



# MRDA Update

*Change agent for the community*

FEBRUARY 2009

MUNDRI  
SOUTH-SUDAN

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## MRDA constructs 48 classrooms in Mundri

**M**RDAs has this month started construction of 48 new classrooms (in six schools) in Mundri (West and East) Counties. The new schools

The six schools are being constructed at Mundri Parish, Bangolo, Amadi, Lakamadi, Lunjini and Minga. Apart from Mundri

The construction undertaken by six separate constructors (each per school) who were recruited from southern Sudan are required to employ casual labourers from the local community in which the work is to be done. The contractors will complete the construction and hand it over to MRDA within a period of 6 months from the date of signing the contract in February 2009.

"We are estimating six months but this will depend on the rains which are starting," said Remijo Amule, the Project manager for Mundri Basic Education service provision through MRDA under Basic Service Fund (BSF).

"We expect the schools to be completed by end of August this year," he added.



Construction going on at Lunjini Primary School, Kediba Payam, Mundri East

will serve 2,261 pupils.

The construction of these schools is part of project known as *Mundri Education Support Programme* (see January 2009 issue) which is supported by Basic Services Fund (BSF). BSF is funded by the Government of Britain, Norway, the Netherlands and Canada. The project is an 18 month joint venture between MRDA, New Sudan Women Federation (NSWF) and Oxfam Novib.

This project will increase the number of permanent classrooms in the two Mundri Counties. At the present time only 15% of the classrooms in the two counties are in permanent structures while 72% of the classrooms are under trees.

Parish, all the schools are in rural areas where there are no permanent structures. The locations for

In the event that the construction works are not completed on sched-

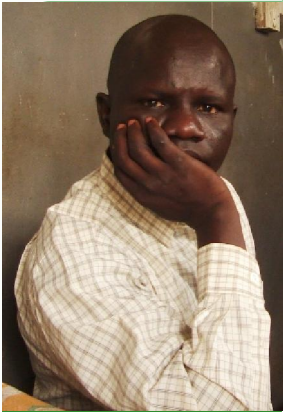


MRDA Field Accountant publicly opens the bids for school construction

the new schools were selected by the County Education Departments.

ule, the contractor shall be subject to penalty of US\$ 25 per day of delay.

**-ENDS-**



Kennet Korayi,  
MRDA Director

## Concrete buildings are seen as peace dividends

**O**n 10 February, I had to travel with some of my staff to Singiringwa—a small village 50 km east of Mundri town. The purpose of our trip was to present to the community a health unit that MRDA helped to build. This is the first permanent building in that village since creation.

The villagers are so proud of their new facility. They told us that it is a concrete sign of development in their village. They also think that concrete buildings indicate that peace has returned to Sudan. But when LRA attacked Bangolo rumours went around that the rebels were destroying these peace

dividends. And so in Singiringwa, we were told, the community left their homes to keep vigil at the health facility. They prefer LRA to destroy their homes rather than the new facility. This is an example of how people in Mundri value permanent facilities. Unfortunately, most donors are not keen to support construction of community structures. Such donors ask: who will maintain the structure? But if what happened in Singiringwa is anything to go by then donors need not to worry.

However, there are indications that donors are changing their attitudes about construction of

structures. A case in point is the front page story in this issue of the UPDATE that MRDA is to construct 48 new classrooms. These adds to the 7 classrooms we have constructed this year with support from Christian Aid. This is a positive development—as it would increase school enrolment. Conducting lessons under trees do not encourage children to attend school. The temporary nature of most community structures is burdensome and expensive to maintain, as it requires regular repairs. The ball now is in the hands of people: let's build, protect and maintain the peace dividends—and prove doubting donors wrong!

*"...I have now gained the skills and confidence to educate my community about forthcoming elections."*

## Voter education starts in Mundri Counties

**M**RD A conducted a five-day voter education training on February 24-27th in Mundri town.

A total of 16 participants who attended the training were drawn from three counties—Mundri West, Mundri East and Mvolo.

Key topics covered in the training included importance of election, electoral law and election process. The training ended in simulated election campaigns, polling and result announcement. For most participants this was



Participants simulating the election process. They are swearing as electoral officers.

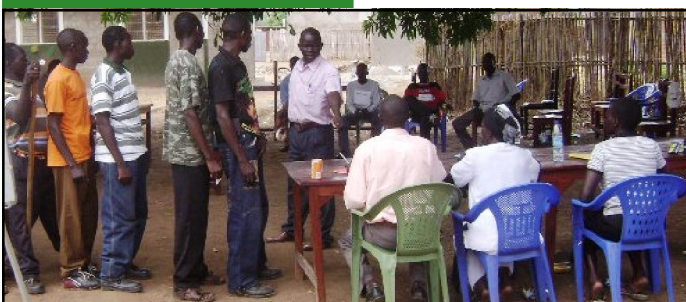
their first election experience.

The closing ceremony was attended by the Commissioner of Mundri West County, Bullen Abiatar, who praised the election simulation. "I encourage you the participants to extend the voter education to rural parts of our Mundri County," he said.

Funded by Finn Church Aid, the project trains facilitators to conduct voter education in

their communities. The community educators use *a common guide for voter education* produced by the GOSS Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs. MRDA plans to conduct 57 community education sessions by July 2009.

The participants—mostly young people—praised the training. One participant remarked, "All the things I learnt here are new for me. I have now gained the skills and confidence to educate my community about forthcoming elections."



Trainees simulating the voting process.

## MRDA supports 2,079 persons affected by LRA attacks



Some of the Internal Displaced People (IDPs) by LRA rebels line up for relief food by MRDA

targeted the most vulnerable population benefited 21 percent of the IDPs.

The MRDA's support was distributed by the joint relief committee including other NGOs working in Mundri and relevant Government Department. The joint committee also known as Emergency Efforts Committee, was established by the County Commissioner to receive, assess and register IDPs as well as mobilise and distribute relief assistance to them.

In addition to MRDA, the IDPs have also received support from World Food Programme (WFP), United Nations Children Education Fund (UNICEF), International Aids Services (IAS) and the local community. The UNICEF support of NFIs was managed by Oxfam GB.

**M**MRDA has this month provided food and non-food items to 232 families (2,079 persons) affected by LRA in Mundri West County. The relief project was funded by Oxfam Novib—a Dutch agency.

month.

The non-food items (NFIs) were intended to provide shelter and enable the IDPs to rebuild their lives. The NFIs distributed include among others: plastic sheets, mosquito nets, cooking utensils and machetes.

-ENDS-

*...continued from page 2*

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-ENDS-



Some of the affected victims carrying food to the point of distribution

The food ration which included maize flour, rice, beans, cooking oil, sugar, tea leaves and iodised salt was for one

The LRA attacks occurred in January 2009 and resulted to death of 14 persons and displacement of 9,742 others. MRDA's assistance which

## MRDA to receive funding from MSH



Lextion May- Health Coordinator

**M**undri Relief & Development Association (MRDA) is to receive funding from Management Sciences for Health (MSH). The funds worth \$ 315,000 dollars will be shared between MRDA and Action Africa Help International (AAH-I) and will be used for implementing Primary Health Care in Mundri Counties.

MSH has replaced John Snow Inc. (JSI) as the main recipient of funds from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) for running Primary Health Care services in South Sudan.

MRDA has been implementing primary health services in the Payams of Lozoh, Kedi'ba, Wittoh, and Minga and in Mundri town with funds mainly from USAID sources during the past three years. The current project starts on April 1<sup>st</sup> and ends September 30<sup>th</sup> 2009. MSH took over the contract from JSI after the latter's term ended March 31<sup>st</sup> 2009. The new project will be a fixed term funding instead of grants as in the previous project.

**By Lextion May Kenneth**  
**Health Coordinator**

-ENDS-

## MPOWER!

### Army Officer learns child nutrition

On February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2009, an army officer visited the Mundri Under 5 Clinic (MU5C) accompanied by his wife and their child of Eleven months old, Akol Manut.

When we weighed the child, the results showed that she was under weight and malnourished. She was weak and could not play like other children her age. One of MPOWER KIDS trainer gave them health education of how the mother should feed the child and give additional and supplementary foods with high energy such as rice which can be added to the main food and supply extra energy. She was also advised to give her other two children proteins (body building foods) like beans, milk and vitamins (protective foods) such as fruits and vegetables.

After three weeks, **Manut** the army officer and father, came back to MU5C and told us, "My child is now active and is gaining weight more than even before... I thank MRDA through its Mpower Kids workers for giving us the health education."

According to him, the programme of home visit should be done in their camp so as to educate their wives and soldiers alike to take good care of their children. "They will know the importance of feeding children on healthy foods than using money on alcohol," he added.

Although he come to know the importance of child nutrition when his child was diagnosed as under weight and malnourished, it has helped him change and provide at least the three main types of food for his family. "Now we have our child health as our priority...my wife and I really appreciate this program," he further said with a look of gladness in his eyes.

**Cecilia Bona**  
**Mpower Project officer**

*"Now we have our child health as our priority... my wife and I really appreciate this program."*

## Local police embrace civic education

In many cases, police tend to be seen as people who are inhuman and insensitive. Mundri west county police have shown that they are different and willing to be informed about human rights issues. When we asked Police Commander Taban Samson about his opinion on activities by police after receiving training on Human rights and good governance, he had this to say, "Our police have become friendly to detainees...they treat detainees as human beings."

The police station, which is also Mundri county headquarters, is located in Mundri town. One suspected LRA rebel who was captured early this year was detained at this police headquarters of Mundri County." This detainee was captured in Jambo. If it were before this kind of training he could have been killed...but he was brought in one piece here," the Police Commander added.

Most of the Police, now, used to be in Sudan People Liberation Army (SPLA). "Before signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, they used army officers...they dealt with people harshly," the Commander claimed. "The harsh conditions of those years made them to be the way they are...but with this kind of education by MRDA, the Police will become better and

better," he added.

"MRDA should intensify its training on Human rights and good governance so as to cover more Policemen/women alike," he suggested.



Police Commander Taban Samson during the interview in his office.

Commander Taban Samson further noted that this kind of training will improve Police intelligence and also their performance at the home level." The police with time will be able to deal with issues at home and out of home in a civilized manner," he said.

He urged Police and people of Mundri to turn up for trainings such as this so that their lives can become better in the long run. "I urge MRDA to continue this good work... you really belong to our community," he further said.

The training which took place on November 24th, 2008 was done by Mundri Relief and Development Association and funded by Christian Aid. Police officers( Men and women) were trained from three counties of Mundri West, Mundri East and Mvolo.

By Nathana Bathuel

Civic Education Officer

-ENDS-

***The youths are said to be tomorrow's future. MRDA with this in mind, has trained 10 civic educators who are training others on human rights, good governance and elections. Meet Charles Moses, a youth who is being trained by United Youth Services (UYS).***

*Q. How did you learn about these trainings of youths by the civic educators?*

A. I was told by a member of United Youth services. After hearing how informative, educative and exciting they are, I decided to join UYS.

*Q. What positive change has these trainings brought in your life?*

A. Now I know what elections are all about. I have never voted or even experienced elections in my life! Now I know what democracy is and that good leadership does not include violence and corruption among others.

*Q. What can you tell youths out there who miss out these training forums?*

A. I urge them to join in big numbers because I have realised that we know so little about civic issues. Southern Sudan is changing...let us change with it.

*Q. Do you think MRDA is doing a good job?*

A. Of course, now youths here in Mundri are getting to know civic issues and are still continuing to know.

*Q. What do you dream for Southern Sudan?*

A. A peaceful, democratic and developing country where we and future generations will live in peace!

This project is implemented by MRDA who are funded by National Endowment for Democracy (NED). United Youth Services is one of the youth groups, among five others, working with MRDA.

Interviewed by Malis Ambawa -Chairman—UYS

-ENDS-



Peter Bay- KITE Principal

## Teacher training insitute with a difference

The education programme is one of the first sectors of MRDA Programmes to have taken off at an early stage, as early as 1993. MRDA coordinated efforts by implementing a teacher Education training programme and providing educational materials in Mundi and Maridi Counties. Teacher training was crucial since the civil war had ruined all the education system in South Sudan and most teachers had either joined the war or escaped to the neighbouring counties.

*"We need to make KTTC the best Training Centre in South Sudan... this is our joint and collective responsibility..."*

MRDA being an indigenous Non Governmental Organisation is actively involved in planning and executing a variety of educational developmental projects in Great Mundi and neighbouring counties.



The Education Coordinator for MRDA, Peter J. Mogga

In September 2008, MRDA administration entrusted MRDA Education Coordinator to facilitate and plan the implementation of the Teacher Education Training projects in Koto'bi Teacher Training Centre (KTTC). There are five tutors and a Principal. The training is carried out in close coordination with the County Education Department using



Student teachers at the teacher training centre in Kot'obi. Far left is Anduwa Rose who is a tutor.

training refers to 2 years training Course leading to award of Certificate in Primary Education.

At the Training Centre, we are implementing the objectives of Teacher Education Curriculum for South Sudan.

We have competent tutors at the Centre with brilliant ideas, modern methodologies of imparting knowledge, transmission of practical skills, leading positive change of attitudes and behaviours, very creative and committed.

recommended syllabus written by the Curriculum Centre, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Government of Southern Sudan (GOSS)

In February 2009, MRDA introduced Pre-Service Training Programme at Kotobi Teacher training Centre where 25 out of 40 student teachers currently registered and are getting training. Training of new teachers is paramount to a nation and is one of the most important aspects of the Ministry Education.

MRDA Director, Mr. Kennet Korayi once said, "We need to make KTTC the best Training Centre in South Sudan... this is our joint and collective responsibility. We have started the task and I am requesting you to be partakers of this training."

**By Peter Bay**

**Principal for Kotobi Institute of Teacher education (KITE)**

Pre - service

## PICTURES



MRDA guest house is located in a *serene and quiet environment*. It has a *well equipped hall convenient for seminars, workshops and other events....*

## MRDA Guest house

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Mundri Relief & Development Association



UNMIS officials and soldiers posing with MRDA director (middle) after holding discussions

Wesley Malis, a practising Librarian records books in preparation for the grand opening of the community Library to be on April 1st, 2009.



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## Democracy is the way to go

**D**emocracy is one of the agents for a prosperous and good governed nation. Many countries have attained good governance and democracy after a long struggle with the government at hand. The struggle for democracy is not easy, for instance in Kenya, during the former government, there was very little freedom of the press. Journalists were harassed by police and did not have the freedom to cover and publish news events that the government thought to be sensitive.

This issue of democracy and power is what most of our African countries are fighting over. Somalia has been in civil war since 1991. There have been several governments but each one is ousted by some rebel group (clan). Every group there wants to be the government. Why can't we see that our people are suffering just because of our greediness for power? Our children are dying because of hunger, diseases and they become traumatised because of the war.

As I see it, this issue of undemocratic rule which has led to many civil wars and upcoming of rebel groups, is the one making us not to have a functioning African Union. Each country has its own problems to deal with, and when faced with other African countries' problems, they do not have the confidence to throw an accusing finger.

We are not weaker than western countries! We have proved to the world that we can rule the most powerful Nation on earth!

It is very saddening to see a growing nation being retarded by dictatorship and poor governance which leads to these civil wars. God created us as equal, why then claim that your tribe or race is above the other thus you have the right to rule. Let us not preach water and drink wine, especially our leaders. When things go bad politically for some of our leaders, they rally us to fight among ourselves.

We aspire to be developed countries, but for us to get there, we will have to practise genuine democracy combined with good governance. The rest will flow.

By **Beatrice W. Maina**

**Advocacy/ Communication Officer**

**We now allow advertisements in MRDA UPDATE, for enquiries, email : [mrda1991@gmail.com](mailto:mrda1991@gmail.com) ,or call +249 915 436 836**

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### Feedback

What do you think of this MRDA update?

Tell us! e-mail: [mrda1991@gmail.com](mailto:mrda1991@gmail.com)

*Designed and edited by Beatrice Wangari Maina; Published by Mundri Relief and Development Association, Mundri- (Southern Sudan); and printed by Paper line ltd. (Nairobi)- Kenya.*