

ACT - CARITAS NCA DARFUR EMERGENCY PROGRAMME MONTHLY BULLETIN — January 2009



SECTION 1. Political developments and the general situation in Sudan

The situation in various parts of Sudan is increasingly tense and worrying. LRA attacks have been reported for several weeks in Western Equatoria; there is conflict in Malakal between Dinka and Shilluk tribes; there is fighting in the Lakes states; in Warrap, in Eastern Equatoria and other places, each with their own causes but raising serious concerns at the national level.

Arrests and interrogations of civilians are taking place in Khartoum, especially at night causing fear and unrest. In Southern Kordofan, SPLM threatened to withdraw from the Southern Kordofan government if there was no agreement over the dismissal of the finance minister; the deadline was 29th January. Meanwhile in Darfur there has been further violence with intensive fighting between GoS and JEM forces in the Muhageriya area of South Darfur causing the displacement of thousands of people. The airport at El Fasher was closed for a while on 27th January whilst the security forces attacked rebel units which had taken up positions in the area. At a press conference on February 4th a statement was issued by a number of profiled representatives from the civil society organizations, media and rights activists calling for a comprehensive process for reconciliation and healing throughout Sudan, including Darfur.

For many people in Sudan, the main issue of concern is the impending decision of the ICC on the case brought against President Bashir for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. Many people, media and observers have expressed fear of retaliatory measures by the Government if an arrest warrant is issued for Bashir and some analysts link the recent upsurge of fighting between the government and rebels in South Darfur to the awaited decision by the ICC judges. The AU has called for a deferment of the indictment 'to give a greater chance to the peace process'. However, in light of the recent hearing of Feb 4th it seems unlikely that Bashir will be able to escape an arrest warrant.

SECTION 2. Activities by the NCA Darfur Programme during January 2009.

- Progress has been reported in the drafting of partnership agreements with Sudan Council of Churches (SCC) and Sudanaid, although the partner self-assessments have not yet been completed. As soon as the partnership agreements have been signed, contracts for project implementation will be issued to SCC and Sudanaid
- SUDO presented its audit for 2007 and this is currently being reviewed by NCA. It was agreed to re-launch the verification exercise of SUDO's activities in 2006, to be lead by John Birchenough. SUDO's new international Finance Manager has not yet received his visa and is therefore not yet in country.
- Technical agreements (TAs) were due to expire on 30th January but HAC announced that the current ones would be extended to 28th February. A new electronic version of the TA has been introduced to improve the system.
- Applications have been made to extend international staff stay visas but these will only be extended to February 28th.
- The programme has been invited by the Sudanese authorities to consider supporting IDP returns during 2009 and Sudanaid is considering how they might develop this initiative.
- The National Coordination Group (NCG) met in Khartoum on 26th Jan. The Compliance Support and Advisory (CSA) Group held a teleconference on 28th Jan.
- ACT Coordinating Office and CAFOD have begun to map funding pledges for 2009. \$3.5m received in pledges to date = 32% of budget.

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SECTION 3. Activities planned for February 2009.

- A girls' school in Dereig Camp, Nyala, built by Sudanaid, will be completed. Following this, NCA plans to build a boys' school.
- Proposals will be submitted to the UN Common Humanitarian Fund (CHF) for non-food items and possibly also for wat/san.
- Logistics training will take place, provided by DanChurchAid.
- The ACT Communications Manager is due to make a visit.
- NCA's new Country Representative, Elizabeth Mustorp, is due to arrive in Khartoum during the last week of February.
- New proposals will be prepared for donor organisations who require these. Regular reports will be prepared for HAC and UN OCHA. The 4th quarter report for 2008 and the annual report will also be prepared.

SECTION 4. Human Resources Issues.

- The new Donor Liaison Officer, Michelle D'Arcy arrived in-country in January.
- Recruitment for Deputy Head of Programmes, ECHO wat/san Coordinator, Head of Finance and Head of HR and Administration is at an advanced stage.
- Magne Svendsen, from NCA Oslo, will be in Nyala to prepare the audit for 2008 and to complete the financial statement for the year (including funds to be carried forward).