



WEEKLY REPORTING

Unit	Governance & Rule of Law
Project Name	Strengthening Access to Justice and Human Security; and Support to the Abyei Civil Administration
Project No	00059806 and 00063382
Location	Abyei
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Reporting Period	15 - 20 March 2009

1. GENERAL SITUATION

A - Political Situation in Abyei

The Abyei Administration maintained that international agencies deregistered by the national government in the wake of the ICC declaration early this month were still allowed to work in Abyei due to its special status. To assert this, the Chief Administration circulated a written notice asking all partners to support the three agencies affected in Abyei (Mercy Corps, PADCO and Save the Children - US).

However, only Mercy Corp was still conducting business in Abyei from Agok (approximately 40 km south of Abyei), while the other two had taken a low profile.

B - Security Environment

The security situation in Abyei remained calm, with no incidents reported.

2. PROGRAMME (ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED, ACHIEVEMENTS AND PLANS)

A: Strengthening Access to Justice and Human Security

Output 1: People's awareness of their rights is enhanced

On 20 March 2009, the project held a meeting with five representatives of the Abyei Human Rights Society (AHRS) at the UNDP Office. The meeting discussed plans to re-establish the group, and implement human rights awareness-raising. To this end, the AHRS members committed to contact the other members in Abyei town: there are approximately 20 members (9 of which are paralegals).

A follow up meeting was scheduled for 24 March 2009 at the UNDP office.

Output 2: People have access to an operational legal aid system

2.1 Establish and support the Justice and Confidence Center

Following the May 2008 violence in Abyei, the Justice and Confidence Center (JCC) was extensively damaged. Additionally, all the furniture and equipment were looted.

Over the week, the project initiated efforts to commence restoration of the JCC. Planned activities include fixing of all broken parts (walls, windows and doors); and procurement and installment of furniture and equipment. To this end, the project requested quotations from three local contractors for the first phase of renovation (fixing of broken parts). It's hoped that works will begin by mid April 2009 upon receipt and analysis of quotations; and the selection of a contractor.

2.2 Training of paralegals

The project met representatives of the Abyei Paralegal Network to set plans for activities (See note on AHRS in output 1 above).

Output 3: Capacity of rural courts and traditional leaders to provide justice is enhanced

No activities conducted this week.

Output 4: Training capacity of law enforcement institutions is enhanced

4.1. Construction of temporary accommodation for the JIPU

Following the presentation of final construction plans for the Joint Integrated Police Unit (JIPU) accommodation last week, the project held a meeting with the Chief Administrator (CA) to follow up on formal land allocation. As a partnership, the plans were prepared by UNPOL, and the civil works will be implemented by UNDP.

The meeting with the CA was an appeal for reconsideration of allocation on a different site. The Administration had offered land for the civil works earlier in the week. However, this was far away from the police station, and would be unsuited for effective policing in the long run. The project thus requested the CA to consider allocating land near the police station to facilitate officers' work especially in changing of shifts, and during the rainy season.

Feedback on the project's appeal was expected next week.

4.2 Establishment of a Family and Child Protection Unit

The project held a meeting UNICEF on 15 March 2009 to deliberate on the establishment of Family and Child Protection Units/Desks in police stations. This would ensure that women and children had access to justice organs and their cases were handled effectively.

UNDP committed to facilitate the process through training for JIPU and provision of separate structures to host the units at the police stations (when possible during constructions). On its part, UNICEF would partially support civil works for the units, and provide basic material to facilitate operationalization of the Units/Desks.

Further, the project received a request from the UNPOL Gender and Child Protection Coordinator in Khartoum on the same. UNPOL sought UNDP's support in the development of a training plan, and implementation of training courses for JIPU in gender and child protection issues. As such, UNPOL committed to share a tentative training plan, for discussion, next week.

4.3 Construction of the Agok Police Station

As part of its monitoring role, the project held a meeting with the contractor of the Agok Police Station, on 16 March 2009, to discuss progress and expected time of completion.

During a visit to Agok the week before, the project learnt from the Station Commander that works had stopped for a while following lack of materials. In the meeting on 16 March, the contractor confirmed that materials had been delivered the day before and works resumed.

As such, works were on-going and completion expected by mid April 2009.

Output 5: Community policing structures have been established and are operational

No activities conducted this week.

Output 6: Local ownership and support to rule of law activities is enhanced and sustained

- Over the week, the project initiated contact with members of the Local Steering Committee (LSC) present in Abyei. Consultations were still on-going to reach more members. The project hopes to hold the first LSC meeting for 2009 by the end of this month, once a date is agreed.
- The project also attended a monthly coordination meeting for all agencies working in Abyei. The meeting reviewed programme activities and challenges hampering timely implementation. The project represented UNDP's Governance and Rule of Law programme and highlighted achievements made in the last one month as well as plans for the next two months - before the onset of the rainy season.

B: Support to the Abyei Civil Administration.

Output 1: Support to the Construction of Civil Administration Offices Provided

1.1 Meeting with the Department of Public Utilities and Infrastructure

While on mission to Abyei last week, the Governance and Rule of Law Head of Unit was scheduled to meet the Secretary in the department of Public Utilities and Infrastructure in the Abyei Administration (AA). However, the meeting did not materialize owing to the Head of Unit's illness. On the other hand, the Public Utilities Secretary had attended a joint meeting between the Head of Unit/UNDP team and the Abyei Chief Administration. The meeting discussed UNDP's support to civil works for the AA, among other things. The AA raised concern over the de-registration of PADCO, which was UNDP's partner in constructing offices and accommodation for the AA.

Owing to the abortive meeting with Secretary last week, the project met the Public Utilities Secretary to clarify UNDP's partnership with PADCO in the said works. The Project confirmed that PADCO was solely handling the initial part of the construction, and had resultantly procured civil works service for the same. UNDP would take up the last phase which included

erecting a fence around the compounds; installing water and electricity; and procuring furniture and office equipment. The project provided a written confirmation stating this position, and that UNDP had not made any payments to PADCO's contractors.

The meeting also discussed the project structure and management, where the Project Manager invited the Secretary to join the project board soon to be established. Moreover, UNDP's support through the provision of office furniture and equipment was discussed and the project committed to follow up with the other four departments of AA to identify priorities and subsequently initiate procurement.

Output 2: Support to the Development of a Legal/Regulatory and Policy Framework for Governance Provided

2.1 Support to the Abyei Legislative Council

In partnership with the Legal Administration, the project was supporting the Legislative Council in developing an interim basic law for Abyei Area. A draft of the law in English has been prepared by experts in Juba and submitted to the Abyei Legislative Council for discussion. UNDP is supporting the translation of the draft law to Arabic to facilitate dissemination to and discussion by all members in the House.

2.2 Official opening of the Abyei Legislative Council

The Abyei Legislative Council conducted its official opening 17 March 2009, following the swearing-in of members in October 2008. The session was attended by the 20 members of the Council, officials of the Abyei Administration and agencies working in the area.

UNDP attended the function where the Chief Administrator presented a policy statement of the newly formed government and pledged to work with all partners to ensure its achievement.

Output 3: Technical Capacity of the Civil Administration Strengthened.

3.1 Meeting with the Department of Local Government and Human Resources

As part of the project's effort to bring all partners on board, the Project Manager met with the AAA Secretary of Local Government and Human Resources. The following were discussed:

- The project structure and formation of a project board - in the next two weeks - where the department would be represented.
- Identification of government staff training needs and prioritization. As the department in-charge of human resource development, the Secretary committed to contact other government sectors and develop a training plan in partnership with UNDP. This would be a precursor to comprehensive needs assessments to be conducted by UNDP advisors, who would co-locate with the various departments.
- Also identified was the need for provision of office furniture and equipment in the department to facilitate staff performance.

Output 4: Project Coordination and Planning Support Provided

- The project had several meetings with government partners and other stakeholders to discuss the establishment of a project board. Accordingly, an augural meeting was scheduled for the first week of April 2009 after the Chief Administrator returns to Abyei from a mission to Khartoum.
- The recruitment of project staff was on-going, and greater field staff presence was expected as from April 2009: recruitment of three technical advisors was at an advanced stage.
- The project continued to facilitate coordination and planning support to the Abyei Civil Administration and agencies working in the area

Output 5: Support to the Establishment of the Joint Integrated Police Unit Provided

See Output 4 in the Access to Justice Project above

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES (STAFFING, LOGISTICS, FINANCE, ADMIN, ETC...)

NTR