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## Safe, free and fair elections begin with well-trained police force

Peace in Sudan remains a key concern ahead of the country's historic April 2010 elections, the first in decades. With less than two months left until the first ballots are cast, Sudanese authorities are under pressure to establish a viable security network before the decisive national elections commence.

Elections are a key milestone of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), which ended the country's long civil war. However, insecurity remains the most urgent problems facing the region—especially Southern Sudan. After a deadly year—according to OCHA more than 2,500 Southern Sudanese people were killed and almost 400,000 displaced by tribal fighting in 2009 – these highly charged national elections could pose a threat to an already fragile peace.

Sudanese identities are often tied together with historic rivalries and prejudice which have been known to spark violence. The election process could exacerbate these rivalries, and cam-

paingning could ignite clashes between followers of rival candidates. Intimidation by some parties may also prove dangerous for communities, and for the security forces charged with protecting citizens.

A reliable and responsible police force is one of the most visible benefits of peace in any post-conflict setting, and the police service in Southern Sudan has already made visible progress in a relatively short period. However, many of police officers in Southern Sudan are demobilized soldiers, who were ushered into police service without adequate training or support to transition them into their new positions. To be able to handle the daunting task of providing security over the monumental election period, the police services need to be better organized, trained and equipped.

For this reason, UNDP's *Support to Elections and Support to Police and Prisons Projects* are working together with strong government partners -- such as the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Southern Sudan Police Service, the Sudan People's Liberation Army and international stakeholders -- to identify conflict triggers, alleviate tensions, and prepare a police force that can provide a safe environment for free and fair elections to take place.

"We are working with the SSPS to shift training programmes for law enforcement from a military ap-

proach to an approach appropriate for a civilian police force", Senior Advisor to the Minister of Internal Affairs and Inspector General of Police, Fred Yiga.

A number of basic training initiatives are already underway or planned, including that recruitment and training of 5,000 police officers from across Southern Sudan. Working with partners from the Joint Donor Team, the UK Department for International Development, GTZ, the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS), the US Embassy and non-governmental partners, UNDP has also been implementing training that focuses on maintaining order in a hostile situation.

During the election period, police will be stationed outside of polling centers, where they will provide security to voters as well as ballot boxes and other sensitive materials. Candidate agents, observers and media will also be present in order to create a safe environment for people to confidently exercise their right to vote.

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Photo: Richard Philbin

UNDP is working together with government and international partners to prepare a police force that can provide a safe environment for free and fair elections.

## Inspector General of Police, Lt Gen Acuil Tito Madut, on the elections

At last years' Governor's Forum, H.E. Maj. Gen. Gier Chuang Aluong, Minister of Internal Affairs, explained that one of the main causes of violence in Southern Sudan stems from the fact that "much the civilian population is still armed". He went on to explain that "the presence of government and law enforcement in areas that are particularly insecure, combined with the use of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms could go reduce violent incidences."

But this presence must be strong, accountable, and efficient if it is to succeed in protecting the people of Southern Sudan. To achieve this the Government of Southern Sudan is investing heavily in key security institutions—particularly, its police service.

Inspector General of Police Lieutenant General Acuil Tito Madut spoke to Joseph Tabani, UNDP Communications Analyst, about his key challenges and upcoming priorities.

### **Lieutenant General Acuil, what are the key security challenges faced by the Southern Sudan Police Service?**

Southern Sudan, like any other country emerging from conflict, faces enormous security challenges. Its most pressing issues include a heavily armed civilian population, 'hotspots' of tribal conflicts, violent crime, and seasonal conflict over resources such as water and land.

Clashes between the SPLA and the civilian population have also raised problems in some areas. Unfortunately, the police service still lacks the capacity necessary to deal with these sorts of confrontations.

We also face problems with armed groups—such as unregistered militias or gangs—who do not fall under the mandate of the CPA. These groups often instigate conflict with

local populations, especially along the borders with Darfur and Kordofan.

I am happy to report, however, that the threats posed by the Lord's Resistance Army—along the Congo and Uganda borders—are slowly declining.

### **What role will the police play during the upcoming elections period?**

We will be responsible for protecting and safeguarding polling stations and ensuring the safety of ballot boxes. We will also need to focus on providing comprehensive security across Southern Sudan in collaboration with the army who is managing this aspect of elections security. We are looking forward to our role in protecting our communities as they participate in these historic elections.

### **What assistance do you anticipate from the international community?**

Community security and national security cannot be handled by the police alone. The government needs to ac-

tively participate in the security sector, and we need help from the international community to help build strong institutions that will be successful and sustainable beyond the elections period.

We also need support to sensitize the public to the importance of abiding by laws and respecting law enforcement in their communities. More funds for equipment and transportation to reach to remote areas are urgently needed too.

### **How do you view your partnership with UNDP?**

We started working together in 2007, and have gained a lot of knowledge from trainings and experienced advisors. UNDP has supported the police with renovation and construction of police HQ offices in the various states; other key materials and training tools; and technical advisors to work with our highest ranking officers and managers.

## ***From the field:* Rule of Law Coordinator Richard Philbin**

I joined UNDP as a Rule of Law Coordinator for the *Community Security and Arms Control Project* in September 2009.

Recently, I've been working with UNMIS partners on the training of law enforcement personnel in both the Eastern Equatoria and Jonglei States. I was struck by the commitment and enthusiasm of these newly selected recruits who vary in age from 16 to 26, and come from a variety of different counties and tribal backgrounds. Most impressive is the number of female recruits who have joined the force.

Although the conditions for both the recruits and the trainers are difficult, there is an excitement in the air and a lot of enthusiasm about the training. The new recruits are patient and dedicated to learning the basics of

their duties; the authority they must command in their communities; and the need for an unbiased approach to policing and mitigation of conflict. Their training curriculum covers topics related to elections security, VIP security and basic human rights.

It is exciting to know that these young recruits will be helping to ensure public safety during the historic election period. I'm confident that thanks to the collaboration of international partners and the Sudanese authorities, we can promote a peaceful and welcoming environment for voters in April.

*Richard Philbin is a senior police officer with the Ontario Provincial Police in Canada. His experience covers corporate services, field operations, professional standards, criminal investigations and training. Richard also worked with UNMIK in Kosovo.*

## The Sudan Recovery Fund shifts its focus to stability and security

Despite the fact that Sudan's civil war formally ended over five years ago, a huge proportion of the country's population have yet to see a direct improvement in their quality of life. This is a particular problem in parts of Southern Sudan where conflict and insecurity, caused by communal or ethnic violence and compounded by the presence of small arms, puts a strain on day-to-day life. In addition there are an acute lack of market opportunities across the region due in large part to poor infrastructure – particularly, inadequate or non-existent roads – and low levels of foreign investments.

In response, the Sudan Recovery Fund was established in 2008 to accelerate medium-term recovery through high-impact, quickly disbursed projects.

The Fund – a joint partnership of the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS), the UN, and donor agencies – focuses on four key areas: a) consolidating peace and security; b) delivering basic services; c) stabilizing livelihoods; and d) building capacity for decentralized and democratic governance.

During its first and second phases, a total of 23.7 million USD was disbursed to national and international NGOs with a track record of delivering high-quality programmes in Southern Sudan. This money allowed 18 projects to be implemented to promote agriculture, and improve infrastructure and income generation potential across all of Southern Sudan's 10 states. Capacity building support for the Southern Sudan Reconstruction and Development Fund was also provided.

In its current phase, the SRF is concentrating specifically on improving

stability and security in priority areas affected by conflict. To this end, and to ensure the delivery of effective and well-targeted stabilization and recovery programmes, the Fund will disburse a total of USD 60 million to four particularly insecure states.

"The Sudan Recovery Fund is a government-led programme so priorities for stabilisation and security are set by each state based on its needs," explains Lise Grande, UN Deputy Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Southern Sudan. "This allows high-impact initiatives to be implemented quickly."

Due to the rapid escalation of conflict in both Jonglei State and Lakes State last year, these two States were the first to be selected by GoSS to receive funding from the SRF. In both, an innovative two-stage participatory planning process was used to guide stabilization programme design. This process linked stakeholder consultations at the county-level (see box), to decision-making at the state-level.

County Commissioners led and supported the first part of the process and helped distil key stabilization priorities. This information was then submitted to the Security and Development Committees of both Jonglei and Lakes States for review and validation.

In Jonglei State, opening up of roads and a radio station were identified as the key activities that would reduce violence. Implementation of these pro-

### What is CSAC?

Working at the community level is a fundamental part of UNDP's mission and the *Community Security and Arms Control (CSAC) Project* is one of the ways it achieves this sort of grassroots engagement. Men, women and children are consulted to explore the perceived causes of insecurity in their particular county or state, and to gather recommendations on the types of activities required to counter this insecurity. The Project uses this local knowledge to design tailor-made interventions. Consultations in Jonglei and Lakes States have also been used by the Sudan Recovery Fund's Technical Secretariat to guide the disbursement of stabilization funding.

jects is now under way. In Lakes, roads were also seen as vital, but stakeholders felt that water sources and strengthening of the rule of law and law enforcement (police stations, small court houses and construction of new prisons should also be provided with some funding.



Photo: Philip Okin

As part of the county consultations in Lakes State, community leaders and elders worked with UNDP staff to map the root causes of conflict and suggest possible projects to counter it.





## Knowledge Corner: UNDP's experience in Sudan — Strengthening rule of law in conflict and post-conflict situations

According to a recent Lessons Learned paper published by UNDP's Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR) based in Geneva, the importance of strengthening the rule of law in post-conflict environments cannot be underestimated.

"During an armed conflict, the rule of law is replaced by rule by force," it says. "In the absence of rule of law, no people can recover from war and no post-conflict society can be rebuilt."

The paper outlines eight 'lessons learned' drawn from the Sudan context, aimed at guiding future post-conflict programming.

### **1. Empower country offices to respond and serve effectively**

UNDP's most effective response is the response it offers in-country. In Sudan, systematic efforts were made by the Regional Bureau of Arab States (RBAS) and BCPR to address the requirements of the UNDP Country Office but providing seed funding to identify needs in several programmatic areas. This enabled it to build a rule of law team, define a vision and timeframe, establish field presence and deliver concrete activities.

### **2. Maximize synergies between protection and the rule of law**

'Protection' has traditionally been viewed as a humanitarian activity, seldom associated with empowerment and capacity development through the rule of law. UNDP's Rule of Law Programme in Sudan, however, changed these perceptions. By engaging early, empowering communities, and working with humanitarian agencies, UNDP served as a catalyst for IDPs, lawyers, local police, judges and prosecutors to address impunity.

### **3. Make women's security and access to justice a top priority**

The Programme in Sudan brought together local NGOs, international NGOs, UNHR, UNMIS, UNHCR, UNFPA and UNICEF and jointly applied synchronized approaches based on comparative advantages to protect women and ensure that they were aware of their rights. Work was done to empower police, lawyers, and judges with the capacity and tools to effectively take on cases.

### **4. Optimize the development approach**

Strengthening the rule of law is a development process that requires a sequenced approach and long-term institutional investment. It should be noted that the development approach is not restricted to any specific phase, but is instead about principles of assistance and how such assistance is provided in any given phase. As a development agency, UNDP responds to host governments' requests for assistance. In addressing highly sensitive areas, it is important to form close relationships such counterparts to be successful.

### **5. Identify local strengths aligned with universal values**

Confidence and trust building constitute an essential focus for dialogue in the rule of law sector in conflict and post-conflict settings. To this end, the Programme in Sudan provided informal and formal forums for debate and discussion among traditional leaders and other groups, including public debates and workshops on rule of law issues such as land tenure or women's rights.

### **6. Be a catalyst for UN system-wide coherence and partnerships**

The gaps in the rule of law sector in post-conflict situations are enormous and can encompass a number of key

areas requiring support – from law enforcement and the judiciary, to highly disputed issues such as compensation and land tenure. The extent of the problems, coupled with the capacity deficits, requires joint efforts by multiple actors. In Sudan, the Department of Peace-Keeping Operations maintained a highly effective division of labour with the UN Country Team and agencies were able to work together to deliver.

### **7. Establish reality-driven monitoring and evaluation**

Monitoring and reporting are most effective when they involve stakeholders in the creative and participatory process of learning how to improve the programme on a continual basis. Tools should be developed with clear and strategic end goals in mind, and baseline studies should be reinforced with continual reappraisals of progress, based on empirical indicators. Regular evaluations can then provide assessments of the impact of interventions.

### **8. Make local lessons global solutions**

An important lesson emerging from the experience in Sudan is that support to country offices should be seen as a critical priority for headquarters. The strategic and financial support provided by RBAS and BCPR enabled the Office to establish itself as a major catalyst on the rule of law in Sudan.

Ultimately, these lessons must be interpreted contextually. However, the nature of the eight lessons can provide guidance that applies to most conflict/post-conflict situations.