



MONTHLY UPDATE

July 2007

Returnees Board Barges Home

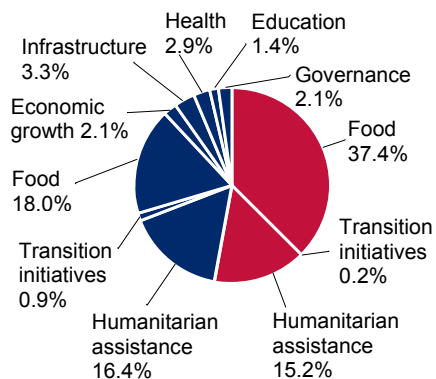
"I have been waiting this day for 16 years," said 60-year-old Mayen Marial Deng, as she boarded a barge with her two children in Kosti. "My family and I will soon be back home. This is an old dream that finally comes true."

On June 20, Mayen's family started its three-week journey down the Nile to Jonglei and Lakes states with 451 other people, who were finally able to return home years after being displaced by Sudan's civil war. With support from USAID, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) is collaborating with the Government of National Unity, the Government of Southern Sudan, and UN partners to undertake the first barge operation ever organized to return displaced people from Northern to Southern Sudan. Passengers on the two barges will receive two hot meals a day during the journey, provided by USAID partner Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), and on arrival, each family will receive a three-month food ration from USAID partner the UN World Food program.

By the end of August, IOM is expected to complete six barge rotations between Kosti and key towns along the Nile in Southern Sudan. Since February, IOM and its partners have helped more than 42,000 displaced people return to their homes in Southern Sudan, Blue Nile, and Southern Kordofan. USAID is providing \$3.5 million to support IOM's return and reintegration program. ♦



USAID ASSISTANCE TO SUDAN FY2006, ESTIMATED



Darfur 52.8%

Humanitarian assistance:	\$108.270 million
Transition initiatives:	\$1.400 million
Food:	\$266.110 million
Darfur:	\$375.780 million

South, East, and Three Areas 47.2%

Humanitarian assistance:	\$116.520 million
Transition initiatives:	\$6.660 million
Food:	\$127.807 million
Economic growth:	\$15.120 million
Governance:	\$14.850 million
Health:	\$22.692 million
Education:	\$10.250 million
Infrastructure:	\$23.350 million
South, East, and Three Areas:	\$335.249 million
Countrywide Total:	\$711.029 million

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



Southern Sudanese board barges at Kosti that will take them to Jonglei and Lakes states. Photo: Husham Ahmed



Operating Around Darfur's Obstacles

USAID partner GOAL has been working in Kutum, North Darfur, since February 2004, and now operates eight health facilities that serve 150,000 people. While the lack of access and general security concerns that afflict all of Darfur have challenged GOAL's ability to maintain its health services, the organization has been actively pursuing different methods of reaching the people who most need their assistance.

Community Participation

As part of USAID's efforts to improve maternal and child health, GOAL provides clean delivery kits to pregnant women in their third trimester. These simple kits—which include plastic sheeting, a clean razor blade for the umbilical cord, and plastic gloves—can have a particularly large impact in an environment where most women give birth at home.

Earlier this year, supply problems created a shortage in available kits. But rather than have expectant mothers do without, GOAL mobilized the communities to make them. More than 300 women at the women's center in Kassab Camp were able to put together almost 1,000 kits in just one week. This initiative not only helped GOAL overcome a gap in supply, but it also got local women involved in, and informed about, improving health in their communities.

Innovative Programming

Because of the increased threat of carjackings and other attacks, GOAL could no longer feasibly continue



Children participate in a health education exercise in Kutum. Photo: GOAL

to operate weekly mobile clinics in the rural areas of Abdul Shakour and El Dor. However, the need for services remained. Members of GOAL's staff discussed the problem with residents of the areas, who identified community members who could be trained to provide basic health services. Those identified then came to Kutum, where they received intensive training in management of issues such as the treatment of diarrheal diseases and malaria. They also were trained in outbreak awareness, which resulted in the reporting of a suspected case of meningitis shortly thereafter.

The basic health units run by the community workers have been operating successfully for several months, and are resupplied by GOAL on a monthly basis. Refresher trainings and discussion are conducted periodically when the staff visit Kutum. As access continues to be a problem throughout most of Darfur, GOAL is now examining whether this approach can be used to provide health services to other communities in need. ♦

Rebuilding Southern Sudan

Sudan's long civil war not only decimated Southern Sudan's infrastructure, it also wiped out livelihoods, job opportunities, and skills. Developing Southern infrastructure is vital to improving access and facilitating economic growth in Southern Sudan, and in rural communities, it will be just as important for local staff to learn professional skills that will serve them beyond the duration of the project.

Creating Jobs. Since December 2006, USAID's partner the UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS) has initiated 14 labor-intensive community infrastructure projects in five Southern state capitals—Bor, Juba, Kwajok, Malakal, and Wau—to help generate income among vulnerable groups while improving the urban and rural infrastructure. To date, the projects have generated 47,000 days of labor in initiatives such as collecting garbage, cleaning drainage ditches, improving roads, constructing pit latrines, and producing crushed stone aggregate.

UNOPS has deployed both Sudanese and foreign engineers to plan projects in collaboration with the state Ministries of Physical Infrastructure, and in some places Town Councils. Once the projects are completed, ownership of the tools and materials transfers to the state authorities; in some places the



Town Council now has the capacity to sustain the project (like garbage collection in Bor) and is doing so without assistance from USAID or UNOPS.

In Malakal, where annual rains restrict movement and present health risks, local authorities identified drainage as a top priority. Over three months, nearly 300 local workers spent more than 17,000 labor days cleaning 30 kilometers of drainage canals. As a result, this is the first year in some time that Malakal has not suffered from rainy season floods.

In Wau, it was the lack of latrines that most threatened public health. A nongovernmental organization initiated construction on this project more than four years ago, but abandoned the project for lack of funds. The state Ministry of Physical Infrastructure requested that UNOPS complete the much-needed facilities and have committed to maintain and keep up the latrines after they are completed. This project is expected to generate 580 days of labor for local workers.

Cultivating Skills. In Western Equatoria, UNOPS is undertaking the construction and rehabilitation of the Yambio to Tambura road. As part of the project, a laboratory in Yambio that will provide engineers data on the quality of soils and materials will employ trained Sudanese staff to ensure a level of sustainability and local expertise after the road is built.

After collecting soil samples from the construction sites, the three men and three women on the lab team conduct a preliminary weight and density test,



Lab workers in Yambio test soil from the Yambio-Tambura road works. Photo: UNOPS

followed by a series of water tests to determine the optimum water content of the soil. This information is crucial to the building process, as it determines the exact material requirements for the design and construction of a durable road. The lab team will play an important role in the constant testing of materials as the road work continues, and will verify the quality of the construction once the work is completed.

The lab team sees this as an opportunity to become a part of the broader development of Southern Sudan once this project is finished. Simon Misa, a 24-year-old lab assistant from Yambio, says that once UNOPS and other agencies have left Sudan other road and construction projects will need skilled local technicians to continue in their stead. "We are the ones who have



Community infrastructure projects in Southern Sudan include cleaning drainage ditches in Malakal and constructing public latrines in Wau. Photos: UNOPS



to take over the road when the construction is done, and now we are gaining the practical knowledge to train others in Yambio,” he said. “We are learning that the work we do is ours.”♦

Office Resources Empower Local Government

The signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005 ushered in a new era for Southern Sudan, but large parts of the population remain skeptical that the agreement will be implemented and peace will be secured in the long term. Conscious that the extreme centralization of government led to marginalization and war in the past, the Government of Southern Sudan has worked toward a more diffuse form of government that will allow greater public participation in political affairs.

As a result, Southern Sudan’s 10 states were divided into more than 70 counties. However, more than two decades of civil war left many of the counties in ruins—and lacking in the resources that would allow them to assume a stronger administrative role in the government. Until recently, the Commissioner of Tonj East County in Warab State could be found conducting government affairs under a large mango tree. Exposure to the elements often disrupted work and made normal business conduct, including adequate record-keeping, unthinkable.

Seeing how the lack of space, furniture, and supplies hindered counties’ ability to function effectively, USAID has provided 22 counties—including Tonj East—with “government-in-a-box” kits, 16 of which included prefabricated buildings. Furnished with tables and chairs, filing cabinets, bookshelves, and basic



Tonj East is one of 22 counties that received government-in-a-box kits to improve local capacity. Photo: USAID

office supplies, approximately 180 government officials now have practical workspaces that allow them to conduct business more efficiently and build local institutional memory. And as the counties’ capacity to serve their constituencies increase, so too will the public’s confidence in the peace process.♦

Women’s League Looks to Future

Constituted in September 2005, the Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly (SSLA) is a transitional assembly with 170 members. Only 33 of the legislators are women, despite a constitutional provision that requires a minimum of 25 percent of seats be held by women. To help translate this constitutional provision into practice, and to strengthen the voices of women throughout Southern Sudan, women members of the SSLA came together to organize the Women’s League. In February they met in Nairobi to develop a strategic plan, which resolved to strengthen the SSLA’s female constituency and enhance equal participation.

On June 21-23, USAID sponsored a conference in Juba for the Women’s League to raise awareness of gender equity and strengthen the gender dialogue between civil society and government. The setting provided not only a valuable opportunity for the parliamentarians to receive training, but it also allowed them to discuss the Women’s League’s next steps.

Identifying barriers to equal opportunity and treatment was a key element of the seminar, as were discussions on how gender-friendly legislation can remove those barriers. Political, economic, and cultural factors have long prevented Sudanese women from enjoying equal opportunity and to actively participating in decision making. Progress on women’s rights and representation in Sudan, as in other countries, must focus on changing structures, increasing skills, and empowering women at the local, regional and national levels, as well as raising awareness in the community at large. This will require that civil society leaders and women parliamentarians engage in a dialogue to reinforce progress, eliminate gaps, and determine a way forward.

As a result of the conference, the Women’s League reiterated its dedication to women’s empowerment and showed its eagerness to acquire new skills to assist them in their efforts to better lobby for women’s human rights in Southern Sudan.♦



Preparing for New Currency

Before the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005, a range of currencies were used as legal tender throughout Southern Sudan, including Ugandan shillings, Kenyan shillings, Ethiopian birr, and U.S. dollars, as well as the pre-1992 Sudanese pound. The drafters of the CPA saw this fragmentation as a symbol of divisions in Sudan and included a provision in the CPA's wealth-sharing provision that established a unified currency for a unified nation. Converting from the old Sudanese dinar to the new Sudanese pound is an important benchmark in the CPA's implementation—and presents a significant logistical challenge.

The new pound became legal tender in January, and the dinar will lose its value on September 30. To help the public learn about the new currency and the conversion process, several USAID partners—Sudan Radio Service (SRS), the National Democratic Institute (NDI), Bearing Point, Mercy Corps, and the International Rescue Committee (IRC)—have been working together to implement a civic education campaign through “Let’s Talk,” a popular radio program, and through radio listening groups.

SRS, NDI, and Bearing Point, conducted interviews with officials at the Bank of Southern Sudan and citizens from various states to form the foundation of the script for the “Let’s Talk” episode. In the resulting broadcast, the characters Salamah and her daughter Sunday visit the market to buy flour and sugar, but they encounter resistance from the traders when she tries to use the new pound. Salamah showed the traders that they can verify the authenticity of the new pounds by looking for the bird on the back of a note when it is held under the light. Salamah and Sunday



*The Sudanese new pound was introduced in January.
Photo: NDI*

also try to convince the traders that prices will not increase, and that one pound is equal to 100 dinars.

The second segment of the show features comments on the conversion recorded during the citizen interviews. Voices of Sudanese people express pride in a new national currency that has the potential to unite the country, though some express concern about rising prices and confusion about the process. The program ends with an educational segment that explains the rationale for the currency conversion, tells how to obtain and identify the new bills, and again explains the value of the new currency.

First aired on March 26, the program has been rebroadcast several times in both English and simple Arabic by SRS, and in Dinka by a USAID-supported community radio station in Aweil East county. The Bank of Southern Sudan has also used a recorded version of the episode in its own outreach efforts.

To complement the radio broadcast, NDI has convened listening groups throughout Southern Sudan, Blue Nile, and Southern Kordofan, that bring citizens together to discuss the issues. The groups often target specific stakeholders in organizations supported by Mercy Corps and IRC, such as traders belonging to the Market Council in Malualkon. The listening groups and the radio broadcasts will continue through July 31, and news programs broadcast on SRS will incorporate answers to questions raised during the listening groups and provide more up-to-date information.♦

Monitoring Avian Influenza

Since the current wave of the H5N1 virus—or avian influenza (AI)—broke out in Hong Kong in February 2005, the disease has spread to more than 50 other countries, and resulted in 172 human deaths. Sudan officially confirmed its first cases of AI in April 2006 in large poultry farms in Khartoum, and in August 2006 in one backyard shelter in Juba. More than 1.5 million chickens were culled as a result, but no human cases in Sudan have yet been detected.

The cases in Juba prompted the Government of Southern Sudan (GOSS) to establish the AI Task Force, with support from USAID. Co-chaired by Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Animal Resources and Fisheries, the Task Force was charged with developing a preparedness and response plan and ensuring effective coordination of AI activities. It has formed three subcommittees—



Students participate in radio lessons at Matangai Primary School in Rumbek. Photo: USAID

Radio School: Matangai

At Matangai Primary School in Rumbek County, Southern Sudan, students attend classes under trees, using logs as desks, studying a blackboard leaned against a tree, and listening to their lessons on the radio. Matangai is just one of the schools across Southern Sudan reached by USAID's interactive radio instruction program, which offers educational resources for students who would have otherwise had none. Based on the unified curriculum for Southern Sudan that was developed with support from USAID, the courses teach numeracy and literacy in English and local languages.

Matangai is a relatively large school with 700 students and 12 teaching staff who have received three days of training on teaching with the radio lessons. Teacher training instructions are embedded in each lesson, encouraging, for instance, teachers to call female students, who are often overlooked in regular classes. The lessons are also student-focused and participatory—an approach quite different from the traditional style of Sudanese schools. To date, primary schools using the USAID radio instruction program have enrolled 17,265 students, 38 percent of whom are female, and trained 583 teachers, 12 of whom are female. ♦

human health, animal health, and communication—to ensure rapid and effective prevention and control measures, particularly in high-risk areas.

In May, USAID supported a workshop in Rumbek to educate community mobilizers drawn from all the 10 Southern States on basic facts of AI and the essential principles of communication and social mobilization. Twenty-three people attended the workshop, which included presentations, discussions, case studies, and role-playing exercises to facilitate training. At the end of the workshop, the participants drafted an AI social mobilization and communication workplan for each state tailored to address specific regional needs. The plans include activities that advocate on the public health importance of AI and solicit resources that will allow them to raise awareness on AI prevention and control. Over the next three months, USAID will collaborate with other members of the Task Force to support the implementation of the work plans produced at the meeting.

Since the initial occurrence of AI was reported in Sudan, USAID has been working with the GOSS on several fronts to mitigate the virus's effects. In addition to the support provided on the development of the preparedness and response plan, USAID has donated to the GOSS 1,600 sets of personal protective equipment and 1,000 decontamination kits, and trained more than 40 staff members of Juba Teaching Hospital on AI prevention and treatment. ♦

Teachers Join the Fast Track

In June, the pilot cycle of USAID's Fast Track Teacher Education and Training Program ended after successfully training 1,300 new teachers at 21 sites in Southern Sudan and Abyei. Many of the closing ceremonies held at the centers were attended by state governors, county commissioners, and state education ministers.

Launched in November 2006 and implemented by USAID partner Academy for Educational Development (AED), the Fast Track program has supported the Government of Southern Sudan Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology in developing and



Fast Track teachers in Juba celebrate their graduation. Photo: AED



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implementing a strategy to meet the demand for the thousands of new primary teachers that will be needed over the next few years. With support from USAID, the ministry is also working closely with state education ministries to build capacity in logistics and administration, financial management, and training that emphasizes active and student-centered learning.

During Fast Track's initial phase, AED and UNICEF worked together to implement a "training-of-trainers," which created a pool of 150 teacher educators, who then went on to train teachers in the states. One key to the success of the program was the training of a mobile team of supervisors who monitored and supported the state-level training. Made up of 18 experienced educators who recently returned to Southern Sudan from Kenya's Kakuma Refugee

Camp, the team proved invaluable in building capacity and supporting the states' ability to implement a complex program. USAID's primary school and English language interactive radio programs were integrated into the training programs where possible, and in the future USAID may distribute radios and teacher guides to every teacher completing the Fast Track training.

Most of the training sites saw a low level of participation from women, except Raga in Western Bahr el Ghazal, which had 50 percent female participants, and Juba in Central Equatoria, which had 37 percent female participants. To encourage more women to enter the teaching profession, the ministry may consider a separate Fast Track cycle designated only for women. ♦

World Food Program Sudan Distributions



Food distribution, Kalma camp. Photo: USAID

USAID is the world's leading donor of food assistance to Sudan. Since October 1, 2006, USAID has provided 388,020 metric tons of emergency food aid worth more than \$389 million to Sudan and Eastern Chad. Approximately 75 percent of this total goes toward feeding displaced people and refugees in Darfur and Eastern Chad, where conflict continues to disrupt food security. The remaining 25 percent is allocated to people in Southern Sudan, Eastern Sudan, Abyei, Blue Nile, and Southern Kordofan, where food aid continues to play a vital role in supporting returnees to Southern Sudan and helping communities recover from two decades of civil conflict.

WFP Distributions May 2007	
Region	Beneficiaries
Darfur	2,236,499
South	600,036
East	168,611
Three Areas*	188,007
Central	16,300
Total	3,209,453

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

WFP Target vs. Actual
Food Aid Distributions - Darfur

