



MEDIA RELEASE

COMMUNITIES LEADING WOMEN EX-COMBATANTS' REINTEGRATION IN NEW DEMOBILIZATION, DISARMAMENT AND REINTEGRATION (DDR) PROJECTS

For immediate release

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A range of new community-based DDR Reintegration projects in Central Equatoria are likely to reach an estimated 3,500 beneficiaries. The projects target demobilized Women Associated with Armed Forces (WAAF), female ex-combatants, as well as non military members of their respective receiving communities. In June 2010, Pact Sudan in collaboration with the Southern Sudan Demobilization, Disarmament and Reintegration Commission (SSDDRC) and the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Demobilization, Disarmament and Reintegration (DDR) Unit launched this community driven, small grants scheme, for grassroots organizations to provide economic and social community based reintegration programmes in Central Equatoria State.

Four grassroots partners have been awarded grants by Pact: Adventist Youth Development Initiative (AYDI), ROOTS Project, Sudanese Association for Humanitarian Aid (SAHA) and Women's Self Help Development Organization (WSHDO). Each organization will provide both vulnerable female DDR participants and community members' access and entry to economic cooperatives, adult literacy and numeracy support and livelihood groups: such as tailoring, brick making, a restaurant cooperative, and indigenous arts and crafts production.

The South Sudan DDR Programme has prioritized the demobilization and reintegration of Special Needs Groups from within the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), including Women Associated with Armed Forces (WAAF), disabled and war wounded, and elderly male and female ex-combatants. Over a 2 year period, the South Sudan DDR Programme will provide comprehensive individual economic reintegration packages to 35,000 ex combatants and WAAF. The package includes training, a start up kit, and livelihood support. Roughly 5,000 beneficiaries have already started individual reintegration training with implementing partners German Society for Technical Cooperation(GTZ) and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Central Equatoria State, as part of the UNDP supported South Sudan DDR Programme.

The above-mentioned Pact/SSDDRC/UNDP collaboration which launches this month recognizes that receiving communities themselves have often been devastated by conflict and have limited capacities or resources to adequately support returning ex-combatants and WAAF. The projects provide extra support to the most vulnerable of the DDR caseload, as well as ensuring that receiving community members also benefit from DDR projects.

"The South Sudan DDR Commission appreciates these grants and that the local community members who will be receiving ex combatants and WAAF can also benefit from reintegration support", comments William Deng Deng, Chairperson of the SSDDRC.

"Pact Sudan is proud to support this pilot project which will later expand to the Lakes state. The main funding source for the pilot is the South Sudan Peace Fund, supported by the Government of Norway, UK Department for International Development (DfID) and Government of Denmark (DANIDA)", says Judith McCallum, Country Director of Pact Sudan.

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