

# Evaluation

Grassroots peace-building project, RPPB section, UNICEF Sudan  
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# Executive summary

This is an evaluation of the Government of Sudan and UNICEF's Grassroots Peace-building Project, part of UNICEF's Rights, Protection and Peace-Building section. UNICEF began peace-building activities in 2000, after a mid-term review of its five year programme identified conflict as a major obstacle to the achievement of its goals in Sudan. The project began in 2002, a year of ceasefires, prosperity and hope in Sudan. It worked in six conflict-affected states.

The project aimed to reduce grassroots conflicts, and to mainstream a rights-based approach to peace-building in UNICEF's counterparts, and in its own work. "Grassroots" conflict-reduction means that the project would not work on the main North-South conflict, but focus on local contests over local power or resources. These lethal, impoverishing conflicts are the immediate context for the denial of many children's rights in Sudan. They are enmeshed in much-manipulated local societies, economies and ethnic identities. These conflicts, project staff believed, could be understood through research, isolated from the main conflict, and – with the support of local and national authorities – reduced. "Conflict reduction" involves working with some unfamiliar partners in Government, and modern and traditional (or tribal) civil society. It means working with an eclectic mix of interventions: anthropological research, workshops and football matches all leading up to tribal conferences, where peace agreements could be concluded.

The project has been heavily influenced by the unpredictable peace-process: when conflict began in Darfur in 2003, activities there were suspended. The project has continued in other areas, but uncertainties about Sudan's direction made donors and UNICEF decision makers hesitant about the future and undermined project funding.

## **Purpose, objective and methodology**

This evaluation was commissioned in preparation for UNICEF's Mid-Term Review in 2004. Its specific objective is to assess project design, effectiveness, management, and lessons learned for the future. A major purpose of the evaluation is to generate ideas for the development of a project in the light of changes to the peace process. For this reason, report recommendations (appearing at the end of each section) are consolidated at the end into brief concept notes for the project's future.

The evaluation is based on a review of project documentation, and of literature on peace-building and on conflict in Sudan. Field research was conducted in three of six project sites: Upper Nile, South Kordofan and Bahr al-Ghazal. Interviews and group interviews were the only method of field research; this method was appropriate to a small, complex project requiring multiple qualitative measurements.

## **Project design**

The project aims to make changes in a wide population (impacts) by changing the behaviour, beliefs and practices of a smaller group of partners (outcomes). The project has one impact objective: to reduce grassroots conflicts. It has two outcome objectives: to promote a rights-based peace framework to partners and to mainstream peace in UNICEF programmes.

The impact objective was designed ambitiously. Using projects to reduce conflict also means using a cause-and-effect reasoning that simplifies complicated patterns of violence and tranquillity. This reasoning raises problems of attribution – how can you know that the project is responsible for a profound, complex change like peace. The outcome objectives are ambiguous and unwieldy. This may be because the project was working in the context of an unpredictable peace process: the

project may have used ambiguity to create consensus for peace among different stakeholders. The project generated an enormous number of indicators that often awkwardly reflect the difficulty of linking ambiguous outcome objectives with profound and complex impact objectives. Monitoring peace-building is inherently difficult, and project designers did not produce an easy-to-monitor project.

### **Progress against objectives**

In spite of these considerable design and measurement difficulties, the project has made significant progress. Its first objective aimed to reduce conflict, and six of 11 conflicts targeted by the project have reduced in intensity or been resolved. The project's intellectual energy, financial resources and human commitment all contributed to this result. However, the project's focus on conflict-reducing tribal agreements between tribal elders means that young people and children are unintentionally excluded from substantive participation in the project. Focusing on a limited number of conflicts made the project more manageable, but did not avoid the problem of attribution: tribal agreements are the outcomes of a confluence of events, not all of them within the project's control. Finally, the project's targeting approach is potentially dangerous: it means the project can overlook less visible conflicts, and it may allow warring parties to direct UNICEF only towards conflicts that they want to resolve.

Project outcomes in the area of conflict-reduction are much easier to describe and evaluate than project impacts. The project developed original research on localised or "second-tier" natural-resource based conflicts, linking them to rural politics (tribes) and rural economics (farming and herding, land and water). They used community development techniques to apply this knowledge to plan service provision, support people to build negotiation skills, and bring tribal leaderships together. Applied knowledge – often the most difficult kind of knowledge – is the project's big achievement.

Successful project outcomes did not, however, include "[promoting] the application of a framework for rights-based peace building" required in its second objective. Instead, the project used an astute research piece, along with workshops and networking to achieve consensus between an exceptionally diverse group of stakeholders on the meaning of grassroots peace-building. This consensus allowed committed stakeholders a space to address local conflicts.

Progress on the third objective – mainstreaming within UNICEF – was patchy. Several field office staff have taken up the project enthusiastically – it offers ways to understand and act more effectively. Most sections have some funded activities in support of peace, but conflict analysis and local community peace-building activities have been weakly mainstreamed into many other sections of the country office. The structures for mainstreaming – regular forums, monitoring systems for budgets and planning – do not exist for peace-building.

### **Project management**

Project implementation rates and project funding declined over the course of the project, because of confusion about the peace process and insufficient capacity building. Project review systems identified problems, but responses to identified problems were weak, partly because of lack of funding. Nevertheless, UNICEF is highly respected by other actors in a difficult field of operations.

### **Lessons learned**

The evaluation came up with a number of insights into work with tribal structures that could be useful for future programming. Almost every informant saw tribes as the future of rural Sudan. Tribes will most likely be the local framework for claiming or enjoying rights in rural Sudan for the

next ten years at least. In many areas they – more than Sudan’s impoverished system of decentralised ministries – will manage much of the transition from relief to rural development. They will define what vulnerability means locally. They are already providing support for spontaneous IDP return in many areas, often with no financial resources. They will be expected to provide land and livelihoods for many demobilised soldiers, absorb alienated or abused children who have had to leave their homes, deal with orphan-hood and other, more unfamiliar forms of child separation. Finally, tribal or customary law will play a decisive role in the legislative development of South Sudan. Tribal leaderships preside over primary courts, that interpret and enforce the areas of that law that affect children most: family law, juvenile justice and (to a lesser extent) land law. This project could be adapted to help UNICEF understand these crucial processes – processes that make up a protective environment for children.

The project’s strengths – its ability to learn and apply learning about local societies, politics and economics – will be vital in helping UNICEF develop its work in Sudan. But the project can also choose to address a major weakness: it is not open to young people and children. It focuses its attention on the male elders who lead tribes and conclude peace agreement: it does not look at how tribes manage internal conflicts between old and young, or between men and women. Such representation issues will be crucial for the way that different tribes manage the return of children associated with fighting forces, alienated children from Khartoum, or the marriages of returned abducted girls. The project could be easily be adapted to address these issues, and involve young people in developing networks for the protection and participation of young people who have nearly all lost out because of war.

### **Recommendations**

Recommendations are presented as three options at the end of this report.

- The project could continue to work on conflict reduction, but it should then reformulate its objectives towards clear outcomes.
- The project can be adapted to work on child protection networks, using its applied knowledge of how rural Sudanese society is changing, and helping children and young people monitor children’s rights and reintegration
- The project could help children and young people monitor how customary law governing children and women’s rights in South Sudan is developed and implemented. Understanding and influencing legal practice is usually much more important than influencing legislation.
- The project could combine any of the above proposals.

Acronyms, references and endnotes are on the last page.

# Introduction

## Project description

UNICEF's 1999 Mid Term Review identified conflict as a major barrier to the realisation of children's rights in Sudan. It set a new requirement for UNICEF programmes: as well as delivering services, they had to build peace. In 2000, UNICEF began implementing activities in support of peace. In 2001, with UNDP, UNICEF commissioned research on peace building. In 2002, the Government of Sudan ("the Government") and UNICEF began a new five-year programme cycle that established the Grassroots Peace Building project that is the subject of this evaluation.

Initially, peace-building activities were part of the Education and Information, Communications and Advocacy (ICA) sections. In 2000, UNICEF established a new Rights, Protection and Peace-building (RPPB) section that took over these activities. The project was thus thematically and financially linked to a particularly diverse RPPB programme that includes urban and conflict-related child protection, human rights promotion and mine-risk education.

The project was the first attempt to set objectives and indicators for peace-building. Its main objectives were to reduce grassroots or second-tier conflicts, to promote a rights-based framework for peace-building for UNICEF and its partners in Government and civil society, and to mainstream peace building in UNICEF's work. The reference to "grassroots" or "second-tier" conflict-reduction signified that the project would not work on the main North-South conflict, but focus on local contests over local power or resources. These lethal, impoverishing conflicts are the immediate context for the denial of many children's rights in Sudan. Because the conflicts are meshed in much-manipulated local societies, economies and ethnic identities, they are sometimes bewildering for the outsider. UNICEF's project started with the assumption that some of these conflicts could be understood through research, isolated from the main conflict, and – with the support of local and national authorities – reduced. "Conflict reduction" involves working with some unfamiliar partners in Government, and modern and traditional (or tribal) civil society. It means working with an eclectic mix of interventions. These interventions included peace festivals, radio messages, football games for soldiers, workshops on negotiating skills, and meetings and conferences that aimed at reinstating traditional, tribe-based reconciliation systems.

More research in 2002 sharpened the 2003 project objectives. These objectives were aligned to other major concerns of UNICEF Sudan: the return of internally displaced persons (IDPs), and the retrieval and return of children associated with fighting forces (CAFF) and abducted children. The project has always been modestly funded and in 2004, funding was curtailed. The decline in funding may reflect uncertainties surrounding the wider peace process in Sudan: conflict in West Sudan indefinitely postponed ratification of major peace agreements reached in the North-South conflict. Donors and decision makers in UNICEF may have found it difficult to have a clear vision for peace-building.

The project was implemented in Khartoum and in five other states: Upper Nile, West and South Kordofan, Bahr al-Ghazal and South Darfur. West and South Kordofan are sometimes referred to as "the Nuba Mountains" in this report. Implementation in Darfur was suspended near the end of 2003 because of the conflict there, and Darfur work is not part of this evaluation.

## The contribution of UNICEF and other partners to the project

UNICEF, Sweden, Norway and Canada funded the project, with in-kind contributions from the Government. UNICEF and the Government implemented the project through the Peace Advisory to

the Presidency (PAP), the Federal Ministry of Higher Education (MOE), and state Ministries of Social and Cultural Affairs (MSCA) in Upper Nile, Bahr al-Ghazal, South and West Kordofan and South Darfur. UNICEF and the Government built partnerships with the Sudan Council of Churches, the Presbyterian Church of Sudan, universities in Khartoum, South Kordofan and Darfur. UNICEF also worked directly with national non-government organisations (NGOs) including Badya and Nuba Mountains Solidarity Abroad, and community based organisations (CBOs) such as the Lou-Jikainy Women's Group in Malakal. The project supported other UNICEF interventions, like the Child Friendly Communities Initiative (CFCI) and work in schools, bringing collaborations with other ministries and partners.

### **Purpose and objective of the evaluation**

This evaluation was commissioned in preparation for UNICEF's Mid-Term Review in 2004. The evaluation examines the differences that the project has made in the Government, UN agencies, civil society and communities in conflict areas. It asks questions about:

- Project design: were planned activities and strategies appropriate to objectives?
- Project effectiveness: did the project progress towards its objectives of reducing conflict and mainstreaming peace-building? What indicators measured that progress?
- Project management: did the structures and systems of the project contribute to its effectiveness?
- Lessons learned: what project functions could be developed for further work?

Recommendations, at the end, come in the form of three options for project development.

### **Methodology**

The evaluation began with a review of literature on conflict and peace-building in Sudan and the principles of peace-building in the United Nations system, then a review of project documentation and budgets. Interviews and group interviews were the only method of field research; this method was appropriate to a small, complex project which required multiple qualitative measurements. There was a general preference for individual or small group interviews. Most interviews sought to establish project participants' views of progress towards peace, and the role of the project in facilitating or obstructing that progress.

In Khartoum, interviews were conducted with Government counterparts, representatives of donor Governments, UNICEF section heads and staff in country office; with UNDP staff working on peace-building, a journalist, academics and NGO staff involved with or informed about the project, and a tribal chief visiting Khartoum. Evaluation field visits took place in Omdurman displacement camps (Dar al-Salam, Wad al-Bashir), Kordofan (El Obeid, Dilling, Kadugli, Demeik, Katcha); Upper Nile (Malakal, Canal, Adong) and Bahr al-Ghazal (Wau town and East Bank settlements). Interviews and group interviews were conducted with the following groups

- Displaced children and child musicians not involved in the project (Omdurman)
- Young educated people involved in the project and other young people (some with less education) not involved in the project (Kadugli, Malakal, Wau)
- People attending village public meetings (Katcha, Demeik), cultural group members (all areas)
- Members of CFCI Community Development Committees (all areas)
- Academics (Dilling), media workers (Wau, Malakal) and teachers involved in the project (Kadugli, Wau)
- Dance group members (Wau)
- Men and women (interviewed separately) living in IDP camps in Omdurman and in project areas of operation elsewhere, some of whom were involved with the project (all areas)

- Women NGO and CBO leaders (all areas), and a woman cultural leader/poet or *hakkama* (Kadugli), some of whom were involved in the project
- Chiefs involved in the project, chiefs committees, and public meetings of chiefs (all areas)
- Representatives of churches and NGOs working on peace-building (all areas)
- Representatives of international peace-keeping operations (Kadugli and Malakal)
- Field staff of UNICEF, WFP, FAO and OCHA (all areas)
- State governors' offices (all areas), state officials of Ministries of Social and Cultural Affairs (all areas), Education (Wau and Kadugli), Health (Malakal), Humanitarian Affairs (all areas), and officials of local Government (Malakal).

### **Constraints**

Time and transport limitations prevented the observation of any project activities except one dance festival. It was not possible to meet with some important potential informants:

- Schoolchildren or teachers involved in peace drama activities, school children attending peace festivals
- Teachers or education ministry officials in Malakal
- Water and sanitation officials, or members of local water management committees
- Representatives of one section of the Hawazma tribe involved in UNICEF-sponsored reconciliation meetings that are analysed in this report

There is a lot of useful comparative experience in areas of South Sudan controlled by the Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M). It has not been used here.

# Findings - project design

The section examines the clarity of project objectives and the coherence of the link between planned objectives and planned strategies and activities. It looks at planned systems for monitoring and evaluation, asking whether the indicators selected by project planners were useful measures of progress.

## PPO Objectives, 2002

1. By 2006, reduce the number and intensity of second-tier conflicts.
2. By 2006, promote the application of a rights-based conceptual framework for grass-roots conflict reduction by Government, civil society and communities.
3. By 2003, ensure that peace building is mainstreamed in the planning and implementation of all UNICEF-supported programmes.

## Objectives

The 2002 Programme Plan of Operations (PPO) set out the project objectives for UNICEF's five-year programme to 2006, given in the box opposite. (Through the life of the project, objectives sometimes changed slightly: "peace-building" replaced "conflict reduction" in objective 1, and objective 2 was narrowed down to 15 or 10 conflicts).

In this document, the second and third objectives are referred to as outcome objectives – objectives aimed at building capacity, changing behaviours, beliefs or relationships of people directly in contact with the programme. The first objective is called an impact objective – a change in the lives of people outside the programme.

Impact objectives are problematic for programmers and evaluators even in programmes with modest and measurable goals. Impacts are the product of a confluence of events and cannot easily be attributed to any one intervention. Most interventions have both positive and negative impacts, but too much evaluation time is spent trying to isolate and capture positive impacts. The linear, cause-and-effect reasoning that is used to demonstrate impact is at odds with the complicated patterns of human society. The project tried to make its impact goals more measurable by focusing on particular conflicts (eventually narrowed down to 15), and focusing on particular types of conflict (grass-roots, local, resource related).

The objective was an influential one for the project. Activities in support of objective 3 (mainstreaming peace) only lasted for a year or so; and activities in support of objective 1 were largely restricted to workshops in Khartoum. The table on the next page, taken from the 2003 Project Plan of Action (PPA) shows how influential the impact objective was in 2003, a sample year. Annual sub-objectives for all work in the field came under the heading of peace-building or conflict resolution.

Articulating this impact objective has clearly been a challenge. Terms like "people to people conflict reduction", "people to people peace initiatives", "enabling environments for peace building" are used fairly interchangeably, which in turn makes it less clear what the project hoped to achieve in different areas. In spite of this lack of terminological clarity, the project managed to focus objectives on more and more specific activities – like IDP return or child abduction.

Outcome objectives – which aim for changes in the capacity and behaviour of people directly in contact with the project – are usually easier for evaluators to deal with. Objective 3 was clear and easy to understand. Objective 2 – "To promote the application of rights-based conceptual framework for grassroots conflict reduction by Government, civil society and communities" – was not. The next section of the evaluation shows the inconsistency in definition of these terms within the project. This objective was no doubt a difficult one to write because it expressed the

understanding of peace shared by UNICEF – a humanitarian agency – and the Government of Sudan – a party to the unfinished conflict. The ambiguities may have been deliberate, but they are ambiguities all the same. It is hard to link ambiguous outcomes to a profound and complex impact like conflict reduction or peace, and this makes accountability for reaching objectives difficult too.

2003 PPA objective	2003 PPA sub-project title	2003 PPA sub-project objective
<b>Corresponds to objective 1:</b> To support communities to reduce and manage conflict in 45 CFCIs and related IDP camps in the Sobat valley, the Nuba Mountains, Western Sudan and Bahr al-Ghazal	Peace building in the Sobat valley	To facilitate people to people peace initiatives between the Lou, Jikainy and Gawaar Nuers and manage conflict in 8 identified red communities in the Sobat valley
	Peace building in the Nuba Mountains	To promote community ownership of local peace initiatives through people to people conflict reduction in 25 CFCIs including IDPs peace camps in Al-Patrol, Buram and Lagawa localities
	Support for enabling environment for peace building between Dinka and Baggara	To enhance the retrieval and reunification of abducted children through people to people conflict reduction initiatives between the Dinka, Baggara and Jur communities in Bahr el Ghazal, West Kordofan and South Darfur
<b>Corresponds to objectives 2 and 3:</b> To build the capacity of UNICEF all staff and counterparts to support service delivery within a peace-building framework	Capacity building for grassroots peace	To build the capacity of all UNICEF staff and counterparts through training to support peace building and enhance the implementation of service delivery

*Note: this table shows that the project organised activities geographically, not by overall project objective. This report, in contrast, organises activities by objective for purposes of evaluation.*

Although the project objectives present a number of problems from the point of view of evaluation, some of the problems identified in the above section may simply reflect creative responses to the many problems it faces. In UN literature on peace and security, “peace-building” is often used to describe activities that happen in the context of a peace-keeping mission. This literature recognises the difficulties of setting objectives for peace building in countries like Sudan where peace processes are incomplete and no wider peace mandate exists<sup>1</sup>.

Often, the term “post-conflict peace-building” is used, to emphasise the fact that peace-building comes at the end of a linear process that starts with peace-making and peace-keeping<sup>2</sup>. This linear approach doesn’t easily fit Sudan’s more complicated patterns of violence and tranquillity. The decision to try and focus impact on 15 conflicts was a worthwhile attempt to work with an exceptionally scattered and convoluted pattern of violence in Sudan. But it probably was not enough to deal with the problems of attribution and accountability for ambiguous objectives.

### Activities and partners

The project has ambitious objectives but limited resources – actual expenditure over three years of operation is less than \$500,000. The project responded to the challenge of turning ambitious objectives into cheap activities. Activities include the following

- Creative activities: peace dances, peace drama, peace festivals, sports days
- Research and information activities: conflict analysis, dissemination of knowledge about conflict
- Training activities: workshops and seminars
- Conflict mediation activities: funding and supporting inter-tribal conferences

In addition, the project previously funded media activities: these activities continue but are now managed by the ICA section.

Diverse activities help the project address the ambitious nature of its objectives. Some activities were thoughtful and creative responses to complicated conflict situations: a popular and multi-ethnic dance session in the central square of a city divided by ethnic conflict, for example. This diversity of project activities has the potential to scatter project activity, but project designers did not link scattered activities with objectives in project planning documents. For example: are dance sessions aimed at reducing conflict? Or promoting rights-based understandings of peace/conflict reduction?

Diversity also means that management time is consumed with partner relationships. Some partners are unfamiliar for UNICEF; many were in areas of Sudan isolated by war. That meant that many NGO and CBO partners were relatively new organisations, or organisations more adapted to relief work, with limited capacities of development work. Government counterparts in state ministries also have extremely limited resources and correspondingly low capacity. The project main planned capacity building activities were workshops, and setting up peace centres at universities.

Finally, the project worked a lot with “communities”, which in practice meant women’s CBOs and tribal leaderships (not “tribes” as such). That is, the project did not plan to work with young people and children, other than as subjects of tribal leaders. The project assumed that tribal leaders represent their tribe members adequately, and that they have a capacity to build peace or reduce conflict. The rest of this evaluation tests those assumptions carefully.

### Indicators and monitoring systems

The table below shows project designers’ seven original indicators for the project – two or three per objective. Some of the indicators are straightforward: an important part of mainstreaming peace-building is that sections allocate funds to peace-building. Some indicators need more clarification, for example: “Government authorities facilitate and support community-led peace processes” (objective 2). Indicators like “reduction in conflict intensity” are problematic because they imply a linear reasoning at odds with the complicated patterns of conflict and peace.

PPO objectives 2002	PPO indicators 2002 (summarised)
1. By 2006, reduce the number and intensity of second-tier conflicts.	Community-led conflict resolution interventions underway or concluded in at least 15 second-tier conflicts
	At least 10 conflict resolution interventions report reduction in conflict intensity, improved relations with opponents or resolution of grievances.
2. By 2006, promote the application of a rights-based conceptual framework for grass-roots conflict reduction by Government, civil society and communities.	Framework agreed and applied by all parties
	Government facilitates community-led peace processes
	Functioning Government and NGO networks that support peace building
3. By 2003, ensure that peace building is mainstreamed in the planning and implementation of all UNICEF-supported programmes.	Conflict risk assessments are included in the choice of all CFCI areas
	All UNICEF-supported sectoral programmes include activities contributing to peace in funded part of their PPAs

In short, some planned indicators lack clarity and others simplify development processes with cause-and-effect reasoning. The project went on to develop a range of other indicators, however.

- Concept papers and proposals for donors included quantitative indicators for conflict reduction, such as number of markets opened, number of agreements signed<sup>3</sup>
- Concept papers included outcome indicators for conflict reduction such as creation of intertribal committees<sup>4</sup>
- PPAs included output/outcome indicators for each activity, but not for overall objectives.

The result of this prolific indicator generation is a project that has over a hundred indicators to deal with. Many are impact indicators of *reduced conflict*, rather than indicators that *the project has reduced conflict*. Outcome indicators for activities are detailed, but they are intended to measure successful completion of activities like workshops: “500 children, youth and community members create supportive atmosphere for peace activities in Lagawa locality” is a typical one. It is difficult to link an outcome like this to the conflict reduction indicators that the project has chosen for itself. This indicator, requiring measurements of supportiveness and atmospheres, is also an inherently difficult monitoring task for a CBO or state ministry – but no funds were budgeted for monitoring it in the PPA.

Monitoring does not feature highly in project planning documents. The project was monitored through weekly reports and annual reviews from field offices and frequent field visits from the project manager. Project design documents did not elaborate monitoring systems for individual activities, or sequenced activities – like a series of workshops leading to a major meeting. Funding for evaluations was allocated in the 2003 budget, but none was disbursed.

### Conclusions

- Objective 1 (conflict reduction) is a highly ambitious impact objective. It is difficult to attribute reduced conflict to project activities. This raises problems of attribution and accountability. Objectives 2 (promoting rights-based peace to partners) and objective 3 (mainstreaming peace in UNICEF) are complex, ambiguous outcome objectives. They may use ambiguity to create consensus for peace among different stakeholders, but they are hard to link to conflict reduction impacts.
- Project activities are diverse and appropriate, but not clearly linked to specific objectives
- The project was designed for many partners, which implies a lot of capacity building.
- It is difficult to develop indicators for this project, and the project has developed too many indicators for a project manager to monitor. Indicators for objective 1 inappropriately measure reduced conflict rather than project contribution to the reduction of conflict. Indicators for objectives 2 and 3 sometimes awkwardly reflect the difficulty of linking ambiguous outcome objectives with profound and complex impact objectives.
- Monitoring systems were not carefully planned or funded at the design stage

### Recommendations

- The impact objective should be reformulated and oriented towards outcomes
- The project's main outcome objective should be simplified
- The number of indicators for the project should be limited
- A clear and simple monitoring strategy for the project should be developed

These recommendations are presented in more detail at the end of the report, as a concept note for a reformulated project

# Findings - project effectiveness

## Progress towards objectives: objective 1

This section is divided into three sections, one for each objective. Activities and monitoring systems for each objective are described and assessed, and each section has a set of conclusions and recommendations. Otherwise, each objective is presented in slightly different ways: objective 1 is assessed through case studies because of its complexity. Definitional issues and rights issues figure in objective 2. There were almost no activities in support of objective 3, so most of that section deals with the challenges of mainstreaming. Nearly all activities were concentrated under objective 1 – conflict reduction, and so the first section is much longer than the second two.

### **Objective 1: By 2006, reduce the number and intensity of second-tier conflicts**

This section examines the project's progress towards conflict-reduction. PPO indicators for this objective were

- Community-led conflict resolution interventions underway or concluded in at least 15 second-tier conflicts
- At least 10 conflict resolution interventions report reduction in conflict intensity, improved relations with opponents or resolution of grievances.

There are problems with attribution for this objective, and the project generated an unmanageably large number of indicators for conflict-reduction. This section describes activities in support of this objective. It measures progress through case studies of project interventions for conflict reduction in two areas, comparing them with nearby conflicts where the project did not intervene. It uses case studies to discuss indicators for success, monitoring systems and targeting.

### **Activities in support of objective 1**

In project planning and budget documents, the overall project objectives are turned into annual sub-objectives, one for national capacity building and the rest for local conflict reduction in target states. Activities for local conflict reduction are listed here.

- 2002 project activities in support of conflict reduction came in the form of workshops for mobilising and training in peace-building and conflict resolution skills. Some of these workshops were used to prepare the ground for inter-tribal workshops or peace dialogues. In addition, the project supported radio broadcasts for peace in local languages in Upper Nile. 21 of 29 planned activities were implemented, some of them in 2003.
- 2003 project activities included peace drama and festivals. Radio work was transferred to the ICA section. Main activities were inter-tribal conferences and workshops, some linked to locally specific themes: IDP return in Nuba Mountains and Upper Nile, abduction in Darfur and Bahr al-Ghazal. In the Nuba Mountains, there were also workshops in support of CFCI. In response to the Shanabla-Nuba conflict in the Nuba Mountains, the project carried out unplanned action research on a specific conflict, and linked research to water provision (see case study). Most activities were in the Nuba Mountains; 20 out of 34 activities were implemented, some in 2004.
- 2004 activities were curtailed by a funding shortfall. Funding went to workshops and follow-up meetings, with a small amount for festivals and drama. Nine out of 18 activities have been funded: some core activities like follow-up for previous meetings have not been funded.

## Evaluation of activities in support of objective 1

### Workshops and capacity building

Some sceptical observers dismiss the project's workshop approach. This may be unfair: first, for many people the workshops were valued learning experiences and opportunities to talk about subjects forbidden for over a decade of war. One lady said "We learned skills of conflict resolution and negotiation but we aren't able to implement them at grassroots. We would like UNICEF to support work at grassroots, people talking together, getting rid of things in their heart, having a better idea of development". The project's ability to bring together politically astute conflict analysis from teams of senior academics, with training in negotiation and dispute-resolution was appreciated. One tribal leader jokingly described how he managed reconciliations before he had learned the "scientific methods" of conflict resolution from the programme: "We would get them all together and say 'Shut up, we don't want to hear what happened, we just want the reconciliation'".

In the Nuba Mountains, workshops often came as a well-connected series, with skills and knowledge built up towards successful inter-tribal conferences. In Upper Nile, there was sometimes less follow-up, and workshop recommendations could get lost. Some informants criticised them for repetitiveness. In the Government controlled south, militia activity or political pressure from leaderships in SPLA/M controlled territory meant that workshops did not include all relevant stakeholders in the conflict, and they were easier to manipulate.

The most apt criticism of the workshops is not that they were "talking shops", but that they were in some areas the main or only project contribution to capacity building. Workshops are not usually enough to give people and organisations the skills, connections and resources to do new things.

In some places, the project had a wider capacity building strategy. Peace Centres set up in universities in West and South Darfur and South Kordofan can function as resource centres for CBOs and NGOs in the area<sup>5</sup>. The Darfur centres are no longer operational in the project, but in South Kordofan the Peace Centre is functioning effectively. South Kordofan and the greater Nuba Mountains area have a strong NGO partner in Badya; the area has attracted considerable funding, and Government militias are no longer militarily active. All these are reasons why capacity building has worked well in the Nuba Mountains.

Unfortunately, no peace centres were set up in Government-controlled towns in the south, where capacity was weak. Upper Nile State in particular has a history of low educational service provision, which handicaps organisations needing trained staff. Government budgets there are low, and war, isolation and a history of relief dependency (and abuse of relief) mean that organisations were not always able to meet agreed commitments. The project dealt with these weaknesses ad hoc, it did not have a strategy to remedy these weaknesses.

The 2003 PPA planned workshops on IDP return in Upper Nile and Kordofan, and abduction in Darfur and Bahr al-Ghazal. These workshops were not assessed, because they were either cancelled, or happened recently with no follow-up.

### Creative activities

Peace festivals cost little but can be very successful. Umm Durayn, in the Moro area of South Kordofan, has a school lying in the JMC demilitarised zone right next to the SPLA/M lines – which means it is Government funded. The state Ministry of Education with UNICEF rehabilitated the school, which trebled school rolls and attracted many students from SPLA/M areas. The school has a mix of children of Government soldiers, Nuba from SPLA/M and Government areas, Arabised

pastoralist and Northern children. The school has held several peace days with traditional Nuba wrestling and football games: each team mixing SPLA and Government soldiers. It was not possible to visit the school but a video of the event was available.

The sound on the video did not work, which meant that this evaluation could not assess the kind of speeches that are made at peace festivals. Such events can be used by powerful actors to give political messages. This may be a risk for the project. A “peace drama” performed by school children in Wau told the following story: a small peaceful neighbourhood is attacked and looted by the SPLA. Resisters are killed. Soldiers counter attack and expel the rebels, and all the locals dance. This war drama is probably an exception (this section of the evaluation is incomplete, because only two interviews were conducted about peace drama, both with adults). But it demonstrates the difficulty of monitoring the content of these activities. It is even more difficult to set up a drama project which allows children whose lives are badly distorted by war to come up with performances that let them to express the experience of impoverished half-peace, rather than dragooning them into celebration.

In Wau, the project funds a weekly dance session in the town’s main square. Wau is one of the oldest towns and ethnically diverse towns in the south. Militias allied to the warring parties violently manipulated this diversity, turning the town into an ethnic killing field in the late 1980s and again in 1998. Schools were divided tribally and people stay within their own tribally-defined suburbs. The dance session attracts several thousand people who watch tribally-organised dance troupes from surrounding areas perform and sing. Several informants criticised the activity for its lack of developmental aim. But it may be a positive contribution: it is genuinely “community owned”, in the sense that it cannot be turned into a political tool. Many non-Sudanese cities formerly divided by war would cheerfully part with this activity’s monthly \$500 budget to have so many people genially mixing together – there have been no reported incidents of trouble.

### Inter-tribal conferences

Inter-tribal conferences were in some ways the culmination of all other activities. There, leaderships of formerly opposed tribes would conclude agreements that were supposed to reduce conflict. Sometimes they represented dramatic local changes: the first time that tribes had met in a Government-sponsored event in Fam al-Zaraf in Upper Nile, for example. Five conferences were held in the Nuba Mountains, and two in Upper Nile. These conferences are discussed in the case studies below.

### Three case studies

The *Shanabla – Nuba* conflict came to the attention of the project when international observers monitoring the ceasefire lines, the Joint Military Commission (JMC), requested UNICEF’s assistance. Both the Government and SPLA/M supported a resolution of the conflict. In 2003, the project manager and field staff conducted an assessment. Both Nuba and Shanabla requested water provision that could deal with the camel’s consumption levels, and inter-tribal meetings to discuss their problems. UNICEF and its Government counterparts constructed or rehabilitated high-volume water yards (hand-pump systems break down trying to satisfy the camels’ huge thirst). They arranged a conference for tribal leaders and representatives of Government, farming schemes,

#### Shanabla - Nuba conflict

Shanabla is a term for landless camel nomads from North Kordofan, who take camels to the Nuba Mountains during dry seasons. They compete for water with land-owners there: Nuba tribes, Arabised pastoralist tribes, and mechanised farming schemes. They and the Shanabla negotiate payments for water. Failures in negotiations lead to violence. After the Nuba Mountains ceasefire of 2002, Shanabla began crossing ceasefire lines, marking the involvement of Sudan’s warring parties in their search for water.

women's groups and others. The conference recommended detailed changes to the regulation of land ownership – the core of the problem.

The **Birgidd-Awlad Hilal – Dar Bakhota** conflict was one of UNICEF's first interventions in a tribal conflict. UNICEF's neutrality was a useful contribution in a conflict where the Government was involved with one of the parties between which it was mediating. A conference reached a compromise: the landless Birgidd would be given a chiefship without land. About a third of the tribe returned to Dar Bakhota land. The rest stayed with the Nuba Ajang. Dar Bakhota threats were not carried out.

**Birgidd Awlad Hilal - Dar Bakhota**

Two sections of the Arabised Hawazma tribe from South Kordofan. The landless Birgidd were clients or guests on Dar Bakhota land for many years. They signalled their desire to acquire land from the Dar Bakhota by requesting an 'umdiya' chiefship from the Government – offering it a tribal constituency in return. Dar Bakhota threatened violence, and the Birgidd responded by accepting the authority of the Nuba Ajang chief instead of their hosts'.

The **Lou-Jikainy** conflict, part of the Upper Nile's inspiring and bitter history of peace-building and conflict influenced the project from the start. UNICEF helped set up a Lou-Jikainy CBO made up of women from two sides of the many conflicts of the Upper Nile. The CBO facilitated communication between the two sides, and gave international organisations – which had a short history in the area – valuable information too. UNICEF provided water boreholes in Lou areas to help water their animals. Workshops on peace-building and conflict resolution culminated in an inter-tribal conference on cattle-raiding and abduction in 2003. The conference called for a

**Lou - Jikainy**

Lou are Nuer pastoralists living on the Sobat river's southern flood plains. Lou bring their cattle to the Sobat in the dry summers, which brings them into conflict with agro-pastoralists from Jikainy Nuer and other Nuer and Dinka sections living along the river. Cattle are rustled, and children may be abducted too. This conflict is entangled in Sudan's main conflict: firearms are widespread, tribal relations were brutally reconfigured by war, and tribal militia leaders – accountable to major warring parties – are still players in the area's politics.

committee of local Government officers and chiefs to deal with cattle rustling and for militia leaders to be accountable to tribal leaderships. The recommendations were not followed up: the cattle rustling committee still exists but its activities are not monitored. This was partly because there was no funding for UNICEF's counterpart, MSCA, which faced restrictions on movement because of insecurity. Counterparts in Upper Nile do not have the capacity to implement some of the

activities without strong field office support. But the main reason for the lack of follow up was because the conference could not address the immediate cause of the conflict, the militia leaders, who were not present at the conference. The water points are in an inaccessibly insecure location and their condition is not known.

**Conflicts not in contact with the project**

Two villages in the Nuba Mountains during the evaluation both were involved in conflict over access to natural resources. **Katcha**, south of Kadugli, is a Nuba village near the border with SPLA/M territory. Nine girls and 16 boys were abducted from Katcha in 1991 by the Awlad Surur, a section of the Arabised pastoralist Misseiriya tribe whose livestock corridors run by the village. Two years ago, the Awlad Surur returned to the area, having stayed away during the worst of the war. Katcha leaders asked the herders to bring their leaders for a meeting: nothing happened. They also raised the issue with the local Nuba paramount chief, a Government appointee. He has done nothing either. Katcha people are keeping Awlad Surur herders away from the village. "The problem can be solved if they come and explain, even if they killed them, a reconciliation is possible," said one person attending a village meeting.

*Demeik* village is part of CFCI. The recently-devised border between West and South Kordofan runs through its lands. The village leadership is Nuba, but members of many tribes have settled in the village: Arabised groups, Burno, Beni Amer, Fallata and Dinka. The Nuba tribal leaders are the custodians of land rights. Other tribes can farm the lands but not own them. Arabised Misseiriya pastoralists graze their cattle on village lands in the dry season. They have not had any meetings with the Misseiriya, and are worried that border changes will limit their land rights. They feel the problem can only be resolved on the initiative of Government security forces.

### Conclusions from case studies

The case studies raise some issues in objective-setting, monitoring and targeting systems.

### Setting objectives

Making “conflict reduction” into an objective means that project managers should be accountable for reducing conflict. This is inappropriate: some conflicts have not been reduced because of external factors. In order to make managers accountable, UNICEF should reformulate this objective and orient it towards outcomes that facilitate conflict reduction. Outcomes indicators identified by informants include

- Access to mediation services in different areas
- Knowledge and use of conflict analysis and of conflict resolution skills
- Implementation mechanisms for conferences, especially when linked to service provision
- Joint management of services

### Monitoring

The project went some way towards meeting its objectives, according to the PPO indicators:

- Community-led conflict resolution interventions supported by UNICEF and Government underway or concluded in at least 15 second-tier conflicts by 2006;
- At least 10 community-led conflict resolution interventions supported by UNICEF and Government report reduction in conflict intensity, improved relations with opponents or resolution of grievances.

State	Targeted conflict	Past interventions	Status of conflict	Monitoring
Upper Nile	Lou – Jikainy	Workshops, inter-tribal conference	Ongoing	MSCA responsibility: suspended, lack of funds
	Lou – Gaweir	Workshops	Ongoing	
Bahr al-Ghazal	Jur/Dinka – Fertit	Dance	Partially resolved	Ad hoc field office monitoring
South Kordofan	Birgidd – Dar Bakhota	Workshops, inter-tribal conference	Partially resolved	Ad hoc field office monitoring
	Shanabla – Nuba	Workshops, inter-tribal conference	Resolved	Joint water point management
	Hawazma – Nuba	Workshops, inter-tribal conference	Partially resolved	Peace Centre supports Chief’s Council for conflict reduction
West Kordofan	Misseiriya Humr – Nuba	Workshops, inter-tribal conference	Resolved	Ad hoc MSCA monitoring
	Misseiriya Zurug – Nuba / Dajo	Workshops, inter-tribal conference	Resolved	
	Misseiriya – Dinka Ngok	UNDP interventions	Ongoing	No monitoring
South Darfur	Dinka – Rizeigat	Suspended	Ongoing	No monitoring
	Dinka – Zaghawa	Suspended	Ongoing	

The table above shows that several target conflicts were resolved or reduced in intensity – according to the “status of conflict” judgements made by the project manager, and backed by the kind of evidence used in the case studies above. The table also shows that systematic monitoring was a challenge: monitoring was thorough in Kordofan but elsewhere was limited in scope.

In Kordofan, a conference in 2002 set up a conflict reduction committee of tribal leaders: the Chiefs’ Council. They discuss any conflicts arising. They appoint leaders from outside the locality of the conflict to mediate, and can recommend the intervention of locality security committees, the judiciary or state Governments. Reports go to the security committee, not to UNICEF. This means that UNICEF is not able to use this body to follow peace and conflict trends. The project is responsive to changes in environment – most notably in the brief but elegant trip reports of the project manager – but it does not have a *system* for observing and responding to trends in conflict and peace. Individual conflicts get attention in the run up to inter-tribal meetings and then disappear from records about a year later.

Joint management of services is a useful and cheap way of monitoring conflict and peace trends. This project has helped to provide water points in South Kordofan and for Lou groups in Upper Nile. There is no information on the management of Lou services, however, because they are in an insecure area. The project does not keep records of successful inter-tribal management committees (see below)

### **Targeting**

One way of giving this project focus would be to spend a lot of time developing thoughtful objectives, sub-objectives and a workable system of indicators along with a monitoring system (see above). Another is to target project intervention to particular conflicts. The project chose the latter approach, targeting 11 of them.

Focusing on specific conflicts has not been a particularly successful approach. Field office staff were seldom able to list the targeted conflicts – the target list was something that was checked at planning stage in Khartoum only. But targeted conflict reduction does not avoid the problem of accountability for unattainable objectives – this project is not responsible for the continuing violence in its targeted conflicts in Upper Nile.

Another approach to targeting might be to look at conflicts that tribes are likely to resolve, given that tribes are assumed to be the most appropriate partners to build peace in conflicts over natural resources (see above, 2.1.2). Elements of success in the Shanabla – Nuba conflict were:

- Support from Government and SPLA/M authorities
- International attention from the JMC
- Intelligent service provision and joint management of services
- The ability to link service provision to a talking process
- Conflicts when more than one set of solutions is available

It is also useful to consider conflicts that tribes cannot solve. First, tribal institutions are an inescapable part of rural administration in areas where land is held in common – areas outside the northern Nile Valley. But they are easy to manipulate. Over the last 20 years, they have been fragmented, politicised and militarised by the warring parties. Second, the power of tribes is closely linked to the power of clan leaders to allocate land to tribe members. Tribe leaders in the northern Nile Valley have less power because land there was individuated in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In South Kordofan, fertile lands and a great diversity of peoples means that systems of land tenure mean that land rights are ethnicised, as the case of Birgidd Awlad Hilal demonstrates.

This means that there are several types of conflict that tribes *cannot* resolve.

- Conflicts where a much more powerful actor has an interest in perpetuating conflict: for example, the Lou-Jikainy conflict.
- Conflicts over tribal rights to land: tribes cannot conflicts by giving away land to outsiders without losing their own authority. The Birgidd – Dar Bakhota conflict is an example.

### **Women and children: other conflicts that tribes do not easily resolve**

Tribes have different mechanisms of representation, not all of them democratic. In some cases, individual elected paramount chiefs have been replaced by twenty Government appointees. In other cases, tribal leadership is inherited. Women and girls' roles vary considerably between tribes, but their political participation is usually limited, as is the participation of unarmed young men.

Tribes are not able to resolve gender conflicts easily. Some tribes have age-set systems that help articulate generational conflicts. War distorted these sophisticated systems: many informants stressed that tribes need to reinstitute the power of the elders for the sake of security. Because the project aimed at reducing conflict, it focused its efforts on making agreements between leaders of tribes. It needed to see those leaders as representatives of discrete and homogenous tribes, and to downplay internal conflicts within tribes. Children were not included in this deal-making. Young men had limited participation too, because the warring parties have been arming young men as a means of turning tribes into military units for their own ends. Tribes can only be reconstituted as semi-autonomous, deal-making entities if young men lose power. Young women are excluded too: although many rural women acquired new and onerous economic responsibilities in the course of the war, some (but not all) informants expected women to help reconstitute “traditional” structures by accepting certain forms of subordination. In summary: project focus on conflict-reducing deals excluded children and young people.

### **The risks of targeting**

One major risk with the targeting approach is that project interventions in one area could start conflict in another area. In 1999, the New Sudan Council of Churches brokered a peace agreement between Dinka and Nuer tribes, previously entangled in a bitter war. The Wunlit peace covenant inspired peace-building projects elsewhere in Sudan: it was able to happen because Nuer groups, previously identified with pro-Government militias, were displaced into areas controlled by the SPLA/M<sup>6</sup>. It was widely seen as successful, “[because it] is in the hands of the community. People are aware of the issues. That is why it is not broken.”<sup>7</sup> However, the process left Dinka militias formed to protect cattle from Nuer attacks with nothing to do: intra-Dinka fights gathered in intensity until the SPLA forcibly disarmed the militias it had itself armed<sup>8</sup>.

Another risk is that targeting tends to go to visible conflicts. Katcha villagers had a grievance with the Awlad Surur section of the Misseiriya tribe that abducted their children over a decade ago. Their approaches to their paramount chief and to the locality security committee have been unsuccessful. One reason may be that their paramount chief, a Government appointee, may not be responsive to such demands. Another may be that Katcha's demands have been made non-violently. A little violence might have brought the attention of the security forces and tribal leaders. One Katcha villager said ordinary people had little role in peace: “Your role is just patience, nothing else.”

Finally, peace-building can also be used as a tool to manage or even exacerbate conflict. There is a large literature on the use of relief to fuel conflict in Sudan<sup>9</sup>. One program manager said: “Peace-building is not so different from relief, it can be instrumentalised.” Militia leaders may use violence

to create zones of insecurity and security, in order to attract services to secure areas. Warring parties can ensure that conflicts are resolved only in areas where they want security.

## Conclusions

- The project targeted 11 conflicts. Six targeted conflicts were reduced in intensity or resolved. The project's intellectual energy, financial resources and human commitment all contributed to conflict reduction. Focusing on conflict-reducing tribal agreements between tribal elders means that the project unintentionally excludes young people and children. Focusing on these agreements causes problems of attribution too: tribal agreements are the outcomes of a confluence of events, not all of them within the project's control. Finally, this kind of targeting approach is potentially dangerous: it means the project can overlook less visible conflicts, and it may allow warring parties to direct UNICEF only towards conflicts that it wants to resolve.
- Instead, the project should be evaluated on its outcomes: capacity building, ability to monitor peace and conflict trends, creative activities, and inter-tribal conferences for example. Capacity building has been effective in peaceful areas like the Nuba Mountains, but less effective in areas of continued conflict like Upper Nile where education systems and modern civil society is less developed. Capacity building is more effective too when there is an institution responsible for it, like Dilling University's Peace Centre. Elsewhere, capacity building is not strategic, just a few workshops a year.
- Monitoring of peace and conflict trends was stronger in the Nuba Mountains than elsewhere. Annual and mid-year reviews were the main monitoring systems for the project, but the project did not develop systems for follow up of workshop or inter-tribal conference recommendations, or attempt to monitor peace and conflict trends.
- Creative activities are the only part of the project that give children and young people a role in peace. The project's creative activities may be instrumentalised, but content is not adequately monitored.

## Recommendations

- In order to make managers accountable, objective 1 should be reformulated and oriented it towards outcomes that facilitate conflict reduction.
- The targeting strategy should be reviewed, either focusing on conflicts that can be resolved straightforwardly, or clarifying outcome objectives for work in conflicts that cannot be easily resolved
- A clear strategy for monitoring conflict and peace trends, including monitoring for inter-tribal management committees for services, should be developed
- A capacity building strategy should be developed
- More attention should be given to creative activities that involve young people in peace. "Content monitoring" of expressive activities should be implemented by paying close attention to the quality of children's self-expression.

These recommendations are presented in more detail at the end of the report, as a concept note for a reformulated project

## Progress towards objective 2

**Objective 2. By 2006, promote the application of a rights-based conceptual framework for grass-roots conflict reduction by Government, civil society and communities.**

The indicators for this objective in the PPO were

- The framework is agreed to and applied by all major parties concerned.
- Government authorities facilitate and support community-led peace processes;
- Government and non-governmental organisations (NGO) networks that support peace building are functioning.

This section presents an assessment of activities in support of this objective. Because the terminology used in the objective is less than clear, it goes on to describe how different informants understood the objective. It looks at how the project linked peace and rights, and how stakeholders used the project for rights and peace-building, which rights the project addressed (with special attention to women and children's rights), and monitoring for this objective.

### Activities in support of objective 2

In project planning and budget documents, the overall project objectives are turned into annual sub-objectives, one for national capacity building and the rest for local conflict reduction in target states. Activities under the national capacity building sub-objective are listed here.

- 2002 project activities were workshops for and planning meetings with the Ministry of Higher Education (at that time the national counterpart of the project), training workshops with state women's secretariats and the Peace Advisory to the Presidency in Darfur. About a third of funding went on a conflict study, conducted by social scientists from Khartoum University. Ten out of 12 planned activities were implemented, some in 2003.
- 2003 project activities included a national workshop on grassroots peace policy and on the results of research. There were new area-specific conflict reports, plus support to establish a Peace Centre in Blue Nile, and a celebration of the International Day for Peace, and modest funding for an annual review. Six out of seven planned activities were implemented.
- 2004 activities in support of this objective include this evaluation, training of trainers for peace drama, and training for UNICEF staff and counterparts.

### Evaluation of activities in support of objective 2

#### Workshops and capacity building

National workshops on peace-building were conducted with the Ministry of Higher Education and PAP in Khartoum and towns in project implementation areas. An outline training manual was written, but the project was not completed. Most workshops actually took place in 2003. They came up with recommendations that reflect the ambiguity of the term "peace-building". A workshop in Malakal, for example, recommended training, mobilisation and conferences for tribal leaders, laws for child protection, opening of roads from Malakal to Renk and Kosti, training for health workers, help for orphans and the creation of a conflict reduction committee.

A Khartoum workshop, where research results were presented, came up with a different but similarly eclectic set of suggestions. Land tenure reform, a reconsideration of Sudan's federal system, more social services and less small arms. These recommendations were usually delivered to or by government officials, but it was difficult to assess their influence. Recommendations were

often clearly outside UNICEF's mandate, but within the mandate of the Presidency, usually a co-sponsor of the workshops, through PAP. Follow-up was undermined by the heavy demands on PAP in 2003: many staff were at the Naivasha negotiations in Kenya, preparing for the Naivasha agreements of May 2004.

The lack of follow-up for highly ambitious recommendations is not in itself a major problem. The main achievement of these workshops was to work with PAP to mobilise other actors for the project.

## Research

The most significant and expensive activity in support of this objective was a research report produced by a multi-disciplinary Khartoum University team. The research was conducted in 2002 and 2003 and published in English as *Eight grassroots conflicts in Sudan*. This objective seeks to define peace-building in a way that includes rights and that engages the Government and convinces the rest of society. The research report was a well-planned and executed response to that difficult challenge. The team included senior academics from North, South, West and East Sudan, so its account of local conflicts could not be linked to any one side in the bigger civil war.

The report's careful dissection of the geography, economics, social history and anthropology of eight grassroots conflicts showed that natural resource competition is a major factor perpetuating local conflicts that will outlast any peace deal in the civil war. The report downplays the links between local conflicts and the national conflict, in order to redefine the terms used to discuss conflict and allow for Government acknowledgement of the existence of local resource-based conflicts, and Government willingness to support project action at grassroots. It was more useful than a "framework" document windily invoking human rights and peace. Research quality was high: this was an original addition to a large literature on Sudan's conflict.

The terms of reference for the research had no mention of intra-tribal relations: for example, girls' or boys' views of their tribe, or competitions between young armed men with their tribal leaderships. This again was probably necessary for collaboration with the Government, whose agenda for the rural future and for conflict reduction puts increasing stress on tribes. (Recent Government peace conferences on Darfur, even the basic school curriculum, place heavy expectations on the tribal system to achieve peace that eludes other actors in Sudan.<sup>10</sup>) But it means that the project, and the research underlying it tend to see tribes as discrete units, stressing their homogeneity and authenticity. This may have sometimes understated the potential for manipulating tribes, and for internal divisions within tribes.

The research project brought natural resource factors underpinning local conflicts to the attention of UNICEF. This helped some staff understand how competitions over land and water shape local societies. The focus on land and water resources was again necessary to depoliticise local conflicts and delink them from the main conflict. But it brought UNICEF into some unfamiliar areas: some of the most successful meetings held have been meetings about land tenure, a key issue for peace, IDP return, demobilisation for soldiers and CAFF from rural areas. Land tenure is vital, but unfamiliar for UNICEF which has relatively little work on livelihoods.

The report has not yet been translated or disseminated in Arabic or other languages. Research results have not been communicated to research participants in the field. In contrast, the rapid conflict assessment of the Nuba-Shanabla conflict that involved a few field staff in Kordofan has effectively disseminated information among key people: local UNICEF staff and counterparts, international monitors. This kind of ongoing peace and conflict trend analysis may be more useful

for the project in the future. The project needs to develop local, authoritative peace and conflict trend analysis if it is to continue its usefulness. This implies a different research management structure: field based and continuous.

### Informants understanding of the objective

“It’s too amorphous to be useful,” complained one informant when asked for a definition of peace-building. Definitions ranged from the psycho-spiritual to the economic. Definitions of the term “rights-based approach” were even more inconsistent however, and showed the influence of people’s institutional background – with Government officials suggesting that it was about respect and tradition. Only one respondent said that the rights based approach is intended to help ordinary people to claim their rights, part of the process of self-determination (and part of the UN’s *Common Understanding on the Human Rights Based Approach*)<sup>11</sup>.

#### Peace-building is ...

“Coexistence between communities to ensure proper services are given”  
 “Make ethnic groups forget their differences”  
 “Diplomacy, mechanisms for reconciliation”  
 “It means development”  
 “When you establish social peace, other sections will follow – health, education and all”  
 “All activities intended to restore social harmony and defuse past tensions in societies devastated by war”

The project did not effectively promote “a rights-based framework to peace-building” in the sense of giving people opportunities to claim rights. But that may not have been the real aim. The project manager used the research project to getting consensus from a wide variety of stakeholders (formerly in conflict) on an approach to peace building at a local, grassroots and mostly rural level. This involved bringing together security personnel and village women, teachers and tribal leaders, even soldiers from both sides. The project manager explained: “It’s a joint programme, UNICEF and the Government. Peace-building is a way of communicating to the Government. It delinks local conflict from main conflict”.

#### A rights based approach is ...

“Remind duty bearers to fulfil their obligations and help right holders to stand up for their own rights. UNICEF’s role is to support either duty- or right-holder when they are weak.”  
 “Traditional mechanisms of solving problems”  
 “we didn’t discuss ... what the conceptual framework might be. But we have peace and development”  
 “shift from needs to rights”  
 “Rights are in international conventions”  
 “If people had been educated they would not have asked for their rights through rebellion.”  
 Can you teach people to claim rights? “If they learn”.  
 “a respectful culture”

Project managers were clear what they had to do with this objective: to get the Government and other stakeholders to “facilitate and support community-led peace processes,” as one PPO indicator puts it. The Government preferred the term “social” rather than “rights based” peace. Government acceptance of these terms was necessary for UNICEF to work with it on local peace. But the objective remains problematic for several reasons

- The terms “peace-building” and “rights based” were not clearly understood
- The phrase “promoting the application of a framework” raises problems of accountability – who is responsible for promotion, or application?
- Rights are easy to compromise, and ambiguities like these makes them easier to compromise
- Opportunities to claim rights are a key part of the rights-based approach and the transition to peace. The project does not give ordinary people those opportunities.

### How stakeholders used the project

This objective aimed to give people a set of conceptual tools for promoting rights and building peace. How did they use them? The project gave committed counterparts opportunities for activism. Middle managers in state ministries or localities with a high commitment to peace building and rights were able to use the project to push forward a peace agenda in their town or local area. One

senior state ministry official, for example, arranged a number of activities through the project, but lost his post when a minister unsympathetic to the aims of the project arrived. Nevertheless, the official was able to continue working on peace issues within the ministry and developed activities without UNICEF support. Some women in women's groups supported by the project were able to use the project to learn new skills, to participate in the politics of civil society, and to engage with tribal leaders. Many of the committed supporters of the project were in the field, rather than in the capital though.

### **What rights did the project address?**

When the project contributed to the reduction of conflict, it made it easier for children and adults to enjoy some of their social and economic rights. However, the project's contribution to rights was never an easy one to articulate. This is partly because the project's main focus was to enable different tribes to reach agreements. Because of the influence of Western liberal traditions on human rights law, it tends to focus heavily on relationships between individuals and the state, it has relatively little to say about the role of traditional collective groups. In contrast, many Sudanese customary (or tribal) legal systems stress restorative justice: mediation, making amends, and reconciliation. African customary systems have many strengths, but restorative justice principles are occasionally at odds with the stress on legal recourse and accountability in other traditions (an example is the issue of rape, below). So articulating the project's contribution to "human rights" needs some nimble legal theorising.

The project did not come to terms with one key part of the rights-based approach that the UN definition: rights-based programmes ought to help ordinary people claim their rights. Claiming rights is important for peace-building work for two reasons. First, because "peace-building" is part of a transition from Sudan's war-system, where few institutions for claiming rights existed and rights could only be claimed violently – to a peace-system. A peace-system needs reliable institutions that give all or most people opportunities to claim their rights. Secondly, peace and reconciliation processes that do not take rights seriously often end in compromise. A woman informant described what this means for some people: "There's no rape in town but a lot in the bush. Rape is now reduced. I don't hear much about it. The women just try to forget the past, it's a good thing. Sometimes they know the perpetrator but they don't talk about it. It's better to forget."

The fact that the project did not adequately articulate a rights-based framework, or produce a document with that title is not a major problem. The project is small and fairly ambitious as it is, and it concentrated its considerable intellectual resources into new ways of describing conflict (see below) rather than in legal theory.

### **Peace-building, gender equality and children's rights**

One area of rights that the project sought to address was the area of gender equality. Project documentation from 2002 included "engendering" peace processes as one aim. The project specifically targeted women too, setting up women's groups in Upper Nile and supporting existing women's CBOs elsewhere.

Targeting women had some positive outcomes. In Upper Nile and Kordofan, women informants said that the project workshops were a route to local political participation. They were sometimes the most eager to use project learning and develop new work. Women were also crucial to some parts of the work. Because they attract less suspicion than men, they are often chosen to pioneer cross-line work – women were needed for this role in the Nuba Mountains. Women were able to initiate intervention in particularly bitter conflicts, such as the Nuer civil war in Upper Nile. Women have a role in war as well as peace, of course, and the project sought to co-opt traditional women

poets or *hakkamas* who use scorn and praise to mobilise men for battle. They were encouraged to sing songs of peace as well.

These initial achievements were not sustained: women attended but did not have a substantive role in peace conferences. Issues identified by women informants as important to women and children were not part of the project. These issues include:

- Criminalizing rape and the rape of minors – restorative justice systems deal with rape through fines and reconciliation, but some informants believed that
- Changes to marriage age and bridewealth during war
- Women’s political participation in tribes

The project excluded some gender issues from peace-building. Rape in the context of conflict was seen as a “gender issue” that would be dealt with by gender programmes. Other gender issues were discussed. For example, in 2003, a Ministry of Finance CFCI gender and peace-building workshop in Kadugli made some detailed recommendations about women’s land rights, alongside some more general recommendations for service provision. The general recommendations were passed on to relevant line ministries, but the gender-specific recommendations about land rights were not. This event reflects overall weakness in follow-up (see below) but it is significant because it is one of the instances when ordinary people used the project to claim rights and to advocate for change within the tribal system: the project was not set up to deal with this.

The project did not have a clear strategy to link peace-building with children’s rights. Peace is a component of children’s rights to survival and development. Some activities – like peace drama – allowed children to enjoy their rights to freedom of expression, leisure, play and participation in cultural life<sup>12</sup>.

### **Monitoring**

The original PPO indicators for this objective were:

- The framework is agreed to and applied by all major parties concerned.
- Government authorities facilitate and support community-led peace processes;
- Government and non-governmental organisations (NGO) networks that support peace building are functioning.

The project did not progress far in developing or articulating a framework that links rights and peace-building – although this may have been deliberate. However, the project manager worked effectively with the Government to reach a consensus on the meaning of the term peace-building, that in turn facilitated community-led peace processes. The project did not create formal NGO networks (UNDP has a project for networking on peace-building), but it brought opportunities to a number of committed people in Government and NGOs to promote peace.

### **Conclusions**

- The project did not articulate a clear framework for rights-based peace building acceptable to all stakeholders. The lack of clarity may have been a deliberate attempt to create consensus through ambiguity. But the project used research, workshops and networking to achieve consensus between an exceptionally diverse group of stakeholders on the meaning of grassroots peace-building, that allowed committed stakeholders a space to address local conflicts.
- Consultant-led research is a significant function of the project but it is not yet accessible to ordinary people. Research conducted in collaboration with field staff was understood and disseminated more effectively.

- Women and children's rights were not adequately addressed by the project. Women were targeted for project intervention, children much less so.

### **Recommendations**

- The research paper should be disseminated in Arabic and English to different stakeholders
- Research should try to involve field staff and other participants. Research strategy should switch from expensive, consultant-led reports to ongoing peace and conflict trend analysis.
- Children should be involved more, and develop a strategy for involving women and children's rights in peace-building. Ensuring that women and children's rights are respected in peace time, and in rural, tribal Sudan is a key responsibility for UNICEF and the Government

Recommendations for developing the project's research function are further developed in a concept paper at the end of this report

## Progress towards objective 3

### Objective 3: By 2003, ensure that peace building is mainstreamed in the planning and implementation of all UNICEF-supported programmes.

The original PPO indicators for this objective were:

- Conflict risk assessments are included in the choice of all CFCI areas
- All UNICEF-supported sectoral programmes include activities contributing to peace in funded part of their PPAs

This clear objective was narrowly time limited. A few activities were undertaken in 2002 and 2003 and none thereafter. This section briefly presents the activities and assesses them, and then looks at the use of peace-building in other UNICEF sections and processes of mainstreaming in UNICEF.

### Activities in support of objective 3

There were only two activities in support of this objective.

- In 2002, UNICEF staff and counterparts in five states were trained on peace-building. UNICEF planning department staff and state Government counterparts were trained on links between peace-building and CFCI.  
(In 2003, UNICEF planned but did not implement a CFCI peace-building training package.)

### Evaluation of activities in support of objective 3

In late 2002 and early 2003, peace-building was included in sectoral training workshops for national counterparts as an additional topic. This training sensitised counterparts to the need to understand the relationship between service provision and conflict and helped in some cases to ensure that services were sited more intelligently. The training did not lead to any systems to ensure that services in areas of tribal tension would take conflict into account. Field staff appreciated the training but it generated less interest in Khartoum.

The 2002 workshop on peace-building and CFCI was intended to incorporate conflict indicators in a wide-scale data collection exercise on the poorest areas in Sudan. CFCI uses quantitative measures of vulnerability across geographical areas to rationalise the targeting of UNICEF's services, and to link services to community development activities. "Conflict indicators" were not traditional enough for UNICEF, they said in retrospect. There is relatively little interaction between CFCI and peace-building in the country office. However, there was follow up to the workshop: the Community Development Committees (CDCs) of CFCI all are supposed to have a sub-committee for peace building, along with sub-committees for health, water and education.

### Mainstreaming: peace-building in budgets and activities of other UNICEF country office sections

**Education:** UNICEF's peace-building work began and continues in the Education section. The Education section's peace-building work promotes class democracy and has supported a teacher's manual for peace-education and a set of Culture of Peace supplementary readers for schools. The former was not available for this evaluation. The readers were an important

#### Supplementary readers

Three volumes entitled *Education for Peace*. One third of the first book covers the role of tribes in conflict-resolution; the book also introduces the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The series stresses religious co-existence – it is all right for Muslims to eat together with Christians, one old man reassures his wife. The prophet Muhammad and the apostle Paul are quoted praising peace. One volume looks at the sufferings of war, with a long description of the horrors of the 1945 Hiroshima bombing; there is no reference to the horrors of war in Sudan.

achievement in a country where children were only recently taught militarist songs in early primary school. However, some informants criticised the readers for evading the causes of war in Sudan: some teachers in South Sudan said that they were not worth using. It may have been partly inspired by the project, but there are relatively few links between the Education section and the project.

**WES:** The Water, Environment and Sanitation (WES) section has supported peace-building by providing water points in Kordofan and Upper Nile. WES staff in Kordofan and Khartoum strongly supported the project. It has given them a much better understanding of their work with communities and was an important part of future work. During and before the project, WES has provided water sources specifically aimed at reducing conflict, and in some cases, water management committees are responsible for negotiating access to water between tribal groups. WES do not monitor inter-tribal relationships in management committees. WES believe that many water sources reduce conflict, particularly those serving IDPs. However, they do not routinely undertake conflict analysis, and one project officer accepted that sometimes improper siting of water points could lead to conflict.

**ICA:** The ICA section supports peace-building work through funding radio work on peace in Arabic and local languages. Only one broadcast was assessed for this evaluation: on Bahr al-Ghazal radio, about the dangers of adultery to neighbourhood peace. These broadcasts are linked to radio listening groups, providing wind-up radios and audience participation activities in villages near Government-controlled towns in the south. Like the Education section, ICA section staff said that communications with the peace-building project were limited: “There is little use of peace-building activities in ICA. But there is no resistance to mainstreaming, and there are consultations with peace-building project manager when PPAs are written. But PPA process tends to simplify objectives down, and peace-building gets lost”. Another staff member said: “Peace-building has been difficult to integrate. People don’t like changing, don’t know what to do to integrate it, and the leadership isn’t there”.

**The work of a Wau CDC peace building committee**

**Violence in the home:** “Problems in the family are linked to food insecurity. People are very poor: men collect firewood or grass, women sell groundnut paste in town. Children pilfer fruit. Unemployed men drink sorghum beer, there’s some violence in the home as a result.”

**Inter-tribal quarrels:** “Dry season water queues are very long. Children sometimes fight in the queue for water. There are fights at parties and occasions. Sometimes water fights acquire a tribal character”

**Conflicts with passing nomads:** “Before, people wanted to put honey in the crops to poison the nomad’s cattle, that were eating crops. Now it’s done by talking. We tell people to respect guests.” The committee has made about 20 peace-building interventions in 2 years of work.

**Planning:** The Planning section manages CFCI, which has over 300 CDCs. The project provides training to CDC members and Government counterparts, that includes a peace-building component. In addition, the project has supported CFCI with training for these groups in Khartoum and Nuba Mountains. CDCs are all supposed to have a sub-committee for peace, and training on the need for inter-tribal management of services in ethnically mixed areas.

Five CDCs were encountered in the evaluation field work. CDCs in Bahr al-

Ghazal set up peace-building sub committees that mediate between people in settled, mixed-tribe villages and Arabised and Fulani cattle nomads who traverse their areas in the dry season. Another CDC worked on IDP reception, raising its own funds to welcome people and provide food and clothes. The successes of the Bahr al-Ghazal CDC were surprising: they had training from the Planning section counterpart (Ministry of Finance) but not from the project itself.

In contrast, two South Kordofan CDCs visited received the same training as those of Bahr al-Ghazal, plus additional training on gender and peace-building, but were not aware of any link

between their work and peace-building. In Upper Nile, the only CDC visited had made some achievements in describing local needs, but had not managed to secure a response from the Government for any of its requests: local people were observed building the village school, but Government ministries had not provided copybooks, pens or seats. CDC members interviewed there knew nothing of the link between CFCI and peace-building.

**Health:** “Days of Tranquility” allow for a brief ceasefire for the purpose of vaccinating children and are one of the oldest “peace-building” activities in Sudan’s civil war. Now, the Health section has no activities in support of peace-building.

**RPPB:** This section covers gender, human rights, children in need of special protective measures (CNSPM) and mine risk education. Joint activities were planned or carried out with the gender project (training on peace building for women state secretariats), human rights (training in the Nuba Mountains) and the CNSPM section (inter-tribal meetings on abduction in West Sudan).

**Field office staff:** In contrast to the reluctance of some SCO staff, several field office staff expressed strong commitment to the project, especially in Kordofan where the project had received more generous funding, and where counterpart capacity was higher. Staff in all sub-offices welcomed the research skills and knowledge that the project afforded them: the research gave them new information about their environments which they said helped them to enhance programme effectiveness. One said “Peace-building is new, it came at the right time, we advocate for it to Khartoum as a counterpart for Government-SPLA talks. It started here (in the field) in order to deal with issues like – how can you live with someone who has done you harm. Then SCO people supported it.”

### Monitoring mainstreaming in UNICEF

Mainstreaming is difficult to define, but this project came up with two appropriate indicators to show when it is happening: allocation of funds and analysis. How did the project fare?

- Allocation of funds: The project kept no records of allocation of funds to peace-building in the PPAs of other sections. An examination of those PPAs appears in the table below.
- Analysis: The CFCI targeting process was informed by conflict analysis techniques developed by the peace-building project. But UNICEF’s planning section did not go on to use conflict analysis in its work.

Section	PPAs consulted	Activities in support of peace building	Monitoring systems
Education	2002-2004	Documented. Part of sub-projects for teacher training and curriculum development	Monitored as part of sub-project
WES	Not consulted	None documented	Water points provided to prevent conflict may be monitored by the peace-building project
ICA	2002-2004	Documented in 2002 and 2004 only. Part of radio sub-project	Monitored by media consultancy as part of overall sub-project
Planning	2002, 2004	None documented. Peace-building is a component of training	Not monitored
Health	2003	None documented. No knowledge of any documentation in other PPAs	No activities
RPPB	2002-2004	Documented. Part of peace-building project	Regular reporting of peace-building project manager

Mainstreaming indicators need to shed light on the extent to which the mainstreamed issue is adopted, developed and monitored by other parts of an organisation, and the organisation's continued learning. There appears to have been little independent development of new work for peace, other than those accepted in the 2002 PPO. The one-off training on mainstreaming is a hostage to staff turn-over: none of the people trained in peace-building in the Upper Nile MOE are still there. In addition, changes in Sudan's peace process affected staff commitment. When the project began, activities in support of peace were exciting and necessary. Sudan's current half-peace in the South, and conflict in Darfur has stopped many project activities.

Field staff communicated regularly with the project manager. They have modest reporting requirements for the project, a few lines in a monthly field report. But this regularity – a basic monitoring principle – meant that they had a clearer idea of project achievements and problems. SCO staff's responsibility for monitoring "mainstreamed" issues is not clear and as a result, monitoring is minimal.

UNICEF staff identified a number of measures for good mainstreaming

- Understanding of how the mainstreamed issue can enhance the work of others
- Appropriate monitoring systems (to see how sections are mainstreaming an issue)
- Appropriate structures for communication with other sections
- An ability to negotiate around the "territories" of different sections
- Energy and charisma of the person leading the mainstreaming

The project did provide information and analysis that could be used to enhance programme quality. However, that information and analysis was not always used. There are no forums for the project manager to communicate directly and regularly with SCO staff – regular communication with field office staff is easier, partly because field staff need to be in contact about project budgets. There is no system for monitoring peace-building in planning either. The lack of structures and forums can sap energy for mainstreaming.

### **Conclusions**

- There were few activities in support of this objective and little follow up
- Some UNICEF sections have some funded activities in support of peace, but conflict analysis and local community peace-building activities have not been extensively mainstreamed into many other sections. The project has effectively mainstreamed peace-building into work in Kordofan
- There are not enough structures for monitoring or communicating about peace-building, so most of the energy of the project goes to areas, like Kordofan, where commitment is high

### **Recommendations**

UNICEF should develop procedures for ensuring that people with mainstreaming responsibilities can work effectively. Procedures to consider include:

- Regular attendance at management meetings, RPO meetings, or planning meetings for the peace-building project manager
- New recruits to have induction meetings with the project manager
- Monitoring of PPA process to ensure that peace-building is included

# Findings - project management

This section analyses some of the project structures and systems, not presented elsewhere in the report, to see how they contributed to project effectiveness. These include: project management, budgets and funding, relationships with other actors in the field of peace-building

## Project implementation

Peace-building, like other projects in the Rights, Protection and Peace-Building section, works with a particularly diverse set of partners: CBOs run by people without educations in literacy, NGOs, academics, state and national ministries as well as tribal groups. This institutional diversity, alongside the concentration of activities in insecure areas, undermines the project's ability to implement.

Sub-project	Implemented:planned activities		
	2002	2003	2004
National capacity building	10:12	6:7	4:7
Upper Nile	6:7	4:7	2:4
Abyei	3:4	0:1	-
Nuba Mountains	4:6	13:14	5:6
Darfur	8:8	1:3	2:2
Bahr al-Ghazal	3:4	1:3	0:6

In 2004, some activities were cancelled because of funding shortfalls. Decisions to implement or not to implement this year were taken in a fairly arbitrary manner. There was little consultation with the field, said one informant, when activities got cancelled. Some important activities – like the follow-up meeting for an inter-tribal conference that set up a

chief's committee on cattle rustling in Upper Nile – were cancelled.

Project implementation rates vary considerably from one area to another, and they have declined over time. Darfur non-implementation is a result of insecurity. Upper Nile project implementation rates are probably a result of the low capacity of partners there, as noted above.

## Project budget

Project budgets (in US dollars, opposite) were well below PPO projections, and declined sharply over three years. PPO projections include Government contributions of 20-25% of total, which did not

Funds	2002	2003	2004
Regular resources	71,933.76	80,436.49	80,000.00
Other resources	148,339.88	91,414.59	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>220,273.64</b>	<b>171,843.00</b>	<b>80,000.00</b>
PPO projections	326,000.00	313,000.00	326,000.00

materialise in the course of the project. PPO projections greatly overestimated contributions from regular resources, and underestimated those from other resources – direct donor funds to the project. In 2003, the project shared a Canadian grant with UNDP for work in the Nuba Mountains: it amounted to 53% of total expenditure that year, and may account for the overall better performance of the area.

Lack of donor commitment in 2003 caused the problems in 2004: that lack of commitment is probably because the Darfur conflict gave donors cause to reconsider investment in peace-building elsewhere. One donor said, "Peace-building is one of the issues – like poverty reduction, or the joint assessment mission – that Darfur crisis has let everyone forget." Perhaps this indicates that the project did not spend enough time on donor relations and donor education. Or, it may reflect the confusion within the project, and in Sudan as a whole, on the future of the peace process. Donors interviewed for the evaluation stressed that peace-building is still part of the agenda: "We need to align development with macropolitics in a down-to-earth way, with lots of capacity development. And we need to plan for conflicts that are caused by peace. The peace-building approach will

continue, but will not exclude more conventional categories of assistance like IDP return,” said one donor.

### Project review

Monitoring systems have already been discussed under each objective. Not all project activities are well monitored, and there is little clarity over responsibility for monitoring peace-building activities in other sections. For example, the project may help to set up an inter-tribal management committee for a water point, but turn-over of staff means that no-one knows whether the committee still exists or functions.

#### Constraints, 2002 review

- State secretariats don't engage
- Scattered, non comprehensive activities
- Shortage of trained resource people
- Many counterparts do not see link between rights, protection and peace building
- Poor coordination at state level

Annual review meetings were the main way in which the project tried to monitor its performance. The 2002 review, for example, identified shortcomings listed in the box opposite. Some of these shortcomings received attention the following year. But there was no attempt, for example, to explain how peace-building could contribute to protection or rights. And the lack of

capacity identified did not lead to plans for enhancing capacity, outside the well-funded Nuba Mountains.

### Project relations with other actors

UNICEF is highly respected by other actors in what is seen to be a difficult field of operations.

**Relations with Government counterparts:** The project began working with the Ministry of Higher Education and then switched to the Peace Advisory to the Presidency. The Peace Advisory has state-level representation in project areas, but is not actively involved there. An example is the PAP peace centre in Wau, opened in 2003, but not functioning much since then. UNICEF's main state-level counterpart is MSCA, and it might support project efficiency if MSCA became the national counterpart for UNICEF.

**Relations with UN bodies:** Peace-building and conflict transformation much closer to the mandate of UNDP than that of UNICEF. UNDP has limited field presence however, and for that reason, which means that UNICEF capacity for implementation is much higher than that of UNDP. The UNDP is an appropriate body to manage this project because it is linked to competition over natural resources, and therefore to livelihoods. UNICEF may find it difficult to use project learning for future programming in the Nuba Mountains, for example, because workshops and inter-tribal conferences often lead to action on land rights. Land rights are usually seen as outside UNICEF's area of expertise, even though they may have considerable importance for issues like the return of IDP households led by women, or CAFF return in areas where most economic opportunities are in the land.

**Relations with international and national NGOs:** NGO informants all saw UNICEF as the lead UN agency for peace-building. International NGOs may be able to support UNICEF in linking peace-building to livelihoods and gender. For example, Oxfam in Malakal has a project for enhancing the legal regulation of pastoralism, in order to reduce conflict, and CARE in Bahr al-Ghazal has identified a need to develop laws regulating women's rights in the transition to a new legal system in South Sudan. Christian Aid has done some work linking peace-building to youth work and children's rights.

## **Conclusions**

- Project implementation rates and project funding declined in the course of the project, because of confusion about the peace process and insufficient capacity building
- Project review identified major problems, but responses to identified problems were weak, partly because of lack of funding
- Peace-building is recognised as a difficult area of operations. In spite of some problems in performance, UNICEF is highly respected by other actors in the field.

## **Recommendations**

- Project implementation rates and project budgets can be addressed through a clear fundraising strategy, but this needs some clear decisions about the future direction of the project.

Recommendations for future directions come in the form of three concept papers at the end of this report.

# Lessons learned

The project developed original research on localised or “second-tier” natural-resource based conflicts, linking them to rural politics and rural economics. They used community development techniques to apply this knowledge to plan service provision, support people to build negotiation skills, and bring tribal leaderships together. Applied knowledge – often the most difficult kind of knowledge – is the project’s big achievement. This evaluation was an opportunity to learn about the way that UNICEF interacts with rural social structures like tribes, and how that interaction can be used to promote children’s rights and help build a protective environment.

## **Tribal structures**

One key lesson of the evaluation is that everyone sees the tribe as the future of rural Sudan. There is no other agenda being discussed. Tribal institutions have been fragmented, politicised and militarised by all warring parties: they are the institutions that are now expected to deliver much of the peace.

Sudanese tribes are exceptionally durable institutions, that have survived over a century of manipulation. But they are not always representative or democratic institutions – some have a history of authoritarianism, others have been encouraged to become authoritarian. The role of women and girls in the institutions is problematic. Young people are likely to lose power relative to elders in the future, because tribes need to assert the power of older males over younger males, because warring parties armed the “wild young men” of the tribe, and peace building means elders take control again.

Understanding tribes is important for UNICEF for two reasons. First, South Sudan will shortly enter a period of rapid and decisive legal development, as provided for in the recent power-sharing protocol signed by the Government and the SPLA/M<sup>13</sup>. Customary (tribal) law will be an important part of legal development, even if the planned Children’s Law, based on other African laws for children, joins the South Sudan statute book. Customary courts – the lowest and most accessible courts in rural Sudan – will have an important role in interpreting and enforcing laws regulating children and women’s rights, including family law, juvenile justice and land law (access to land is a potentially important component of demobilisation young people in rural economies). In most countries, primary courts deal with these parts of the law. These courts will most likely be the local framework for claiming or enjoying rights in rural Sudan for the next ten years at least. UNICEF needs to support the way that children and family law is developed, but even more crucially, understand the institutions that deliver it, if UNICEF is to promote children’s rights in South Sudan.

Secondly, tribes are often seen as key institutions in Sudan’s penniless system of decentralised rule. When state ministries do not deliver, tribes have to provide. Tribes will therefore be key institutions in the transition from relief distribution to development. Their definitions of vulnerability will be influential, and they will have to manage much of the transition from war – when competing interests are violently managed in the interests of the violent – to a peace system, when gender, class, ethnic and generational conflicts are managed non-violently by institutions with some legitimacy and resources. Again, UNICEF needs to understand these changes if it is to work effectively in the new Sudan.

This project’s ability to use learning about local contexts to enhance programming is potentially invaluable in developing an understanding of tribes in development.

## Local definitions of child protection

A second key lesson was around local perceptions of child protection. Children have been overlooked in the peace process and in this peace-building project. The project sees peace as a deal between male elders, and the role of children and women is to initiate and decorate peace processes. But the field work uncovered many opportunities for working with children in the context of the programme.

First, many “community child protection measures” are tribe specific. Tribes have some positive child protection practices, especially in the area of support to orphaned children. They are able to provide the community reintegration for children who have gone through the trauma of bereavement, that eludes urbanised societies. But if the assumption that tribes will deliver much of the peace in Sudan is correct, they will have to deal with a whole range of separated children’s issues. While “victim children” such as orphans, pose few challenges to tribal structures, “problem children” – CAFF, street children, separated and urbanised IDP children, abducted and alienated children, children involved in sex work, or sexually abused after abduction – will challenge traditional systems of protection, as many informants acknowledged.

Impoverished and semi-urbanised IDP tribal groups have got used to institutional care for “problem” children in some areas, like Khartoum and Malakal for example. One CDC, however, when asked of plans for “problem children” said: “We have already put them into consideration. We will treat them kindly. There are not many problems in integrating children. Children will solve their own problems.” When pressed, they acknowledged that CAFF are unpredictable. Knowledgeable young Khartoum child consumers may find village life oppressive.

Ordinary people, influenced by tribal leaderships, will define the nature of child vulnerability in the new Sudan. It is vitally important for UNICEF to understand how that vulnerability is defined. Many of the key mistakes in development come from misunderstanding vulnerability: allowing a wealthy outsider to determine who is to be pitied or helped in a strange society<sup>14</sup>. Outsiders who focus resources on vulnerable children in a much larger and highly vulnerable population of adults and children – such as assetless IDPs – can undermine those populations by creating perverse incentives for them.

This project’s ability to use learning about local contexts to enhance programming is potentially invaluable in this regard.

**There should be no doubt about the urgency of developing local understanding of child protection. A recent Humanitarian Aid Commission/Sudan Relief Rehabilitation Commission framework plan for spontaneous return of IDPs, calls for child protection networks to be set up in six months:** “Child Protection networks and child demobilisation: The parties will agree to the demobilisation of all children from their forces within six months of the signing of the peace agreement. This means that specific programming for the return of children formerly associated with fighting forces needs to be included in short term planning. This may involve more school places for adolescents, short-term vocational opportunities, and sports and cultural activities. Equally it will be necessary to have child protection networks active in those communities which will receive high numbers of children from the armed forces. In particular this will be necessary where children have fought on the other side of forces which were previously enemy forces. Child protection networks should build local capacity to support peaceful reintegration and reconciliation and therefore protect returning children and protect their communities from them.”

*A Six Month Framework Plan for Spontaneous Return in the Sudan*, 13 July 2004, page 11, 10.5.2

## Children and young people's participation

Another important lesson learned in the evaluation was around the area of children and young people's participation. The project has scored few big successes in this regard: children had roles in sports days and peace festivals, and not much else. In contrast, the project actively fostered the participation of women – as long as that participation was in boundaries that were seen as fixed by tradition.

Young informants viewed their tribalised future ambivalently. Many acknowledged that tribes are an important part of peace. But one informant in his early twenties said: "It's different now – tribal leaders can't speak on behalf of young people. In the social system young people have no role, they just wash people's hands and serve food. They need to be given a role in the tribe. Now they can read and write they despise this youthful subordination. They should have access to satellite TV and leisure activities. UNICEF has a role in activating young people". Several urban, educated girl informants expressed a wish to go back to the village. They described complex relationships between young people in the city and those in the village. Rural young people are not educated, but even non-educated urban youth get cultured from mixing with educated youth. They only had friends in the village who were ex-city people.

Everywhere, young people of both sexes had youth groups. In Omdurman IDP camps, young people collected money from the impoverished population to fund school buses for exam days. In Malakal, educated young people described a range of choices available to them: clubs costing 30SDD to enter, political forums in universities, schools, churches and festivals, and student associations based on the tribe (*rabit*). One of these youth associations arranged their own inter-tribal conference when IDP youth groups and football teams fell apart after a spate of inter-tribal violence. They invited chiefs from both sides, and explained that, as educated young people, they did not want to get involved in tribal clashes that were forced on the area by militias associated with the warring parties. The youth groups survived, and the young people distributed a statement in the IDP camp.

*Rabit* were also encountered in villages: in the Nuba Mountains, NGO counterpart Badya organised a workshop for young people in two villages across the front line. The *rabit* tries to spread peace in the area. In another village, young people ran a radio listening group, and cleaned up streets, welcomed official guests, and maintained the school and clinic. The young men among them also went out to fight during the cattle rustling season.

Very few pre-teen children were interviewed in the evaluation, but those that were interviewed, described children's networks for watching TV, play and singing. Adult men observing the interview often were not aware of the level of organisation that children had, and were surprised when a fatherless boy led the performance of a song he had written, call-response style. "A ship will rescue us, we are dispersed, our father will come and rescue us". They had a song about a girl called Nanut, against skin bleaching: "When you came here, you didn't have a white skin." The adult surprise is not unusual, but it shows that understanding children and young people's culture requires information from source.

These observations are not about the project, but the project's capacity to study local societies again holds strong potential for UNICEF's future development. Networks involving young people and children are crucial for child protection. If the community development approach of CFCI is to succeed, it needs to go beyond the formulaic approach to young people and adult participation, engage people and understand the local institutional context: which includes young people's networks as well as tribal leaderships and courts.

# Conclusions

2002 was a hopeful time for Sudan. Different peace processes began to deliver ceasefires in the Nuba Mountains and the South, and petroleum exports topped \$1.5 billion for the first time: this project began when Sudan was headed for a future free of war and poverty<sup>15</sup>. The project used partnership with Government, original research and a version of community development principles as strategies to reach ambitious peace-building objectives. Two and half years later, a new conflict in Darfur and continuing instability around the oilfields in the South has undermined a lot of that optimism. Many people evaluate the project more coldly than they might have done, if events had been different.

The project narrowly interpreted peace-building as conflict-reduction. This meant a commitment to lofty, difficult-to-evaluate goals. To meet its ambitious objective of reducing conflict, the project disentangled local conflicts from Sudan's main conflict, so that it could work on them. It studied local competitions over natural resource that had been dragged into a civil war. It worked with unfamiliar partners, with limited capacity, including tribal leaderships, who had been weakened but not destroyed by the war.

The project succeeded in developing an understanding of tribes and using its version of community development to set up workshops and conferences that led to agreements to end some lethal and impoverishing local conflicts – this is a successful project. But in doing so, it has adopted a narrow view of peace, and a view of rural politics that stresses the importance of tribal leaders negotiations and deals. It asks few questions about the way leaders represent their tribes, and unintentionally excludes children and young people from political participation.

Although Sudan's ambiguous and unpredictable peace process has confused the project's achievements and potential, it is still a sound project. It needs to orient its objectives and indicators towards more modest outcome objectives, and to develop more participatory and practice-based research. The following section presents a concept note for a reformulated project.

The project could continue to do what it does now, or it could develop a broader view of peace-building, looking at other areas of the transition from war. Peace-building is a broad (or too-broad) category. It also covers rule of law, and the development of representative or socially accepted institutions that can mediate conflict non-violently. The project has learned many lessons about these issues, and could easily apply this learning to children's rights and child protection.

It was never an intention of the project to work on child protection or children's rights directly. But it could easily build on its clear strengths in understanding and working with rural, tribal politics to promote children's rights and a protective environment for children. The following section presents two concept notes for building on these strengths and orienting the project towards children's rights, and show how each concept relates to UNICEF's view of a protective environment for children.

All three concepts could be turned into one project, or UNICEF could choose to work only on or two of the concepts.

# Recommendations: three concept notes

<b>Reformulated grassroots peace building project</b>	
<b>Project outline</b>	<b>Research function:</b> Changes from one-off research piece to ongoing conflict and peace trend analysis. Academic staff provide research methodology, NGO trains local counterparts. Local structures like Chiefs Council and CBOs monitor changes to conflict.
	<b>Peace-building function:</b> Each area of intervention has a designated partner for building the capacity of tribal institutions and CBOs to monitor conflict and provide services for conflict mediation.
	<b>Community development function:</b> UNICEF and one NGO or ministry counterpart develop capacity-building plan for CBOs and Chiefs Councils. These groups monitor the link between service provision and conflict and nomad settlement. Chiefs Councils support inter-tribal service management committees.
	<b>Advocacy function:</b> Locally generated conflict and peace trend analysis will identify some issues outside UNICEF's mandate, such as land tenure. UNICEF SCO and field offices should support CBOs to raise issues outside UNICEF's mandate to the right Government institutions or international organisations
<b>Targeting</b>	Different possibilities. UNICEF could restrict work to Nuba Mountains, or restrict work to conflicts where resolution is a strong possibility. Better, UNICEF could work on any conflict that comes to the attention of the Chiefs Council, CBOs or its own programme, resolving those capable of resolution and monitoring those not capable of resolution.
<b>Child/youth participation</b>	Limited possibilities. One of the two CBOs should have an active youth participation policy. UNICEF supports this with good quality training and accompaniment
<b>Rights-based approach</b>	Some possibilities. Capacity building of CBOs aims at helping local people act to enhance their own rights to security and services. Advocacy involves wide range of local people. Women and children actively involved in substantive peace-building activities like monitoring, and have equal representation to that of men in CBO.
<b>Counterparts</b>	State ministry, academic institutions, one NGO and one CBO in project areas, tribal groups
<b>Objectives</b>	Build capacity of 1 Government and 2 NGO partners in each conflict area to identify, analyse and provide mediation services to local conflict
	Build skills of key staff in UNICEF and counterparts to analyse, monitor and respond to conflict around service provision and water resources in CFCI areas
	Develop research strategy based on conflict and peace trend analysis
<b>Monitoring</b>	Existing research functions would be turned into extensive monitoring system with high level academic support for methodology. Monitoring will cover: conflict and peace trends; joint management of services; access to mediation services; outcomes of mediation
<b>+</b>	The project has to build local peace against the background of Sudan's half-completed peace deal. All project interventions will be needed when the peace deal is signed
	The project learns about local conflicts and institutions: this knowledge is needed for UNICEF to make the transition from relief to development. CFCI may need this to succeed.
<b>-</b>	Warring parties have always instrumentalised relief provision They can still instrumentalise peace-building – directing activities to favoured areas, and manipulating peace messages
	Unworkable major project assumption – second tier conflicts can't be de-linked from the main conflict

<b>Child protection project</b>	
<b>Project outline</b>	<b>Research function:</b> NGO, with academic support assesses how age groups and sexes within tribes understand and respond to child vulnerability, assesses how young people and children organise in networks or formal activities. NGO then trains children, young people and adults on research to monitor child protection
	<b>Peace-building function:</b> NGO sets up child protection networks to support to the reintegration of separated children including IDPs and CAFF. Networks allow people to articulate and deal with contradictions and problems of peace
	<b>Community development function:</b> Capacity building used to set up child protection committees: separate groups of adults and children in different age groups that work to identify and monitor child protection and to welcome children at risk. Extensive work on creative activities promotes children's and young people's self expression. May eventually develop representation for young people in tribes.
	<b>Advocacy function:</b> Use information generated and children's expressive activities to influence duty-bearers on child protection.
<b>Targeting</b>	Initially focus on areas with high levels of child return, child disability, child abduction of CAFF
	Need to look at all areas where protection is a major concern, need to have a strategy to extend coverage if the
<b>Child/youth participation</b>	Resource intensive and high level of child and youth participation in all activities; needs strong strategies for capacity building
<b>Rights-based approach</b>	Supports young people and children to claim their rights. Links children and adults to duty-bearers in ministries. Can incorporate clear non-discrimination strategies on gender, disability, HIV/AIDS where necessary.
<b>Counterparts</b>	State MSCA, NGO with strong capacity for participation, NGO with strong creative skills, local child protection networks, tribes, academic institutions
<b>Objectives</b>	Build capacity of MCSA and 1 NGO partner in each project area to develop child protection networks
	Build capacity of local parent and youth organisations to understand and respond to child protection
	Support children and young people in research and self expression
	Enable key UNICEF staff to understand and respond to local communities views of vulnerability
<b>Monitoring</b>	NGO supports young people to generate protection and participation indicators, NGO monitors them with young people (see attached paper on participation and indicators)
<b>+</b>	Misunderstanding vulnerability is the start of bad programming. This "learning programme" approach is better than consultant research.
	Tribes may deal effectively with "victim children" (orphans, disabled). The project could develop influential, authentic models for working with tribal models
	Tribes may need support in reintegrating "problem children" (CAFF, street children). The project supports this: reintegration is a key to peace
<b>-</b>	Is it needed? Many local communities effectively organise for IDP return and feel confident about integration. They need relief goods more than capacity building
	Separating vulnerable children from a highly vulnerable population is questionable. Child protection committees might find it hard to work when people are focused on survival

<b>Legal project</b>	
<b>Project outline</b>	<b>Research function:</b> NGO develops expertise in studying customary law deals with children and families and other areas of customary law decisive to children's rights, family law and women's rights, supports local CBO to monitor court cases
	<b>Peace-building function:</b> NGO will support tribes to recover their judicial powers, but also support young people and women to enhance their representation within the tribe
	<b>Community development function:</b> UNICEF and legal anthropologist support NGO to develop expertise, NGO supports youth and women's CBOs that can monitor their rights in the New Sudan
	<b>Advocacy function:</b> NGO and local CBO counterparts will have credible information on the rights situation of women and children that could be used to influence legislation; capacity to monitor legal rights in local customary courts
<b>Targeting</b>	Needs to include areas and tribes with both centralised and decentralised systems, needs to focus more on South Sudan and on areas where customary law is significant (this will probably eventually include Darfur and South Kordofan)
<b>Child/youth participation</b>	High potential for resource intensive but effective child participation
<b>Rights-based approach</b>	This is a rights project for people at risk of legal discrimination
<b>Counterparts</b>	NGO with strong analysis, NGO with strong mobilisation skills, academic institution with a legal anthropologist, local rights monitoring CBOs
<b>Objectives</b>	Build capacity of MSCA, tribal leadership and 1 NGO partner to study law
	Build the capacity of UNICEF staff to understand children's rights in customary law
	Build the capacity of young people to understand their legal rights
<b>Monitoring</b>	Existing research functions would be turned into extensive monitoring system with high level academic support for methodology. Monitoring will cover court cases and other protection issues
<b>+</b>	Tribes will most likely be the local framework for claiming or enjoying rights in rural Sudan, UNICEF needs to understand how they use the law
	In Southern states, this would also involve looking at juvenile justice, family law and women's rights in customary law, at a time of rapid and decisive development of customary law.
<b>-</b>	Everyone is trying to manipulate tribal structures: would UNICEF funding for sub groups not just exacerbate their problems?
	As a stand-alone project it may be too complicated to succeed. Might be better as a research consultancy attached to the child protection project.

## Links between options and main components of a protective environment<sup>16</sup>

Component	Reformulated project	Child protection networks	Legal project
<b>Attitudes, traditions, customs, behaviour and practices</b>	Has understanding of these categories, applied to conflict analysis, not child protection	Applies understanding gained from peace-building project to child protection	Applies understanding gained from peace-building project to child protection
<b>Governmental commitment to fulfilling protection rights</b>	Mobilises government commitment to change at local level, commitment applied to peace-building, not child protection	Mobilises community commitment to child protection, may deal with lower levels of government	Mobilises lower levels of government on child protection, project data can be consolidated and used for advocacy at higher levels
<b>Open discussion of, and engagement with child protection issues</b>	Some opportunities for women to discuss how peace and conflict affect women and children	Explicitly aimed at generating open discussion	Explicitly aimed at focusing open discussion
<b>Legislation and enforcement</b>	Has understanding of customary law, applied to building capacity of tribal leaders for peace-building, not child protection	Promotes enforcement of children's rights by local authorities and service providers	Explicitly aimed at monitoring enforcement of customary and national legislation, strong enforcement monitoring focus, potentially able to influence legislation
<b>Capacity [of professionals working with children]</b>	Develops capacity of tribal leaders and CBOs to build peace	Children could use the project to promote child rights messages to teachers and other professionals	Develops capacity of tribal leaders with judicial authority, local government
<b>Children's life skills, knowledge and participation</b>	Children participate in drama and festivals	Child led organizations, built on children's understanding of and commitment to changing their own context	Led by legal professionals, potential for high levels of child participation in monitoring and research
<b>Monitoring and reporting</b>	Consultant-led, high quality, one-off research	Regular monitoring of protective environment led by children	Regular monitoring of protective environment led by children and legal professionals
<b>Services for recovery and reintegration</b>	Understands and promotes community capacity to recover from war	Implements child-friendly, child led recovery and reintegration services	Supports child-friendly, child led recovery and reintegration services

## Acronyms

CAFF	Children Associated With Fighting Forces
CDC	Community Development Committee (part of CFCI)
CFCI	Child-Friendly Communities Initiative
ICA	Information, Communication and Advocacy section, SCO
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
JMC	Joint Military Commission
MOE	Ministry of Education
MSCA	Ministry of Social and Cultural Affairs
PAP	Presidential Advisory for Peace
PPA	Project Plan of Action, an annual plan for a single project
PPO	Programme Plan of Action, a five-yearly plan for the whole office
RPPB	Rights, Protection and Peace-building section, SCO
SCO	Sudan Country Office
SPLA/M	Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement
WES	Water, Environment and Sanitation section, SCO

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## Endnotes

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- <sup>1</sup> Boutros-Ghali 1995, paragraphs 49-55, Brahimi 2001: 6
- <sup>2</sup> de Zeeuw 2001: 14ff
- <sup>3</sup> UNICEF Sudan Country Office: Grassroots Peace Building Project 2003, UNICEF Sudan Country Office: Sobat Corridor Grassroots Peace Building, Nov 2002 proposal
- <sup>4</sup> UNICEF Sudan Country Office: Grassroots Peace Building Project 2003
- <sup>5</sup> The project also funded a Peace Centre in Blue Nile in 2002
- <sup>6</sup> Johnson 2003:125
- <sup>7</sup> IPF Working Group 2001:22
- <sup>8</sup> Nyaba 2001:8
- <sup>9</sup> See for example de Waal 2002
- <sup>10</sup> Republic of Sudan and UNICEF 2003: 11, Ahmed 2004
- <sup>11</sup> UNICEF 2004:92
- <sup>12</sup> Articles 14 and 31 of the Convention of the Rights of the Child
- <sup>13</sup> Schedule B, Power Sharing Protocol, Naivasha, 26 May 2004
- <sup>14</sup> See Harrigan and Chol 1999
- <sup>15</sup> IMF 2003:47
- <sup>16</sup> In UNICEF 2001: section 6.2