

Project Holder: Resource Centre for Civil Leadership
(RECONCILE INTERNATIONAL)

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Project Title: CIVIC EDUCATION AND PSYCHOSOCIAL
REHABILITATION.

Reporting Period: September-December 2006.

Introduction:

The situation in the Southern Sudan one and a half years after the signing of the peace agreement has been one of hope, high expectation, anticipation, anxiety and frustration. The communities were eager to see the agreement being implemented so that they could experience visible change in their lives through improvement of the infrastructure, provision of basic services, safe return home and building sustainable livelihoods.

During the twenty years of rule of the Sudan Peoples Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M), very little visible physical improvement can be seen in the areas that were liberated. The priorities were pursuing the war. Looking at other liberation struggles that have ended their wars, it is clear that it has not been easy for the liberators to be transformed into democrats and developers. Governments have been formed and civil structures have been institute but much more is expected in order for a transition to democratic governance to materialize and time seems to be moving faster than the development. Thus it is vital for the Sudanese people to have an understanding of democracy as well as their rights and responsibilities as citizens. To achieve democracy requires a public that is well-informed, knows their rights, and can advocate for themselves in a peaceful manner when those rights are jeopardized or threatened. Therefore, RECONCILE sought to continue its engagement of training with State parliamentarians to promote policy development and multiparty democracy through the Democracy and Good Governance objective of the project. As well as engaging in consultations and meetings with the Church and community leadership on reconciliation and trauma healing.

Only when war memories are healed will Sudanese be able to break out of the cycle of violence is the premise that RECONCILE works from. Reconciliation among communities is still a challenge that needs to be addressed as evidence by the ethnic tensions and violence that are still occurring even after the signing of the peace agreement. As such another focus of RECONCILE in the period being reported was promotion of reconciliation through psychosocial rehabilitation in the communities. The period being reported is from January to August because programme activities were extended till August as funds were received in July due to delays beyond our control.

I. Changes in Development Context, Problem Analysis and Development Goal:

The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) signed in January 2005 and Interim National Constitution (INC) includes guarantees of numerous rights and freedoms to the citizens of Sudan. The Interim Constitution for the Government of South Sudan (GoSS) also includes many of these rights. Despite the fact that, the vast majority of South Sudanese, and even many government leaders, still do not have copies of these documents and hardly have any idea what has been signed on their behalf, RECONCILE made a vital contribution in awareness creation of the CPA and constitutions during this period.

However, even after one and half years of signing of the peace agreement, there are still a number of military groups who are opposing and competing with each other in parts of Southern Sudan particularly in Upper Nile Region for example Tanginya's group in

Nasir, the displaced people from oil exploration who are presently expected to return home are still in camps which has caused fear and uncertainties where they will be resettled which in most cases still lacks basic social services compared to the camps. There have been reports of disarmament of armed civilians particularly in Akobo area which is a positive step by the people and payment of soldiers' salaries. Although this has reduced the looting but in other places such as Yei it has increased the misbehavior of the soldiers who have killed, raped and also looted people violently.

As an instrument inspired by the churches, RECONCILE sought to address the above concerns and challenges by engaging in consultations with the Church and community leadership on a broad range of issues that address each of these concerns. These consultations were pre-planning meetings for training facilitators to promote civic education in their churches and communities, engaging civil society organizations in strategizing for community mobilization for peace, trauma healing, reconciliation and public discourse surrounding the signed peace agreement as well as follow-up meetings which evaluated the psychosocial rehabilitation program and provided more materials for the trainees. These consultations and engagements with civil society created understanding and provided opportunities for the community and church leaders to express the areas of concern and need on the issues of reconciliation and healing war memories and also identify what proactive steps are necessary for promoting civic education.

Development goal:

RECONCILE sought to empower local community and Church leaders and members by involving them in planning for the trainings as a means of creating an awareness and knowledge that leads to active ownership of the tools for peace building and social transformation; Conscientization on issues of democratization; governance and human rights; monitoring of human rights and implementation of the CPA.

II. Activities:

1.1 Training in conflict resolution, democracy, governance and human rights.

1) *Report on Training in Conflict Resolution, democracy and human rights- Abwong Upper Nile.*

From 21st-23rd September 2006, RECONCILE carried out a workshop in Abwong Upper Nile an area abandoned by civilians for a time during the 21 years of civil war due to constant attacks from the government forces and militias. As the peace talks were taking place in Machakos, Kenya relative security prevailed in the area and some of the former residents returned but by 2002 inter-ethnic fighting between the Dinka, Nuer and Shilluk forced them to flee once again.

Then in mid-2004 the religious leaders together with some community members formed a grassroots peace initiative to work with the conflicting ethnic groups for peaceful resolve to the fighting. This was the start of Magang Grassroots Peace Initiative (MGPI).

The leaders highlighted a number of troubling signs that indicates significant conflict and animosity remains among the peoples of southern Sudan, with many deeply-rooted causes for conflict as well as potential conflicts that need to be addressed at the grass roots level with full community participation. Some of the areas they are seeking more training in conflict resolution is on the following conflicts: day to day conflicts due to petty misunderstandings and lack of communication in the absence of law and order and in effect lack of good governance, displaced communities returning to their former homes and lands further competing for limited resources particularly land, and availability of small arms in the communities. Thus RECONCILE responded by carrying out the above training which brought together 45 community elders, executive chiefs, pastors, evangelists, catechists, teachers, payam administrators, women leaders, deacons, soldiers and other government officials. 17 had come from a distance of 12 hours by boat and 2-3 days walk, 4 from a distance of 6 hours walk, 5 from a distance of 3 hours walk and 11 from Abwong town but had to cross the swamp for total of 1 hour each way to come to Geldhiak.

The participants expressed the following expectations which they hoped the workshop would address:

- Sharing ideas of how to live peacefully.
- Follow-up to the earlier peace meetings.
- Learn how to deal with life after the peace agreement.
- To share with others what we know and learn about the peace agreement.

As the workshop came to close, the participants expressed the following concerns about the post-peace period and suggested strategies to counter them:

Concerns	Strategies
Development and re-building programs not visible in the area i.e. schools, hospitals, markets etc	Form committees and raise the issue with our representatives i.e. members of legislative assemblies in Juba and Malakal.
Militias still operating.	Raise the issue to the county commissioners so that they can approach SPLA and UNIMS.
No employment opportunities available.	Raise the issue with our representatives i.e. members of legislative assemblies in Juba and Malakal.
Teachers and nurses have not been paid yet.	Raise the issue with the county commissioners.
Wealth sharing-oil of the southern Sudan yet Northern Sudan getting more of the revenues.	We will choose wisely when the time for Referendum election comes.
Southern Kordofan and Southern Blue Nile not given right to self-determination.	Ask SPLM to negotiate with Nuba and Angasana at the end of the popular consultation.

Seminars on reconciliation, re-integration and resilience- Renk and Yei Counties.

RECONCILE was invited by the Peace and Justice office of the Diocese of Renk Episcopal Church of Sudan to carry out a seminar on reconciliation and re-integration to take place in November 2006 in Bentiu had to be re-scheduled to Renk in December 2006 from 5th-9th because of insecurity in the area. Nevertheless it was well attended by 75 persons among them chiefs, community and religious leaders-Christian and Muslim. The Greater Upper Nile Region Ecumenical for Justice and Peace was provided with a platform to report on their assessment visits on reconciliation and peace. Where people were asked what is our role as Moslems and Christians to bring peace in our community in Upper Nile, such as –Nuer, Jank, Sholok, Anyuak, Maban and Murle? They responded as follows:

- To maintain our Sudanese identity whether we are Moslems or Christians where we consider ourselves in a spirit of nationalism, not tribalism.
- To mobilized our communities to protect the land more then ever before.
- To encourage mutual respect for faith base group through conducting of workshop among Moslems and Christians in peace building and sustainable development.

The participants concluded the seminar by resolving to support the local government authorities in their endeavour for peace by:

- Encouraging inter-ethnic and cultural activities that can bring harmony and learn from each other positive transforming culture.
- Encouraging of inter-tribal marriages.
- Encouraging Christians and Moslems to work together in social affairs and developmental activities in their areas.
- Supporting sustainable peace through development in all parts of Southern Sudan.
- Supporting democratic systems that respect rules of law of the country.

The workshop with 42 Chiefs, boma and payam administrators from Yei and surrounding areas was held in Yei at RECONCILE training centre from 13th-16th October 2006. It enlightened the leaders of the provisions in the peace agreement for reconciliation and skills of civil leadership, functions of local government and the role of traditional leaders in re-integration.

III. Project Objective:

To empower local communities including church leaders by creating awareness and providing knowledge that leads to active ownership of the tools for peace building namely psychosocial transformation, implementation of the CPA, and conscientization on issues of democratization, governance and human rights.

IV. Planned and Achieved Intermediate Results:

Planned Activities	Intermediate Results	Remarks
Training in Democracy, good governance, human rights and conflict resolution.	Communities are starting to become aware of their rights, obligations and roles. RECONCILE is receiving human rights reports from communities. Communities equipped with basic civic ed information and skills.	The pre-planning meetings for the trainings has improved the quality of presentations as RECONCILE deals with the issues and concerns raised by participants as opposed to anticipating what their needs are. Communities have started reporting to their leaders concerns about their rights.
Seminars on Reconciliation re-integration and resilience.	Communities sensitized and equipped to deal at basic level with the issues of trauma and reconciliation	As reproted in the meetings, communitites are utilising the knowlege gained for basic trauma and reconciliation.

V. Changes and Conclusion:

There have not been any major changes in the project area as stated one year ago. What is noticeable is the frustration of the people who had very high expectation of their government. To their disappointment there is very little that they can be proud of.

In this context RECONCILE through its training and consultations tries to explain to the people what has happened in terms of achievement by the GoSS as the government presents it and also give hope that things will change. RECONCILE tries to explain that what was destroyed during the 22 years of war can not possibly be built in a year. However that is not an excuse for the people to see their government moving into the direction of improvement.