

NOT FOR SALE

# VOICE of WOMEN



SUPPORTED BY:

## IWD2026 #GivetoGain

SPECIAL EDITION



International Women's Day



# Celebrating South Sudan Women In Mediation

THE PUSH FOR WOMEN WITH DISABILITY INCLUSION

WOMEN IN MEDIATION SOUTH SUDAN ADVOCATES FOR INCLUSIVE DIALOGUE FOR TRANSFORMATION

SUPPORT WOMEN INFARMING & BUSINESS

MARCH - APRIL 2026

Voice of Women Magazine - South Sudan

# C O R R D I N A T O R

## South Sudan Women Mediators

### The South Sudan Women Mediators: Identity, Formation, and Mandate

The South Sudan Women Mediators (SSWM) is a national, women-led peace initiative established to promote inclusive dialogue, conflict prevention, and the peaceful resolution of disputes in South Sudan. The network operates independently and on a non-partisan basis, guided by national interest and a commitment to sustainable peace.

The SSWM comprises 21 women leaders drawn from diverse sectors of society, including political parties, civil society organizations, media institutions, faith-based organizations, women's unions, representatives of persons with disabilities, and the private sector. This cross-sectoral composition provides the network with broad social legitimacy and the capacity to engage across political and community divides.

The platform has been hosted by the Community Empowerment for Progress Organization (CEPO), which provided institutional anchoring and administrative coordination. The initiative has also benefited from financial and technical support from UN Women, United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), and other development partners. This institutional hosting and sustained donor support were essential for the operationalization of the Women Mediators platform – including mentorship, dialogue sessions, and outreach engagements.

At the same time, the SSWM has maintained its non-partisan and nationally driven character, ensuring that its advocacy remains grounded in South Sudanese ownership of the peace process. The Women Mediators were formed in response to the persistent exclusion of women from formal mediation spaces and high-level political negotiations during South Sudan's conflict and post-agreement implementation phases. While women bore a disproportionate burden of violence, displacement, and economic hardship, they remained underrepresented in decision-making structures dominated by militarized elites. The formation of the SSWM was therefore both corrective and strategic: corrective in addressing gender exclusion and strategic in strengthening the peace architecture through women-led engagement.

The establishment of the platform also reflected recognition that sustainable peace requires continuous dialogue beyond formal negotiation tables. Women mediators positioned themselves not as parallel actors competing with official mechanisms but as complementary peace actors capable of bridging communities and signatory parties.



**Hon. Lona James**  
South Sudan Women' Mediators'



# C O N T E N T S

MARCH 2026



07

**Hon. Lona James, South Sudan Women Mediators Coordinator, Feminist Leader & Deputy Chairperson of Political Party Council: Engagement with Signatory Parties: Strategy, Practice, and Political Navigation**

## Cover Story

CEPO is honored to share this special Impact that highlights the work of the women in Mediations in South Sudan. As you'll see in these pages, South Sudan is made up of influential women leaders & Peace Builders who are focused on Transitional, breaking the bias, and improving empowerment for women in throughout the country.



9

**Nema Juma Media Experts in Disability Inclusion & Gender**



16

**Zakya Musa, Advocate for Women with Disabilities & Among 21 Women Mediators**

## Women's Month

- 10 South Sudan Women Mediators Experience
- 13 Successful Story of Rose Invest In woman South Sudan AECF PROJECT
- 18 The Role of Media in Supporting Women Mediators in South Sudan
- 19 Women Mediators Engaged African and Western Countries Ambassadors on Transitional Process in Juba



# Editor's Message



## International Women's Day 2026: Giving to Gain for Women and Girls



International Women's Day is celebrated globally to recognize the achievements, resilience, and contributions of women to their families, communities, and societies. Women remain the backbone of social and economic development, and this day serves as a moment to honor their progress while also acknowledging the ongoing struggle for equality, justice, and rights

### #GiveToGain

The 2026 International Women's Day theme, **#GiveToGain**, highlights the importance of collective action and shared responsibility in advancing gender equality. Alongside the global call championed by the United Nations under the theme "**Rights. Justice. Action. For All Women and Girls**," the message emphasizes the need to protect women's rights in education, political participation, and socio-economic opportunitie

Technology and innovation are increasingly providing platforms for women to raise their voices and participate in global conversations. When women are empowered with knowledge, resources, and access to networks, they can actively shape policies and decisions that affect their lives and communities.

Importantly, the theme also calls for women to support one another. Through peer-to-peer dialogue, mentorship, and capacity building, women can uplift those who are vulnerable and marginalized. Such engagement also promotes mental well-being, encourages leadership, and fosters innovation in areas such as technology, entrepreneurship, and livelihoods.

However, critical questions remain at the center of the global gender equality agenda: Why do many women still struggle to access justice and equal rights? Why do girls face barriers to quality education? Why are women still underrepresented in leadership and decision-making processes? Addressing these questions requires collective commitment to dismantling stereotypes, discrimination, and social norms that continue to limit women's opportunities.

This edition of *Voice of Women Magazine* highlights the experiences and contributions of women mediators in South Sudan, particularly their role in dialogue and mediation efforts. Their stories demonstrate how women are not only advocates for peace but also key actors in building bridges across communities.

As we commemorate International Women's Day 2026, let us reaffirm our collective responsibility to advance justice, equality, and rights for women and girls everywhere. By embracing the spirit of **#GiveToGain**, we can work together to build a future where every woman and girl has the opportunity to thrive

**Happy International Women's Day.**

**"When we give opportunities, support, and resources to women, we gain stronger communities, inclusive leadership, and a more just society."**

In South Sudan, International Women's Day carries particular significance. Women continue to face high levels of gender-based violence, economic hardship, and deeply rooted cultural norms that limit their representation especially in decision-making spaces. Despite these challenges, South Sudanese women continue to demonstrate remarkable strength, leadership, and commitment to building a more inclusive society.

**Give to Gain** encourages individuals, organizations, and communities to invest in women and girls. By offering resources, mentorship, advocacy, and opportunities, society ultimately gains stronger communities, greater equality, and sustainable development. Empowering women through education, skills development, leadership opportunities, and mentorship programs strengthens their ability to contribute meaningfully to society.

### PUBLISHER

CEPO South Sudan

### EDITOR

Rufina Isaac

### WRITERS

Nema Juma, Ajak &  
Edmund, Adwok Chol, Iklas

### DESIGN AND Rewrite

#### CHIEF DESIGNER

Jeno Wen & Sidya Manasi

Tel: (+211) -914897589  
(+211)- 912111088



### Voice of Women Magazine

South Sudan is published  
Yearly

by CEPO South Sudan. Copyright 2026  
All rights reserved. Except as permitted,  
no part of this magazine may be  
reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in  
any form or by any means whatsoever,  
or stored in a database or retrieval  
system, without the prior written  
permission of the publisher.

CEPO - SouthSudan

Hai Nheem, Women Union  
Compound, Juba

Mobile: +211 919472792

E-mail:

ceposouthsudan@gmail.com  
@gmail.com Copyrights 2026



“Strike for innovative and creative action for South Sudan dialouge & realistic Impact “

## Why CEPO Initiated Women in Dialogue & Mediation

Mr. Edmund Yakani, Executive Director of CEPO says South Sudan Women Mediators was a great idea that we initiated and translated into action to position the role of women in mediation and dialogue. The idea was within our program of the Status of Women Initiative, which purposely focuses on strengthening the role of women in public life. The South Sudan Women Mediators is an implementation of the objective of the Status of Women Initiative, which focus on “To empower women leaders for effective public life engagement”.

The efforts so far delivered by the South Sudan Women Mediators are encouraging and motivating. The South Sudan Women Mediators broke the deadlock on rejection of inclusive political dialogues by the parties' signatories to the R-ARCSS on the 5<sup>th</sup> December, 2025 in Juba. The pressure generated by the South Sudan Women Mediators was effective because it made the government to act on formation of committee for dialogues among the parties' signatories to the 2018 peace agreement

CEPO strategy for empowering women to effectively drive peace and security agenda is gaining attention and delivering results already, such as the South Sudan Women Mediators. South Sudan Women Mediators is a platform that was designed carefully and timely for realization of the UNSCR 1325 and the African Union Maputo Protocol for enforcement of women role in peace and security. It is clear that when women sit at the forefront of mediation and dialogue tangible results are often delivered in a lasting manner.

Finally, CEPO is proud that our initiative on Status of Women Initiative was able to develop and strike this innovative and creative action of South Sudan Women Mediators. It is encouraging and motivating to see trained, mentored and coached women on mediation and dialogue driving realistic impact

The message of ED was about women's resilience and taking the lead in trsition of South Sudan. CEPO Takes lead to Support Women #Givetogain

HappyInternational Women's Day!



Edmund Yakani  
Executive Director,  
Community Empowerment for  
Progress Organization (CEPO)

CEPO's commitment to women, peace, and security generated the process for the creation of the South Sudan Women Mediators for driving UNSCR 1325 and the African Union Maputo Protocol. It is evident that acting on the realization of the agenda on women, peace and security at community level is much easier than at regional and international level. South Sudan short period of the existence of the South Sudan Women Mediators has led to the practical actions for driving women, peace and security agenda being realized

# Engagement with Signatory Parties: Strategy, Practice, and Political Navigation

## Hon. Lona James, Coordinator of Women Mediators

With institutional anchoring provided by the Community Empowerment for Progress Organization (CEPO) and technical and financial support from UN Women and United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), the South Sudan Women Mediators (SSWM) transitioned from capacity-building and internal consolidation to direct political engagement with the signatory parties to the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS).

This engagement was neither symbolic nor peripheral. It was deliberate, structured, and strategically framed to influence behaviors, strengthen implementation, and reduce the risk of relapse into violence.

### Framing Engagement: Complementary, Not Confrontational

From the outset, the Women Mediators adopted a complementary approach toward signatory parties. Rather than positioning themselves as critics or watchdogs, they framed their role as supportive actors committed to the successful implementation of the R-ARCSS.

This framing served three strategic purposes:

It reduced defensiveness among political elites. It preserved access to senior party leadership & It positioned the mediators as partners in stabilization rather than adversaries.

Women consistently emphasized that peace implementation was a shared national responsibility and that inclusive dialogue was the only sustainable pathway forward. This non-confrontational posture enabled them to open dialogue spaces even during moments of heightened political tension.

### Modalities of Engagement

The Women Mediators utilized multiple modalities in their engagement with signatories.

#### Structured Dialogue Sessions

Formal dialogue sessions were convened with representatives of signatory parties to discuss implementation bottlenecks, security concerns, and political tensions. These sessions created safe, semi-neutral spaces for discussion outside formal negotiation tables.

In these engagements, mediators: Referenced specific provisions of the R-ARCSS to ground discussions in agreed commitments, Raised concerns related to ceasefire violations and delays in implementation, Advocated for inclusion of women in transitional institutions and electoral preparations.

Because the mediators were well-versed in the agreement's content, discussions moved beyond general advocacy to precise, provision-based accountability.

#### Quiet Diplomacy and Shuttle Engagement

Beyond formal meetings, Women Mediators conducted quiet consultations with individual signatory leaders. This shuttle-style engagement allowed sensitive issues to be addressed discreetly, particularly during moments when interparty relations were strained. This approach was particularly useful in:

De-escalating emerging tensions, Clarifying misunderstandings between parties. Encouraging restraint during politically volatile periods

#### Quiet Diplomacy and Shuttle Engagement

Beyond formal meetings, Women Mediators conducted quiet consultations with individual signatory leaders. This shuttle-style engagement allowed sensitive issues to be addressed discreetly, particularly during moments when interparty relations were strained. This approach was particularly useful in:

De-escalating emerging tensions, Clarifying misunderstandings between parties. Encouraging restraint during politically volatile periods

#### Early Warning and Community-to-Elite Linkages

The mediators leveraged their diverse backgrounds and networks to gather early warning information from communities through the support of CEPO. Reports and briefings of localized clashes, mobilization of armed youth, hate speech, or displacement were communicated through trusted networks to the Women Mediators.

These concerns were then elevated to relevant signatory leaders through dialogue channels. By transmitting community realities directly to political elites, the Women Mediators played a preventive diplomacy role—often before situations escalated into broader confrontations.

This bridging function enhanced both legitimacy and responsiveness.

#### Professional Conduct and Strategic Communication

The earlier capacity-building and mentorship proved critical in shaping engagement outcomes. The Women Mediators demonstrated: Neutral language in politically charged discussions, Careful sequencing of issues to avoid escalation, Firm but respectful insistence on accountability, Collective messaging aligned with agreed positions.

The “dos and don'ts” of engagement — including avoiding public shaming during closed dialogues, refraining from partisan language, and maintaining confidentiality — strengthened trust with signatory parties.

At the same time, transparency was maintained through carefully crafted press releases issued after dialogue sessions. These communications reinforced public accountability while preserving professional relationships.

#### Political Impact and Limitations

The engagement of the Women Mediators contributed to, Maintaining communication channels during tense periods, Elevating community concerns into elite discussions.

Reinforcing public expectations for implementation, Increasing visibility of women as serious political actors, However, their influence remained constrained by structural realities, Decision-making authority continued to rest with armed elites, Access to high-level negotiations was not consistently institutionalized. Resource limitations affected the frequency and geographic scope of engagement

Nevertheless, the relational power exercised by the Women Mediators — grounded in credibility, professionalism, and unity — enabled meaningful, if incremental, influence within a highly militarized political environment.





“Women with disabilities are not asking for charity; they are demanding equality. When their voices are heard, and their rights are respected, communities grow stronger, fairer, and more inclusive.”

## Nema Juma, Media Expert on Disability Inclusion & Gender

**What have I learned from advocating and lobbying for the rights of persons with disabilities as a female advocate and communications professional?**

Advocating for the rights of persons with disabilities, especially women, teaches several important lessons. First, disability rights are human rights, not charity. Women with disabilities deserve equal access to education, health services, employment, and leadership opportunities just like everyone else.

Second, I have learned that advocacy requires persistence and collaboration. Working with organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs), civil society groups, government institutions, and development partners is essential to influence policies and change attitudes.

Third, communication plays a powerful role in challenging stigma and harmful stereotypes. In South Sudan, many communities still view disability with negative attitudes, which limits participation in social, economic, and political life.

Finally, advocacy shows that empowering women with disabilities strengthens communities. When women with disabilities are given a voice, they become leaders, role models, and agents of social change.

### **What is the status of women with disabilities' rights protection?**

The protection of the rights of women with disabilities in South Sudan is improving slowly but still weak in practice. A major milestone was the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in 2023, which commits the government to promote equality and protect the rights of persons with disabilities.

These challenges continue to hinder the full participation of persons with disabilities in national development.

### **Participation and representation of women with disabilities in public life in South Sudan**

Participation of women with disabilities in public life is still very limited. Although South Sudan has a 35% affirmative action policy for women, women with disabilities often fail to benefit from it due to barriers such as a lack of political party affiliation, discrimination, and limited opportunities. advocates also note that women with disabilities are rarely represented in parliament, ministerial positions, or leadership roles. Barriers to participation include:

- Low access to education and leadership training
- Social stigma and discrimination
- Lack of accessible public spaces and information
- Economic challenges

### **However, advocacy groups are increasingly calling for inclusive governance and meaningful participation in decision-making processes.**

Three key messages on the rights of women with disabilities for International Women's Day 2026

1. Nothing about us without us. Women with disabilities must be fully included in leadership, policymaking, and community decision-making.

2. Equal rights and equal opportunities

Women with disabilities should have equal access to education, healthcare, employment, and justice.

3. End stigma, discrimination, and violence

Communities, government, and institutions must work together to eliminate discrimination and protect women with disabilities from gender-based violence.

## SOUTH SUDAN WOMEN MEDIATORS EXPERIENCE

*CEPO Project Manager: Lidai Ruben Shared here experience to voice out the important role played during the implementation of this project. The **South Sudan Women Mediators (SSWM)** is a women-led peace initiative established in September 2025 by the Community Empowerment for Progress Organization (CEPO). The initiative was created to promote inclusive dialogue, conflict prevention, and the peaceful resolution of disputes across South Sudan. It reflects a growing recognition that sustainable peace requires the meaningful participation of women at all levels of decision-making.*

The SSWM platform brings together **21 women leaders** drawn from diverse sectors of society, including academia, political parties, civil society organizations, media institutions, faith-based organizations, representatives of persons with disabilities, and the private sector. This diversity strengthens the legitimacy of the platform and enhances its ability to engage across political, social, and community divides.

The initiative is coordinated administratively by CEPO and supported by UN Women. Rather than competing with formal peace mechanisms, the women mediators position themselves as complementary actors who bridge communities, political stakeholders, and signatories to peace agreements. Their work contributes to decision-making processes while also addressing the social and economic hardships that often fuel conflict.

### Role of Women Mediators

Women mediators play a critical role in advancing peacebuilding efforts across South Sudan. One of their key contributions is driving dialogue within communities. Through organized discussions and engagements, they create safe spaces where conflicting groups can communicate, rebuild trust, and explore peaceful solutions to disputes.

In addition, the 21 women mediators are active participants in peace processes, supporting the implementation of the Women, Peace, and Security agenda. Their presence helps ensure that peacebuilding initiatives reflect diverse perspectives and address the realities faced by communities affected by conflict.

### Impact on Peacebuilding

“By advocating for inclusive dialogue, South Sudanese women mediators are helping transform conflict into opportunities for lasting peace.”

The involvement of the South Sudan Women Mediators has already produced important results. Through a series of training sessions, mentorship, and coaching programs, the mediators have strengthened their capacity to engage in dialogue and conflict resolution. The mediators reported that the training met their expectations and equipped them with essential skills in mediation and peace dialogue

As a result, they are now better prepared to facilitate discussions within communities and support inclusive peace processes.

The program has also increased community participation in peace initiatives. By encouraging local engagement and dialogue, the mediators are helping to make peacebuilding efforts more sustainable and locally owned.

### Challenges Facing Women Mediators

Despite these achievements, the South Sudan Women Mediators continue to face several challenges.

One key concern raised by the mediators is the **limited time allocated for engagement with political stakeholders**, particularly meetings with parties that are signatories to the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS). Sessions lasting only one day per party were considered too short to allow for meaningful dialogue.

Additional challenges include **cultural and social barriers**, as deeply rooted patriarchal norms often limit women's participation in mediation and political negotiations. Many communities still perceive peace negotiations as a male-dominated space, making it difficult for women to gain recognition as legitimate mediators. Women mediators also face **capacity and resource constraints**, including limited access to training, funding, and logistical support. Sustained investment in capacity-building and information-sharing is essential for strengthening their role in peace processes.

### Gains and Achievements

Despite these obstacles, the initiative has achieved significant milestones. Through mentorship and coaching sessions, the mediators reported that they are now **better informed about the gender provisions within the R-ARCSS** and understand how these provisions can support women's participation in peace and security efforts.

The mediators also gained valuable insights into regional and international policy frameworks, including discussions on the African Union Peace and Security Council communiqué on the situation in South Sudan issued on 28 October 2025.

Furthermore, the initiative provided important updates on the evolving political context and power dynamics in Juba, enabling the mediators to engage more effectively in dialogue and advocacy.

Twenty-one women mediators, through collective action, are driving dialogue, strengthening participation, and advancing the Women, Peace, and Security agenda in South Sudan, UN Women said on Thursday.

A press release issued to Radio Tamazuj said that while Human Rights Day is commemorated on 10 December, UN Women put the spotlight on the 21 women mediators as essential participants in the peace process. Their participation in the peacebuilding process is fundamental to building an inclusive and just South Sudan and the realization of the human rights of the South Sudanese people.

The courage and leadership of South Sudanese women mediators show that peace is possible when women are at the table,” said Delphine Serumaga, UN Women Country Representative in South Sudan. “Their efforts are bridging divides and creating pathways for political dialogue.”

With UN Women’s leadership, and in close partnership with Community Empowerment for Progress Organization (CEPO) and women’s civil society organizations, 21 women were trained, mentored, and coached in mediation and negotiation.

Their work has strengthened the national Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda and empowered women to lead inclusive dialogues at a critical juncture in the country’s peace process.

According to UN Women, their advocacy has already yielded significant results: political parties have begun holding bilateral meetings to seek consensus and engage in consultative dialogue. The women mediators’ facilitation has created space for constructive engagement among stakeholders.



***Delphine Serumaga, UN Women Country Representative in South Sudan.***

Historically, women’s participation in peacebuilding processes has been shown to contribute to successful transitions to peaceful nations, as seen in post-war Liberia (1999) and Sierra Leone (1995).

Women mediators influence the peace process, demonstrating that inclusive dialogue led by women is essential for building trust, bridging divides, and moving the country toward political resolution. In South Sudan, women’s participation in peace dialogues and transitions, particularly as mediators, is not a new phenomenon.

The UN Women statement says that the actions of the 21 mediators, who managed to hold five (5) inter-party dialogues and facilitated a resolution to the impasse, which

resulted in a joint political party agreement to pursue a political resolution at the highest levels. From 15 to 19 December 2023, parties to the 2018 Revitalized Agreement

on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS) will hold a joint high-level political dialogue to advance consensus and overcome the current impasse.

The efforts are supported by the donor community, specifically, the government of Norway for prioritizing women’s participation in the peace and security agenda, the European Union, and the United Kingdom as co-chairs of the Women, Peace and Security Working Group, whose secretariat is led by UN Women, and the UN International Elections Assistance Team.

These efforts advance peace and embed gender-responsive approaches at the heart of South Sudan’s peacebuilding efforts.



Rose Fekira Santo Age 28 living in Ronyi, Yei River County, Central Equatoria State, with five children, shared her story before joining AECF Program, she was not able to cultivate large area for farming though there is enough farmland because of lack of financial support.

There was no guaranteed market for farm produce. She grew vegetables for marketing, such as cabbage, tomato, green pepper, eggplant, onion, kale (sukuma) and was earning 50,000 SSP to 60,000 SSP per sale of the vegetables the program empowered her with skills and knowledge but also helped her with planning and managing farm activities, in all farm activities such as land preparation, planting, harvesting and sales of the farm produce. Through the gain skilled from ACFE She was able to paying children's school fees, medical bills, house rent and food.

**Through this program, Rose was** trained as a tailor, currently has a sewing machine at home but could not put into business because of lack of textiles (kitenge) since they are expensive. She is serving as Chairlady for Village Savings and Loan Association. (VSLA)

Despite Rose's successful story, she is also facing some challenges in meeting all the basic needs, due to displacement from original village as a result of 2016 war.



## She appreciated AECF Program and highlighted her strength after joining

- She was able to acquire training on Climate Smart Agriculture.
- Her production increased as a result of an increase in farmland because she was able to hire laborers.
- She started cultivating a variety of crops alongside vegetables, such as maize, sorghum, groundnut, sesame, and cassava. Her income increased after sales of the farm produce.

### What source of income do you have?

Sales from farm produce and I started a small family business at home as a result of the income from the farm. I am currently selling basic household items such as soap, sugar, salt, Maggi, groundnut paste, and small fish (commonly known as nkejje)

Now she can make up to 150,000 SSP per sale of farm produce and earn about 300,000 SSP from the small family business per month.



Farming for business as a result of the training offered by Blessing Millers Savings and Loan Association



The war affected my source of livelihood hence no stable source of income as before as she narrated: "Now we have to rent a house for the family which is not large enough to accommodate us and our belongings. It is difficult to complete payment for school fees easily, normally, there are balances that remain to be completed. Medications are too expensive, especially when there are serious medical issues. We are managing with only basic food for sustainability.

We get clean water from a borehole, but sometimes there is congestion from those who are also displaced.

he group of 10 women Savings and Loan Association is an initiative created so that individuals make a contribution of 26,000 SSP monthly to the group. This is to encourage savings as well as receive a reasonable amount to be able to solve each individual's problems and needs. The monthly contribution is rotational among members.

She is able to raise and save money through the savings and loan initiative they created. The money is meant for paying the children's school fees, medical emergency and house rent.

Meanwhile, for food, she supplements with what they get from the farm, such as vegetables and other crops like sorghum, maize, groundnut, cassava, and sesame, part of which is reserved for food. Still, they get clean water from the borehole.

## Voice of Women With Disability



We really appreciate the decision by the EU C5 Plus to ensure peace in this country, and this is what even our government wants.

With the leadership of our president, the commander-in-chief, Safaki, the Mayor did. He has to ensure peace in this country; therefore, he is very committed to attending all meetings with people from various countries to ensure he is supported and that peace prevails.

And we know that with peace, as peace is crucial for all success and solutions, particularly amidst our security situation and economic instability. So all this without peace, things will not progress. Peace is the only solution for all these things.



“I hated my disability condition”, narrates Margaret, adding “I didn’t think I had any value to my relatives in any way”.

Consequently, our government is really committed. They have to make sure that peace truly prevails in this country and peace is the one will make our citizen to be free. Consequently, we are pleased and appreciative for this decision that is going now on. As South Sudanese women mediators, we have developed our strategies.

One of the strategies is to make sure that, primarily, the citizen consultation is in place. We need to make sure that we are really consulted as citizen of this country. We do consultation different meetings with the citizens. And also, we are going to have the regular meetings with the AU mission in South Sudan.

so that we see their support in terms of how peace is going to be at the end in this country. So as South Sudanese women mediators. We recognize that women are both peacemakers and vital to national success, as reflected in the saying: 'If you teach a woman, you teach a nation.'

' Therefore, we believe that for these countries to succeed, women must be informed and empowered to ensure success. This sentiment, that 'women are the success of the nation,' is particularly resonant for us as women. Consequently, our commitment to peace prevailing is not solely reliant on collective efforts but is significantly driven by the efforts of us women.

# The Role of Media in Supporting Women Mediators in South Sudan

Media serves as a platform to amplify the voices of women mediators, acting as a crucial partner in social change processes. Television and radio channels, newspapers, and digital platforms highlight important issues and the vital role of women mediators in resolving social and political conflicts. Recognizing their contributions and fostering public confidence in women's ability to mediate in a male-dominated environment is essential. Local and international media outlets—including newspapers, magazines, and community radio stations spread throughout the country—as well as digital platforms that have become key spaces for women's voices, can all play a significant role.

Furthermore, as a tool for advocacy and lobbying, the media can encourage governmental institutions and international organizations to integrate women mediators into the planning, implementation, and monitoring phases of national reconciliation programs. Through media channels, women mediators can exert pressure on decision-makers to involve them more fully in dialogue and mediation processes, where their participation at the negotiating table fosters sustainable peace. The media also challenges stereotypical images of women, raising societal awareness that they are peacemakers and essential partners in nation-building.

In addition, media contributes to creating a supportive environment for women's participation in peacebuilding by spreading awareness, promoting participation, changing societal attitudes, and pushing decision-makers toward more inclusive policies.

It also provides a transparent environment for the Women Mediators Initiative by monitoring activities and documenting their impact. Training female journalists on sensitive coverage of conflicts and gender issues further strengthens the mediators' role. Despite ongoing challenges, the media remains one of the most important tools for promoting the sustainability of the Women Mediators Initiative and transforming it into an effective force for a more stable and just future.

Therefore, media plays a key role in spreading awareness and highlighting the efforts of the twenty-one trained mediators participating in the country's peace and mediation processes. This visibility gives them broader recognition within society and international institutions, demonstrating women's potential to strengthen



political dialogue and build trust between conflicting parties. Such enhanced visibility empowers women to lobby for implementing international conventions and treaties protecting women's rights, further solidifying their influence in peace processes (Sugh & Agnes, 2017). Beyond mere visibility, media engagement facilitates the development of women-led networks, such as FemWise-Africa, which enhance collective action and amplify policy recommendations for inclusive peacemaking (Rein, 1983).

t

# Women Mediators Engaged African and Western Countries Ambassadors on Transitional Process in Juba



South Sudan women Mediators were proactive in engaging the African Ambassadors in South Sudan for pressuring our political leaders for genuine political transition from violence to peace. They managed to engage Nigeria, South Africa, Kenya, Sudan, and the African Union Mission in South Sudan. These engagements were impactful based on the content of the declaration of the AUC-5 plus recently in Ethiopia-Addis Ababa dated 15<sup>th</sup> February, 2026. South Sudan Women Mediators were strategically engaging the African Ambassadors in South Sudan to convey their messages and concerns, aiming to ensure the transitional period's success and in accordance to the provisions of the R-ARCSS.

The South Sudan Women Mediators were proud and appreciative to see that their concerns were properly reflected in the content of the AU C-5 declaration. The next steps for the women mediators involve following up on and tracking the commitment of the African Ambassadors to ensure that South Sudan's leaders implement the AU C-5 plus declaration's resolutions. A key step in this follow-up and tracking with African Ambassadors is the development of a strategy for influencing the implementation of the AU C-5 plus declaration. The strategy was developed recently dated 30<sup>th</sup> February, 2026. The strategy primarily aims to influence the design of the process for the implementation of the AU C-5 plus declaration

The strategy was widely disseminated to African and Western Countries' ambassadors. The majority of African and Western Countries' ambassadors welcomed the women mediators' strategy, promising to use it in their various engagements regarding the implementation of the AU C-5 plus declaration.

South Sudan Women Mediators will strive their best to ensure that the implementation of the AU C-5 plus declaration embraces meaningful women's participation and representation from all sectors of public life, whether civil society or political parties. It was recognized that in the past there had been no proactive advocacy and lobbying for meaningful women's participation and representation in peace mediation. This time, the South Sudan Women Mediators want to engage

proactively to ensure meaningful women's participation and representation in the AU C-5 plus proposed mediation and dialogues, thereby securing a genuine transitional process in South Sudan.

# WOMEN Empowerment Through Farming

## Sucess Story AECF fund



Mrs. Evlen Keji, a 32-year-old farmer from Korumulla Village in Rajaf Payam, Juba, is a mother of two children who are currently in primary school. She is married to Mr. Peter Pitia, who is 40 years old. Like many families in the area, their household depends mainly on small-scale farming for survival. Before the project intervention, earning enough income to support their family needs was a constant struggle.

Evlen Keji became a beneficiary of the groundnut and sesame farming project, which aimed to support smallholder farmers, especially women, by providing seeds, training, and agricultural support. According to Evlen, the project brought significant positive changes to her livelihood. Although pest attacks affected part of her harvest and she managed to obtain only three sacks of groundnuts, she was still grateful for the opportunity. The harvest provided her family with some income, which helped them meet important household needs. She also explained that the land prepared for planting groundnuts and sesame allowed them to grow vegetables such as greens, which improved food availability for her family. This helped diversify their food sources and improve household nutrition.

One of the most valuable aspects of the program for Evlen was the training provided by the International Institute of Rural Reconstruction (IIRR). Through the training sessions, she and other farmers learned about:

- Appropriate planting seasons
- Climate change and its effects on farming
- Flood management techniques
- Better farm management practices
- We got trained by CEPO about financial management, human right and gender participation Also, knowledge on harvesting season, climatic changes and flood management

These lessons helped her improve her farming skills and better prepare for future agricultural seasons.

Evlen also appreciated the support provided by Tofy Company, which helped farmers by clearing bushes and ploughing the land. This significantly reduced the labor required to prepare farmland and made the planting process easier for many farmers, especially women.

Another major benefit came when farmers received cash from the sale of groundnuts. This support was particularly helpful for those who could not easily transport their crops to the market. The income allowed Evlen and other farmers to support their families during important periods such as the Easter season.

Despite some challenges during the season, Evlen believes the program was highly beneficial. She emphasized that the project helped farmers gain knowledge, increase food production, and generate income. She hopes the support from organizations like IIRR and partners will continue so that more farmers in Juba can benefit and strengthen their livelihoods.

Evlen concludes by saying that the project not only supported farmers economically but also empowered women farmers by giving them opportunities to improve their skills, increase production, and contribute to their families' wellbeing.

# WOMEN

# MEDIATOR

# MEETS

# NIGERIA AMBASSADOR IN JUBA



### OPP: Lack of political will, funding gaps stalling peace agreement

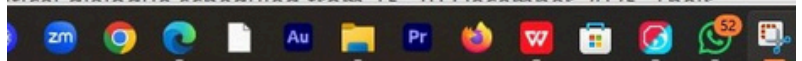
By: Dogga Morris On: November 27, 2025



### Women mediators shape political dialogue ahead of key Juba peace summit



Twenty-one South Sudanese women mediators are taking a leading role in advancing the country's peace process, ahead of a high-level political dialogue scheduled from 15-10 December 2025. Their



### Women, faith leaders call for immediate ceasefire as fighting resumes in country

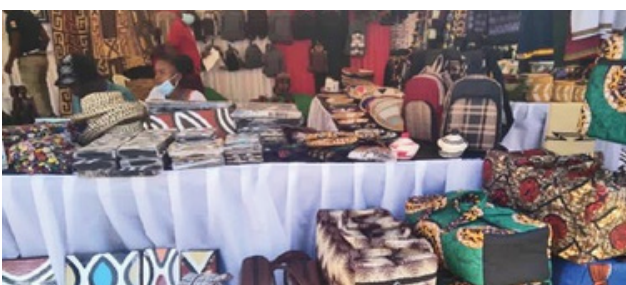


ARTICLES OF WOMEN MEDIATORS ENGAGING WITH POLITICAL PARTIES SIGNATORY TO R- ACCESS IN JUBA, SOUTH SUDAN- 2026 CREDIT: STANDARD ZONE NEWS

<https://szn.ss/women-mediators-shape-political-dialogue-ahead-of-key-juba-peace-summit/>

<https://szn.ss/women-faith-leaders-call-for-immediate-ceasefire-as-fighting-resumes-in-country/>

### South Sudan's home dialogue continues as FDS call for inclusive peace efforts





# FAME

## Mini Mart

**Fresh.  
Affordable.  
Variety.**



Find us in Torit town (Along Torit-Juba road)  
Opposite Iman Clinic & Goodwill Ceramics Tiles  
Call: + 211 (0) 929 822 401  
Email: [minimart.ffame@gmail.com](mailto:minimart.ffame@gmail.com)



# International Women's Day 2026

## “Rights. Justice. Action.”

### Women's rights mean nothing if we cannot defend them

International Women's Day 2026 arrives as justice systems are stretched thin. Conflict, repression, and political tensions are weakening the rule of law, leaving women and girls with shrinking protection. Many are dismissed, doubted, revictimized, or unable to afford legal help – and equality slips further away. When justice breaks down, women pay the price.

Access to justice is a right recognized in global and national law. Denying it threatens human rights, peace, and sustainable development. Without equal access for everyone, justice cannot function. Barriers facing women and girls only deepen inequality.

As the world faces multiple crises – rising inequality, growing conflict, democratic backsliding, climate stress, and uneven digital change – the need to secure access to justice is more urgent than ever, especially amid ongoing pushback on women's rights.



**Q: What would be your final message to the women of South Sudan as we join the rest of the world to commemorate the International Women's Day (IWD)?**

The International Women's Day is a very important platform

globally and nationally. It allows us to review our achievements, the challenges we face, and the ones we anticipate.

This will help us develop advocacy strategies for addressing some of these challenges, ensure that we build consensus within the country, and have a common agenda for women's participation at all spheres. My message to the women is that we should recognize

our achievements nationally. Right from the liberation struggle, we have achieved a lot as women. We need to appreciate our government and continue working together with our development partners to advance the course of women in the Republic of South Sudan.

expand and grow their businesses. We are also trying to look at fund that is provided with 100% seed capital from the government. We need ownership. For example, the Kenyan enterprise fund is successful because the government spearheaded it, providing 100% seed capital. This led to the growth of women enterprise development fund in Kenya. So these are the models we are now designing. This year, we are conducting many consultative workshops at the national and state levels to educate women about the fund. We want to hear their views and also want to look at how the fund will be managed. Which firm will establish this fund, the management experts operating this fund for a certain period, while South Sudanese are being coached to efficiently run this women's enterprise development fund.

# LET'S MAKE MAGIC TOGETHER!

- › Company & NGO profiles
- › Magazines, Reports & Newsletters
- › Websites and Social Media branding
- › Brochures and Branding Materials



 @BrandKnewGlobal

 brandknew.uganda@gmail.com

 +256 752 896 185 / 780 121 584

MARCH - APRIL 2026

**BrandKnew**  
branding | marketing | advertising



**IWD2026**  
**#GivetoGain**  
**08.03.22**

**Voice of Women Magazine Produce**  
**By CEPO**