RENEWING COMMUNITY TIES IN NORTH DARFUR

Kafod and Abu Sekin, North Darfur Years ago, people were accustomed to visiting each other’s villages for social occasions like weddings and births.

Irrespective of what group they belonged to, people from different villages gathered and danced, sang, and raced horses and camels. Quite often, these celebrations would last for days or even weeks.

For the most part, the ensuing troubles in Darfur ended these exchanges. Not only did people from different villages no longer invite each other to these celebrations, but there was a general reluctance to gather in groups due to safety concerns.

Kafod and Abu Sekin were identified by the DCPSF as potential focus areas in the 2013 Call for Proposals. At that time, tensions were rife between different communal groups. Disputes over
livelihoods and assets between pastoralists and farmers were increasing along migratory routes crossing Kutum and El Fasher localities to the south.

Welthungerhilfe and their local partner, Rayan for Social Development, began supporting social-cohesion in these communities through support to community-based reconciliation mechanisms (CBRMs), farmer field schools, market restoration, and cross-communal water management. These projects began to build, step by step, new links between communities and to engender renewed levels of trust and confidence.

Later in the project, at a conference organized by Welthungerhilfe and Rayan for Social Development, a number of community members remarked that they were beginning to see signs that old ways of being were returning. They remarked that,

“Step by-step people from Kafod area who are African by race began to exchange visit with people from Umsyala area who are Arab…”

Relationships were gradually being re-built at the personal level.

One of the CBRM members was a man from Umsyala called “Mr. Hussein” who before the most recent tensions had a close friendship with a man called “Mr. Salih” from the Kafod area.

Because of tension between community groups, they had completely lost contact with each other. During the project, however, both Mr. Salih and Mr. Hussein were part of the CBRMs and through their work in forums resolving community challenges, they also renewed their friendship.

Subsequently, the families of the two friends have exchanged visits. Mr. Hussein invited his friend’s family into his home and in return he and his family have visited Mr. Salih’s home on two occasions.

More recently, Mr. Salih and his family came from Kafod for two days to celebrate the occasion of Mr. Hussein’s son’s wedding.

DCPSF 2015 Results

The Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund aims to address local-level conflicts in Darfur through community reconciliation mechanisms, joint management of natural resources and the creation of new livelihoods opportunities.

During 2015, the DCPSF has...

**Built trust and confidence:**
- 82% of community members where DCPSF partners were active during the preceding year state that trust and confidence is restored in their communities.
- 87% of tribal and civil society members in these communities agreed there was now a common or collaborative approach on how to address root causes of conflict.

**Supported community-based reconciliation:**
- 70 community-based reconciliation mechanisms (CBRMs) were newly established during the year.
- A total of 217 CBRMs and peace committees were active in Darfur during 2015.

**Improved cooperation over livelihoods assets and increased income generating opportunities:**
- 85% of community members surveyed reported that economic interactions between diverse communities had increased during the year.
  - Improves access to natural resources and basic services:
    - 9 migratory routes totaling over 200km have been demarcated, cleared, or rehabilitated and 70 natural resource management committees were supported. These committees cross inter-tribal and inter-communal barriers to manage joint natural re-sources.
    - 84% of community members surveyed reported that consensus now existed around shared restoration of natural resources.

**Supported an effective peacebuilding network:**
- 43 civil society organizations participated in capacity building programming on programme management and implementation.
FARMER FIELD SCHOOLS IN WEST DARFUR YIELD RESULTS

Koshosh and Arafa villages, Kulbus and Jebel Moon,
West Darfur – The DCPSF’s second objective centers around supporting livelihoods for social cohesion.

In support of this, DCSPF partner Concern Worldwide and their partner Sudanese Organization and Reconstruction (SORC) supported farmer’s field schools (FFS) in West Darfur to disseminate agricultural extension knowledge with diverse groups of men and women.

The farmer field school model – developed in Indonesia – “assume[s] that farmers have experience and knowledge” but also that they may have gaps in knowledge or habits that could be changed to improve farming results. The model also assumes that the best way for farmers to learn new things is to teach each other, and show each other the real results of new practices.

In West Darfur, twelve farmer field schools were established. A key part of Concern Worldwide’s mission is to support the most poor, this was balanced with DCPSF’s focus on livelihoods for social cohesion, and local sheikhs were consulted to ensure a mix of different tribal groups were part of each FFS to build collaboration and trust.

Four demonstration plots were established by the schools to demonstrate best practices on vegetable production in the winter cropping season.

Beside technical aspects, participants were trained on organizational management, management of group-based agriculture activities, and of the demonstration plots.

During the trainings, participants recommended that an extension service guide with key messages for Lead Farmers would be helpful. The FFSs also proposed other extension tools such as a mobile cinema, visual guides and booklets to spread messages to those who couldn’t read. Concern Worldwide worked with the Ministry of Agriculture to provide crop production booklets as guides, FFS members who could read took the lead on sharing this information with other members.

In addition to the above, eighty farmers (in four FFS’s) were provided with vegetable seeds and motorized pumps to improve irrigation. The pumps have been installed and vegetable production is ongoing. Two women members of each FFS go to market twice a week selling tins of tomatoes and other vegetables. Onions, watercress, radish, and molokhia are also being grown.

The day’s profits are handed over to the FFS groups’ treasurer. Some of the money is used to buy fuel for the irrigation pumps, the rest is returned to group members.

As each group includes members from different tribes, the FFS provide an opportunity not only for learning technical skills, but also for making personal and professional connections among different groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Locality</th>
<th>No. of Farmer Field Schools</th>
<th>No. of farmers</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kulbus</td>
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<td>20 (33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jebel Moon</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>40 (33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>60 (33%)</td>
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IN SEARCH OF SUITABLE PASTURE: PREVENTING CROP DESTRUCTION IN CENTRAL DARFUR

*Central Darfur:* After the rainy season, nomads and their animals were on the move. When there were not available pastures, the herders led their animals near the farms where the grass grows lushly – but crops can easily be destroyed if there are many animals in one area.

INTEROS and their Sudanese NGO partner AHABAB supported local community based reconciliation mechanisms (CBRMs) to help resolve tensions between herders and farmers and avoid escalation into violence during this sensitive period.

Adam, a young herder, started to move with his cattle during October 2015, reaching the village of Nyango. Unfortunately, he didn’t find any suitable pasture there.

“There wasn’t any proper field for my goats so I decided to approach to an [area] where I saw a lot of grass around.” While Adam rested, the animals entered into a farm, and began eating the harvest.

The farmer, Idris, was a member of the Intersos supported CBRM in the area and gathered the other members to evaluate the crop destruction and assess a fair compensation.

Adam explains: “The Committee required me to provide two sacks of sorghum to the farmer, but in the end Idris, [feeling] friendly, refused the compensation.”

The CBRM further advised Adam and his fellow animal herders that a small dam was constructed south of Nyango, encouraging him and the other herders to take their animals to graze there.

These small dams, six of which were built by the project in coordination with the Water Environment and Sanitation department (WES), reduce crop destruction by providing animals a place to drink and eat away from farms.

Community Water Committees were trained in water management, maintenance of facilities, and conservation to help ensure these resources remain available into the future.

While the Intersos project ended in November 2015, it is hoped the successes of the CBRM will continue.