

South Sudan Recovery Fund (SSRF)

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IN BRIEF

South Sudan Recovery Fund (SSRF), (formerly Sudan Recovery Fund or SRF), was established in May 2008 as a pooled fund administered by UNDP's Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office. With a total committed funding of US\$111.8 million from the Governments of the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, SSRF aims to bridge the gap between recovery and development.

Rounds 1 and 2 funding focused on promoting livelihoods and generating income in marginalized communities, including women and youth, in all 10 states in South Sudan. Round 2 also provided capacity-building support to the Southern Sudan Reconstruction and Development Fund.

Round 3 programmes focus on stabilization and conflict prevention in key insecure areas in Jonglei, Lakes, Eastern Equatoria, and Warrap States.

Stabilization programmes underway in three states

South Sudan Recovery Fund's (SSRF) third round of funding rolls out as preparatory work and construction of key infrastructure began in three states during the first quarter of 2011. The SSRF Stabilization Programmes in Jonglei, Lakes, and Eastern Equatoria States were each reviewed and approved by the Government's Inter-Ministerial Appraisal Committee in November 2010.

Funded by the Governments of the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, the programmes under Round 3 contribute to the conflict prevention and stabilization efforts of each of the state governments, by addressing priority areas that communities and state governments have identified. The current fund allocation for the three state stabilization programmes is US\$52.7 million, with approximately US\$17 million for each programme.

The Jonglei Stabilization Programme, for one, addresses one of the key priorities in the Jonglei State Strategic Plan which is to construct the 170km Akobo-Pochalla road in eastern Jonglei. Both counties face security chal-



Construction of cofferdam at the Pibor bridge site will facilitate the transport of materials for construction of the Akobo-Pochalla road. © Jose Nash/UNOPS

lenges, fuelled in part by competition over scarce resources and a proliferation of small arms. To date, contractors have begun mine and bush clearance of the road. Construction materials to stand up a bailey bridge over the Pibor River – in-kind donation from the UN Mission in South Sudan – have been moved to Akobo County.

Another priority identified by state authorities under

the Jonglei Stabilization Programme is to provide information through a state-managed radio station. Inaccurate information or rumors about cattle raids and other inter-communal conflicts cause constant retaliations, further exacerbated by the fact that communities are heavily armed.

State authorities, through the radio station, will be able to sensitize the population

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Funds transferred for the fourth Stabilization Programme: Warrap

Warrap State boosts its stabilization efforts following the signing of the Warrap Stabilization Programme Document and the subsequent transfer of funds that will support the state's initiatives towards conflict prevention.

Under SSRF Round 3 programmes, the Warrap Stabilization Programme Document was signed by South Sudan's Minister of Finance and Economic Planning and SRF-SS Steering Committee Chair H.E. David

Deng Athorbei, and the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator and SSRF Steering Committee Co-Chair Ms. Lise Grande.

The first tranche, US\$14.9 million, was transferred to implementers to rehabilitate roads and construct police posts and haffirs. Warrap is the fourth state, along with Jonglei, Lakes and Eastern Equatoria States, under SSRF Round 3 that focuses on stabilization and

conflict prevention in South Sudan. The document signing and funds transfer follows a succession of activities including community, county and state consultations, and various project assessments.

The US\$17.75 million programme is a Joint United Nations Programme that supports the government's national goal of sustaining peace and stability, which the Programme supports through catalytic stabilization inter-

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Women and youth gain greater access to credit



Mijikita VSLA Group Savings in Lokurubang, Lainya, Central Equatoria State ©CMSI

The Village Savings and Loans Associations is a successful scheme that supports and sustains the neediest households and vulnerable groups.

Twenty-year old Lawrence Wani dropped out of school in 2006. To earn an income, he set up a small shop for consumable goods. In 2010, Lawrence heard about the Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLA) and signed up.

VSLA, funded by SSRF, is a programme that delivers low-cost solutions to problems of accessing credit and youth unemployment. Specifically, VSLA is a pooled financing scheme that uses a savings-and-loan approach that reaches out primarily to women and

youth. Implemented by the international non-governmental organization (NGO) Church Mission Society, Ireland (CMSI) in partnership with the NGO ZOA Refugee Care, VSLA has been identified as a successful scheme that supports and sustains the neediest households.

To generate income, communities in Lainya and Juba West Counties in Central Equatoria formed groups of 15-30 self-selected members. Members access loans with a low interest rate of five percent, to fund small, start-up enterprises. Groups are encouraged to contribute to a savings pool and give loans among themselves using a structured system that encourages joint accountability.

The full loan and interest rate is repaid at an agreed time before another loan is given. For instance, a loan for seeds or tools for agriculture would usually be repaid after the harvest and subsequent sale of crops.

Members are availed of three loan phases within a savings cycle, with corresponding maximum amounts, i.e. the first loan is equivalent to US\$100; the second loan is for US\$200; and the third and final loan is for US\$300.

VSLA does not require any external loan pool, thus emphasizing saving rather than borrowing. The scheme teaches members to think beyond merely obtaining a loan and profiting from it.

Savings also serve as an emergency fund for expenses, such as medicines or school fees. In addition, members appreciate the value of having a pooled savings scheme such that even without receiving a loan, they can collect a portion of their money back at the end of the year.

To sustain the scheme, CMSI and its partner ZOA provided members training in planning and management. CMSI noted that members shared their learning from the training and encouraged others to join or form other VSLA groups.

Although SSRF support officially ended in December 2010 wherein 1,246 members in Juba County gained direct access to credit, VSLA continues to be a sustaining enterprise.

Some groups are accessing a third round of available loans and others are incorporating themselves into a farming group that will address food insecurity through the same scheme.

Stabilization programmes underway in three states

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through peace-building messages which will be broadcast in local languages throughout the state. The radio station will allow state authorities to reach even the most remote and marginalized communities.

To date, the construction site for the radio station has been cleared and fenced, a technical design study has been completed, and a tender for construction of the station and re-transmission sites has been finalized.

Meanwhile, construction of a *haffir* (water reservoir) is almost complete in Jie, in

Kapoeta East County, while contractors are being mobilized to another haffir construction site in Loaka. A total of four haffirs will be built under the Eastern Equatoria Stabilization Programme. Kapoeta East County borders Kenya, Ethiopia and Jonglei State, and has been a key triangle of insecurity caused by pastoralist groups crossing the border for cattle grazing. This often results in cattle raiding and territorial disputes.

In addition, rehabilitating a security access road in East-

ern Equatoria's Southern Kidepo Valley, as well as building county headquarters and rehabilitating a prison, all in strategic locations, will contribute to curbing violence and promoting stability. Tenders for the road rehabilitation from Lobira junction to Kanangoro have been advertised, while construction of the county headquarters in Kapoeta South County has been re-tendered.

Priorities identified under the Lakes State Stabilization Programme include building roads, haffirs, police stations,

and county courts. To date, the contract for constructing the Karich-Amok-Piny and Aluakluak-Akuoc-Cok roads have been awarded and bush-clearing is underway. Construction of two haffirs in Abirriu and Nyangkot, county courts and police stations in key locations throughout the state have also commenced.

UNDP serves as the Lead Agency of the SSRF stabilization programmes. Implementers include UNOPS (in all three states), World Food Programme (Lakes), PACT Sudan (Eastern Equatoria), and UNDP (Jonglei).

New market rakes in more profit for women's groups

Grace Poni, a 42-year old mother of 10, no longer has to shell out precious cash to transport her agricultural produce to town. These days, she and a number of women's groups can sell their goods directly in a newly constructed covered market right in their hometown in Nyai-Wudabi, Morobo County in Central Equatoria State.

SSRF through its Small Grants Mechanism, provided funds to national non-governmental and community-based organizations to improve livelihoods and generate income especially among vulnerable groups.

In Nyai-Wudabi, the covered market has been strategically built along the main road. This cuts the cost of transporting vegetables from the farm to the main market by over US\$160 per truck rental, per trip, for which women pool their money.

It also saves them up to three hours of travel time and reduces loss of perishable goods. Moreover, having a central trading area within the village allows women to sell at higher prices than they would in the main market, located 35 km away in Yei, where supply is higher and



Newly constructed covered market in Nyai-Wudabi, Morobo, Central Equatoria © SPEDP

prices are lower.

Completed in December 2010, the covered market can accommodate as many as 25 sellers on a first come-first serve basis. Market days are usually held every Thursday and Friday. Women's groups sell vegetables and fruits to an average of about 100 buyers a day. Concessionaires pay local authorities a minimal market access fee upfront for a space in the covered market. This arrangement has generated greater income for women like Grace, with savings from

transportation costs and the ensuing loss of perishable goods.

"I used to earn about 50 SDG (US\$15) per month from selling vegetables," she shares. "Now, I bring home 10-15 SDG (US\$3-4) per day," she reveals.

The project was implemented by the national NGO Sudan Peace and Education Development Programme (SPEDP) – one of 69 local organizations across South Sudan which have received funding from SSRF. SPEDP

Women no longer have to transport perishable goods to the main town 35 km away. A covered market within the locality saves them precious time and money.

also conducted agricultural livelihoods training, such as vegetable farming, and formed women's farming groups in Morobo and other counties in Central Equatoria State. Assorted vegetable seeds, fruit seedlings and agricultural tools and equipment were provided to communities as well, to increase their agricultural productivity and household income levels.

A similar covered market has been built in Panyume payam, Morobo County through SSRF funds.

Funds transferred for the fourth Stabilization Programme: Warrap

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ventions that will reduce conflict and improve security.

As in Jonglei, Lakes, and Eastern Equatoria States, major conflicts in Warrap are largely caused by cattle raiding, competition over scarce resources, such as water points and grazing lands, and a largely unemployed population especially among youth.

More critically, poor infrastructure, such as roads and poor communication facilities, prevent state authorities and security forces from responding to or preventing conflict, leaving

many communities isolated and vulnerable. This also hampers humanitarian and development assistance.

In addition, a high level of rebel militia activities along the north-eastern border between Warrap and Unity States causes major security concerns among authorities and communities.

Through county and state-level consultations, three priority areas were identified under the programme that will support the state government's stabilization efforts. One of these

priorities is to construct or rehabilitate security access roads that will help state security personnel access isolated communities. These roads will not only mitigate and address clashes but will also improve access to basic services and facilitate trade opportunities with neighboring counties and states. Another priority is to build police posts in strategic areas to improve state authorities' capacity to respond to conflicts.

A final state priority is to construct haffirs with a

30,000m³ water capacity for cattle, along with boreholes for humans, which will reduce competition over such a scarce resource, particularly during the dry season.

UNDP serves as the Lead Agency for the programme while implementers include UNOPS (roads and police posts) and PACT (haffirs and boreholes).

To date, UNOPS has initiated tendering for the construction of two police stations in Akop and Makuac, as well as for the construction of the Warrap-Mushra/Mashraar road.

Vulnerable children enjoy better care and opportunities



Community leader Gabriel Longar (left), oversees this child protection/sports center built in Marialbai, Wau through SRF-SS. ©Maria Frio/SRF-SS

In Wau, Western Bahr el Ghazal State, communities' heightened awareness on child rights as well as the establishment of a child protection unit and sports center has translated to better care and opportunities for street children and market children.

SSRF, in partnership with

the international NGO Save the Children, helped establish a child protection unit at the State Ministry of Social Development. Social workers have been trained on child rights, as well as on child protection and reintegration to better manage child welfare cases.

"Before, there were no [official] reporting and monitoring of cases involving children," says Martin Madut, Director General of the Ministry.

Now that there is an established and functioning unit within the ministry that handles such incidences, "there are [a] reduced [number of] cases," Mr. Madut adds.

SSRF provided the ministry with office equipment to set up the unit as well as supported capacity building for social workers not only within the ministry, but also of social workers assigned in prisons, hospitals, police precincts, and those overseeing returnees.

In Marialbai in Wau, 284

children participated in sports activities at a sports center built with SSRF funding. The center provides children a safe place to spend time after school.

The center is also accessed by children in the communities nearby. Gabriel Longar, who heads the Community-Based Child Protection Network overseeing the center, says, "Children can do various sports activities and even hold their own meetings or dialogues, instead of loitering around the market where they can be prone to abuse or acts of violence."

The Network, composed of various community members, also monitors children to ensure that there are no rights violations.

Altogether, 799 children benefitted from the work of the Child Protection Unit at the Ministry of Social Development in Wau and 352 children received awareness training on child rights and child protection through child rights activities.

An ear to the ground: engaging communities to chart their progress

Consulting community members is key to ensuring that programmes address the needs that have been identified and prioritized by project beneficiaries themselves.

SSRF developed its stabilization programmes through consultations at the state level. However, the process was initiated through community and county consultations led by the government's Community Security and Small Arms Control (CSSAC) Bureau, supported by UNDP's Community Security and Arms Control project (CSAC). The CSSAC Bureau, together with CSAC, holds consultations with local authorities as well as with women, youth, tribal elders and chiefs, making the process participatory.

Here, a community consultation in Warap State is held with the CSSAC Bureau, CSAC and SRF-SS.



Community consultation in Warap State © Wakweya Tamiru/SRF-SS



South Sudan Recovery Fund (SSRF) is a pooled fund administered by UNDP's Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office. Funded by the Governments of the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, SSRF aims to bridge the gap between recovery and development in South Sudan.

SSRF Technical Secretariat
UN-OCHA Compound, Airport Road, Juba, South Sudan
<http://mdtf.undp.org>
For comments or subscriptions, email maria.frio@undpaffiliates.org

