



مفوضية استفتاء جنوب السودان
Southern Sudan Referendum Commission
**COUNTING AND ANNOUNCING RESULTS
AT THE REFERENDUM CENTERS**

COUNTING THE BALLOTS AT THE REFERENDUM CENTER

Counting of ballots takes place at the Referendum Centers where voters cast their ballots. It begins immediately after the Chief of the Center declares polling closed at the end of the last day of voting, and continues until all ballots are counted.

Referendum officials first do a “reconciliation” that helps to detect potential irregularities or mistakes that may have occurred during polling. This step begins *before* the ballot box is opened. Referendum officials

- Calculate the total number of voters by counting all entries in the Final Referendum Register that have been crossed by a line and ticked.
- Verify the Number of Ballots: Record the total number of ballots received at the Center at the beginning of polling, the total number of unused ballots, and the number that were accidentally spoiled by voters.
- Calculate the number of ballots issued to voters. The Chief of the Referendum Center is able to calculate the number of ballots that are supposed to be in the ballot box through a simple calculation: Number of ballots received at the very beginning of polling less the number of ballots accidentally spoiled by voters and the number of unused ballots.

Opening of the Ballot Box in the presence of observers

- Count the number of ballots in the box: Ballots papers are unfolded, piled, and counted. This is the first check for accuracy—whether the number of ballots in the box equals the number issued to voters. If there is any difference, the chief must order a recount and if there is still a difference, it must be recorded on the Referendum Center Results form.

Sorting & Counting of Ballots

- a. The Referendum Center official picks up each ballot paper, one by one, shows it so everyone present can see how the ballot was marked and announces loudly the option that was chosen by the voter. Ballot papers are sorted into piles—one for the Unity option, one for Secession, one for invalid, and one for unmarked.
- b. A ballot is declared invalid if:
 - It is torn or damaged such that it is impossible to know the voter’s choice
 - It is marked in such a manner that the voter’s choice cannot be determined
 - If the ballot is not the official ballot paper issued by the SSRC.
- c. After all ballots are sorted, they are counted and the results are written on the Referendum Center Results Form in the following order: Votes for Unity, Votes for Secession, Invalid ballot papers, and Unmarked ballot papers. The sum of the ballots in each category must equal the total number of ballots taken from the box.
- d. The Chief of the Referendum Center signs and stamps the Referendum Center Results Form and its copies. Accredited observers may also sign the form.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF REFERENDUM CENTER RESULTS

The Chief of the Referendum Center immediately declares the results for the Referendum Center and displays one copy of the Results Form in a visible place in the Center.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

The Chief of the Referendum Center packs the materials carefully and according to SSRC instructions. Ballots, both used and unused, are placed in a ballot box, along with other sensitive materials such as the ink and the official stamp. The box is sealed with the



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numbered security seals. The Results Forms are put into tamper-evident bags, one for the County Subcommittee (South Only), one for the State Committee, and one for the Data Center (Juba or Khartoum). The Tamper Evident Bags and other sensitive material, including ballot boxes are sent to the County Subcommittee (South only) or to the State Committee (North).

Accredited observers are allowed to follow the movement of the materials from the Referendum Center to the next SSRC office, but they must provide their own transportation. They are not allowed to travel in SSRC vehicles or to travel with the materials.

Accredited observers and media have the right to be present throughout the polling, counting and announcement of results process, but they must not interfere with or try to influence the referendum officials. Only registered voters may raise objections to the results of the referendum.

FIRST STEP IN THE RESULTS ANNOUNCEMENT PROCESS

There are several steps before the Final Results of the Southern Sudan Referendum are announced officially by the SSRC Board of Commissioners. This fact sheet describes only the first step—the counting of ballots and the Referendum Center and announcement of Results for the Center. A separate fact sheet has been prepared to describe the various steps of the process to determine the results of the Referendum.

For further information:
www.ssrc.sd