



# Better Migration Management (BMM) Programme in South Sudan

## General context

South Sudan is the world's youngest country, becoming independent from Sudan in 2011. It is also one of the youngest nations demographically, with nearly half of its population under the age of 18.

As of March 2025, South Sudan hosts approximately 548,000 refugees and asylum-seekers, primarily from neighboring Sudan (UNHCR). According to IOM, more than 1.8 million people are internally displaced (IDPs), and around 2.3 million South Sudanese live outside the country. Migration is often irregular, leaving migrants vulnerable and increasing their risk of economic exploitation and physical abuse.

The Better Migration Management (BMM) Programme aims to enable national authorities and institutions to facilitate safe, orderly and regular migration and to effectively address and reduce trafficking in human beings (THB) and the smuggling of migrants (SoM) within and from the Horn of Africa region, using a human rights-based approach.

## Better Migration Management Horn of Africa



Project name	Better Migration Management Programme
Duration	April 2016 to September 2025
Partner countries	Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan and Uganda
Implementing Partners in South Sudan	International Organization for Migration (IOM), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

In South Sudan, BMM, through IOM and UNODC, works alongside its partners to reform policies and legislation, improve infrastructure, enhance cross-border cooperation, and provide capacity building. Activities are implemented in three components: migration governance, strengthening effective institutions to address THB and SoM, and the protection of vulnerable migrants in need.

South Sudan has taken steps to enhance safe migration management. In 2017, with support from BMM, the South Sudanese Cabinet transformed the National Aliens Committee into the National Coordination Committee (National Coordination Mechanism, NCM), responsible for coordinating migration-related activities with relevant authorities. Under the auspices of this committee, the country's first Comprehensive Migration Policy was developed and validated in 2019. The policy promotes a whole-of-government approach to migration management by addressing cross-cutting themes, including the legal and institutional framework for free movement and border management, labor migration, and forced migration.

South Sudan's Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation have successfully acceded to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC), marking a significant step in the country's commitment to combating organized crime. While South Sudan has yet to sign the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea, and Air and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, these remain key areas for potential future engagement and progress.

Additionally, authorities have participated in meetings on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration.

## Migration governance

BMM supported the National Coordination Committee to develop a National Migration Policy, which is now being transformed into a statutory framework. The border security strategy was endorsed in 2022 and is strengthened through training of trainers. The strategy outlines the implementation of migratory laws regarding border management, free movement of people, labour migration and forced migration.

BMM supported South Sudan in developing and implementing a National Referral Mechanism (NRM), which aims to provide structured cooperation between all actors involved in the protection of migrants, making services more efficient and effective.

BMM facilitated the first (November 2023) and second (December 2024) Inter-Ministerial Summit on Migration Governance in South Sudan. The event addressed migration challenges with participation from government ministries, international organisations and civil society. It also reaffirmed the NCM's role and endorsed resolutions to improve migration governance, including developing a national border management framework, promoting regular labour migration, managing forced migration and enhancing diaspora engagement.

BMM supported the National Bureau of Statistics in improving its digital management of migration data, including collecting, sharing and protecting statistics, and installing a migration database to ensure a better coordination among ministries responsible for monitoring and valuation, enhancing the quality and accessibility of migration data.

South Sudan acceded to the UNTOC in October 2023. Building on this success, BMM supports the Counter Trafficking Taskforce in implementing the Palermo Protocol, which is the UN protocol to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in human beings, supplementing the UNTOC.



Legal advisory workshop to enhance migration governance.  
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## Effective institutions to address trafficking and smuggling

BMM strengthens institutional cooperation between law enforcement agencies and the judiciary on THB and SoM. Investigators and prosecutors receive training on their roles within criminal investigation procedures. Prosecutors and judges acquire enhanced knowledge of handling cases of trafficking, with a special focus on migrants' rights and the differing needs and interests of migrant men and boys, women and girls. The programme also promotes meetings of regional law enforcement experts on crime intelligence and threat assessments, as well as cross-border crime.

Officials from the border authorities and immigration services were trained in Integrated Border Management (IBM) to increase cooperation between all the authorities involved, both nationally and across borders. Additional training of trainers on the manual for IBM and the Standard Operation Procedures (SOPs) on cross-border cooperation, as well as exit and entry procedures sustainably strengthen the capacities of the relevant actors.





Training for border officials improves the efficiency and safety of entry and exit processes. ©GIZ/Bebe Joel

In addition, training sessions on Integrated Border Governance were conducted for border officials, both inland and at border points, focusing on migration management, trafficking, and visa processing.

To enhance One-Stop Border Post (OSBP) operations and strengthen cross-border cooperation, a regional training brought together border officials from Djibouti, Kenya, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Somalia, and Uganda. The training covered OSBP concepts, procedures, and best practices, as well as human rights and the needs of vulnerable groups, such as victims of trafficking.

For the national police training institute, curricula, onboarding material and in-service training on THB and SoM are being developed.

## Protection

The programme supports South Sudan in establishing and implementing a National Referral Mechanism (NRM), which aims to foster structured cooperation among all actors involved in migrant protection, making services more efficient and effective.

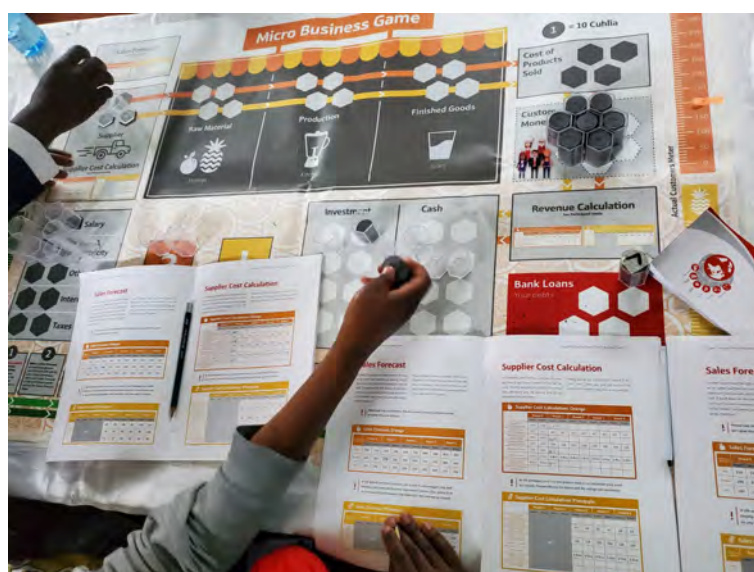
BMM strengthens Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) to enhance their protection and support services for migrants and trafficking victims, as well as their engagement in human rights advocacy and livelihood support. BMM also facilitates the participation of South Sudanese CSOs in training and the Regional CSO Forum to Promote Safe and Fair Migration by the East and Horn of Africa Anti-Trafficking (EHAAT) Network. This network, initiated by BMM, brings together more than 100 CSOs from BMM partner countries to foster cooperation and exchange.

To empower trafficking victims and other vulnerable migrants with sustainable socio-economic solutions, BMM collaborated with the *Deutsche Sparkassenstiftung*, which conducted Micro Business Games training sessions to strengthen financial and entrepreneurial skills.

As part of an emergency fund initiative, BMM supported 25 vulnerable migrants wishing to return to their home countries from South Sudan, assisting them with transportation, document processing, transit accommodation, medical treatment, meals, and exit clearance from the South Sudanese government.

Furthermore, protection staff from CSOs, law enforcement, and the judiciary, as well as community members and leaders, received training on victim identification and support.

In partnership with the Uganda Child Rights NGO Network and the Coordination Office for Prevention of Trafficking in Persons (COPTIP), BMM supported a cross-border communication strategy focusing on the transport sector between the Uganda-South Sudan border (Elegu-Nimule). As part of the implementation, materials such as posters, audiovisual content, jingles, and referral pathways were developed and are set to be rolled out in the coming months.



Using a dynamic board game, participants of the *Deutsche Sparkassenstiftung* Micro Business Games manage a fictional juice shop over a period of four years, learning essential skills such as accounting, business diversification and marketing. ©GIZ



## Results of BMM (April 2016 – September 2024)



**1,978** actors were supported to strengthen coordinated migration management, national migration policies, legislation, and cross-border cooperation



**31** capacity-building measures were implemented for **732** actors in the areas of investigation and prosecution of trafficking, integrated border management, and the referral of migrants to services



**880,000** individuals were potentially reached through awareness-raising activities on human trafficking and migrants' rights.

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