

3SF UNDERTAKES RETREAT IN BOR, JONGLEI STATE FOR ANNUAL WORK PLAN AND BUDGET FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2027

The Strengthening South Sudan Financial Sector (3SF) project conducted a successful retreat in Bor, Jonglei State, from September 14 to 18, 2026. The retreat's main objective was to review the 2026 annual work plan and budget and develop the 2027 annual work plan and budget. The retreat also aimed to engage the project's departments and beneficiaries to understand the project and foster their involvement in implementing project activities, as they are crucial stakeholders.

The retreat was attended by members of the Technical Working Group (TWG); Component Leads, and the Project Consultants at the Project Implementation Unit (PIU). A total of 16 participants attended the retreat.

Four milestones were achieved during the five days of the retreat, including the review of the performance of the Financial Year 2026 Annual Work Plan and Budget & establishing any shortcomings and gains, the drafting of pending Terms of Reference, the development of the 2027 Financial Year Annual Work Plan and cash flow projections, and the updating of the project procurement plan.

The team reviewed the 2026 Annual Work Plan and budget and observed the implementation of the following:

1. That 50% of the project time is completed and that the plan to extend the project expiration date is in progress.
2. That there is, owing to some challenging circumstances beyond the control of the Project TWG and PIU, slow implementation of the project activities.
3. That so far, there is low disbursement and utilization of the project funds (currently standing at only about 16%).
4. That the conditions for the disbursement of the South Sudan Institute of Banking and Finance (SSIBF) have been met, and now the SSIBF is operational and needs to be made functional.
5. That a governing body for financial strategy was established and its members were trained.
6. That the conduct of the South Sudan financial sector diagnostics study is completed, and the financial sector strategy and implementation roadmap is complete, approved by the Economics Cluster, and now pending the Council of Ministers' approval.
7. That there is ongoing conduct of a market skills assessment.
8. That based on the institutional assessment of BoSS, a comprehensive training plan has been developed and is pending implementation.
9. That the repeated attempts to hire RBS and BCP consultants have failed.
10. That the Bank of South Sudan's decision to upgrade its core banking system to T24 is ongoing
11. That the financial sector institutions have been trained on IFRS 9 and are currently implementing the knowledge and skills they were trained on.
12. That the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) officials are currently being trained in specialized anti-money laundering courses; out of 16 persons supported to attend this training, 50% have successfully passed the examinations. They have

also been facilitated to attend ICRG meetings and conduct of awareness workshop. They were also supported with desktop laptops.

13. That the Conduct of Strategic Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (SESA) was completed.
14. That several capacity building exercises are either ongoing or planned.

The participants also recognized the challenges that the project experienced in 2026. The challenges included: regular change of leadership at BoSS, inconsistent decision-making on the upgrade of the core banking system, delay in the formation of SSIBF gender inclusive Board of Directors, slow market responses to requests for expression of interest (RBS, BCP and regional training institutions), delays in approval of project documents (such as invitation of internal and external auditors), irregular calls for TWG and PSC meetings, lack of premises for project beneficiaries (FIU and SSIBF), which slowed project implementation activities, slow approval of the Financial Sector Strategy and Implementation (Economics Cluster, Council of Ministers and Parliament).

Having reviewed the work plan and discussed the challenges experienced by the project, the participants outlined eight fundamental deliverables as crucial takeaways from the retreat. The deliverables are: formulation of the 2027 AWPB, reviews and development of some terms of reference, which include [Reviews of ToR for the legal consultant to draft the SSIBF Bill, Reviews of ToR for tracing staff performance, Review of ToR for RBS and BCP consultant, Development of ToR for the procurement of T24 System, Development of ToR for procurement of GoAML System, Reviews of the Service Agreement document to be used for contracting UNODC for the supply of GoAML System, Updating of the procurement plan, Identification of 10 priority trainings for BoSS, Development of training plan for the SSIBF (2026 and 2027)], interaction and peer learning among the project beneficiaries which enhanced implementation, re-allocation of fund across component inline with the ongoing project restructuring, engagement with the State Government, the retreat was open by the Deputy Governor of Jonglei State Government and State Secretary General.

Ultimately, the retreat made 13 recommendations as a way forward. They are:

1. That under the financial sector strategy and policies formulation, BoSS is requested to identify possible financial sectors that need to be formulated based on the developed financial sector strategy.
2. That the comprehensive training plan be reviewed by the HR department to ensure that key functional departmental trainings are well presented.
3. That procurement of a firm to implement RBS and BCP be undertaken, since recruitment of an individual consultant has failed several times.
4. That there should be continuation of training of BoSS supervisory officials on RBS.
5. That there be engagement of regional Central Banking on the implementation of RBS and BCP.
6. That there be increased stakeholder engagement to create more awareness about the Project at BoSS and in the financial sector.
7. That, with the commencement of the implementation of the SSIBF 2026 training plan in October 2026, all the identified trainings will be facilitated by the 3SF Consultants.

8. That the procurement of T24 (system, infrastructure and training) begins immediately.
9. That the T24 high-level and technical committee conduct a study tour to learn more about the implementation of T24.
10. That the ongoing FIU ACAMS training should be concluded before the end of the year 2026 to allow a new capacity-building plan.
11. That the procurement of the GoAML infrastructure be completed.
12. That contracting progress of UNODC for the supply of the GoAML system commence immediately.
13. That the restructuring of the project be completed.

Some of the retreat pictures



Deputy Governor of Jonglei State Government, State Secretary General and 3SF retreat Team , Bor



Hon. Deputy Governor, Jonglei State Opening remark



Group Discussion



AWPB Group activity: Discussion



BoSS, Bor



BoSS, Bor



At BoSS, Bor



Along the River Nile