities suspended the system's operation, clearly to manipulate election results and guarantee the NCP's victory in the North, and the SPLM/A's victory in the South.

¹⁷ Statement of Work, RFTOP, USAID EPP IQC DFD-I-00-05-00225-00.

In retrospect, perhaps, the 2010 elections represent a bitter-sweet development in South Sudan's independence process. Understanding the elections were a necessary step to get to the referendum, the Southern Sudanese and the international community turned the other way in what turned out to be a highly deficient, "election-like" activity. One prominent and closely-involved respondent stated that "what would have most certainly been red lights in other countries and/or other scenarios were seen as yellow during the 2010 elections." Simply put, the 2011 referendum had to happen, even if a highly dubious election process was the cost.

In no way, however, should this be construed as a misstep, or shortcoming on the part of IFES. In fact, IFES provided exceptional technical support for the elections, and used the process as an important building-block and exercise to prepare the referendum's workers; both for national level authorities in Khartoum and regionally-based authorities in Juba. But it is important to recognize that in highly polarized and sensitive environments, technical work is often times contaminated by political issues and interests. This is not unique to the Sudan/South Sudan scenario.

That being said, IFES was forced to walk a very fine line between the technical and the political. Ultimately, it did so very successfully, gaining the respect and credibility of not only the Southern Sudanese, but also those in the North. According to several USAID, USG, and UN staff interviewed for this evaluation, IFES' field leadership demonstrated a deep political understanding and prowess, a significant advantage, given the tense and sensitive environment.

And although IFES was certainly a key actor, it was not the only electoral assistance provider for this process. The UN also contributed significant technical assistance and material/resource support for the process. But IFES' flexibility, mobility, and creativity proved exceptionally beneficial, not only in terms of the direct support provided to the Sudanese electoral authorities, but also in terms of the leadership role it played among the other assistance providers. On this point in particular, there was widespread acknowledgment and agreement among the respondents interviewed for this evaluation.

Following the 2010 elections, the Sudanese electoral authorities – and the participating international electoral assistance providers – had only eight months to prepare for the CPA's final milestone event. With the ultimate goal of the 2011 referendum before it, IFES re-doubled its efforts and rebuilt the composition of its team on the ground. While previously its operational center of gravity was in Khartoum (for the 2010 elections), IFES seamlessly transferred the core of its logistical, technical, and financial capacity to Juba. IFES' foresight, operational and logistical mobility, and its close working relationship with USAID made its assistance for the referendum particularly effective.

While other assistance providers played significant roles, IFES' leadership was instrumental in ensuring "all the trains were running on time," as described by one respondent. Though not immune to its own internal administrative and bureaucratic delays, IFES moved swiftly and efficiently. When other assistance providers failed to provide certain assistance, or procure needed materials and/or services, IFES could and would quickly jump-in and resolve the matter. A prominent, non-IFES respondent closely involved with the process admitted that IFES' ability made other assistance providers uneasy, if not envious, making already difficult working relationships, more complicated. Ultimately, however, IFES managed itself and these relationships extremely well. UN staff involved-in and familiar with the process recognized – sometimes begrudgingly – the advantages IFES could offer.

IFES's project was tasked with meeting two, overarching objectives: "1 – strengthening the capacity of election management bodies in Sudan to administer credible elections and referenda; and, 2 – provide election-related commodities needed to ensure the success of these key political processes."¹⁸ A focus on longer-term institutional building was completely absent; not by mistake, but because the immediate needs were to first conduct the 2010 election that would pave the way for the organization the ultimate goal, the 2011 referendum. At the time of the project's initial design, USAID was not contemplating, nor focused on post-referendum democracy and governance assistance. Consequently, IFES did not plan, nor focus, on work beyond September 2011.

In that regard, then, IFES' project did not meet the "democratic needs of Sudan." But that was never the intention of IFES', and/or USAID's, assistance strategy. While it's true that IFES subsequently requested – and was granted – two, one year no cost extensions, its work during this period was not geared towards or designed for longer-term democratic strengthening, but rather to answer to and address the needs that emerged in the confusing fog of post-referendum and independence South Sudan. And even then, the work IFES suggested and planned on undertaking was subject to the political will, or lack thereof, of South Sudanese authorities. Ultimately, although IFES was very effective in its flexibility and ability to adjust to ever-changing and emerging needs, the evaluation team was unable to ascertain that the organization had a post-referendum strategy or vision in place. The same is certainly true for USAID, as well

Conclusions

IFES' role in the implementation of the CPA was not only instrumental, but crucial. Based on the work conducted by the evaluation team, it is clear that IFES successfully understood what was at stake, and did, in fact, "achieve the right focus and balance in terms of design, theory of change/development hypothesis." Based on a thorough review of project documents and interviews conducted by the evaluation team with USAID personnel, IFES staff, UN representatives and South Sudanese electoral officials, it is clear that the initial strategy and project design formulated by USAID was extremely effective. Understanding the political sensitivities of the CPA's implementation, the project allowed for a very efficient mix of technical assistance and commodity support, along with rapid-response capacities from both the Mission and IFES. Certainly, the strategy's design was appropriately formulated to affect the necessary conditions for the eventual conduct of the 2011 referendum.

That being said, the evaluation team believes it is also important to understand that the successful and appropriate design of the project strategy by USAID represented only half of the equation. Having a solid strategy alone does not guarantee success. Being able to rely on an internationally well-experienced, flexible, and creative technical assistance provider to implement the strategy, is the other half of the equation; and it's precisely that what IFES represented.

Finally, while it was impossible to know what would happen after the referendum, the referendum's probable results were quite clear; independence wasn't a surprise. The certain eventuality of independence should have led IFES (and USAID, as well as the international community, in general) to plan for and be prepared for the post-independence reality.

¹⁸ February 5, 2009 IFES Task Order DFD-I-07-05-00225-00 , pg. 5

Recommendations

Longer-term, Strategic Program/Project Development Initiatives

While the evaluation team understands and recognizes the pre-established timeframe in which assistance programs are implemented, technical assistance providers should formulate strategies and contingency plans that go beyond pre-determined project end-dates. Being able to think-ahead and be prepared for possible, yet unknown, scenarios is extremely important. Particularly in conflict/post-conflict environments where political situations tend to be volatile, unpredictable, and fluid, assistance providers should be constantly assessing conditions, exploring ways and opportunities in which it may provide additional assistance, or expand its scope.

In this regard, the evaluation team believes technical assistance providers should incorporate into their internal project implementation schemes efforts to permanently assess on-the-ground conditions and formulate activities and strategy plans for possible follow-on work.

QUESTION 2: WHAT WERE THE INTENDED AND UN-INTENDED RESULTS OF PROJECT INTERVENTIONS?

It is important to note that IFES' electoral support was offered in an environment where multiple variables affected project outcomes. These included the will, or lack thereof, of domestic actors to implement CPA milestones, the capabilities of the Sudanese and Southern Sudanese institutions, as well as the work of other assistance providers, including primarily the UN. This discussion must therefore be viewed in the light of IFES having made contributions to results and outcomes that cannot be completely, or even primarily, attributed to the organization. Rather, this discussion should be viewed as IFES having been a critical player in an overall international and USG strategy to implement the CPA milestones.

IFES and UN provision of technical support and commodity support was a critical component to the sound administration of electoral processes, as per the CPA. According to respondents, international support was even more critical for the referendum, which was more focused on the South because there authorities had less experience with implementing electoral events than their counterparts in Khartoum, where the NEC had conducted several elections in the past. In fact, several respondents indicated that in many ways the elections were a "trial run" for the more important referendum.

Within this context, one USAID official who was closely involved with IFES described SEASP as the "pinnacle of United States Government support" that "needed to make sure that nothing got in the way [of the referendum]." According to another USAID official, the rationale was that "we must have this election to get to the referendum." In fact, the notion that the 2010 elections were simply a milestone to the much more important referendum is a view that was shared by most members of civil society and international partners that were interviewed for this assessment. Due to the short implementation timeline and extremely complicated operational circumstances, yet another USAID official described the successful implementation of the referendum as "having pulled off a miracle."

The technically successful implementation of the elections and referendum is well documented, and the critical nature of international support (IFES and the UN included) is already established (see for example the Carter Center and EU Observer reports for the 2010 elections and 2011 referendum). Rather than redraw this connection, this section draws out some of the unintended results of IFES's support to the CPA electoral processes. The points listed below represent conclusions reached by the evaluation team, based strictly on the information that was compiled

and analyzed throughout the course of its work. However, these findings squarely coincide with those reached by an overwhelming majority of the respondents interviewed by the team.

Findings

Consolidation of the SPLM and NCP in the South and North Respectively

One of the unintended consequences of the 2010 elections was that they consolidated the power of the SPLM in Southern Sudan and the NCP in the North. In fact, the plurality of political parties was reduced in both areas in the post elections period, with many of the smaller political parties that had been allocated seats under the CPA negotiations losing representation. One respondent noted that while it was originally not in the interest of the NCP and SPLM to have elections as part of the CPA, both parties used the electoral process to their advantage to entrench themselves in their respective spheres. One informant noted that “legitimacy is important” for the SPLM in particular. However, in the Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly, the institution that would become the South Sudan Legislative Assembly in post-independence era, the SPLM won 94 percent of the seats, whereas before the elections it held 70 percent of the seats.¹⁹

Introduction of Undemocratic Practices

Another unintended consequence of the 2010 elections was that they introduced severely undemocratic practices into the political landscape of South Sudan (and Sudan, but many argue that these practices already existed here). One well-placed and knowledgeable international assistance provider remarked that the 2010 elections “did not have the minimum flavor of democracy”. Indeed several respondents observed that the NEC bypassed the electronic results tabulation system and manually falsified results when it found that the NCP was not winning with the preferred margins.

In the South irregularities were also widespread. Multiple respondents commented that the SPLM used its security apparatus to intimidate some voters to mark the “star” (the SPLM symbol). Focus group participants described the situation as a “a threat on the ground”, and characterized the 2010 elections as relatively peaceful but “not fair”. Opposition parties took a darker view, highlighting many alleged instances of the SPLM interfering with their campaigns or falsifying electoral results. One party member remarked that, in fact, “the current problems started in 2010 with the international community’s indifference to vote rigging and intimidation.” However, many respondents indicated that population was by-and-large willing to go along with SPLM domination because the movement was seen as being able to get the country to the referendum.

Imposition of Candidates

Focus group participants and civil society members highlighted that they felt that the SPLM “imposed candidates” on them rather than selecting them from the community. One respondent observed that the SPLM process for selecting candidates “was very poor.” This frequently cited shortcoming resulted in some credible and locally popular SPLM candidates running for elections as independents.

Elections as Conflict Triggers

Several respondents noted that the SPLM candidate selection process resulted in the outbreak of post-election violence when locally popular and well-supported candidates failed to win the

¹⁹ “Assessment of USAID Support to the January 2011 Southern Sudan Referendum on Self-Determination”, Management Systems International, Oct 2011, p. 9.

elections when running as independents. According to one respondent, the governor's races were particularly contentious. One civil society expert suggested that of the ten SPLM governors, five were "false governors". The perception that the SPLM imposed and facilitated its candidates' success was widespread amongst the respondents interviewed. Of the races resulting in post electoral violence, the cases of George Athor (gubernatorial candidate in Jonglei State) and David Yau Yau (State Assembly candidate in Jonglei State) were the most frequently mentioned²⁰.

The IFES-supported Southern Kordofan State elections, delayed until May 2011, are another example of an electoral process turning violent. In this instance, the NCP candidate was declared a winner in a close electoral contest in one of Sudan's critical disputed areas. According to a report by the Rift Valley Institute "The disputed gubernatorial election in South Kordofan, Sudan, in May 2011 was one of the key triggers of a conflict that has since engulfed large parts of the state, giving rise to atrocities that, according to the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, may amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity."²¹

Avoidance of War

Focus groups in Aweil, Juba, and Wau highlighted that one of the primary achievements of the CPA was that it put an end to the war between the Government of Sudan and the SPLM/A. The importance of the referendum in putting an end to the North-South war, and indeed avoiding renewed hostilities that would have arisen by failing to implement it, have also been highlighted in reports by the Rift Valley Institute²² and the United States Institute for Peace²³. Another previous report noted that "Northern and Southern acceptance of the referendum results was critical to avoiding large-scale violence in Sudan."²⁴ As such, one of the primary intended results of IFES' project was the conduct of a credible referendum that was recognized and accepted by the North and the South – as well as the international community – and consequently avoiding an outbreak of hostilities between both sides.

Establishment of South Sudan as an Independent Country

Another consequence of the referendum was the emergence of South Sudan as an independent country. This result was derived from the fact that South Sudanese voted in overwhelming numbers to secede from Sudan (the final vote was almost 99% in favor of separation). Focus group discussions conducted for this report highlight that civil society representatives agree independence was, by and large, the most significant achievement of the CPA.

While secession, or independence, outright was not an intended result of IFES' project, or even USAID's assistance strategy, the outcome of the referendum was never in doubt. The new country, however, was not prepared to govern itself. According to one UN official, even the planning on how to support a potentially emergent, independent South Sudan prior the referendum would have been politically controversial. In part due to the short timeframes for implementing the referendum (which required all attention to be put on the immediate political and operational needs of the event); in part due to political sensitivities; and in larger part due to the relative disinterest – or lack of strategic vision – on behalf of the South(ern) Sudanese government, little work was done to establish the institutions that would eventually support the democratic governance of the country.

²⁰ For more detail see: "Fighting for Spoils: Armed Insurgencies in Upper Nile", Small Arms Survey Issue Brief, 18 November 2011.

²¹ "Disputed Votes, Deficient Observation -The 2011 election in South Kordofan, Sudan", Aly Verjee, Rift Valley Institute, August 2011, p. 1

²² Rift Valley Institute, "Race Against Time", p. 6-7.

²³ USIP Special Report 228 (2009), p. 7

²⁴ "Assessment of USAID Support to The January 2011 Southern Sudan Referendum on Self-Determination", Management Systems International, Oct 2011, p. 9.

High Expectations for the Future

Focus group discussions organized for this evaluation and public opinion research previously conducted by the International Republican Institute (IRI) suggest that the successful implementation of the referendum raised expectations among South Sudanese in regards to a general improvement in the quality of life. Focus group discussions consistently made a link between the CPA, independence, and progress, as it relates to development.

IRI's September 2013 surveys indicated that 56 percent of the population felt that the country was "moving in the right direction". Within this category, 65 percent attributed "independence, separation, and/or freedom" as the reason for their choice. The next response attributed to the perception that the country was "moving in the right direction" was "democracy/political rights," with only 6 percent of respondents. Conversely, 42 percent of the population felt things were "not moving in the right direction"; these respondents offered reasons such as "crime and security" (15 percent) and "food shortage/famine" (14 percent) for their choices. While the survey does not specifically draw out how the association between independence and positive country development is established, it does highlight a powerful positive association between independence and perceptions of a positive trajectory of the country.²⁵

Lack of Confidence in Post-Referendum Government Institutions

Focus group respondents strongly agreed that government institutions were "weak" and incapable (or unwilling) to deliver the services that the population had hoped for in an independent country. Some participants pointed to the politicization of government institutions, whereas others pointed to a "lack of accountability". In any case, respondents were generally disappointed with government performance. This perception was tied to a general distrust of the government, which, according to the discussions, is more concerned with its political power than the quality of life experienced by the South Sudanese. These perceptions were also specifically projected onto the NEC and the NCRC.

NEC Perceived as Biased

Interviewees' had the general perception that the NEC was a political body that, since appointed by the government, would do its bidding. This view was highlighted by one respondent who pointed to the NEC Chairman's announcement of the 2015 elections as a particular affront to the institution's independence. In either case, the NEC, given its lack of financial support from the government, does not appear well placed to conduct much meaningful work, despite the fact that IFES prepared some very significant foundational groundwork (such as the creation of an electoral calendar, budgets, and internal rules) with which the institution could launch work in the future.

NCRC Perceived as Biased

Similar to the issues experienced by NEC, the NCRC suffers from a perception of being a "government institution." Further, while the NEC has seemingly managed to keep emerging inter-commissioner cleavages relatively in check, one respondent indicated that there were strong conflicts within the NCRC, particularly between the Secretary General and NCRC Chairman. Further, the NCRC appears to be perceived as either not caring about their public outreach role or as not being able to conduct its work appropriately.

²⁵ "Survey of South Sudan Public Opinion – April 24 to May 22, 2013", International Republican Institute, p. 6-8.

Civil society respondents frequently complained about the manner in which the NCRC's public consultation initiatives were held. One respondent questioned the NCRC's commitment, stating that "maybe they are not serious," highlighting the short duration of time the NCRC scheduled for each consultation (2 hours) and that it didn't even bother to take questions from the audience. In any case, the work of the NCRC is in a complete standstill, as it awaits government funding and an improvement in the security situation. One final issue with the NCRC is that many of its members have defected to the SPLM-In Opposition, making it unclear who is still currently engaged.

Conclusions

While it's clear that USAID's ultimate strategic goal – and IFES' primary project objective – was to ensure the credible organization and conduct of the 2011 referendum, along the way, other outcomes ensued. Many of these were intended and others were expected. But, as efforts to get to the referendum were undertaken, and even after the process was concluded, a series of unintended consequences also emerged. Intended, or not, many of these consequences can be built-upon in South Sudan's construction efforts. Others, however, may serve as long-standing obstacles to the country's future development.

The 2010 elections appear to have had several negative outcomes in regards to post-referendum institutional and governance development. The SPLM may have set such an authoritarian tone that any institution to which the SPLM-dominated executive of legislature appoints members will immediately be perceived as being biased, lacking in accountability, or corrupt. This perception, be it right or wrong, sets the institutions on an uphill battle for public confidence. In regards to the NEC, this is a critical ingredient to its eventual success. It is increasingly clear that the SPLM has comfortably entrenched itself in power, and is not prioritizing democratic institutions such as the NEC or NCRC. Despite multiple claims from respondents that the SPLM craves legitimacy, it is precisely these institutions that, if credible and strong, could undo the party's dominance of South Sudanese political institutions. The SPLM government, thus, would have little interest in strengthening these democratic institutions.

The successful conduct of the 2011 referendum, however, represented the completion of the most significant CPA milestone, thus avoiding full scale war between the GoS and the SPLM/A, and consequently creating the world's newest state. The separation from Sudan raised the hopes of the South Sudanese people for a brighter future that, at least according to focus group participants, should include improved prospects for development. Progress on security issues and development issues, however, remain constrained.

Recommendations

In terms of intended consequences, or expected results, IFES implementation of the SEASP successfully, effectively and efficiently met the project's objectives. The unintended consequences, or unexpected results, of the project's implementation were mostly unknown at the project's inception, albeit not entirely surprising when they occurred. As is widely true in many, if not most, electoral assistance initiatives, political issues can too often contaminate technical ones. The line between these two factors is often thin and blurry. But, given the purely technical nature of the project and its work, IFES was not positioned to tend to political factors, nor should it have. But closer and on-going political analyses of emerging developments and communication of findings and conclusions to USAID and USG could have better-prepared the SEASP and, perhaps, allowed for mitigation efforts, or at least, better preparation for likely scenarios.

QUESTION 3: TO WHAT EXTENT WAS THE IFES' OPERATIONAL MODEL COST EFFICIENT AND COST EFFECTIVE IN ACHIEVING PROJECT EXPECTED RESULTS?

As one of the holders of the Elections and Political Processes Indefinite Quantity Contract (EPP IQC), IFES competed for and was awarded SEASP in February 2009. The 31-month, \$70 million project was implemented through a contract award mechanism, as opposed to a cooperative agreement. Interestingly, of the \$70 million award total, \$48 million was set-aside for commodity/procurement support, representing close to 70 percent of IFES' project budget. One of the key assumptions when the assistance strategy was first developed was that the Sudanese authorities would not have enough resources – or would not make them available – for the conduct of the 2010 elections, and particularly the 2011 referendum, especially for Southern Sudan. This foresight proved tremendously advantageous for IFES, and ultimately, for the entire electoral assistance effort that was deployed.

Based on the guidance received from and indications given by USAID/South Sudan, for this particular question, the evaluation team focused on and analyzed three specific issues: human resources/personnel, logistics/operations/costs, and exit strategy.

Findings

Human Resources/ Personnel

All respondents familiar with the IFES team had the highest praise for the project's Chief of Party (COP). He was described by USAID staff, UN personnel, and other implementers as an "exceptional" leader, a "close confidant of the US government", very generous in briefing and sharing information with other implementers, "effective" and "constructive" in collaborating with the UN, and "able to achieve more than expected given the challenges."

On the other hand, IFES and other implementers had overwhelmingly positive views of USAID staff involved with democracy and governance assistance initiatives. Nonetheless, multiple implementers and some USAID officials themselves felt that the frequent turnover of USAID staff was a challenge for democracy and governance assistance. Some implementers noted that it was difficult for new, in-coming USAID staff to establish a rapport with them and project beneficiaries during their standard one year tour, given the challenging and fluid operating environment. One implementer characterized the turnover as "not contributing to the development of the program" and "detrimental to program flow." A USAID official flagged the turnover as a specific challenge for the IFES project, noting that the rotation of democracy and governance officers was especially high from 2009-2011, when IFES operations were split between Khartoum and Juba.

In various interviews conducted by the evaluation team, USAID, the NEC and other implementing partners had high praise for the IFES team and its efforts during the pre-referendum period, a particularly challenging and sensitive phase. A senior UN representative said that IFES' COP "knew the landscape well" and characterized the UNMIS/UNIRED relationship with IFES as "very productive". In fact, this UN official stated his relationship with IFES was even better than it was with UNDP. Another implementer described IFES' COP as instrumental in getting the NEC Chairman in Khartoum to "do the right thing," both for the elections and the referendum. One USAID official underscored the role that the IFES COP played in removing constant obstacles to the referendum in a technically sound and professional way, noting: "The superiority of our [USG and IFES] technical recommendations to move things forward saved the day a number of times."

IFES field staff and USAID alike also noted the role that IFES' Senior Program Manager played when he joined the project in IFES HQ in 2010. A senior member of the IFES team in Juba noted that "things improved drastically" when he joined the team. A USAID official remarked that IFES' Senior Program Manager "saw his job as figuring out how to make life for field-based staff easier and how to get them what they needed—and play interference if needed."

Several USAID and IFES sources noted the wise decision by the COP to reconfigure the field team after the 2010 elections, ahead of the referendum, including the naming of more than a dozen election experts mainly based in Juba. IFES selected experts with both technical and political acumen, in preparation for the highly sensitive referendum process.

IFES was very complimentary of USAID and US embassy staff, noting the "close", "open", "proactive" and "excellent" relationship on the ground, and the sense that "IFES work was part of the bigger political space." Another implementer commented that the USAID's DG officers during the pre-referendum period were "realistic", "flexible" and "understood the challenges."

USAID did express some frustration with the administrative functions at IFES HQ, such as slow decision making on procurement matters. However, they also noted that they felt the IFES HQ administration improved after the Mission formally raised its concerns with IFES HQ.

Shortly following the conduct of the referendum, IFES COP resigned and left the project, specifically in May 2011. The then-Deputy Chief of Party (DCOP) was consequently named Acting COP. Overall, the evaluation team heard positive comments about the Acting-COP from a range of target groups consulted for this evaluation. Respondents said that he was very good at relationship building, that IFES had a long-term vision for NEC capacity building during his tenure, and that the South Sudanese EMB was very positive and happy about IFES' support during this period. A senior NEC official said, "I was convinced that USAID would continue the contract with IFES because we were very comfortable with them." USAID noted that IFES had a competent, proactive and committed team on the ground and in headquarters in the final year of the project.

However, several USAID sources expressed frustration with IFES HQ regarding the protracted recruitment process for the original COP's replacement. Indeed, this process lasted seven months, finally culminating when the Acting COP was officially named COP in late 2011. While this did not have any discernable negative effects on the project and its implementation, it did create a sense of uncertainty among USAID staff involved with SEASP. Some IFES staff interviewed for this evaluation also cited that the extended lack of permanency may have had an undesirable effect on the team's general morale, however slight this may have been. Regardless, the evaluation team found no evidence that this situation effected the effectiveness of SEASP's on-going implementation.

As noted above, IFES, other implementers and some USAID officials reported that USAID turnover was challenging. The USAID Mission Director, Deputy Mission Director and DG team all changed after the referendum. One implementer pointed out the particular challenge of developing a new USAID democracy and governance strategy when there were such frequent changes in the USAID team. One USAID official familiar with the post-referendum period said that one-year tours are "just the norm" but "not an excuse for problems."

Logistics/Operations/Costs

SEASP had a rapid start-up period, with a head office in Khartoum and sub-office in Juba. The two-office approach was required, given the separate institutional structures in Northern and Southern

Sudan²⁶. Based on the evaluation team’s interviews with IFES staff, the organization felt that its strong presence and focus on relationship building in Khartoum beginning in 2009 benefitted the entire project, even after it closed its Khartoum office in July 2011. IFES cited the hard-won goodwill of the NEC in Khartoum as a legacy of the project and noted that the Khartoum-based Commission was eager for continued assistance and training. This perception was generally reinforced by election officials currently working in South Sudan who worked in the Khartoum NEC during the elections and referendum.²⁷

As has been previously mentioned, \$48 million of the overall \$70 million project budget was allocated for commodities; a unique model, indeed, but one that provided IFES, and the overall international effort of conducting the elections and – more importantly – the referendum, the ability and flexibility to meet the ever-changing and emerging material, service, logistical, and operational demands. IFES noted that it had been challenging to design a project with such a high commodity value because it left comparatively little money for project activities. Ultimately, however, IFES believes this became more balanced once implementation began.²⁸ USAID underscored IFES’ role in facilitating the huge logistical challenges for the 2010 elections, including the distribution of materials, saying “[they] really managed to make sure elections happened.” IFES also noted that the high commodity value was a useful “carrot” with the Khartoum-based NEC.

Based on documentation reviewed by the evaluation team, from June 2009 to August 2010, USAID granted source, origin and nationality²⁹ waivers for approximately \$34.4 million for office start up, the 2010 elections and the 2011 referenda. USAID granted IFES approval to use geographic code 935 (defined as any area or country, but excluding prohibited zones) instead of being restricted to geographic code 000 (United States only, as stipulated in the Task Order). IFES reported that anticipating the broad type of support that would be needed and obtaining the waivers was key to the project flexibility, allowing IFES to be much more agile than other implementers.

The UN in particular underscored the budget flexibility and fast decision making ability that IFES had during the project’s implementation. In addition to “very, very effective teamwork”, multiple UN officials characterized this flexibility as particularly key to the success of the referendum. A senior USAID official noted that this built-in flexibility was relied on multiple times during the referendum period and praised the team who designed the project.

USAID was complimentary of IFES cost control measures during the referendum. The Mission highlighted two cost-saving examples: (1) the decision to purchase lower cost waxed cardboard booths instead of plastic booths, and (2) the decision to retain a chartered plane for the Southern Sudan Referendum Bureau (SSRB) to facilitate its mobility and flexibility, instead of making do with other, highly unreliable air service options.

USAID also praised IFES for its efforts to apply lessons learned from the elections for the referendum process. In reports, IFES cited lessons learned in a number of areas, including operational planning, training and information, and results management. USAID noted in its review of IFES’ 2010 work plan that these references “enhance the activity descriptions and it’s much appreciated.”

²⁶ References to *Sudan* pertain to the pre-referendum period, while references to *South Sudan* pertain to the newly-formed sovereign state following the 2011 referendum vote.

²⁷ As noted in the methodology section of this report, the evaluation team did not have an opportunity to meet directly with project beneficiaries in Sudan.

²⁸ Ultimately, IFES used approximately one-quarter of its planned commodity budget. Other implementers- notably the UN- also provided substantial commodity support. Other donor support was not known at the time the IFES project was designed.

²⁹ Source, origin and nationality (S/O/N) refers to where an item is manufactured, where it is purchased, and the nationality of the companies involved.

IFES permanently closed its Khartoum office and substantially scaled down the number of full time international staff in Juba after the referendum. USAID noted that there was a plan in place to “beef up” staffing when, and if, needed. Given the generalized lack of activity in a post-electoral, or related event, a scaling down of staff and activities is not uncommon. After the referendum, the Southern Sudanese authorities focused on more immediate necessities, such as preparing for the creation of a new country, and its related negotiations with the North regarding asset transfers, administrative hand-overs, and other tasks. As a result, IFES’ scale-down during this period had no effect on the implementation of the project.

USAID awarded two no-cost extensions to IFES during this period. The first, in June 2011 (extending the project to September 2012) allowed IFES to continue supporting the institutional development of South Sudan electoral processes in line with the Transitional Constitution, which was enacted following the referendum. The second, in August 2012 (extending the project to September 2013) included a project modification to add a new, sixth project objective for IFES to support the work of the NCRC, which was established in January 2012.

Post-referendum, the South Sudanese government was working under an austerity budget that essentially stripped IFES’ main counterparts (the NEC and the NCRC) of their respective operating budgets. Without local counterparts with whom to work, IFES experienced increasing challenges.

Although not originally contemplated in its original programming, IFES did design and develop meaningful activities and strategies to continue its work with the NEC, and subsequently, with the NCRC. However, the delays in naming, first the NEC’s commissioners, and later the NCRC’s leadership, left IFES alone, unable to conduct or implement any activities. Once both bodies were created and their respective leaderships’ named, IFES was able to reinstate its activities. But once activities started to get off the ground, GoRSS funding for the NEC and the NCRC was suspended. In fact, the GoRSS decision to suspend its financing of the NEC and NCRC remained in place for the remainder of the project.

USAID reported that during this period it was seeking signs of political will from the government in the form of budget commitments. Regardless, IFES was able to effectively balance these two pressures, according to USAID, offering appropriate, budget-conscious support. USAID highlighted IFES’ “ability to maintain a very strong relationship with the government related to its goals for creating an election process and election commission” during this period.

The IFES commodity budget remained high for this period. As described by USAID, the procurement plan was vast because the expectation was that South Sudan would need everything – “[the budget] was designed to give room to respond as needed without having to amend the contract later.”

USAID – IFES HQ relations were solid during this period. However, several IFES and USAID key informants referenced a decision by the IFES Contracts and Grants (C&G) team to not approve the use of project funds for the construction of pre-fab offices for the NCRC; this despite the fact that IFES had already made the commitment, having initially received a green light to proceed. Many respondents believed that this impacted IFES’ credibility as an institution, noting that: “USAID was not happy;” “IFES policy was not based on realities on the ground;” and that IFES C&G had “outrageous risk intolerance.” Nonetheless, USAID reported that it appreciated the subsequent visit of a senior IFES official to Juba to personally explain this corporate decision to the Mission.

It's important to note that the Sudanese government bodies charged with conducting the referendum (the SSRB, the SSRB, and the 10 Southern Sudan state referendum bureaus) were temporary bodies, created exclusively for this purpose. Once the referendum was conducted, these bodies were disbanded. The adequate disposal of referendum assets was a challenge given the dissolution of the state referendum bodies and the lack of a new NEC in South Sudan. USAID expressed a desire to dispose of the SSRB equipment, in particular, in a "responsible way" and to use the equipment from SSRB and state capitals "as the nascent building blocks of the new country [...] but there was not a big political imperative to get the electoral house in order." This forced the project to identify several other beneficiaries for the assets and required a disproportionate level of effort from IFES.

Exit Strategy

There was a widespread expectation that IFES would be awarded the follow-on election support project. Several USAID officials, IFES staff, and other implementing partners interviewed by the evaluation team expressed their surprise that IFES would not continue in South Sudan. The NEC, in particular, expressed its "shock" about IFES' departure, telling the evaluation team they were completely caught by surprise by this decision, and that they hadn't even been made aware of the possibility of IFES leaving. To this day, the NEC leadership – and its Chairman, in particular – remain "upset" that IFES didn't continue its assistance initiatives in South Sudan. USAID expressed regret that the Mission had not been clear with project beneficiaries or other donors regarding the fact that a competitive bidding process was initiated for the follow-on, and that as a result, IFES assistance would possibly not continue. For example, USAID noted that several other donors were planning to provide new funding to IFES to support the establishment and development of State High Electoral Committees (SHECs).

IFES reporting shows that IFES commenced close out procedures in April 2013. However, a senior USAID official who was in Juba when the project ended reported that IFES only began close down procedures in earnest in the final days of the project, after being notified that they had not won the follow-on contract. USAID reported that as a result, IFES was 30 days late in submitting its close out plan, but was still able to effectively close down and properly dispose of its property.

The NEC was very grateful for the extensive office compound and material support provided by IFES in the final year of the project. They also noted that the code of conduct, electoral calendar, and internal rules of procedure and budgets that IFES helped the NEC develop currently serve as a basis for the Commission's ongoing work. IFES confirmed to the evaluation team that they provided hard copies and CDs with all NEC-related materials, as well as a server (purchased during the project) containing referendum and related data and voter registration data to the NEC before the project ended. IFES also confirmed that they shared all items with the NEC in soft copy at the time they were developed. However, the NEC officials who the evaluation team met with were not aware of any soft copy materials or files shared by IFES.

Conclusions

The 31-month, \$70 million SEASP was implemented through a contract mechanism, as opposed to a cooperative agreement. Based on numerous interviews with USAID personnel, the decision to award this project through a contract mechanism had to do with the high political sensitivities regarding the 2010 elections and 2011 referendum, and USAID's need to have substantial involvement and control over project strategies and activities.

For implementers, work under a contract's award mechanism can often-times be rigid, time-consuming, inflexible and excessively administratively/contractually heavy. However, the working

arrangement between IFES and USAID was very close, collaborative, and well-coordinated. Ultimately, the USAID-IFES relationship was exceptionally solid and the many-times rigid contracts mechanism was not an impediment.

The \$48 million set-aside for commodity/procurement support turned out to be incredibly advantageous, not only for IFES, but for the entire electoral technical assistance support strategy – including other assistance providers. The robust procurement budget allowed IFES the capability to answer quickly to emerging needs. According to several sources interviewed by the evaluation team, the hefty procurement support budget also served IFES as a useful bargaining chip. Indeed, when IFES encountered initial challenges in its work with the Khartoum-based NEC, IFES effectively used the \$48 million as somewhat of a carrot and stick strategy, ostensibly offering technical assistance as a condition for commodity support. Ultimately, however, the effective relationship management efforts led by IFES’s Chief of Party built a strong relationship with the NEC.

Recommendations

Field visits by HQ contracts/grants and procurement staff

Successful project/program implementation requires effective technical, operational, administrative, financial, and contractual management. Often-times, field operations and HQ backstopping don’t necessarily see eye-to-eye. This is not unique to IFES, or to this project.

Despite a highly sensitive, high-stakes, pressure-filled initiative, IFES’ implementation of the SEASP was very successful. With so many moving parts – technical, financial, administrative, and contractual – IFES overall management of the project was very effective. The project did experience some hiccups on the contractual/procurement end, leading to an unfortunate incident in which IFES was unable to honor a commitment it had made, both to USAID and the NCRC. Based on the evaluation team’s findings, the problem’s roots are in an unclear understanding of field operations and technical implementation on the part of HQ based contracts/procurement staff.

While these issues are not unique to IFES, the evaluation team does recommend the incorporation of periodic field visits by HQ contracts/procurement staff to help bridge the gap in understanding between contractual rules and regulations and field operations and technical implementation. A better understanding of what particular projects are about, as well as the “big picture” purpose of project initiatives would help strengthen a greater and better sense of mission.

Internal mid-term project evaluations

Given the work carried-out during the course of this assessment, the evaluation team recommends the conduct of mid-project evaluations for future projects. Internal, mid-term assessments can be very helpful to determine project shortcomings, identify strategic opportunities, and make necessary adjustments, including budgetary re-alignments. Of the \$48 million commodity procurement support in its budget, for example, IFES expended roughly only \$14 million, leaving \$36 million unused.

While the post-referendum/independence environment in South Sudan may not have been ideal for general assistance – and commodity support, specifically – the evaluation team was unable to determine whether or not there had been any viable opportunities to rely on these funds and provide additional support, or even if this possibility was explored.

Regardless, mid-project evaluation exercises can help project implementers – and indeed, donors – identify emerging needs, formulate new strategies, and make budgetary adjustments, if necessary.

QUESTION 4: WHAT HAVE BEEN THE SPECIFIC AND DIFFERENTIAL EFFECTS OF IFES PROJECT ON MALE AND FEMALE IN TERMS OF ELECTORAL RESULTS PRODUCED?

Based on a thorough review of project – and other IFES institutional – documents, as well as the evaluation team’s familiarity with IFES and its programs, the organization has traditionally sought to incorporate specific and targeted efforts aimed at increasing the involvement and participation of minority groups, including youth, people with disabilities, and women, among other groups. In fact, IFES is considered a pioneer in this regard, particularly as it relates to electoral assistance programs. That being said, the general situation in Sudan/South Sudan was so unique, critical, and politically sensitive, that these traditional IFES initiatives did not represent a focus of the project’s overall strategy. Nor was it a priority in USAID’s – or the international community’s – strategy.

However, where and when it could, IFES did organize events or activities and introduced measures that encouraged and facilitated the participation of women. The evaluation team found, however, that even then, it is important to note the disproportionate levels of illiteracy among the general population in Sudan/South Sudan; these levels are even higher for women. Thus, the number of available women with even the most basic levels of education was – and continues to be – exceptionally low.

Furthermore, USAID’s *Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy* was not introduced until March 2012, three years into IFES’ project. The policy aims to integrate gender equality and female empowerment throughout the Agency’s Program cycle and related processes- in strategic planning, project design and implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. While IFES was aware of the policy when it was introduced, the evaluation team did not find evidence that the policy had an impact on the IFES project.

Findings

Based on a thorough review of project documents, as well as interviews with both IFES staff and USAID personnel, SEASP did not have a specific focus on gender. In that regard, however, it’s important to note that gender initiatives, in general, were not a priority of USAID’s – and/or the international community’s – strategy. IFES’ Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) dated December 2009 shows plans to disaggregate data by gender for two standard indicators: PI (GDJ 3.2): *Number of electoral and referendum procedures strengthened using USG assistance* and 2.1 (GDJ 3.2): *Number of election and referendum officials trained with USG assistance*. There were no gender-specific targets for training events; the number of male and female participants was beyond the control of IFES, as the NEC had full authority for appointments at all levels of the EMB structure.³⁰

While gender equality and female empowerment was not a central focus, the project included several activities with a gender element, such as assisting electoral management bodies (EMBs) to develop strategies for gender-inclusive recruitment, working with other democracy and governance implementers to develop voter education campaigns targeting women, and supporting domestic observation groups to pay special attention to women’s participation in the elections³¹. For example, several international implementers and domestic civil society organizations noted the

³⁰ Based on available reporting for the 11 IFES training events for electoral officials in FY09 and FY10, the evaluation team estimates that approximately 7% of the participants were female and 93% were male.

³¹ The evaluation team heard that a challenge in the recruitment of domestic observers was finding enough of them who can read and write. This was a more severe challenge with women than men.

role that IFES played in sharing information and providing briefings, which, in turn, helped them to inform their civic and voter education efforts for the elections.

A substantive review of IFES project documents – as well as those of some implementing partners – along with official NEC figures led the evaluation team to conclude that women were as eager as men to participate in the 2011 referendum. While the evaluation team struggled to find reliable statistics on the 2010 and 2011 electoral events, alike, one figure that is worthwhile pointing out has to do with voter registration for the referendum: 52 percent of the eligible citizens who registered to vote in the 2011 referendum were women. And while the evaluation team was unable to come across a gender breakdown of voter turn-out figures³², the team can confidently assume that the referendum’s registration numbers for women translated into participation for the historic exercise.

During the post-referendum period, IFES did initiate important efforts aimed at addressing gender issues. Specifically, IFES provided assistance to the newly-established NEC in the drafting and establishment of its internal rules and regulations. Currently, the NEC is using this as a basis for its work, including for gender-related issues. An example of this relates to the NEC’s recruitment of staff and SHEC members. The NEC’s internal rules and regulations require that no more than two-thirds its employees be of the same gender.³³ In other words, at the very least, 33 percent of NEC employees should be women. The NEC reported that for most SHECs, two of the five members (40 percent) were female. The evaluation team was unable to verify figures for all 10 states, but did observe that there was only one female SHEC member in Northern Bar El Ghazal State, and two female members in Western Bar El Ghazal’s SHEC. Members of civil society organizations confirmed that the NEC had consulted with civil society on the appointment SHEC members.

For the NEC itself, two of its nine members (22 percent) and one of its four directors (25 percent) are women. This is broadly in-line with the affirmative action clause in the Transitional Constitution, which calls for at least 25 percent female representation in legislative and executive organs at all levels of government.³⁴ However, the team learned that the 2012 National Elections Act (NEA) does not include a procedure for electoral institutions to achieve the quota. This gap will need to be addressed in future amendments to the legal framework for elections.

Other USAID implementers reported that gender indicators for democracy and governance programs focused on output levels (e.g. number of men/women who attend training). The evaluation team was unable to confirm or find any examples of past or current democracy and governance projects with customized indicators or outcome-level indicators for gender. However, implementers conveyed that they are “always cognizant of it [gender]” but that “it’s not meaningful to tick a box” and that “high illiteracy rates and the general status of women” can make reporting on gender challenging.

With IFES’ second no-cost extension, a sixth project objective was introduced; this one was designed to support the constitutional process. In it, IFES did add a new performance indicator with a gender disaggregation element, GJD 1.1: *Number of groups participating in development of a permanent constitution with USG assistance.*

³² Unfortunately, the NEC in Juba had limited data on hand. None of the USAID officials whom the evaluation team approached was aware of good, available data; some suggested that there may be more information available in Sudan. The evaluation team was able to obtain official referendum statistics produced by the SSRC. The SSRC report contains data on registration, total votes cast and turnout for the whole of the country; however, none of it is disaggregated by gender.

³³ Republic of South Sudan National Election Commission Internal Rules & Regulations, 06 September 2013, Section II.9 (2).

³⁴ Transitional National Constitution of South Sudan, Article 16(4) (Bill of Rights).

Conclusions

While not underestimating the importance of inclusion – and the participation and involvement of women, specifically – many USAID, UN, and IFES personnel interviewed by the evaluation team stated there were other, more immediate issues that had to be addressed. Incorporating specific inclusion initiatives into project strategies – as IFES normally does – assumes the situation and conditions in a particular country/environment are stable and appropriate for such measures. But the situation in Sudan/South Sudan was immensely unique; a traditional approach was not necessarily appropriate. Just being able to conduct the 2010 elections, and pave the way for the 2011 referendum was challenging enough, and ultimately, that was the focus of the assistance strategy.

Recommendations

Clearer Definitions and Directions Regarding USAID Gender Strategy and Reporting

USAID should ensure that all strategic planning, project design and monitoring and evaluation efforts reflect USAID policy and the expectations of the South Sudan Mission regarding gender equality and female empowerment.

Incorporation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Types of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW³⁵) into its Future Programming

The CEDAW has important implications for constitutional and electoral reform in South Sudan and can be used as a reference point for developing customized performance indicators. USAID should permanently incorporate CEDAW-related requirements into its future strategic planning, project design and monitoring, evaluation and learning exercises in South Sudan.

Ensure Equitable Participation of Women

The Transitional Constitution calls for at least 25 percent female representation in all legislative and executive organs at all levels of government. For the NEC leadership, two of its nine members (22 percent) and one of its four directors (25 percent) are women. However, the evaluation team learned that the National Elections Act (NEA) does not include a procedure for electoral institutions to achieve this quota. As a result, this gap needs to be addressed by the NEC in future amendments to the legal framework for elections. As an important component of the overall EMB structure, the NEC's legal affairs office can and should play an important proactive role in recommending electoral policy. The review and subsequent amending of the country's transitional constitution could present an opportunity to update and improve the standing NEA, including measure to adopt the above-cited requirements.

QUESTION 5: TO WHAT EXTENT WERE THE USE OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING STRATEGY, AND THE PROCUREMENT OF ELECTION COMMODITY APPROACH SUSTAINABLE?

³⁵ In September 2014, South Sudan ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Types of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Countries that ratify the Convention are legally bound to put its provisions into practice. CEDAW provides a basis for realizing equality between men and women through ensuring women's equal access to, and equal opportunities in political and public life. General Recommendation 23 of CEDAW requires states to report "statistical data, disaggregated by sex, showing the percentage of women relative to men who enjoy these rights." This has implications for publishing e.g. voter registration and voter turnout data in the future.

Sudan/South Sudan and the historic CPA represented a never-before-seen scenario which demanded innovative strategies. USAID's deep understanding of the-on-the-ground situation and necessities, coupled with IFES's flexibility, implementation capability, and high caliber human resources optimized what was already a well-designed strategy. Sustainability for this project, however, cannot be looked at from the perspective of a traditional democratic development initiative. The historical context in which this project was implemented must be considered.

Not only did the implementation of the CPA avert war, but it also resulted in the birth of a new nation. Thus, sustainability must be looked at through the lens of resolving a conflict, and relieving the suffering of approximately 12 million people. As previously discussed, IFES' project had an immediate-term, mission-critical focus. The development and strengthening of democratic institutions was not its purpose. Rather, its purpose was to implement the CPA – and the 2011 referendum in particular – and consequently an end to the long-running war.

Findings

Beginning with direct support to the electoral authorities of Sudan, which was based in Khartoum, IFES worked to ensure the 2010 elections would be technically sound, and consequently, recognized and accepted. IFES respondents pointed out that, initially, however, the NEC was reluctant, if not interested, in receiving support from IFES. Perhaps understanding the inevitability of Southern Sudan's secession, the authorities in Khartoum were generally not inclined to receive international assistance. In addition, having impartial, international experts so closely watching their work may not have appeared attractive to the Sudanese authorities. But IFES was gently persistent, eventually succeeding in getting the NEC to soften its stance. Having such a robust commodity support budget certainly helped. Eventually, the Sudanese authorities understood help was needed.

IFES provided significant technical guidance and assistance in various key and sensitive election activities, including voter registration and results transmission strategies. Through its mix of commodity support and the provision of technical expertise, IFES managed to make substantial contributions to ensuring the 2010 elections took place.

The evaluation team believes, nonetheless, that it is important to note that the highly technical support provided by IFES was a "one-shot deal," not meant for the longer-term strengthening or development of the NEC, but rather to ensure the elections took place, thereby securing the continued path toward the referendum.

While some of the support and resulting materials were later used as a guide and/or basis for the referendum, these products were designed to address immediate goals. For example, poll worker training and civic education materials developed for the 2010 elections were later used for the referendum. Although these were two very different processes, many of the voting and vote-counting mechanics remained the same, allowing for the materials' design to be recycled, with modest changes and adjustments, of course.

Conversely, the voter lists created as a result of an extensive voter registration campaign for the 2010 elections were a one-time initiative. Given eligibility requirements for the 2011 referendum, and voters' mobility between North and South, it was politically and technically impossible to use this same list for the referendum, or even as a basis for the 2011 process.

While IFES' center of operational gravity was initially in Khartoum, it also opened an office in Juba. This dual office approach was clearly strategic, allowing for IFES to establish a presence in the South, understand and gain on-the-ground knowledge of limitations in the region, and build

confidence and relationships with many of the key actors that would most certainly be involved with the referendum.

Having already worked closely with the Khartoum-based NEC for the 2010 elections, and having had a regional base of operations in Juba, IFES was keenly aware of the challenges and limitations the referendum process would face, starting with, perhaps, a less-than lukewarm commitment and effort – technically and financially – from the Khartoum government. But IFES also understood the human resource, logistical and operational challenges it would face in the South. Save for the electoral process that had been undertaken in April 2010, there was no electoral experience on which to build, much less an electoral infrastructure that could cover a vast and remote landscape.

In practice, IFES' technical experts were essentially imbedded within the SSRB in Juba. Its presence within the SSRC in Khartoum was also important, although most – if not all – of the operational and logistical activities were performed in the South. Coupled with its robust commodity support capacity, IFES proved to be an indispensable player in the organization and conduct of the referendum. As cited by numerous sources that were consulted throughout the course of this evaluation, without IFES' unwavering and unconditional support, the referendum may not have been successful, or even possible.

Based on the activities conducted for this assessment, the evaluation team found that from a programmatic, operational, and financial standpoint, IFES was extremely well-positioned to provide highly meaningful, effective and impactful post-referendum assistance. In this regard, all the pieces were in place for IFES to take advantage of the momentum gained and the widespread enthusiasm that followed the referendum, and subsequently, independence. Despite the lack of a plan, many believed the euphoria would certainly carry-over to the difficult task of building a new nation and its democratic institutions. The evaluation team found that while other assistance providers significantly downgraded their presence – or left the country altogether – IFES maintained a presence in the country and had preserved its ability to expand its presence further, when and if necessary. In addition, of the \$48 million in commodity support in its overall budget, only \$14 million had been spent up to that point.

But, besides not having a democracy and governance strategy in place, the evaluation team believes that the reality of the new situation may have been misread by USAID, IFES and others. While post-referendum/independence South Sudan was considered a post-conflict environment, this was not the case. In fact, deeply-rooted and unresolved issues within the SPLM/A remained firmly intact, keeping the newly created nation in a continued state of potential, if not unresolved, conflict.

Furthermore, interviews of USG officials, South Sudanese political party members and representatives of local non-governmental organization concluded that adequate conditions on the ground for nation and democracy building were simply lacking. As the SPLM/A entrenched itself in power, interest in building democratic institutions quickly evaporated. Seemingly, the government of South Sudan was not nearly as interested in the country's democratic development as was IFES.

Nonetheless, the evaluation team found that not all has been lost. There are important legacies that IFES' efforts left behind. There are foundational documents in place within the NEC: internal rules and regulations, an organizational structure, a code of conduct, and an electoral budget and calendar – highly technical documents that the NEC by itself would most likely not have been able to produce. The general mission of the organization, as the country's democratic vanguard institution seems firmly entrenched within its personnel. NEC and SHEC functionaries interviewed

by IFES demonstrated a genuine commitment to the democratic development of the country, and recognized the important role that they should play.

Conclusions

While the mission-critical focus of the project clearly addressed and resolved an immediate need, or goal, the evaluation team found – and many of the individuals interviewed agreed – that a lack of a longer-term strategy aimed at building a new country and its democratic institutions certainly had adverse effects. However, it is important to understand that from a project implementation standpoint, planning for the unknown is an unlikely, if not altogether impossible, luxury. The immediate on-the-ground reality in post-referendum Southern Sudan and post-independence South Sudan was also not conducive to nation-building. Finally, the overwhelming lack of clarity and direction from the new country's authorities made planning for assistance provider enormously challenging.

Recommendations

Incorporate Information Management and Knowledge Transfer Strategies

Despite the significant resources and efforts that were expended throughout the course of the project, there is very little – if any – information and/or knowledge that has been preserved by the South Sudanese electoral authorities. The evaluation team was made aware of a series of documents, manuals, and other proprietary assets that were developed for the NEC by IFES. Unfortunately, most of these resources have been badly misplaced, or completely lost.

Particularly when attempting to build and strengthen the institutional capacity of an EMB, carefully tailored and specific efforts must be made to ensure a systematic transfer of knowledge and adequate management of information resources. Future projects should seek to incorporate specific efforts in this regard, not as secondary activities (or an afterthought) but as a key objective in the strategic framework of an assistance initiative.

Incorporate Inventory Exercises into Electoral Assistance Strategies

Having contributed to and supported the creation, development and procurement of substantial resources (equipment, materials, documents) to the 2010 elections and the 2011 referendum, there is little – if any – information or documentation related to their whereabouts. While the evaluation team understands some of the materials, documents, and other contributed resources were for one-time use, meant to address a specific need, there were other materials that could have been re-used, and in fact, relied-upon to build a permanent electoral infrastructure, both at the national and state levels. Based on the evaluation team's work, the lack of reliable record-keeping in this regard has hindered efforts at building the NEC. While IFES did, in fact, make efforts in this regard, these were loosely followed-up upon by the local authorities. Ultimately, the materials and other resources that were transferred have been lost, or misplaced.

To guarantee the proper preservation of procured, designed, and developed materials, documents, and equipment, future electoral technical assistance projects and providers should incorporate comprehensive inventory strategies, including training, into their implementation strategies. Coupled with comprehensive end-of-mission briefings for local counterparts, these inventory initiatives would greatly benefit local electoral authorities, safeguarding the resources that have been created and contributed.

QUESTION 6: HAS IMPLEMENTATION RESPONDED FLEXIBLY TO CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES?

Within the framework of its originally intended goals and objectives, the evaluation team believes the IFES program was considerably flexible. Beyond simply tweaking its project implementation focus along the way, the project was proactive and ahead of the curve, making substantial personnel related changes when necessary, leveraging political and diplomatic support, and building confidence and credibility among counterparts and beneficiaries, as well as other assistance providers.

Findings

As soon as it learned it had been awarded the 31-month, \$70 million project, IFES dispatched a team of technical and administrative experts to Sudan to initiate its work. At the time, the expectation was that elections would be held in July of 2009, only five months after IFES originally arrived in-country. Despite the short window, the evaluation team found that IFES was prepared to immediately provide a wide-array of meaningful support to the Sudanese authorities. However, a severe lack of preparedness – and an apparent lack of interest – on the part of the GoS forced a delay in the process, increasing tensions between the North and South, and with the international community.

This delay, however, did allow for a more thorough and appropriate organization of the elections, which were eventually held in April 2010. According to several IFES sources interviewed by the evaluation team, getting the NEC to accept IFES assistance was a significant challenge. To its credit, IFES' field leadership was very effective in building confidence and trust, eventually leading to an opening from the Sudanese.

IFES' start-up work proved highly strategic, while focusing technical, financial, and diplomatic efforts in Khartoum, it was also able to deploy a team to Juba to establish a regional center of operations for Southern Sudan. Not only did this allow for IFES to get a lay of the land and provide much needed support to the electoral process in the South, but it also provided it the opportunity to identify key players and build strong working relationships for the eventual referendum. Ultimately, this was key.

Preparations for the referendum began immediately following the April 2010 elections. Like the Khartoum-based NEC, the SSRC and the Juba-based SSRB also received significant technical and material support from IFES. Recognizing the importance of this process, IFES' operational center of gravity shifted to Southern Sudan. IFES' field leadership also understood the need to reconfigure the composition of the team, bringing-in more technical experts. In so doing, IFES was able to more effectively provide much needed support to the SSRB, an organization whose leaders had very little, if any, experience whatsoever. In fact, IFES experts were working hand-in-hand, shoulder-to-shoulder with the Southern Sudanese authorities. IFES' contributions also included spearheading highly sensitive activities, such as a new voter registration process for the referendum, as well as a results transmission and tabulation process.

Following the referendum – and independence, IFES formulated and suggested a series of initiatives aimed at building the country's nascent democratic institutions. However, it is clear from the documents reviewed and interviews conducted by the evaluation team that the emerging GoRSS was simply not moving at the same pace.

After the January 2011 referendum, for example, the authorities of what was still Southern Sudan focused their efforts on the actual independence process, preparing for its formal administrative,

political, financial, and geographical split from the North. Understandably, the Southern Sudanese authorities were forced to focus on more urgent matters.

During this period, the Southern Sudanese also focused on making adjustments to the Interim Constitution of Sudan, removing any and all references to the North. The Interim Constitution, which governed a unified Sudan (North and South), was used as the basis for the Transitional Constitution of South Sudan, which was ultimately signed and put into effect on July 8, 2011, the day South Sudan formally declared its independence. Though “transitional, this document remains the new country’s *Carta Magna*.

After formal independence, one of IFES’ main objectives was to provide logistical, operational and material support to the government institution charged with drafting a permanent constitution, the NCRC. While IFES was prepared to continue providing support in the NCRC’s creation and establishment, including support for key civic education and public consultation efforts, a clear lack of commitment from the GoRSS rendered this assistance ineffective.

Conclusions

Indeed, SEASP was built for flexibility, anticipating the varying needs and requirements of the 2010 elections and the 2011 referendum. Even the post-referendum period, for which nothing was previously planned, proved to be an example of IFES’ flexibility and ability to respond quickly to changing circumstances. Based on numerous interviews with project staff, USAID personnel, and South Sudanese government functionaries, IFES offered considerable assistance during the post-referendum period, designing strategies aimed at building the new country’s EMB and supporting the constitutional review and drafting process. Disinterest and a lack of commitment on the part of the GoRSS, however, left IFES without South Sudanese counterparts with whom to work. The lack of commitment from the GoRSS – coupled with the outbreak of war in December 2013 – also resulted in the eventual decision from USG to suspend all support activities. As of April 2015, this suspension remains in place.

General Recommendations

In this section, MSI evaluators contracted to conduct this assessment present a series of recommendations aimed at improving potential electoral assistance initiatives in South Sudan in the future. While these recommendations have been based on the evaluation team’s findings in South Sudan, they need not be considered exclusive to the country. As many are based in general best practices, the recommendations outlined below can be considered for and implemented in other countries or environments, as well.

Below, the evaluation team presents recommendations that are wholly viable and practical. Furthermore, several of the recommendations are immediately actionable, particularly those made to the NEC. The general recommendations outlined below can effectively be implemented alone, or complementary of those formulated to address the specific questions reviewed and discussed previously in this section.

For Implementer

- **Conduct of internal and periodic project evaluations:** The conduct of mid-project evaluations can be very helpful to determine shortcomings, identify strategic opportunities, and make necessary adjustments. In a highly sensitive and fluid environment, such as was the case in Sudan/South Sudan, these evaluations can take the form of short, status check exercises to ensure the effectiveness of project implementation. In traditional, slower-

paced initiatives, this could take the shape of more formal SWOT analysis exercises. Regular, internal assessments of the project's performance can prove enormously beneficial, improving the overall performance of the project and its impact. The evaluation team would highly encourage electoral technical assistance providers to adopt measures in this regard.

- **Organization and conduct of comprehensive, joint, end-of-mission debriefs:** IFES' departure from South Sudan was quite abrupt. Despite the clear September 30, 2013 project end date, the organization seemed unprepared for its eventual close-out. The project's main counterpart and beneficiary was even less prepared for IFES' eventual departure. In fact, the NEC was not even aware of the possibility that IFES might be leaving. To this day, this unfortunate oversight weighs heavily on the NEC.

To avoid similar situations in the future, comprehensive, joint, end-of-mission debriefs between the implementer, USAID, and beneficiaries would be enormously useful, even more so with the participation of the new implementer, if applicable. In fact, even to address the point above regarding information management and knowledge transfer, a joint, end-of-mission debrief would prove helpful.

A debrief of this nature would facilitate a common understanding of the current status of various issues, ensure the continued engagement of the beneficiaries, and an organized and effective transfer of relevant resources.

In that regard, the evaluation team would encourage future electoral assistance projects to incorporate formal, end-of-mission de-briefings with USAID and the local counterparts/beneficiaries.

For USAID

- **Longer-term commitments of contracts and DG officers:** Although the evaluation team understands that traditional tours for contracts and DG officers are limited to one year, exceptions should be made for conflict/post-conflict countries. While USAID oversight and management of IFES's project was effective, the seemingly constant turn-over of USAID personnel (particularly during the 2009-2011 period) did have a perceived negative effect among project implementers across the DG spectrum. USAID should consider longer-term assignments for its contracts and DG officers in conflict and post-conflict areas, particularly when highly sensitive political milestones, i.e. election, referenda, are to take place. Longer continuity and stability of USAID personnel would ensure more stability in project direction, strategy, and implementation, avoiding unnecessary changes of course, and/or delays.
- **Enhanced coordination with other international donors:** Though not always easy, close-coordination among international donors is key to the overall success of any multilateral international assistance initiative, or goal. The evaluation team would encourage USAID to continue playing a leading role in this regard.
- **Mid-project/program evaluations:** Similar to what was recommended for project implementers, USAID should consider and explore the possibility of conducting mid-term evaluations for its multi-year assistance projects. These mid-project status checks should include thorough analysis of the political situation, and would help USAID determine the need to make course-changes, and (re) allocate resources.

- **Future DG support predicated by concrete and clear commitment from GoRSS:** Before USAID can re-engage in DG initiatives, the GoRSS must show and demonstrate clear commitments toward working for peace, stability, and building of the nation and its democratic institutions. Clear signals of stability must first be established before re-engaging. The immediate focus must be on peace building initiatives.

For NEC

Although the evaluation team fully understands that this assessment's scope focused on IFES and its performance, a very important wealth of information has been compiled. Based on this information, and the technical expertise of the evaluators, the team would like to take advantage of the opportunity and make specific recommendations for the South Sudanese NEC.

- **Development and implementation of policies, rules, and procedures:** With significant assistance from IFES, the NEC did develop a series of foundational documents, including internal rules and regulation, code of ethics, policies and procedures. However, the NEC has neglected to fully implement these. While the evaluation team understands and recognizes the significant limitations faced by the NEC, implementing internal rules, procedures, and policies is important to establishing its institutional culture and increasing morale. The NEC should move quickly to introduce, incorporate, and enforce these internal guidelines. This will also be helpful in creating an institutional culture within the country's EMB.
- **Inventory exercises:** The NEC does not have a full grasp and understanding of the resources and materials it has at its disposal, both at the central and state levels. A thorough inventory exercise to determine what equipment, materials, documents, and other resources it has on hand is important to its overall institutional development, and to be prepared and sufficiently organized for future electoral processes. The evaluation team highly encourages the NEC undertake actions and implements strategies in this regard.
- **Development of action plans for SHECs:** While the SHECs were recently installed and its members appointed, these have little, or no, direction in terms of what activities to undertake. Immediately following their appointments in late January and early February, committee members from all 10 states were summoned to Juba for a multi-day induction and training seminar. Since then, however, they have not received any instructions from the NEC regarding next steps and day-to-day activities. Despite the blanket budget limitations, there are exercises and activities the SHEC can undertake to build its general professional capacity. The NEC should immediately develop action plans for the SHECs in this regard.
- **Establishment of permanent and dedicated SHEC liaison:** Related to the above, the NEC should appoint a permanent and dedicated officer in its Juba headquarters to oversee, coordinate, and assist the country's 10 SHECs and its members.
- **Strengthening of legal affairs office:** Traditionally, legal affairs matters are exceptionally important for the effective functioning of EMBs. Not only do these issues predicate when and how electoral processes are to be conducted, but they also establish the procedures in which any potential electoral disputes are to be resolved. In an emerging country such as South Sudan, the role of a legal affairs office within the NEC is even more important. While a legal electoral framework is in place (Transitional Constitution and

National Elections Act), it is most certainly subject to change. The NEC, thus, must be adequately prepared to assimilate any future changes, but also, to promote and recommend any adjustments it thinks should be applied to improve electoral processes. With the recently-extended mandate of the president, legislature, and GoRSS institutions, and the postponement of elections, the NEC's legal affairs office must be strengthened. To that end, the NEC must move to strengthen its legal affairs office, assigning sufficient personnel and resources for the proper work to be carried-out effectively.

- **NEC staff development plans:** Despite serious budgetary limitations, there are a series of activities the NEC – and SHECs – can undertake; the development of staff being, perhaps, the most important of these. Given the postponement of election to mid-2018, the NEC has an important opportunity to build and strengthen the capacity of its staff, as well as that of the 10 SHECs. Professional development plans for its staff, including training on basic issues (administration, office and computer skills, for example) would be highly useful and would prepare EMB functionaries for upcoming electoral processes and related activities. Given the expanded time the NEC will now have to prepare for the country's next electoral events, it should quickly move to organize, conduct, and implement staff development efforts.
- **IT Development:** The NEC should develop and implement a technology modernization initiative for its Juba headquarters and the country's 10 SHECs. By installing a relatively inexpensive intranet system, the NEC can link all its internal offices and departments and SHECs. An institutional intranet would also increase information management and knowledge transfer efforts, store and make readily available important documents, and facilitate greater coordination and communications among staff and the state offices.
- **Public Relations Strategy:** As the new country's main democratic institution, the NEC can and should serve as South Sudan's principal promoter of democracy. South Sudan's citizens have barely a basic understanding and knowledge of democratic principles, having never been exposed to these. By designing a communications strategy aimed at educating and informing citizens on elections and the basic principles of democracy, it can serve to form the country's future generations, while at the same time promoting a much-needed democratic culture in the country. The NEC should move to organize and fund efforts in this regard. Partnerships and/or memoranda of understanding with other GoRSS agencies and ministries would prove strategically beneficial; the evaluation team would highly recommend the NEC take action in this regard.
- **Introduction of democracy/citizenship into education curriculum:** Related to the above, the NEC should work closely with the country's Ministry of Education to design civic-related and oriented components for their incorporation into the country's education strategies and curricula. Considering South Sudan is a very young country (65 percent of the population is 24 years old, or younger; 80 percent is 40, or younger³⁶), efforts to educate and inform the population on these and related-issues is important to ensuring the country's short, mid, and long-term democratic development.

³⁶ Source: CIA World Factbook

LESSONS LEARNED & FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The USAID-funded, IFES implemented SEASP was extraordinarily successful. With so much at stake, the project's focus and design, coupled with the robust provision of commodity support and technical assistance resulted in a formidable model. The project not only met the overarching, political and diplomatic objectives of implementing the CPA, it also contributed to the creation and establishment of South Sudan, while helping avert an inevitable war between North and South. .

But the near-sighted focus of ensuring the successful conduct of the referendum – and securing the South's secession – resulted in the emergence of a new country without any plans or blueprints. Not only were the Southern Sudanese not prepared for the construction of their country, but neither was the international community. Less than four years from its independence, South Sudan is far from being able to stand on its own. Where before Southern Sudan had one common goal and enemy, today, South Sudan's perceived enemies lie within. Internal power struggles have thrown the country into a dangerous spiral of violence, uncertainty and instability.

Although no one could have predicted what has happened, the shortsightedness and complete lack of planning for post-referendum/independence South Sudan was neglectful. If the broader, international strategic mission was to conduct a successful referendum, than the mission, in and of itself, was incomplete. The international community – and the United States in particular – poured significant resources into essentially guaranteeing the creation of South Sudan. But once South Sudan emerged, there were little, if any, construction plans in place. The few plans that did exist were formulated on the mistaken assumption that South Sudan was a post-conflict environment, when, in fact, the conflict has never ceased.

Many South Sudanese interviewed by the evaluation team stated that while they did not even remotely regret their decision to secede from the North, they were beginning to wonder if perhaps independence was a mistake. The high expectations born along with the country itself have been far from met. Coupled with the complete lack of a democratic culture, little respect for the rule of law, and only weak – if, at all existent – democratic institutions, the country faces critical short, mid, and long-term challenges. The prospects for internal conflict and ethnically-based war remain.

South Sudan will continue to need – and will remain completely reliant on – the assistance of the international community for years to come. A revised constitution will eventually be drafted, and elections will necessarily take place. Without the close collaboration of the international community, however, no electoral exercise or related events will be possible.

Despite the significant resources and efforts that have been already expended, these were designed to gain the independence of South Sudan, not for its democratic construction and development. The international community, particularly USAID, must remain creatively and firmly engaged. But in the immediate term, comprehensive, long-lasting and permanent peace must be reached. Diplomatic efforts must be re-doubled, and the GoRSS must show concrete and tangible commitments to ending the current conflict and constructing the country.

Based on the work conducted, the evaluation team believes there are strategies that can be adopted to remain reasonably involved in the development of the NEC and the 10 SHECs. Understanding the USG's decision to indefinitely suspend its direct assistance to the GoRSS, the

evaluators recognize the situation is far from ideal. Nonetheless, the country's active civil society could prove to be an increasingly important and useful actor.

In that regard, the evaluation team suggests USAID and its democracy and governance partners on the ground in South Sudan adopt and implement some, if not all of the below-outlined points during this unique and uncertain period.

- USG/USAID should maintain open and fluid channels of communication with the GoRSS at both the diplomatic and technical levels. Despite the indefinite suspension of direct assistance, efforts should be made by USAID to engage with NEC, SHEC, and NCRC authorities. Remaining apprised of plans, activities and related-initiatives is strategically important and will prove significantly useful when assistance is authorized.
- Current USAID implementing partners should remain thoroughly involved, particularly in their work with local civil society and faith-based organizations. Without the ability to work with GoRSS authorities directly, locally-based organizations can be an important source of current, on-the-ground information and knowledge.
- During this period, USAID implementing partners can create, build and/or expand civil society networks throughout the country. Civil society and NGO representatives can be trained on various issues related to political processes in the country, i.e. electoral, constitutional, etc.
- Information-gathering activities should be considered. Nationwide polling and focus group initiatives can serve as valuable tools during this uncertain period. USAID and its implementing partners will have a better grasp of on-the-ground sentiments, perspectives, and expectations. These activities would also be useful in informing work of USAID implementing partners and locally-based civil society organizations.
- Relying on Internews' existing capacity and platform, public information campaigns related to democracy and governance issues can be design and implemented.
- Relying on local civil-society and NGO representatives, modest electoral assistance initiatives can be performed, i.e. material, equipment, and document inventory exercises at NEC and SHECs.

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FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Northern Bahr El Ghazal State (Aweil) Focus Group – 18 March 2015

Participants	9 male
Organizational focus	Education (4), peace building (4), child protection (1), health (5), education (3), gender (2), development (2), WASH (3)
Election voter education	6
Referendum Voter education	8
Source of election funds	NDI: 3 UNDP: 3 GOSS/SSRB: 2
Interaction with NCRC	Yes: 1 NO: 7
Importance of NCRC work:	Important: 2 Not Important: Unknown: 5

Question 1: What were the main achievements of the CPA?

Discussion summary: Consensus was achieved on several themes. Among these was that the primary achievement of the CPA was to end war, to gain freedom and independence from oppression and that the CPA provided a framework for elections, although one respondent noted that the SPLM used the CPA to justify elections. Some respondents also made a link between the CPA and the peace it achieved and development. However, other respondents also noted problems in the post-CPA period, including post-CPA security issues. Lastly, some respondents noted that the CPA has not been fully implemented as per the three areas.

Question 2: What is the Quality of Government Institutions in South Sudan?

Discussion summary: Participants pointed to an overall lack of government performance. They pointed out a range of contributing factors to the lack of performance, including low accountability, lack of budgets, lack of training, lack of strategic vision, lack of consultation with the community, and misallocation of resources. Only one participant suggested that the government was delivering services (he however also made a connection between declining service delivery and the deteriorating security situation). Other governance issues that were identified included the absence of a functioning anti-corruption commission, a weak human rights situation, and a lack of division between military and civilian rule.

The NEC was evaluated as weak and biased. Two participants noted that the selection/appointment process of officials was problematic, with one noting that the community should be consulted. Only one participant offered a view in regards to the NCRC, noting that the institution had a weak cooperation with civil society.

Question 3: Does the government take civil society into account?

Discussion Summary: Some discussion participants noted that there was no real interaction between civil society in the NCRC and that as a result the constitutional review process did not link community interests with the constitutional process, which was in one view elite-driven. The difficult of reaching “lower” levels of society, at the *payam* level was noted in both respects to

voter education and the constitutional review process. Participants also noted that the government controls civil society by controlling the organizations' funding and through coercion.

Question 4: How were the 2010 elections conducted?

Discussion Summary: While the general view was that elections were generally problematic (red) due to inexperience of officials respondents seemed to suggest that this was at least in part because it was the first time elections were conducted in South Sudan (light green). Additionally respondents noted that the NEC allowed political parties to interfere in the elections and one respondent questioned the neutrality of the NEC (purple).

Question 5: How was the 2011 Referendum conducted?

Discussion Summary: The consensus was that the referendum was well conducted.

Question 6: Is South Sudan prepared for an election?

Discussion Summary: Participants agreed that elections should not be held under current circumstances and that peace was a prerequisite for elections. Respondents noted that elections would be triggers for additional conflict and should be avoided. One respondent made a link to the conflicts that resulted from the 2010 elections. Another respondent noted that even without conflict the NEC would not be prepared to hold elections.

Question 7: What do you want from an eventual election?

Discussion Summary: Discussion participants hoped to see greater involvement of the community in the elections in respects to the nomination of electoral officials and candidates. Two participants specifically suggested that there was a need to change the process of nominating candidates. Other suggested changes included more neutral electoral administration and less intimidation.

Question 8: How can the international community help to build democracy in South Sudan?

Discussion Summary: Discussion participants indicated that the international community was needed during the current insecurity in the country. UNMISS was specifically mentioned as having saved the lives of many people. However, participants also noted that the international community was not perceived as fully neutral. Relief work and democracy work were suggested as important interventions by two separate respondents.

Western Bahr El Ghazal State (Wau) Focus Group – 19 March 2015

Participants	11 (6 female, 5 male)
Organizational focus	Education (7), Peace-building (6), Human Rights (2), Food Security (2), Child Protection (2), Advocacy (1), Health (1), Livelihoods (4), Gender (1), Youth (1)
Election voter education	5
Referendum Voter education	5
Source of election funds	GOSS/SSRB: 4 UNDP: 2 NDI: 5

Interaction with NCRC	No: 6 Yes: 5
Importance of NCRC work:	Important: 10 Not important: 0 Don't know: 2

Question 1: What were the main achievements of the CPA?

Discussion Summary: The primary achievement of the CPA, according to discussion consensus, was that it gave the South independence (or the choice to be independent) and the opportunity to pursue self-determination. The other primary achievement was that the CPA provided an opportunity for the development characteristics (i.e. low education levels) to improve. In addition two discussants emphasized that the main achievement of the CPA was to stop war.

Question 2: What is the Quality of Government Institutions in South Sudan?

Discussion Summary: Discussants agreed that government institutions in South Sudan are generally “weak”, “struggling to cope with governing” and experiencing problems “with institutional capacity.” One participant noted that “we are very disappointed, since 2005 nothing has been done.” Several discussants made a connection between weak government institutions and low service deliver, including specifically problems with health services and poor roads. One participant expressed that she felt that the “government stopped development and all money is given to security.”

The discussants connected the weakness of the institutions with low political will or accountability. Noting, that “citizens can’t express opinions”, that there is “still no transparent government”, that “leaders of the country don’t know about democracy”, and that the government is not run by people that “do the right thing.” One participant expressed the view that only SPLM members receive access to government jobs, and that much technical ability does not find its way into government institutions despite capable people being available in the community. One equated low SPLM governing performance with inexperience, noting that it is “very different to govern than to fight wars”. Another noted that at independence “expectations for services and education were high.” “Now people are disappointed”, added another. A third expressed disappointment that “after three years we come again to war.”

Participants also discussed the NEC, noting that it was an important government institutions and that it was important for it to maintain its neutrality (they did not make a judgment on if they thought the institution was neutral). One discussant noted that the NEC has been unable to fill vacant seats through by-elections and stated that currently 4 or 5 seats in the state legislative assembly were left vacant. Regarding the 2010 elections, many discussants noted that the process was not fair and hampered by security forces’ interference. Participants referred to “a voting threat on the ground” and stated that “there was a certain body that forced people to vote for them”, in reference to the SPLM/A which, according to discussants supported the elections because it wanted to win (and according to one participants allowed civil society to participate because of the government’s interest in winning the elections).

Question 3: Does the government take civil society into account?

Discussion Summary: Focus group participants stated that the government at times finds it useful to engage with civil society (general service delivery, election and referendum “services”) and “appreciates CSO work”. One participant even stated that the government had co-opted some groups. However, discussants also described a “red line” which the groups cannot cross, or

risk being “blocked” by the government. The red line includes discussions of human rights issues, mass arrests, corruption, or governance issues.

With regards to the NCRC the responses on the institution’s work were negative. Respondents noted that the commission did not appear to be doing any work, that without NDI support it would be able to do nothing, and that it faced severe budgetary constraints. One noted that when the NCRC came to Wau it was only for three hours and that very few people attended. She noted that “as a commission they are not very effective”. Another noted that it is really only civil society that is in touch with collecting the views of the population, but that civil society has been not very involved with the NCRC. Two discussants described a perceived bias within the institution, noting that its members were appointed by the government, which makes them “do what the government wants”.

Question 4: How were the 2010 elections conducted?

Discussion Summary: The consensus was that the elections were peaceful. However, participants did not feel like the process was fair or that voters were presented a real choice. Two themes emerged from the discussion. The first was that candidates were not nominated according to the “interests of citizens” and that “candidates were imposed on the people.” The other theme was that while the elections were peaceful they were not free or fair. Discussants made mention of the SPLM instructing persons how to vote, being told “if you are capable of voting, you must vote for the ‘star’” and also of voting fraud (such as making non-SPLM votes invalid or having over 100 percent turnout). Participants noted, however, that voters went along with the situation because “the SPLM was the only party that could get us to the referendum” and towards the “common objective of independence”. However, moving forward, one participant noted that “if it continues like this, it would be better not to have elections.” Another noted that “some people were now having regrets about who they voted for. Referring to future elections, two participants noted that they would be unlikely to be peaceful and that peace and “forgiveness” was needed before additional elections.

Question 5: How was the 2011 Referendum conducted?

Discussion Summary: In general discussants noted that the referendum was conducted peacefully and fairly. There was some divergence in the discussion about the overall will of the South Sudanese to be independent from Sudan. While many discussants noted that the outcome of the referendum reflected the “outcome of 21 years of war when we were treated like second class citizens”, three discussants also noted that “separation was not the will of all South Sudanese” and that the discussion on independence changed significantly after Garang’s death. Three discussants also noted technical deficiencies with the referendum, such as underage voting.

In regards to the effect of the referendum, one participant noted that “people are now regretting” the outcome of the referendum as things in South Sudan are “not as bad as living in Khartoum”. Another noted that “the government has failed us and let us down” due to ongoing war and IDPs (which was echoed by another discussant). Two participants also noted that the “fall” of South Sudan had been predicted by politicians in the north who had said that people would “suffer the consequences of separation”. They noted that this was indeed happening. In addition, several participants noted that voting for separation “was not done in the spirit of nationalism”, that tribalism remained pervasive, and that some of these issues were “at the root of the current war”.

Question 6: Is South Sudan prepared for an election?

Discussion Summary: The consensus was that South Sudan is not prepared for an election under current circumstances. There was a strong consensus in the discussion that peace, security, and reconciliation were prerequisites for an election.

Question 7: What do you want from an eventual election?

Discussion Summary: Discussants stated that they would like to see candidates participating in elections that came out of local communities (and not be imposed by the political parties). The further noted that candidates should be able to conduct their campaigns freely and without intimidation. Additional comments included the need for a NEC with elected members, further international support (“to carry out elections on our own is not possible”), a single national army, and the need for peace in an electoral process.

Question 8: How can the international community help to build democracy in South Sudan?

Discussion Summary: Five discussants stated that the international community needed to continue to support the South Sudan government institutions through development aid. Another added that “development aid has stopped and things have gotten worse.” Discussants added that the international community needed to support the South-South peace process, with three participants adding that there such support “needed to come from the heart”, be given “in a true way” and be given in a way “that will not affect us negatively.”

Central Equatoria State (Juba) Focus Group – Conducted 21 March 2015

Participants	4 (3 male, 1 female)
Organizational focus	Human Rights (3), Governance (2), Elections (1), Rule of Law (1), Peace building (1), Leadership (1)
Election voter education	3
Referendum Voter education	3
Source of election funds	GOSS/SSRB: UNDP: 3 NDI: 3
Interaction with NCRC	No: Yes:
Importance of NCRC work:	Important: Not important: Don't know:

Question 1: What were the main achievements of the CPA?

Discussion Summary: Discussants agreed that one of the primary achievements of the CPA was to end the war between North and South through a “non-violent” approach and through “dialogue”. In addition, the focus group participants focused on the various institutional arrangements that still exist in South Sudan today, as a result of the CPA framework. These include the current form of the constitution, electoral processes (including proportional representation and women’s lists), government decentralization, and “a culture of human rights” and “a culture of democratic elections.” Discussants also noted the importance of the CPA in giving the South to the “right to choose” “our own destiny”. One discussant noted that the “CPA brought certainty to having the choice.” Some discussants also noted that the CPA introduced a

“concrete approach to power sharing” and wealth distribution – an approach which is, according to a discussant, seen in the current peace negotiations. One participant added that the peace negotiators have, however, “taken the CPA model to protect their own interests but not the interests of the people.” One discussant also noted that CPA process allowed the SPLA/M to have a united front vis-à-vis the North.

Question 2: What is the state of the current government institutions?

Discussion Summary: The conclusion of the focus group discussants was that government institutions were weak. They drew a connection between the institutions being controlled by SPLM members and the SPLM members coming from the army, and thus not being qualified to manage government institutions. Two participants noted that the institutions were weakened by the corruption of SPLM officials, which resulted from “mass money” coming through the government. Discussants further noted that the SPLM has not met citizen expectations (which were high, post-referendum, according to two discussants) because the Movement has put its own political interests above all else and provided “political rewards” to members (or defectors, such as David Yau Yau) at the expense of providing services to the South Sudanese.

Discussants agreed that there is not national unity or national identity, and that tribal politics are a particular issue, especially in the army. One noted that people have “not moved from identifying themselves as coming from a tribe or region”. Another stated that “we are so much aligned to our tribes”, and that much of politics is based on evaluations of “who is behind me.”

Discussants noted particular weaknesses of the NCRC. They linked the perceived lack of interest by the NCRC in collecting citizen views to its perceived politicization. One participant noted that the SPLM caucus sets up all institutions (including the NEC and NCRC) and that it was not in the Movement’s interest to consult on appointments to constitutional bodies. Discussants noted that they perceived to be the NEC, and particularly the NEC Chair, to be partisan. One discussant based this perception on the Chair’s announcement of the 2015 elections, while another made the connection by suggesting the Chair and President came from the same ethnic group. Another discussant noted that in any case the NEC is currently unable to do its work, leaving 6 national assembly seats and 3 governorships in need of by-elections.

Question 3: Do government institutions take civil society into account?

Discussion Summary: While noting that the NEC consulted with some civil society groups on the formation of the electoral calendar and the appointment of SHCs – the general view was that government institutions do not consult civil society, and that civil society pushes for its priority issues. At times, however, according to one discussant, the government sees an opportunity to use civil society partnerships to attract international donor funding.

Question 4: What impact did civil society organizations have on the 2010 elections and referendum?

Discussion Summary: Discussants agreed that civil society carried out “a massive civic education” effort that covered “all 79 counties.” According to the group the result was that it “opened the mind of the people” to electoral processes and procedures. One discussant added that the groups’ civic education effort “added credibility to the election and referendum results”. Another noted that the government benefitted from this credibility, and therefore made civil society part of the process. Another participant noted that generally the relationship between the government and civil society during the elections was good.

Question 5: How do you rate the credibility of referendum and elections?

Discussion Summary: Focus group participants noted serious deficiencies with the 2010 elections. One noted that five of the ten governors in South Sudan (Unity, Central Equatorial, Warrap, Western Equatorial, Jonglei) are forged governors. This “forging” was characterized, according to discussion consensus, but “severe government and security forces interference” with the election results. One participant had the impression that even where a SPLM candidate one, the result was at times inflated to give him/her a bigger margin of victory. Intimidation by security forces was a frequently cited means of influencing results, as was the involvement of polling officials in instructing voters to “vote for the star” (and the assignment of party symbols – as a related issue). In addition, three participants expressed concerns about the manner in which candidates were “imposed”. One noted that the president interfered in the “electoral college to get his own candidates” and that two “non-popular governors were imposed”.

Participants noted a generally more transparent and free environment for the referendum, despite time constraints and questions about the SSRC’s neutrality. However, they noted that the entire country seemed to be involved in the pro-independence campaign, including election observers and the church (which was said to have made statements like “the devil is for unity” and “let my people go”). According to one discussant, symbols associated with the referendum ballot became a way for members of society to campaign by “using hand waves”. However, two participants noted some shortcomings with the referendum, including irregularities on turnout (polling stations with 100 percent turnout) and the SSRB not taking dispute resolution seriously.

Question 6: Do you believe that South Sudan is ready to have an election?

Discussion Summary: Participants agreed that South Sudan is currently not prepared for an election. One discussant noted that “if the government carries out the election the results will not be good and then the government will carry out intimidation.” Other participants noted technical challenges about holding elections, such still having to conduct a census, boundary delimitation, and party registration, which one described as “really tense issues”. One participant highlighted that even the delimitation between administrative areas was not fully complete and agreed upon, that these were tense and charged issues, and would need to be resolved before drawing electoral constituencies. In addition, two participants described challenges with NEC funding and the high number of IDPs. Finally, two participants highlighted that “the country is yearning for peace more than anything” and that the “first priority is peace and reconciliation.”

Question 7: What do you hope to see from an eventual election?

Discussion Summary: Participants generally hoped for free and credible elections. The indicated that factors such as NEC credibility and independence, an election law without a “winner take all formula”, the separation of the army from politics, and a constitution with more limited presidential powers could bring about a more positive electoral process.

Question 8: How do you feel about the role of the international community in supporting democracy in South Sudan?

Discussion Summary: Three discussants highlighted that the international community had supported the SPLM too much, to the detriment of democratic development in South Sudan. One respondent singled out IRI as having “empowered the SPLM too much”. In general, several respondents noted that the international community had played a positive role in supporting CPA milestones. Discussants, however noted that the international community should continue to work with the government, should focus on long-term capacity building, and should not withdraw

from supporting government institutions because these institutions “are service providers,” noting that “if you don’t strengthen these institutions, services are not provided.” One participant noted, however, that too many resources had been given to the government at the expense of resources being given to civil society.

ANNEXES

ANNEX I: EVALUATION SCOPE OF WORK

Performance evaluation of Democracy and Governance Activities under IFES project

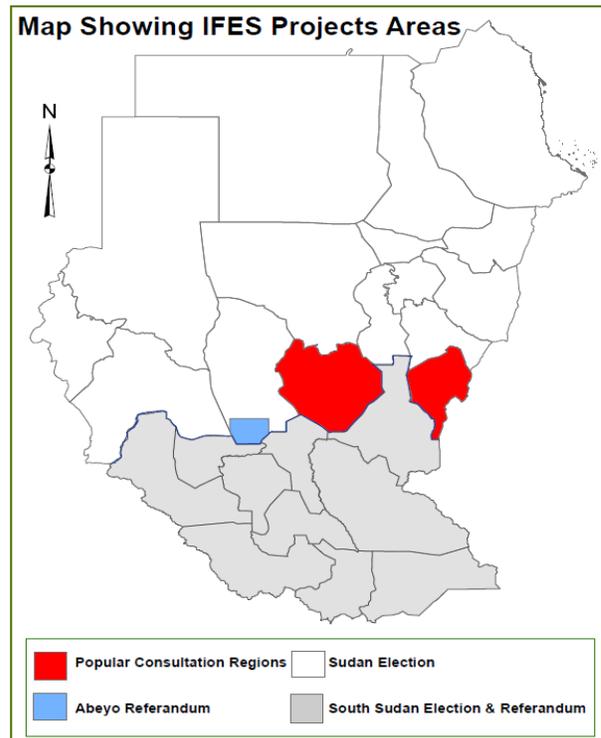
Background Information

Project Identification Data

Activity Name:	The Sudan Election Administration Support Project (SEASP)
Award Number:	DFD-I-07-05-00225-00
Procurement Instrument:	Task Order
Funding:	About \$70 million
Program Beginning/End Dates:	02/05/2009 to 11/11/2011
Key Modifications:	Sept 2012, and Sept 2013
Implementing Partner:	International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES)
USAID/South Sudan Technical Office:	DG (Democracy Governance)
Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR):	Patrick T. Riruyo
Contracting Officer:	

In 2010, Sudanese elections presented a turning point in Sudan's path towards a democratic future. Citizens had the opportunity to choose their political representatives after decades. The last two elections held in the country were in 2000 mostly in the northern part of the country. In South Sudan, the last election conducted was in 1986, three years after SPLM/SPLA was founded. These two elections fell far behind international standards. With lack of elections history coupled with extremely high levels of illiteracy as well as major operational obstacles, both Sudan and South Sudan have limited capacity to manage election processes. Therefore, conducting credible elections in Sudan is still a major challenge.

The Sudan Election Administration Support project was designed as a three year project (2009 – 2011). However, there were two no cost extensions made during implementation of the project: first extension was up to September 2012; the second extension was up to September 2013. These modifications enabled IFES to also support the development of a permanent constitution for the Republic of South Sudan including other follow-on projects.



The Sudan Election Administration Support project supported South Sudan Referendum Commission (SSRC), Abyei Referendum Commission (ARC), the Southern Sudan Elections High Committee (SSEHC), Southern Sudan Referendum Bureau (SSRB), 25 State Elections High Committees (SEHC) and 10 Southern Sudan States Referendum Committees (SSSRC). The project also targeted all eligible and registered voters in both Sudan and South Sudan.

This project was implemented by International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES). The main activities included assistance in establishing the legal frameworks, administrative structures, technical systems, and operational capacity necessary for conducting national electoral events in Sudan. However, following South Sudan's independence, the IFES South Sudan project had six key anticipated results:

- The legal and regulatory framework for national elections is completed in a timely and credible manner.
- The capacity of Electoral Management Bodies at the national, regional, and state levels developed to operate efficiently and independently.
- Election Management Bodies have the technical capacity to administer and oversee key functions of elections administration.
- Election officials in voter registration, voting, and collation centers nationwide receive training on how to administer credible elections.
- Necessary commodities are provided to maximize operational efficiency and public confidence in election procedures.
- The constitutional process in South Sudan is an efficient, inclusive, and transparent process that increases the public credibility and legitimacy of the permanent constitution.

Development Hypothesis

IFES South Sudan Election Administration Support Project (SSEASP) can be stated as follows:

If technical assistance, and training on the planning and conduct of national elections were provided to Election Management Bodies (EBMs) leading to strengthened capacity of EBMs in South Sudan; and if election-related commodities needed to ensure the success of these key political processes were procured and delivered to the National Election Commission (NEC), Southern Sudan Election High Committee (SSEHC), and State Election High Committees then credible elections and referenda will be conducted in South Sudan.

This will result in sound administration of historic Sudanese electoral processes. Further, Sudanese leaders would have fulfilled obligation to implement Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and that would have laid a firm political foundation for the country's democratic future.

Existing Background Documents

Evaluation team will have range of project background documents to consult one week before. The documents include:

- IFES Task Order DFD-I-07-05-00225-00 Sudan Election Administration FINAL SIGNED 02 20 2009
- IFES SEASP Workplan narrative -draft- (2), (from IFES for submission to NEC) (USAID recs), 6-6-2009

- IFES_SEASP_Workplan_Budget 2009 07 11
- Partner work plan guidance FY 2010
- IFES SEASP work-plan v3
- Proposed Workplan_Budget_July 11 page 2
- IFES SEASP Work Plan 2010_FINAL 2011 02 03
- USAID comments on IFES July work plan draft 2009 07 26
- IFES Work Plan 2010 Activities
- IFES Work Plan 2010
- USAID Comments on IFES 2010 Work plan 2010 05 04
- USAID Comments on IFES 2010 Workplan 2010 05 23
- Agenda - IFES Oversight Committee 20Aug09 (brooke script)
- Cover letter to MFA - IFES work plan 2009 07 30
- Cover letter to MOF - IFES work plan 2009 08 03
- IFES SEASP Work plan Budget - Ovesight Comm 2009 07 30
- Workplan request for extension 2009 03 20
- IFES South Sudan Work Plan 2012-2013 – clean
- IFES South Sudan Work Plan 2012-2013 Revised 28 Dec 2012
- Performance Management Plan (PMP), and
- Reports quarterly and Annually
- Final and supplemental reports

Evaluation Rational

Evaluation Purpose, Audience, and Intended Uses

This performance evaluation will assist the Mission in reaching decisions related to future investment in support to electoral processes. The performance evaluation will determine the project's achievement of project goals and results, and associated underlying reasons for achievement and/or non-achievement; and document lessons learnt and best practices to inform future programming of similar project activities.

Audience and Intended Uses

The main audiences of the evaluation report are: USAID/South Sudan Mission, specifically the Democracy and Governance team who are interested in determining if the project has achieved project goals; and to document lessons learned and best practices for informing future programming of similar projects, the USAID/Africa Bureau wants to learn effective design of electoral interventions suitable for post conflict settings, IFES and RSS will learn about their strengths and weaknesses. While IFESS may adjust any future projects accordingly, RSS will likely revisit its election approach and management strategy.

Evaluation Questions

1. Did the project achieve the right focus and balance in terms of design, theory of change/development hypothesis, and democratic needs of South Sudan?
2. What were the intended and un-intended results of project interventions?
3. To what extent was the IFES' operational model cost efficient and cost effective in achieving project expected results?

4. What have been the specific and differential effects of IFES project on male and female in terms of electoral results produced?
5. To what extent was the use of technical assistance and training strategy, and the procurement of election commodity approach sustainable?
6. Has implementation responded flexibly to changing circumstances?

Gender Disaggregation and Gender Differential Effects

USAID/South Sudan DG team expects the evaluation team to disaggregate finding by sex in terms gender differential effect: (a) explore gender issues within the context of SEASP activities, and (b) recommend for any future gender responsive and gender differential effects. Table below identifies USAID’s expectation for the incorporation of gender differential effects into answers to evaluation questions.

Evaluation Questions	Disaggregate by Sex (M/F)	Examine Gender Differential Access/ Participation	Examine Gender Differential Results and/or Benefits
Question 1:			
Question 2:	X		
Question 3:			
Question 4:	X		
Question 5:			Access to training opportunities and access to leadership positions
Question 6:	X		

Evaluation Design and Methodology

The methodology of this evaluation is proposed to be a mixed methods evaluation. But USAID/South Sudan DG team looks to the evaluation consultant to propose a suitable methodology for this assignment, which will then be approved by USAID. However, it is recommended that the methodology should utilize primary and secondary data from multiple sources with both quantitative and qualitative data. This is to allow triangulation of data to inform findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

Evaluation Methods – Data Collection

The evaluation team will start work by reviewing project documents as soon as they are commissioned. At this stage, evaluation team will also start working on data collection tools to be used for collection of primary data. However, the tools will be further discussed when the teams are in Juba during Team Planning Meeting (TPM). The table below shows some possible data collection methods for various evaluation questions

Data Collection Methods	Evaluation Questions
Desk Review	1, 2, 3, 4,5, 6
Existing Data Series	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Key Informant Interviews (KI)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Individual/Group Interviews	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Evaluation Methods – Data Analysis

The data analysis will be based on the analysis plan developed. Review of project documents will reveal what is already known from existing data sources about answers to each evaluation question, and what are the gaps that need to be filled. Document review will be done in line with the table shown below..

Evaluation Questions	Desk Review Findings	Gaps to Fill from Field Work
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		

It is expected that the evaluation team disaggregate findings by gender where applicable. Further disaggregation of findings by EMBs at state level would also be expected. The table below summarizes some possible data analysis methods for each question.

Data Analysis Methods	Evaluation Questions
Descriptive Statistics (frequencies, trend analysis, cross tabulations, pivot tables)	4, 6
Content (or Pattern) Analysis of qualitative data (e.g. group discussion documentation)	1, 2, 3, & 4, 5, 6
Comparatives (or normative)	3, & 5, 6
Integrated Mixed Methods Analysis of overlapping data points/Findings Synthesis	1, 2, 3, 4, & 5, 6
Cause-and-effect?	2 , 3, 6

Methodological Limitations

This evaluation comes at a time when the situation in South Sudan is unstable in terms of security. This is also coupled with the rainy season. Therefore, logistics can be challenging during this period, sometimes tense security situation and rainy season. As a result some of the potential site locations for the evaluation team to visit may not be reachable. All these can be limitations that may affect representativeness and reliability of the evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations.

However both random and purposive sampling with replacement of site locations will be employed

Further, the presence of outside observer(s), including project and USAID staff may also affect the presence of Key Informants and community focus group discussions if these are chosen to be one of the methods for data primary collection. Thus, the evaluation team will propose clear strategy of how to mitigate possible subjectivity as anticipated limitations during this evaluation.

Deliverables

USAID/South Sudan DG team expects the following deliverables from the evaluation team:

Pre-Field Work Briefing

The team will present the inception report and approaches detailing the evaluation design to USAID in an oral presentation and review meeting in which USAID may raise questions and issues and request adjustments, if necessary, to that plan prior to the start of field work. This meeting will be held within 1 work day after the submission of the team's inception report detailing the following:

1. A summary of the key findings that emerged from the team's review of existing documents organized on a question by question basis. Bullet points of clearly identified gaps that the team will fill through field data collection and analysis.
2. Methodological approach and tools, and suggestion of the evaluation team about changes in the methodological approach proposed in the SOW, and
3. Analysis Plan – A detailed description of data analysis methods in relation to the evaluation questions and the specific data collection methods or data sets to which they are linked and will be applied. A draft work plan that includes the timeline for the study as well as scheduled field location visits and interviews is a required element of the detailed design and must be approved by the COR along with the methodological plan.

USAID will approve, request adjustments or reject the team's inception report and evaluation design within 1 work day after this meeting is held.

Post-Field Work Review

This briefing and oral presentation/review will serve as a checkpoint on the completeness of the evaluation team's data and analysis on each of the evaluation questions and on the clarity of the flow of the team's presentation of its findings, conclusions and recommendations. The document required, which may take the form of a set of Power Point slides, should present team findings on a question by question basis in bullet form and demonstrate how its findings lead to the conclusions and recommendations it intends to present. This briefing will be held after field work has been completed and the team has completed the bulk of its data analysis, and before the drafting of those sections of the evaluation report commences. Any gaps in evidence identified at this review or gaps in the logic of the flow from findings to conclusions to recommendations will need to be addressed before drafting report for these sections is authorized. The remaining time may need to be redirected to filling data gaps identified. This meeting is to be held after a substantial amount of data analysis has been completed but prior to

drafting these sections of the report or any presentations.

Draft Report

The team's full draft of its evaluation report, prepared in accordance with USAID's How To Prepare and Evaluation Report guidance in Annex 1 of USAID's evaluation policy, and using USAID's evaluation report template is due after the Post Field Work Review is carried out but before the evaluation team departs South Sudan in the final phase of field work. The evaluation team is encouraged to self-score its evaluation against USAID's evaluation review checklist before delivering this document to USAID:

http://transition.usaid.gov/policy/evalweb/evaluation_resources.html

Debriefings: The second debriefing with a wider audience that include, USAID team, implementing partner (s), government invitees, and any other interested stakeholder. The Mission reserves the right to request the team to omit all findings of sensitive nature during presentations to wider audience.

Documents, slides, etc. that will be useful for disseminating information about the assessment.

Quantitative and qualitative data sets are transferred to USAID.

Final Report

The evaluation team is required to produce 2 versions of the report. The first report will be for the sole use of USAID mission. A second version of the report will be shared with wider stakeholders: Implementing Partner (s), government of the Republic of South Sudan, and any other interested South Sudanese stakeholder. Any potential procurement- sensitive information will be omitted from the second version of the report before the report is submitted. The final evaluation report is due in 5 working days after the evaluation team receives USAID comments.

The final version of the evaluation report will be submitted to USAID/South Sudan electronically. And the report format be restricted to font 12 Garamond. Page limit for this evaluation, excluding the Executive Summary and Annexes, is 30 pages.

APPENDIX I

CRITERIA TO ENSURE THE QUALITY OF THE EVALUATION REPORT

- The evaluation report should represent a thoughtful, well-researched and well organized effort to objectively evaluate what worked in the project, what did not and why.
- Evaluation reports shall address all evaluation questions included in the scope of work.
- The evaluation report should include the scope of work as an annex. All modifications to the scope of work, whether in technical requirements, evaluation questions, evaluation team composition, methodology or timeline need to be agreed upon in writing by the technical officer.
- Evaluation methodology shall be explained in detail and all tools used in conducting the evaluation such as questionnaires, checklists and discussion guides will be included in an Annex in the final report.
- Evaluation findings will assess outcomes and impact on males and females.
- Limitations to the evaluation shall be disclosed in the report, with particular attention to the limitations associated with the evaluation methodology (selection bias, recall bias, unobservable differences between comparator groups, etc.).
- Evaluation findings should be presented as analyzed facts, evidence and data and not based on anecdotes, hearsay or the compilation of people's opinions. Findings should be specific, concise and supported by strong quantitative or qualitative evidence.
- Sources of information need to be properly identified and listed in an annex.
- Recommendations need to be supported by a specific set of findings.
- Recommendations should be action-oriented, practical and specific, with defined responsibility for the action.

Report Requirements

USAID requires that evaluation reports are 27 – 30 pages maximum. The report format should be restricted to font 12 Garamond, and should be arranged as follows:

1. **Executive Summary:** concisely state the most salient findings and recommendations (2 pages);
2. **Table of Content:** (1 page);
3. **Introduction:** Purpose, audience and Questions: (1 page);
4. **Background:** brief overview of the project, strategies, and activities (2 page);
5. **Methodology:** describe evaluation methods, including detailed limitations, constraints and gaps (1 page);
6. **Findings/Conclusions/Recommendations (FCR):** organized FCR by questions, highlighting data quality, and reporting as bases for verification of spot checks, issues, and results as applicable (17–20 pages);
7. **Issues:** Provide list of key technical and/or administrative, if any (1 page),
8. **Lessons learnt and future directions:** (1 page);
9. **References:** (including bibliographical documentation, meetings. Interviews and focus group discussion);
10. **Annexes:** annexes that document the evaluation SOW, tools, schedules, and interview lists, and list of tables/charts.

Team Compositions

The evaluation consultants will consist of 3 team members. A Team Leader, and 2 technical experts. In addition, representative of the government, implementing partner, and USAID will also join the team. However, USAID representative will participate on part time basis, and in selected trips. The Team Leader will take full responsibility for managing the team, organizing its work, and ensuring quality control and delivery of a final report acceptable to USAID standards. Team composition should be gender sensitive with at least one female member.

Team Leader: A senior Evaluation Specialist, and should have a postgraduate degree in International development, Governance and Rule of Law, Evaluation, Political Science, or any related Social Science. S/he must have at least 15 years' experience – 5 of which should be working in a developing country context especially in the field of political transformations and election. The candidate should also have analytical and good report writing skills. S/he must have experience of leading large scale studies. A sound knowledge of understanding USAID programming approaches and methodologies will be an added advantage.

Technical expert: Two technical experts with extensive experience ranging from 7 – 10 years. The technical experts should have postgraduate degree in political science or any other relevant social science. The technical experts should also have expertise in one or combination of the following: Governance and Rule of Law, organizational/institutional development; or/and capacity building. The individual should have experience in research and demonstrated knowledge of conducting qualitative studies. Local experience as well as experience in Africa or/and other similar setting will be an added advantage.

Management of the Evaluation

Logistics

Management Systems International (MSI) will provide overall management and support to the evaluation team. This support will include overall technical guidance to the evaluation team, coordinating and arranging teams meetings with key stakeholders; other logistical arrangements e.g. travel, housing in Juba and in the field, etc; and coordination of Juba visitations and other meetings as identified during the course of this evaluation. The consultants, however, will have to procure logistical services like accommodation, and flight travels. But MSI will pay for government representatives. Further, participating USAID and IFES staff will make their own arrangements. In addition, MSI will also provide, for the evaluation team, office and meeting space, as needed, at MSI's Juba Office Compound where the team can access internet, printing and photocopying services. MSI will also coordinate further technical support as deem appropriate.

Schedule

The specified period of performance for this evaluation task is proposed to be approximately 9 weeks in total arranged as follows: 1 week document review; 3 days TPM; 4 weeks field work, 1 week data analysis; and 3 days presentations; and additional 1 week for the team leader to draft final report.

Budget

Task/Deliverables		Estimated Duration/LOE in days		
		Team leader	Technical Specialist 1	Technical Specialist 2
1	Initial document review and interviews with DC-based actors (USAID, IFES, State)	3	3	3
2	Travel to South Sudan	2	2	2
3	Preparation of inception report (literature review, methodology & tools development) and debrief USAID/South	4	4	4
4	Incorporate comments from the debrief with USAID	1	1	1
5	Data collection exercise	12	12	12
6	Data analysis	2	2	2
7	Draft evaluation report writing and preparation of presentation	3	3	3
8	Debrief meetings with USAID	1	1	1
9	Debrief with partners and key stakeholders	1	1	1
10	Team incorporate feedback/comments and complete draft evaluation report and submit to USAID	1	1	1
11	Depart (travel days)	2	2	2
12	USAID & partners provide comments on draft Report due ten days after (out of country)			
13	Team revises draft report and submits final to USAID (out of country)	5	2	2
14	USAID completes final review			
15	Team Leader/MSI do final revisions and edit/brand final report for submission to USAID	3		
Total Estimated LOE		40	34	34

A six-day work is authorized when working in country. And additional LOE may be for the Team Leader to meet any further requirements as deem fit.

ANNEX II: INTERVIEW LIST

Name	Position
IFES	
Jerome Leyraud	CoP (2009-11)
Parvinder Singh	Advisor, DCoP (2010-11); CoP (2011-13)
Michael Svetlik	VP of Programs
Matthew Parry	Senior Program Manager (2010-present)
Ajay Patel	Advisor (2010-13)
Alafi Alfred	Program Officer (2011-13)
Elizabeth Reiter	Program Manager (2009-13)
Robert Irish	Operations Officer (2010-13)
Eliane Torres	Advisor (2012-13)
Abigail Wilson	Africa Division Deputy Director (2009-14)
USAID	
Alexious Butler	DG Director South Sudan (2013- present)
Carrie Gruenloh	DC-based DG Officer Sudan (2007-10)
John Allelo	DG Program Officer South Sudan (2011-2012)
Michael Eddy	DG Program Director and Advisor Sudan/ South Sudan (2010-13)
Patrick Riruyo	DG Program Officer South Sudan
Sara Taylor	DC-based DG Officer South Sudan/Sudan (2010-14)
Scott Lyons	DC-based DRG Officer
National Elections Commission	
Prof Abednego Akok Kacuol	Chairperson (2012-present)
Jersa Kide Barsaba	Deputy Chairperson (2012-present)
Lawrence Salubia Amin	Commissioner (2012 – present)
Thabo Abosuh	Commissioner (2013 – present)
Yoannes Amum Nyiker	Secretary General (2014-present)
Christine Jaguru Jasten	Director General Public Outreach, Civic & Voter Ed (2012 – present)
Northern Bahr El Ghazal State High Committee	
Angelo Machar Akec	Deputy Chair (2015 – present)
XXX	Member (2015 – present)
XXX	Member (2015 – present)

Western Bahr El Ghazal State High Committee

Arcangelo Udo Agony

Limo Junia Marcelino

XXX

XXX

XXX

Chair (2015-present)

Deputy Chair (2015-present)

Member (2015-present)

Member (2015-present)

Member (2015-present)

National Constitutional Review Commission

Prof Akolda Maan Tier

Chair (2012 – present)

United Nations

Ray Kennedy

Denis Kadima

Panto Letic

Elections Director, UNMIS (2008-10)

Director, UNIRED (2010-11)

Operations Director, UNIRED (2010-11)

Political Parties

Dr. Lam Akol

Dr. Mario Aweim

Juma Saeed

Philip Yamby

Santino Amyeih

Nkrumah Anai

Korrelie Kom

Sarah Nene

Sebastiano Ucham

David William

Steward Soroba

Martin Abe

Joseph Opio

James Orasio

Peter Lommukel

Joseph Modestom

Chair, SPLM-DC

Assistant Secretary General, SPLM-DC

Secretary General, SSN

Chair, PURE

Deputy Chair, PURE

Chair, SSNP

Chair, NUDF

Secretary General, NUDF

Chair, UDF

Secretary General, UDF

Deputy Chair, UDF

Secretary General, UDP

Secretary General, SSUP

Secretary for Information, SANU-Nation

Representative, USSSP

Secretary General, CPSS

Civil Society

Abraham Awolich

Bishop Moses Deng

Senior Program Analyst, SUDD Institute

Bishop, Episcopal Church – Western Bhar Gazhal

Ijjo Elias Odego
Tiberious Lecca B. Lagu
Gladys Dommy Mananyu
John Ashworth

Executive Director, SSUNDE
Facilitator, South Sudan Council of Churches
Justice & Peace Officer, South Sudan Council of Churches
Fellow, Rift Valley Institute

Northern Bahr El Ghazal Focus Group Participants

8 organizations, 9 participants (9 male, 0 female)

Joseph Wek
Mayud Mayuol
Simon Dut
Albimo Dengy Tong
Angelo Deng Atem
Justin Wiro Ajongo
Francis Ngong
David Ayaga
Lwal Wuyu

ASCD
Executive Director, NICE
Executive Director, KAUCD
Chair, WYPBA
Director, WAYSA
Executive Director, AWORD
Executive Director, BAAS
Executive Director, AWODA
Project Officer, AGIDP

Western Bahr El Ghazal Focus Group Participants

10 organizations, 11 participants (5 male, 6 female)

Nelson Night John
Linda Ferdinand Hussain
John Elis Bandas
Saida Selim Haroun
Elizabeth Mario
Obuanya Abraham
Gabriel Dahl
Rougai Madut
Maria Luka Mauro
Stephen Robo
Awet Dominic
Monica Ilario Kaiwa

Deputy Chair, HYGS
Executive Director, WOTAP
VCS
Chair, General Women's Union
Director, Women Association
Finance Director, Women Association
Director, GDS
Director, AAGCE
Finance Assistance, WDG
Coordinator, CEPO
Acting President, PFCD
Coordinator, St Mary Association

Central Equatoria Focus Group Participants

4 organizations, 5 participants (4 male, 1 female)

Amanya Joseph
Guliba Florence
Edmund Yakami
Kinarro Joseph
Alafi Alfred

Program Coordinator, HURIDO
Program Officer, SSUNDE
Chairperson, CEPO
Network Coordinator, SSUNDE
Civil Society and Electoral Program Officer, DI

International Partners

Milica Panic

Ian McIntyre

Troy Brody

Mohammed Qazilbash

Deborah Ensor

Glenn Cowan

Jennifer Blitz

Mary Kagunyi

Tracy Cook

Jackiline Nasiwa

Sue Tatten

Lauren Krauth

Tihana Bartulac Blanc

Deputy Africa Division Director, IRI

Director of Finance and Administration, DI

Program Officer South Sudan, IRI (2011-2014)

Country Director, Mercy Corps

COP, Internews

Chief Executive, DI

Senior Program Manager, DI

Civil Society Advisor, DI

Country Director, NDI (2010-11)

Constitutional Advisor, PILPG

CoP, DI

Program Associate, Creative Associates
International

Senior Associate Creative Associates International

ANNEX II: INTERVIEW GUIDE

IFES SEASP Evaluation

Evaluation Question	Interview Guide	Response
<p>1. Did the project achieve the right focus and balance in terms of design, theory of change/development hypothesis, and democratic needs of South Sudan?</p>	<p>a. How would you describe the original program purpose?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How central was the CPA to the program design and purpose? ○ Were USAID's expectations of the program realistic? ○ Were IFES' expectations realistic? ○ Was there a defined "theory of change" or "development hypothesis" for the program? Where did this come from? <p>b. Were there different goals for the different phases of the program- i.e. 2010 elections, 2011 referendum, post referendum support?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What were the differences? 	
<p>2. What were the intended and unintended results of project interventions?</p>	<p>a. What are the best examples of program successes?</p> <p>b. Were there any surprise results?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In what ways did the program contribute to the overall democratic needs of South Sudan? <p>c. What, if any, program achievements were difficult to measure/ demonstrate?</p> <p>d. What kind of challenges did the program face in achieving planned results?</p>	
<p>3. To what extent was the IFES' operational model cost efficient and cost effective in achieving project expected results?</p>	<p>a. Relative to other programs you have worked on, how important was cost efficiency and effectiveness to USAID for this program?</p> <p>b. In retrospect, is there anything you would do change about the program structure to make it more cost efficient or effective?</p> <p>c. Did IFES expect to use the full \$69.9m value of the Task Order?</p>	
<p>4. What have been the specific and differential effects of IFES project on male and female in terms of electoral</p>	<p>a. Did IFES have a specific focus on gender for this program?</p> <p>b. What were USAID's expectations regarding gender mainstreaming and reporting on gender for this program? Were these expectations realistic?</p>	

results produced?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. Were there any challenges in disaggregating program results for men and women? d. Which program activities had the most measurable effects on men and women? 	
5. To what extent was the use of technical assistance and training strategy, and the procurement of election commodity approach sustainable?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. What were IFES' biggest contributions to the electoral environment in Sudan and South Sudan? b. What do you think is/ will be the most <i>lasting</i> impact from the program? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Do you think the program was <i>expected</i> to have lasting impact beyond the five year program period? o Was it <i>designed</i> to have lasting impact? c. Why do you think IFES lost the follow on program? 	
6. Did implementation respond flexibly to changing circumstances?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. How did IFES go about making program changes to respond to emerging needs/ circumstances? b. How accommodating was USAID to the proposed changes? c. How was IFES' rapport with USAID? d. How did the frequent changes in USAID staff impact the program? 	
OTHER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. How do you think this evaluation can be most helpful to current and future USAID electoral support in South Sudan? b. What contextual issues should we keep in mind in assessing IFES' performance? c. Who should we meet? d. Any further comments? 	

ANNEX IV: QUESTION GUIDE – IFES EVALUATION FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

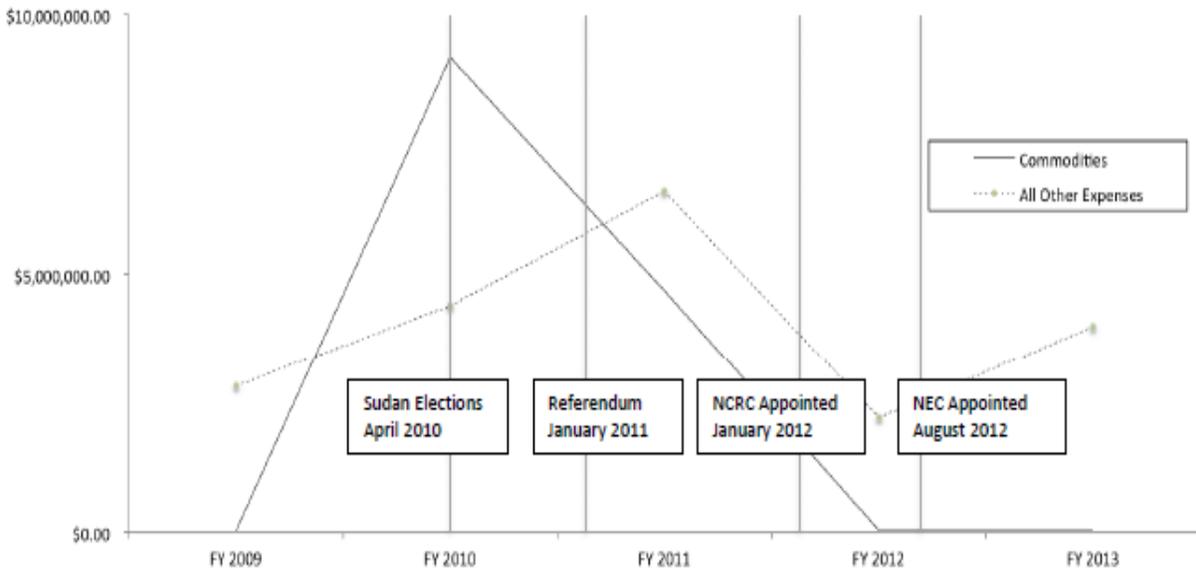
1. Why do you think the CPA process was so important?
 - a. What do you think are some of the biggest achievements of the CPA?
2. How would you qualify the current state of government institutions in South Sudan?
 - a. What is your impression of election institutions, like the NEC? What about constitutional institutions, like NCRC?
3. Do you feel government institutions, including the electoral authorities, take civil society into account?
 - a. What impact has civil society in South Sudan had on electoral processes? Constitutional processes?
4. How would you qualify the performance of electoral authorities for:
 - the 2010 elections;
 - the 2011 referendum;
 - currently?
5. Do you think the country is ready and prepared to conduct an election?
6. What would you like to see for your country from an eventual election?
7. How do you feel about the role of the international community in helping build and strengthen democracy in South Sudan?
 - a. Which international donors and organizations do you know of that have provided support for elections and constitutional issues in the country?
 - b. What is your impression of this support from the IC?
 - c. What have been the IC's most important contributions to elections and constitutional issues since the CPA?
 - d. What is the best way for the IC to support CSOs working on electoral and constitutional issues? Are you receiving this support now? From whom?
 - e. What (other) kind of support should the IC provide for future elections in S Sudan?

ANNEX V: SEASP CHRONOLOGY

Chronology of Key IFES Program and Political Events	
Date	Event
January 9, 2005	CPA signed between the SPLM and Government of Sudan
April 22 – May 6, 2008	National Census conducted in Sudan
July 15, 2008	National Election Act signed
February 5, 2009	IFES USAID Task Order Initiated – Initial Agreement to September 2011
February 2009	IFES opens office in Khartoum
March 2009	IFES opens office in Juba
May 12, 2009	National Census results announced
December 31, 2009	Southern Sudan Referendum Act signed
April 11-15, 2010	National elections held in Sudan – SPLM wins landslide victory in South, NCP wins landslide victory in North – Elections heavily criticized by international and domestic observers
May – June 2010	Multiple rebellions break out in Southern Sudan after results are released
June 30, 2010	Commissioners of the Southern Sudan Referendum Commission appointed
November 15 – December 8, 2010	Voter registration for the referendum conducted throughout Sudan, Southern Sudan and in the diaspora
January 9-15, 2011	Voting takes place for the Southern Sudan referendum
February 7, 2011	Announced results show almost a 99% vote in favor of independence
May 15, 2011	Southern Kordofan state elections results announced
June 2011	Fighting begins in Southern Kordofan
June X, 2011	IFES granted first no-cost extension
July 9, 2011	The Republic of South Sudan becomes an independent country
July 9, 2011	Transitional Constitution of South Sudan signed, giving the President powers to dismiss elected governors and state legislatures
July 31, 2011	IFES closes Khartoum office
January 9, 2012	National Constitutional Review Commission (NCRC) members are appointed
July 31, 2012	South Sudan National Elections Act signed
August 1, 2012	National Elections Commission appointed
August 3, 2012	IFES is granted second no-cost extension; new objective regarding support to the NCRC is incorporated.
July 24, 2013	President dismisses cabinet
October 2013	IFES closes Juba office
December 15, 2013	Civil war breaks out in South Sudan
December 31, 2014	NEC Chairman announces elections for June 30, 2015
February 15, 2015	President announces cancellation of 2015 elections
March 21, 2015	Transitional Constitution Amended to extend the term of the President, legislature and government institutions.

ANNEX VI: SEASP EXPENSES AND MILESTONES

SEASP Program Expenses and Key Program Milestones



ANNEX VII: EVALUATION TEAM BIOGRAPHIES

Luis Arturo Sobalvarro, Team Leader

Luis Arturo Sobalvarro has 20 years of experience working on democracy strengthening initiatives throughout the world. Focusing on electoral and political development assistance, he has designed, developed, managed and implemented related programs in more than 20 countries in Latin America, the Caribbean, the Middle East, North Africa, and Asia. Mr. Sobalvarro has served as a staff member in several international organizations, including the International Republican Institute (IRI), the International City and County Management Association (ICMA), Democracy International, and IFES. In addition, he has undertaken numerous consultant assignments for the Organization of American States (OAS), the Inter-American Development Bank, (IADB), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and The QED Group, among others. More recently, Mr. Sobalvarro served as a Deputy Chief of Party and Chief of Party for USAID-funded elections assistance programs in El Salvador and Honduras, respectively. Mr. Sobalvarro holds a B.A. in International Affairs and Economics from The American University in Washington, D.C.

Katherine Vittum, Technical Expert

Katherine Vittum has 15 years of experience as a manager and adviser for electoral assistance programs in politically sensitive environments. She has expertise in the design, implementation and evaluation of multi-stakeholder programs. Ms. Vittum has participated in numerous evaluations of USAID-funded electoral and political process reform programs- both as a technical expert and as team leader. She has worked in nearly 20 countries throughout Africa, Asia and Europe, and has authored and contributed to several publications on electoral and constitutional issues.

Jeremy Eckstein, Technical Expert

Jeremy Eckstein has been engaged with issues relating to the Sudan Comprehensive Peace Agreement since 2006, when he worked with the International Republican Institute in Southern Kordofan. He returned to Juba in 2009 to assist the Institute with its political party work in advance of the 2010 elections, and later worked with UNDP in Karthoum in regards to the 2011 referendum. He also authored a study on USAID referendum assistance in 2011. In addition to working on Sudan-related initiative, Jeremy Eckstein has worked in Bangladesh, Liberia, Nepal, Uganda, and Nigeria. He was a formerly with the San Francisco Elections Department and has observed numerous elections in the Balkans and in Eastern Europe.

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