

UNAMID's publication for the people of Darfur

VOICES

of Darfur

VOL.05 NOV-DEC 2010

A WORLD IN SILENCE

EDUCATION FOR DARFUR'S MOST
OVERLOOKED CHILDREN

GETTING READY FOR THE BIG DECISION

DARFUR'S SOUTH SUDANESE
REGISTER FOR REFERENDUM

COMMITTED TO PEACE

OUTCOMES OF DOHA CIRCULATED
TO COMMUNITIES



AFRICAN UNION - UNITED NATIONS
MISSION IN DARFUR
(UNAMID)

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05 The AU-UN Mediation team, UN-AMID and the Doha Follow-up Mechanism, which includes the participants of the second Civil Society Conference held in Doha in July 2010, meet in El Fasher, North Darfur. Nearly one hundred delegates review the status of the Darfur-wide exercise to disseminate outcomes of the Doha talks and identify concerns that warrant further attention by the population.

07 A UNAMID international civilian staff member is abducted from his accommodation in El Fasher. The Mission establishes a Crisis Management Group with Government authorities to address the issue.

01 An attack by unidentified armed men in Tina village, 14 west of Tawilla in North Darfur, leaves four dead and several wounded. A UNAMID team evacuates the injured to a medical facility in Tawilla.



05 A UNAMID peacekeeper is shot while on guard duty at a water point in Kutum, North Darfur. UNAMID forces nearby return fire which forces the perpetrators to flee.

07 Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator Valerie Amos meets with the Mission's senior leadership to discuss ways of improving collaboration among humanitarian agencies and with local authorities to better serve the people of Darfur.

11 Under Secretary-General for Peace keeping Operations Alain Le Roy concludes a three-day visit to Darfur, where he meets UNAMID and government officials, assesses the security situation and appraises the implementation of the Mission's mandate.

OCTOBER AT A GLANCE



08 The United Nations Security Council concludes a two-day technical visit to El Fasher, after meeting with state officials, community representatives, including internally displaced persons, the UN Country Team, and the Mission's senior leadership.



24 UNAMID joins worldwide celebrations for UN Day, commemorating the establishment of the Charter of the United Nations in 1947, with events in all three Darfur states, under the theme "Together for Peace in Darfur."

NOVEMBER AT A GLANCE



14 AU-UN Joint Special Representative Ibrahim Gambari addresses the national and international press in Khartoum on issues of peace, security and developments in Darfur.



25 The campaign 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence is launched in El Fasher, under the theme "Together for the Protection of Women from Violence." More than 1,000 people take part in a march of solidarity through the town.



15 Registration centers open throughout Darfur's three states, allowing South Sudan inhabitants who live in the region to participate in the upcoming referendum on the self-determination of South Sudan.



28 AU-UN Joint Chief Mediator for Darfur Djibrill Bassolé and the Qatari Foreign Minister Ahmed bin Abdullah Al-Mahmoud begin a four-day visit to the region. The aim is to conduct extensive consultations on the ongoing Doha peace process with the local authorities and representatives of civil society.



A world in silence

Education for Darfur's most overlooked children

BY MAYADA UMBADDA

Abdelatif Adam's hands weave through the air as he interprets a math lesson given by the teacher beside him. More than half of the thirty students in this classroom in El Fasher, North Darfur, are deaf. The rest differ in physical disability. They come from both the town and the nearby camps for those displaced by the seven-year conflict. For most of them, especially the deaf students, this is their best chance at a formal education.

Since 1967, when the first organization for those with hearing disabilities was established, the Sudanese National Society for the Deaf (SNSD), most of the strides made in the integration, education and training of deaf people have been largely due to the work of volunteer groups. But as a result of a strained education system and limited funding to non-government organizations (NGOs), deaf children in some

of Darfur's rural communities have virtually no chance at education.

There are less than twenty elementary schools for the deaf in the Sudan, and only one secondary school, all are run by NGOs. Teachers at crowded mainstream schools are often at a loss as to how they can help the few deaf children who attend.

A recently published report by the UNDP entitled Beyond Emergency Relief found that "at the primary level, Darfur has among the worst student-teacher ratios in northern Sudan – including 64 students for every teacher in West Darfur." This is in part due to a dramatic rise in the region's population from 1.3 million people in 1973 to 7.5 million today, half of whom are under sixteen. Since the start of the conflict, there has also been a significant shift towards urban centres and now nearly 50

per cent of Darfuris live in or near urban areas, mainly the capitals of the three states.

In North Darfur, there are no schools aimed at children with special needs, only a couple of classes held every day at the state's Union for People with Disabilities and open to anyone who cannot, for any reason, attend another school.

Abdelatif Adam was seven years old when he suffered considerable hearing loss after a severe bout of meningitis. His parents took him for treatment in Khartoum, but a failed attempt at a cochlear implant took away most of his hearing. Though he could still lip read, he struggled through school for another year before leaving and trying to learn a trade. Now 43, Abdelatif works as a tailor in the center of town, but this father of six still takes a few hours out of each day to interpret classes at the Union.



far left: Radia Ibrahim Hamid and Abdelatif Adam Ibrahim, teach mathematics to students.

left: Young members of the center look through the classroom's door.

PHOTO: ALBERT GONZALEZ FARRAN

This is especially true for girls, he says. "Once a girl's disability is apparent, she is encouraged to stay at home and is put in charge of taking care of the house. She is at the mercy of her siblings. She cooks and cleans while the others go to school and get jobs. She then finds herself with no source of income and is completely dependent on them."

One of the main objectives of these organizations is to make those with disabilities aware of their rights. A pioneer in this field is the SNSD, which was founded by Dr. Taha Talaat, an Ear, Nose and Throat

ents decide that we might be a better environment. Nowadays, families are more understanding. We also encourage them to learn sign language, so they can better communicate at home."

The SNSD also aims to spread Sudanese Sign Language, holding regular classes for those who are interested. "There are certain fields that would benefit from having someone on staff who knows sign language," says Najat Hassan Alim, a sociologist with the organization. "Places like hospitals, police stations and courts regularly contact us to provide interpreters."

“In some parts of the Sudan, having a disability, especially a congenital one, is seen as shameful”

"It's very difficult to balance my time," he signs, "But I do this because people here need to learn. It's the most important thing, especially for a child. An adult might be content with only being able to scrape together a living, but the children are the ones who want to move forward."

In 1996, Abdelatif helped found the North Darfur Association for the Deaf. But before trying to get proper programs for education and vocational training, a greater challenge was often getting families to understand their children's needs. In some parts of the Sudan, having a disability, especially a congenital one, is seen as shameful. Parents might keep disabled children confined to their homes, sometimes even going so far as to deny their existence to strangers.

"They are sometimes marginalized and segregated within their own family," says Mohammed Adam Ibrahim, head of the North Darfur's Union for the Physically Disabled. "We're told that the child has been excused from going to school and that they have neither the means nor the time to find an alternative."

specialist. He helped unify the deaf community in Khartoum and together they standardized Sudanese Sign Language, compiled a dictionary and taught it to a number of teachers. Then, in 1971, with a handful of volunteers, the SNSD opened the Sudan's first elementary for children with hearing loss, the al-Amal ("Hope") School for the Deaf. Since then, they have opened 14 branches throughout the country. A few years ago they expanded to include a secondary school.

Since she started teaching at the school 13 years ago, Mona Balla found the biggest change has been in the attitudes of her student's parents. "Before, children would be about 9 or 10 years old before their parents brought them here. Now, they're around five. Some parents were unable to accept or deal with their child's special needs, would first insist on enrolling them in mainstream schools which were ill-equipped to help them. Others just lived too far away."

"The classes are usually crowded and the teachers don't find the time to attend to each student, and sometimes end up just giving them passing grades," she explains. "It may be a couple of years before the par-

All the teachers at the al-Amal school, whether hearing or deaf, must be fluent in both Sudanese and Arabic Sign Language, common to all Arabic-speaking countries. A member of both the World Federation of the Deaf the Arab Association for the Deaf, the SNSD takes part in regular summits to review, update and standardize Arabic Sign Language. The association also convenes national standardization seminars twice a year for by teachers throughout the country.

Nearly all families with deaf children develop some basic signs to communicate with each other. However, without any exposure to a standardized sign language, these "home signs" are of limited use when meeting other deaf people. It is also difficult to express more abstract concepts without the proper vocabulary.

Literacy classes, similar to government-run anti-illiteracy programmes, are also available at the SNSD for students over 18 years of age who cannot read or write. The school makes it a point to never turn away a student, regardless of age or income. There is a nominal annual fee of about 300 Sudanese pounds (125 USD), but that is waived for anyone who cannot afford it.

“One of the main objectives of Sudanese National Society for the Deaf is to make those with disabilities aware of their rights”

Nonetheless, the teachers are well aware of the difficulty most of these students will face when trying to find jobs after graduation. Although legislations protecting the rights of people with disabilities to employment have been in place since the 1980's, the reality is that the best most of these students can hope for is a factory job.

The al-Amal School does its best to give pupils an advantage by offering an arts-based curriculum with courses that include painting, interior design, woodwork, metallurgy, and mechanical and electrical engineering. A number of their graduates later enrol in the University of the Sudan, acclaimed for its Faculty of Fine Arts.

But the majority of Darfur's deaf community can only dream of these opportunities. Outside of Khartoum, progress has been slow. The biggest hurdle has been the lack of funding.

In South Darfur, the Nyala Elementary School for the Deaf has six classrooms, and eleven teachers. Though badly in need of everything from roofs and desks to electricity and running water, for the nearly one hundred students enrolled there, this school is still a unique opportunity and an encouraging sign of how far they've come.

UNAMID recently funded a proposal to build several classrooms for the school, to be implemented by a national NGO, the al-Hidaya Rehabilitation Corporation for Special Needs. The project is planned to cost 50,000 SDG (around 20,800 USD). But it isn't just the school that's experiencing monetary setbacks. When classes were moved from the Association's headquarters in the center of Nyala to the school's new location on the outskirts of the city, attendance dropped from 186 pupils to just over 80. Parents, especially those living in displaced persons' camps, complained that they simply couldn't cover the daily transport fees.

The West Darfur Union for Deaf People has been teaching a few classes a day for pu-

pils of all ages in their headquarters. Work began several months ago on building a small school to house its 60 students, but

is currently stalled while the organization looks for sponsors.

Meanwhile in North Darfur, a plot of land was recently acquired by the organization on which they've begun planning their new headquarters, school, dormitory and vocational training center. "We've still got a long way to go," says Abdelatif. "But I'm sure we'll get there soon."

top: The teacher and a deaf student exercise on the blackboard.

bottom: Deaf students take mathematics lessons.

PHOTOS: ALBERT GONZALEZ FARRAN





Ibrahim Adam supplies water in Tawilla.

PHOTOS: KALTHOUM YAHIA

Local entrepreneur invests in water

Ibrahim Adam is the main water supplier in Tawilla

BY KALTHOUM YAHIA

Water is an important resource in Darfur, and for many years people in the region have had to manage a way to acquire it. In Tawilla, a town located about 60 kilometers from El Fasher, North Darfur, Ibrahim Adam Mohammed found it in his heart to make a difference by helping his community by offering to supply this basic commodity for its inhabitants.

The people of Tawilla are subsistence farmers, growing fruits and vegetables and selling them to nearby cities such as El Fasher. The income they receive from selling their products is used to purchase fuel and other requirements as needed. Some parts of the community are involved in brick making.

Ibrahim, a retired teacher and father of six, had dreams of doing more for his community. He went on to explore several possibilities of how he could provide basic services in the town. He ventured out by supplying water to people.

Now, 67 year old Ibrahim is the main water supplier in Tawilla. He provides water to this town which has a population of approximately 80,000 people and neighboring villages. He also provides water to

UNAMID forces stationed in the area.

He started out with only two boreholes twenty years ago with the profits he made from transporting fruits from Jebel Marra area, in the central region, to the nation's capital. Today, he has a total of six wells operating in Tawilla.



In the beginning he faced a number of challenges such as a lack of fuel and spare parts, but fortunately with the help of his team who were responsible for the regular maintenance of the equipment, his business was revived and he continued supplying water for the population in need.

During the war, he could only offer water to two camps in the area, Al Salaam camp which had a population of about 40,000

and Argo Camp of 20,000. The inhabitants exchanged their produce, mainly sorghum, for water in that time.

He says on an average day, UNAMID purchases between 8 and 10 tanker loads of water from him. Others that benefit from the water supply include Sudanese military officials, health centers and internally displaced persons living in the area.

Before Ibrahim began supplying water, the community received it from hand held wells, which now appear to have dried up. Residents purchase water on a regular basis from their tribesman Ibrahim for about two Sudanese Pounds (0.75 USD) a barrel.

Ibrahim has indeed made a profitable business supplying water to his community; he has managed to send his children to school, two of which have graduated. He thinks that there are a lot of ways one can make a difference in his town and is pleased that he can help his people.



Getting ready for the big decision

Darfur's South Sudanese register for referendum

BY GUIOMAR PAU SOLE

Altahir Yousif hasn't decided what to do yet. He would like to go back to South Sudan, his birthplace, but he currently works in Darfur and obviously doesn't want to lose his job. On 9 January South Sudanese will choose whether to become independent or to remain part of a united Sudan. Some of its former residents see this moment as the time to return to their homeland.

Many South Sudanese fled from their towns during the long conflict. In Darfur there were roughly 46,000 people from South Sudan, accordingly to a 2008 census. And now they face an important decision.

Altahir says that he has still some time, as "it is said that if the secession wins it won't be effective until six months after the referendum. Then I will have to choose if we remain in the North or move to the South. Until now, people are safe in North Sudan, however, we are concerned as to what the

vote might bring," he explains.

Even with the possibilities of a rise of the conflict in the South, many are more afraid of the consequences in the North. In El Fasher, Darfur, at least 300 people (about 45 families) have already left. They organized their way home, hiring trucks with each family paying about 3,000 Sudanese Pounds (USD 1,200) for the trip. "They took everything they had with them. Even some of them sold their houses at really cheap prices," explains Laila Lukwasa, originally from Juba, who has lived 12 years outside South Sudan.

"I'm planning to go to Juba for Christmas and stay there until referendum day. After that I will come back to my duties in Darfur," he explains. Laila prefers to register himself and vote there because he feels more comfortable.

In a similar situation is Lily Kenyi. For the moment she is staying in El Fasher, where

she works, but her family plans to return to the South. She doesn't know what the future will bring. She wonders what will happen after the referendum with the people from South Sudan who live in other parts of the country. "In the North, there is sometimes discrimination against Southerners, but if we go back, we don't know if we will find a job there. If the country is divided, we prefer to be in our land," Lily adds.

For those who don't make it to the South to register, there are 20 registration centers set up in Darfur. The sites are coordinated in each state by the State Referendum Committee, whose members are selected by the South Sudan Referendum Commission, which is funded by the Government of Sudan, the Government of South Sudan and the international community.

Some organizations, such as IOM, UNDP or UNMIS, are assisting the referendum process with the help of national NGOs,

Left & Bottom: South Sudanese register in El Fasher, North Darfur.

Right: Abdul Rahman Suleiman, a South Sudanese "sultan" (leader) from Aweil, shows his voter's card.

PHOTOS: ALBERT GONZALEZ FARRAN

as well as the Union of Young of South Sudan in Darfur, which are also conducting voter education activities. UNAMID's role is to provide logistic support (such as the distribution of materials) to UNMIS who, in the application of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, is mandated to oversee the process.

The first day in El Fasher registration center was calm. Adam Ali Ahmed Adam, one of the registration officers who has 35 years of experience working on elections, commented that "the last days of the process are always the more crowded." When someone arrived, the first thing Adam did was check the voter fingers. An ink mark on their finger indicated that the individual had already registered.

To be registered the first condition was that the voter must be at least 18 years of

“Some South Sudanese see this moment as the time to return to their homeland”

age. Then, one had to prove with an ID or with the testimony of a sultan (South Sudanese community leader) that he or she belonged to a tribe which had its roots in South Sudan before the independence of the country in 1956.

The first one to register in El Fasher on 15 November was Sultan Abdul Rahman Suleiman. His task was to help officers identify people originally from his region over the 24 day registration-period.

The Sultan has spent more than half his life in Darfur. He came in 1986, when he was 12 years-old. He doesn't think that there will be security problems in Darfur, but prefers to go back there with his Darfurian wife, because he wishes to return to his land. "People feel satisfied to go back and settle in the South," he explained. The



ones who arrive there and don't have any property are staying in temporary camps, and expect that the Government of South Sudan will give them land at a symbolic price.

Abdul was not alone. Another sultan in El Fasher, Anglo Koc Koc Dut Atuoc, was volunteering with him in the center. He is 38 years-old, and has been living in Darfur for 17 years. He explained that people in the South are looking forward to the referen-

dum. In his opinion "some are with the independence and other with the unity, the majority is not clear," he noted.

The future voters appeared in the center little by little. Rebeca Lou registered herself the first day in El Fasher where she has been living and working for the last 20 years. Her children who lived in Khartoum had already moved to the South. "Independence is a thing for politics, what people care most about are their rights and finding a job," she expressed.

Even if the future is not clear, the referendum in South Sudan will represent a historic moment for citizens like Althahir Yousif, for the country and for Africa as a whole. ■





Residents of Kalma decide to pick up where they left off

After months of preparation, IDPs of the camp are encouraged to return to rebuild their home

BY SHARON LUKUNKA

At about 0700 in the morning, the women and children begin preparing for their departure, to pick up where they left off seven years ago. Trucks are already outside, the men and boys stand outside in the morning breeze, loading their few belongings.

Halima Yusef Mohamed Sanusi, a 26 year-old mother of two decided it was time to

return to her place of origin in Andi village, West Darfur. Halima's husband and several others left here about two months ago to prepare for their return. "It is good to return home, I would like to begin rebuilding and rehabilitating our land that we left behind," she says.

More than 500 individuals from Kalma internally displaced persons (IDPs) camp re-

turned to their villages in West Darfur on 5, 7 and 9 December. They returned to Andi and Gido villages, Tandusa village in Forobaranga locality and Sulu in Azoum locality, between Zalingei and Mournei and Urum in Habilla locality, situated about 90 and 150 kilometers south of El Geneina town. More are expected to follow in the coming months. The returns programme is the first government-initiated opera-



above: Pregnant and sick women, young children and disabled people travel by bus.
left: A family of returnees are attended by a doctor in Nyala before the departure.

PHOTOS: ALBERT GONZALEZ FARRAN

tion with the assistance of United Nations Agencies in the state.

Due to the security situation in Kalma, the Government met with UN Agencies to explore ways of assisting IDPs return to villages in West Darfur. A joint field assessment visit was conducted by United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) as the lead agency in South Darfur, with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) playing a supportive role.

Registration and verification was conducted for more than 1,500 individuals living in the camp. For its part, the Governments of South and West Darfur agreed to take full ownership and assist the IDPs to return to their homes, as well as provide escort and ensure security throughout the journey.

Kalma camp, with a population of more

than 200,000, located about 25 kilometers north of Nyala town, is among the largest camps in Darfur.

Sheikh Osman Mohamed Ali Oumar of Andi village was among the leaders who participated in the field visit with UN Agencies. He has been living in the camp for seven years, but says he misses his previous life in his home.

A day before the departure, IOM conducted a verification and registration process and the World Health Organization (WHO), in coordination with the Ministry of Health, carried out medical screening for every individual to ensure they were fit to travel. The returnees were also provided with non-food items such as blankets, jerry cans and sleeping mats for each household for use during the journey.

The Head of UNHCR's Field Office in Nyala, Rose Muchina, said, "we have conducted several operations before, but this is an exceptional one as it is the first movement of people from one state to another. We are happy to assist in their return to their villages, as it is voluntary."

Mohamed Ahmed Hamid Yusef, 32, and his brother Zachariah Idris Mattar, 27, are happy to be returning to Urum village. They both say that since their arrival in Kalma, life has been difficult as they had to depend on ration cards to receive food.

"We want to cultivate our own land for food and not wait for assistance," Mohamed adds.

The three day journey through Kass, Nertiti and Zalingei towns in South and West Darfur was accompanied by six social workers who provided counseling and support to the women and children, and also supplied soccer balls for children to play during short breaks along the route.

As the trucks and buses left the transit point in Nyala, those left behind were tearful as they waved goodbye to their long time friends.

"It is not easy to leave a home one has known for so long. These people have spent seven years in the camp, they have established relations, built homes and now they suddenly have to start afresh," commented UNHCR Field Assistant Babiker Mohamed. Nonetheless, the IDPs are excited to be returning home to see what is left of their villages and to begin to rebuild, yet they are sad to be leaving friends behind.

The hope is that this kind of returnee exercise will continue to allow the people of Darfur to rebuild their communities and encourage those living in camps to return to their homes and enjoy the benefits of peace and stability in their region.

The ecological footprint of plastic bags

Though cheap, they are not environmentally friendly

BY SHARON LUKUNKA

Plastic bags are very popular in grocery and retail stores and among consumers. Open bags with handles are used in large numbers worldwide as most shops provide them as a convenience to their customers. In some societies they are even more popular among under privileged children as they use them to carry their books. The bags are cheap, strong, lightweight and functional for carrying food and other goods.

Although everyone uses them, most of us are unaware of the affect they have on our environment. Despite the impact of these bags is not directly noticeable, it is significant and harmful. They litter the environs, cause pollution, kill wildlife and destroy part of the resources of the earth.

Some governments around the world are taking the initiative to deal with the environmental impact of plastic bags by either banning them or discouraging their use.

To begin with, plastics are made of polyethylene and other chemicals, which are derived from natural gas and petroleum that emits tons of carbon into the air annually.

Plastics also create a visual pollution problem and can have harmful effects on both the sea and animals. Plastic bags are particularly noticeable components of litter due to their size and because most do not decompose.

Once these plastics are litter, they end up in rubbish pits. They find their way into drainage pipes, parks, streets and, if they are burned, they produce toxins.

A cleanup campaign is organized by UNAMID every two months to help the Darfur community address this problem. The initiative is aimed at creating awareness and ensuring a cleaner environment and surroundings. Locals in Abu Shouk camp, on

the outskirts of El Fasher, have employed individuals responsible to collect litter in and around the community.

Grocery stores used to ask, whether the customers wished to have paper or plastic at the checkout, but now many stores automatically pack items in plastic unless consumers specifically ask for paper bags.

Many stores have begun plastic bag recycling programs to reduce the number of bags that are thrown away. It is also the responsibility of individuals to create better alternatives so consumers can to conveniently incorporate reusable products into their daily lives.

Environmentally conscious consumers are now using reusable tote bags in order to avoid using plastic bags. ■

Plastic bags entangled in bushes in North Darfur.

PHOTO: SHARON LUKUNKA



Women working for women

A day in the life of a gender police advisor

BY GUIOMAR PAU SOLE

Angela Anyeman left Ghana eight months ago to join UNAMID as a police advisor. Based in El Fasher, North Darfur, she is the gender and child protection focal point for Zam Zam camp, which is home to over 50,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs). The Mission carries out three patrols a day in Zam Zam, covering 24 hours a day and seven days a week. Each day, Angela works a different shift. Today she is on the morning patrol.

At 8.00 am she meets her fellow police advisors in Zam Zam base camp where they go over the route and arrangements for the convoy of a confidence-building patrol. The convoy is usually escorted by Indonesian or Jordanian Formed Police Units, although occasionally a Nepalese contingent is requested to provide protection.

To ensure that IDPs are not only protected but also feel safe, UNAMID police strives to be visible in the entire camp throughout the day. The community's security is now far better than it was before UNAMID was established and there are only minor incidents, mostly at night.

During their route through the camp, the

convoy makes a number of stops to interact with the population. Angela and two other female police advisors are accompanied by Hadija their language assistant, who translates their words to Arabic. They meet with displaced women to listen to their concerns. To ensure a closer and more confident dialogue, male police advisors stand aside when gender issues are discussed. Today they're talking about the problem of early marriage. They have noticed that it is not unusual to find 16-year old girls who are already mothers to four children.

Remaining respectful of local culture and traditions, Angela explains the importance of education for girls and the health risks of pregnancy during adolescence. She advises teenage girls to avoid marriage and attend school until they reach the age of 18, when their bodies are ready for motherhood. The officer also recommends that the women space their pregnancies. As food and water are scarce in the camp, Angela asserts that families with fewer children to provide for will be healthier.

Since arriving in Darfur, Angela has noticed that her work has made a genuine impact on the local population. She re-

mains enthusiastic despite the language barrier as she easily bridges the gap with universal body language and expressions. Each day, she sees more girls going to school and more women cognizance of their rights.

However, she is also always moved by complaints over the shortages of adequate food, water and health care. While these items do not fall within UNAMID's mandate, they can pass them on to the various UN Agencies and NGOs operating in the region.

Towards the end of their patrol, Angela and the other police advisors write a daily report about the current security situation and progress on their various initiatives for the review of the police commanders who will analyze it.

As her day draws to a close, she begins preparing for tomorrow's afternoon patrol and the night patrol the day after that. The latter are by far the most challenging and dangerous. But, Angela is unfazed, "We are here to help the people of Darfur. This is what we do."

Angela Anyeman, with her colleagues, during a morning patrol in Zam Zam camp



PHOTO: OLIVIER CHASSOT



PHOTO: ALBERT GONZALEZ FARRAN

Committed to achieving peace in Darfur

Outcomes of Doha circulated to communities

BY SHARON LUKUNKA

UNAMID's efforts to support the mediation team in Doha and the political process continue to move forward, paving the way for peace agreement for Darfur. A total of 36 workshops were organized and one symposium throughout the three states, through which it sensitized the local community on the outcome of the Doha I and II Civil Society Conferences.

"The time is now to reach an Agreement and stop the fighting because people of Darfur have suffered far too long," said JSR Ibrahim Gambari. "We urge all those movements that have not joined the political process to do so, and we have to make a point that there can be no military solution to this conflict."

Among the sessions organized was a

workshop held in Mellite town, located about 68 kilometers north of El Fasher in North Darfur. The locality has a population of about 140,000 who are mainly Berti and Ziyardia tribes that rely on agricultural produce and livestock, a few populations conduct commercial trade on a small scale mainly through a direct air link from El Fasher to Libya. In the past, before the conflict in 2003, the area was a well known commercial trade centre with its neighbor Libya, with loads of goods then transported by road, it was the lifeline of the community.

The population receives water from the largest valley in the area, built in 1947.

The forum was attended by more than 100 participants from civil society and com-

munity based organizations, native administration, traditional leaders, women and youth groups. The session discussed the outcome of the Doha Agreements including power and wealth sharing, development, justice and reconciliation. They also talked about the role of local society in the peace process, particularly women and national non-governmental organizations (NGOs). They considered the root causes of the Darfur conflict, the issue of voluntary returnees and refugees, while stressing the provision of basic services and security as well as compensation and reconciliation.

Umda Suleiman Hamad, a native of Mellite town, said he was happy to have attended the workshop. "It is good to know the contents of the Doha Agreements signed by



PHOTO: SHARON LUKUNKA

above: Civil society representatives from Mellite, North Darfur, in a recent workshop on the outcomes of Doha negotiations.

left: Participants of the second Civil Society Conference held in Doha in July 2010, meet in El Fasher University.

Darfur Civil Society organizations.” Umda Hamad who is also a secondary school headmaster said he will return to his community to address the students on the outcomes of the Doha consultations.

ety plays in the peace process.

Members expressed appreciation for the opportunity to learn more about the Doha process and called for inclusive participa-

“The time is now to reach an agreement and stop the fighting because the people of Darfur have suffered too long”

Other participants, including Madina Yahya Mohammed, a school teacher and Youth leader, and Suda Hussein Adam, said the workshop provided a good opportunity to learn about the role civil soci-

tion in the peace process, civil society. The participants raised a number of concerns including the issue of Kalma camp in South Darfur and the role of UNAMID and government of Sudan in addressing disarmament.

The last of the workshop on sensitizing the local community on the Agreements concluded on November 4 in El Geneina, West Darfur. A total of 125 participants drawn from various segments of the community including the Commander of Sudanese Armed Forces in the region attended the workshop.

During the deliberations, participants agreed to forget the past and seek ways to restore confidence and peaceful social co-existence. The outcome of the Doha I and II declarations have been fully endorsed by the community in Darfur.



PUBLISHED BY :

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