Centre for
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# Armed violence and poverty in Southern Sudan

A case study for the Armed Violence and Poverty Initiative


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MAKING KNOWLEDGE WORK

## The Armed Violence and Poverty Initiative

The UK Department for International Development (DFID) has commissioned the Centre for International Cooperation and Security (CICS) at Bradford University to carry out research to promote understanding of how and when poverty and vulnerability is exacerbated by armed violence. This study programme, which forms one element in a broader "Armed Violence and Poverty Initiative", aims to provide the full documentation of that correlation which DFID feels is widely accepted but not confirmed. It also aims to analyse the **processes** through which such impacts occur and the **circumstances** which exacerbate or moderate them. In addition it has a practical policy-oriented purpose and concludes with programming and policy recommendations to donor government agencies.

This report on Southern Sudan is one of 13 case studies (all of which can be found at www.bradford.ac.uk/cics). This research draws upon secondary data sources, including existing research studies, reports and evaluations commissioned by operational agencies, and early warning and survey data where this has been available. These secondary sources have been complemented by interviews with government officers, aid policymakers and practitioners, researchers and members of the local population. The analysis and opinions expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views or policy of DFID or the UK government.

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## Executive summary

This southern Sudan case study documents the impact of armed violence during prolonged civil war whose ongoing second phase began in 1983. There are two conflicts in southern Sudan. One conflict, the greater war, is north-south, between the Government of Sudan (GoS) and the southern opposition primarily led by the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A). Another is south-south, between factions of the southern rebel movement who have fought each other for leadership of the southern cause and for control over territory and access to resources. The GoS has fuelled the south-south conflict through its chillingly effective strategy of counter-insurgency. The GoS has supported southern and Arab militias, not least with weapons, in order to fight the war "by proxy". Both sides have armed the population of southern Sudan. Civilians have been deliberately targeted in the war, with the widespread destruction of assets and of livelihoods. This has had a hugely impoverishing effect on a population of over seven million.

This case study focuses on three areas of southern Sudan to demonstrate the differential impact of armed violence. The first is Bahr el Ghazal, particularly the Lakes sub-region. Bahr el Ghazal has mostly suffered from north-south conflict, although there has been politicized inter-ethnic fighting between the Nuer and Dinka tribes since 1991. The SPLA has provided rudimentary governance. In comparison, Upper Nile, the second area, has suffered from much more severe inter-ethnic/ inter-factional fighting and a scorched earth policy by the GoS in the oil-producing areas. There is virtually no system of governance. It is one of the worst-affected parts of southern Sudan, and recovery has been much slower than elsewhere since the cessation of hostilities over two years ago. This case study also looks at the area covered by the 1999 Wunlit peace agreement, the third area, to learn lessons from that important local-level initiative. These comparisons underline how important it is to understand the underlying dynamics of conflict in order to understand the specific impact of armed violence.

Local people assess the risk of violence from southern and Arab militias as greater than the risk of conventional warfare between the GoS and rebel movements. Some of the militias that have been armed – particularly the Arab *murahilin* – have been driven by economic interest (or greed). The southern militias have been driven more by local and tribal grievances and by cattle raiding. All the militias have been rewarded by the seizure of assets from their looting, including livestock and people; a thriving slave trade has developed, afflicting large numbers of women and children.

In the words of one chief, "nowadays everyone has a gun". For the majority of the population their motive for being armed is protection against this destructive form of counter-insurgency warfare, and in the absence of either the GoS or the rebel movements providing or maintaining security. For some, especially young men, the motive has transformed into an offensive one as the barrel of the gun became the easiest way to accumulate wealth (usually through livestock) and to assert control over scarce resources.

Years of war and the proliferation of small arms has led to the breakdown of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms. Killing, particularly of women and children, is no longer taboo. This shift in attitude is particularly associated with the years after the split in the SPLA in 1991 when inter- and intra-ethnic fighting escalated. Social capital has been both a casualty and perpetrator of conflict. One of the consequences of the counter-insurgency tactics has been the breakdown of traditional agreements and relationships between different ethnic groups that may previously have shared resources, enjoyed relationships of exchange and even inter-married. The backing and arming of certain groups has caused them to turn their guns against each other and has fuelled power struggles over natural resources such as grazing land. At the same time as groups have segregated, they have turned inwards for protection.

Two decades of civil war in southern Sudan have resulted in huge loss of life. In the field work for this case study, every interviewee from the Lakes and Upper Nile Regions recounted tales of loss of family members and of looted livestock. Abductions have had a similarly debilitating and traumatising impact. Slave raiding has been perpetrated by government-backed militia as a tool of war to terrorize the population. Women and children were abducted as forced labour or as a commodity to be traded in the north. The scale is disputed and unknown, but is substantial; some NGOs reckon up to 200,000 people have been enslaved.

War has also caused widespread displacement. Sudan now has more internally displaced people (IDPs) than any other country in the world. Displacement may be seasonal, often during the dry season during the critical periods of planting and harvesting. For some, it has been a more or less continual state over many years. Fleeing from place to place makes it very difficult to re-establish livelihoods and to recover. IDPs are very vulnerable to banditry along the roads. When some have been able to return, especially after a long period, it is to find that their land has now been taken over and occupied by the SPLA. Whilst some host communities have absorbed IDPs well, in other areas it has fuelled tension, even conflict, where there has been competition for scarce resources. IDPs in northern Sudan have been exploited as a cheap and readily available source of labour.

War has had a devastating impact on livestock, the mainstay of the pastoralist and agro-pastoralist economies of the Lakes sub-region and Upper Nile, mainly through looting. In parts of Bahr el Ghazal, it was estimated that 40% of households lost all their cattle. Insecurity has limited access to vital grazing areas in the dry season to water points and to major markets only to further deplete livestock herds. Lack of milk is a major loss of sustenance during the “hunger gap”, especially for young children. Crop production has also been depressed by war-related violence through the destruction of crops and the displacement of labour. Fear of attack meant that some communities stopped cultivating.

The asset-stripping nature of the war has meant that the better-off are often more vulnerable to attack. This has a knock-on effect on poorer households if they can no longer rely on wealthier relatives for support or for labour. Displacement has also destroyed kinship support as families fleeing from conflict have become more spread out over large areas.

The war has been especially hard on Sudanese women. They now outnumber men by a significant margin, which means they must carry the burden of supporting all dependents. This involves a hugely increased workload. Yet, they do not have land rights. Widow-headed households have become some of the poorest in the region. In Yirol County, they represent 20-30% of the "poorest" category of households and 15-25% of the "poor" category.

One of the most devastating cases of the destruction of livelihoods, displacement and impoverishment on an appalling scale has happened in the areas surrounding the oil fields in western Upper Nile, as a result of the GoS's scorched earth policy. The policy was intended to ensure that no one would ever return home so that oil exploration could proceed 'unhindered'.

At the meso level, the war has had a devastating impact on social infrastructure. Several generations have grown up with little or no access to formal education causing a knock-on lack of professional human capacity to build governance and the judiciary system, for example. For years, in SPLA areas, development objectives were subordinated to military objectives. High and unregulated taxation to support the SPLA war effort was a further drain on already depleted household resources. Trade and exchange routes and relationships have also been disrupted by conflict, which can severely compromise coping strategies in times of stress when pastoralists would normally sell livestock to buy food and non-food items. Access to humanitarian relief, a life-saving resource for many, is unpredictable and frequently severed in the areas of greatest fighting. Insecurity has caused agencies to withdraw, sometimes when they are needed most, and denial of access has been a tool of war used with fatal consequences by the GoS.

This was never more evident than in the run-up to the Bahr el Ghazal famine in 1998. Asset depletion through looting (particularly by the destructive activities of warlord Kerubino), SPLA attacks on towns causing massive displacement, and denial of access of humanitarian agencies by the GoS caused appalling famine marked by some of the highest mortality rates ever recorded. Within one decade there have been at least three serious famines in southern Sudan, all conflict-related, symbolising the most extreme form of impoverishment and death.

The cost of the civil war on livelihoods in southern Sudan is attributed more to the destructive activities of southern militias than it is to direct attacks by the GoS army. As a result, areas of southern Sudan controlled by the SPLA have some of the worst human development indicators in the world, which are substantially lower than other parts of Sudan. For example, gross national income per capita is estimated to be less than $90 per year, about four times lower than income per capita in the rest of the country. Meanwhile, some have grown rich through a war economy that has flourished in the last two decades – warlords, government officials and politicians and some SPLA leaders. They have benefited from looting and other predatory means of acquiring assets.

The 1999 Wunlit Peace Covenant effectively ended seven and a half years of politicized inter-tribal fighting between the Dinka and the Nuer, which throws up some important

lessons. It shows the importance of restoring trust in society to re-establish security and to mitigate the impoverishing impact of war, particularly destructive asset-stripping. However, the Wunlit experience also shows that communities can relapse into conflict when the underlying causes are not addressed, including external political influence, weak governance and rule of law.

Recovery programming must be integrated, combining investment in development – for example, in water, health and education – with investment in governance – for example, in the police, judiciary and protection. Failure to address the latter will almost certainly result in a waste of resources in the former. Yet, there is no point in disarming before security is guaranteed and before local people trust the governance systems. Currently, the possession of weapons is regarded as an essential part of people's livelihood strategies to protect themselves.

In the short term, the international community must do all it can to support the peace agreement between the GoS and SPLM/A, including advocacy to end militia activity. It must also support local-level people-to-people peace processes. In the longer term, the international community must invest in governance and strengthening the rule of law. Disarmament plans must be linked to longer-term rehabilitation and recovery only when sufficient trust has been built between local people and properly functioning governance systems.

# 1. Introduction

This case study of southern Sudan has been led by Pact Kenya, through a combination of field and desk research. The field research took place from 11 July to 6 August 2004, mainly in the Lakes sub-region of Bahr el Ghazal (in Yirol Town, Pankar village and Rumbek County), in Ayod County in Upper Nile and in Nairobi, Kenya. It took the form of group interviews, personal testimonies and observation. The interviews and personal testimonies were particularly valuable in documenting the psycho-social impact of the war and how perceptions of security have changed over time to lead to differing behavior patterns. A list of key informants interviewed in Nairobi for this study is attached as Annex 1.

The southern Sudan case study documents the impact of armed violence during the prolonged Sudanese civil war[1]. It began as conventional warfare in 1983 between the Government of Sudan (GoS) and the southern opposition primarily led by the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A). Very soon a new dimension developed, south-south conflict between factions of the southern rebel movement, which started to fight each other for leadership of the southern cause and control over territory and access to resources. Throughout this period, the arming of the population of southern Sudan has been widespread and indeed been a key strategy in how the war has been fought. The fuelling of the south-south conflict is a direct result of the GoS's chillingly effective strategy of counter-insurgency. No household is untouched by the war and its violence. Interviews carried out in southern Sudan for this study reveal just how badly the war has devastated institutions such as traditional authority, governance and rule of law. The violence has deliberately targeted civilians, their assets and livelihoods, resulting in high food insecurity, widespread displacement and death. Although the level of exposure to the different types of conflict has had differing impacts on assets, livelihoods and social relationships, it has had a hugely impoverishing effect on this vast area of Sudan, affecting a population of over seven million.

At the time of writing, Southern Sudan is on the brink of peace, propelled by recent breakthroughs in the peace talks between the northern government and the SPLM/A. Indeed, most of the south has enjoyed a cessation in hostilities for over two years due to a ceasefire between the two sides. There is already evidence of recovery, but this is still fragile, which reflects the fragility of the peace process itself.

This case study focuses on three areas of southern Sudan: Bahr el Ghazal, particularly the Lakes sub-region, Upper Nile Region, and areas covered by the 1999 Wunlit peace agreement parts of which overlap with Lakes and Upper Nile. See Annex 2 for the respective maps. The reason for choosing these different areas is to understand the differential impact the war and armed violence has had. The Lakes sub-region has mostly suffered from the north-south civil war between the GoS and SPLA. There has been

[1] This case study covers the second phase of civil war in southern Sudan. The first phase started in 1955 and continued until the Addis Ababa Peace Agreement in 1972. The second civil war began in 1981 and became organised in 1983 when the rebel movement – the SPLA – was formed (Deng, 2003)

politicized inter-ethnic fighting between the Nuer and Dinka tribes since 1991, but to a lesser extent than in some other parts of southern Sudan. Thus, recovery in the Lakes sub-region has been much faster since the cessation of hostilities than in the second region covered by this case study, Upper Nile. This region has been one of the worst-affected parts of southern Sudan as a direct result of the greater war and because it has become a microcosm of that war. It has suffered from many different conflict dynamics, including severe inter-factional fighting and a scorched earth policy by the GoS in the oil-producing areas. There has been much less sign of recovery since the official cessation of hostilities. Hence violent inter and intra-ethnic fighting has continued in the almost total absence of governance. Table 1 shows the similarities and differences between the Lakes sub-region and Upper Nile. Common to both, however, has been the proliferation of weapons into society.

**Table 1. Similarities and differences between the Lakes sub-region of Bahr El Ghazal and Upper Nile**

| Characteristics | Lakes sub-region, BEG | Upper Nile |
|---|---|---|
| Area | Six counties in eastern BEG: Rumbek, Yirol, Awerial, Cuiebet and Tonj | Three sub-regions of Western, Southern & Eastern Upper Nile |
| Ethnicity | Mainly Dinka (a range of sub clans); some other ethnic groups | Multi-ethnic, including Nuer, Dinka, Murle, Toposa, Kichipo, most with a range of sub-clans |
| Main livelihood system | Mainly agro-pastoralism | Mainly agro-pastoralism |
| Primary conflict | GoS-SPLA civil war | GoS-SPLA civil war; GoS against local communities surrounding oil fields; GoS-backed militia against SPLA and local communities; Nuer-Dinka politicized ethnic clashes; politicized and non-politicized inter- and intra-ethnic clashes over resources; local armed violence by civilians |
| Additional conflicts | Nuer-Dinka politicized ethnic clashes; local armed violence by civilians | |
| Nature of armed violence | GoS aerial bombardment; physical fighting between GoS & SPLA troops; banditry; cattle raiding; looting; raping women; burning villages | GoS aerial bombardment; inter- and intra-factional fighting; banditry; cattle raiding; looting; raping women; burning villages; abducting & selling women & children |

# 2. The context of armed violence

## *2.1 The underlying conflict dynamics*

As explained above, there are two conflicts in southern Sudan: north-south and south-south. Initially, the war was fought by the GoS through aerial bombardment and helicopter gunships and through physical fighting between GoS and SPLA soldiers. In the mid-1980s, however, the GoS began supporting Arab pastoralist groups, which included arming them. They became known as the *murahalin*[2] and were encouraged to attack Dinka and Nuer pastoralists in SPLA-areas of Bahr el Ghazal and Upper Nile. The *murahalin* became the first part of a two-pronged GoS strategy to co-opt groups to wage a war by proxy in the south. Similar to GoS troops, the *murahalin* raided cattle and looted and burned villages; the spoils of these raids served as a major financial incentive for continuing the war. By the late 1980s, GoS support for these militias was regularized as they were transformed into the paramilitary Popular Defence Forces (PDF), a parallel army made up of the *murahalin*. The Army used the PDF in joint operations against the SPLA and civilian targets and to protect trains carrying supplies for Bahr el Ghazal garrison towns (Prendergast, 2002). The PDF militia was generally financed by looting and the slave trade. This government strategy has taken a devastating toll on Bahr el Ghazal and Upper Nile. Thousands have been killed or enslaved and hundreds of thousands more displaced across both southern and northern Sudan.

In 1991 a split occurred in the SPLM/A. Commanders Riek Machar and Lam Akol had a falling out with John Garang over the leadership and direction of the SPLM/A. Riek and Lam split off to form the SPLA-United, which was made up of mostly Nuer and Shilluk forces in Upper Nile. This split set Nuer and Shilluk tribes against the primarily Dinka supporters of Garang's SPLM/A. The split set southerner against southerner and intensified the war on the southern front. The impact of these intensified Nuer-Dinka clashes was particularly severe in Upper Nile.

This south-south conflict represents the other side of the two-pronged GoS strategy to co-opt groups to wage a war by proxy in the south. The GoS took advantage of the split within the SPLM/A to supply Nuer and Shilluk factions with weapons to fight the SPLM/A. The GoS went on to arm other individual factions, Dinka and Nuer, to wage war against the SPLM/A, other southern factions that opposed the GoS and civilians in areas around the oil fields. This policy resulted in violent inter- and intra-ethnic clashes, in-fighting among southern rebel groups and widespread displacement. The GoS strategy of divide and conquer served two objectives: first, to divert southern attention away from the north and second, to help clear the way for oil exploration and extraction. The latter is illustrative of how GOS (and SPLA) counterinsurgency sometimes worked. It was not only about political power and control, there were also strong economic motivations.

[2] The *murahalin*, or mobile forces, are recruited from the Baggara tribes of Southern Kordofan, Southern Darfur, Western and Southern Gezira, Northern Upper Nile and Northern and North-Western Bahr el Ghazal (Alier 2003). The Baggara have traditionally migrated to the south during the dry season to graze and water cattle. In the past, agreements with southern tribes gave the Baggara access to these resources. However, relations between the two groups degenerated toward the beginning of the war and even more when GoS policy shifted to arming the *murahalin* against the Dinka and Nuer.

These have been well-documented (see, for example, Keen, 1997 and Duffield, 2001), with serious knock-on effects on poverty.

The north-south and south-south conflicts have more recently spilled over into intense localized armed conflict especially in Upper Nile. This has taken on the forms of banditry, more deadly cattle raiding, looting property, burning villages, raping women, and disputes in which people more frequently resort to guns instead of relying on the intervention of traditional authorities.

### *2.2 The significance of small arms and light weapons*

Weapons proliferated into civilian hands during the war as the GoS and the southern militias armed the population to fight the opposition, i.e., their opponents, the GoS, SPLA or other southern militias, depending on the case. The effect of forming and arming the *murahalin* militias became particularly evident in Bahr el Ghazal from the mid-1980s onwards. Africa Watch (1990) documents how the GoS provided arms, ammunition, intelligence and effective immunity from prosecution. The most devastating raids of the *murahalin* occurred in Bahr el Ghazal in 1986/ 87. Over 1000 displaced Dinka were brutally massacred by the *murahalin* in Ad-Daien in western Sudan in 1987 (Deng, 2003). The creation of these militias and the provision of arms had the effect of severing relations between different ethnic groups – in this case between the Baggara and the Dinka/ Nuer – that traditionally had agreements about access to grazing and water resources.

The forming and arming of southern militias by the GoS and by the southern opposition have had a similarly devastating impact particularly since the split in the SPLA in 1991. Whereas the *murahalin* militias are driven by economic interest and marginalization in the north, the southern militias are driven by local and tribal grievances and cattle raiding (Deng, 2003). As a result:

> "waves of attacks [were launched] on entire Dinka communities in Upper Nile, which resulted in a horrific devastation of lives and livelihoods, never before experienced in the history of tribal conflict in southern Sudan".
> (Deng, 2003: 125)

Interestingly, Deng's survey work in Bahr el Ghazal (2003) reveals that households' perceived Dinka militias and Arab militias as the main sources of risk that they faced (as well as drought). In contrast, conventional warfare between the GoS and the southern rebel movements did not feature as a particularly important source of risk.

Not only were the militias deliberately armed by the GoS and rebel movements, but also in turn, the militias armed the local population. This was the case in Eastern Upper Nile from the mid-1990s when inter- and intra-ethnic conflict was raging. The militias freely distributed firearms and ammunition to arm local people against other clans and tribes. Also, small arms easily fell into civilian hands as soldiers deserted from the army and melted back into civilian society, while taking their weapons with them. In the words of Chief Chep Akuch from Pagarau, in the Lakes sub-region: "nowadays, everyone has a

gun". An informal poll conducted in Eastern Upper Nile, among the Gawaar of Ayod County, indicated that the percentage of men carrying small arms among the Gawaar community exceeded 70%. Individuals as young as 13 possessed guns.[3]

There are several motivations for holding a gun. The motivation for the majority of people is protection. In response to the Sudanese government's counter-insurgency warfare and in the absence of either the GoS or rebel movements providing and maintaining security, the population took protection into their own hands, which meant being armed. This pattern is typical amongst pastoralists in East Africa's peripheral areas where government administration and the rule of law are weak. This is borne out in the northern Kenya case study (Buchanan-Smith and Lind, 2004). It is simply more extreme in the context of civil war where violence is more widespread and more intense. Indeed, even in the current "post-conflict phase", guns are still widely held and depended upon for protection.

For some, protection soon became offensive. For example, the White Army[4] in Upper Nile, an informal gang of armed young men, was originally created to protect herds during the dry season. Armed with modern weapons, the White Army soon began to expand traditional rivalries with other groups to terrifying proportions. Nyuon Nen Nyuen explained that these men started to engage in everything from hunting to banditry, looting, cattle raiding and eloping with women without paying the proper dowry, or paying as little as three to five cows instead of the usual 25 to 30.[5] The White Army even took to forcefully collecting food from the community. Similarly, other rival groups have armed to assert control over scarce resources, while many people have simply armed to protect themselves from these armed groups.

For young men, the barrel of the gun has enabled them to accrue wealth in a war environment where options were extremely limited. Cattle raiding and looting have become the easiest means of accumulating a herd, which is essential for paying the bride price in order to get married. It has also become a way to gain power over people and resources.

A vicious cycle is created whereby the increased availability of arms in civilian hands has fuelled widespread lawlessness and disorder, which are possible because of weak governance systems and a culture of impunity. Local conflicts can quickly spiral out of control and thieves and looters can commit crimes without an effective deterrent. Even after the war, arms have continued to spread into civil society as families arm to protect themselves and their assets against bandits and as gangs continue to arm to compete with rival groups for wealth and fame.

[3] Conversation with James Duoth Joak, Ayod County, 27 July 2004

[4] The name White Army was given to this group of armed civilians to distinguish them from the regular armed services and other militia. The term 'white' is a reference to their lack of identification as a real army, for example, they do not have uniforms

[5] Conversation with Nyuon Nen Nyuen, Ayod County, 26 July 2004

# 3. Social and cultural aspects of armed violence

## *3.1 Cultural aspects*

Traditional weapons, such as the spear, club or stick, would always have been seen as symbols of juvenile masculinity. As the availability of weapons increased, the social significance of guns has simply overtaken these traditional weapons.

Before the war, killing was taboo among both the Dinka and Nuer tribes, and those who committed it were required to undergo rituals of penance. If a Dinka killed another person he was required to sacrifice a bull or goat and jump over it to cleanse himself of the act. If a Nuer killed another person he had to be bled. A spiritual leader would use a fishing spear to draw blood from his right shoulder as a symbol of drawing the blood of the slain person. Then he would sacrifice an animal (NSCC, 2000). The proliferation of small arms in society and the destruction of war have led to the breakdown of these traditional conflict resolution mechanisms that required compensation for the taking of a life. Instead, young men recruited by the warring factions were taught to kill without restraint, negating the ethical constraints of social and spiritual risks associated with killing (NSCC, 2002). There were no longer taboos around the killing of women and children and the abduction of children became a lucrative trade. This change in attitude appears to have been particularly marked after the 1991 split in the SPLA. In the words of Deng Mading, a Community Development Officer for Pact:

> It was as if people lost the spirit of humanity. The cycle of war made people more brutal. People began taking revenge in a different way. To get back at me someone might come and kill my sister to anger and humiliate me. People also saw the Arabs doing things like this to women.

## *3.2 Social capital and armed violence*

One of the most striking features of how the civil war in southern Sudan has been fought has been the use of counter-insurgency tactics by both sides. As a result, neighbouring tribes and individuals turned guns against each other to amass wealth and fame. In the words of Chief Top Tut Nyial in a peace conference, which aimed to quell the conflicts among all of the tribes in Southern Upper Nile, "the weapons acquired were for fighting the Arabs, but unfortunately, we turned them to ourselves."[6] Thus, social capital has been both a casualty and perpetrator of conflict.

Relationships and negotiated agreements between groups rapidly broke down, which also affected how they perceived each other. For example, in Southern Upper Nile, the Dinka and Nuer came to be perceived by their neighbours as power-hungry groups that oppressed minorities. The Murle were perceived as "hostile, aggressive and backward." The Toposa and Kachipo were perceived as having a culture that encouraged killing for fame and respect and the Anyuak were perceived by their neighbours as trying to

[6] Pact/SPF, Planning and Organization Pibor Development Association (PDA), Mediation & Secretariat Presbyterian Church f the Sudan, Pibor Parish (PCOS, PP) Murle Reconciliatory Peace Conference Resolutions and Recommendations, 14-17 December 2003.

dominate resources by claiming that all resources belong to them.[7] Moreover, previously the Dinka and Murle were reported to have had an adoption agreement, whereby the Murle, plagued by infertility, could adopt Dinka children. During the war this practice broke down and evolved into forced abduction and commercial transactions in the sale and buying of children. Abductions were also carried out by families as revenge for cattle raiding. Due to the economic incentive, forced abductions became a growing, lucrative criminal trade and another underlying perpetuator of conflict in the region.

Another example of the breakdown of relations is provided by the Agar and Apak between Yirol and Rumbek Counties in the Lakes sub-region. The Agar and Apak have traditionally had friendly relations, enjoying intermarriage and exchange relationships. In many villages lying on the borders between the two peoples, such as those along the Cuibet-Rumbek border, the Agar and Apak lived together. However, as conflict erupted, cattle raiding, looting, burning and incidents of rape caused the two groups to pull apart. The Agar people fled their villages to move closer to their people in Rumbek for added protection. The Apak people moved to Agany village to become closer to their people. Thus, social capital between the Agar and Apak, in the form of their close-knit relationship, fell victim to the conflict as relations were severed and the two groups separated. There are now empty villages along the Cuibet-Rumbek border where the Agar and Apak once lived together.

On the one hand, GoS backing and arming of certain groups caused them to turn their guns against each other. On the other hand, conflict has caused groups to segregate and look inward for protection.

This, in turn, has fuelled violent local-level power struggles over natural resources. In the Lakes Region, for instance, these have turned increasingly deadly as groups have asserted their control over coveted grazing areas by attempting to rename cattle camps. In Tonj East County, the Pakam renamed areas as they moved into Jalwua territory only to fuel conflict between the two groups. Similar conflicts erupted between the Gok and Agar in Mvolo County and pastoralists (Beil, Agar, Reel, and Gok) from Rumbek, Cuibet and Yirol counties, as pastoralists attempted to rename areas in which they grazed their cattle.

However, not all areas of southern Sudan are unstable. Social capital in the form of women and youth groups, religious groups, trade and agriculture associations, parent-teacher associations, community-based organisations (CBOs) and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) does exist to varying degrees all over the region. The presence of relative security has helped these organizations to develop and grow. In Rumbek, for example, the establishment of security has allowed for the rise of civil society institutions. The SPLM/A took Rumbek in 1997 after intense fighting with the GoS. The restoration of peace in Rumbek led to the gradual increase of civil society. The Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Association (SRRA, now SRRC), the SPLM/A's body for relief and coordination of the activities of indigenous and international organizations, was established in Rumbek in 1998. The UN's World Food Program arrived in that same year

[7] Murle Peace Committee, Boma Civil Administration, Pibor Development Association, "Jonglei Inter-Ethnic Peace & Reconciliation Conference Murle Led Peace Initiative," 20-23 February 2004.

to respond to the famine that followed the fighting. Each ensuing year has seen the arrival of more traders and civil society organisations. This is a slow but valuable process that must be nurtured during the recovery phase.

## 4. The breakdown of governance and the rule of law

Before the war, traditional authorities in southern Sudan were responsible for managing community affairs. Traditional dispute resolution mechanisms included bringing people together for dialogue and administering justice by determining adequate compensation to resolve conflicts within and between communities. As the war continued and the SPLM/A took over civil administration, the power of traditional authorities was gradually undermined.

In the 1980s, the SPLA made considerable efforts to expand the role of chiefs' courts in settling inter-tribal disputes throughout the areas they oversaw, but chiefs were still highly controlled. While electing chiefs, the SPLA co-opted some of the more prominent personalities among them and carefully influenced the selection of others to secure positions for their supporters and allies (Johnson, 2003). Despite retaining nominal authority, chiefs were subordinated to the military chain of command and increasingly lost power to military authorities. Governance under the SPLM/A authority was carried out in a highly centralized militaristic fashion with little attention to the principles of fairness and consensus. The justice system was known for harsh and arbitrary interventions with little accountability.

Today, corruption permeates the system as civil authorities either work on a voluntary basis or if paid receive very meager salaries. With little accountability to higher authorities, offering and accepting bribes has become commonplace and acknowledged as the only way to get anything done. The undermining of governance institutions by way of corruption and neglect and the simultaneous supplanting of traditional authority have left people in the south with little confidence in the system, particularly the administration of justice. "It's as if truth and justice have been wrapped up in a ball and hung just out of reach," laments one Dinka woman from Rumbek.[8]

Meanwhile, tit-for-tat raiding escalates when authorities leave such cases unresolved. Unresolved cases eventually fester and boil over into violent conflict. As Chief Abai noted[9], outstanding cases have convinced the aggrieved to seek their own justice in the absence of the rule of law. Groups undertake revenge killings and looting of cattle, which leads to rapid escalations in the scale of the conflict and its levels of violence.

Continued failure to establish governance and systems of justice, even after the cessation of hostilities, means that local level conflict persists and in some cases has escalated. See Section 7.1.

[8] Conversation with Rhoda Adel, Rumbek County, 24 July 2004.
[9] Conversation with Chief Dhei Abai, Yirol County, BEG, 21 July 2004.

## 5. The political economy of violence

A certain amount has been written about the greed versus grievance motivations in Sudan's long-running civil war.[10] Deng (2003) shows how the two interact:

> While the Arab militias were mainly motivated by need (drought and famine) and greed (restocking and cattle trade), the Dinka militias were mainly motivated by psychological pay-offs (revenge and vengeance), fear (SPLA soldiers joining for security) and greed (quick acquisition of wealth) (ibid: 128)

He claims that counter-insurgency warfare legitimised greed in the 1980s and 1990s with assets being seized on a large-scale, e.g., Dinka livestock from northern Bahr el Ghazal taken by Arab militias and by Dinka and Nuer militias. What is particularly striking is how the looting and transfer of assets became systematized over years and decades. This was the way in which militias were rewarded especially through livestock and people. A thriving slave trade developed, which afflicted large numbers of women and children (see section 6.2 below).

As noted above, weak governance and an absence of accountability breed corruption. Soon this becomes institutionalised and part of the political economy of war. For example, in the Lakes sub-region, the police and judiciary are sometimes perceived as being only interested in money. Judges have even been known to collect fines without settling cases. The SPLM County Secretary for Tonj East believes that the conflict in his area is partially caused by the self-interested practices of the judiciary and civil authorities. The Agar Pakam allegedly stole cattle, raided, looted property and took control of lands belonging to the Jalwau. Instead of resolving the conflict, judges "just go and take the cattle without giving a solution to the problem."[11] In other cases, criminals are not arrested or are allowed to bribe their way out of jail.

The fragmentation of southern rebel movements spawned a form of warlordism of which Kerubino Kuanyin Bol was one of the most destructive. He was the government-backed rebel leader of the South Sudan Unity Movement (SSUM) and led Dinka militia in northern Bahr el Ghazal to attack their own communities. He particularly targeted areas that produced food, held stocks and livestock or had recently received food aid deliveries (Deng, 2003). This widespread looting and destruction had a devastating impact on livelihoods. It was one of the contributory factors creating the Bahr el Ghazal famine of 1998 (see section 6.5 below), rendering large numbers of people extremely vulnerable or destitute.

Thus, in a context of long-running civil war and weak governance, a predatory political economy became established. Certain groups and individuals – for example government officials, politicians, warlords and some SPLA leaders – have benefited and grown rich from the transfer of assets by force and violence, from illegal exploitation of natural resources (gold, ivory and timber), and from profiteering from the high prices of essential goods in garrison towns (Keen, 1997).

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[10] See, for example, Keen, 2000.
[11] SPLM County Secretary for Tonj South, Pankar Peace Meeting, Rumbek 8-10 May 2004.

## 6. The impact of armed violence on poverty

Regardless of the root causes and forms of the conflict, civilians have suffered the most in Sudan's civil war as the violence has targeted their economic base. Perpetrators of the conflict have raided cattle, disrupted planting seasons, torched crops, looted grain stocks and killed family members. Not only has this been very destructive of livelihoods, it has had a very negative effect on coping strategies. Thus, families have become increasingly impoverished and increasingly vulnerable in the face of external shocks.

After two decades of war, the processes by which this has happened are well-documented and are presented below. It is hard to quantify the impoverishing impact, but the figures that do exist show just how widespread and substantial the devastation and impoverishment have been. It seems hardly necessary to quantify much further.

### *6.1 Micro level*

*"People are losing their livelihoods and prosperity." Commander Salva Kiir Mayardit, SPLM First Vice Chairman and Chief of Staff of the SPLA*

#### *a) Loss of life and abduction*

Two decades of civil war in southern Sudan have resulted in huge loss of life sometimes through horrific massacres. As the ferocity of the war intensified after the 1991 split in the SPLA, Deng records some of the appalling killings that resulted. In the Bor area of Bahr El Ghazal (the home area of the SPLA leader), it is estimated that more than 5000 people, mainly women and children, were massacred in a horrific manner. Others were displaced. Dinka communities in Upper Nile Region experienced similar attacks by the South Sudan Independence Movement/Army (SSIM/A) forces after the 1991 split, resulting in massive loss of life and displacement.

In the field work for this case study, every interviewee from the Lakes Region recounted tales of loss, enumerating the number of family members dead and cattle stolen. Awut Acuil, a representative of the New Sudan Council of Churches (NSCC) for Bahr el Ghazal, said that her family abandoned everything during the war and had to flee to Kenya. She is separated from her husband's family, which is widely scattered.[12] Achol, a women's leader from Yirol County, has lost two sons and three stepsons in the conflict.[13] Elizabeth Yar Malek, from Bor, lost five children in one day. Three more of her children were taken to be soldiers; she does not know where they were stationed or if they are even still alive. [14] Helena Yak Marin, from Yirol County, described how her husband, a chief and soldier in Anyanya I, was targeted and killed by GoS soldiers.[15] David Deng, who was part of the SPLM/A negotiating team in Naivasha, Kenya, lost three brothers (one of whom was a chief) and six nephews to the war. In total, he has lost over 20

[12] Conversation with Awut Acuil, Women's Leader/Pact Program Officer, Yirol County, 19 July 2004.
[13] Conversation with Achol, Women's leader, Yirol County, 21 July 2004.
[14] Conversation with Elizabeth Yar Malek, Yirol County, 21 July 2004.
[15] Conversation with Helena Yak Marin, Yirol County 21 July 2004.

family members. David's house and flour mill in Rumbek were also destroyed.[16] These are just some of the many stories of the direct and devastating impact of this violent war on individuals and on families.

Abductions have had a similarly debilitating and traumatising impact. Whilst abduction and slave-raiding are not new to Sudan[17], it has intensified in scale and has somehow been "legitimized" by the conditions of war. Women and children have been abducted for forced labor or as a commodity to be traded in the north like animals. They have suffered horrifying forms of abuse, including sexual abuse (Fitzgerald, 2002). Intensified slave raiding was perpetrated by Government-backed militia as a tool of war to terrorize the population. Many villagers from Western Upper Nile have recounted sobering accounts of scores of relatives, including young children, brutally murdered by the GoS and its militias, abducted or lost in the chaos surrounding the attacks. One woman recalled that while hiding behind a tree during one attack, "a woman was running with her child. For a moment she let the child go…[and] a horseman swooped down on them and took the child. The mother has no idea what happened to her little child."[18]

The scale of the abductions and slavery is unknown, but is substantial. There has been much debate over the numbers and the status of those designated as "slaves". The Sudanese government claims that as few as 5,000 people have suffered from inter-tribal abductions while some NGOs reckon that up to 200,000 have been enslaved[19]. The Jonglei Peace Conference in southern Upper Nile reported that 855 children had been abducted in the sub-region. Chief Cuei of Duk County recalled an incident in which an abducted child from Duk was returned only to be stolen again along with another child.[20] At the conference, participants enumerated over and over the numbers of children and women abducted and the trauma experienced by both children and parents.

These patterns of violence also generate tremendous fear. Rumours of fighting and imminent attacks would cause people to leave their villages and hide in the bush often without access to food. As documented below, this has a knock-on effect on essential livelihood activities like planting.

### b) Displacement

*"We have to keep moving if we want to stay alive." Chief Manyeil Kong*

War in southern Sudan has led to widespread displacement, both temporary and permanent. Sudan now has a larger IDP population than any other country in the world, a record four million according to the Global IDP project.

[16] Conversation with David Deng, Yirol County, 22 July 2004.
[17] Duffield (2001: 228) comments that "inter-group abduction is an established feature of ethnic border zones…. It has long been part of the 'traditional value systems' of the groups involved".
[18] Advocacy document distributed by DanChurchAid and Christian Aid.
[19] As reported in Deng, 2003: 122, quoting Amnesty International and the International Crisis Group.
[20] Murle Peace Committee, Boma Civil Administration, Pibor Development Association, "Jonglei Inter-Ethnic Peace & Reconciliation Conference Murle Led Peace Initiative," 20-23 February 2004.

Temporary displacement, also known as seasonal displacement, often occurred during the dry season at critical times of planting and harvesting crops. Cattle raiding and even temporary displacement left families unable to access food inputs. As a result, they became increasingly vulnerable to malnutrition, disease and death.

Sometimes this has occurred on a very large scale. For example, after the 1991 split in the SPLA and increased inter-tribal fighting, the UN reported that "more than 200,000 residents of [the Dinka areas of Upper Nile], in an exodus unlike anything seen before in Sudan, fled south in search of food, shelter and security"[21]. Deliberate displacement was a key strategy in the GoS scorched-earth policy in oil-producing areas of Western Upper Nile as described below in section f).

Large-scale displacement of southerners into northern Sudan, including Khartoum and South Darfur, provided a cheap and malleable labour force for commercial farmers and other members of the host communities, including local leaders. Exploitation of this large IDP – often Dinka – population has been rife and is quite well-documented (Duffield, 2001). The international aid community's failure to protect this population has been severely criticised (see Karim et al, 1996).

Displaced families that were once considered wealthy are often reduced to relying on relatives or the charity of their host communities to survive. Kuany, for example, once a wealthy man with many wives and children, fled several times before finally ending up in Ler. "Ler is a better place. Our old village is a place of war. The GoS can shell my old village whenever they want." Kuany lost all of his cattle during the attack and was left with nothing. He had to send two of his wives and seven of their children to relatives in Mayom County where they could be fed. Four of his wives, the mothers of his slain children, remained with him. Kuany has been reduced to relying on other displaced relatives for food.[22]

Internally displaced individuals such as Kuany are left with very few of the inputs needed to rebuild their lives. If they arrive too late for the planting season or lack the necessary tools for planting, then they will remain food insecure unless they can call upon relatives (see kinship support below), the host community or the international community intervenes to fill the hunger gap.

The IDPs left in limbo, fleeing from place to place, are even less able to pick up and rebuild their lives until some measure of security returns. The story of Elizabeth Nyadet Joak illustrates the plight of IDPs as they are forced to move from place to place for security and survival.

[21] Quoted in Deng, 2003: 125
[22] Ibid.

### Elizabeth Nyadet Joak: ex-internally displaced person from Upper Nile[23]

Elizabeth Nyadet Joak is a Gawaar Nuer from Ayod County, Upper Nile. She is the mother of seven children and a widow whose husband was killed in action by the GoS in 1987. Due to the fighting between the SPLA and the Sudanese People's Defense Force (SPDF) in1992, followed by the 1998 Lou Nuer attack on Gawaar positions, Elizabeth and her family were displaced to the *toich.* After they lost their cattle to Lou Nuer raiders, the family moved to a village called Gaar where they spent two years.

Life in the village was difficult for the family because they did not have access to clean drinking water or health facilities. The family heard that in a place called Jiech there were NGOs, which provided basic services, such as clean drinking water from the borehole and primary health care services. They also heard that NGOs distributed kits for the displaced, which contained basic household needs such as a mosquito net, blanket, cooking pots and fishing equipment. Since these were the things Elizabeth's family needed for survival, they decided to move to Jiech in 1995.

However, in Jiech, they were again subjected to frequent displacement to and from the *toich* because of fighting between SPLA and Government militia on the one hand and the Lou Nuer versus the Gawaar on the other. December 2002 brought a peace settlement between the two Nuer clans of Gawaar and Lou under the auspices of the NSCC. Since then, there have not been any major incidents of one group attacking the other, except for small-scale robbery and cattle theft.

At the outset of 2003, the original residents of Ayod decided to return home. Elizabeth's family was among those who returned to Ayod in January 2004. Elizabeth now relies on trading; she brews and sells beer. She then buys grain and dry fish with the money she generates from trading. Elizabeth noted that her activities were much disrupted by the violence between the Gawaar and Lou Nuer.

With the rise in localized conflict, IDPs have become increasingly vulnerable to banditry along the road. Displaced populations, some of them returning to their places of origin, have been robbed of all property, including cattle and cooking utensils. Deng Mading of Pact noted that you could find people walking with nothing but the clothes on their backs because all of their property had been stolen.[24] Some groups have even used their meager incomes to hire people to protect them along the way.

[23] Conversation with Elizabeth Nyadet Joak, Ayod County, 27 July 2004.
[24] Conversation with Deng Mading, Nairobi, Kenya, 31 August 2004.

Other problems arise when IDPs, particularly those individuals who have been displaced for a long time, attempt to return to their land. They find that it is now occupied or has been taken over by the SPLA. As an example, one woman, returning to Bahr el Ghazal from the north, found that an SPLA commander had taken over her land, so she could not retrieve it. Her father's land had also been taken over by the SPLA. She was not eligible to receive food aid because, having just returned, she was not registered. Even if she had been registered, she would have only received a small ration of food.[25]

These are just a few of the problems that IDPs face. Taken together, they work against allowing IDPs to recover from the shock that caused their displacement in the first place.

***IDPs and host communities***

In some areas, IDPs have experienced very few problems with their host communities. In other areas, however, an influx of IDPs has placed a strain on communities already suffering from food insecurity due to past GoS bombardment, militia activity or localized conflict. The Bor Dinka IDPs who fled to Equatoria present one example of the friction that can arise between IDPs and their host communities. Many Dinka Bor from Upper Nile fled to Equatoria during the 1991 Bor conflict. Since then, about 15,000-20,000 Bor IDPs have remained in Mundri County and surrounding areas.[26] Their presence and that of their cattle have led to a deteriorating security situation as cattle have destroyed the host community's crops. IDPs have also occupied revered shrines, forests, and water points and have been cited for lacking respect for the hosts' culture, traditions and local authorities.

The tensions have at times boiled over into conflict between the two groups. Equatorians have retaliated by killing cattle found to be eating crops. These acts have led to hatred, counter-retaliations, and tit-for-tat violence between the two communities. On both sides, economic assets vital to household food security were destroyed.

### c) Livestock

Livestock has long been the mainstay of the pastoral and agro-pastoral economies of the Lakes sub-region and Upper Nile. The war, however, has had a devastating impact. As a result of the asset-stripping nature of the war, an estimated 40% of households in Bahr el Ghazal lost all of their cattle (Deng 2000). People in other areas became more reliant on producing their own food. In Ruweng County of Upper Nile, for example, following the Nuer raids of 1996 and 1997, the traditionally pastoralist Ngok Dinka switched to mainly agricultural activities as their herds were reduced by 75% (Annual Needs Assessment, Ruweng).

It is not only through raiding that herds have been depleted. Insecurity has limited access to vital grazing areas and water points and disrupted access to major markets where cattle could be exchanged for goods or restocked (discussed in section 6.2). For example, conflict has often seriously disrupted seasonal migration. Pastoralists and agro-

[25] Ibid.
[26] Pact/SPF. Proposal: Joint Team Project for the Repatriation of Bor IDPs and Cattle.

pastoralists, such as the Dinka and Nuer tribes, regularly migrate with their livestock to cattle camps in the *toich* or lowland grazing area during times of drought. During the dry season when there is not enough water to support planting, about 90-95% of families, including women and young children, move to the *toich* where they have access to water points, grazing land for cattle and milk, an indispensable source of nutrition for children.[27] However, access to the *toich* can be cut off by the presence of GoS forces or ethnic conflict. When ethnic conflict flares, movement to the *toich* exposes people and their cattle to hostile tribal elements. This puts people's lives in danger and exposes livestock to the risk of cattle raiding. Thus, as much as 50% of the population may be forced to remain behind to contend with the dry season or drought in the home area.[28] This unusually large proportion of the population puts unbearable stress on the scarce resources in the home area, in turn causing increased levels of food insecurity. Also, when communities lose the option of dry season cattle migration to the *toich*, tensions arise as they are forced to compete over increasingly scarce resources. This competition has often escalated into violent conflict, as was observed among the Lou, Jikany and Gawaar Nuer after the Dinka-Nuer split.

The loss of cattle has major implications for poverty in the region. It means lower milk yields, as families are dependent on milk to sustain them through the "hunger gap" between planting seasons. Milk is also vital to the health and development of children under five providing them with the necessary resistance to disease. One villager from Rumbek explained that he lost all of his cattle in the war and has never been able to restock. He now farms instead of tending cattle. "My children are sick because they do not get enough milk. We need milk," he complained.[29]

In addition, loss of cattle leaves families with fewer assets with which to trade or barter for food and non-food items such as grain and fishing equipment. It also has implications for kinship support. As better off families lose livestock, they have less to loan out to poorer relatives to help them through the distress periods. Large-scale loss of animals takes away an important source of identity in this pastoralist society (Fielding and Sharp, 2000).

### *d) Agricultural production*

Conflict has targeted crop production in two ways: through the destruction of crops and the displacement of labour. In both Lakes and Upper Nile, looting crops and food stocks and then burning what was left behind was just one method of targeting the asset base of households. Crop production was further impacted when families were forced to flee and thus were not able to tend to sowing and harvesting crops.

[27] Conversation with Steve McDowell, Nairobi, Kenya July 2004.
[28] Ibid.
[29] Conversation with villager from Rumbek County, 26 July 2004.

According to the 1997 SRRA assessment report (SRRA, 1997):

> Physical insecurity in southern Sudan continued to be a significant cause of food insecurity as it has eroded households' entitlement base through serious economic disruption in agriculturally productive zones, decline in food production, food stocks and livestock looted.

The impact of conflict on food security has not changed since the SRRA report of 1997. The conflict between the Pan Kuc and Pan Lual tribes in Tonj North County in 2003/2004, for example, "disrupted economic activity," causing "communities to stop cultivation for fear of ambush."[30] Similarly, conflict between the Gok and Agar tribes has seriously affected planting for the past two years. In Tonj North, harvests have been threatened by the escalation in violence between the Agurpiiny and Mayauai peoples.

As James Awong, an Ngop Dinka from Yirol County summarized the predicament: "if you heard that there was fighting in Yirol, you'd be on the move, hiding in the bush. You never knew who would be stronger, the government or the SPLA, so you just had to go into hiding, without access to food and a lot of things."[31] When conflict threatens to erupt, households often have little choice but to flee for their lives, prioritizing security over production. As a result, farmers are unable to harvest crops or tend to weeds and pests that might threaten the harvest.

Permanent and temporary displacement has led families to expand on other food sources. Shifting to wildfoods was one coping strategy that families employed to buffer the asset-stripping nature of the conflicts. People displaced from villages in Western Upper Nile, for example, were forced to scavenge for wild vegetables such as water lily to survive. When the water lily ran out, they were forced to move, walking for miles in search of wild foods that they had never before eaten. In Rumbek County, people recounted having to rely on roots and wildfruits during the famine of 1998, a direct result of the intense fighting that Bahr el Ghazal witnessed in 1997.

### e) Kinship support – all are vulnerable

Kinship is a major part of life in southern Sudan and kinship support is particularly vital in times of need, as it is used as a coping mechanism to buffer the impact of external shocks such as conflict. The war, however, has had a deleterious impact on kinship support as it has separated families and has targeted assets so that wealthier households have less to give to poorer relatives.

"Everyone is so scattered," explained Rhoda Adel from Rumbek, when commenting on the lack of support she receives from her family[32]. Families were scattered by displacement as people were separated in the chaos of fleeing conflict or even as families chose to uproot themselves from insecure areas to settle elsewhere in southern Sudan and

[30] Pact/SPF, Summary tables of Pankar Cluster Conflict Analysis.
[31] Conversation with Pantayar Khoucal, Yirol County, 20 July 2004.
[32] Conversation with Rhoda Adel, Rumbek, 23 July 2004.

abroad. Awut Acuil, and NSCC representative who is now a refugee in Kenya, noted that she was separated from her husband's family and "they are now scattered all over the place."[33]

The asset-stripping nature of the conflict has also left wealthier households with little to share with poorer relatives. Deng (2003) has convincingly demonstrated how the non-poor are more vulnerable to attack than the poorest in war. This is principally because they are targeted because they have more assets such as cultivated land, food stocks and cattle. He also claims that they are more susceptible to trauma and have greater inflexibility to adopt new livelihood strategies. This, in turn, has a knock-on effect: the poor are no longer able to call on their better-off relatives for help.

**Nuer-Nuer conflict in Eastern Upper Nile[34]**

Nyuon Nen Nyuen, a Bul Nuer from Ayod County, Upper Nile who is a farmer and a former leader of the *Bonum* (White Army) recalled the fighting that broke out during the time when the Lou Nuer attacked the Gawaar and raided over 500 cattle. This attack marked the beginning of atrocities between the two Nuer factions and a big shift in the pattern of violence. Though cattle-raiding was previously only practiced between the Nuer and Dinka tribes, now Nuer were raiding the cattle of other Nuer. This attack led to subsequent retaliatory attacks lasting up until December 2002 when the NSCC mediated a peace conference in Ayod in which the two sides agreed to stop fighting.

Nyuon used to rely on livestock (cattle, shoats and chicken), grain, agriculture, and business for his family's livelihood. However, all of these activities were affected by the fighting. He and his family were displaced, their cattle raided and their grain and other household belongings looted. Nyuon and his family had to leave their farm behind, first moving to Pagey village, then to Beu and then further to Panah village. He returned to Ayod in May 2004.

Poorer households also rely on wealthier relatives for labour. However, this mechanism becomes limited in the presence of conflict. As better off households move away from the areas of conflict or disperse their livestock to more secure areas, the labour market collapses, negatively affecting poorer relatives.

Kinship support as a percentage of the household food basket is often reported to be very low during periods of conflict. In Southern Leech State in Western Upper Nile, for example, during the period of intense fighting in the area between 1999 and 2001, reliance on kinship for food gradually fell from 9% in 1998 (still not that high) to 2% in 2001 for poor households (ANA Southern Leech State). The situation was worse in Ruweng County as kinship support was reported to have fallen to 0% in 2001 as a result

[33] Conversation with Awut Acuil, Yirol County, 19 July 2004.
[34] Conversation with Nyuon Nen Nyuen, Ayod County, 26 July 2004.

of fighting around the oil fields (ANA Ruweng)[35]. This is very likely the result of wealthier families having very little to give as well as wealthier families moving away from the conflict areas.

### *f) The impact on women*

*"Women had to find a way to win. They became breadwinners and the head of families. They were even taking care of extended families." Awut Acuil*

*"Women have lost both men and children. It's really painful." Rhoda Amuk*

The war has been especially hard on Sudanese women. Almost every adult woman in southern Sudan can narrate stories of fathers, husbands, sons and male relatives lost to the war. In 2000, a large gap was measured between the number of adult men and women in southern Sudan with women outnumbering men by a significant margin. In the Lakes Region, for instance, there were an estimated 166,223 men and 279,849 women. In Upper Nile there were an estimated 31, 372 adult men and 82, 234 women, a significant gap (See Annex 4).[36]

During the Lou-Jikany peace conference held in March 2004, women deplored the fighting that left them as widows. Mary Nyabiel Cuil, a Jikany women's representative, stressed that women were traumatized to see their husbands and children being killed like animals. Widows were left with the unbearable responsibility of taking care of orphans. She noted that the internal displacement of people have left women exposed to all manner of humiliations and violations.[37] Women do not have land rights; everything belongs to the family. When a man dies, his wife is inherited by one of his brothers.

In this patriarchal Sudanese society, widow-headed households have become some of the poorest in the region. In 2000 in Yirol County, for example, 15-25% of poor households were headed by widows, while 20-30% of the poorest households were headed by widows; there were virtually no widow-headed households in the middle and better-off economic categories (See Annex 4).[38]

Women who have lost husbands and sons to the war have been forced to take on almost all livelihood activities, from collecting grass and cutting wood to building *tukuls* (grass huts), walking long distances with children on their backs to collect wild foods and relief food, sowing and cultivating in the fields, brewing and selling local beer and trading goods in the markets. Women in Yirol County complain that in the past, you would not see women doing this kind of "men's work". "Before the war, men would cut the poles for constructing a house. Now women have to do it all because no one else will do it for you."[39] Some have commented on how the increased domestic burden on women has

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[35] See Annex 3 for ANA data regarding kinship support contribution to the total food basket during these years.
[36] Unicef, Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, 2000.
[37] Africa Center for Human Advocacy (ACHA) "A Report on Jikany/Lou Peace Conference," Riang Location, Eastern Upper Nile, 1-5 March 2004.
[38] WFP, Annual Needs Assessment, Yirol County, 2000-2001.
[39] Conversation with Elizabeth Yar Malek (from Bor), Yirol County, 25 July 2004.

become more or less institutionalised even when men have returned.[40] Nyandeng Malek, a Community Development Officer for Pact, attributed this disparity to the impact of the war:

> Men became accustomed to going to Ethiopia and other camps to train to be soldiers. They're used to fighting. They now consider themselves townspeople so they don't want to work or farm. So all the work falls to women. This is why you see women working and men loafing. This is a result of years and decades of war.[41]

### *g) Oil extraction – the impact of a scorched earth policy*

*"They want our land so that they can get the oil. They do not want southerners to remain on their land." Chepak Theaf Kac*

One of the most devastating cases of the destruction of livelihoods, displacement and impoverishment on an appalling scale has happened in the areas surrounding the oil fields in Western Upper Nile. Through a well-documented scorched-earth policy, the government attempted to completely depopulate the areas surrounding the oil fields and along the path of the planned oil pipeline to the Red Sea. Oil exploration was made possible by using the *murahalin* to clear away all civilian populations and then to secure these areas through alliances with the breakaway Nuer factions of the SPLA (Johnson, 2003).

According to a report by Christian Aid, government forces and militias unleashed in the area destroyed harvests, looted livestock and burned houses to ensure that no one would ever return home. In one area, government officials warned people to move before they attacked, stating: "We don't want anybody here. This is not your place anymore! We have business to do here." (Christian Aid, 2001)

A woman from Ngaryang village recalled that her village had been bombed several times. When this happened, she and her family fled to the forest. "The fighting had intensified with helicopter gunships and horsemen. The Antonov bombed while the gunships shot at us." The gunships also fired rockets at the *tukuls* to set them on fire. Before long, the village was set ablaze and filled with smoke. Then the GoS sent in horsemen and tanks. Chaos reigned. Villagers ran everywhere in search of safety.[42]

Many of those interviewed by Christian Aid repeated such tales of the Government using Antonov bombing to scatter people and then bringing in helicopters and truckloads of GoS soldiers to raze whole villages and to shoot everyone in sight. Specific events cited by Christian Aid vividly portray the northern-backed forces' merciless sweep of the area:

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[40] Conversation with Rhoda Amuk, Rumbek County, 23 July 2004.
[41] Conversation with Nyandeng Malek, Yirol County, 18 July 2004.
[42] Advocacy document distributed by DanChurchAid and Christian Aid.

> An estimated 11,000 people displaced from Block 5a by the … attacks settled in the SPLA-controlled village of Nhialdiu. The village was already swollen by Nuer who had been driven south from the Heglig area in earlier years. Then on 15 July 2000, government militias attacked Nhialdiu, burning every hut bar one and displacing every inhabitant. A local chief, John Lou, said that the militias rounded up the elderly, put them in one hut and burned them alive. He said some of the dead were also very young children—five of them his own children (Christian Aid, 2001).

## 6.2 Meso level

### a) Social infrastructure

Two decades of war have had a crippling impact on social infrastructure. Several generations have grown up with little or no access to formal education. Children in areas of southern Sudan controlled by the SPLA are thought to have the least access to primary education anywhere in the world with a net enrolment ratio into primary schools of around 20%. In terms of primary school completion, it has the lowest rate in the world, i.e., an estimated 2%. Adult illiteracy (76%) is second only to Niger. Adult female illiteracy and youth illiteracy rates are estimated to be 88% and 31%, respectively. There are only 1,600 schools for approximately 1.6 million children of school age (NSCSE & UNICEF, 2004).

Men (and some women) are now soldiers or former soldiers instead of secondary school or college graduates. This causes serious shortcomings in human capacity. Those who were lawyers and junior judges before the war are now responsible for overseeing the administration of justice, despite having not practiced law in Sudan for some twenty years. Even worse, there are only 30-40 judges and about the same number of lawyers for all of south Sudan, a territory as large as Germany and France combined, or roughly the size of Texas in the United States. This lack of educated professionals simply extends the governance problems described above even though the war has subsided.

Indeed, the general attitude of the SPLM/A and the other southern rebel factions toward building institutions of any kind is summed up in the words of one former soldier from Rumbek: "They say you go fight now. Once Sudan is liberated and there is peace, then you'll go to school."[43] All development objectives were subordinated to the military cause. In the words of Keer Bol, a Regional Officer for Pact, "the SPLA was not interested in providing public services. This would have diverted resources from the war effort."[44]

International aid has supported schools and health centres, but on a small scale compared with need, and this assistance could easily be disrupted by insecurity and lack of access (see section e below).

[43] Conversation with Acuil, former soldier, Rumbek County, 23 July 2004.
[44] Conversation with Keer Bol, Rumbek County, 26 July 2004.

### *b) Taxation*

Taxation, to support the SPLA war effort, has been a serious drain on already strained household resources. People living in SPLA-held areas were called upon to contribute taxes, in the form of bulls and grain, to feed the soldiers. "Each family has contributed bulls for the war effort, whether voluntarily or forcefully. This is your livelihood and you can't get it back," explained Isaiah Alier of Rumbek.[45] Taxation in the absence of functional governance can become particularly punitive as people are taxed again and again without any form of redress. For example, along trade routes from Uganda to Rumbek, people are taxed over and over because everyone wants their cut. During the war, when the call went out that the SPLA needed more soldiers, families were even expected to give up their children. Boys as young as nine years were forcefully recruited and sent to training camps in Ethiopia and other parts of the south.

### *c) Trade and exchange*

In southern Sudan "trade" is not based on monetary transactions and "exchange" involves bartering goods such as cattle for grain or goods for services such as labour for grain. In a cashless economy, or where there is low circulation of currency, households principally depend upon exchange.

In discussing the importance of trade and exchange in Upper Nile, Fielding and Sharp (2000) note that:

> Prior to the war, cattle for grain exchange took place every year, normally when the cattle returned from the *toich* at the start of the agricultural season. Exchanges were made either at the *toich*, where there was good access to producers living in the Nile Corridor food economy area or at the market centers. Major centers for exchange included Malakal and towns on the Juba-Malakal road such as Atar and Kongor. Grain was brought from Renk and Kosti into Malakal, where cattle and tobacco could be sold at market centers. Tobacco was also taken to the southern border of the Nuer area to be traded with the Murle.

In the Lakes sub-region, households would obtain cash by selling cattle and then use that money to buy grain from traders in the main markets of Rumbek, Thiet, Tonj, and Yirol.

Conflict has severely limited these traditional trade and exchange patterns by limiting access to traders and markets. For example, fighting in Upper Nile in 1999 rendered the important market in Mankien inaccessible to Twic County in Bahr el Ghazal. Similarly, insecurity has completely isolated Ruweng County from external trade leaving families with no option to replenish vital food and non-food items, such as livestock, grain and fishing tools.

The inter- and intra-ethnic conflict within the south also cut off relations between neighbours that historically traded with each other, like the Murle, Lou and Jikany Nuer

[45] Conversation with Isaiah Alier, Rumbek County, 22 July 2004.

and the Dinka and Nuer. When the Lou Nuer were cut off from trade, a vital coping mechanism, they ended up attacking their Jikany and Gawaar neighbours for access to resources.

This loss of trade severely impacts on livelihood coping strategies particularly in times of distress when pastoralists and agro-pastoralists would either sell livestock for money to buy food and non-food items or barter for them. Also, the conflict and looting has left poor households with almost nothing to trade. When trade or exchange does take place, it is often on poor terms to the detriment of livelihood systems[46].

### *d) Lack of access to humanitarian assistance*

During the civil war most international aid provided to southern Sudan has been humanitarian. Lack of access to those most in need has been a recurrent issue. Indeed, this was at the heart of the creation of Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS), which legitimised the cross-border relief operation from Kenya.[47]

Access has either been constrained because of violence and insecurity or as a deliberate strategy of war. As an example of the former, in June 1998 relief agencies had to pull out of Western Upper Nile because of fighting. Yet people were facing acute food insecurity to the point of famine. Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) had to abandon its life-saving therapeutic and supplementary feeding programme for 750 children. We can assume that lives may have been lost as a result. MSF and other agency compounds were looted.

There are numerous examples of how access to relief agencies has been denied often by the GoS. The most notorious denial of access occurred in the months preceding the Bahr el Ghazal famine in 1998, which undoubtedly contributed to the scale of the famine (See section 6.5 below). Denial of access by the GoS has since continued. In 2002 IRIN reported that up to 45 locations were at times off-limits. This is yet another example of the deliberate targeting of civilians, in terms of denial of access to basic life-saving relief, as part of the war strategy.

## *6.3 Macro level*

At the macro level, two decades of civil war have been an enormous drain on the Sudanese economy in the north and the south, alike. At one time, in the early 1990s, it was estimated that the GoS was spending approximately $1 million a day on the war. Over time their strategy of counter-insurgency of divide-and-rule by arming the *murahalin* and southern militias became “war on the cheap”, a way of weakening the SPLA without undue expenditure on the northern Sudanese army and government money (Deng, 2003). Consistent with this strategy, Deng estimates that:

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[46] Ibid.

[47] Initially OLS was an *ad hoc* and informal tripartite agreement forged in 1989 between the GoS, the rebel movements in the south (specifically the SPLA and the SSIM) and the UN, for a discrete period of time, to improve humanitarian access to all war-affected populations. In 1994 it was formalised and the geographical focus was broadened. This agreement has been central to the humanitarian response ever since.

> "the cost of the civil war on livelihoods in the south that is attributed to the activities of southern militias or south-south conflict is significantly higher than is the cost directly inflicted by the central government army".
> (ibid: 123)

### *6.4 The worst case scenario: conflict-induced famine*

Within a decade there have been at least three famines in southern Sudan, all conflict-induced. The first was in Bahr El Ghazal in 1988, as a consequence of combined conflict and drought. It is estimated that almost 300,000 people lost their lives. The second was in 1992-93, in Upper Nile, shortly after the split in the SPLA, which was marked by ferocious fighting between the divided southern movements.

The third famine in 1998 was perhaps the most severe one once again in Bahr el Ghazal. In the worst famine months of June to August 1998, malnutrition and mortality rates were amongst the highest ever recorded. For example, in Ajiep, one of the worst-affected towns where 90% of the population had been displaced, the crude mortality rate was estimated at 69 per 10,000 per day and the under-five mortality rates at 133 per 10,000 per day. Although these rates may be overestimated because of difficulties of estimating family size and because of the concentration of mortality in a few sites, we can still conclude that "these rates are staggeringly high, unheard of in civilian populations" (Buchanan-Smith et al, 1999:85). The total number of people who perished in this famine is unknown. Although the region had experienced three successive dry years, it was the effect of violent conflict that really triggered the 1998 famine in the following ways:

(i) between 1995 and 1997, the notorious warlord, Kerubino, consistently attacked villages in northern Bahr el Ghazal (as described above), impoverishing them and leaving them highly vulnerable;

(ii) in 1997, there was a fundamental shift in the war economy of Bahr el Ghazal when the SPLA made military advances, driving government troops out of places like Torrit. Trading relationships between garrisons and the local population collapsed, which deprived the latter of a key source of livelihood;

(iii) when Kerubino defected to the SPLA in late 97/ early 98, there followed attacks on three garrison towns: Wau, Gogrial and Aweil. This caused massive displacement, of around 130,000 people, from towns into rural areas which were already facing acute food insecurity;

(iv) just when the food security situation became cataclysmic, the GoS imposed a ban on all relief flights in early February 1998, only partially lifted in early March: "The ban could not be justified as of immediate military necessity and went far beyond the geographical areas of the brief fighting, in violation of customary rules of war. It was imposed to punish Kerubino, the SPLA, and the civilians living in areas they controlled" (Human Rights Watch, 1999: 3).

(v) when the ban was partially lifted, relief flights were only allowed into four sites in SPLA-held territory and to the Government-held towns of Wau and Aweil. This

created a fatal magnet effect on an already highly stressed population. The concentration of people resulted in increased transmission of disease, and rocketing mortality. (Buchanan-Smith, 2003)

### *6.5 Regional & international levels*

Some of the negative impacts of civil war in southern Sudan spill over into neighbouring countries in the form of arms flows, unchecked cattle raiding and the draining effect of warlordism. The case study of northern Kenya highlights some of these negative impacts (Buchanan-Smith and Lind, 2004).

## 7. Overall impact on poverty, and patterns of recovery

### *7.1 The general picture*

All over southern Sudan, the conflict has targeted assets and livelihoods, as part of the classic counter-insurgency strategy of "draining the water to catch the fish" (Deng, 2003). The impact has been high food insecurity, widespread displacement and death on a very substantial scale, not least because of the duration of the war.

According to a recent publication, areas of southern Sudan controlled by the SPLA have some of the worst human development indicators in the world, which are substantially lower than other parts of Sudan. For example, the percentage of under-five children suffering from wasting (21.5%) is estimated to be the highest in the world. Children in these areas of southern Sudan are three times more likely to die than in other parts of Sudan and the maternal mortality ratio is three times the rest of Sudan. Gross national income per capita is estimated to be less than $90 per year, i.e., about four times lower than the income level in the rest of the country (NSCSE & UNICEF, 2004).

### *7.2 Explaining differential impact*

Although there are strong similarities in the way that armed violence has impacted on households in the two focus areas of the Lakes sub-region of Bahr el Ghazal and Upper Nile region, as described in section 6 above, there are real differences in intensity. The conflicts raging in Upper Nile have had a much more deleterious impact on the civilian population. The reasons for this are the differing nature and scale of the conflicts in each region and differences in governance. Both of these factors have great implications for the process of recovery.

As discussed earlier, the Lakes Region suffered from more conventional warfare with the GoS up until about 1997 when the SPLA took over. With this type of war, people generally knew where the fighting was taking place and could avoid it. In Upper Nile, however, with the mix of fighting (GoS bombardment in one area, GoS-backed militia activity in another area, inter-factional fighting in yet another area and Dinka-Nuer fighting in other areas), it was difficult to know where to run, as security or chaos in a particular area was never guaranteed, especially for the displaced.

Thus, Upper Nile experienced more wide-spread population displacement. The pockets of insecurity all over the region left people running from place to place for years in search of security, as Elizabet Nyadet Joak experienced (see earlier). This pattern of displacement does not allow households to recover easily and rebuild their lives. Fortunately, Elizabeth was finally able to return home and resume her life, although after six years of continuous displacements. Other people will be forever displaced as their villages were completely wiped out.

GoS arming of militias was even more determined in Upper Nile than in the Lakes Region. This spurred inter-factional fighting and encouraged groups to carry traditional ethnic rivalries and competition over resources to new proportions of death and destruction through cattle raiding, looting, and general devastation of livelihoods.

As well as differences in the nature and scale of the conflicts in the two regions, the presence or absence of governance structures finally tips the balance in explaining the differential impact and recovery patterns. The Lakes Region had a central authority and an attempt at the rule of law, whereas the Upper Nile Region had none. The experience of the Lakes Region shows that any system, even a centralized military authority such as the SPLA, is better than no authority. Despite the military's record of delivering harsh and arbitrary judgments, the SPLA was reportedly effective for a time in keeping localized conflict in check. Although it undermined the authority of traditional chiefs, the SPLA kept the system of courts and customary law in place to hear cases and pass judgments. Though still at a nascent stage and rife with corruption, there are at least civil structures of governance in place. By comparison, the sheer amount of inter-factional, inter- and intra-ethnic conflict in Upper Nile meant that there was no kind of unified leadership, much less a system of rule of law that could be developed. The reigning chaos kept tribes and clans utterly divided. During the Wunlit II peace conference, participants cited over and over how the absence of central authority and rule of law in Upper Nile added to the resurgence of conflict. "Now there is no authority from Upper Nile because of insecurity…that is why we don't have schools," noted Thomas Gatot Chok, a youth from Western Upper Nile. Other conference participants noted that while there were a lot of commissioners in Upper Nile, there was absolutely no effective governance. As a result, this region has had a much harder time recovering after violent conflict.

A look at the number of cattle owned and feddans cultivated per household in Upper Nile and Lakes regions illustrates this contrast in recovery patterns. When 1997 to 2002 figures are compared to baseline data for the two livelihood zones, the numbers for Upper Nile are generally below average, while the numbers for Lakes Region are not only above average but tend to display a yearly increase in both the feddans cultivated and cattle owned. The phenomenon of a yearly increase in the number of feddans cultivated in the Lakes Region is a direct result of the general security that the region has experienced. Households are more likely to devote labour to cultivation when there is less risk of losing the harvest.

### *7.3 Changing livelihood patterns?*

The recovery in livestock numbers since there has been relative security in parts of southern Sudan is remarkable (See Annex 5). It also appears that livestock holding is more evenly dispersed with more cattle in middle-income groups and less in wealthier groups.

However, the extent to which some households that have lost all their livestock will be able to return to pastoralism or agro-pastoralism is a moot point. This is particularly the case for the large number of female-headed households and for poorer socio-economic groups. Although agricultural production is the obvious alternative to herding, for them labour is a big issue especially for women who have to care for children and for all the other domestic chores. Also, as long as there is the threat of insecurity, cropping is a very risky livelihood strategy. Conflict may prevent time-sensitive weeding and ground preparation and the crops themselves are vulnerable to being destroyed. Instead, some of the poorest people are resorting to petty trading, fishing and wildfoods. These shifts in the livelihood base may prove to be irreversible and leave marginalised groups ever more vulnerable particularly if they have weak social links to the community.

## 8 Implications for aid programming

### *8.1 Learning from the Wunlit Peace Covenant*

The 1999 Wunlit Peace Covenant effectively ended seven and a half years of politicized inter-tribal fighting between the Dinka and Nuer tribes, which had begun with the SPLA split in 1991. It covered a large geographical area, i.e., part of eastern Bahr el Ghazal and part of Western Upper Nile.[48] This local-level agreement helped to restore trust between the Nuer and Dinka tribes and provided relative security. It has become a model for local level people-to-people peace processes, but also illustrates how recovery is hampered when underlying sources of conflict are not addressed.

After a lengthy process of traditional conflict resolution, through indigenous traditions of airing grievances, story-telling and cleansing rituals, the Wunlit peace covenant was signed by all parties in Wunlit in Bahr el Ghazal’s Tonj County. It was brokered by the NSCC. The effects were immediate:

- cross-border cattle rustling, while it did not completely cease, declined dramatically;
- internal and cross-border regional trade resumed. Thousands of Dinka traders traveled from Yirol County to Nuer areas of Nyal, Ganyiel and other locations to pick up relations, trade and commercial activities. As a result, many heads of cattle were sold from Western Upper Nile/Unity State through Dinkaland to Uganda later that year

[48] The areas included in the Wunlit agreement, referred to as the Wunlit cluster, cover the Dinka zone in the Lakes sub-region of eastern Bahr el Ghazal, from Gogrial County in the north-east to Yirol County, while the Nuer zone stretches from Mayom in the north-west to Payinjiar County in the south west area of Western Upper Nile.

(NSCC, 2002). Rumbek County authorities later established cross-border trade between Rumbek and counties in Western Upper Nile;

- the relative security that followed the peace agreement also allowed for surplus grains in parts of the region, which helped to enhance exchange activities;
- pastures were consecrated for joint use and hundreds of displaced returned to their old homes along the border, well in advance of any relief that would enable them to begin rebuilding;
- several abducted women and children were returned;
- Nuer fleeing from GoS bombardment around the oil areas even sought refuge in Dinka lands, something that they would not have done before Wunlit.

This illustrates the effect of security in reversing some of the impoverishing factors associated with war and violence, above all ending the asset-stripping nature of violent conflict.

Wunlit was most successful in restoring trust between the Dinka and Nuer communities and thus in ending the politicized inter-tribal clashes. However, there continued to be sporadic violations of the Wunlit agreement, most instigated by outside forces, such as the GoS-backed militia groups on the East and West banks that were intent on destroying the peace. Weak governance and rule of law were cited as the major sources of the re-emergence of conflict. Many of the resolutions from Wunlit I involving governance and rule of law were not implemented as evident in these examples. In some areas border police were not put in place, while there was a lack of any kind of effective governance in Western Upper Nile. Also, sometimes SPLA and government officials were seen to be complicit in criminal activity and undisciplined SPLA soldiers were causing problems. As a result, conflicts that erupted were not resolved properly, which led to retaliation and an escalation of fighting.

The lesson of Wunlit is two-fold. It shows the importance of restoring trust in a society to re-establish security and to mitigate the impoverishing impact of war. At the same time, the Wunlit experience shows that communities can easily relapse into conflict when the underlying causes of conflict are not addressed. These causes include external political influences, the proliferation of weapons and weak governance and rule of law. These very issues have tipped the balance in Upper Nile where conflict still rages despite the official cessation in hostilities: this situation is hampering recovery.

### *8.2 Building recovery and development out of peace*

Programming must be integrated to combine investment in development (e.g., in water, health and education) with investment in governance (e.g., in the police, judiciary and protection). Failure to address the latter will almost certainly result in a waste of resources in the former. This is one of the very real challenges facing southern Sudan today.

### 8.3 Avoid disarmament programmes in isolation

There are various examples of unsuccessful attempts at disarmament in southern Sudan, including the disarmament programme that took place in the Lakes Region in 2000. There was confusion as to who to disarm and who to leave with arms only to result in an ineffective piecemeal approach. Dinka bordering Nuer were left with arms to patrol themselves, but people in the interior were disarmed. This was singularly unsuccessful because arms were still coming back into the area from Upper Nile. Moreover, there was corruption and thus those who were disarmed could retrieve their guns by buying them back from the SPLA. Others would keep arms with their relatives and still others broke into the stores where guns were kept because they felt vulnerable and needed the guns to protect themselves.

This experience reveals the folly of disarming before security is guaranteed and before local people trust the governance systems. Currently, the possession of weapons is regarded as an essential part of people's livelihood strategies to protect themselves. Real investment in disarmament is only worthwhile much further down the line when there is a track record of improved governance and security.

### 8.4 Implications for aid donors

In the short term, the international community must:

- continue to actively support the peace agreement between the GoS and SPLM/A;
- use advocacy to end militia activity and external manipulation and instigation of war in the south;
- support local-level people-to-people peace processes to settle disputes, reconcile communities and restore trust;
- support efforts to address conflicts over scarce resources, i.e. land and water;
- seek buy-in from SPLM/A and local authorities to settle outstanding disputes.

In the longer term, the international community must work to:

- build local, regional, and national capacity for effective governance;
- strengthen the rule of law (police, judiciary, courts, judges and lawyers);
- establish mechanisms of accountability for positions of authority, such as commissioners, judges, soldiers, commanders, etc.;
- develop strategies to address the concerns of marginalized groups; and,
- link disarmament plans to longer-term rehabilitation and recovery.

Although this second list may be directed at the longer-term, it needs to start immediately, in particular to address issues of governance. Ultimately, the only sustainable way to reduce poverty in these regions will be to reduce violent conflict, as it is more than two decades of a brutal civil war that have so desperately impoverished the population.

## Acronyms

| | |
|---|---|
| ANA | Annual Needs Assessment |
| BEG | Bahr El Ghazal |
| CBO | community based organisation |
| CICS | Centre for International Cooperation and Security, University of Bradford |
| DFID | UK Department for International Development |
| GoS | Government of Sudan |
| IDP | internally displaced person |
| IDS | Institute of Development Studies, Sussex University |
| IGAD | Intergovernmental Authority on Development |
| MSF | Medecins Sans Frontieres |
| NGO | non governmental organisation |
| NSCC | New Sudan Council of Churches |
| NSCSE | New Sudan Centre for Statistics and Evaluation |
| OLS | Operation Lifeline Sudan |
| PDF | Popular Defence Forces |
| SC-UK | Save the Children UK |
| SPF | Sudan Peace Fund |
| SPLM/A | Sudan People's Liberation Movement/ Army |
| SRRA | Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Association |
| SSIM/A | Southern Sudan Independence Movement/ Army |
| SSUM | South Sudan Unity Movement |
| WFP | World Food Programme |

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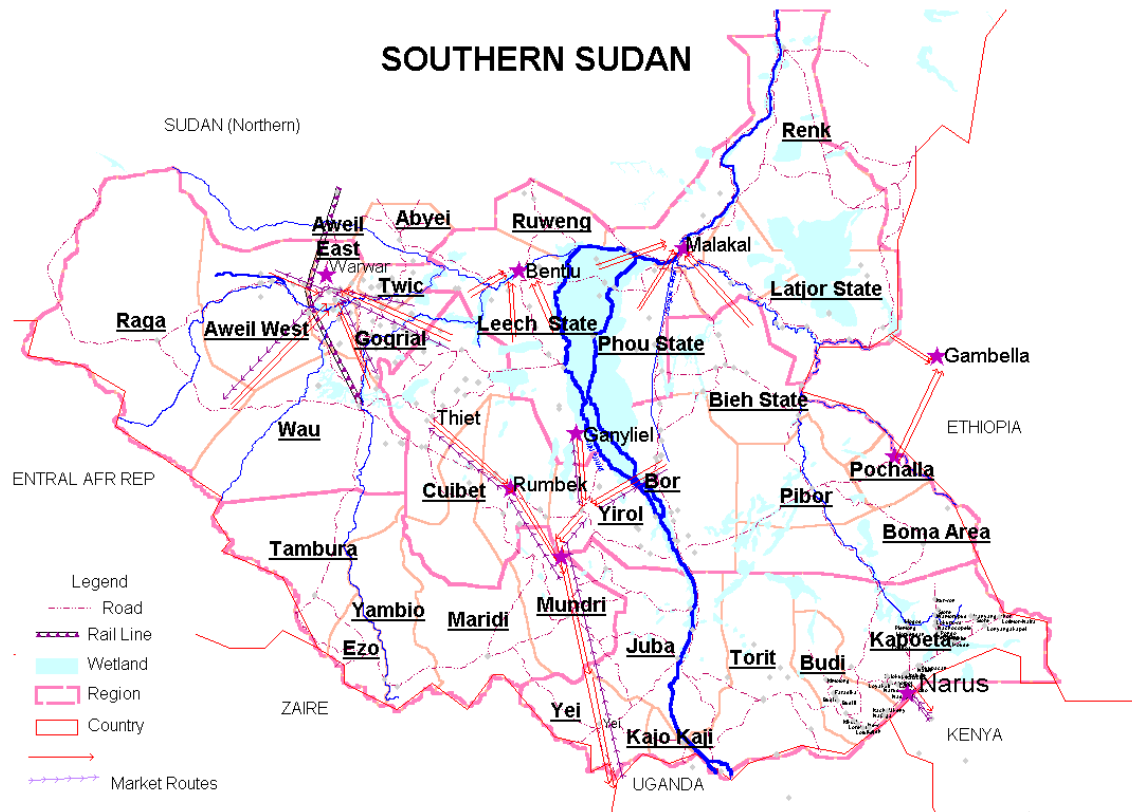
## Annex 1: List of people interviewed

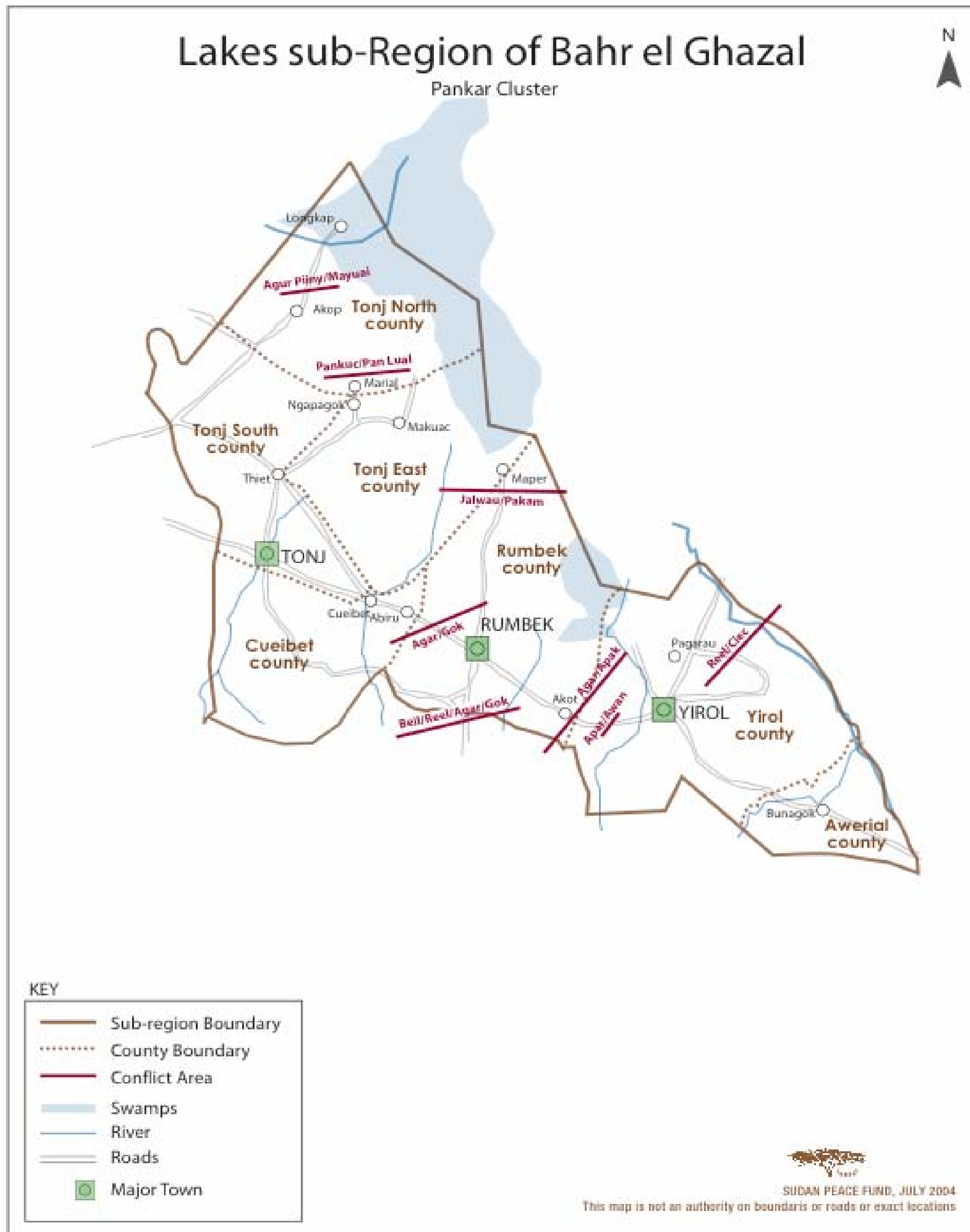
| | |
|---|---|
| Paul Murphy | Pact |
| Simon Richards | Pact |
| Paul Savage | Pact |
| Keer Bol | Pact |
| Deng Mading | Pact |
| Nyandeng Malek | Pact |
| Awut Acuil | Pact |
| Buzz Sharp | SC-UK |
| Wendy Fenton | SC-UK |
| Steve McDowell | WFP |
| Adele Sowinska | Catholic Relief Services |
| Luka Biong Deng | NSCSE |
| Maker Ayuel Deng | NSCSE |
| James Kok | SPLM |
| Caroline Gullick | USAID consultant |
| Jason Matus | USAID consultant |
| Will Mulders | Verification Monitoring Team, Bahr el Ghazal |
| Suzanne Jambo | New Sudanese Indigenous NGOs Network |
| Alice Hinga | DFID |
| Rachel Sisk | DFID/ Foreign & Commonwealth Office (UK) |
| Dan Maxwell | CARE |
| Gary McGurk | CARE |
| Tim Mander | CARE |

## Annex 2: Maps of Southern Sudan



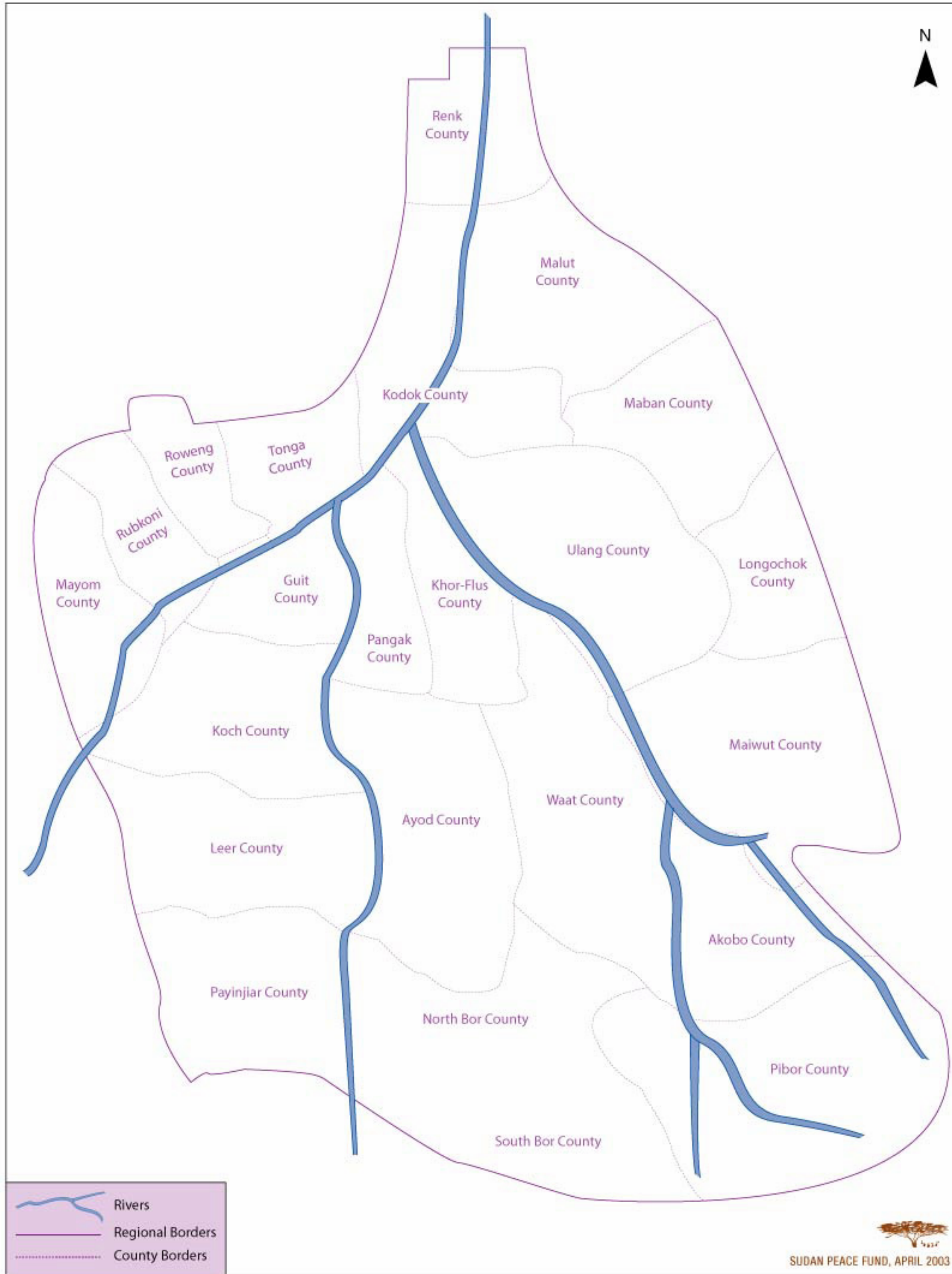

Note: Map ANA 2001/2002

## Map of Lakes sub-region of Bahr el Ghazal[49]

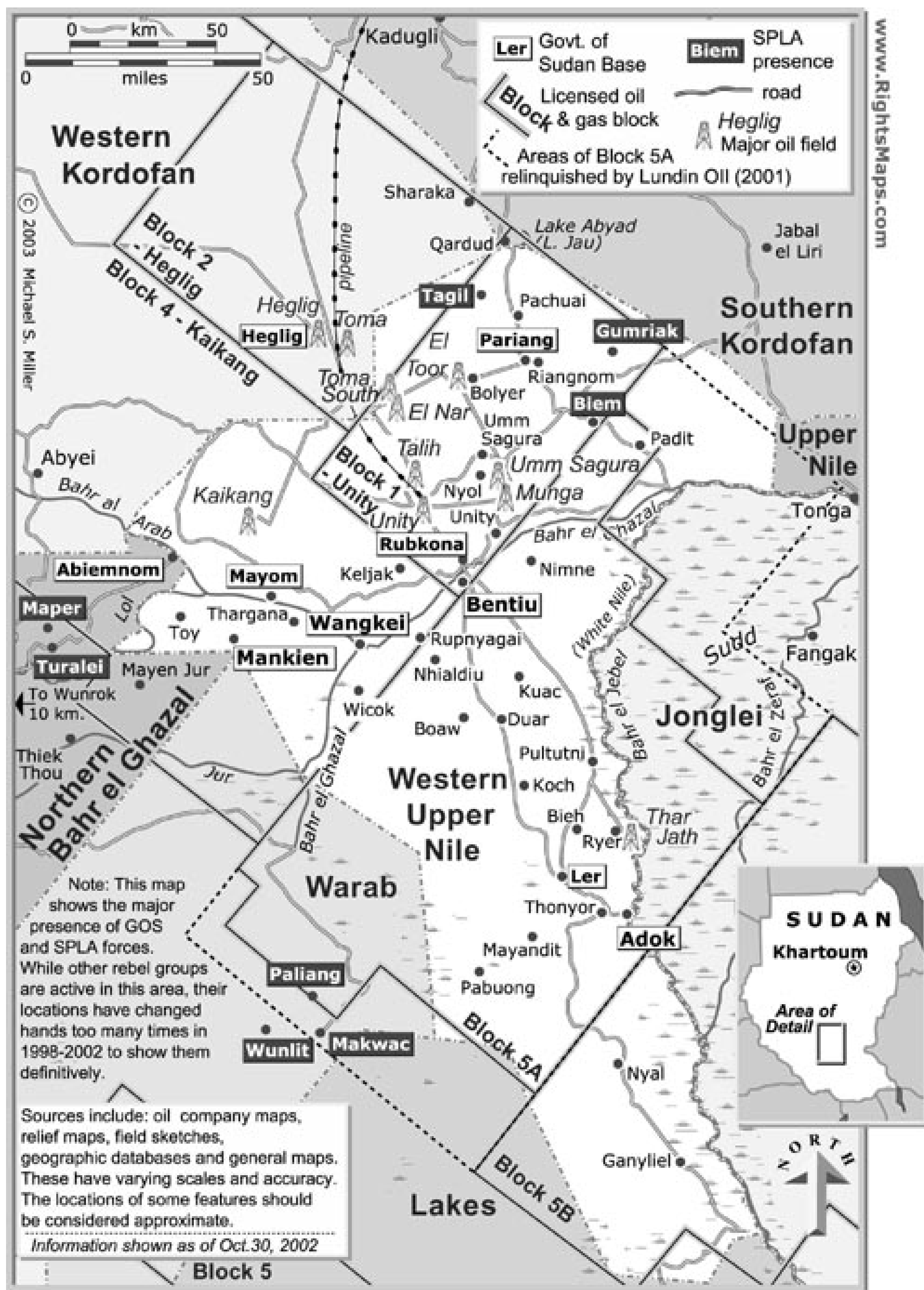



[49] Map taken from the Pact/SPF Pankar Rapid Response Proposal. Pankar Cluster refers to the Lakes Region.

## Map of Upper Nile Region



**Oil Activity and the Scene of War in Western Upper Nile, As of October 31, 2002**[50]




[50] Human Rights Watch (HRW), "Sudan, Oil and Human Rights," www.hrw.org/reports/ 2003/sudan1103/3.htm

# Annex 3: Food Baskets for Ruweng County and Southern Leech State

Food Basket for Ruweng County 1999 and 2001

| Food Basket/Year | Poor | | Non poor | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | '99 | '01 | '99 | '01 |
| **Crop** | 7.5 | 2.5 | 11.5 | 7.5 |
| **Exchange** | 0 | 0 | 10.5 | 0 |
| **Fish** | 11 | 7.5 | 21 | 9 |
| **Kinship** | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **Livestock** | 0 | 4 | 27 | 11.5 |
| **Hunting** | 3 | 0 | 1.5 | 0 |
| **Wildfoods** | 45 | 17.5 | 11 | 12.5 |
| **Deficit (-)** | -32.5 | -68.5 | -17.5 | -59.5 |

Note: ANA Data

Food Basket for Southern Leech State 1998-2002

| Food Basket/Year | Poor | | | | | Non poor | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | '98 | '99 | '00 | '01 | '02 | '98 | '99 | '00 | '01 | '02 |
| **Crops** | 9 | 16 | 28 | 16 | 19 | 18 | 21 | 32 | 43 | 27 |
| **Exchange** | 4 | 2 | 6 | 5 | 7 | 7 | 2 | 4 | 7 | 12 |
| **Fish** | 21 | 20 | 27 | 30 | 27 | 16 | 16 | 30 | 20 | 18 |
| **Kinship** | 9 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 8 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 7 |
| **Livestock** | 17 | 22 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 33 | 33 | 25 | 22 | 16 |
| **Wildfoods** | 22 | 17 | 26 | 30 | 20 | 16 | 21 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| **Relief** | N/A | 1 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| **Deficit (-)** | -19 | -19 | -7 | -15 | -14 | -6 | -1 | 6 | 8 | -2 |

Note: ANA Data

## Annex 4: Women in southern Sudan

The following table shows the disparity between the numbers of adult men and women in Bahr el-Ghazal, the Lakes sub-region of Bahr el-Ghazal and Upper Nile Region.

### Disaggregated population data for Bahr el Ghazal and Upper Nile

| Region/Gender | Adult Population | | Total Population (including adults and children) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Men | Women | Men | Women |
| **Bahr el Ghazal** | 186,256 | 549,836 | 809,971 | 1,067,856 |
| **Lakes sub-region of Bahr el Ghazal** | 166,223 | 279,849 | 450,469 | 523,082 |
| **Upper Nile** | 31,372 | 82,234 | 143,764 | 178,769 |

Unicef, Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, 2000

The following table shows the socio-economic breakdown for widow-headed households as compared to households in which both a man and a woman were present in Yirol County in 2002. Widowed households disproportionately fell in the poor and poorest socio-economic categories.

### Socio-economic breakdown for households in Yirol County 2000

| Socioeconomic Breakdown | Poorest | Poor | Middle | Better Off |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **% Female based households** | 15-20 | 25-35 | 30-40 | 15-20 |
| **No. of Wives** | 0-1 | 1-2 | 2-3 | 3-5 |
| **% Widowed hh** | 20-30 | 15-25 | 0 | 0 |
| **Land (feddans) /hh** | 0.5-1 | 2-3 | 3-4 | 3-4 |
| **Assets-Cattle/male hh*** | 0-5 | 15-25 | 50-70 | 100-200 |
| **Assets-Shoats/male hh** | 0-10 | 20-30 | 40-50 | 10-20 |

ANA, Yirol, 2000/2001

## Annex 5: Livestock numbers

### *South Bor, Southern Upper Nile*

| Cattle Population Per Household | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1997** | **1999** | **2000** | **2001** | **2002** |
| 15,128 | 46,306 | 14,609 | 79,053 | 79,053 |
| 54,935 | 205,611 | 39,814 | 129,360 | 129,360 |
| 79,134 | 110,650 | 82,761 | 129,360 | 129,360 |
| **149,197** | **362,567** | **137,184** | **337,773** | **337,773** |