

UNICEF

A THREE GOAL DRAW HELPS CONVEY A THREE MESSAGE LIFESAVER



Internally displaced persons (IDPs) in el Salam Camp, in Khartoum, take part in a football match sponsored by UNICEF as part of awareness raising activities on the issue of landmines

Photo Credit: Nagui Kodsi/ UNICEF Sudan/2007

Khartoum, 19 March 2007

Under a scorching sun, and amidst the dust of a makeshift soccer pitch, the gathering crowd of some 800 spectators in el Salam IDP Camp roars as the third goal, an equalizer, hits the back of the net. The game will have to go to a penalty shoot-out, but that will just mean more entertainment and for the estimated 40,000 young people and children living in el Salam Camp, displaced during the 21 year civil war in Sudan, an opportunity for entertainment is something to be cherished.

Today's match, organized by the multi-actor Special Information Campaign on Mine Awareness, is part of a broader social communication programme supported by UNICEF. Behind the shouting and laughing, and the friendly competition of the game, lies a more serious message. Many of the young people living at Al Salam will soon be returning to their places of origin in the southern states of Sudan and once there, will be confronted by another legacy of the war; landmines.

The United Nations classifies Sudan as one of the ten countries in the world most affected by landmines. Two years after the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) that brought the civil war between north and south to an end, landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXO) remain a threat to life. As the United Nations aims to assist an estimated 630,000 Southern Sudanese to return home this year alone, the need for effective mine risk education is clear. Today's event at el Salam is just one part of UNICEF's contribution to that vital task.

The threat of landmines in Sudan lurks under the bridges where children shelter from the sun, hidden amongst the firewood that children collect, on the edge of the road that children walk along on their way to school. UNICEF's simple advice to children is "Keep away, don't touch, report". These three life-saving messages are repeated throughout the day at el Salam, and the messages appear to be resonating with the young audience.

"It was impressive to see how every child was keen on learning the messages, reading the brochures, posters and listening to the discussions," says Sharif Baaser, UNICEF's Child Protection officer leading the mine risk education programme in North Sudan. "The only way to reduce the danger from landmines is through teaching children and the community on the best ways to recognize and respond to that danger. And that starts with helping children know what landmines look like, the importance of avoiding them and the need to report anything they may find to adults".

Global experience has shown that children learn more easily if the process is entertaining. Events such as the sports matches at el Salam Camp bring young people together, and enable messages to be disseminated in an interesting and colorful way. Mine risk education becomes a community-based activity; here at el Salam Camp residents had supported the young players with training, providing sports kit as well as being there on the day to encourage their children in the match. The game itself saw a team from amongst the camp residents take on a squad made up of humanitarian workers – an important bridge-builder, that builds confidence in the work of the agencies in the camp, and helps to strengthen the value of the landmine messages.

"Effective communication is built on trust," says Sharif Baaser. "If people are to really trust in the messages about landmines, then they also have to have faith in those providing the messages. Events like Landmine awareness messages like this really help bring the humanitarian community and the resident population closer together, and that creates an opening for us to sit down and discuss these more serious issues."

And everywhere one looks, those messages are prominent. The two soccer teams are wearing shirts that proclaim a series of warnings "Stay away from unknown objects", "Watch out for markings, signs or clues that indicate mines and UXO", "When traveling make sure that you always stay on commonly used roads". In the crowd, leaflets with simple pictorial messages on mine awareness are circulated widely. Teams of volunteers have organized entertainment through comedy shows, songs and competitions through which they have communicated the campaign messages, attracting not only the attention of the children but women, men and community leaders.

In the coming days and weeks, many of these internally displaced persons will pack their belongings, and climb aboard the buses and trucks to take them back home. For some of the children, it will be a journey to a place they have never seen. They



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may have never witnessed the conflict that forced their parents to flee to Khartoum, nor will they have experienced the hardware of war, much of which remains a threat today.

"Nothing is worse than a landmine, hidden to kill at any time, at times of peace as well as war," says Howayda, a volunteer from a local NGO, Jasmara. "Unfortunately children are the most affected by landmines out of curiosity, anxiousness to play, run and explore life".

Hopefully, the messages being disseminated today will ensure that such curiosity and sense of adventure can continue without risk to life or limb, and that the young Sudanese preparing to return home will be able to look forward to a safe transition to their new life.

For now, there is something else to celebrate. The camp residents' team has just knocked in the deciding penalty and are preparing to receive a champion's cup from UNICEF. Another success, to match that of the mine awareness day.

The United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS)



Simon at the the artificial limb clinic.

Photo Credit: Catherine Waugh/UNMIS/2007

Standing proudly among the tools of his trade - plaster casts and molds for making artificial limbs – Simon admits he began his life in Khartoum as a street boy.

Escaping an abusive home in the town of Fau at 12 years old, he joined some 40,000 other boys eeking out a living in Khartoum's markets. "We slept under benches and went through the garbage or stole for food," he remembers.

Luckily for Simon, his market days ended a year later when he followed a younger boy to a drop-in centre for street boys, where he was offered a trough to wash his clothes, two meals a day, a place to rest and lessons to prepare for school.

Simon flourished at the centre, attended regular school and was

eventually trained by an Indian doctor with another former street boy, Hamad, to construct artificial limbs. The two boys currently run a limb clinic, supported by RNGC Petroleum and Rotary International, at Khartoum Teaching Hospital.

"Boys initially come here because they need a place to rest away from the dangers of the market," said Barbara Gouldsbury, who now runs the Bridge of Hope centre for boys in the Haj Yousif area. "Eventually, it restores their sense of self worth and gives them the encouragement and space to change."

Little more than brick walls, a dirt floor and a partial bamboo roof, the Bridge of Hope's drop-in centre provides a haven for 50 to 100 children per day. Within the same structure is a learning centre - its main feature - where five teachers are bringing 40 boys up to an age-appropriate educational level.

Boys like Simon with no home in Khartoum or parents unable to keep them may be transferred to the live-in residential centre next door, which currently houses 30 boys from six to 19 years old.

The Bridge of Hope is mainly supported by a private Swedish family, but also receives donations from Lundin Petroleum and Ericsson telecommunications. Funding barely covers costs, however, which prompted Ms. Gouldsbury to seek UNMIS' help in upgrading its cramped and makeshift learning centre.

Recognizing the centre's potential, the mission recently approved a Quick Impact Project (QIP) grant through its Civil Military Cooperation (CIMIC) unit to expand the facility.

Ms. Gouldsbury has already arranged construction of a four-room new learning centre as a second floor to the residential home. "I believe to teach and learn you must have a conducive atmosphere. Having 40 boys squashed into a small space certainly did not provide that," she said.

CIMIC Deputy Chief Paddy Bryden said UNMIS was supporting local authorities by increasing the capacity of existing and proven programs like the Bridge of Hope. "Helping these children improve their lives is something we can all be proud of."



Former street boys at Bridge of Hope Learning Centre

Photo Credit: Catherine Waugh/UNMIS/2007



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The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

UNHCR TEACHES DARFUR IDPs TO HELP THEMSELVES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

KHARTOUM, 07 August 2007

The United Nations refugee agency is working with internally displaced Sudanese to rehabilitate the environmental degradation that has been both a cause and a consequence of the Darfur conflict.

Earlier this year, UNHCR through its implementing partner INTERSOS started a community-based environmental rehabilitation project in three localities in West Darfur: Forobaranga, a small town bordering Chad, in Garsila and in Um Kher village.

The three nurseries aim to improve fruit and vegetable production, address deforestation through growing forest trees and provide local farmers, many of them women and youths, with training on topics like land management, water harvesting, pest control, tree management, intercropping, cash crop management, seed production and storage.

"This is for once good news from Darfur. We are pleased to see local villagers and IDPs alike embark on activities that not only help restore the damaged environment but also provide them with skills to enhance their self-sufficiency in the future," said Chrysantus Ache, UNHCR Representative in Sudan.

The Darfur conflict, often simplified in the public debate, is complex. Among several causes are tensions over access to land, water and resources. Ironically, the massive displacement of Darfurians over the past three years has worsened that already precarious environmental condition.

With internally displaced people (IDPs) moving close to urban centres and into camps there are two million people displaced inside Darfur deforestation around camps and towns has grown rapidly. Everyday, IDPs and local communities go further into the desert to collect firewood and livestock cover greater distances to find grass.

Apart from managerial skills, the participants learn differences in growing mango, banana, citrus, papaya, guava, millet, sorghum, tomato, onion, garlic, chickpeas, beans, groundnuts, eggplant, potato and sweet potato. Weekly training follows the natural cycle of the plants: sowing, germination, growth, transplanting and creation of new seeds.

So far, over 200 participants, mostly women and youth, have enrolled in the three localities. Ninety-minute training sessions are held four days a week. In Garsila, UNHCR plans future training in youth centers in IDP camps outside the village to attract more internally displaced youth.

Among the forest trees are acacia 120,000 are being grown already as well as tamarind, albizia, cassia fustula and other



After working in a nearby factory, Zahia, 15, collects wood for her family. The high number of internally displaced in Darfur has damaged an already degraded environment.

Photo Credit: H. Caux/UNHCR/2007

trees typical of the region. Since the project started in March 2007, the sowing of seeds has been completed and plants are growing well.

Prior to deciding where to carry out the programme, an environmental specialist supported by two local agronomists conducted an assessment of the soil and conditions and decided, along with local authorities and the villagers who embraced the idea, how to make the best out of the project.

The nursery was conceived to obtain best results from all species of plants. One part of the nursery is used as an incubator for seeds put in plastic bags and irrigated by special canals carrying fresh well water. The other part of the structure is designed to host young plants needing more sunlight and less humidity. Once the young plants are strong enough, they are distributed to the farmers.

Trees will be planted in the three localities in October near schools, wells, in selected public spaces and close to houses. One of the many positive side-effects of the project is that the training of women and youths with help them become self-sufficient in an increasingly difficult environment. The training is open to internally displaced people and local villagers alike.

Recently the project's participants in Um Kher and Garsila even succeeding in growing the seemingly impossible: For the first time, pineapples usually at home in humid, tropical areas started to blossom in the desert of West Darfur.

By: Annette Rehl, Information Officer, UNHCR Sudan



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The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

RECOVERY AND REHABILITATION PROGRAMME (RRP): JOBS CREATED AS UNDP AND PARTNERS WORK TO ALLEVIATE POVERTY ACROSS SUDAN.



Dong Chol supervises the construction crew the Recovery and Rehabilitation Programme (RRP) has hired to build local government offices in Aweil West.

Photo Credit: UNDP/2007

A year ago, Dong Chol, 32, was struggling to feed his family. The father of five from Aweil West County in Southern Sudan could only find sporadic employment and had to resort to collecting stones to sell as building materials. He was earning less than US \$1 a day and couldn't afford to pay his children's school fees or buy medicine when they got sick.

After receiving job training from the Sudan Recovery and Rehabilitation Programme, Chol's predicament became a thing of the past. Chol is now a construction supervisor. He oversees a crew that is building a new office building for the Aweil West local government.

"I have learned how to build walls, how I can lay the brick, carpentry, roofing even and building tussles," said Chol. "Now I have the confidence to go to Aweil town and compete for jobs where there is a lot of construction."

Chol makes now about US\$10 a day, which is a high income in poverty-stricken southern Sudan. According to the Sudan Interim Unified Millennium Development Goals Report of 2004 more than 90% percent of people living in Southern Sudan live in extreme poverty. Across the rest of the country, up to 60% are poor. Chol can now afford to feed, educate and care for his family's health.

The Recovery and Rehabilitation Programme is training thousands of Sudanese men and women and helping Sudan in its effort to reach the first Millennium Development Goal: to halve extreme poverty and hunger by 2015.

The Recovery and Rehabilitation Programme is a 54,325 million Euro programme, funded by the European Commission and managed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on behalf of the Government of National Unity, and the Government of South Sudan. The programme runs projects in Abyei Area and the following states: River Nile, Red Sea, Blue Nile, South Kordofan, Upper Nile, Warrap, Central Equatoria, Eastern Equatoria, and Northern Bahr al Ghazal.

Under the Recovery and Rehabilitation Programme, jobs have been created in construction, in the agricultural sector, and through micro-credit loan schemes.

Chol is one of 7,099 people who found employment through the recovery programme. The programme has helped create 879 construction related jobs like Chol's. The demand for skilled construction workers has increased in Sudan, because of the large number of infrastructure and recovery projects that began after the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in January 2005. While many of these jobs are temporary, these workers gain valuable training that will help them find sustainable employment in construction.

The recovery programme has created 4,520 jobs through micro-credit loan schemes. Members of rural communities submit a business proposal to a micro finance committee made up of local leaders in the ten project locations.

Each loan recipient must pay back the amount of credit borrowed, in addition to 10 percent of their profits made during the time it takes to repay the loan to the revolving credit fund. The money in the revolving credit fund is then used to extend a loan to the next entrepreneur.

In addition, the Recovery programme has created 952 jobs in Sudan's vital agriculture sector. While crop production contributes roughly 45% of Sudan's gross domestic product, less than 7% of the country's surface area is used for cultivation. But as the agricultural sector is developed, there will be more opportunity for continued job creation under RRP's programmes. Agricultural training not only creates jobs, but it also works towards achieving the first Millennium Development Goal by improving food security.

The Recovery and Rehabilitation Programme, which is serving 800,000 Sudanese, is the largest recovery initiative across Sudan. A total of 47 NGOs are working together to build schools, healthcare centers, and water networks; improve people's livelihoods through vocational training, agricultural projects, and peace-building initiatives; and increase capacity through training local government administrations.



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The International Organization for Migration (IOM)

RETURN AND REINTEGRATION OF QUALIFIED SUDANESE PROGRAMME (RQS).



Luca George returning to Southern Sudan as part of the Return of Qualified Sudanese Programme.

Photo Credit: IOM/2007

The Return and Reintegration of Qualified Sudanese (RQS) Programme aims to meet some of the critical gaps in knowledge and skills that the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) Ministries and other employing institutions face as they rebuild and develop Southern Sudan. Luca George Kidi is an internally displaced person (IDP) and a teacher, who wants to return home. Here is his story.

"I am from Eastern Equatoria, from Lopaw Payam [district] in Torit County, Southern Sudan. A long way from here ... I came to Khartoum in 1996, after fleeing from my village in 1993. I was eleven years old at the time. I had the chance to go to school in Khartoum and later studied to become a pre-school teacher. I also did teacher training courses in community development, physical education, child protection, early childhood development, music and movement, and a variety of other subjects. My aim is to bring this knowledge to the Torit area where my family comes from. But first of all, I hope to be offered a

job as a pre-school teacher there. I lodged my application with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to join the Return of Qualified Sudanese Programme and they forwarded the list to the Ministry of Education in Eastern Equatoria. I understand that the ministry has indicated that they will offer jobs to all of us, who meet the qualification requirements. So, I am going to fly back to Torit via Juba with members of my family.

Apart from teaching, I see myself assisting in improving pre-school education in the Torit area, because early childhood learning is very important. I have experience. I have already been involved in setting up a school in El Salaam Camp for IDPs near Khartoum, where we live. The Episcopal Church of Sudan together with the Sudan Development and Relief Agency (SUDRA) have assisted us. NGOs such as World Vision and CARE Sudan are giving us some funds. I receive a small financial incentive for my work as a teacher at the school.

SUDRA sent me on an assignment mission to the Torit area in November last year, to see what is to be done there and where NGOs could help. There had been a fierce attack on the area by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) shortly before the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005. Since then, school buildings have not been properly repaired, there is hardly any teaching material and ... there are very few teachers. I can help. I have the experience with getting funds from NGOs. I can do my share to improve the situation in Torit. I keep telling my colleagues in the camps in Khartoum 'What are you still doing here? Let's go and build up something for future generations in our home areas in the South'."



Luca George Kidi (first on the right) with colleagues all teachers wanting to return to Southern Sudan as part of the Return of Qualified Sudanese Programme.

Photo Credit: IOM/2007