



MONTHLY UPDATE

October 2007

Bringing Health Care to Aweil East County

In Aweil East County, in Northern Bahr el Ghazal state, the chairman of the Bakau Village Health Committee, his deputy, and a community health worker sit under a large tree, remembering what their community was like before a primary health care unit was built in the area.

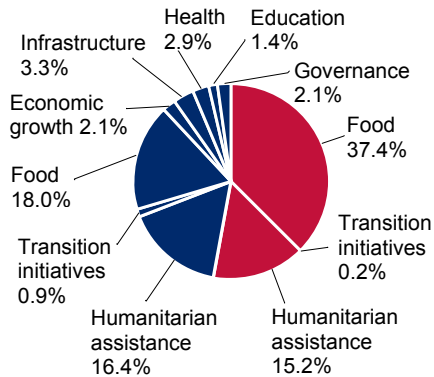
“Before, we didn’t know how to write or how to run a [clinic],” said the chairman, “but [Tearfund] made a construction, you give us medicines and we move forward.... Before we were in a bad condition; we are better now than in the past.”

In Bakau, members of the community are now able to get prescribed drugs from health professionals, rather than buying medicines from market traders. They have also begun encouraging family members to receive proper treatment by taking them to a health unit when they are sick.

With support from USAID, Tearfund has been establishing and running clinics in Aweil East since 2005. Tearfund has also undertaken initiatives to empower local Village Health Committees and equip them and state Ministry of Health officials with the tools needed to manage the facilities. These new skills will allow the local authorities to eventually assume the long-term supervision and operation of the facility.

When asked about the future of the clinic and his community, the Bakau committee chairman said he hoped that within five years,

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.



Pregnant and lactating women line up to be immunized at the new primary health care unit in Aweil East County. Photo: Tearfund



Community members receive prescription medication at the dispensary next to the new primary health care unit. Photo: Tearfund

community health would be improved and the diseases that currently plague them would be eliminated. He also hopes that his area would one day have a primary health care center, with an inpatient unit for admissions. He is determined to build on Bakau's progress.

"It is not like when we sat idle," he says. "Now we have knowledge we will not sleep like before, we will sit together as a committee and talk to the community...."

"We can contribute bricks and resources to keep the [clinic] going...and for other things like drug supply, we will ask for help. But for other things, we can do them; we learned this from the empowerment training." ♦

Breastfeeding Improves Child Nutrition in Darfur

In parts of Darfur, 23.3 percent of children are malnourished—well above the emergency threshold of 15 percent. Early and sustained breastfeeding is an important step toward improving the long-term nutritional status of children and their mothers. Newborns who breastfeed within hours of birth benefit from the first of their mothers' milk—colostrum—which contains a high amount of protein and passes along a mother's antibodies to her child. For mothers, early breastfeeding improves their production of milk and reduces their risk of infections and post-partum hemorrhaging. For infants, feeding exclusively from the breast for the first six months optimizes their growth and development by providing complete nutrition and decreasing the risk of infection from contaminated water and food.

Since 2006, USAID partner Catholic Relief Services (CRS) has been implementing a unique health and nutrition program in West Darfur that targets pregnant and lactating mothers and infants under six months old. While other programs focus on emergency nutrition for malnourished children aged 6 months to five years old, the USAID-funded CRS program is the only one that aims to improve maternal and child health by promoting early initiation of breastfeeding and exclusive breastfeeding for six months.

CRS trains traditional birth attendants and Ministry of Health officials on improving infant feeding practices and supporting pregnant women. CRS has also partnered with birth attendants to establish Mother-To-



New and expectant mothers learn about breastfeeding and are tested for malnutrition in Kulbus, West Darfur. Photos: CRS



Nafiza's Story

Nafiza, 28, is a traditional birth attendant living with her husband and four children in Zam Zam camp in North Darfur. Her youth and her literacy spurred community leaders to select her to participate in a reproductive health training program run by USAID partner Relief International.



The training has helped Nafiza strengthen her skills and those of other birth attendants. Expectant mothers now specifically request Nafiza to provide care during deliveries, as well as care after delivery. She also shares information with the community at large about maternal health issues and how women can overcome health risks.

Nafiza says that her training is helping change her community's attitudes about pregnancy and childbirth, and is cultivating more positive, healthy behavior. She dreams of becoming a certified midwife, and hopes one day to be able to afford the \$300 annual cost of the three-year program. ♦

Mother support groups, where pregnant women and new mothers can discuss and learn about breastfeeding and other infant feeding practices.

In addition to breastfeeding promotion, CRS identifies mothers with well-nourished children to share their successful feeding practices with mothers of malnourished children, which encourages the use of local foods and solutions to improve child welfare.

These efforts have reached more than 4,000 displaced and resident mothers in the northern corridor of West Darfur—more than twice the original target set by CRS. Follow-up monitoring shows that 89 percent of mothers participating in the program initiated breastfeeding within one hour of giving birth, and 86 percent exclusively breastfed their newborns for six months. These numbers are especially impressive in a region where mothers traditionally introduce complementary foods after two or three months. ♦

USAID Hands Over Health Facilities in Rumbek

USAID partner John Snow International Research and Training Institute (JSI) has worked in Southern Sudan since 2004 to re-establish health services and build the capacity of health institutions in the Government of Southern Sudan (GOSS) and in states and counties. To ensure that the government had the resources necessary to attract qualified staff and conduct day-to-day business, USAID committed to build office and housing facilities for the GOSS Ministry of Health in what was in 2004 the first capital of Southern Sudan—Rumbek, in Lakes State.

These facilities, consisting of eight administrative buildings and four staff houses, were nearly complete in 2005 when the sudden, tragic death of Dr. John Garang resulted in the shift of the southern capital to Juba. Since the Ministry of Health facilities were already so far along, JSI, USAID, and the GOSS agreed that the project be completed and used to house the Lakes State Ministry of Health.

On September 20, USAID Director for Southern Sudan Allan Reed officially handed over the facilities to Lakes State Acting Governor Awan Andrew Gaul Raik. The new facilities now house the Lakes State Ministry of Health, as well as a number of other newly established state ministries, and effectively decentralized governance and health services in one of Southern Sudan's key states. As these ministries become staffed and operational, health and education services will be more efficiently managed and able to reach residents and returnees in vital outlying areas. ♦



GOSS Minister of Health Joseph Monytuiel Wiejang speaks at the handover ceremony on September 20. Photo: USAID



Twenty-three health professionals attended a disease surveillance and response training in Yambio. Photo: USAID

Disease Surveillance Training Launched

In July 2006, the Government of Southern Sudan Ministry of Health took an important step in establishing an integrated disease surveillance and response system that would meet the needs of a region moving from civil war to peace and the millions of displaced people returning home. During those first meetings of the Integrated Disease Surveillance Working Group, government officials and nongovernmental partners agreed to adopt the World Health Organization's disease surveillance and response guidelines as the most workable solution for Southern Sudan's needs.

With support from USAID, a consultant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention developed a one-year action plan, recommending state- and county-level training on disease surveillance and response. The inaugural training was held in Yambio on July 18-21, 2007, and brought together 23 lab technicians, nurses, and other health workers from five counties around the city.

By the end of the training, the participants were expected to understand the concepts of integrated disease surveillance and response, have created an action plan for their locality, know how to collect disease surveillance data and conduct routine analysis, and be able to respond to an outbreak. Feedback from the participants provided some important lessons learned that will be applied to future trainings. Noting the success of this initial training, the Ministry of Health and its partners are moving forward with plans to provide this course across Southern Sudan. ♦

Radio Boosts English Skills in Southern Schools

When the Government of Southern Sudan declared English its official language, schools across the south also had to shift their medium of instruction from Arabic to English. While the change was welcome, it was difficult.

Ben and Charles are experienced educators with a foundation in English, but like many teachers and students, they struggled to adjust. So to improve their English skills, they and other educators at the Juba Day Secondary School have started to tune in to the USAID-funded radio program TERBIA—Teaching English through Radio Instruction for All.

Run by USAID partner Educational Development Center, TERBIA's advanced programs are designed to teach English to people with some proficiency in the language, focusing on improving their speaking and comprehension skills. The program incorporates issues around the Comprehensive Peace Agreement to improve public awareness of civic rights and responsibilities.

Ben and Charles now not only use TERBIA to improve their own English skills, but they also have their students listen to the broadcasts to build on what they learn in class. Students are also tuning in to TERBIA on their own. The Girl Child Education Movement (GEM), a student club at the Juba Day Secondary



Students at Juba Day Secondary School prepare the radio to listen to a TERBIA course. Photo: EDC



Students at Juba Day Secondary School study along with a TERBIA lesson on the radio. Photo: EDC

Promoting Gender Equity in Education

In Southern Sudan, currently less than one in 10 girls complete their primary education, and as few as one percent of them attend the less than 100 secondary schools that serve the millions of people that live there. In addition, the number of qualified female educators is very low.

To combat these statistics, USAID, in cooperation with the Government of South Sudan, has launched a five-year, \$6.5-million Gender Equity through Education program in Southern Sudan. The program, implemented by USAID partner Winrock International, will promote gender equity in secondary schools and teacher training institutes

throughout Southern Sudan and the Three Areas of Abyei, Blue Nile, and Southern Kordofan.

The program will encourage 6,800 girls and women to complete secondary school and become teachers. Scholarships will cover school fees and supplies and help reduce financial barriers to secondary education. School improvements will help eliminate social barriers to education, including, for example, the provision of separate bathrooms for girls and boys. Incentives for women to enter the teaching profession include gender-sensitive teaching aids, English language improvement courses, and scholarships to cover training fees and supplies. Cultural barriers will be addressed through community advocacy campaigns and greater government involvement in gender-sensitive programming.

To promote sustainability, Winrock will pilot a mother-daughter micro-credit initiative to enable communities to eventually take over the scholarship allocation. Winrock will also conduct an ongoing study to measure the impact of USAID's education efforts in Southern Sudan from 2003 to 2012. ♦

School, has transformed the school's media center into a "TERBIA Center," where students gather voluntarily to listen to programs. More than 30 students now regularly sacrifice their morning recess to listen.

Ben says he uses the program because "it teaches listening and speaking skills at the same time." The practice students get listening to the radio lessons gives them more confidence and makes them more comfortable participating in class, says Ben. The students who listen to TERBIA are more active in class discussions than those that don't, he says.

Jane Suku, chairperson of the GEM club, says she hasn't missed a single TERBIA lesson because she wants to keep up on her civic education. "It improves my skills as a debater and gives me more information on how to argue out my viewpoint during our school debates."

Another student, George Yuggu, says, "We need more of these programs to improve our English, but political education issues make the lessons even more attractive."

Launched in 2004, TERBIA is broadcast throughout Southern Sudan and the Three Areas of Abyei, Blue Nile, and Southern Kordofan. It and USAID's other interactive radio instruction programs are incorporated into the department of alternative learning systems in the Government of Southern Sudan Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology. ♦

BOSS Training Is Well Received

"This seminar was excellent. It provided us with the knowledge we need to properly supervise the conventional banks operating in Sudan. We hope

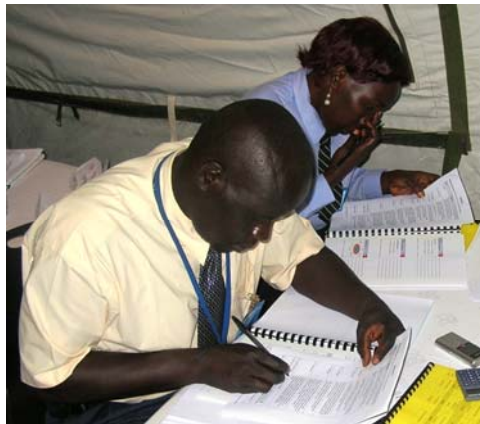


USAID | SUDAN

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

there will be many more seminars in the future.” That’s how Tong Akech Deng, an assistant director general for the Bank of Southern Sudan (BOSS), described an intensive four-day course on bank supervision.

Since the fall of 2006, USAID has been working with the staff at the BOSS to improve their understanding of conventional banking and help them develop the tools necessary to oversee and regulate Southern Sudan’s banking system. In July, USAID partner BearingPoint taught the



Ibrahim Mustafa Ibrahim and Arkanjelo Chol attended the bank training. Photo: BearingPoint

first course of a seven-course core curriculum, Bank Supervision Seminar I. The seminar was intended to introduce new terms and concepts about bank supervision, including bank balance sheets, the supervisory process, a risk rating system, and the Basel Committee’s 25 Core Principles for Effective Banking Supervision.

Future courses will focus on a variety of other issues and concerns relevant to the southern bankers, including accounting, asset and liability management, and foreign exchange. ♦

World Food Program Sudan Distributions



Food distribution in Darfur. Photo: USAID

USAID is the leading donor of food assistance to Sudan. In fiscal year 2007, USAID provided 391,900 metric tons of emergency food aid worth more than \$393.9 million to Sudan and Sudanese refugees in 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 August 2007	
Region	Beneficiaries
Darfur	3,062,568
South	771,321
East	140,669
Three Areas*	99,575
Central	29,525
Total	4,103,658

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

