



MONTHLY UPDATE

April 2007

Celebrating International Women's Day

On March 8, USAID-supported organizations marked International Women's Day with a range of events and celebrations across Sudan. From El Fasher to Yei, the Sudanese people honored women's achievements and rededicated themselves to working toward women's full participation in society.

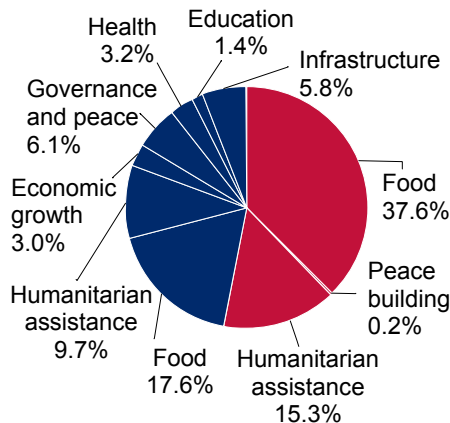
The U.S. Government has made a long-term commitment to help women worldwide find their voices, achieve their potential, and share in the benefits as well as the duties of development. "We are resolved to remove the barriers to political, economic, and social empowerment so that women everywhere may freely chart their own way," Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has stated.

Keeping the resolve expressed by Secretary Rice is a priority for USAID. Transformational development is not possible without the full and equal participation of women, and Sudan cannot reach its full potential unless women have equal rights and opportunities. USAID's support for democracy, education, health, and economic growth improves the status of women and enhances their opportunities.

Darfur

With support from USAID, the UN Development Program (UNDP) marked International Women's Day in North Darfur by conducting a

USAID ASSISTANCE TO SUDAN FY2006, ESTIMATED



Darfur 53.2%

Food:	\$266.11 million
Peace building:	\$1.40 million
Humanitarian assistance:	\$108.27 million
Darfur:	\$375.78 million

South, East, and Three Areas 46.8%

Humanitarian assistance:	\$69.02 million
Food:	\$124.87 million
Economic growth:	\$21.37 million
Governance and peace:	\$43.27 million
Health:	\$22.69 million
Education:	\$10.25 million
Infrastructure:	\$40.80 million
South, East, and Three Areas:	\$332.27 million
Countrywide Total:	\$708.05 million

The Three Areas are Abyei, Blue Nile, and Southern Kordofan.



In El Fasher, Kenin men dance and women make music at an International Women's Day celebration. Photo: UNDP



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series of activities March 6-9 that promoted the message, “Together We Can Stop Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Against Women.”

In Kutum locality—where women walk 2-3 hours every day to collect water—UNDP coordinated with CARE, the UN Joint Logistics Center, and the UN Mission in Sudan-Human Rights to distribute plastic containers that will allow women to carry more water and make the trip less frequently. A total of 2,300 jerry cans were distributed to women from 870 households from Damrat Sheik Abdalbagy, and from 259 households from Boirsaid.

In Abu Shouk camp in El Fasher, UNDP supported a soccer match between displaced youth and international aid workers to raise awareness of sexual and gender-based violence. Both teams wore T-shirts bearing the message, “Stop Violence Against Women” in English and Arabic. [The Darfuri youth defeated the aid workers, 1-0.]

In the final celebratory event in El Fasher, UNDP collaborated with local USAID grantee Um Jumma Women’s Charitable Society to host a music and dance cultural festival. The day-long event spotlighted the traditional Hakamat women singers and poets, who wrote new songs of peace and women’s empowerment to perform at the festival. Dance troupes—including Arabs, Bergo, Dinariah, Dinka, Fallata, Fur, Hausa, Kenin, Masalit, Tama, and Zaghawa—entertained the governor (*wali*), the British

ambassadors to the United Nations and to Sudan, and more than 400 community members.

USAID also supports efforts to improve the status of women across Darfur year-round with its Violence Against Women Initiative. The \$15-million dollar program was launched at the Secretary of State’s request in response to the ongoing, widespread violence against women and girls in Darfur. Work aims to improve physical safety of vulnerable people, provide immediate services to victims, and address the root causes of violence. USAID primarily implements these activities through small grants that support community organizations, and through mainstreamed, standalone activities that are part of larger humanitarian assistance programs.

Southern Sudan

Residents of Juba, the capital of Southern Sudan, launched International Women’s Day with a parade through the city streets. When the parade arrived at Juba Stadium, hundreds of people observed and participated in a day of music, dancing, and speeches. Many participants wore T-shirts that said, simply, “25%”—a message advocating for government offices to strive to reach the Comprehensive Peace Agreement-stipulated quota for women’s representation.

In Leer, Unity State, three USAID partners led the day’s festivities, which provided examples of how their



International Women’s Day in Juba started with a parade through the streets, then music, dancing, and speeches at Juba Stadium. Photos: USAID



Members of Mothers' Action Assist Widows sing at a celebration of International Women's Day in Yei. Photo: Mercy Corps

work empowers women, whether through an adult learning program or computer literacy courses.

"We invite the community to support and encourage the women and girls to get more preparation in capacity building, especially education," said guest of honor Sister Andriana Tovar from Comboni Catholic Church. "We are aware that the Government of Southern Sudan has given 25 percent [of] seat[s] to women in parliaments, and we know that in parliament many of the issues that affect a country are discussed and decisions are taken. So, how can women be involved in decision making in Southern Sudan if they are not prepared?"

"By sending women and girls to school they become more prepared and aware of who they are and how they can contribute more actively in the community by getting involved in peace building, human rights, gender equality, and development in general. This is a day for women to be aware of their self worth, their dignity and appreciate themselves for who they are—as people gifted and ready to contribute to the development of the nation."

In Yei, Western Equatoria, Mothers' Action Assist Widows (MAAW) ended the festivities with a song celebrating women around the world. "Let us join hands together to promote end of violence against women and girls. Let us empower women in Yei, in Sudan, and the world. Widows and widowers are coming—let us smile a bit. MAAW has come to enjoy the international Women Day."♦

Healing Darfur's Injured Women

An obstetric fistula is a debilitating injury caused by complications during childbirth. During prolonged obstructed labor, a hole may develop between a woman's birth canal and one or more of her internal organs. This condition causes permanent incontinence, and sufferers are often ostracized by their families and communities because of the accompanying foul smell. According to the Fistula Foundation, surgery can repair obstetric fistula 93 percent of the time, and it now has been virtually eliminated in developed countries. However, it is still prevalent in much of the developing world. At least 2 million women currently live with fistula, primarily in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, and 50,000-100,000 more women are affected annually. In Sudan alone, there are 5,000 new cases each year, more than 60 percent of which are from West, North, and South Darfur.

In August 2006, with support from USAID, Save the Children opened the New Hope unit, a fistula ward at the regional hospital in Geneina, West Darfur. Previously, women with fistula were admitted to a general gynecological ward, where they were still stigmatized by their problem, and the few who were able to have corrective surgery had to do so at a distant hospital most easily reached by plane. Now, a specialist works in the New Hope unit to treat fistula on a consistent basis. Only women suffering from fistula are admitted to the ward, where they feel more comfortable to be with other women who share the same problem.

Miriam is just one woman who has benefited from the New Hope Unit. The 50-year-old has lived in Ardamata camp in West Darfur since her village was attacked by armed militia. She has borne three children—the first died at birth and the second, a boy, is now 26 years old. Miriam labored for three days before giving birth to her third child, a boy named Osman who is now 24 years old. She developed a fistula as a result of the prolonged labor, which made her unable to hold her urine and caused a permanent, unpleasant odor.

Because of the odor, Miriam was ostracized by her community. Her husband took all their belongings, abandoned her, and married another woman. She was not welcome at traditional public events such as weddings or community celebrations, and if she attended, she was obligated to keep her distance from the group. Despite the shock and depression caused



by her situation, she tried to actively look after her two sons, begging in the market for food, though she was too poor to send them to school.

Recently, Osman brought Miriam to Ardamata's USAID-supported primary health care clinic. She was immediately diagnosed as having a vesicovaginal fistula and referred to the New Hope unit for evaluation and treatment. Osman was devastated to learn that his mother's condition had been caused by his birth, but his grief turned to hope when they learned that her fistula could be surgically repaired.

Two weeks following her admission to the New Hope unit, Miriam underwent corrective surgery, which ended her 24 years of suffering. That day, she says, was the happiest day of her life. ♦

Radio Programs Address Violence Against Women

The unimaginable unfolds as a matter of daily life for displaced women in Eastern Chad. Many of these women are survivors of sexual and other violence perpetrated in Darfur or Eastern Chad, and frequently, the initial grief turns into shame and aggression as some families imprison these women, literally tying them up in their refugee camp tents.

To raise awareness and promote healing among these women and their communities, USAID partner Internews Network produces the radio show, "She Speaks, She Listens." Broadcast daily on FM radio to refugee camps throughout Eastern Chad, the program



In Eastern Chad, an Internews journalist conducts an interview. Photo: USAID

raises awareness of issues critical for women. A recent 20-minute program used interviews with camp residents, psychologists, and other experts to explore options available to people dealing with grief and trauma. Since the show aired, camp workers report dramatic increases in the number of women choosing to seek services, engage with others, and even begin to heal from the traumas they have suffered.

Internews employs Chadian women journalists, which enables "She Speaks, She Listens" to discuss sensitive topics, including female genital cutting, child marriage, and domestic violence. Internews also addresses these themes in radio dramas it produces and broadcasts in association with a local theater troupe.

"She Speaks, She Listens" is part of Internews' Humanitarian Information Service, which reaches out to Sudanese refugees and the local population in Eastern Chad. This and other programming, made possible with support from USAID, the U.S. State Department, and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, now reaches more than half of the refugee camps in Eastern Chad. ♦

Sitting Down to the Same Water Table

Ed Daein, South Darfur, has historically been populated by Arab tribes, the majority of whom are nomadic, and non-Arab tribes, the majority of whom are settled. Each of these groups lays claim to the same rights over the land and its resources—most notably, water. As a devastating result, the destruction of water access points has become the weapon of choice in this ongoing struggle for natural resources, and, consequently, one of the main causes of exodus from rural areas.

In this context, with the support of USAID, Solidarités has intervened for the past year to secure rural access to water in an effort to improve health and foster reconciliation.

The initiative, which rebuilt water access points that had either fallen into disrepair or were purposefully destroyed, followed an innovative system that separated water intended for human use from water intended for animal use. Previously, humans and animals shared the same drinking troughs—a practice that significantly increased the chances of disease transmission from animal to human. The absence of



People and animals shared the same water sources in Ed Daien (left) before improvements gave them separate access points and added faucets and drains (right). Photos: Solidarités

drainage systems also increased the chances of water stagnating around access points, attracting malaria-bearing mosquitoes and other insects. The improved access points eliminate standing water, and the problems associated with it.

To further local reconciliation, Solidarités rehabilitated water points that were situated in both the Arabs' and the non-Arabs' zones of influence.

In Jawazat, 3,200 people have benefited from a complete overhaul of the water yard. More than half are nomads who travel up to 25 kilometers, round-trip, in one day to reach the water point. Humans draw their water from a platform with a ramp outfitted with faucets and a system that effectively drains used water. The numerous animal herds—camels, cows, sheep—now drink from a water point independent of the human system.

In El Minger, the 2,500 residents benefited from the complete overhaul of their water yard with the help of USAID and Solidarités. A generator that powers the submersible pump was repaired, which now allows each of two 11,000-gallon water tanks to be filled in three hours. Following the same principle as with Jawazat, El Minger's water point for human consumption was separated from the animal water point. Moreover, a hygiene committee composed of both men and women was created to ensure that the benefits of the new system are continually promoted and the facilities upgraded.

Both projects mobilized their communities to an unexpected degree. At Jawazat and El Minger, numerous volunteers at both sites spontaneously participated in the construction work, as well as in sessions organized to promote health and hygiene. ♦

Building Awareness of Land Rights in the East

Over the last five years, conflict has intensified between Eastern Sudan's agro-pastoral communities and foreign investors over the confiscation of land and water for commercial agriculture. Sudan's Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and the recently signed Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement (ESPA) stress the need for the peaceful resolution of conflicts related to the allocation of scarce resources such as land, oil, and water. However, most of the inhabitants of Eastern Sudan are unaware of the rights afforded them by the CPA and ESPA. Furthermore, members of these communities often lack the conflict management skills that would help them resolve land disputes peacefully.

To address these potential drivers of conflict, USAID partnered with a Sudanese civil society organization to organize a five-day workshop and training program focused on the peace agreement and land conflict resolution skills. Initially, it was difficult to reach the remote communities, but by the second day of the



A USAID workshop builds awareness of land rights. Photo: USAID

workshop, word had spread that, for the first time, an organization was reaching out to pastoralists to address issues important to them. Consequently, the workshop attracted 70 attendees rather than the 50

expected, including representatives from one very conservative nomadic tribe. This marked the first time that members of this tribe had ever attended a workshop with the other tribes in the region.

Before the workshop, only 15 percent of the participants had been exposed to the CPA or ESPA. By the end of the training, all of the participants said that they understood their rights and could protect themselves against violations of these rights. The participants also requested that the workshop be given in rural areas around Kassala so more communities could be mobilized to advocate for better laws on the use of Sudan's resources. ♦

Partners in Radio Education

If you are in Southern Sudan and have a shortwave radio, you can tap into a real education resource that targets primary students, as well as their teachers and parents. USAID's Southern Sudan Interactive Radio Instruction program strengthens education access and quality through the daily Learning Village program in literacy, English, and mathematics for grades 1-3; instruction in English and civics for youth and adults; and professional studies programs, geared to strengthen teacher education.

But while shortwave broadcast capability allows people in Abyei, Blue Nile, Southern Kordofan, and Southern Sudan to listen to the programs on a regular basis, the quality and stability of a shortwave frequency does not compare with the clarity of a FM signal. In areas such as Juba, reception was spotty and experienced significant interference.

"We realized that we could lose some of our audience if the reception was poor, and because the Learning Village programs in particular are tied to the national curriculum, we needed to make sure they could be available at the right times for school audiences," says Tom Tilson, of USAID partner Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC).

At the same time, Miraya Radio, an FM station operated by the UN Mission in Sudan with support

Let's Beat Malaria

The Government of Southern Sudan Ministry of Health launched the Let's Beat Malaria Initiative on February 23 at the Munuki Antenatal Care Center in Central Equatoria. USAID is supporting the initiative, which works to raise public awareness on how to prevent and control malaria—one of the most pervasive public health threats in Southern Sudan.

The initiative will focus on distributing long-lasting insecticide-treated bednets, especially to younger children and women during pregnancy; promoting rapid diagnosis and prompt treatment using more effective combination therapies; and conducting intermittent preventive therapy for women during pregnancy. If effective, the initiative will reduce malaria-related deaths by half over the next five years.

The launch included a march from Juba University to Munuki, entertainment by the Central Equatoria Women's Union, a performance by the Southern Sudan TV Group, and speeches from the Government of Southern Sudan and USAID. The day concluded with a bednet distribution for all women at Manuki. ♦



The launch of the Let's Beat Malaria Initiative included dramatic performances on the danger of malaria during pregnancy. Photo: USAID



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from the Swiss Hironnelle Foundation, was seeking programming to supplement its news and information broadcasts. Broadcasting since June 2006, Miraya's mandate includes providing information on topics such as the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, women's issues, health, and education.

Miraya and EDC teamed up to complement each other's initiatives, with EDC supplying the programming and Miraya supplying the frequency.

"EDC provides quality content that is interesting to us," said Leon Willems, who heads Miraya. "We're very excited about the educational dramas, they are a welcome addition and add variety to our programming schedule. Education is extremely important for Southern Sudan."

Radio Miraya has been so well received that it has begun adding FM repeater stations, and aims to comprehensively cover all Southern Sudan's major population centers by the end of 2007.

"There is a mutual interest for us to partner with EDC," said Willems. "And as soon as the media market opens up more, we will be able to reach all of Southern Sudan." ♦



Children in Maridi learn numbers through daily radio programs. Photo: EDC

World Food Program Sudan Distributions



Offloading wheat at Port Sudan. Photo: USAID

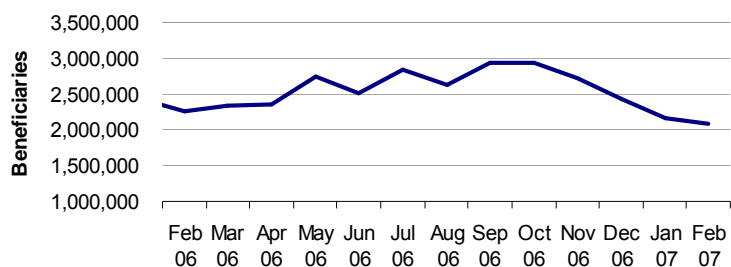
USAID is the leading donor of food assistance to Sudan. Since October 1, 2006, USAID has provided 377,700 metric tons of emergency food aid worth more than \$380 million to Sudan and Sudanese refugees in Eastern Chad. During fiscal year 2006, USAID emergency food assistance to Sudan and Eastern Chad amounted to 475,910 metric tons worth nearly \$457.8 million, and accounted for two-thirds of all donor contributions to WFP's Sudan operations.

WFP Distributions February 2007

Region	Beneficiaries
Darfur	2,085,830
South	101,265
East	92,251
Three Areas*	151,022
Central	21,526
Total	2,451,894

* The Three Areas are Abyei, Blue Nile, and Southern Kordofan.

WFP Distributions - Darfur



WFP Distributions - South, East, and Three Areas

