

IN THIS ISSUE

- Doctor's mission to improve health care
- Roadmap for the future
- UNDP supports medium term development
- Community security through cooperation

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A doctor's mission to improve health care

The queue outside the front gates of Bentiu State Hospital began in the early morning. Mothers held sick babies, the elderly rested against the wall, and together dozens of people waited for the gates to open. "Everybody comes here," said the hospital's surgeon, Dr. Patrick Njeru Nyaga. "Some travel for two or three days."

Bentiu State Hospital is the only referral hospital in Unity State, and receives patients and referrals from all across the border region between South Sudan and Sudan. The area is prone to violent conflict, particularly cattle raids, which place a major strain on government health services. "When it's calm, we get things like ulcers, infections, complications. But this state is volatile," said Dr. Patrick. "We get all the injuries - gunshot wounds, explosive injuries. Truckloads are coming in."

Just a few months ago, the number of people arriving for treatment was increasing, and patients had no access to surgery. Returnees from the north were flooding across the border; people were fleeing conflict in nearby Abyei. "We had insecurity, and there was no surgeon here at that time," said Simon Peter Wal, Acting Director General at the State Ministry of Health. Their plea for assistance to the national Ministry of Health was heard, and passed on to the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD).

Through the support of the Government's IGAD Regional Initiative on Capacity Enhancement, hundreds of Civil Service Support Officers have been recruited from the East African community and are being brought to

South Sudan to help build the capacity of public servants in the new country. One of the priority areas that needs help is public health - both in administration and medical specializations. UNDP is facilitating the IGAD Initiative, which is led by South Sudan's Ministry of Labour, Public Service and Human Resources Development, in partnership with the governments of Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia.

Dr. Patrick, a specialist surgeon, was seconded from Kenya. He has been practicing medicine for eleven years, most of it in surgery. He saw the job advertisement in the newspaper and he thought, "I want to take on more challenges. They needed help to set up the medical systems. I thought this was a new kind of challenge." He is faced with tremendous obstacles every day in his attempts to bring high quality surgical services to Bentiu Hospital, particularly the lack of resources. "I didn't know what to do with such limited resources and infrastructure," said Dr. Patrick. The hospital currently has no CT Scan machine, and its X-Ray machine is broken. Attempting to diagnose and treat cases is difficult. "But with the little we have, there is work we can do," said the doctor optimistically. "When you see the patients, nothing could be more satisfying. They are at the end of their journey - it is you, treating them, or death."

The efforts of the surgeon to help improve the hospital go well beyond his surgical expertise. "Patrick is making



Treating a child with a bullet wound at Bentiu State Hospital.
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a difference," said Dr. Peter Gatkouth, the Medical Director of Bentiu Hospital. "He helps with activities like Continuous Medical Education (for other doctors). He is sharing his knowledge in planning for the future of the hospital. We are happy he is here." Dr. Peter acknowledges the support from the region. "When our brothers from IGAD countries come to help us, we feel it is the same as getting help from a South Sudanese."

Dr. Patrick hopes his contribution to South Sudan's health system will be a lasting one. He is actively mentoring young South Sudanese surgeons, to pass on his skills, and working towards improved hospital management systems. "I would like to have a functional hospital which is not dependent on individuals, but systems," he emphasized. ■



A roadmap for the future

What is the South Sudan Development Plan?

The new government of South Sudan has launched its first ever Development Plan. The Plan outlines the Government's major priorities for the next three years in the areas of governance, economic growth, social development as well as conflict prevention and security. The new Plan which was approved in early September will serve as the country's roadmap for the future, directing Government expenditure and donor investment into much-needed development initiatives.

Why is it important?

South Sudan became an independent nation on July 9, following decades of conflict. The new nation is one of the most undeveloped countries in the world, suffering from low levels of literacy, tribal conflict, poor health

conditions and an inexperienced workforce. So far, development efforts by the Government and the international community have been uncoordinated and fragmented. There is an urgent need for the Government to deliver the dividends of peace to the people of South Sudan, so they can share in the oil wealth of the country, experience greater prosperity and an improved standard of living. The Development Plan sets ambitious targets for improvement in key areas, outlining measurable goals to be met by the Government with assistance from partners.

How was it created?

The Plan was designed through a collaborative process guided by an inter-ministerial planning committee with input from key ministries and agencies in the areas of governance, economic development, social and human development, and conflict prevention and security. In addition, the planning process included input from major stakeholders at the state

and local level. UNDP was deeply engaged in the creation of this development plan from helping identify priorities to providing technical expertise on specific issues.

What are the objectives?

The goal of South Sudan's Development Plan is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable peace and development in South Sudan and provide an overarching framework for planning at the national, state and county levels. The Plan concentrates on four core building blocks: improving governance; achieving an aggressive rural development strategy to improve economic livelihood and increase employment opportunities; improving and expanding education and health services; and deepening peace-building and security efforts. In addition to the four focus area, seven issues have been identified as critical and are addressed throughout the Plan: the environment, gender equality, youth employment, capacity-building of the government, human rights, HIV/AIDS, and corruption. ■

Some key development plan objectives	2013 Target
Governance	
Strengthen the legislative assembly's capacity to oversee the government and the budget	Increase the number of laws passed from 12 to 18
Stabilize government revenue and improve macroeconomic management	Increase non-oil revenues from SDG118 million to SDG500 million
Economic development	
Increase crop production	Increase cereal production from 0.69 million MT/year to more than 1 million MT/year
Create interstate, trunk and feeder roads	Build 752km asphalted trunk road and 2000km feeder road
Social & human development	
Reduce maternal, infant and child mortality by increasing access to health services	Increase healthcare access from 13% to 40%
Ensure South Sudan is on the path towards universal enrollment in primary school	Increase primary school enrolment from 46% to 65%
Conflict prevention & security	
Establish an effective DDR program that provides ex-combatants with a sustainable future	Demobilize and reintegrate 30,000 ex-combatants
Improve access to justice and respect for human rights	Increase the number of county legal affairs offices from 32 to 79

UNDP supports medium term development

When the design of the South Sudan Development Plan began, UNDP worked closely with the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning to implement a consultative process for key stakeholders and to ensure that the views of local communities were better articulated in the Government's priorities. This process helped produce a Plan that addresses the different needs of people across the country and provides a nationally owned development framework for Government and international donors to support the new nation in these first two critical years of statehood.

UNDP is aligning its programme with the priorities outlined in the South Sudan Development Plan. As the United Nations lead development agency, UNDP draws on its expertise in development planning processes and is providing technical advice to Government in the following areas:

- **Governance:** UNDP is supporting the deployment of international civil servants and technical experts in key areas including management of public resources, rule of law, health and public administration. We provide advice and support to the Office of the President and Ministries including Finance and Economic Planning. In 2011 we have helped the ten state governments prepare budgets and are in the process of launching new initiatives to boost accountability and oversight functions.
- **Economic Development:** UNDP is working with the UN Capital Development Fund and the Central Bank of South Sudan to increase access to microfinance for poor women across the country. We have already delivered US\$20million in livelihoods and agriculture training, and created a number of common markets in vital trading centres. We are injecting expertise and support into the Wildlife sector by helping Government to protect natural habitats and plan for the future.

- **Social and Human Development:** UNDP is helping the Government deliver testing and treatment for HIV & AIDS; 4,000 people are already receiving treatment. In addition, UNDP is supporting the government in strengthening public health systems and in designing a cash transfer programme, which will provide regular payments to poor families to secure food and other vital needs for their children.

- **Conflict Prevention and Security:** UNDP works with the Government's Bureau for Community Security and Small Arms Control and the Peace Commission on grassroots peacebuilding efforts, as demonstrated by the building of ten water haffirs to mitigate conflict over resources. We are providing strategic guidance into the DDR Commission's new plans for reintegration of ex-combatants and we have a comprehensive Rule of Law programme delivering both infrastructure and capacity building support to police, prisons and the justice sector.

With a complex development environment, having a strategy to guide efforts is critical. UNDP helped the government draft its Medium Term Capacity Development Strategy (MTCDS) that focuses on strengthening the public sector and its systems. This strategy looks at the current levels of capacity in government institutions, and ensures that the new nation will be able to live up to the goals outlined in the South Sudan Development Plan. The strengthening of institutions is a priority for UNDP in South Sudan, as it is critical to ensuring a country can deliver services to its people. UNDP South Sudan's Head of Office George Conway, said "South Sudan needs strong government institutions to be able to deliver to the people. Particularly in areas like rule of law, financial management, public administration, health and education.

When the government is strong in these areas, the people will really be able to feel the benefits of peace and independence." ■



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Community security through cooperation

The state of Northern Bahr el Ghazal in South Sudan presents many challenging problems for the newly-formed police force. The state borders Darfur in Sudan, as well as the contested region of Abyei. Tens of thousands of South Sudanese have returned across the border from the north following South Sudan's independence in July, there are critical shortages of basic services, violent tribal conflict persists in the region, and there is little presence of government or rule of law in people's lives.

Dilip Kumar arrived in the state capital of Aweil in September 2010 as a Law Enforcement Advisor, and already has made a difference. Working as an UN Volunteer, he has provided on-the-job training to the state government to more efficiently manage security operations and the police force. This included helping the Police Commissioner recruit 657 new police officers, design a basic police training curriculum and train police in public security and crowd control. "If society is secure and if people are secure, then they can use their efforts towards good," said Dilip, who hopes the greater presence of law and order will lead to economic development for the people.

His work has also included the establishment of criminal procedures and penal codes, a crime statistics reporting system, and accounting mechanisms for the local security sector. Using his Masters of Business Administration degree and specializations in Finance and Human Resources, Dilip has helped to lay strong foundations for an accountable, well-run police force in Northern Bahr el Ghazal state. "We are very proud of Dilip's achievements," said UNDP's Acting Head of Office, George Conway. "He is bringing real results to bear in a difficult working environment. UNDP is working across the country to extend the reach of government to the people, and Dilip is a great example of the impact our UN Volunteers are having."

Dilip has drawn from his experience in law enforcement in southern India,



UN Volunteer Dilip Kumar volunteering with new police recruits to plant trees in Northern Bahr el Ghazal state
© UNDP / Dilip Kumar

working to build peace between Hindu and Muslim communities. Here in South Sudan, he has formed Police Community Relationship Committees and organized meetings between the police and government employees, local traders, and payam and bomas chiefs. His training has also focused on advising police officers on how to exchange security-related information, resolve differences, and enhance community security through cooperation. Guot Akol Guot, now a Sergeant Major in the South Sudan Police Services (SSPS) in Northern Bahr el Ghazal state was personally mentored by Dilip and as a result has gained experience in using computer systems for policing functions. "If there is a better word then excellent, we would use it for the support provided

by the Law Enforcement Advisor and UNDP in this state."

In an effort to create a positive relationship between the police and community members, Dilip has facilitated a culture of volunteerism by setting-up blood donation drives, tree planting campaigns and neighbourhood clean-up crews. Dilip's achievements are recognised by the Northern Bahr el Ghazal State Police Commissioner who said "We owe our independence to international field staff like Dilip, who worked with us towards a successful and non-violent referendum and interim period for independence." The experience has also proved to be fulfilling for Dilip, who has committed to extend his UN Volunteer position for a second year. ■



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