

BULLETIN

Quarterly update on UNDP's work across Sudan

Volume 5 - **Special Edition: UNDP in Eastern Sudan**

Introduction

UNDP's full engagement in Eastern Sudan dates back to late 1980s. Over the past twenty years, UNDP has been supporting rural development, local governance, access to judicial services, strategic planning and policy coordination at the state level.

In 2009-2012, UNDP Sudan will guide its support to recovery and development efforts in Eastern Sudan in line with the emerging regional priorities and in support of the implementation of the East Sudan Peace Agreement (ESPA). UNDP will continue to support government initiatives at the state level to deliver peace dividends to war-affected areas. It will also strengthen the capacity of national institutions and partners to plan and implement development initiatives in medium and long term.

With the signing of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the 2006 ESPA, UNDP has scaled up its interventions in the region. The current issue of UNDP Sudan's newsletter sheds light on UNDP's ongoing recovery and development interventions carried out in partnership with local, national and international development partners.

In addition to these activities, UNDP has recently launched the Livelihoods and Sustainable Natural Resource Management Project in Kassala State to promote sustainable recovery of the region through a comprehensive pro-poor livelihoods approach. The project deals with six strategic interventions to increase rural production and productivity, employment opportunities and income for target communities.

In an effort to help Sudan move from a reactive way of dealing with disasters to a more proactive approach that incorporates prevention and risk management,

UNDP Sudan is also developing a Disaster Risk Reduction project document. The project is set to support pilot disaster risk management initiatives in Kassala and South Kordofan States by providing advisory and technical assistance to the Ministry of

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Humanitarian Affairs and to the government of Sudan.

To boost local development, UNDP is also finalizing a project proposal for sustainable land management in Toker area of Red Sea

State. The project aims to address institutional constraints to local development, support legal reform processes in land rights and mobilize communities to defend their shared interests.

Fishermen Reel in Shared Profit



"You can always tell when you are getting near the sea, says 50-year old Ali Abu Ali. "The air feels different; cooler against your skin."

Ali and most of the men in his village have been fishing most of their lives. For them, fishing is more than a job, it is a way of life; a topic that finds its way into almost every conversation and an activity that sustains themselves and their families.

For years in this poor, rural region of Arbaat in Eastern Sudan, the men had no proper

equipment to fish. They spent their days walking to the shore of the Red Sea and renting very small wooden boats so that they could fish in the shallow coastal waters.

"We would carry the fish we caught slung over our shoulders, and walk from the sea back to the road, a distance of about 3 km," says Ali.

The men would then wait by the side of the road for a ride. Sometimes the fish would



spoil and they would return home empty handed.

But today their hands are full. In the bustling fish market of Port Sudan, Ali and his cohorts sit behind plentiful baskets of fresh, varied fish caught deep in the Red Sea.

They have just returned from a week long fishing trip in one of the three motorized fiberglass boats provided by the Recovery and Rehabilitation Programme (RRP). Ali points to dozens of different types of large, colorful fish on display for local hotel and restaurant owners to buy.

"These are fish that can only be found in the deep sea," says Ali. "Before the small wooden boats we rented weren't strong enough to travel in the waves, but with the RRP boats we are able to go out to sea for days at a time"

And with the three ice boxes also provided by the RRP, the fishermen are now able to keep the fish fresh for up to one week. This means they can store the fish until they are ready to sell at the market, which is a great

advantage, explains Ohaj Ahmed Eimali, of SOS Sahel-one of the RRP partners in Red Sea.

The RRP is a five-year initiative (2005-2010), including four years of implementation. The largest and most comprehensive recovery programme in Sudan, the RRP is managed by UNDP on behalf of the Government of National Unity and the Government of Southern Sudan with funding of 55.8 million; 49.75 million of which comes from the European Commission, and 1.5 million from the Government of Norway. A total of 44 national and international NGOs are working together in 10 locations across the country (Blue Nile, Abye, River Nile, Red Sea, South Kordofan, Northern Upper Nile, Central Equatoria, Eastern Equatoria, Warrap and Northern Bahr Al-Ghazal) concentrating on institutional strengthening, improving livelihoods and basic services.

In the Red Sea State; the harsh desert climate and isolation of many of its communities can make projects difficult. But despite the challenges faced these tight knit communities have demonstrated remarkable results. Part of the Red Sea State consortium's success is because of the excellent coordination at the community level. Before the RRP began in this state, communities had already formed the Arbaat Development Association (ADA), a local organization that intended to address the region's development needs; but meetings and activities were sporadic and poorly organized.

The Arbaat fishing project is truly community-owned, with 105 families benefiting from just three boats. Here is

how it works: there are three groups of 35 fishermen; and each group has one boat. Each group is split into five smaller groups and these teams have a rotating schedule for going out to sea. Every time a group comes back from sea, the fish are sold at the local market and the profits split between all 35 members.

"The boats and boxes from the RRP changed so much – Now we can travel three to four hours out into the deep sea to fish," says 30-year-old Serie Abu Ali. "We can catch all kinds of fish that we didn't have access to in the coastal waters. On a seven day trip we can catch 800 kgs of fish and then sell them for 8 SDG a kg," he explains as he skins fish on the rocky seashore.

Ali and the other fishermen will cook it over an open fire and sleep on the beach before getting up at the break of dawn to take the boats out again.

It's a simple life; and requires a simple formula for success: "We catch more fish, we make more money," says Ali.



Sinkat Religious Leaders Join the Fight Against HIV/AIDS at Locality Level

Red Sea State has been one of the first states in Sudan to respond to the HIV/AIDS challenge in the country. Serving as Sudan's main sea port, the state is inundated with human traffic including entrepreneurs, truck drivers, and soldiers.

A number of awareness and intervention campaigns about the dangers of HIV/AIDS have been organized in the state. However, the assistance of religious leaders was needed to reach out to a larger number of the population.

Over the years, religious leaders have had a strong influence on the Sudanese social

fabric. Their revered status and tolerant approach have enabled them to reach a wide audience and become engaged with the society's daily concerns. In recognition of their vital role, the Ministry of Religious Guidance and Endowment in collaboration with UNDP and the Sudan National AIDS Program (SNAP) organized a number of workshops across Sudan on HIV/AIDS.

Recently a 3-day training session took place in Sinkat locality in Red Sea State on 17-19 May. The training aimed to mobilize Muslim religious leaders' support for the fight against HIV/AIDS in Sudan. It focused on the need for increasing a more positive

attitude towards people living with HIV/AIDS and ending stigma and discrimination. Religious leaders received an orientation on preventive methods against HIV/AIDS and the availability of treatment in the Voluntary Confidential and Counseling Centers in Sinkat

The training used a special module endorsed in February 2008 by Muslim and Christian leaders to build the capacity of religious leaders in responding to HIV/AIDS in Sudan. The training module focused on enabling religious figures to promote spiritual values of care and compassion for people living with HIV/AIDS.

A member of the Association of People Living with HIV/AIDS also participated in the workshop; relaying his own experiences and encouraging participants to approach Voluntary Confidential Counseling and Testing Centers (VCCT).

So far 30 VCCTs across 15 northern states provide HIV testing services to visitors in a confidential and non-discriminatory manner. The centers also act as information dissemination centers that provide information on HIV infection and means of prevention.

It is hoped with religious leaders spreading the word of tolerance and compassion toward people living with HIV/AIDS, more people would seek the centers' assistance on a voluntary basis.



Providing Strategic Planning Tools for Eastern Sudan

As Sudan moves from relief to development, the requirements for mid and long-term planning become more complex. The challenges to development programming and socio-economic recovery and security in Sudan require a mechanism that demonstrates the various security threats and socio-economic recovery risks facing the country.

To respond to the urgent need for strategic planning tools in Sudan, UNDP in partnership with the UK's Department for International Development (DfID) launched in December 2007 the Threat and Risk Mapping and Analysis (TRMA) project.

The TRMA project develops a geo-referenced state-by-state mapping and analysis of the key security threats and socio-economic risks across Sudan.

The project identifies and addresses the complexity of co-existing crisis, conflict resolution, post-conflict recovery and development challenges. The maps and database produced by TRMA allow for

the various layers of information to be extracted and visualized, thereby facilitating partners' respective analysis, planning and programming processes.

Following a trial phase in South Kordofan State, TRMA moved to Eastern Sudan in November 2007. By November 2008, the threat and risk mapping cycles and data validation processes were completed for Kassala, Red Sea, and Gedaref States. More than 3000 threat and risk entries were collected and approximately 900 new villages in the region were geo-referenced and added to the common platform.

Consolidated State Situation Analyses have been completed for Kassala and Red Sea States. These documents are based on the results of the participatory mapping process and further consultations with state officials, civil society groups, tribal leaders, women and youth groups from the state capitals as well as the state localities. The documents focus on peace-building; governance and rule of law, livelihoods and productive sectors, and basic services.

Supporting the UN Resident Coordinator's system, the TRMA project tracking database tool (4Ws) has been rolled-out in Red Sea and Kassala and is currently being tested by the NGOs and UN agencies.

TRMA is currently supporting the state-led mid-term reviews of the five-year State Strategic Plans on the basis of the available analyses. Through this support, the project will focus on the methodology used in the review and planning processes, emphasizing participation and conflict sensitivity. In line with the strategic objectives the 2006 Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement and UNDP's analysis, TRMA further seeks to hold data validation and planning workshop for war-affected areas both in Agieg (Red Sea State) and Hameshkoreib (Kassala State) so that the war-affected areas would receive particular attention in the revised State Strategic Plans, with concrete and implementable strategies for recovery.

UNDP identified the TRMA products as key for its programming and effective coordination. It supports a more coherent UN and NGO programming plan, which can identify priority responses and needs for interventions at the State and the National level. A regularly updated mapping database and analysis process effectively supports improved monitoring and assessment of the impact of selected interventions.

This three-year project is jointly funded by DfID and the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery of UNDP.



Community Farms Cultivate Food and Financial Success

As the sun rises and the smell of ginger-infused coffee fills the air, women emerge from their homes and head to a lush green field of abusabean, a crop used as cattle feed. It grows easily and abundantly in Sudan; provided there is enough water.

Dressed in vibrant colors of fuchsia, orange and yellow; adorned with ornate nose rings and bracelets, these women carry hoes and machetes. They begin chopping stalks, sifting soil, and carrying large bundles of green leaves. Soon after, the roar of a generator can be heard and water begins to flow.

This is one of the 37 community farms made possible through the generators and water pumps provided by the Recovery and Rehabilitation Programme here in Red Sea State; and it is owned and maintained solely by women. These 15 ladies farmed this land in previous years, but their crops were extremely limited due to a lack of water.

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communities can make projects difficult. But despite the challenges faced these tight knit communities have demonstrated remarkable results. Part of the Red Sea State consortium's success is because of the excellent coordination at the community level. Before the RRP began in this state, communities had already formed the Arbaat Development Association (ADA), a local organization that intended to address the region's development needs; but meetings and activities were sporadic and poorly organized.

"Before, this land was dry. We grew only enough to feed the community," says 43-year-old Aicha. "After the RRP installed the water system we are able to have a business; we not only have food to eat but extra money to buy things like furniture for our homes."

The main crop cultivated by the women is abusabean; but many of the other community farms here are growing

vegetables; and yielding excellent results. Members work on the farms every morning and every evening; and transport the vegetables to the markets in Port Sudan, Atbara and sometimes even Khartoum.

"Everybody talks about the Arbaat vegetables," says one of the vegetable sellers in the Port Sudan market. "They are grown without pesticides and are fresh and assorted. Really, they are the most popular vegetables here and there is a high demand."

The demand is being met because of the dedication of community members like Aicha and her partners.

"I am encouraged to work hard and make money so that my son can have a better life," she says as she stands next to her farm's water pump. "Already since the project began I am able to buy him clothes and books that he didn't have before."

1440 Police Officers Received Advanced Training in Kassala State

A survey conducted by UNDP's Justice and Confidence Center in March 2006 in Kassala State revealed a significant level of fear and mistrust between rural and urban communities and the rule of law institutions, including the police and judicial organs.

To help build trust and confidence in rule of law institutions, especially the police service, and to strengthen the capacities of police officers to deal with citizens according to basic international human rights standards, UNDP's Access to Justice and Confidence Building in Kassala State project started a comprehensive police training programme in February 2008. The police training is conducted by UNMIS Police in collaboration with Kassala Police Training Department. As of June 2009, 893 police recruits graduated

from the programme. Between February 2008 and June 2009, UNMIS Police has conducted a total of 43 sessions organized in Kassala city and Halfa locality. Training courses covered community policing, human rights and the rule of law, crime investigation, traffic road control, VIP protection, riot control, forensic, police station management, family and child protection, and basic computer skills.

UNDP's Access to Justice and Confidence Building in Kassala State project is funded by The Netherlands, the European Commission and Norway. The overall objective of the project is to contribute to the peaceful resolution of conflict, to diffuse tensions in Eastern Sudan, while paving the way for long-term development.



First Wastewater treatment Plant in Red Sea State

Water resources in Red Sea State rely mainly on rainfall, groundwater, and possible desalination of sea water. The increasing demands for domestic water due to population growth, and the growing use of water in the industrial sector have increased the total amount of wastewater available for reuse. Concerns regarding the sufficiency and quality of water for drinking and sanitation purposes have increased in this coastal state over the past few years.

While recognizing the importance of wastewater treatment as a source of water, the State doesn't have a wastewater treatment plant system. People rely on septic tanks which are costly, hard to maintain and pose some serious health risks.

To augment the water resources, the Red Sea State is embarking on developing the first

wastewater treatment plant system in Port Sudan. Such a system would enable the city to reuse treated domestic wastewater for domestic use and for irrigation. The facility would operate 24 hours a day, recycling dirty water into clean water for safe use.

To help the State carry out this vital project for both domestic use and irrigation, UNDP's Transfer of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nationals (TOKTEN) project recruited Prof. Nassereldeen Kabashi, an Expatriate Sudanese working as Associate Professor at the International Islamic university of Malaysia. Prof. Kabashi was deployed to Port Sudan on June 28 to design the first wastewater treatment plant system in the city to be a model for the entire State.

Throughout this assignment, Prof. Kabashi will train personnel in analyzing available

data and maps to select the suitable drainage system for Port Sudan city, provide hands-on training on developing the term of reference for the implementation of the identified drainage system, advise the responsible institution on all issues related to the establishment of the drainage system.

Prof. Kabashi is the 39th volunteer to have been deployed by TOKTEN project to help build or develop Sudanese institutions' capacities in various areas.

TOKTEN Sudan is an initiative launched in 2006 by the UNDP, with the support of the Netherlands and the UK's Department for International Development with the aim to bring back to the country the expertise of highly qualified Sudanese professionals living abroad.



Legal and Human Rights in Kassala: Everyone's Cup of Tea

Under the cool shade of a colorful tent, young and old men and women as well as children are taking a break from a day at Merganya village on the outskirts of Kassala City. A mix of excitement and curiosity sweeps through the place as they debate human and legal rights with lawyers and paralegals from Al-Sharg Center in a friendly tea session.

In an effort to cultivate a culture of human rights at urban and rural levels, the Al-Sharg Center, together with UNDP, are conducting a series of tea sessions to interact with men, women and youth who rarely have a chance to learn about their legal and human rights. Topics such as women's rights in the family, and the right to work, education, property, health, voting, and to participation in public life are discussed in these sessions. The Centre also briefs the audience on the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the 2006 Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement.

In addition to raising awareness about human rights, the Centre roams Kassala to inform people of the pro bono legal services including the counseling and legal representation it provides through UNDP's Access to Justice and Confidence Building in Kassala project. These legal services are part of large number of services and activities supported by UNDP rule of law programme in Kassala in response to the results of a

survey conducted in March 2006 by UNDP's Justice and Confidence Centre.

Conducted in two rural and one urban IDP settlements, the survey revealed that communities are often ill-informed about their legal and human rights. The survey also pointed to several reasons that make communities stay away from statutory courts. In fact communities tend to find the courts often too far away from their settlements, the legal fees are too high, the procedures too long and the court's language and procedures difficult to understand.

To address the situation, UNDP established a full-fledged rule of law programme in Kassala State focusing on providing legal aid services and raising people's awareness about their legal rights and duties. In June 2006, UNDP established the first Justice and Confidence Centre in Kassala with a network of 2 lawyers and 25 paralegals trained by Al-Manar, a local NGO.

UNDP's Justice and Confidence Centre organized more than 60 awareness sessions on criminal and civil laws and procedure; legal aid; human rights, and criminal and civil law procedure. The centre also received and dealt with 103 cases, out of which 43 were referred to courts and 60 resolved through mediation. In 2008 alone, the centre took

on 29 cases out of which 18 were resolved through mediation.

By December 2007, legal and paralegal members of the Justice and Confidence Center decided to register under an independent NGO called Al-Sharg Centre for Culture and Legal Aid, Kassala's first NGO specializing in legal aid services.

The establishment of Al-Sharg is a major success story for UNDP and development partners who are supporting the empowerment of civil society across the country.

Staffed with 2 lawyers and 15 paralegals, Al-Sharg Centre continued its rule of law activities with UNDP's support.

Since the beginning of 2009, the Centre received 22 cases out of which 2 were resolved through mediation.

It also organized 14 human rights sessions on criminal and civil laws and procedure, and legal aid.

The Access to Justice and Confidence Building in Kassala State project has been carrying these activities with the continued support of the Netherlands, the European Commission and Norway.



UNDP Hands Over 8 Vehicles to Red Sea Planning and Information Units

In addition to the 8 land cruisers handed over to the Red Sea Localities' Planning and Information Centers by UNDP's Poverty Alleviation-Oriented Governance Project, the Red Sea State Government handed over two vehicles on 21 May.

With a total of 10 vehicles, each of the recently established information and planning units in Ageig, Tokar, Sinkat, Halaib, Gebeit and Almadin, Gunub and Oleeab, Port Sudan, Suakin, Haiya, and Dordeib, and Port Sudan has now a vehicle at its disposal.

In addition to having furnished and fully equipped the 10 information and planning centers at the locality level, UNDP's Poverty Alleviation Project provided senior advisors in strategic planning, public expenditure management and local development management to train the Red Sea government planners in projects planning, data collection and budget processes.

With the support of the Netherlands and Danish International Development Agency, Port Sudan's ten localities and Red Sea

State Government in collaboration with UNDP's Poverty Alleviation Project have embarked on a rural centered development planning process. The project attempts to build local communities' technical capacity to formulate long-term development strategies and successfully implement them.

Red Sea State Demobilizes 737 Ex-Combatants



The second phase of the demobilization process in the Eastern Sudan that was launched in Kassala on 1st April 2009 also began in Red Sea State on 21 May.

By the end of June, 841 ex-combatants have been demobilised in Kassala and 737 in Red Sea State. The 1,578 demobilized ex-combatants have opted for small businesses, vocational training, agriculture, livestock and government jobs as reintegration options. Following the completion of the demobilization stage in Kassala and Red Sea, plans are underway to start the DDR process in the Gedarif State on 15 July 09 for a total of 676 ex-combatants.

Each of the demobilised ex-combatants was provided with a reinsertion package at USD 400 to help them bridge the gap between demobilisation and the start of their reintegration support interventions. All demobilized ex-combatants have also been briefed on peace building process under the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, the Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement, DDR, peace and development work for Community Security Support, Gender Based Violence, HIV/AIDS and Mine Risk Education.

Ex-combatants also received one-on-one sessions covering medical screening, free and voluntary HIV/AIDS testing, and

reintegration counselling.

This phase aims at demobilizing and providing support to the North Sudan Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Commission in support of reintegration services to total of 2,254 ex-combatants in Eastern Sudan.

UNDP's assistance with the DDR process in Eastern Sudan is part of the Support to Human Security in Eastern Sudan project that was launched in 2007 at the request of the Government of National Unity.