

TUKUL AFRICA IMPACTS DIGEST TUKUL AFRICA IMPACTS DIGEST


TUKUL AFRICA
JANUARY, 2026

ENTRENCHING COMMUNITY-LEVEL PEACEBUILDING, SAFETY, AND COHESION BY BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF WOMEN IN MALAKAL COUNTY OF THE GREATER UPPER NILE STATE

IMPLEMENTED BY TUKUL AFRICA WITH SUPPORT FROM
UNDP'S PEACE AND COMMUNITY COHESION PROJECT (PACC)



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“ INFORMED VOICES,
INCLUSIVE
LEADERSHIP,
STRONGER
COMMUNITIES ”



PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

Change rarely announces itself loudly. It begins in small but powerful ways—a woman speaking up for the first time, an organization rethinking its role, a young leader realizing that her voice belongs in public spaces.

In this edition, we spotlight stories of transformation emerging from our work across communities. Women-led organizations are moving beyond service delivery to confidently engage in policy dialogue and political advocacy. Young women are stepping into leadership with renewed confidence, equipped with knowledge of their rights and a determination to shape peaceful, inclusive futures.

These stories reflect the impact of sustained engagement, learning, and dialogue. They show what is possible when women and youth are supported to understand governance processes, claim their space, and hold leaders accountable. Each journey shared here is a reminder that inclusive leadership is not an abstract ideal—it is built, step by step, through informed action and collective commitment.

THANK YOU

This progress would not be possible without the dedication and courage of the women, youth leaders, and community champions who continue to show up, speak out, and follow through. We extend our sincere appreciation to the women-led CSOs, youth groups, traditional leaders, and political actors who engaged in dialogue and committed to opening spaces for inclusion and accountability.

We are deeply grateful to the **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** and the **Peacebuilding Fund** for their support to this project. - Your partnership has been instrumental in strengthening women's political participation, youth engagement, and community dialogue.

Together, we are turning conversations into commitments; and commitments into action; while building a future where women's and youth voices are not only heard, but respected, valued, and reflected in decision-making spaces.

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SUCCESS STORY 1

FROM MOBILIZATION TO
POLICY ADVOCACY: WOMEN
UNION STRENGTHENS
WOMEN'S POLITICAL VOICE

WOMEN UNION, MALAKAL



"This project changed how we see our role. We are no longer only mobilizing women for meetings – we now understand the laws and can advocate for women's political participation. We will continue following up with leaders so their commitments to include women become real."

Nyalok David

Women Union's Chairperson -Nyalok David during a women-led campaign.

Before participating in the project, the Women Union, a women-led CSO in Malakal primarily focused on community mobilization and welfare support for women. While active at grassroots level, the Union had limited structured engagement with governance processes or formal policy advocacy. According to Chairperson **Nyalok David**, many women lacked confidence to speak in political spaces and had minimal understanding of laws that affect their participation in leadership.

Through the project's leadership and advocacy trainings, as well as workshops on the Political Parties Act and the Women Empowerment Bill, the Women Union deepened its knowledge of legal frameworks governing political participation. The Union also gained practical skills in facilitating dialogue and engaging decision-makers. With support from the project, Women Union representatives helped organize and participate in community dialogues that brought together women, traditional leaders, and political party representatives. These forums allowed women to openly discuss barriers to leadership, including cultural norms, lack of information, and exclusion from party structures. The Union played a central role in ensuring women's concerns were documented and fed into broader advocacy discussions.

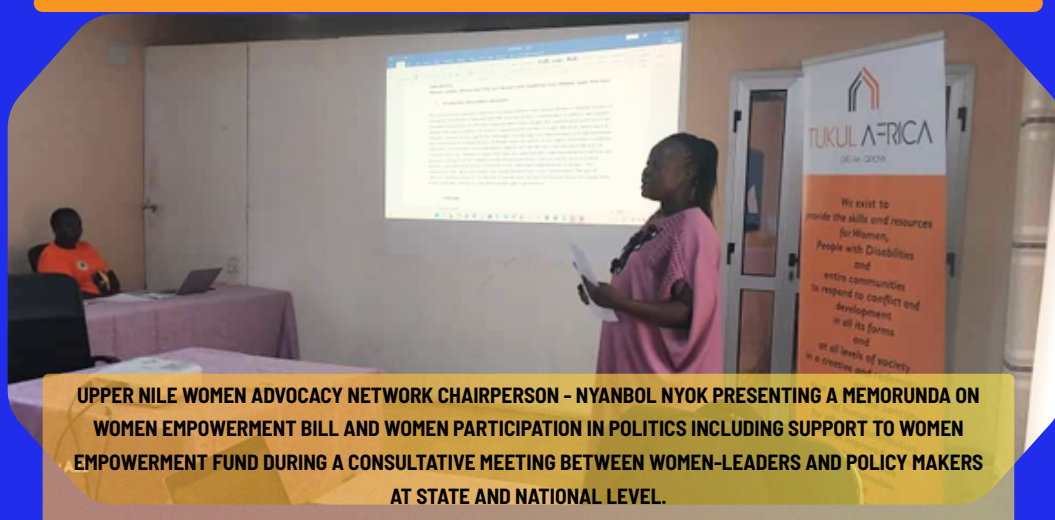
As a result, several local leaders and political party representatives publicly committed to increasing women's inclusion in community decision-making forums and party activities. The Women Union now plans to follow up on these commitments, engaging leaders to ensure promises translate into concrete actions, such as inviting women to community forums and supporting women's candidacy in local leadership structures.

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SUCCESS STORY 2

UPPER NILE WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION
MOVES FROM SERVICE DELIVERY TO
POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

LEADER: NYANBOL NYOK, CHAIRPERSON – UPPER NILE WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION



“WE USED TO THINK OUR ROLE WAS ONLY TO SUPPORT WOMEN AT HOME AND IN THE COMMUNITY. NOW WE KNOW WE MUST ALSO SPEAK ABOUT LEADERSHIP AND POLITICS. WE WILL CONTINUE ENGAGING LEADERS AND REMINDING THEM OF THE PROMISES THEY MADE TO INCLUDE WOMEN”

NYANBOL NYOK

UPPER NILE WOMEN ADVOCACY NETWORK CHAIRPERSON - NYANBOL NYOK PRESENTING A MEMORANDA ON WOMEN EMPOWERMENT BILL AND WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS INCLUDING SUPPORT TO WOMEN EMPOWERMENT FUND DURING A CONSULTATIVE MEETING BETWEEN WOMEN-LEADERS AND POLICY MAKERS AT STATE AND NATIONAL LEVEL.

The Upper Nile Women Advocacy Network, a women-led CSO in Malakal, had long been involved in supporting vulnerable women through community initiatives. However, the organization had limited experience engaging in political dialogue or policy advocacy. Women members often felt that politics was “not for them,” and few had interacted directly with political party representatives or local authorities.

Through the project’s capacity-building workshops, the organization gained new understanding of women’s rights to political participation and the provisions of the Political Parties Act. Training on grassroots political engagement equipped members with tools to organize inclusive dialogues and confidently engage with leaders.

With logistical and technical support from the project, the organization facilitated several community dialogues focused on women’s leadership and participation in decision-making. These dialogues created safe spaces where women shared experiences of exclusion and discussed ways to engage more actively in local governance processes. Political party representatives and community leaders attended some of these discussions and acknowledged the need to create more space for women in leadership.

Following these engagements, the organization has committed to continuing dialogue sessions independently and to monitoring whether political parties and local leaders uphold their pledges to include more women in decision-making spaces. The experience has shifted the organization’s identity from a service-oriented group to an advocacy actor.

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SUCCESS STORY 3

A YOUNG WOMAN STEPS INTO PUBLIC LEADERSHIP

LUCIA, THE CHAIRPERSON FOR THE YOUTH PEACE AMBASSADORS DURING A CULTURAL FESTIVAL ON THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE.



“BEFORE, I THOUGHT POLITICS AND LEADERSHIP WERE NOT FOR YOUNG WOMEN LIKE ME. NOW I UNDERSTAND MY RIGHTS AND MY ROLE IN PEACEBUILDING. I WANT TO KEEP WORKING WITH OTHER WOMEN AND YOUTH TO MAKE SURE LEADERS KEEP THEIR PROMISES TO INCLUDE US.”

- LUCIA:

At 24, Lucia once believed that leadership and political discussions were the responsibility of elders and men. As a young woman, she rarely spoke during community meetings and had little knowledge about laws or governance processes.

Her involvement in the project as part of a youth peace ambassador group marked a turning point. Through participation in dialogue sessions, peace campaigns, and awareness activities, Lucia gained confidence and learned about women's rights to participate in governance and peacebuilding. Exposure to discussions on the Political Parties Act and women's leadership inspired her to take a more active role.

Lucia began supporting community awareness activities and speaking during youth and community gatherings about peaceful coexistence and the importance of women's participation in decision-making. She also encouraged other young women to attend dialogues and trainings, helping to widen youth engagement.

She now expresses a strong desire to continue working with women leaders and CSOs to follow up on commitments made by community and political leaders, particularly those related to including women and youth in decision-making spaces.