

**Republic of the Sudan
Government of Southern Sudan
Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly
Juba**

**Minutes of the Proceedings of the Sitting No. 6 of the
2nd Session of the First Assembly 2007**

Date: 25th September 2007

Time: 10:00 AM

Venue: SSLA Main Hall.

Order of the Day:

- 1. Announcements***
- 2. Oath Taking.***
- 3. Presentation of Work Plan, Ministry of Gender, Social Welfare and Religious Affairs- GoSS/Juba.***
- 4. The Southern Sudan Research Council Bill, 2007.***

Hon. Deputy Speaker

Brothers and sisters Hon. Members of Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly, good morning. We have received telephone call this morning from Hon. Speaker in Nairobi. He was at the airport and hopefully he will be arriving here by 12:00 pm. He has asked us to continue with the sitting, so it is not necessary that he is received at the airport. This is an indication that he gives a lot of attention to the work in this Assembly. So may Almighty God bring him safely.

The quorum this morning reads as follows: those present are 88, 13 are on permission and the total is 101 Hon. Members which is good for us to proceed with the sitting.

We don't have Oath Taking.

To save time, we request H.E. the Minister for Gender, Social Welfare and Religious Affairs in the Government of Southern Sudan to come to the podium to present her Work Plan.

H.E. Mary Kiden, the Minister of Gender, Social Welfare and Religious Affairs

Hon. Deputy Speaker, Advisors to the Government of Southern Sudan, Chairpersons of Specialized Committees, Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly, Hon. Members of the Assembly, I would like to greet you this morning.

Thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to present our Policy and Work Plan. This has been our due because last session, before you could go for recess, we have been scheduled to come and present it in front of the Hon. Members but unfortunately because of tight schedule, it was not possible for us to have started in time before the recess. When we were just about to present then I was asked to go and join a committee that accompanied our President to China to present our projects.

**Hon. Jacob Duang Wan, UDSF, Upper Nile State
(Point of procedure)**

Thank you Mr. Speaker sir. The point of procedure which I want to point is this, when our good ministers are presenting their Work Plans and Policies, there is no need for translation. This is a norm in this Assembly we are following and only when deliberations are being put forward by the Hon. Members. So if we need this big document to be translated into Arabic, I think we will have not less than 72 hours to finish it. So I appeal to the Hon. Minister that he should immediately go to the plans and policies without translation. Thank you Mr. Speaker sir.

Hon. Deputy Speaker

Thank you brother Jacob.

First of all, H.E. the Minister has not reached or touched the policies and she is still giving an over view as to why her ministry's Work Plans and Policies delayed. As soon as she enters the Work Plans and Policies as usual there will be no translation.

H.E. the Minister of Gender, Social Welfare, and Religious Affairs

Thank you Hon. Speaker sir. The last of my explanation for the delay was just going to the conclusion that I had to get permission from the Hon. Speaker to leave for China.

So I was granted permission to present later and when we returned from there, the Assembly went on for recess that is why today you find us here. I am now going to present and you will find that in the presentation and because we are presenting in September 2007, for the first year of the plan, three quarter of work has already been done.

Thank you very much Hon. Speaker sir. Let me go to the Work Plan.

The background information of the ministry:

This is a new ministry Hon. Members. It has been created on the background that it takes in the social and marginalize group and the particular groups that are in the margin are the women, young children and the disable, and it is because of this that a ministry right from the time of the struggle was conceived. And this ministry was first known as Secretariat for Women and Child Welfare and it is on the background that the people of southern Sudan are among the marginalized in the Sudan and women are even more marginalized particularly black women community who were not fully involved in all the processes of development which went on in the country.

The introduction of informal education during the Colonial period favored the education of boys resulting in high number of educated men compared to that of women. Education for persons with special needs was completely ignored during the Colonial period. For example, from 1956 to 1972 there was no single secondary school for girls in Southern Sudan. It was only after the Addis Ababa Agreement that a secondary school for girls was opened in Juba i.e. Juba Girls Secondary School.

Politically, all the processes leading to the Addis Ababa Agreement of 1972 did not involve women adequately but the emergency of the SPLA/SPLM came as a turning point to the women's emancipation. In comparison to men, women of Southern Sudan suffered some of the poorest quality of life. They are frequently the victims of sexual and physical violence and are given very little legal protection. They suffer from a high maternal death rate, cultural bias against their participation in the community and public projects, high illiterate rate and routinely having to work longer hours.

The population census of 1983 put a number of women in Sudan to be around 52%. Although there are no authentic statistics on the women population in Southern Sudan, the ministry believes that the number of women is more than that of men taking into consideration the effects of war that claimed more males' lives than females.

Women and vulnerable groups have suffered disproportionately from the effects of war through abduction and separation, sexual and physical violence and lack of basic social services.

Executive Summary:

The Ministry of Gender, Social Welfare, and Religious Affairs has its origin from the SPLM Administration.

It was first established by the SPLM as the Secretariat of Women, Gender, and Child Welfare and mandated to handle focal policies and government unit to deal with issues of Women, Gender, and Child Welfare.

In October 2005, the secretariat became the Ministry of Gender, Social Welfare, and Religious Affairs.

The Ministry is composed of the following directorates.

1. Directorate of Gender.
2. Directorate of Social Welfare.
3. Directorate of Child Welfare.
4. The Directorate of Religious Affairs.
5. The Directorate of Research, Planning and Documentation.
6. And the Directorate of Finance and Administration.

The Vision:

The vision of the ministry is to attain a peaceful, inclusive and equitable society.

The Mission:

The Ministry of Gender, Social Welfare and Religious Affairs strives to promote gender, equality and equity. The ministry is committed to advocate, sensitize, and protect the rights of all the people without discrimination on the basis of gender, ethnicity, political or religious affiliation.

The ministry is committed to the promotion of Religious Co-existence in Southern Sudan. It is also to monitor any violation of women, children and persons with disability rights. Based on this mission, the ministry works to influence other ministries and agencies, policies and decisions to be gender sensitive.

To insure equitable and effective participation of all social groups in the social and economic life of Southern Sudan. In line with its mission and vision, the ministry operates within the following concept frame works. There are three (3) concept frame works.

The first concept is gender: following the Chukudum declaration of 1994, the SPLM created the Secretariat of Women and Child welfare.

The Interim Constitution of Southern Sudan further instituted 25% as affirmative action for women's participation at all levels. Despite these achievements however, many social cultural practices still pose serious threats to gender equality in Southern Sudan.

The concept of gender was not well understood by many including policy makers.

Gender is sometimes understood to mean women, when in fact, it means both men and women. The responsibility therefore, is assuring that gender's main stream within on going activity is not shared and the existing gender mechanism is hampered by lack of skill persons, financial resources, and strategic which aims at developing gender policies that enhances the empowerment of men and women.

The ministry cannot achieve some of these objectives on its own and will require sector specific institutional arrangements invaded within the ministry to enable sector specific concert actions. These actions include initiating plans, strategies and applications of resources to strengthen the line ministry's role, performance and effectiveness in implementing the Millennium Development Goals, the Beijing Flat Forum for Action 1995, and the commission for elimination of all forms of discrimination against women in order for the advancement of gender equality within the specific sector to happen. For example, these line ministries include Education, Health, Water and Agriculture. The work of these ministries impact a lot on advancement of vulnerable groups particularly women and disabled.

So we work closely with these groups to make sure that their budgets include work with vulnerable groups. Like in Education, the education of girl child and the enrolment of the young children to school is also our work and we work closely with this ministry. With the ministry of Health, also the work of vaccination of children is very important because children and women are the most vulnerable and we make sure that the budget allocation takes into consideration the work of these ministries.

The second concept is the social welfare. Social welfare is defined as a complex social system comprising all forms of social intervention in fulfillment of the needs of the Members of the society and is made up of efforts, activities and operations that aim at solving social problems as well as guiding against these problems.

This is in line with the ministry's objectives of developing human resources and alleviating the suffering of individuals and vulnerable groups. These objectives aim at achieving better living condition and standards and guarantee as a network of social services rendered to vulnerable groups, individuals, households and enhance social systems. Function of the ministry is the development of social policies. Based on this, the ministry will develop social policies to respond to the needs of people of Southern Sudan.

The third concept under which the ministry operates is the social development. The definition of social development relies on the notion that it is a process of dynamic change taking place in a specific and cultural frame work, meaning that development programs effect social changes within the frame work of society. The aim being development of all aspects i.e. economically, socially, technically and culturally, brought about through deliberate attempts to develop the local communities within the aim of activating its hidden energies providing for working of customs and traditions through striking a balance between economic development and social development.

Mr. Speaker Sir, Hon. Members, based on these concepts; the ministry has identified three strategic areas that need to be addressed.

I. Women Welfare:

Under women welfare, the ministry will develop:

1. Gender policy,
2. Promotion of women's right,
3. Promotion of women's education,

4. Advocate and support of women's participation in all aspects of life including social, political, and economic aspects,
5. Training and awareness ranging on gender,
6. Promotion of gender equality.

II. Child Welfare:

Under child welfare could be development of child welfare policy, harmonize child welfare policy across sectors and actors. Coordination of child welfare activities consist of policy, promotion of child rights, support girl education, rehabilitation of child soldiers and street children, rehabilitation of orphans including fostering and adoption, promotion of child participation in decisions that affect them.

III. Social Welfare:

Under the social welfare the ministry will involve the development of social policy, development of disability rights, rehabilitation of wounded soldiers and persons with disability, rehabilitation of war widows and orphans.

Functions of the Ministry:

Department by department functions and priorities of the Ministry.

DEPARTMENT OF GENDER:

1. Develop a national gender policy for Southern Sudan.
2. Promote research and studies on traditional practices that impact negatively on the welfare of women and children and recommend remedial approaches including legislation.
3. Promote research and studies on gender based violence and support development on national policy on gender based violence in Southern Sudan.
4. Develop approaches to mainstream gender in all government social sectors.
5. Promote programs to enhance women effective participation in political, social and economic life of Southern Sudan.
6. Promote the role of women in peace building.
7. Promote education and training of women and girl child.

Priorities of the Department of Gender:

Under these functions, the ministry has chosen priority areas. The first priority area is to take stock of the status of women in terms of who are the war widows and how many of them are there, the mothers of the fallen heroes, women with disabilities including women lepers, physically disable and blind, the status of single mothers i.e. family headed by female, so this needs to be established.

How many women are there in decision making, access to resources and services and impact of some traditional practices e.g. wife inheritance, property inheritance and custody of children.

In the field of government and the law, the ministry will develop,

1. National gender policy for the Southern Sudan,

2. Support participation of women in political and executive levels of government and private sector,
3. Raise awareness on gender violence,
4. Support and enhance women effective participation,
5. Support programs that address negative customs,
6. Advocate women's rights,
7. Lobby for law of defilement in the child act in the Interim Constitution of Southern Sudan to protect the child against girl child harassment,
8. Support the establishment of federation of women's lawyers to address issues of gender concerning rape, domestic violence and child's prostitution.

On Capacity Building, the ministry will establish,

1. Women development center in Juba,
2. Encourage and support rehabilitation projects for poverty eradication to improve income of vulnerable women (widows, mothers of fallen heroes and disable),
3. Encourage and support establishment of special fund to support scholarships for vulnerable girls (orphans), disable),
4. Organize fundraising campaigns to mobilize funds for establishing village savings and credit institutions (Village Banking) for vulnerable women as source of start up capital in the States, Counties, and Payams,
5. Mobilize funds to support the construction of women resource centers in the states, counties, payams, and Bomas furnished with communications facilities to raise funds for sustainability and serve as centers for disseminating information to the grassroots,
6. Encourage and support counseling programs in the states for traumatized women in collaboration with the Ministry of Health.

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE:

Functions:

1. Development of social policies in regard to welfare for:
 - a. Persons with disabilities
 - b. Orphans and street children
 - c. Old aged persons
 - d. Probation and rehabilitation programs
 - e. Promotion of child welfare, including child care, support and rehabilitation of child soldiers
 - f. Promotion of family welfare
 - g. Protection of the use of public places including cemeteries
2. Encourage and support research and studies on social development of communities
3. Encourage and support research and studies on issues of disabilities and recommend remedial approaches including legislations.

4. In collaboration with the directorate of Gender, encourage and support research and studies on traditional practices that impact negatively on the welfare of women and children and recommend remedial approaches including legislations.

Priorities of the Department of Social Welfare:

1. Develop social policy for Southern Sudan.
2. Training of social workers and counselors.
3. Develop policies for rehabilitation of persons with disabilities (blind, deaf and lepers).
4. Develop policies for special needs education.
5. Rehabilitate Rejaf School for the Blind.
6. Construction of an Orthopedic Reference Center in Juba.
7. Develop policies for adoption and fostering of children especially orphans.
8. Encourage and support rehabilitation projects for vulnerable groups.
9. Encourage and support research on social impact of development projects including the oil sector.

DEPARTEMNT OF CHILD WELFARE:

Functions:

1. Develop policies that promote child welfare
2. Develop policies that protect children from harmful practices, substances and information such as violent films, advertisements and pornography
3. Develop policy for care of orphans
4. Develop policies for children with disabilities and street children
5. Examine any legislation on children with view to changing negative aspect
6. Develop policies that promote discussion of child welfare issues in the media and community.

Priorities of the Department of Child Welfare:

1. Conduct survey on the status of the child particularly the street child and children with disabilities.
2. Training of child social workers and counselors.
3. Promotion of child care in the community.
4. Promotion programs that serve the best interest of children.
5. Support formation of children Parliament.
6. Encourage and support formation of Parliamentarians Child working group in the Parliament of SSLA and the States.
7. Discussion of the Child Act once passed by the Parliament.
8. Support the child protection working group in the 10 States of southern Sudan.

DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS:

Functions:

1. Develop policies for regulation and conflict resolution among communities and religious groups.

2. Promote policies for the development of religious education in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology.
3. Provide guidance for the registration of Faith Based Organizations.
4. Promote reconciliation and peace building among different communities.
5. Promote counseling services for men and women in the organized forces.
6. Establish coordinating mechanism between GoSS and the states Departments of Religious Affairs.

Priorities of the Department of Religious Affairs:

1. Develop policies to enhance religious tolerant society in Southern Sudan.
2. Encourage and support reconciliation and peace building among different communities.
3. Develop policies for regulation and conflict resolution among communities and religious groups.
4. Develop policies that promote religious dialogue.
5. Promote policies that encourage religious co-existence.
6. Review the religious curriculum in schools in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and other stakeholders.

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, RESEARCH, AND DOCUMENTATION:

Functions:

1. Conduct social research on issues of concern to the ministry based on its objectives with the aim of providing road maps for the ministry.
2. Co-ordinate development of policies and training.
3. Co-ordinate the work of NGOs
4. Develop data base system in the ministry for strategic plans to provide the ministry with ability to:
 - Understand the scope with its activities.
 - Understand its environment and match its activities to the environment.
 - To provide the ministry with tools through which it can effectively manage the implementation of its programs and activities, and also provides monitoring tools.

Priorities of the Department of Planning, Research, and Documentation:

1. Conduct social research.
2. Co-ordinate training of social workers.
3. Co-ordinate development of social policies.
4. Establish a data base center.
5. Co-ordinate development of international regulations
6. Co-ordinate development plans of the ministry.
7. Monitor and evaluate the ministry work plans.
8. Co-ordinate the work of NGOs in collaboration with the Southern Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission-SSRRC.

DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE:

Functions:

1. Development of international policies for control and effective use of funds and other resources.
2. Development of internal policies for monitoring and evaluating use of resources
3. Development of internal training, promotion, and staff appraisal policy
4. Development of policies for proper use of vehicles, equipments and other resources.
5. Development of policies for coordination with the states
6. Regulate and manage the use of resources
7. Process appointment of staff in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour, Public Service and Human Resource Development.

SOCIAL WELFARE INSTITUTIONS:

1. ORTHOPEDIC REFERENCE CENTER:

There is one orthopedic workshop in Juba. At the moment, the capacity of production is 40 gadgets per month.

The ministry intends to expand and equip the workshop in order to produce more gadgets to meet the needs of the disabled.

The ministry has obtained land and is building a new orthopedic center on the Yei road. This center shall be the reference center in Southern Sudan to ensure quality delivery of services to persons with disability.

2. NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTERS:

Social welfare has community centers known as neighborhood centers distributed in the following locations in Southern Sudan:

- | | | |
|-----------|---|---------|
| • Aweil | 1 | center |
| • Juba | 3 | centers |
| • Malakal | 1 | center |
| • Wau | 2 | centers |

The neighborhood centers were established to support mother and child welfare in counseling, training and income generation. The present centers are in a bad state of repair and need urgent maintenance. There is also need for construction of new centers in the 10 states to meet the overwhelming need of the rural communities. Due to decentralization system, these centers are now the responsibility of the Ministries of Social Development at the states.

However, the ministry shall endeavor to encourage and support the state ministries of social development in their efforts to rehabilitate these centers.

3. ORPHANAGE:

This institution cares for children who have nobody to take care of. Before any child institutionalization, social workers shall be engaged to study individual cases to verify the

absences of surviving and close relatives. This institution is very expensive in terms of provision of services and quality care for the children because the best place for a child in a family setting, the orphanage shall be the last resort.

4. REHABILITATION CENTERS:

These have existed in Southern Sudan. There were 3 rehabilitation centers, one in Juba, one in Maridi and one in Wau.

These centers are meant for juvenile offenders between the age of 8-17 years. The centers provide psycho socio economic rehabilitation of the young offenders but not punishment. In collaboration with the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Gender, Social Welfare, and Religious Affairs will provide technical and social support including trauma counseling for these young offenders.

The Ministry noted with concern that there is no Mental Health Center for the rehabilitation of mentally ill persons. At the present, the mentally ill persons are kept in prison. In collaboration with the Ministries of Interior and Health, the ministry will support the urgent establishment of a mental Health institution for the care of these vulnerable groups.

5. INSTITUTION FOR SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION:

Southern Sudan has one institution for blind and deaf in Juba known as the Rejaf School for Blind. While they have benefited from education in this center, the deaf have not benefited. The ministry intends to support the inclusion of education facilities for the deaf and the mentally retarded in this institution.

WORK PLAN 2007-2009

The ministry has identified objectives and planned activities for an initial three-year period (2007-2009) to meet the objectives to be implemented in collaboration with the Ministries of Social Development in the 10 states. The ministry's objectives and activities are in line with the principles expressed in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), the Interim Constitution of Southern Sudan 2005 and the policies of the Government of Southern Sudan.

The ministry also recognizes the importance of the involvement of stakeholders' ministries, civil society and communities in realizing the objectives.

SECTION 1: OVERALL OBJECTIVES:

The overall objectives and vision of the ministry is to: Attain a society that is peaceful, inclusive and equitable:

- Effective coordination of institutional capacity for humanitarian and social services delivery at all levels of government in Southern Sudan.
- Promote peace-building, building sustainable process for conflict resolution, conflict prevention at community level and dissemination of CPA.
- Reduce vulnerability and promote social inclusiveness.

- Promote gender equality, empowerment and effective mainstreaming of gender issues.
- Poverty reduction of communities focusing on women, youth, and marginalized groups.
- Enhance social mobilization and community participation in development.
- Raise awareness and address the social and humanitarian dimension of HIV/AIDS.

SECTION 2: THREE YEAR OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES:

The ministry believes that these sub-objectives and activities will contribute to attain the overall objective of the ministry:

1) Effective coordination of institutional capacity for humanitarian and social services delivery at all levels of government in Southern Sudan.

The activities of the Ministry of Gender, Social Welfare, and Religious Affairs are:
 Establish equipped offices including means of transportation.
 Provide communication equipment including network.
 Establish forum for information collection and dissemination.
 Establish monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

In the three-year period, the ministry intends to establish co-ordination mechanism, provision of offices equipment and facilities to ensure effective communication and information-flow from GoSS to States ministries of Social Development and vice versa. The ministry plans to support training and capacity building programs, according to needs of states ministries of social development as essential component of effective delivery of social and humanitarian services.

2) Facilitate the re-integration of returnees (IDPs), refugees, ex-combatants and coordinate basic services delivery.

The activities of the Ministry of Gender, Social Welfare and Religious Affairs.

- Undertake regular monitoring of areas of return and highlight gaps to ensure that basic services are in place.
- Enhance information campaigns at areas of displacement and return.
- Promote involvement of experienced social workers to support the reintegration of returnees.

The ministry plans to regularly monitor, return of returnees and internally displaced persons and will contribute towards sharing of information among the stakeholders. The Ministry of Gender, Social Welfare and Religious Affairs and the Ministries of Social Development in the States will contribute with professional staff (social workers) to support the resettlement and reintegration process.

3) Promote peace building; build sustainable process for conflict resolution, conflict prevention at community level and dissemination of CPA.

The activities of the Ministry of Gender, Social Welfare and Religious Affairs are:

- Establish fora for inter-communal dialogue and participation
- Advocate culture of peace through social activities and festivals
- Support conflict resolution mechanisms and structures
- Integrate peace building and civic education into activities targeting communities
- Translate the Comprehensive Peace Agreement into local languages in Southern Sudan.
- Support awareness raising campaign on CPA.

The ministry will develop and adopt policies and mechanisms to ensure sustainable peaceful coexistence among communities of Southern Sudan. It emphasizes the importance of strengthening tools to reach rural communities (i.e. through translation of CPA into local languages, awareness campaigns, and inter-communal dialogue), as well as the role of the women and youth, as stewards of peace and civic education.

4) Reduce Vulnerability and Promote Social Inclusiveness.

The activities of the Ministry of Gender, Social Welfare and Religious Affairs are:

- Develop and adopt policies and strategies for rights protection and social welfare.
- Promote positive attitudes and inclusive behaviour to break barriers
- Enhance awareness of preventive measures through mass media
- Design and support specific initiatives targeting vulnerable groups
- Encourage and support the establishment of orphanages in the states

The Ministry of Gender, Social Welfare, and Religious Affairs will develop policies and strategies that promote rights protection, participation and reintegration of vulnerable groups in the community and raise awareness to ensure social inclusiveness. It will also support initiatives that improve the quality of life for the vulnerable through creation of institutions that support the vulnerable.

5) Promote Gender Equality, empowerment and Effective Mainstreaming of Gender Issues:

The fifth objective that we have identified for three years is to promote gender, equality empowerment and effective mainstreaming of gender issues.

The activities of the Ministry of Gender, Social Welfare and Religious Affairs on this objective are:

- Develop gender policy and strategic plan to implement the policy

- Conduct workshops on gender balance and equality
- Encourage and support access to education and advocate for girl child education
- Implement affirmative action of 25% in the Interim Constitution of Southern Sudan 2005.

The Ministry of Gender, Social Welfare and Religious Affairs will develop policies that promote gender equality, empowerment, effective gender mainstreaming, through advocating for girl education to reduce gender imbalance in work place and implement affirmative action of 25% in employment market as stipulated in the Interim Constitution of Southern Sudan 2005.

It will support gender workshops at levels of government and the rural communities and support activities geared towards ensuring gender balance and combating gender violence in the community.

Towards these objectives Hon. Speaker and Hon. Members, we have gone a long way in the 8th month starting from last year.

Let me start from education first.

The support of girl child education we have worked side by side with the Ministry of Education to make sure that the enrolment and reintegration of the girl child in school is maintained.

We have also worked to advocate for the establishment of ten boarding schools for girl in the budget of 2006 and we are still following to make sure that this ten secondary schools for girls are operational. Some of them like in Western Equatoria are already at stage of foundation. Like in Jonglei; the President has already declared a girl school there. So we are following with the Ministry of Education.

We have also through the Ministry of Education obtained one hundred scholarships in the budget of 2007 for girl child. These scholarships for girl child, we have agreed with the Ministry of Education that at least 25% of the scholarships will go to the sons of the fallen heroes.

The minister has the invitation to go to South Africa on the first of October to negotiate with the Minister of Education of the Republic of South Africa. If he can, we can get our children to pay home fees. If they pay it, not as international students and because of our relationship with South Africa, we will be able to use the money which is supposed to be used for 100 or 150 or even 200 students.

I will be hoping to travel with the Minister of Education for this very important meeting with the Minister of Education in the Republic of South Africa. We will be visiting universities where our children will be going so that I can go and see for myself what conditions are there where our girls can go. Because these scholarships are for the girl child and we want to make sure that the girl child can be put in the universities that are environmentally and culturally are conducive for girls.

The academic year in South Africa will start in February but because the negotiation is taking place in October, hopefully these scholarships will be advertised once the agreement is reached and then each state will send applications to the Ministry of Education so that the selection will be done on merit level and to balance also we can have the disciplines that will be studied.

We are hoping that we will be able to study medicine. Girls who are able to do engineering among those but also in this scholarships we are also hoping to get some 50 to go not necessarily for the university but to go for the skills because you can see in the market now if you go to the Home and Away, many of the people who are working are the skilled people and they are not from Southern Sudan. We need to train out people in hotel management, service industry so that they are able to come and also work in the market so this is one of scholarship.

We have been also able to support some girl children and orphans in Kenya this year. This has been done through working together with the Ministry of Education making sure that always the 25% is adhered to if there is an opportunity for extra scholarship. We also work with them to get those scholarships because this Ministry of Education has a focal gender point there. We have got a Director General for Gender Equality in the Ministry of Education and this director general one of her job description there is to make sure that everyday any scholarship or any appointment that is done in the ministry she is aware of. She is to be aware of the program on the illiteracy so that women can also benefit, and as a result, now the accelerated learning programme is benefiting a lot of women in Juba. Because of the close relationship with the Ministry of Education, we have participated in the campaign for illiteracy because you know, the highest number of illiterate population of Southern Sudan is women and therefore we have taken very keen interest to see to it that women get educated, and they get to know how to read at least the prescription for medicine if they are given to their children.

We have also in our own given scholarship for the girl child. For example there was one girl whom her father died early this year in Juba. This girl was to finish her three months course to become a pilot and she wanted to come and work in Southern Sudan to pilot our President. There was only between her becoming a pilot and not becoming a pilot stood 21,000 US dollars. So this Ministry paid the 21,000 dollars and now this girl has happily completed and will be the first pilot in Southern Sudan among girls. So this is what we have been doing toward education in Southern Sudan with the Ministry of Education.

We have also helped in education of women working with the Ministry of Health. There has been this Fistula Campaign. This fistula used to be a disease that affected women. Men never thought that it was also their problem. Now we have joined in full force with the Ministry of Health and we are working together with the NPA our partners. We used to think that only the treatment or the repair of fistula was done in Ethiopia but now it is being done in Juba Hospital. Many women have been cured and they got their live back. We have been in a campaign and in this campaign our role is to find in the villages women who are having this fistula problem. They have to come out and report themselves to the health authorities so that they can also be cured.

So this is part of education that we have done.

We have also been in the fourth run of education on HIV as you have heard earlier and we are working with the commission for HIV to make sure that this random testing is very dangerous because we as social workers, know that you cannot go to a place and be tested and later on you are told that you have HIV. What is supposed to happen is a bit dangerous; so we are trying to take it slowly.

We are talking with our partners so that there can be mechanisms in place. If somebody has to be tested, there is a process through which one should first of all go through, counselling so that they are told what the outcome would be. If the outcome comes, they don't get devastated. So we are working on it through the department of social welfare.

We are also working on the campaign for the people who are already affected or infected, so that HIV does not become a death sentence because there is this social saying that "zol dusu lagam". Socially, for us, we cannot accept this because it makes people not come forward. And for those who find that they are already infected, they will be devastated, and they can even die before their time. So we are campaigning out there that having been found with HIV should not be a death sentence but we should be able to manage it as a friendly disease.

The people are managing diabetic because we know of some who have been infected and they were discovered in 1985 and until today they are still alive.

Unfortunately for Southern Sudanese, when somebody has been discovered to have HIV/AIDS people point at them. They are isolated within 3 months to 6 months. This period is death, but this should not be the case. So this campaign we are in it with our social worker and we are training social workers we have through our partners.

Schedule training of 200 social workers this year, we have done the process of negotiation and the training is going to be done through the University of Juba. We had wanted to do it in Ethiopia. We found it was too expensive. The money I was allocated by our partners is 200,000 dollars. So now the training will take place in Juba University. Once these social workers are trained fully they will go and be at the level to make sure that some of them are placed at this testing centers for HIV/AIDS. Some of them will be working in the reformation with the Ministry of Interior so that they can also talk with the children so that they can follow the process if a child comes in a conflict with the law.

We have also succeeded in getting scholarships for the technicians because we don't have technicians at all. Earlier when we came, there were three technicians of orthopaedic in Juba. Now we have estimated the number of the wounded people is fifteen thousand in Southern Sudan and once you are wounded you lose a leg. That which is given to you is not permanent. We have borrowed technicians from Kenya and thank God they have been paid by our partner. We are not paying them because we don't have the money and they are also now training for us seventeen technicians, 15 of them are technicians and two are physiographers.

The physiographers have trained fifteen technicians. Seven of them went last year and they have already graduated and come back. They are waiting once the orthopaedic center opens. Hopefully it will open in March that is the latest time we have given ourselves because now we have ordered the equipments to be brought.

If you go on Yei road, you will find out that the center is coming up. These technicians will start working here and the other physiographers will continue for the four years meanwhile the ICRC our partner will provide for us two physiographer of their own.

So these seventeen Southern Sudanese who have qualified through a fair system of selection. We have selected people through interview. People who have passed both sciences (chemistry and biology) and mathematics for the ones who were selected to go for those courses because they are scientific courses they are training and they will come up to Southern Sudan.

We have an agreement with the ICRC to run this center for us for six years. Within six years, if we now have the Southern Sudanese who have come back from training and they are working fully here in this reference center, then we may think either of facing out our partners the ICRC or continue with them to do this work and we can see if we can expand to other states. At the moment we have got the state light put in Rumbek and state light point in Juba will continue to remain a state light point the one way we are working now and this big one which we are building now with the assistance from our partner will be a reference center.

We have already been appointed to become a center for manufacture of wheel chairs and once we manufacture, part of East Africa would benefit where we are also able to export when we get our budget next coming month or year. Our disable will be able to ride their bicycles on roads and these bicycles will be made in Southern Sudan.

Our sixth objective is poverty reduction and economic empowerment. The activities of this objective is to establish a vacation training centers at the state level to provide training in entrepreneurship, encourage formations of cooperatives and microfinance, promote income generations empowerment of communities particularly women, youth and vulnerable groups is one of the most tools to combat discrimination and achieve participatory and equal society.

No sustainable development can be achieved if there is no coherent social development in a country. The ministry plans to develop policies and activities that promote added value and serious in the creation of these opportunities for acquiring skills and empowerment of these groups through training in self reliance and actively participating g in social and economic development.

To this Hon. Speaker sir, Hon. House, we have also in the eight months moved the vulnerable groups, the disabled, the women, and the children. Most of them if you look carefully don't belong to the formal sector; they are in the informal sector. So the best that we could do is to try to find out how they could also train in the informal sector so that they can also benefit.

The first negotiation that we went into is with the training institution of the University of South Africa which is right now training our cadres in the ministries. You know that even the commissioners recently came from there. The ministers, the governors and staff have gone for training in South Africa. Then we raise this point that we cannot go and have training only in the formal sector because the majority of the vulnerable groups are in the informal sector. Now we have been asked to develop a training program that will specifically target the vulnerable groups, the women in the informal sector and that is specifically the civil society because no country can develop without the involvement of its civil society.

The civil society during war alongside the SPLM/A contributed a lot toward the war efforts but when we came back from the Oslo Pledges we found that the civil society was not considered. Up to now they have not got any money. The only money that we struggle to get is in our budget which is the five hundred and ten thousand Dollars which has not been realised. Up to now if that money is realised that is the only money that the civil society can get.

We are making a concerted effort to see to it that the civil society becomes part and partial of the training planning of the Government of Southern Sudan and this has already been accepted by the trainers. They have invited us to make a program and most of this training will take place in Southern Sudan. It will be done in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and Human Resource Development so that we can use the MTC for the training of the civil society. I have already talked about the credit and the worth of the training groups because these groups are cooperative. These groups can actually help to generate income.

We have been depending on the oil but we are richer than the oil if we can enhance the capacity of our people then we are very rich and this is what we intend to do this year. We have started by three women farmers and farmers groups. We train them in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture in the Government of National Unity and after training the Ministry of Agriculture in the Government of Southern Sudan have donated a car and two motorbikes to one association.

The President's office and the Vice President's office have donated water pumps and we have donated water pumps also so these groups can produce vegetables during the dry season and that all the vegetable that you will see in the market will not be vegetables coming from Uganda. They will also be produced locally because groups have been trained how to produce vegetables and how to add value to the products. They have been also trained packaging.

Through these trainings these groups hopefully will now be formed into formal cooperatives which will be supported by the ministry of Cooperative and Rural Development. We hope to replicate this project in the other greater regions in 2008 especially when the roads are made. People from the Greater Bahr el Ghazal, Western Equatoria and Eastern Equatoria would be able to feed Juba market.

You know that iris potatoes used to grow in Eastern Equatoria and now are embanked through this training for the women in Eastern Equatoria. They can get back to produce iris potatoes and onions in Upper Talanga so that they float this market. I have already talked to you about the policy of poverty reduction.

Before I go to the last one, I want to tell you a lot about the mainstreaming politically and administratively of women into the work force. By the time the ministry was formed, already the assemblies, of the Government of National Unity and the Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly had been formed.

Our role was to come and check if the 25% was implemented in the assemblies but then we did not have the mandate to check everywhere what we had in the ministries and secretariats. We were only checking on the SPLM seats.

The SPLM seats for each state were eleven and in these eleven seats three of them were supposed to be the 25% for women. So we came and checked and found that most states have fulfilled the 25% of the SPLM seats in the Assemblies. There were only some states that did not at the time that we started the checking. Western Equatoria was one with only one woman and the other two seats were being occupied by men. The same with Central Equatoria where there was one woman and two seats occupied by men.

In Eastern Equatoria there were two women one seat was also missing. In Upper Nile one seat was occupied two seats were also missing. So we tabulated all these seats which were missing and we made presentation to the President through the advisor and we started making campaigns and making negotiations with the governors so that they can see to it that the SPLM fulfils its pledges of the 25% because after all the 25% came in 1994 in Chukudum Declaration and it was an SPLM policy.

The SPLM should not be the one to break. So we have been following. As a result, we have been willing to give back these seats. Some of them are now occupied but we still have some of the seats which are missing and we are saying that these seats which are still missing in this assembly we need to have them back, even if it is for two hours for women to sit on these seats before people go for elections and we have written to our President because we know where these seats are.

We have written to the governors and they know where these seats are and we had wanted to say that because we are SPLM let us negotiate them so that nobody needs to suffer and thrown on the streets because after all we are volunteers. We are working at different levels. People who are occupying women seats should have volunteered two years ago to leave the seat but we don't want people to be asked to go but never the less it is the duty of this ministry to make sure that we highlight the seats which are occupied and we have now highlighted them. Some of them thankfully are not now being occupied but they will now soon be filled like the one of Eastern Equatoria, and Western Equatoria but the seats that continuously remain occupied are in Central Equatoria and in Upper Nile. These are four seats in total and we need these seats. At the ministerial level, let me finish with the Assembly.

In the committee we are satisfied. Hon. Margaret Peter and Hon. Agnes Lasuba are very happy about that and we thank the Assembly system for making our women occupy these seats and we are very grateful for that. Thank you Mr. Hon. Speaker.

At the ministerial level, we have not met a lot of progress but a little. In the former Southern Region my memory has failed me now. I don't know if late Victoria Yari then probably was the first minister and Mary Basumi. But otherwise, we have not known any luxury since then that we have now. We have two ministers sitting in the cabinet, we have two advisors.

We always complain that we actually should be six and we have not kept quiet.

We have also written about it to the President because we are supposed to be six women sitting in the cabinet and not two. So we are still looking around to see if we can get something in the cabinet. We think that it is about 8% only that has been testified not 25%.

Now at the Government of National Unity, if we put our ministers and state ministers together in the north, this is history in making in the Sudan because when you go to Khartoum now and you see that those ministers there are Southern Sudanese.

Four of them against only one from the north, this is very great achievement. We have got Madam Angelina who is in the state for energy; Anna Itou is the state minister for agriculture. We have got Hon. Teresa Sericio who is the state minister for Environment, and we have state minister Dr. Tabitha Butrus who is the Minister of Health because she is there sitting on the ticket of SPLM which we consider to be our seat.

In the South now in the Assembly, the same ticket also chairs one of the committee and you have seen if you watch the 10:00 o'clock news in Omdurman, you will find that Hon. Jama is aspiring a lot and I have a joke here, I am sorry Your Excellency if I could tell it here during one of the sittings Hon. Jama was talking, so one of the Hon. Members from the north said "da min Wani" and he was told that "da min Junubi." then he was asked "walayi?" then he said "Da Kani Garang." So you can see the important step that women are making and this one was very good to us and we think that that one is for our progress.

We have one seat in the north which has gone missing and one man is sitting on it. Unfortunately for him he did not go and swear using his name. He went and swears as Nybol. So we are waiting for that Nybol to leave our seat and we have written to our President and he has made presentation because in the north, the President of the Republic is the one to take note of this. So we got some news later that he was saying to our President "Gal Yaki inta jibta lena masakil. De sunu inta jibu nusuwan ketir kida" so that Nybol hopefully we are hoping when I finished from here he should actually by himself leave the Assembly.

At the states level, we have made a very good progress. We have in total now ten ministers. We have one Speaker and this Speaker is the only Speaker in the whole of

Sudan. She is in Eastern Equatoria. There are no states that have not appointed ministers up to now. This is because some states have actually given us full 25%.

Western Equatoria has given us two ministers, Warrap has given two ministers, and Eastern Equatoria has given us two ministers.

However, we still have two states where in the cabinet there is no woman and these are Unity State and Western Bahr el Ghazal. I remember in our campaign, when we were in the SPLM meeting, we went and took the list of those whom we feel were guilty. So we have put Unity State and then we went to the Governor Taban Gai and we said that you look at yourself then he said that ya jama, the states started with u alphabetically. I should not be the first on the list. Why do you put me as the first on the list? We said that because we have talked to you for a long time and you have not been able to give us a woman minister and we are still waiting.

These are the two states that are remaining now without women ministries. We have an advisor every time we ask Western Bahr el Ghazal they tell us that we have an advisor, but then we say if you want us to compromise with you probably you have to bring a law where the advisor sits in cabinet otherwise we cannot consider that Western Bahr el Ghazal has actually fulfilled the twenty-five percent.

Let me go now to the administrative executive. I said no, it has to go up there. So we started following and the good thing that happened was that, I was made a member of the appointment committee. We worked on caucus so I use to tell my colleagues that, if you bring your list for appointment and I don't see any woman director, no woman deputy director then I will not sign your list, which means that your list will not go to the Council of Ministers. And indeed many people who came with their list without women we returned them. They have to go and look around and look for CVs. And as a result, now we are updating our figures. I don't have the correct information in front of me because we are up-dating it every time as I speak today now here we have got one undersecretary. We have got five director generals.

In fact, the latest director general is Doctor Jean Kani whom I see entering the room right now. This is the latest director general we have which makes five, adding on top the director general we have in Warrap, which are six directors general we have almost lost count of our directors. The group three and particularly the deputy directors, I can safely say here that we have got between 66 and 100 directors and deputy directors put together.

This is something the CPA has brought because by 1985 we only had one director and no director general. We had one director group three here in Juba, Madam Margaret Juwan Ladu. She was the only director since the south was created. Now we are talking of director generals. We are even talking of undersecretary, after we have appointed undersecretary; the government of National Unity found it expedite to appoint women as undersecretary also because they did not know what to face the international community to find that they themselves don't have an understanding. So we have made progress at this level.

Today if a meeting of directors, deputy directors, women, and professional is held, you will find that this hall will be full at the level of civil authority. We have also gone to the army and consulted and said to them that during the struggle many of our brave women, some of them have fallen, some of them fought bravely, participated in the battles and we don't know their names quite often in the promotions and now you know that we have got commanders, alternate commanders, colonels, brigadiers, among the women one of them is here with us in this assembly so that is because the close watch of this rigorously watching implementation of the 25%. And we did not leave it only at the level of the army, but we have also gone to the NGOs. We have told them that we are not happy to see NGOs coming to see us and to visit us in the ministries and all we could see is foreign faces.

When we know that they are Southern Sudanese who are qualified and as a result of this for example today if you go to UNDP, NPA, UNICEF, UNFPA, you will find that they are professional Southern Sudanese women there doing their job and this has never happened because in 1985 prior to the war, the UNDP was the place where the Uganda can work there. We could not believe that Southerners could work there because we did not know how, but we thought that this is our turn now that we are sitting on the seats. We have to do something to see that this system can also take Southern Sudanese and that Southern Sudanese can be expatriates because what is the colour of expatriates? A Southern Sudanese can also become an expatriate and they can also go to work in other countries and expatriate money back to Southern Sudan and build up Southern Sudan so that they can also be partly of the Diaspora.

So this is what we have done while following the 25 %. I was going to forget about the commissions because they were the last to be appointed, and we have got three important commissions. It is 95% not 25% but what makes us happy is that, the most important commission Anti-Corruption has been given to us. I don't know why it was given to us, probably because we are very poor people at stealing prompting the reasons why we have been given that commission. And we have been given also that of Human Rights because women always mediate in collaboration with peace makers because they don't want to see somebody suffer injustice unnecessarily.

We are very grateful in addition to our President for giving us for checking injustice in the Employee Justice Commission. We take these three commissions with full responsibility because the Government of Southern Sudan has entrusted us with looking after institutions that will keep checks and balances and we are very much happy about this. In those commissions there are very many women who are members of the commissions.

We have got the deputy commissioner there is a woman and this to us is very great. The biggest last achievement we made recently is appointment of the deputy secretary for the SPLM. This has been a very big achievement because we have campaigned long and hard for this position for us to acquire. We knew before that there were some people who were already looking around that position, that they were the ones who are going to be appointed but we continued and at the end we got the blessing from God and this position

has been given to us. If you go to ANC in South Africa the deputy is a woman and she is working very hard. If you have gone to Uganda you will find the deputy is a woman, in Rwanda the same. So why was a party having one boss? Even the northern and southern sectors are all male. So we are hoping that the other parties will also give us some help like what the SPLM has done. We are looking forward for the National Congress Party and the other members here to appoint women also in important party positions same as the SPLM.

At the state level I don't want to lose sight of the deputy speaker we have in Bahr el Ghazal. I think she is in Northern Bahr el Ghazal. This has been a very important thing. I don't want also to lose sight of local administration. The local administration is very important. We are under pressure in it, and we had been campaigning at the high level. We don't know that we are actually losing at the ground level.

We now have two commissioners only and this cannot be right. So our next move is to refocus our attention on the commissioners so that we can also get the position of commissioners for women at the lowest level, we manage to get a chief in Eastern Equatoria. Now we have it, we are not doing very badly at the local level. So we could now look for hard women because the smallest unit is called headman, why should it be headman? So we also want to see that there is headwoman that is now where our attention is going to be focused.

Mr. Speaker sir, the last that I have there is mobilization. This objective of mobilization is to enhance social mobilization and community participation in development. The activities of ministries on this level is as follows: promote implementation of community self project, encourage formation of groups and associations, increase establishment of neighbourhood and day care centers, promote social and recreational activities, design specific projects for vulnerable groups to engage in constructive community development, facilitate youth and women involvement in the protection of the environment.

The ministry will promote policies and activities that strengthen involvement at all sectors of the community in the development of Southern Sudan. It will advocate the formation of associations and groups and establishment of neighbourhood and day care to address needs of the community.

Mr. Speaker sir, we have been working in the Ministry of Agriculture. We have also been working with the Ministry of Youth and Sports, and Ministry of Education. The most important thing is the support of the communities associations in recreation. The first thing that the ministry did on its own is to make sure that the women's day becomes the day that every men, women, and children know what it's all about in Southern Sudan.

For the last two years that we have been in Government, in March 2006 this day under the theme of: **"Women in Decision Making"** was celebrated all over the South up to the counties. The ministry gave a donation that year of four thousand dollars to each state so that they can now go and add its own resources to it and distribute to the counties, and as

a result, women became aware of what women decision making means. This is why you can see today up to the state there are now director generals so that they can sit in meetings in decision making, in the second year which is just year 2007 under the theme of curbing violence against women. We also moved to publicise that day and to give an opportunity for men and women to come together for recreation and education.

The ministry contributed 8000 dollars each to every state minister of social development so that our state minister will go and distribute this money up to the county level, and the result is that this women day is becoming a very famous day and an opportunity to make people aware. In the states the reports that come back to us in the ministry was that on the day of the women day men were the ones cooking then the women come and eat. That this one was their contribution to women's day and was very good contribution because we tell men that cooking is not only for women. If it was so why are men cooking in the hotels. Is it because they go to the hotels for a paid job? So cooking is not only for the women.

So this has become a day of recreation that people get together and bring reconciliation to families. When we went to the survey in the flood areas, I went to the President accompanying him to Wad Fasala and to Aguba and Bar. And when we reached there, the women who came to receive us I had some interview with them. I was asking them whether they did celebrate Women Day. And they said yes, Madam Nyada sent them some money and that they organized with their commissioner and he also contributed some money for that day. This is very far in our remote counties.

I remember when we reached Wad Fasala and we went to sit down. The women came with umbrellas in that community probably getting some of your Benj to be covered by umbrellas is something important. So the women came and sheltered me with an umbrella. That they are allowing men to do the same to our President. They were accompanying me with umbrella until we got to the place. My colleagues John Luke was telling them that he was not going to send them any money any more if they were just going to cover their minister.

So the mobilization of women is what this objective is and we have done very fine to mobilize them. As you can see, we mobilised women who are selling stones in Juba. These women in the next one year will be more organised especially with the new credit which is now coming. We have applied for a place to sell stones in the market. We are still following that money from our partners, but we are working with the Ministry of Commerce. They have a big funding from EU to set up a big market just on the foot of the mountain. And we have applied to them that we intend to get our 25% of that area to be for women. So this is the mobilization that we are doing and we are going to continue with it because we have already polices that have indicators. We got the indicators monthly reports.

We would also be able to meet with our committee in the Assembly here so that our committee is aware of how the list is going. If a place has already been vacated, we tick

that one and then we go forward and find out which one is not yet vacated and then we zero on that.

Lastly but not least, Mr. Speaker sir, section three is talking about the role of states and counties to meet these objectives. The full involvement of the states ministry of social development and counties in the implementation of the activities presented in section two is important. Within three years period 2007-2009 the ministry in collaboration with the states ministry of social development shall be involved in the building of capacity and professional skills through the organization of training programme and workshop.

This institution is purely designed to build capacity within the context of power devolution and decentralization to decision making in the fund development service delivering good governance as well as monitoring and coordination of activities.

So Mr. Speaker sir, the principle is that, all states communities and counties are entitled to development without discrimination.

Lastly, on the last page the ministry has been organised in term of line management so that we are able to monitor the work that we are doing. At the top of the organ government is the minister. On the side is the office management of the minister but the line of command comes to the undersecretary who is the top evil servant of the minister. He is deputized by three director generals, the director general for social welfare, the director general for finance and administration and the director general for gender.

Under the three director generals, the director general of social welfare, line managers three deputy directors. One is the director of religious affairs, two is the director of social welfare, three is the director of child social welfare and under these directors there are also many sections.

The section of religious affairs has got three deputy directors: the deputy director for Christian affairs, the deputy director for Islamic affairs, and the deputy director for inter-religious affairs. Under the director for social welfare, there are three deputies: the deputy director for disability welfare, and the deputy director for assopete who are on the side of the fifth. This is the manager of the assopete center. Then the deputy director for specific need of education and that is the deputy director manager.

The social welfare institution which is the school for the blind under the director of child welfare, there are three deputy directors: The deputy director for rehabilitation and the deputy director for child and mother welfare. The director general for finance and administration has two directors which is line manager by director general of finance. The first line is the line of human resource management. The deputy director of administration and finance, then the deputy director of establishment, then the director of training and documentation. The second line is the director of planning, research, and documentation. This is the line that works to line together as you have seen in the function and priority.

This is the one that manages the center of documentation and all these figures I mentioned to you come from this department. It comes across from this department to make sure that there is information that comes in and it is documented.

So it has got director for research who is the one to do the work that we need on social research. Like research in the oil sector, how it has affected our people socially and environmentally in terms of pollution and many others.

We have got deputy director for planning. And as we are speaking now we have already map out our monthly work plan so that everybody knows what he/she is doing in a month so that you just don't come to the office and leave without doing any concrete thing. You have to know that by the end of the month you must produce a report which must go to your line manager and from the line manager to the director general and up to the undersecretary and the minister.

Everyone will have to know what is happening in the ministry every month. Meetings are planned accordingly in the department.

The deputy director for publicity and information whenever there is a function in each of the ministry. This department can be informed to organise it for documentation and publicity.

In our structure, the first is the director for gender, then deputy director for gender, deputy director for projects, then the deputy director for gender training so that the word gender can be understood. We need to actually target training in various fields so that people can understand what gender means because people think that gender is women only. So when we said now we have one hundred scholarships and 25% of them this tome will go to boys, people may wonder why? And this is how you forget gender.

So with this Mr. Speaker sir, what is left here is just the matrix to enable us monitor the work that we are to do. So all these objectives I have mentioned are in this matrix and the copies have been given to you so that you can look at them year after year to see if the work is complying with the guiding principles contained in the matrix. I don't want to bore you on this matrix because it is about putting in figure.

We had very serious financial constrain in the ministry. The first problem we had, was the constrain of space. This is a new ministry and when it was formed or created in October 2005 we were first asked to go and share with the ministry of information and culture. But then it was discovered that information has to share with culture and so we were evicted and sent to the ministry of health because the department of social welfare was under the ministry of health. But when we went to the Ministry of Health we found that out of the 44 offices, the minister of health had given us 7 offices. This made it very difficult for the ministry even to recruit staff. We were operating under 7 rooms but thanks to other partners.

The NGOs and UN, managed to build for us two units of about 8 offices plus the 7 offices totalling to 15 offices. So it is these 15 rooms that we are operating under severe

pressure. This is why we have not been able to employ the 226 staff that we were supposed to employ owing to lack of rooms. There is no ministry or institution where director general, the director and the deputy director sit in one office and this has happened in our ministry of gender and social welfare.

We also have limited transport facilities because in the budget, we have been given actual ceiling and in this ceiling we could only afford 5 cars. So when we got out of the offices we all have to come down with our cars including the one of the minister to transport all the employees to their residence areas.

Appreciations go to our partners who have donated to us 7 cars. But because our ministries at the states level are even in the worse situation, then we have to send 5 cars to the states. Imagine most of our state ministers like Jonglei walk on foot for several months. So we have allotted 20 motorbikes and 100 bicycles to the states.

Last year we have actually made budget for training programme of women. And we have created a women center. Unfortunately, the difficulty of land has made it impossible for us to use that money. Last year and even this year we may not be able to use that money because there is no land allocated for us.

We also applied for land in order to build our ministry so that we are easily located because even our visitors sometimes find it hard to locate the office because where we are operating, it is written ministry of health. Precisely, we are like unwanted guests in the Ministry of Health and that is the situation we are in.

Whereas the budget for building a new ministry was refused last year, this year we have been faced with a ceiling. This means that we are not going to do most things that we wanted to do like supporting orphanage. We have budgeted about five hundred thousand dollars and the money up to now has not been released. You know that we have lack of liquidity.

From January up to April, the only money we got in chapter two was only 25% of one month and that came to 35,000 dollars. In June and July we got 50% of one month because our role is not understood properly. People think that this is just a ministry of women and what do they want after all?

So they don't see it in terms of allocation of budget. The issues of children, we have made presentation in Geneva we also worked together with the Ministry of Legal Affairs to make sure that the Bill on the right of a child is brought before the Assembly. We did all these with the help of the international community so that we are able to hold the consultation meeting and be able to produce that Bill.

We have also been able to get three consultants. The tricks that we used so that we can get ourselves some roof was to appeal to our funds that we need consultancy and then when they say ok we will give you consultancy then we say to them that we have no rooms to accommodate them. Sometimes they say all right we can build for you so that the consultant can come in.

So with this Hon. Speaker, I would like to thank you for listening to my presentation and I also thank you for your patience and memory because this document was presented to you long time ago. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Deputy Speaker

Thank you Your Excellency for this elaborate presentation. You have said a lot of good things and you also mentioned that this ministry is not only for women but it seems there is an element of defence towards the right of women in this ministry. This makes men more suspicious about their consideration by the ministry.

Ladies and gentlemen of Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly, this is 1:00 pm; we are going for lunch and come back for deliberation on this presentation at 2:00 pm so that we continue with our discussion.

So I declare the sitting closed.

Hon. Deputy Speaker

In continuation to our sitting this morning after having listened to the excellent presentation by Her Excellency, the Minister for Social Welfare, Gender and Religious Affairs, now it is your turn to look into this plan despite the fact that it was good. But addition from your reach is more important also. Now the floor is open for debate or discussion.

Hon. Daniel Deng Monydit, SPLM, Rumbek North, Lakes State.

First of all let me commend the minister for her well and clear elaborate policy and work plan. In her presentation, it is clear that she is a great fighter for the right of the marginalized people. I also saw that she is very concerned about women rights. The distribution of the senior posts starting from the director general and directors whether they are gender and regional balance and for that purpose she is able to recruit us to fight for her ministry. This is my comment and thanks.

Hon. Matthew Mathiang Deng, NCP, Unity State.

I add my appreciation to the work done by Her Excellency the minister of Gender, Social welfare and Religious Affairs. My question to the minister is that, the religious affairs specially the Christian affairs are marginalised. Religious affairs, if I could remember well were established in 2002. Under the SPLM secretary for religious affairs, it is reduced into one of directorates.

In February this year I wrote to the President of GoSS to create a ministry of religious affairs because most of our ministers came here to present a very wonderful presentation but when you go to the ground, it is completely zero.

My question goes to the Hon. Minister. In the north up to now they are mostly being supported financially by the government. The mosques in the south are built by the government. We have so many churches where they are not being supported by the government of Southern Sudan. I would be very happy if the Hon, Minister tells this

House how much has been given by the government of Southern Sudan as a support for the churches.

The other question is about the reformatory schools of prisons. We are seeing so many children around rooming in the streets without anybody taking care of them. We would like the minister to respond to that.

Hon. Michael Win, SPLM, Fashoda County, Upper Nile State.

I would like to raise some of the points here. The first is actually the departmental function of religious affairs as mentioned by Reverend Matthew. This is a very important function in our social affairs. If I could draw your attention back, actually religious affairs in the regional government used to be under the ministry of education and it has a very important function in education in addition to other social programmes.

My concern to the Hon. Minister is that I have noticed the structure of the ministry here but religious affairs in spite of the fact that is a structure function in defining the ministry it is under director general of social welfare. And I would have hoped that it should be reporting direct to under secretary. However, I don't know the merit used to be combined with social welfare.

I am concerned also about director general for financial and administration. Is it true in the GoSS ministries that there are directors general for finance and administration in every ministry. And if that is the case what is finance doing?

The question I would like the minister to answer is the implementation of 25%. They have unfortunate case where one of our members here was removed from this assembly due to the policy recommendation by her ministry. And if I calculate the number of 25% in this assembly we are about 170 and there should be 43 women according to 25% stipulation in the CPA. And we appreciate that the women position must be given but Mr. Speaker; we have to do things in a right way. The constituency must be defined so that you know which constituency will bring a lady and should not be left floating like that so that people choose according to their wishes.

So I hope that this policy must be rectified by her department. And if I can raise a small complain translation is taking 25% of our 5 minutes. Thank you.

Hon. Andrea Yondo Maktab, SPLM, Lakes State

First of all I would like to appreciate the role played by the minister and her ministry. I have three questions here in the training; it has not been mentioned of how many people have been trained whether it is in child care or orphanage care. The ministry is now two years and nothing in the structure about director who is supposed to be responsible for the orphans. The question posed itself of who is to care for the orphan.

The third is what we called conditional grant, how is this kind of grant being transferred because I came from an area where nothing has been mentioned about childhood and orphan.

Hon. Abieng Nathaniel Anai, SPLA Representative.

As we know, the 60% of our population are women and for us to implement the 25% of women to work. We must also provide conducive atmosphere for them because most of their older children are attached to the care of their children on their back. They also denied other small children going to school in order to take care of their small brothers and sisters. So it should be made the first priority in tackling these issues.

I would also like to mention about the scholarship for the children of the fallen heroes. We know that most of our women have not acquired much education because a lot of them have been participating in the 20 years war and as a result, they did not go to school at all. However, for them to do effective duty especially in the police, they must know how to write and read.

Also in the correctional units, they must know human rights more than to protect the right of the prisoners and they cannot do that if they are not educated.

You have to make awareness to women at the grassroots because they are the ones who will vote in the coming referendum whether for separation or unity of the country.

Hon. Paulino Apinyi Akol, SPLM, Bahr el Ghazal State

Thank you Mr. Speaker sir. After this long discussion, the Speaker has now come back to the point. I would like to compliment my minister and her team for the well presented Work Plan and Policy of the ministry.

The Work Plan and Policy of the ministry included aspects related to human development. She has mentioned issues on religious education either in culture or in education. These are basic factors that human life development is based upon.

She also mentioned nothing on disable persons and orphan children or street children. It is very important to provide housing for these orphan children and choose for them good teachers to take care of their education including the reformatory so that they are introduced to vocational training such as carpentry, mechanic, agriculture and other technical courses.

These are the means which will enable us to reach this objective.

A woman needs support for her to be able to carry out responsibility of the family.

Another thing I want to talk about is AIDS pandemic. I would like to suggest that anybody affected by virus should still deserve his/her protection

Thank you very much.

Hon. Margaret Peter Abudi, NCP, Central Equatoria State

I would like to commend the work presented by Her Excellency the minister. The presentation of that Work Plan on the ground is going to be very good. And in the document we are really imagining things we are supposed to be doing. As it has been mentioned also in the Bible that you give 10% of your income to God. We should apply this principle whether you are a Muslim or Christian. We should give such percentage to the poor because God says the more you give the more blessings we get and because of that may be we will get more revenues instead of revenue from oil.

It has been mentioned that 200 women in the market are now doing good businesses. And I don't know whether these women have been accorded some assistance in terms of land for marketing these services here in Southern Sudan.

Another thing was the plan of donating one vehicle to all the states are covered by this provision. My application goes to the ministry of gender and religious affairs for its plan for establishing 1000 houses in each of the ten states of South Sudan to accommodate widows, orphans and returning population who have failed to accommodate themselves.

I would also like the Ministry of Education to encourage girl education and concern is that, if the ministry of education together with the Ministry of Gender, Social Welfare and Religious Affairs build schools and colleges in southern Sudan then it could be much better because the experience tells us those children who have been studying abroad are coming up with cultures which are irrelevant and foreign to our local culture of the Sudan and this needs to be taken into consideration. We cannot prevent importing teachers from abroad into the country. The Southern Sudan sometimes cannot allow their girl child to study abroad or far distance.

In the presentation of the ministry document, I saw that the document has not mentioned something on social programme like cultural exhibition and others like Christmas celebration because this ministry also deals with entertainment. This will solve some of the problems that have accumulated over the years of the conflict. We used this programme to solve some of the problems like trauma and other social issues.

The Ministry of Gender and Social Welfare should also be responsible for the design and fencing of the grave yard. We don't know whether there is anything on this in the work plan, like Hai Malakal Cemetery where our ancestors have been buried.

Hopefully, I believe that something should be done to women who are in the business of stone breaking so that they become stable in their business which is currently conducted under the trees.

I would like the Hon. Members to be specific and to concentrate on issues like the cemeteries. These are issues may be related to the states and here we want people to concentrate on the work plan so that we really come up with very good points whether we want to add or delete.

Hon. Kuadam Kuot, SPLM, Gogri el East, Eastern Bahr el Ghazal

Thank you Mr. Speaker sir. The presentation is appreciated.

Piece of information: In Warrap State Council of Ministers, minister of education, minister of social welfare, minister of information and advisor on security, all of them are women. So women make up 50% of the Warrap State Council of Ministers and not two as stated by the minister.

Another point I would like to make is that, I would like to know whether there is a gender balance in the top positions of the ministry and also whether there is a regional balance in the top position of the ministry of social welfare. I would like the minister to clarify these questions.

The minister made statements that cooking is not only confined to women but men can cook too. In our tradition, cooking is only for women. This applies mainly in the countryside. I would like the minister to clarify whether we men in the countryside can also cook.

Then a point on English grammar: you formulate a policy, you don't develop a policy, you can develop a strategy.

Concerning 25% this is something contained in SPLM constitution as well as interim constitution of southern Sudan (ICSS). It does not apply to 170 members of parliament and SPLM has 119 seats here. So one quarter of 119 is 29.7. Something since there is no point in human being; it is 30. So each state is to bring three women so that is the point I want to make clear. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Nartasio Loluke Manir, SPLM, Eastern Equatoria State

Thank you Mr. Speaker sir. I would like to congratulate the Ministry of Gender, Social Welfare, and Religious Affairs for this well articulated policy document. We want to pass our congratulation to your staff because they are the people who are working day and night to ensure that this document is produced.

I want to emphasise the issue of the 25%. We want to assure you the minister that this Assembly is committed to the 25%. All the changes that are happening in our states actually it is this Assembly that has passed the order that 25% must be implemented. And we still continue to pursue. This is a national call that the positions that are for the women should be given for the women. However, I want to comment on what the former speaker was saying that it has to be consultative when we are choosing these women. It is not only the women to choose women leaders because these women are national leaders.

So we men must participate in their consultation and choosing, and in case of south Sudan, we want to assure you that there is also a rough road as far as participation of women is concern because some of our cultures still want to be refined so that they become responsive to the need and to the calls of women. So these women whom we are also choosing must really be good women who have a lot of integration and the women whom every society can respect.

I want to say this in connection with one of our Hon. Member who has been removed from this Assembly. I agree and you will agree with me that it is against human right for somebody to be removed from this Assembly when in actual fact he is not sitting on women seat. So we recommend you and request you because it was through your recommendation. Please undo the recommendation so that we have the Hon. Member back here in this Assembly.

Regarding the issue of the IDPs, we need to look into it from a comprehensive perspective. We have IDPs like for instance people who are staying on the mountains; they should be considered as the IDPs because they have been forced to go into maintains because of war. We need a program from the ministry to ensure that these people come down from the mountains for the issue of census. They will not be counted if these people remain on the mountains.

The issue of health facilities will not be good for them like toilet; you cannot dig a toilet on a rock. If these people remain on the mountains, they will destroy our eco-system especially the forest that we have up the mountains and the moment they remain on the mountain they will defecate randomly and then all these waste matters are taken to the rivers. For that reason, we have continuous cholera and other water born diseases. I request the minister to consider this very seriously.

On the issue of the disabled, Your Excellency the Minister, we in the committee of Education have been always pressurising you to assist us so that we assist the disabled. You have not been very responsive on that. What is the guarantee this time that this policy on the disable and all the marginalised people of Southern Sudan will be implemented?

The issue of orphanage, it is a good idea but it has to be taken care of slowly. Let us move with it slowly because I remember in countries where people started talking about street children, street women, you will not have a permanent solution for it. Now in Southern Sudan we have this idea. So if you are talking about orphanage and those issues of street children I think we are going into a wrong direction. I feel we shall always strengthen our cultural network whereby the family is held responsible for any child. We need to ensure that anybody who is pregnant today or tomorrow should know the father and the mother. We do not need any street children in Southern Sudan. It is too easy for us to talk about this. It is only applicable in social economic welfare societies. Thank you very much Your Excellency.

Hon. Ater Ayiel, UDSF, Yirol East, Lakes State

Thank you Mr. Speaker sir for giving me this opportunity. What I want to say is that we discuss the policy and work plan and the time is over. The year is over and we are left with three months, so I don't see any reason for us to talk more because the time is over and we are waiting now for the work plan of next year. So I suggest stopping debate or I want to raise a motion to pass this work plan with the observations. Thank you.

Hon. Deputy Speaker

There is a motion for the termination of the discussion; any secondment?

Okay. Please take your seats because we have already entered a different stage. Is there any counter motion?

Hon. Sabino Makana Akol, SPLM, Tonj East, Warrap State

Let me make my counter motion. My counter motion is that let the debate continue till the minister has chance to respond to the questions.

Hon. Deputy Speaker

There are three things that are to be together. The person who wants the debate be closed should state the following:

-First, giving chance to the minister to respond to the question.

-Second, close the debate and then

-Third, pass the work plan.

The three are to be put together. Anybody with a counter motion should say the opposite of the three.

Hon. Sabino Makana Akol, SPLM, Tonj East, Warrap State

Let me modify or amend my motion to read as follows, give chance to minister to answer the questions then after that we pass the work plan.

Hon. Abuk Payiti Ayik, SPLM, Malakal County, Upper Nile State

I am a Chairperson for the Committee of Gender, Social Welfare, Youth and Sports. I would like to say that we give the chance for the minister to respond to the questions raised. I would like also to thank H.E the Minister and the team for the good job they have done.

Hon. Deputy Speaker

Excuse me Hon. Abuk, it is a privilege to continue talking but we have also entered into actually terminating the debate. If there is any suggestion to terminate the debate, there will be no any more comments. Up to now we don't have any counter motion. We have seconded that it has to be given to the minister to respond then later on the debate will be terminated. Do we have any counter motion? I would like to ask Her Excellency the Minister please just to take up the podium and to respond to some of these questions.

Her Excellency the Minister of Gender, Social Welfare and Religious Affairs

Thank you Mr. Speaker sir and the Hon. Members. The questions which have been raised, some of them are connected. Let me answer one question which has been repeated thrice or twice, this is about the distribution of the senior positions in the ministry whether in their gender balance or regional balance. Before I answer these questions I just want to bring something into knowledge about this ministry. The directorate of religious affairs, the directorate of social welfare, the directorate of gender, these are specialised directorates.

The co-business of the ministry is the directorate of social welfare and directorate of gender and in order for any meaningful work to take place there must be people who have the background of qualification in these two directorates. Either you are a social welfare or you are a gender specialist. So when the ministry was first constituted, we immediately looked into what has happened before because other ministries like health, when the minister came he found that there were already people in place.

In the ministry of gender and social welfare, we found that the department of social welfare was already formed.

In 1982, there was already a Director of the Orthopaedic Center, Director of the school for the blind, Director of Social Welfare, and the only directorate which did not have a person was the directorate of gender. This is why we have to find a director for gender who must be a gender specialist. This is why when I am going to read out at these directorates you have to bear in mind that some of them already existed. Three quarter of the directors here were those who were trained by the first director of social welfare Ms. Margaret Juan Lado who has trained herself in social policy in the University of Suanze.

Therefore, the appointment of the Undersecretary went to a social worker who was himself trained in social policy and was formerly the director of the school for the blind. And he was from CCSS that is the former co-ordinating council for southern Sudan.

The Director of Gender went to gender specialist who herself came from camps and was already a specialist in gender working with the UNDP and we had to get her, lobby her to come out from a very high salary in the UNDP so that she can be a director of gender in the ministry. The director of social welfare went to a person who was already a director of social welfare when the department was formed and this director of social welfare was formed and this director was trained in the University of Suanza on social policy. The director of planning went to a psychologist who himself is trained in psychology and work in the psychiatric unit in Taxes (US) for ten years and he is a qualified social worker. He is leading the directorate of planning because he is a researcher. His role is specially to be able to plan the training of social workers and counsellors. He comes from camps.

The director of Child Welfare went to somebody who is specialised in social work in the church who was himself ordained as a priest and served as Catholic Parish Priest in Khartoum for four years and worked with youth programmes. We classified him as coming from CCSS.

The director for religious affairs went to a priest who himself is an ordained priest. The director general of gender went to a specialist who herself is a specialist in gender but also a specialist in child care who has been a member of this department since 1982.

The director of orthopaedic center went to the director who has been trained in 1983 to deal with the disable and he is the only one who is a specialist on production and management of the appliances in the orthopaedic center.

This is how the formation of the ministry has been done. It was based on qualification and mindful of quality and control in the ministry.

Fortunately enough, these professionals also happen to be from different regions of Southern Sudan. You will find that the Director of Planning is from Upper Nile, the Director of Religious Affairs is from Bahr el Ghazal, the Director General for Gender is from Eastern Equatoria, and the Undersecretary is from Central Equatoria.

When you come to males versus females, this is the only ministry that has taken 50 = 50 representation. I have not counted the deputy directors. Today if you have a look at the line here, you will find that there are three very senior women sitting here in front of you and there are still some senior ones looking after the ministry behind.

So the imagination that these positions were taken by one region has unfortunately not happen because we were mindful of qualifications and when the first appointments came in 1982, it was the ability of somebody to be a social worker and to be able to study either in the University of Ghana to do social work or to go to Suanza and qualify in either social policy or in orthopaedics. This answers these two questions.

The other question that has come also twice is the one of the religious Affairs. The first one which I want to answer quickly is about the marginalization of the religious Affairs. I don't seem to believe that that is true because as you can see the Religious Affairs, the ministry of gender do not apply to bring Religious Affairs so that it can be marginalised. What has happen is that Religious Affairs is one of the social issues. This is why it came with the gender and social welfare.

I am aware that when the ministry was started, the director general who brought the files of Religious Affairs here was the acting undersecretary. But when the ministry now wanted to be formed technically, this director could not fit the bid. As an SPLM member, he was placed in a place where he can also be able to contribute to the development of Southern Sudan.

The department is very important and nobody is marginalized. And the fact that it is within this ministry our first function is for regulation. This is why the department has been working hard and it is said here they have registered 160 organizations. It is because of their work that we are able to liberate the Zakat and Awokaf. This is why today our poor Muslims are very happy thinking that the government of Southern Sudan has increased their salaries; it is because of financial assistance from Religious Affairs Department.

Another thing is the support to the Churches. Yes, we are aware of the Machaokos Protocol. You know that we are following the constitution and the CPA. The Machaokos Protocol separates religion from the Government. This is why this Religious Affairs Department is not implement to implement the work of the Church though that doesn't prevent us if we have any support to give to almost 120,000 US Dollars to different Dioceses when they have been under stress. We have been able to support the Churches

when they invite us and something like working with them to formulate policies or work with them on workshops. We have been able to work with them because we realised that they have been able to help the people of Southern Sudan.

What I explained to the churches is that the Government of Southern Sudan cannot provide a budget for you as the Islamic Government in Sudan did here. If we do that, we are going against the CPA. This is why the idea that the government should actually appoint or form a ministry for religious Affaires is completely contrary to the Machokos Protocol. But of course that is the right of Right Hon. Member to write to the President and it is also the prerogative of the President to think if he thinks that he wants to form a ministry like that.

Our feeling in the ministry is that the Religious Affaires is a social issue which is being taken care of by the regulatory part of it so that people don't use religion for dividing people.

Then the idea of therefore making "Future Jamai" for example is out of the Machokos Protocol because if we bring money from the government and then we hold breakfast and we invite only rich people, you know in the Bible it is said that if you invite only rich people to your table then you haven't done anything because these rich people will tomorrow invite you to eat.

This is why last year we gave 20,000 US dollars to our Muslim community to put an end to this because this "Future Jamai" collective breakfast has been used to divide people. They will bring food from Khartoum then give it to some people and then somebody who is very hungry would have gone there to be given food and then he/she is not given because there are some things connected to it. Moreover the money which have been used for buying this food have been collected from Southern Sudan through Zakat and Awakaf and then our people were made to think that this money is coming from somewhere.

We have agreed to put a stop to that and hand over Zakat and Awakaf to our people so that they can collect the money instead of making feast for rich people. Let them use that money for helping the poor.

Another question which I think may need to be answered here is the issue of 25% which might have caused some problems in the Assembly here. I wish to clear here that it has not been in the hands of the ministry to come here and make recommendations that so and so should be removed.

What we wanted is to say we have got missing seats and then it is up to that region to provide us with the vacant seats. However, it has now come to our knowledge of that issue which has happened on a seat which did not belong to women.

The fact that we are already working on the remedy of that thing has happened. In fact that the member who was supposed to have come to take over that seat has now been appointed as advisor in Eastern Equatoria definitely will not include the seat of the

effected member. And we will take this advice that the Hon. Nartisio Loluke has given us so that we can work together over that issue. Ours in the SPLM is not to create conflict but rather we want to create reconciliation.

Now the other question is the issue of the graveyard which was already here. But I would like to say that this issue concerns us because we have come up with social policies. We are developing social policies and we have been advising the ministry of social development in the states. We have been very active in advising the minister and we have been trying to raise funds so that we can help the states to fence their graveyards.

The issue of orphans, we are now trying to imitate what happens in the western world. The only problem is that whether we want that these children should be taken care of by relatives, still there will be somebody who will deliver and they will have no father, no mother and they will end somewhere in the hospital and the state has to pick up that case. So this is an old system it has not just happen now by the time we will open our eyes in Juba, we found that an orphanage was existing.

However, because we are aware that the best place for a child is a home, we are working to develop policies for care in the community as we have already said in our policy.

So with that unless there are some burning questions; this to me seems to be the most important questions that were put forward.

The issue of disable, I need to highlight it or to recap it. The disable is a special class of vulnerable group and I want to say that we have got now 15,000 people with disabilities. If we were not responding to some of the request, from our Hon. Members, it is because of supporting the disable. As a result, you can see that our support has results in the disable people. Two blind people have been appointed in senior positions in the Ministry of Education. Then this year two people have joined university and they have been supported and there are also other people with disabilities.

Our support has resulted in the introduction of the sign language because the deaf used to stay there like the residence in the school for the blind. Now there is sign language and they have been taught and hopefully, once the school is renovated properly, they will be able to have a section where they will be taught sign language continuously.

The issue of helping our colleagues in SRRC about the displaced: We were not aware about those people who are internally displaced at the mountains because in the state we work with the ministry of social development. But we will take note of this and we will be able to connect with our minister there. And if they need some support about training how to do the assessment, we will be able to support them to do assessments needs.

I think Hon. Members, Mr. Speaker sir; this is in brief my response to the questions. Thank you.

Hon. Deputy Speaker

Thank you Your Excellency the minister.

Brothers and sisters, we are now approaching the end of the sitting. After having listened to the responses from the minister, the next step was supposed to be termination of the debate and that has been seconded. There is no counter motion.

The third step is passing the work plan and policy of the Ministry of Gender, Social Welfare, and Religious Affairs, and that has been seconded and there was no counter motion. As such, we consider this work plan passed.

Congratulation to the Ministry of Gender, Social Welfare and Religious Affairs. Always we do tell our brothers and sisters the ministers that the Assembly here is not to give you hard time but to help you improve your work. Hopefully, next year you come and give us report on what has been achieved in this plan which has been passed now and what have not been achieved and why. After that what is needed is that we are able to provide fund for the Ministry of Gender, Social Welfare and Religious Affairs. That is why the Assembly is calling the ministers to come and present their work plans because we called for these plans from the beginning.

Congratulation to all the ministries that their work plans have been passed.

Hon. Members of Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly, tomorrow we are supposed to have one of the important ministries, the Ministry of Industry and Mining because there is little oil there and we want to ask a lot of questions. It was said he is not ready. We are thinking of putting it next Monday because we are having a very big man who will be visiting us here. He is coming specifically to attend the sitting of this Assembly. We had wanted to put on Mondays so that the Hon. Members can deliberate so that he knows this issue of oil has got problems. But up to now we have not determined it absolutely.

We have moved items No. 4 in our today's Order of the Day which is concerning Southern Sudan Research Council Bill, 2007 to be discussed tomorrow. Unless there is an emergency issue that will need to be included into tomorrow's agenda.

At this juncture the sitting is closed.