



Sudan DDR Dispatch



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Highlights:

- Water paves the way to peace in Al Dabkaria, White Nile.
- Walking a mile to hear people out. An interview with GPBC project and programme coordinator
- Group Interview with participants of training the trainers on food-processing skills, in South Kordofan.
- Contextual peace dividends - a case in Southern Kordofan.



Community benefiting from their new water yard. Dabkaraia, White Nile.
Photo credits: Mutwakil Omran / UNDP

Water Paves the Way to Peace in Al Dabkaria - White Nile

Access to water has historically played a significant role in triggering conflict. Al Dabkaraia village in White Nile State is no exception as it has now become home to the returnees from South Sudan who were forced to resettle in the area, after the secession of South Sudan in July 2011. This group includes 360 ex-combatants (XCs) formerly aligned to both the PDF and SAF and who, due to limited funds, were not part of the DDR process. In addition, scarcity of water led to regular fighting between farmers and pastoralists. Thus, this exclusion, lack of livelihood options and proliferation of weapons posed a threat to community security. This is especially significant given the proximity of the village to conflict in South Kordofan and the presence of youth with conflict carrying capacities.

In an effort to address the grievances of XCs and reduce the strain over the limited water resources in the village, a water yard was constructed by implementing partner (IP), ALAM, in close coordination with the Water Corporation. The head of the Dabkaraia Public Committee asserted that *"this water project will give great benefits to our community; essentially, it will ensure that our community is secure and stable."*

The CSAC soft component aimed to address the proliferation of weapons in the area and included community sensitization on the dangers of small arms and light weapons, reconciliation, conflict mitigation and peace-building. Select community members were also organized into groups where they were given 15 boats and 15 fishing nets to embark on collaborative and income-generating activities. This was bolstered by providing vocational training on fisheries to selected unemployed youth who were selected by the communities.

Community members were also trained on the One Man Can (OMC) Manual, as well as numerous other civic education topics. In an interview with Mr. Adel Mohamed Elfakki, Head Master of the Dabkaraia Primary School and training beneficiary, he happily expressed that *"...man can alter harmful customs and traditions. I usually insist that bad habits in the region need to change, especially FGM and I help raise awareness on such issues during meetings in the mosque and inside the school, where I consider myself to be an influential figure. I hope I can make a positive impact on my community."*

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"Walking a mile to hear people out": Client and community perception surveys conducted by GPBC

Participants Satisfaction Survey (PSS): aimed to assess satisfaction of DDR participants with services provided by implementing partners, success in creating livelihoods from economic reintegration project, and to get feedback from participants on DDR project implementation.

Community Perception Survey (CPS): goal is to assess the awareness of the community about DDR, CSAC and perception towards DDR participants in the communities as well as feedback on community security activities.



Alkorgol south of Al-Dilling, South Kordofan State Survey, March 2013. Photos credits: GPBC

Headquartered in the busy locality of Dilling, situated in the northern part of the complex state of South Kordofan, are the members of the Gender and Peace Building Centre (GPBC) organization. GPBC is an independent, nonprofit research development organization contracted by UNDP to conduct individual and community surveys in Blue Nile State (BNS) and South Kordofan State (SKS). The GPBC has never worked on any of the reintegration project on the rationale that the implementing partner would be more objective as it has no vested interest in the projects implemented. Overall, the survey is meant to gauge and reflect the sentiments at the grassroots level to evaluate the DDR programme, in terms of effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability. It is also meant to help inform the approach of the project based on feedback from beneficiaries and community members. A task which proved anything but easy!

The challenges faced by GPBC were many *"we had security challenges, inaccessibility, and of course the recent conflict"* said Hussam, a Project and Programmes coordinator at GPBC. Security remains the most significant challenge. The impact of the recent conflicts in South Kordofan and Blue Nile was felt most in neighboring regions where it has led to large displacement of community people, including the targeted participants of the programme. A smaller hurdle was the relocation of a few communities in BNS due to a Dam expansion project. And then there were the security clearances which took anything from a couple of days to some cases waiting up to 8 months for clearance. *"The key to overcoming it all is patience and perseverance"*, Hussam added.

What's noteworthy from GPBC in overcoming the obstacles is their vigor and positive attitude to accomplish the tasks for the survey. At times they walked 8 hours straight to reach areas inaccessible by vehicles due to the rainy season. And sometimes they even employed conflict resolution between communities as they waited for clearances. So why do all this? *"it's in all our interest to have their concerns and voices heard...it builds trust and it generates candid results"*.

The consensus amongst participants was that DDR brought peace, settlement and stability to families and communities. They mentioned that this can be attributed to various factors but especially to the means for livelihoods it provided. Marie Seido, a 45 year old former combatant chose a restaurant for her reintegration support. The restaurant was more profitable than Marie has anticipated which reaffirmed the importance and sustainability of livelihoods. This motivated her to help her own sons start their own small businesses, a shop for each son.



Road troubles during rainy season.
On the way to Agadi, BNS, 2013. Photo credits: GPBC

The testament to the success portrayed was evident during the recent conflict, where despite the displacement, and relocation, majority of the participants who were interviewed responded that they opted not to engage in conflict. Hussam recalls a memorable statement by one of the former fighters who said "We gave up on War! We tried it, we got to nowhere, and we accomplished nothing". A growing sense of attachment to their new lives and livelihoods is noticeable. Hussam further remembers vividly how one community said: "The DDR Programme brought back their dignity".

Interestingly, community feedback through focus group discussions have revealed that communities would like to see support that address rural economic stabilization and livelihoods for unemployed youth who are at most risk of being drawn into conflict or community security related issues. They went further to request that they should be given a more active role to support the efforts as they have a genuine interest of supporting community security and stability.



The methodologies adopted in this survey included:

- Semi structured interviews
- Focus Group Discussions.
- Refresher training field monitor

Dilling, South Kordofan State, March 2013

Blue Nile State Survey, October 2012

Photos credits: GPBC

Contextual Peace Dividends - A Case in South Kordofan



*Community members fetching water from water yard project in Al Matar, Dilling.
Photo credits: Muwkail Omran / UNDP*

Al Matar Community, in Dilling, has experienced a time of continued upheaval and conflict as they witnessed deadly clashes over water and pasture. Migrant camel rearing pastoralists - Shanablaa and Beni Jarar tribes – from North West Kordofan started to graze together with residing Bagara tribes in the same locations. This led to overgrazing and an accompanied sense of antagonism over water resources.

In 2012 alone, six conflicts and forty-three deaths were reported. With no immediate end to the conflict, this prompted immediate attention. The state government of South Kordofan and the Sudan DDR Commission, together with the UNDP DDR unit called for focus group discussions with the affected communities. Following the discussions, a Community Security and Arms Control (CSAC) project was launched for the promotion of social stabilization in the affected area.

This CSAC project provided the community with a water yard to mitigate tension and prevent potential tribal conflict among community members. It dissuaded XCs from escalating the conflict, re-mobilizing, and discouraged the use of small arms. The water yard proved to form deeper channels for cooperation which were visible from the aftermath of the Kadugli incidents, in 2011. Following the incidents, some of the displaced Nuba tribes settled in the Matar community where they too shared the water sources. This time however, water security created a potential for cooperation and a catalyst for peace. CSACs water yard project has been estimated to benefit about 5,000 community members. The project was additionally supported by a soft component, which empowers the traditional structures along with XCs, in the areas of early forecast and conflict mitigation. It also educated the community on the on-going sustainability of their newly acquired water source.

The Matar community expressed their utmost satisfaction. The water point allowed them to experience tangible results in regards to conflict resolution and has continued to enhance the overall peace in the community.

Social reintegration: empowering women to support peace.

This community based women's project was implemented by implementing partner, SOLO in South Kordofan and targeted 400 beneficiaries with activities in food-processing, literacy and peace building. While literacy is planned to promote literacy skills; food processing training aims to enhance the participants and community members' skills in preserving food for times of drought and increasing the nutritional value of food for the family.

These trainings use the REFLECT approach, designed for adult education. It consists of participatory learning circles which promotes discussions and questions amongst each other. Peace building activities are designed to use the communities' heritage of arts and folklore to strengthen social cohesion and bridge any gaps amongst the communities. The women's circles will be soon be provided with cooking sets to promote the sustainability of their activities.



Group photo of beneficiaries from training the trainers on food-processing skills, in South Kordofan.
Photo credits: Mohamed Yousif / UNDP

Hana, a trainer of trainers (TOT) and a beneficiary of SOLO's partnership with SDDRC and UNDP. Hana broke out into tears when she started telling her story: *"...you know, I'm the sole responsible person in my family, I'm the eldest daughter, so I have to be the mother, the father and the supporter of my younger siblings (...) my family was displaced after the war, we fled to Kadugli (...). When I joined the food processing training, I had nothing and now I have knowledge, skills, and courage. Now I'm very successful with food decoration and presentation, as my specialty. If anyone has a special occasion where they want to impress other people they call me to come and decorate their food, it is an art (...). Food processing training increased my income and helped me support my family and find my passion (...)."*

When Hana starts crying, most of the women in the room joined her in tears. One of them explains: *"...when we were in the training [food processing], Hana's little sister came and told her that they hadn't eaten anything yet and the kids were starving and crying at home. When I remember that moment I feel sad because Hana was the age of my daughter, she is too young to be burdened with a huge responsibility like that (...). One thing I can say, I admire Hana because she is very brave and responsible. I'm proud of her, of how she manages all of that and yet managed to succeed in the course."*

These testimonials indicate that, despite their differences, the training created a platform for women to share feelings, experiences, and brought them together. This increased their solidarity, level of understanding, and above all mutual respect. This is a crucial element of the healing process which reinforces social reintegration.

Another participant shares: *"At the beginning of the training of trainers in food processing, I was not sure about how I would deal with women who are diverse and coming from different backgrounds. They were clearly divided, which adds to the challenge. Some of the XCs were members who belonged to opposing sides during the war. Others were civilians, who were not comfortable studying together in the same room with XCs. Could you imagine bringing people who fought in a war against each other into one room to study? I was personally in doubt, but, by the end of the training, participants forgot their political affiliation, their tribal belonging, and all differences, they came together as women, who shared one thing: an eagerness towards learning and improving their lives. They discussed and shared experiences, they laughed and cried together; it was not only food processing but also life processing (...). The training increased openness, social trust, and solidarity amongst participants and I'm very proud to have been part of that transformation."*



ToT beneficiaries receiving their cooking sets, in South Kordofan. Photos credits: Mohamed Yousif / UNDP



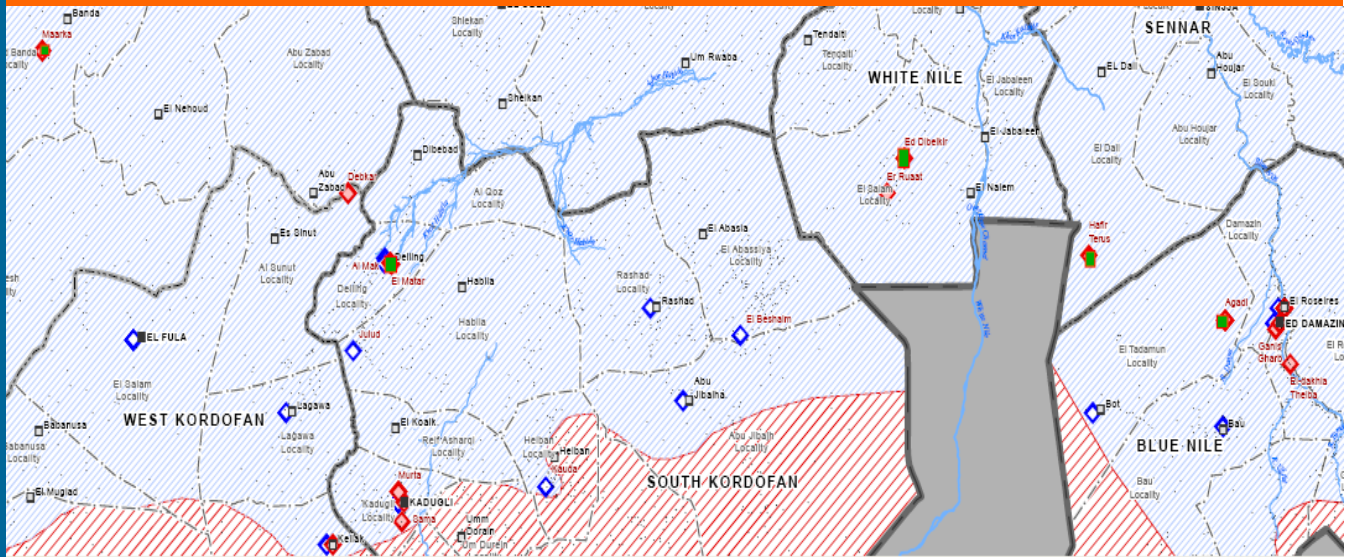
Participants also emphasized the economic value that the food processing training has bestowed upon them. Nafessa states that after the training her income increased and the quality of her family's lives continue to improve. She said: *"I have been able to finish building my house (...) thanks to the money I make from producing food. (...) Now, alhamdulillah, I can buy what I need to buy for my family or for myself."*

Sana, a very young participant adds, *"I learned many things in the training but I figured out what makes money in the market; it's making pasta! I learned how to make pasta, so now I make and sell it in the market (...) The income has helped me to meet my personal needs, since I'm a divorcee already. You know, I married at a very young age and I have a little boy (...) I have been able to save around 1500 SDG and I'm planning to go back to school (...) I'm young and I'm looking forward to the future; being educated is something that I have always dreamt about."* Sana closes her statement with a big smile, and a look that shows fascinating ambition and determination.

Another interesting point comes up in the discussion. Thanks to the food processing training, these families have improved the food security situation for their family. One participant mentions *"I no longer worry that my child will starve because there is no food in the house. I dry vegetables and fruits that are in season, I turn them into interesting products, I save money and I increase the nutritional value for my family."* Another participant explains that *"...after the war, many of our relatives fled from their villages to Kadugli and they came to live with us, in the house. It was very challenging financially and physically for me. Then I encouraged these women to join the training and some of them now produce food and are successful."*

This project is just one example of many other program interventions working towards achieving the social reintegration of former fighters and other people affected by conflict. The women reached by SOLO now feel more confident and empowered. They now have the ability to manage their lives, earn their own income and help their families. Furthermore, the project has reinforced social cohesion between different groups.

Highlights and Progress of DDR and CSAC



Map: Courtesy of UNDP / CRMA

- 14 CSAC projects are being implemented in Blue Nile, South Kordofan, White Nile, Sennar, North Kordofan and West Kordofan.
- Six projects were completed with beneficiaries reaching 33,000. Upon completion of all CSAC projects expected beneficiaries are expected to reach a total of 110,000.
- Currently, 66% out of the 36,251 demobilized fighters have received support (17% women).
- In April 2013, client satisfaction surveys were completed in SKS and BNS, which revealed that 85.7% of participants found reintegration support reasonable and sustainable.
- 53% of interviewed participants reported that their incomes were around SDG 200 per month on the livelihood ventures being established.

Map Legend

Settlements (OCHA, 2011)

- Locality Head Quarter
- ◆ CSAC Activity Locations (4 Ws Database for UNDP, August 2013)
- ◇ DDR Activity Locations (4 Ws Database for UNDP, July 2013)

State Boundary

- Other States
- ▬ Border States with South Sudan and Kordofan Regions
- ▬▬▬ Locality boundaries (State Govt., Not Verified, April 2009 & 2010)

Accessible Areas (DDR, Aug 2013)

- ▨ DDR and CSAC operational areas
- ▨ Accessibility challenged areas

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