



United Nations Mission

In SUDAN

Special Focus: Southern Kordofan

Toiling for gold

Waiting in Goli

Reversing stereotypes

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Editor-in-Chief: Hua Jiang
Managing Editor: Catherine Waugh
Associate Editor: Joseph Contreras
Assistant Editors:
Murugi Murekio and Eszter Farkas
Layout and Design: Sesar Amin

For comments and suggestions contact
unmis-insudan@un.org

FRONT COVER: Artisan gold miners at a large dipping well in Mirri Barra, Southern Kordofan State. Photo: UNMIS/Eszter Farkas.

BACK COVER: Misseriya women sitting at her tea shop in Goli village, 25 kilometers north of Abyei town. Photo: UNMIS/Stuart Price.

Diary

20 April: UNMIS, UN agencies and relief organizations sent humanitarian aid to people affected by violence from 13-

14 April in four villages of Al Rashad locality, Southern Kordofan State. The attacks resulted in the death of at least 19 persons and injury of 29, and left more than 200 houses torched and 2,000 people displaced. The victims were reportedly unarmed and predominantly Nuba civilians, attacked by Baggara tribesmen.

20 April: The technical constitutional committee formed to review Southern Sudan's interim constitution submitted a draft transitional constitution to the regional government in Juba for discussion and approval.

27 April: The UN Security Council voted to extend the mandate of UNMIS until 9 July, when Southern Sudan becomes an independent state. The resolution said a successor mission was planned and asked Secretary-General (SG) Ban Ki-moon to submit a report by 16 May on the post-independence options for a UN presence.

27 April: Aiming to improve journalists' skills as Southern Sudan prepares to become a new nation, *Radio Miraya* began a three-day training session for reporters in Malakal, Upper Nile State.

29 April: The UNMIS Indian contingent completed a veterinary camp in Upper Nile State, treating 1,570 cattle, sheep, goats and donkeys in Tonga region of Panikyang County.

2 May: The three-day polling exercise in Southern Kordofan State's elections started, with state citizens casting their votes for governor and members of the State Legislative Assembly (SLA).

3 May: UNMIS dispatched patrols to Todach north of Abyei, the scene of fighting the previous day, and discovered the bodies of 11 people wearing uniforms, reportedly members of the Joint Integrated Units (JIUs), and three people in civilian clothing. The death toll of the latest round of clashes in the Abyei Area thus amounted to at least 14.

5 May: The governments of Sudan and Southern Sudan agreed on a commitment to implement the Kadugli and Abyei agreements aimed at restoring calm to the disputed region of Abyei, where clashes broke out earlier in the week. Special Representative of the Secretary-General Haile Menkerios pledged support to the parties after meeting President of Southern Sudan Salva Kiir. The Kadugli and Abyei agreements, signed in January and March, call for total withdrawal of all unauthorized forces from the Abyei Area, leaving the maintenance of security to the JIUs and Joint Integrated Police Units.

7 May: The City Council of Juba, in coordination with UNMIS, UN agencies and non-governmental organizations, held a day-long cleaning exercise in Juba to improve health and welfare as well as beautify the city. The campaign drew 200 participants from the UN family alone, including members of the military and police as well as civilians.

8 May: Holding its first meeting, facilitated by UNMIS, the Abyei Joint Technical Committee signed an agreement for the effective deployment of JIUs and the withdrawal of all unauthorized forces from the Abyei area, to take place from 10 to 17 May.

11 May: Unknown assailants fired at an UNMIS patrol in the Abyei Area, injuring four Zambian peacekeepers. The incident occurred at a roadblock in Goli village, about 25 kilometres north of Abyei town.

11 May: UNMIS senior official Jasbir Lidder visited Jonglei State, where he met senior state officials to discuss rising insecurity as well as the deteriorating humanitarian situation. Speaking with Governor Kuol Manyang, he said solutions to the state's problems would have to be broad-based, noting that capacity building would be a major concern of the UN's new mission in Southern Sudan.

15 May: Releasing results for Southern Kordofan State's poll from 2 to 4 May, the National Elections Commission said that National Congress Party (NCP) candidate Ahmed Haroun had won the gubernatorial seat with 201,455 votes. Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) gubernatorial contender Abdel-Aziz Al-Hilu had garnered 194,955 and independent candidate for governor Telefon Kuku 9,130. Aggregated results gave the NCP 22 seats in the State Legislative Assembly and the SPLM 10.

Rooting out the causes

One of three areas awarded special attention in Sudan's peace accord, Southern Kordofan has long been a hub of conflict, even regarded by some as having all the ingredients to make it "the next Darfur".

The state's situation remains fragile, especially as elections wrap up and popular consultations loom. But the political, social and economic improvements these events seek to bring can only occur with security and stability in place.

"Tensions need to be managed carefully to prevent violence," said UNMIS Civil Affairs Officer Ahmed Subahi. "It's important, in trying to prevent conflict, to analyze the root causes and put proper interventions in place."

The main causes of conflict have been cultural diversity, historical background, resource competition and outcomes of war like marginalization, displacement and lack of basic services as well as infrastructure.

"What is most important, however, is to keep in mind that UNMIS has a short life," Mr. Subahi added. "Local communities will remain. They have to be a part of the solution from the beginning."

That, then, has been the core strategy -- to have sustainable solutions designed and owned by communities, with assistance from partners.

The Reconciliation and Peaceful

Co-existence Mechanism (RCPM) is one of these. The state-initiated conflict management body is mandated to deliver timely and coordinated conflict resolution and conflict prevention activities in the state.

With technical and logistical support from UNMIS and other international partners, RCPM has held conferences allowing local communities to identify priorities for reconciliation as well as peaceful co-existence and implement recommendations where possible.

At the smaller community levels, UNMIS has been linking reconciliation and conflict prevention with Quick Impact Projects (QIPS), based on recommendations from communities.

Mr. Subahi gave an example of Al Fashayar, a rural area in Dilling that has had many politically based disputes, along with resource competition. UNMIS worked with local leaders and the Nuba Mountains International Association for Development to form a local peace committee.

"We trained leaders in conflict resolution and then had one conclusive conference," he said. "They came together to identify the root causes and make recommendations. One of the biggest problems identified was water."

Working with PACT Sudan, UNMIS put up hand pumps in seven different areas and organized exchange visits for women and youth groups to learn how other

communities live.

"It isn't 100% foolproof," noted Mr. Subahi. "Many times the roots of conflict are too complex to be solved by the provision of one basic service. Having more access to water, for instance, doesn't take away years of mistrust."

Taking into consideration this wariness, many programmes also focus on changing attitudes and perceptions.

Working with the local Kega Development Association, for example, UNMIS has approved plans to fund the building of three classrooms for a school in Kega Temero locality.

"Part of the thinking is that it allows the youth to meet and develop good relations with people that they might ordinarily conflict with," said UNMIS Civil Affairs Officer Mohamed El Obed.

The QIPs programme also provided water and power to Kadugli Secondary School, according to headmaster Mohammed Atijain Makin. School authorities, he said, emphasize to students that they can share resources in their communities if they do so peacefully at school.

Another tool that has been used to bridge gaps is *Kadugli Radio*, where communities interact through call-in shows, openly sharing their problems and hearing back from leaders. QIPS donated much equipment the radio uses for this programming.

"We made a proposal for equipment that would help us increase our listenership and it was approved," said Kirya Kabbashi, the radio's community radio coordinator and acting general manager.

"One of the conditions was that our programming would raise awareness on reconciliation and peace-building," he said. "The people actually use it. We no longer go to the field to hear complaints -- the listeners themselves collect their complaints and opinions and bring them to us. The authorities are forced to respond."

Renowned American journalist Dorothy Thompson once said that "peace is not the absence of conflict but the presence of creative alternatives for responding to conflict... alternatives to violence". In the end, only time will tell how successful these methods were, but it is a work in progress with some positive outcomes.

Story and photo: Tina Turyagyenda



CAPTION:
Kadugli Secondary School headmaster
Mohammed Makin at school with QIP water tap.



Toiling for gold

worker in Khartoum for the past 10 years.

He returned to his hometown knowing that gold had been discovered here four years ago with the help of metal detectors. "Work in Khartoum was periodic, but here I can work constantly," he said.

Mr. Yahia, living in a small, thatched hut among the gold wells, claimed to earn about 1,500 Sudanese pounds (\$560) per month digging for gold and planned to continue the back-breaking job for some time.

"I want to build a home, buy a motorcycle and (using gold profits) develop Miri village," Mr. Yahia said.

With merchants flocking to the local *souq* from Khartoum buying one gram of gold for about 110 pounds (\$41), business seems to flourish.

Village chief Mr. Musa also acknowledged development seen since the recent gold rush.

"Before, women used to carry water and other things on their heads and do farming with old tools," he said, adding "but now you can see cars and motorbikes, and there is bread at the market while there was none before".

According to the Sheikh, gold profits would be used to build a school, hospital and much-needed road as well as bridge, as in the rainy season the town becomes unreachable due to lack of paved roads.

Although gold digging in Miri Barra is not yet officially regulated, the town committee allocated plots to villagers who then organized groups or *wardiya*, consisting of five to six men.

Part of the profit went to the locality's administration and the rest was shared at the end of each day, with a bigger portion due to the well owner.

Gold being one of Sudan's most valuable resources, the federal ministry of minerals was hoping to regulate artisanal exploration of it in the near future.

According to ministry geologist Elsheikh Abdelrahman, regulation was needed to benefit gold-producing states and curb gold smuggling, as well as enhance workers' protection and rights.

By privatizing mining and signing contracts with companies, including Chinese, Indian and Canadian establishments, the Government of Sudan receives royalties and tax profits.

The producing state then gets two per cent of the federal net revenue, according to Mr. Abdelrahman. But traditional mining largely remains untaxed and carries health as well as environmental risks.

Once a small, dusty village, Miri Barra is now teeming with men and women breaking rocks and sifting dirt through orange-coloured water 20 metres underground.

Accompanied by a radio as they work, these people are searching for gold.

Some 17 kilometres north of Kadugli, the village has a bustling *souq* (market) where the miners, working most of the day and with the help of a headlamp at night, enjoy a cup of tea during their break.

According to Sheikh Abdelkarim Musa, the population of Miri Barra has grown from 500 to about 3,000 within the past four months, thanks to the recent gold rush.

Those who left the area during Sudan's north-south war have been trickling back to try their luck, digging inside deep, narrow and dark "wells" with basic tools. They break rocks into smaller pieces, pulverizing and sifting them using the toxic metal mercury, and selling the hard-produced gold to merchants.

Eldasogy Yahia has been working as a gold digger in Miri Barra for three months, after working as a seasonal construction





Artisanal miners often use mercury to amalgamate gold, after crushing and powdering rocks, pouring it into water and sifting it, which can contaminate rare water sources in mining areas, the geologist added.

According to the ministry, Sudan produced some 70 tons of gold in 2010, the majority of which was artisanal. Mr. Abdelrahman noted that this year some 65 tons might be produced across the country, out of which no more than 10 tons would likely be through official channels.

Story and photos: Eszter Farkas

CAPTIONS:

Top left: Man holding piece of gold he amalgamated by burning a small chunk of rock with basic tools.

Top right: Miners hauling sacks of rocky soil up to the surface.

Bottom (L to R): Man breaking up mined debris with hand tools in Miri Barra.

Artisans pulverizing rocky soil with machine in Miri Barra.

Men sifting soil through water and amalgamating gold with help of poisonous mercury.

Mark Rutgers

An important hub



With Southern Kordofan State elections just completed and the Comprehensive Peace Agreement-mandated process of popular consultations approaching, *In Sudan* spoke with UNMIS Kadugli Head of Office Mark Rutgers about these and other issues facing the area.

Why is Southern Kordofan given special mention in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA)?

Southern Kordofan occupies a unique position within Sudan both geographically and by means of its rich ethnic and cultural heritage as well as religious diversity.

In addition to the Nuba tribes, Southern Kordofan is also home to the descendants of West African tribes as well as a large population of Arab tribes. The latter still perpetuate nomadic traditions. As such, this state is a platform from where seasonal migration occurs as nomads from the area follow the rains south with their livestock in search of pasture and water.

Additionally, Southern Kordofan's size (landmass) ranks it as Sudan's fifth largest state (comparable in size to Poland). It shares borders with South Darfur, the Abyei Area, Northern Bahr El-Ghazal, Unity and Upper Nile states. As such, the regions which currently constitute Southern Kordofan have been and always will remain an important hub linking the regions and the people of the north to

south and east to west.

Does the CPA give the state the attention it needs?

For reasons I have mentioned and more, many stakeholders would argue that the central position that Southern Kordofan holds within Sudan's geopolitical context is not adequately reflected in the CPA. This perception is shared by many of its citizens who feel that many of the seminal issues that should have been addressed and resolved by the CPA remain largely outstanding in spite of the fact that the CPA is fast coming to a close.

What are the main concerns of the people of Southern Kordofan, especially the Misseriya and Nuba?

Southern Kordofan's main constituent groups, the Misseriya and Nuba, have common grievances in their appreciation of the CPA. They readily recall that the state played a determinant role in the 22-year civil war and their role in that struggle is not to be underestimated.

The Nuba are keen to seek greater political autonomy and representation within the state whilst securing security reforms and constitutional amendments which will guarantee their religious and cultural diversity within a climate marked by stability and progress.

The Misseriya are keen to see their

rights upheld regarding their need to engage in seasonal migration and accessing the south as outlined in the Permanent Court of Arbitration's ruling on Abyei, whilst youth seek improved access to employment, education, health and basic services. They, like many nomadic communities, face innumerable challenges in perpetrating age-old traditions within a changing political and socio-economic landscape and seek assistance in modifying their economy and lifestyle in keeping with the times. They too seek parameters that will protect and secure their future and in this regard are hopeful of regaining what was formerly Western Kordofan. In sum, the objectives shared by both communities, though different in their form, are very similar in their content.

Does UNMIS have a mandate on conflict prevention? If so, what steps have been taken in Southern Kordofan and what progress has been made?

Yes, UNMIS clearly has a mandate related to conflict prevention. In efforts to fulfill these requirements, UNMIS in Southern Kordofan, as in other locations, has adopted a three-pronged approach. Under this, UNMOs engage in the monitoring and verification of the ceasefire agreement, UNMIS substantive units -- Civil Affairs Division, Human Rights, Child Protection, Gender, etc. -- engage with government counterparts in promoting the rule of law and peace building activities, whereby conflict resolution is elevated above other concerns and becomes a state objective.

To this effect, our substantive units engage with civil society organizations, community leaders, woman and youth groups and the like in the field on a regular basis, thereby gaining insight into components and dynamics which are likely to engender violence.

UNMIS acts on these potential trigger factors by mapping areas of conflict, engaging with relevant local and national counterparts such as the Reconciliation and Peaceful Co-existence Mechanism, the University of Khartoum Peace Research Institute and the (traditional) Council of the Wise, and by convening workshops and peace conferences with a view to promoting stability. Our efforts have complemented those which were spearheaded by the government and will continue to do so.

Are popular consultations likely to occur in Southern Kordofan before the end of the CPA period?

It is highly unlikely that popular consultations will occur within the framework of the CPA, given the delays that were experienced in negotiation and implementation of key milestones within the CPA. The state legislative and executive elections in Southern Kordofan are an illustrative example. (Elections in Southern Kordofan were originally scheduled for April 2010, but did not take place until May 2011.)

Just how useful will consultations be in a state where different groups clearly have very diverse views of how (and where) they want to be governed?

The popular consultation process is a tool which, given the appropriate political

reception and climate, can be used to positive effect. Its implementation and effectiveness will depend entirely on the willingness of both parties to accommodate each other's demands. However, the fact that the popular consultation process will now be occurring after the secession of the south will undoubtedly make it more complex and challenging for the parties

What do election results and popular consultations in Southern Kordofan mean for the rest of Sudan?

It is clear from the attention that the gubernatorial elections are attracting from both Khartoum and Juba that the outcome of these elections will resonate well beyond the state's borders. This stems from the fact that the party that claims the governorship and has a majority in the state assembly will be in a stronger position to conduct discussions

with the Presidential Commission for popular consultations. Given that popular consultations are seen as a democratic right and mechanism to improve outstanding matters relating to governance and the relationship between the center and the periphery, both parties are equally keen to secure their interests by means of this process.

The challenges and expectations that popular consultations raise are many-fold. They are viewed by Khartoum as well as SPLM North/SK (Sudan People's Liberation North/Southern Kordofan) as providing both parties with a unique opportunity to review their power-sharing agreements within a newly aligned federal state. As such, this process will be keenly watched by the constituents of Darfur and other regions within the north as a possible model for replication.

Photo: UNMIS/Stuart Price



A different route

Departing from the roaming lifestyle they have led for centuries, Southern Kordofan's nomads are now building permanent, brick classrooms for their children.

A bumpy, hour-long drive north of the state capital Kadugli, Manago village lies on flat sand dotted with thatched *tukuls*

(conical mud and straw huts), and is home to some 3,000 semi-nomadic people.

The Awlad Kamil, a sub-group of the cattle-herding Misseriya tribe, traditionally travel north when the rains start in May and return in the dry season around December every year.

But the village has recently become less temporary, now boasting a brick-building with three classrooms and a small office near the *tukuls*, which house five classes or 147 nomadic children between the ages of six and 10.

"We never had a chance to study," said tribe member Meidan Kuku, explaining the community's decision to build a permanent structure. "We are preparing the ground for the sons of our sons."

Mr. Kuku added that the word nomad

had lost its original meaning, as some families had settled down and opted to work in agriculture, besides cattle herding.

Community members estimate that nowadays only

"We never had a chance to study. We are preparing the ground for the sons of our sons."

about 20 per cent of nomadic people migrate, while others grow vegetables and fruit, including guava and mango, the latter a main seller at Kadugli's market and along the main road at the end of April.

Manago's classes are taught by two volunteer teachers who receive community donations in the form of crops, housing support and 250 Sudanese pounds per month (\$93).

While admitting it was nearly impossible to find a teaching job in the state's more developed areas, headmaster Sadiq Haidu said he volunteered his services in Manago to support the community and

because "if you educate a girl, you educate the nation".

Following the regular Sudanese curriculum, the school runs from



December to July to allow for migration. While the Awlad Kamil were able to put up a brick building that they began constructing in 2008 from local taxes they had levied on trucks transporting sand and rocks from the area, children were lacking basic necessities like desks, benches or running water.

Pupils were struggling with the same inadequate facilities at a new permanent structure complementing three old, frail huts in Al Twol village, a 10-minute drive from Manago. Nomadic children there were also forced to sit on the dirt floor as they were taught by two volunteer teachers.

While its infrastructure was basic, lacking latrines and relying on a donkey cart for water, Al Twol's school offered primary education for 64 pupils. Some of them were sheltering from the sun in one of the huts, while clasping their UNICEF schoolbags with a pencil, notebook and ruler inside.

Both schools are supported by UNICEF with basic learning tools like schoolbags, pencils, notebooks and rulers each year.

Two years ago, the UN agency launched a strategic plan for nomadic education, which aims to increase enrolment of the estimated 500,000 children of nomads living in northern states.

Previously UNICEF supported mobile schools but it has now shifted to on-site learning centres, as many children remain in one place for up to six months of the year.

To cater to children who pursue education while their families migrate, boarding schools were needed, said director of nomadic education at the state ministry of education Abdullahi Said, who hails from the nomadic Lagawa (Baggara) tribe.

"I used to migrate with my family as a child and had to be back (in Katcha, Al Burram locality) by October," Mr. Said recalled. "Sometimes I missed a few weeks or a month (of school) because we were late."

Developing a keenness for letters as a young man, he took a different route than his ancestors' and continued his studies. But receiving

no funding from his parents, Mr. Said sought work during summer breaks to finance his secondary education near El Obeid and university studies in Dilling.

Twenty-year-old Adam Khalil from Manago seemed to have a similar enthusiasm for education. Abandoning the old nomadic lifestyle, this year he passed the Sudan Secondary School Certificate.

"Due to migration, I lost three years," he said, adding that he was hoping to one day

join medical school.

Story and photos: Eszter Farkas

CAPTIONS:

Top left: Abdullahi Said, nomadic education director with UNICEF-provided materials.

Bottom left: Children at Monogo's new, permanent school.

Bottom right: Teacher and pupil in old classroom in Al Twol.



Fitting back in

You could hear the excitement in Ali Ibrahim's voice as he sat at the Joint Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) site in Kadugli waiting for his package – and the start of a new life.

"For the first time in 18 years, I'm going to be with my family as more than just a visitor," said the greying ex-combatant, who was unable to be home with his wife when she gave birth to most of their nine children.

"I feel like someone who has been set free from prison!" he added.

On a hot April afternoon, Mr. Ibrahim was one of 65 ex-combatants receiving demobilization packages – some cash, clothing, mosquito nets and a World Food Programme (WFP) food ration to last a family of five up to three months – short term benefits to help them meet immediate needs as they wait to complete the DDR process.

The programme is a provision of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), aiming to promote human security and social stability, especially in CPA areas like Southern Kordofan, which merited special attention in the accord.

The state has the biggest DDR caseload in Sudan, according to Ali Daffallah, Director of the state's Joint DDR Commission.

"It's a big challenge in a big state with weak information channels," he said. "Many people do not know what the programme is all about and those who have an idea sometimes have the wrong idea. We don't just have to disarm, demobilize and reintegrate – we have a lot of work in managing expectations."

The Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) and Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), who select and disarm their candidates, are expected to demobilize at least 90,000 combatants each, including other militias, like the Popular Defence Forces (PDF).

"Demobilization is the next step and we do it at different sites for the SAF and SPLA," said UNMIS DDR officer Rowland Mujakperuo.

Completing the SPLA caseload, the town of Julud demobilized 3,023 combatants and Kauda 4,700 in 2009 and 2010 respectively.

"The Kadugli site handles SAF and completed the first phase in October last year, demobilizing 9,900 combatants,"

"I feel like someone who has been set free from prison!"



"Now I just want peace to prevail and see my children join university."



Mr. Mujakperuo said. "The second phase has a 7,217-combatant caseload and by yesterday (19 April) had demobilized 5,297 combatants."

Of a total 35,000 ex-combatants already demobilized in North Sudan, 20,000 were in Southern Kordofan, according to Mr. Daffallah.

Some of the combatants, like Mr. Ibrahim, who worked as a recruiter, did not necessarily participate in fighting, but took on other roles in the forces.

Murad Ahmed, for instance, is a trained teacher who was brought into the PDF as a nurse, on account of her first aid skills. Clad in a baby-pink robe that belied any attachment to military service, she said she never did quite feel at home there.

"It is something that circumstances forced you to do," said the widow, a mother of two daughters. "Now I just want peace to prevail and see my children join university."

Ms. Ahmed hoped the final package she receives during reintegration will help her achieve this.

And it can, according to DDR Programme Specialist Saidu Sankoh, who works at the UN Development Programme, which handles the third stage of the programme, working with both local and international implementing partners.

"Most ex-combatants have successfully settled in their communities as civilians," he said. "We tell them that they can achieve their plans, but we also emphasize that it's not going to be a magical overnight affair. Reintegration takes time and hard work."

Based on their experience, qualification and skills, ex-combatants are counseled and advised on which package best suits them, choosing from a wide range of economic options, including agriculture, livestock farming, small business entrepreneurship, vocational training in food processing, tailoring, auto-mechanics and carpentry. The training is also offered to members of communities where ex-combatants resettle.

According to Michael Mubarak, director of one of the implementing partners, the Nuba Mountains International Association for Development (NMIAD), training and economic options keep changing as assessments are carried out, to ensure the programme is as beneficial as possible.

In Southern Kordofan, for instance, many ex-combatants will choose the agriculture and livestock option because



they have skills and experience in that area. This makes it necessary to have personnel with veterinary skills to assist ex-combatants.

"We have been taking some of the ex-combatants and in addition to giving them their own economic options, we train them in veterinary care," said Mr. Mubarak. "Yes, we have the Ministry of Agriculture, but it is not staffed enough to cater for everyone. We have to create our own extension workers."

With continuous assessment and improvement, success stories abound.

Sitalgeel Khider is an example that easily comes to mind and clearly the pride of NMIAD.

"She received a package of cattle – which is doing very well – but she was also trained to give veterinary care," Mr. Mubarak said. "That has grown too! Now the entire community, and not just combatants, depends on her to advise them, and to vaccinate and treat their animals."

For some ex-combatants, the success is in living dreams they had considered lost when in the armed forces.

Mohamed Rahal, for instance, was a student when he was recruited into the SAF. He had always hoped to own his own business dealing with cars and machinery. When the 38-year-old father of four left the army in 2006, he tried to start his own business, buying a machine that repairs punctured tire tubes.

"When I got to the stage of choosing an option, I saw that I could make my business bigger," Mr. Rahal said. "I asked

for a small business package and started a shop that sells oils and lubricants. Since 2010 when I got the package, I (have been) able to look after my family and re-invest in the business too."

It wasn't all smooth-sailing, he added. There were teething problems, like gaining customer awareness and loyalty as well as the dreaded taxes. It took perseverance.

"There are some not-so-good-stories too. With such a big case-load, that is inevitable," said Mr. Daffallah.

"Although generally the success rate is recorded to be very high, it's too early to judge any failure rates," said Mr. Sankoh. "What is for sure is that we can't claim that everyone will do well, in spite of all the briefing, counseling and training."

As it is set up, the DDR programme allows each combatant a package only once. Those that fail must find their own way.

And so the programme is keen on any cases that have been unsuccessful, learning lessons and seeking ways to ensure that there is hope for ex-combatants. This is important in preventing ex-combatants from returning to arms – defeating the purpose of the DDR process in the first place.

Some of the ex-combatants would not go back to arms, they say.

"No, not for any reason," said Ms. Ahmed. "And I would not encourage my daughters to be a part of it. We have had enough war. It's time for us to think of development."

Ibrahim would not either, he said, adding that he no longer even carries a

knife as many men would, whether they are in the army or not.

Thirty-two-year-old Santino Deng is a Dinka from Abyei who joined the PDF purely to earn a living, although some from his tribe did not understand his decision. Now leaving the army, he wants to return to his lands and settle as a farmer.

"But if conflict broke out that interrupted my new life, I can't sit back and watch," Mr. Deng said. "I'll take up arms again if I have to."

It is a real fear for the authorities too, according to Mr. Daffallah. That is another important reason for continuing the programme, even when the CPA's implementation period ends. For now, the Government of Sudan has extended the commission's work to 2013.

"These are soldiers. Their skills are in fighting. If you don't equip them with a different option, they will do what they know best," he said. "We cannot stop this process halfway. It's about survival. If the peace agreement is to survive, we have to ensure that the people who could disrupt it have other options for survival."

Story and photos: Tina Turyagyenda

CAPTIONS:

Top left: Ex-combatant Ali Ibrahim at Kadugli demobilization site.

Bottom left: Ex-combatant Murad Ahmed at Kadugli demobilization site.

Top right: Ex-combatants leave demobilization site to begin reintegration process in Kadugli.

Waiting in Goli



North of Abyei in central Sudan, Misseriya nomads and their livestock have been congregating in and around the village of Goli for many weeks.

After generations of peaceful coexistence with the Ngok Dinka, Misseriya cattle migration, which uses a central corridor through and around Abyei town, has been unable to reach its time-honoured grazing areas across the Kiir River to the south.

According to the Misseriya, it is the first time in nearly 400 years that their animals have been unable to arrive at these long-established areas of pasture. After fighting over the past few months in Todach and Makir, just a few kilometres back down the road towards Abyei, the Misseriya have been unwilling and unable to migrate further due to insecurity and fear for their livestock.

With an estimated 7,500 heads of sheep and some 15,000 cattle, the Misseriya in Goli are waiting to move. As it becomes increasingly unlikely that this will be in a southerly direction – and with the rains beginning in early May – it is north, back towards Muglad, that their next journey will take them.

Adding to the insecurity, four UNMIS military peacekeepers were shot and wounded by unknown armed men in Goli itself as In Sudan went to print.

Photos: UNMIS/Stuart Price





Reversing stereotypes

Cultural practices like dowry payments can lead to early or forced marriages for young girls, resulting in low school enrollment and a high dropout rate for those who attend.

More than 70 per cent of Southern Sudan's women are illiterate, according to UN figures, as many are prevented from accessing or continuing education. Boys are leaving them behind, as girls make up only about a third of initial primary school enrollment.

For UNMIS Gender Affairs Officer Mikelina Emilio, this year's International Women's Day theme – "Equal access to education, training and science and technology: Pathway to decent work for women" – was especially relevant for Southern Sudanese women.

Women are still typecast as homemakers, dowry earners and compensation for the dead in some communities, according to UNMIS Gender Affairs Officer Margaret Modong Joshua.

The majority of women in Southern Sudan were slaves to these stereotypes, she added.

"When they speak, they are beaten up and silenced, but the time has come to break the silence and intolerance," said Ms. Joshua. "We need equal opportunities and education. These attitudes have left women without position or rights in their families."

Aiming to increase enrollment of children and bridge the gap between boys and girls, the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) launched the "Go to School" campaign in 2006.

But some parents still keep their girls at home for bride wealth, noted Gatwech Lam, member of the Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly (SSLA) Committee for Gender, Child and Social Welfare.

"Girls are being kept at home for families' treasures, as they earn lots of cattle," said Ms. Lam. "Some families have made such choices because of the cattle they could receive after their daughters' marriages."

Such practices undermined any gains made by women in education and employment, the SSLA representative added.

Gains in political participation

Dengteil Ayuen Kuur, SSLA Chairperson for Gender, Child and Social Welfare noted that women's participation in politics had markedly improved, although the sector was still dominated by men.

This advance was attributable to a provision in the Interim Constitution of Southern Sudan 2005 addressing gender imbalance.

According to the provision, all levels of government in Southern Sudan shall promote women's participation in public life and their representation in legislative and executive organs by at least 25 per cent.

Some 53 women are SSLA members (of a total 171), seven are GoSS ministers (of 32) and eight are GoSS undersecretaries (of 32). Of 18 presidential advisors, one is a woman, and there is one female state governor.

"For a young nation like Southern Sudan, we women are progressing well, but we are not stopping there," said Minister for Gender, Child and Social





Welfare (MoGCSW) Agnes Lasuba during the 8 March International Women's Day celebrations in Juba.

But Minister Lasuba insisted that the struggle for equality and representation of women in all levels of government would continue. Providing equal opportunities for girls and boys in education would help uplift women in the region, she said.

"With the formation of a new nation ahead of us, I believe that women will double their participation in political and economic affairs," said Margaret Mathiang, undersecretary in the MoGCSW.

Ms. Emilio urged the new nation, South Sudan, to prioritize girl child education

and gender equality in decision-making positions.

There was a need to sensitize the community on women's rights and create laws that would reverse customary laws, which discriminate against women, suggested Ms. Joshua.

Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said in his women's day message that access to various information and communication technology tools, backed up by education and training, can help women break the cycle of poverty, combat injustice and exercise their rights.

The launch of the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

– UN Women – this year, Mr. Ban said, demonstrated the UN's intent to deepen the pursuit of women empowerment and gender equality.

Ojja Bosco

CAPTIONS:

Bottom left: Women at work in Magwi County, Eastern Equatoria State. Photos: UNMIS/Tim McKulka.

Top right: Journalist editing news at Miraya FM Radio station. Photo: UNMIS/Isaac Gideon.

Bottom left: Students at Upper Nile University in Malakal. Photo: UNMIS/Tim McKulka.



Cleaning up Juba

Dubbed one of Africa's fastest growing cities, the southern capital of Juba is also suffering a negative effect of rapid development -- rising waste on its streets.

Despite signs around the city urging 'Do not litter' and 'Keep Juba clean', heaps of garbage dot streets, residential areas and public facilities like markets, hospitals and schools.

"Ninety per cent of waste materials in Juba are plastic bottles and bags that are littered without due respect to the environment," said UN Environmental Programme (UNEP) South Sudan Programme Coordinator Joseph Bartel.

Victor Tombe, director of environment at the Government of Southern Sudan Ministry of Housing and Environment, said residents consumed a lot of bottled water, canned soda and packaged food. "It is a big problem but is controllable," he said of the littering.

In markets, piles of rotting farm produce have become a breeding ground for disease-carrying insects. With no one to collect it, this and other waste is washed into the Nile River during the rainy season, polluting Juba's primary source of water.

Lologo shantytown resident Isaac Bonyo blamed the rising piles of rubbish on bad habits inherited from years of civil war.

"Some people were using garbage in their vicinity as a shield to protect them from ... bullets and aerial attacks," the 35-year-old man said. He also blamed persistent littering by residents on high illiteracy rates and an inability to read signs.

"I am wondering whether people really do read the messages on the signposts," Mr. Bonyo said.

Juba Deputy County Commissioner Samuel Gasim blamed the mounting waste on the inability of county personnel to keep up with Juba's fast-rising population.

Another problem is the lack of a plastic waste-processing system, which has left residents and officials no choice but to burn rising piles of the substance.

"Burning plastic containers is hazardous to the environment because they produce a poisonous fume that is so dangerous to both human respiration and the environment," said Juma Saeed Worju, chair of the Central Equatoria State High Ministerial Committee to clean up Juba.



Meeting international standards

On 1 April, Central Equatoria Governor Clement Wani Konga issued a decree establishing Juba City Council and appointed Mohammed Al-Haj Baballa Council mayor. Governor Wani also established a high ministerial committee to oversee the cleaning of Juba.

"My priorities are cleaning all forms of garbage, organizing ... roadside sellers on all streets, removing temporary shelters along main roads and markets and getting rid of open car-washing facilities in the city," Mayor Al-Haj said.

He added that he envisioned organized markets, car-washing spots and citizens ahead of 9 July when Southern Sudan becomes formally independent.

Mr. Gasim said the county devised a system in 2010 to begin charging businesses and individual households for garbage collection. In the yet to be rolled-out plan, businesses will contribute 20 Sudanese pounds (\$8) per month, restaurants and market stalls 50 (\$19) and residential areas 10 (\$4).

Defending these charges, Mr. Gasim said it was the collective responsibility of residents, traders and the government to keep Juba clean.

In 2008, county authorities hired a private company to clean up the town with little success. Nevertheless, officials are optimistic that this time they will achieve their goal with contracted companies.

Mr. Worju said his committee would monitor the performance of the companies closely. "We want to seriously supervise these companies and monitor their performances so that such companies are held responsible when rubbish piles up at their designated locations."

UNEP is implementing a three-year (2011–2013) Solid Waste Management Project in Juba. The project's goal is to clean up the city and set up a basic viable and sustainable waste management system, Mr. Bartel said.

In addition to developing the capacities

of state organs and involving the private sector in waste management, the project will also use education to raise awareness on waste prevention and management.

"The population just litters because of ignorance," said Mr. Bartel. "Concerted efforts are required to raise awareness in the public through radios, TVs and the print media regarding dangers of littering the environment."

Mr. Worju said it was also time to involve teachers in schools and youth in churches to enlighten the population about the dangers of poor waste management.

To draw are residents into the cleaning effort and also prepare for independence celebrations on 9 July, the City Council in coordination with UNMIS, UN agencies and non-governmental organizations held a day-long cleaning exercise in the city on 7 May.

The programme drew over 200 participants from the UN family alone, including members of the military and police as well as civilians. UNMIS lent four trucks and a front loader to the mayor's office to help transport garbage to assembly points before its disposal.

"We hope that this is not a one-off practice," said Principal Civil Affairs Officer and the Acting UN Regional Coordinator for South Sudan Sylvia Fletcher. "I believe this will become a practice for all citizens and foreigners in Juba."

To help ensure that the city remains cleaner, the high ministerial committee is drafting waste management legislation, which will be submitted to the State Council of Ministers and then forwarded for approval and enactment by the State Legislative Assembly.

"These laws will govern and penalize anyone who fails to conform to those laws pertaining to rubbish collection, management and disposal," Mr. Worju said.

Story and photo: James Sokiri

CAPTION:
Residents clearing rubbish from Juba streets during clean-up day in May.



Strain and gain

The massive wave of returnees from northern to southern Sudan in recent months has put increased strain on already stretched services and infrastructure, but has also brought new skills to the region.

Over 290,000 men, women and children made their way to the south between October 2010 and April 2011, according to International Organization of Migration (IOM) figures, with the majority settling in the border states of Unity, Northern Bahr El-Ghazal, Upper Nile and Warrap.

These locations have limited services and infrastructure, including water points, housing, hospitals and schools, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (OCHA).

"The numbers of people who visit (Malakal Teaching Hospital) have increased because of many factors, such as the displacement caused by insecurity and returnees from the north of the Sudan," said the hospital's medical director, Tut Gony, speaking in the Upper Nile State capital of Malakal.

"At the moment we have only seven doctors who barely cover the daily needs of patients," Dr. Gony said. "We are trying to recruit doctors on contractual bases."

In Western Bahr El-Ghazal State, Wau Teaching Hospital Director General Dr James Okello Morgan said the inability of the large number of returnees to pay for medical care has severely strained operations.

"We have already informed our head of office in Juba and the local authority," Dr. Morgan said. "They are trying their level best to improve the services thorough contacting NGOs (non-governmental organizations) and other donors to mitigate the problem we have at this moment."

An influx of returnee students is crowding already ill-equipped schools in different parts of Southern Sudan.

"The education sector at all levels

(from elementary to university level) lacks enough space and qualified staff to accommodate existing students in the south; let alone to include returnee students," said Mou Mou Athian Kuol, Undersecretary at the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology, adding that immediate expansion efforts were required.

Ministry of Education officials in Upper Nile State reported that about 105 returnee students had registered for secondary education and another 991 for the basic education level.

"The plan is to set up classrooms in some schools to help accommodate the pupils," said State Director of Basic Education Venansio Akol. "UNICEF is ready to provide temporary shelters for pupils."

Western Bahr El-Ghazal State Minister of Education Adil Surur said the state had received a high number of returnee students crowding classrooms.

But he added that his ministry had received two tents from UNICEF and secured a grant from the Islamic High Council to build 20 classrooms to minimize the shortage of space.

"We also requested assistance from GOSS Ministry of Education and they promised to send more tents soon for temporary classrooms," the education minister said.

Providing shelter for returnees had also strained local resources.

"In some locations, returnees have been hosted in schools, which has disrupted and continues to disrupt the school year," said OCHA Public Information Officer Cecilia Attefors.

In the Southern Sudanese capital, returnees have added to overcrowding at Juba Teaching Hospital.

"The hospital receives 150 to 200 outpatients every day," said Medical Director Robert Patrick Napoleon. "Some

among them are returnees."

In addition to the high number of patients, Dr. Napoleon noted other challenges like lack of trained staff and a shortage of medical supplies.

"We have a shortage of nurses and midwives and nurses are obliged to take care of several patients at a time, which is a nightmare," said Dr. Napoleon.

The 518-bed hospital has 40 doctors and 200 nurses. Ordinarily such a facility would require 100 doctors and 500 nurses.

"Because of the current increase of population in Juba, supplies provided for three months are finished in a month," the doctor added.

Untapped human resources

"The case of returnees is twofold," Dr. Napoleon said. "They can be seen as a burden to social services but they are also a gold mine in terms of tapping skilled personnel."

Juba Teaching Hospital had brought some returnees into its employ, he noted. "We have recruited one assistant anaesthetist and are in process of bringing one more on board."

In Warrap State, returnee nurses that had been recruited assisted in January and February following a measles outbreak among the recently arrived population.

OCHA's Ms. Attefors said returnees also brought with them new skills and opportunities. "Worth noting is that Warrap and Jonglei states have taken note of teachers among the returnees to bring them into the education system."

In Western Bahr El-Ghazal and Warrap states, IOM has been piloting a skill survey among returnees in an effort to integrate them into local economies.

Hailemichael Gebrekrstos, Francis Shuei Diu and Negus Hadera

CAPTION:
Outpatients waiting at Juba Teaching Hospital.
Photo: UNMIS/Isaac Gideon.

Pound for pound

A brand new currency will rank high among the trappings of sovereignty that the Republic of South Sudan is expected to acquire after the formal proclamation of its independence in early July.

The National Congress Party and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) reached an agreement in March giving the south a green light to issue its own national currency after last January's Southern Sudan referendum on self-determination produced a landslide vote in favour of secession from the rest of the country.

The South Sudan pound will feature the visage of the late SPLM founder John Garang de Mabior on the front of the bank note. A variety of well-known landmarks like the White Nile River and illustrations depicting some of the new country's natural resources will adorn the back.

The currency will be issued in six denominations ranging from one pound to 100, and four different coins will have values of one, five, 25 and 50 piastres.

The South Sudan pound will become the world's 161st national currency, according to the World Factbook of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency's website. Some currency experts have already hailed its imminent debut.

"Great news for banknote collectors, there will be a new currency coming very soon," trumpeted the Jays World Banknotes website last March. "This currency could possibly circulate as soon as this summer!"

Finance and Economic Planning Minister of the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) David Deng Athorbei told *In Sudan* that printing the bank notes has already commenced in a foreign country that he declined to disclose on grounds that its identity was "confidential".

But press reports of a 29 March news briefing he addressed in Juba quoted the minister as saying that printing is



taking place somewhere in Europe. Initial deliveries of the bank notes are expected after Southern Sudan officially becomes an independent country on 9 July.

Introduction of the new currency will gradually bring to an end the use of today's Sudanese pound in the south that was created under the terms of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA).

During the Kenyan-mediated peace talks, SPLM negotiators insisted on replacing the Sudanese dinar as one more symbol of the Arabization that successive governments in Khartoum had sought to impose on southern Sudan.

Mr. Athorbei said the SPLM had tried to print its own currency before the end of the country's second civil war. "We almost succeeded, but it was blocked because the Sudan government threatened to sue companies that were printing the money for us," he said.

Sudan's current monetary unit had a value of 2 Sudanese pounds to the U.S. dollar when it began circulating in 2007. Bank of Southern Sudan President Elijah Malok declined to say in advance at what exchange rate the new currency would be fixed when it makes its first appearance later this year.

Mr. Athorbei said that the South Sudan pound's value would be subject to a "managed float" regime under which

its exchange rate will be permitted to fluctuate on a daily basis.

But the degree of that fluctuation will be controlled by the South Sudanese central bank's purchase and sale of currencies.

"This is going to protect our money because we have just come out of war," said the GoSS finance minister. "I expect the South Sudan pound to be strong."

The Sudanese pound should be completely phased out in the south by year's end, while it will be retained in northern Sudan. Awad Abushouk, general manager of the Central Bank of Sudan's (CBoS) issuance department in Khartoum, denied earlier reports that Khartoum might convert to another currency or revert back to the dinar, in use until 2007.

Mr. Abushouk noted that northern and southern finance authorities were discussing means of "resumption", or compensation for the amount of pounds accumulated at CBoS' Juba branch, which could be in US dollars or Euros, for instance.

While Juba was preparing for its new currency, North Sudan was aiming to issue the "second edition" of the Sudanese pound around July, said the issuance chief, based on CBoS' forecasts about new currency demand.

Demand was calculated based on several variables, including trends of inflation rate, gross domestic product, increase in commercial activities like gold mining, and deterioration of existing banknotes, which in turn had to be destroyed.

While Khartoum would issue no new denominations of banknotes, the one-pound note might be changed into coin, said Mr. Abushouk. It has a fast rate of deterioration, becoming unusable within six months of circulation, which makes it a rather costly commodity.

Taban Kenyi with inputs from Eszter Farkas

CAPTION:
Formerly used Sudanese pounds.

NEWS BRIEFS

Parties agree to implement Kadugli Agreements

Meeting for the first time on 8 May, the Abyei Joint Technical Committee (JTC) laid down on a timeframe for implementing the Kadugli Agreements.

The JTC signed an agreement during the meeting, which was facilitated by UNMIS, for the effective deployment of Joint Integrated Units (JIUs) and the withdrawal of all unauthorized forces from the Abyei area, which was to take place from 10 to 17 May.

The meeting followed a deteriorating security situation in Abyei that has raised concerns around the globe. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon voiced concern on 6 May over the continuing military stand-off in Abyei, noting that the deadlock had led to further loss of life.

Mr. Ban appealed to the two sides to immediately implement the short-term measures to restore calm, as agreed in the Kadugli agreements of 13 and 17 January, and the Abyei agreement of 4 March, and to adhere to the timetable for their implementation.

The governments of Sudan and Southern Sudan had committed to implementing the two recent agreements the day before, with assistance of the United Nations, according to Haile Menkerios, the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Sudan.

"UNMIS will also support the containment and temporary security measures while a solution is being sought," Mr. Menkerios said after meeting the President of Southern Sudan, Salva Kiir, in Juba on 5 May.

The meeting followed deadly clashes in Abyei at the start of the week that claimed the lives of at least 14 people.

WFP resumes food deliveries in Lakes and Jonglei

The World Food Programme (WFP) was resuming operations in two Southern Sudanese states where they were suspended in April after staff came under direct attack from combatants in the area, the agency said on 13 May.

The WFP issued a statement the previous day saying it would renew food distribution in Lakes and Jonglei – ensuring an estimated 240,000 people in those two states received critical rations in May month – after receiving positive assurances from state authorities.

Operations were suspended in Lakes when a truck was seized on 19 April by members of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA). The truck was later found empty and abandoned in a neighbouring state.

Food distribution had also been suspended in seven of 11 counties in Jonglei after a national staff member for WFP was killed during an ambush on 22 April, but the agency said they have now resumed.

The agency aims to reach 1.5 million people across Southern Sudan this year but said the general instability is hampering its ability to access many areas.

Lidder urges SPLA to grant humanitarian access in Unity State

A top UNMIS official concluded a two-day fact-finding mission to Unity State on 29 April with a call on senior officers of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) to ensure access for UN humanitarian aid agencies and non-governmental organizations to local residents displaced by recent clashes between the SPLA and anti-government militias.

During the visit, Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General (Political Affairs) Jasbir Lidder led a seven-person UN delegation, who traveled from Juba to the Unity State capital of Bentiu and then

Mayom County, where militia forces had attacked the town of Mankien and the village of Tam on 21 April and 24 April, respectively.

Accompanied by UN Deputy Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator Lise Grande, Mr. Lidder first met with Unity State Governor Taban Deng Gai. The delegation then flew to the town of Mankien near the border of Warrap State, where a rebel force razed the local market and set ablaze a number of dwellings on 21 April.

An SPLA counter-attack on the following day routed the militia fighters from Mankien and resulted in the deaths of 30 rebels, 20 SPLA troops and four civilians, according to SPLA Col. Mayol Lual Ayom.

The SPLA commander in the area told the visiting UN delegation that Mankien and environs had been secure for the past seven days, and the road to the county seat of Mayom Town was now clear for vehicular traffic.

Haroun wins Southern Kordofan governorship



National Congress Party (NCP) candidate Ahmed Haroun won the gubernatorial seat in Southern Kordofan State's elections, according to results released by the Sudanese elections body on 15 May.

At a press conference held in Khartoum, the National Elections Commission (NEC) disclosed that incumbent candidate Ahmed Haroun had won the governorship with 201,455 votes in the state poll held between 2 and 4 May.

Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) gubernatorial contender Abdel-Aziz Al-Hilu garnered 194,955 votes, while independent candidate Telefon Kuku – who had been campaigning while being detained in Southern Sudan for over a year – received 9,130 votes.

NEC Deputy Chairman Abdallah Ahmed Abdallah said the commission had been in consultation with political parties during all phases of the elections, and that "none of the domestic or international observers or participating parties ... had questioned the integrity of these elections".

The NEC deputy chairman called on the parties and their supporters "to accept the results calmly because in any democratic elections there is a winner and a loser".

Taking the floor at the press conference, NEC Commissioner Mukhtar Alassam listed results for each of the state's 32 constituencies. Aggregated totals showed that the NCP had gained 22 seats in the State Legislative Assembly (SLA), and the SPLM 10.

