

UNICEF/Baring-Ellerman Foundations Joint Project

June 2005 - December 2007

Reintegration of Children displaced by Conflict in Southern Sudan

FINAL EVALUATION



30th April, 2010

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Applied Knowledge

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1. Executive Summary

The Republic of Sudan is the largest country in Africa and the tenth largest in the world. Since independence in 1957, it has enjoyed only 11 years of peace. During the civil war which lasted until 2005, human rights reporting frequently raised concerns about the recruitment and use of children in armed forces on all sides.

The Project to support the reintegration of children displaced by conflict in Southern Sudan was approved in 2004, before peace was fully achieved. It reflects closely the recommendations and principles of the joint UNICEF/Government of Sudan Rapid Situation Analysis conducted in the same year. The location of the project, in two counties in Greater Upper Nile, was chosen on the basis of the expected concentration of children soldiers there, combined with the track record in the area of the local partner NGO, Naath Community Development Services (NCDS). The duration, at three years, was consistent with good examples of disarmament and reintegration processes in other countries.

The original activities intended by the project were to be extensive, ranging from establishing local networks for family tracing, advocacy and direct provision of services to the most vulnerable children, to building the capacity of local authorities and establishing community-based child welfare groups. In the event, many of these objectives fell away, with project activities essentially reducing down over time to community education about children's rights and psycho-social support of vulnerable children.

It is possible that as a result of the project up to 1,500 children and adults received - and have been influenced by - child protection messages. Assuming a (not implausible) average of 100 people per community, this number could be regarded as equivalent to the original "15 communities" target set for NCDS. It is, however, only 20% of the larger goal of reaching 8,000¹ children over the life of the project - the total UNICEF aimed to reach through the wider Child Protection Programme. The second objective of the Project - the capacity building of an indigenous NGO (NCDS) and, through them, the development of a wider network of local capacities around child protection and reintegration - was only partially achieved: NCDS remains in existence today and has been a partner for other UNICEF projects in Southern Sudan more recently. Furthermore, many of the individuals trained and developed by UNICEF, though they left the Project, remain in Southern Sudan and several are known to continue to work in child protection. The wider network of local capacities remains limited, with UNICEF capacity building effort transferred to the new Government of Southern Sudan's DDR Commission and Ministry of Social Welfare, which did not exist at the time of the original project. The timing of the project has been a key determinant of the sustainability of the institutions involved. It straddled the signing of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement and coincided with the important social and institutional changes that followed.

The Evaluation found four broad areas for lesson learning: project scope, management arrangements, monitoring, and NGO capacity. These are:

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¹ It is important to note that the project was developed before the signing of the Cooperation Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005 and that at that time it was almost impossible to verify the information about the numbers reported of children associated with armed forces and children affected by conflict.

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1. Be clear about the challenges and risks from the outset.
2. Look for feasibility tests in project proposals.
3. Check the extent to which the project is a priority and a “correct institutional fit” for the implementing agency.
4. Test that all partners have the same understanding of key concepts.
5. Revisit initial timelines and agree indicators as soon as possible after inception.
6. Beware of local cultures of pleasing the donor in project reporting.
7. Consider attempting institutional development of NGOs as a primary objective only in less fragile countries.

2. Evaluation Approach & Methodology

Following the DAC Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance², this Evaluation assesses relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. Over the ten days allocated for the study, the evaluation method involved:

- meetings with key staff in UNICEF, Baring Foundation, Naath Community Development Services (NCDS, the implementing NGO) and Government of Southern Sudan. See Annex 1 for a list of people consulted;
- a desk-based review of all available project documentation in London, Juba and Malakal;
- a field visit (20-26 February) to a UNICEF-supported child protection project of *similar design* to the Barings-Ellerman project in Baglei, 1 hour south by road from Malakal.

It must be noted that a visit to the location of the project itself was not possible, and therefore all conclusions about what was seen in the field must be regarded as tentative.

Detailed terms of reference for the evaluation are at Annex 2.

3. Background

3.1 The Socio-Economic Context of Southern Sudan

The Republic of Sudan is the largest country in Africa and the tenth largest in the world. At 2.5 million square kilometres, it is ten times the size of the United Kingdom³. The population is estimated to be 40 million, of which 40% is under the age of 15⁴. The land is generally a flat, featureless plain, dominated by the Nile and its tributaries. Arid desert in the north becomes seasonal tropical swampland in the south, with low mountains rising in the far south and west.

Pastoralism and subsistence agriculture employ 80% of the adult population, entailing persistent very low household incomes. However, since Sudan began exporting oil in 1999 (primarily to

² DAC Principles for the Evaluation of Development Assistance. OECD, 1991.

³ CIA World Factbook, 2009.

⁴ Sudan Household Health Survey, 2006

China), national income has boomed so that it is now nudging middle-income status with GNI per head of \$1,130⁵.

Since independence in 1957, Sudan has enjoyed only 11 years of peace; a civil war in southern Sudan lasted much of the past 45 years. The South first gained some autonomy when an earlier war ended with the Addis Ababa Agreement of 1973. War broke out again in 1983 and continued until 2002, with a Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) finally signed in 2005. During that time an estimated two million people were killed and 4.5 million displaced by the conflict and conflict-induced famines. The vast majority were civilians and southerners⁶.

The larger civil war in Sudan reflects many smaller, longer-standing, grassroots conflicts which are characterized as resource-based. Environmental degradation is indeed a proximate cause of some of the current conflicts but root causes can be traced back in history to cattle raiding and slavery. Today, the conflict has taken a wider political dimension, with internal divisions in the rebel movement and within government reflecting these longer standing enmities. The civil war has added a new legacy of continuing local conflicts as permanently displaced communities have moved onto lands traditionally occupied by others. Hunger is consequently an ever-present threat, while continuing oil exploitation (along the disputed border between north and south) exacerbates tensions further.

Among the complex impacts of the 20 year long conflict, the extent to which the socio-economic fabric of areas in the South has been militarized is striking. Many goods are only accessible through military connections and market stalls are often owned by an Army soldier. Cooperatives and community self-organized education efforts have been disbanded for years. With a lack of basic social services, displacement, loss of livestock and fields, poverty and hunger, the military appear to have replaced much of the traditional social fabric, particularly in rural areas, as well as controlling economic resources and markets.

3.2 Children Affected by Conflict in Southern Sudan

Human rights reporting has frequently raised concern about the recruitment and use of children by the Government of Sudan (G0s), the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and affiliated militia. A Human Rights Watch report in 1995 found conscription practices included setting up check-points and press-ganging from street children's 'camps'. A UNICEF Rapid Situation Analysis in 2004⁷ found on-going recruitment of children as young as 12 years old to be particularly blatant in some parts. Local sources estimated that 75% of children recruited had been taken from schools, resulting in disruption of education as parents kept children at home due to fear of abduction.

The 2004 Situation Analysis reported that children became associated with fighting forces through both "voluntary" and forced recruitment. Tactics included taking one male from every household, requiring chiefs to provide certain numbers of new recruits, and conscription directly from schools, market places and homes. In some cases, young boys were traditionally involved

⁵ World Development Indicators, 2008.

⁶ Sudan: Empty promises? Human rights violations in government controlled areas. Amnesty International 16 July 2003 AI Index: AFR 54/036/2003.

⁷ Situation Analysis for the Demobilisation and Reintegration of Children in Government Controlled Areas of South Sudan. UNICEF, 2004

in local conflicts over cattle or access to land and water sources such that they transitioned easily into more formal community militia. Indeed many ethnic groups placed a high social value on their 'warriors'. In many cases children were enticed into armed groups because of hunger, displacement and tribalism rather than overt recruitment. This extended to girls being enticed to be the 'illegal wife' of a soldier by promises of food. Almost all militia were based on tribal, clan and geographic community identities, many refusing to deploy to locations outside their community. These factors created a strong basis for claims of 'voluntary' recruitment, as well as consistent denial of the association of children generally. There was therefore a high risk that 'girlfriends' and '*jenajesh*' (houseboys) would be informally released or abandoned rather than through a formal demobilisation (DDR) process. Often, 'girlfriends' and '*jenajesh*' did not view themselves as needing to be 'demobilized'. A formal process of demobilization might in itself therefore have been an obstacle to meeting the rights and needs of children, underscoring the importance of developing inclusive, community-based reintegration programmes promptly.

3.3 UNICEF's Approach to Child Protection and Children Affected by Armed Conflict

The total UNICEF programme in South Sudan is currently (2009/10) US\$72m, of which the Child Protection Programme is US\$5m. At \$275,000 the Project is equivalent to just over 5% of current total UNICEF spend on child protection in South Sudan.

UNICEF's approach to child protection in Sudan is a "human-rights based programming approach" with four pillars. It involves:

1. Social Planning and Programming – establishing the legal and institutional framework.
2. Juvenile Justice – ensuring that minors have special rights and procedures under the national judicial system.
3. Children affected by Armed Conflict – addressing the array of needs of children associated with fighting forces or affected by conflict.
4. Mine Risk Education – tackling the particular risk children face of encountering unexploded ordinance in post-conflict situations.

In Sudan in 2004, UNICEF estimated that the SPLA had released over 12,000 children from its ranks since 2001. It adopted a "working figure" of 10,000 children still associated with Sudanese armed groups. Good early progress appears to have been made on demobilisation, with only 2,400 – 4,000 estimated to be remaining with the SPLA by the end of 2006⁸. The original estimate carried the caveat⁹ at the time that "in reality, it is impossible to determine the number of children associated with fighting forces (CAFF)¹⁰ with any precision for a number of reasons: the complexity of the issue, official denial, the two decade timeframe of the conflict and use of

⁸ Baring/John Ellerman Programme Second Year Progress Report. UNICEF July 2007 .

⁹ Situation Analysis for the Demobilisation and Reintegration of Children in Government Controlled Areas of South Sudan. UNICEF, 2004

¹⁰ The agreed definition of CAFF in Sudan at the time was "*any person, male or female, under the age of 18 years who is part of any kind of regular or irregular armed force or armed group, including but not limited to: cooks, porters, messengers, and anyone accompanying such groups other than purely as family members. It includes boys or girls who have become separated from their families and are now in the care of soldiers and children recruited for sexual purposes and/or forced marriage. It does not, therefore only refer to a child who is carrying, or has carried, weapons.*"

children, ongoing recruitment and difficulties in arranging meetings with certain militia commanders due to ongoing conflict and tensions. Further, many children are escaping or being released informally.” Official denials of the existence of any CAFF meant there was a high risk that the Armed Forces and militia would release underage members in a manner aimed to avoid acknowledging their existence, making it “*all the more vital to initiate community-based, inclusive reintegration programming regardless of how children may be 'released' or how formal DDR may proceed.*”

UNICEF defined 3 key reintegration principles for Southern Sudan at this time:

1. *An Inclusive approach:* Reintegration activities would not privilege child soldiers over other vulnerable children.
2. *Community-focused support:* Mobilization, training and support would be directed towards communities to strengthen their capacity to receive all returning and vulnerable children. The focus would be on community-level inputs for schooling, skills training, and other activities or services.
3. *Adaptation to local context:* While taking place within a national framework and with national coordination, the specifics of reintegration would respond to local opportunities and realities.

UNICEF was already working on CAFF advocacy, policy and programme planning in anticipation of formal DDR within the context of the peace process. Coordination between UNICEF and partners in the Southern sector to start to build the substantial reception capacity needed for larger numbers of demobilized and returning children in the coming months and years was reported at the time to be “commendable.”

Education was consistently requested as the priority activity for reintegration throughout the 2004 situation analysis, including by children themselves. This was true across age groups, even where one might expect recommendations to be different (eg for older children). Nevertheless, UNICEF decided that while linked, formal education needs and challenges were too extensive¹¹ to be addressed by a CAFF programme. Instead, non-formal, compressed or alternative education schemes were recommended. Many sources stressed that effective reintegration work must also include the extension of basic services to rural areas, as well as support to livelihood/agro-pastoral interventions for youth.

In view of the “immensity of the work to be done” to establish these interventions and of the probability that a section of older children would not be interested in education or other community skills-building activities, it was recommended that UNICEF focus on establishing community-based social resources that could mediate and network between children and a variety of education and life-skills. “Life-skills” (adolescent sexual health issues, social and cultural activities – recreation, dance, drama and peer group approaches – that support local

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¹¹ Issues included payment and availability of teachers, curriculum content and supplies, highly politicized language issues and physical facilities.

reconciliation issues) were recommended as a key intervention, rather than vocational training or livelihoods interventions, for which UNICEF was not well suited.

Opportunism was also recommended: “Regardless of whether children may be defined as CAFF, their case may combine with other local factors to create an opportunity for small-scale work in addition to policy and advocacy work under the national CAFF programme framework. For example, civil society and local authorities are openly interested in undertaking more concerted work on CAFF. There are indications that displaced communities and other actors are prepared to undertake the issue of *‘jenajesh’* and ‘illegal wives’; Thus small-scale reintegration activities that initiate family tracing and alternative education capacity can feasibly be initiated in Malakal and then expanded in scale in the future.”

Acknowledging the changes heralded by the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and the establishment of a nascent Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) in Juba, the UN also relocated to Juba. The move reflected the transition from emergency to longer term development operations. UNICEF also shifted from an opportunistic, community-based, approach to increasing engagement with government systems aimed at establishing a rights-based, legal and institutional framework for child protection.

4. The Project: Reintegration of Children displaced by Conflict in Southern Sudan, June 2005 - December 2007

4.1 Relevance: Overall Project Design

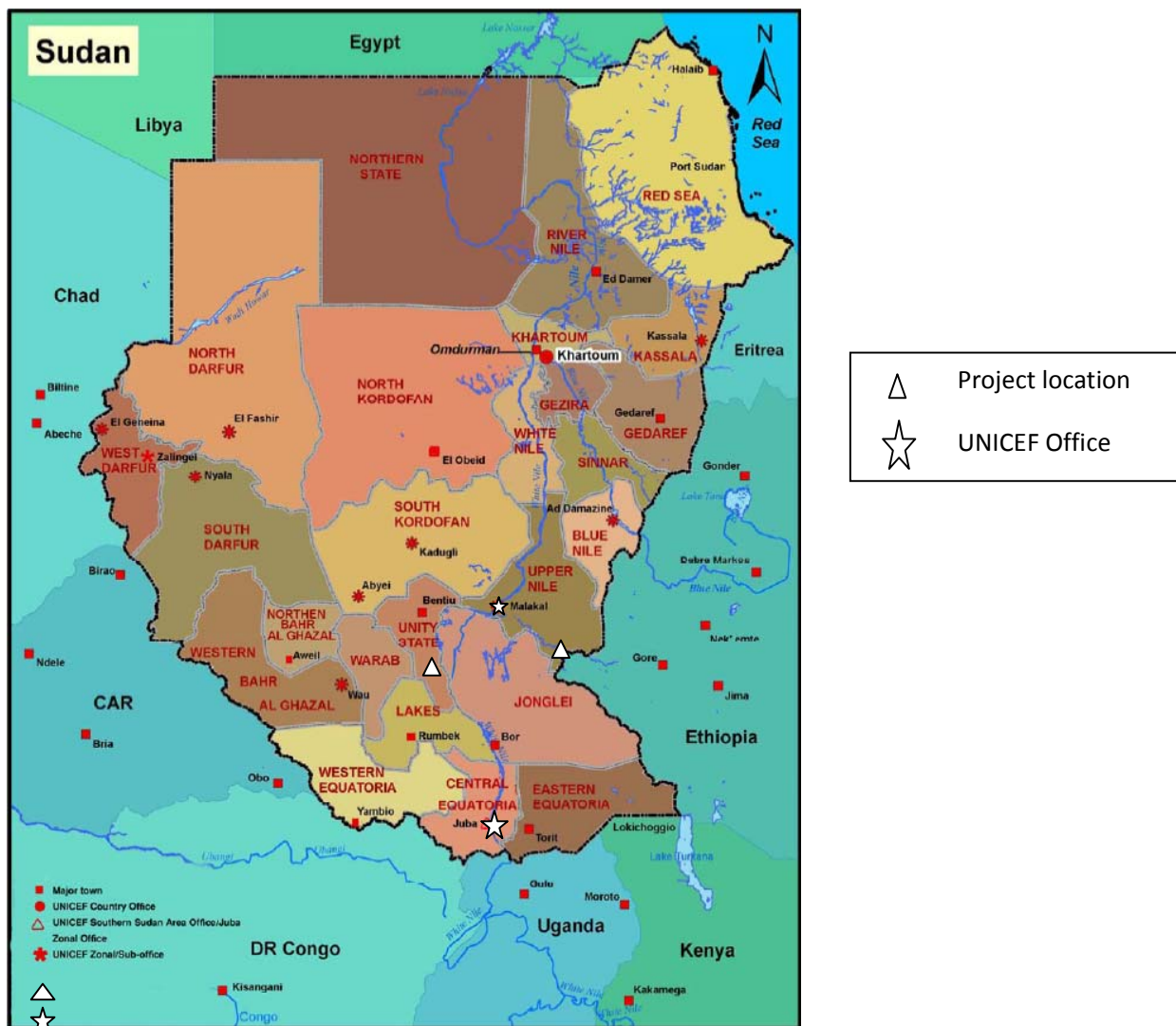
The Project was designed in 2004 and reflects closely the recommendations and principles of the UNICEF/HAC Rapid Situation Analysis conducted in the same year (summarised in section 3.3 above). It was designed while UNICEF was still based in Nairobi, delivering an emergency programme as part of Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS) and responding to the perceived need (and broadly accepted principle in relation to child soldiers) of acting swiftly and opportunistically, in advanced of formal DDR processes, and where local conditions were favourable: *“Multiple opportunities were identified and, further, they are important to seize in the immediate term. Opportunities include expansion of policy and programme preparation work as well as some locales where direct work to release and reintegrate children can begin.”*

The **location** of the project, in two counties in Greater Upper Nile (Nyal County in Unity State and Maiwut County in Upper Nile State) was chosen on the basis of the expected concentration of CAFFs in these areas close to intense north-south and tribal conflicts and the presence of the NGO Naath Community Development Services (NCDS) in these same areas where they were implementing a separate peace-building programme funded by Pact/USAID. The distances from UNICEF headquarters in Juba (350 miles) and the zonal office in Malakal (150 miles) along mud roads impassable for 5 months of the year did not appear to present any challenges to the project design. Although the Juba and Malakal UNICEF offices were not operational and did not enter the design and early implementation of the project, UNICEF had been operating in this region for some time with OLS, so might have been expected to be aware of logistical difficulties and implications for achievements of project.

The **duration** of the project, at three years, was based on the estimated time it would take for the DDR process to be completed. This was a reasonable assumption at the time, being consistent with good examples in other countries (Nepal, Rwanda), but it has subsequently proved to be over-ambitious. While there were some substantial demobilisations in the early

days (UNICEF¹² report 800 children released in 2006, for instance), the formal DDR procedure that was finally agreed, necessitating the involvement of UNICEF, the SPLA and the Southern Sudan Demobilisation, Disarmament and Reintegration Commission (SSDDRC), is slow and cumbersome. The problems around identifying and incentivising children to leave military service have slowed progress even further.

Map of Sudan showing location of project activities and UNICEF Offices



As for the **partners**, the UNICEF Project Document (UNICEF UK Grant Application May 2004, see Annex 4) gives the impression that NCDS was selected from a range of contenders. But the Evaluation was told that this refers only to UNICEF's obligation to follow an open tender process. It appears that NCDS was one of the very few, perhaps the only, NGO willing to

¹² S. Pasti, personal communication.

operate on the ground in the region. However, it is likely that UNICEF drew some comfort (with regard to probity, if not to a specific competency in child protection) from the fact that NCDS was at this time (2003-4) implementing four other projects funded by international donors in a wide range of sectors (veterinary services for FAO, agriculture for FHI, water for Pact Sudan, peace-building for Pact/USAID).

4.2 Relevance: Project Activities

Reintegration is the process by which ex-combatants acquire civilian status and gain sustainable employment and income programmes. It involves an open time frame, primarily taking place in communities at the local level. Reintegration programmes can include: psycho-social support; vocational training; job placements or apprenticeships; business start-ups; micro-finance; and other income generating activities. Reintegration programmes also support communities and are complemented by other recovery and development initiatives which boost local economies to enable them to absorb ex-combatants¹³.

The reintegration **activities originally intended by the project** were to be broad, ranging from establishing local networks for family tracing, advocacy and direct provision of services to the most vulnerable, to building the capacity of local authorities and establishing community-based child welfare groups. In the event, many of these objectives fell away, with project activities essentially reducing down over time to *advocacy* (promoting awareness of child rights in the community) and *psycho-social support* (establishing children's clubs and providing recreational supplies, eg footballs)¹⁴.

Advocacy and psycho-social support are indeed standard elements of child protection/child soldier reintegration programmes. UNICEF's 2004 situation analysis accepted that higher community priorities for education and clean water, for example, were beyond their (UNICEF's) capacity to deliver at that time in southern Sudan. Advocacy and psycho-social support activities were, however, feasible and would help the children targeted by the programme to have access to those other services¹⁵, once they were available.

4.3 Effectiveness: The extent to which the project achieved its objectives

The *overall* objectives of the original (June 2004 - May 2007) project were:

1. improved geographic coverage of protective services for returned children;
2. improved capacity of Sudanese NGOs, authorities and communities to provide protective services; and
3. "local ownership" of approaches to the return and reintegration of children.

It was expected that over three years, the overall programme would benefit "at least 4,000 children formerly associated with the fighting forces as well as 4,000 other vulnerable

¹³ Stabilisation Issues Note: Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration. DFID, 2009.

¹⁴ The evaluation learnt of some failed attempts at vocational training (eg brick-making) by the project, though there was relatively little evidence of this either in projects reports at the time, or from other sources.

¹⁵ The provision of education, water and sanitation and health services is the objective of other UNICEF programmes in Southern Sudan, and these priorities raised by the children/communities have now been taken up. Since the signing of the CPA, about 1 million children have been enrolled in school due to UNICEF's support.

children...such as refugees and abducted children returning to their communities". NCDS specifically were to reach "at least 15 communities ... [and] establish 15 local reintegration mechanisms".

This and other *specific* objectives for NCDS in implementing the project are listed in the table below, with reported achievements from annual reports.

Table 1: Objectives & Achievements of May 2004 – Nov 2007 Project

Objective In Original Grant Application May 2004	1st Year Progress Report August 2006	2nd Year Progress Report July 2007	Revised 2nd Year Progress Report February 2008 (summarising achievements Aug 2006-Nov 2007)
Identification of children currently associated with armed forces & advocacy for their release	-	<i>NCDS advocated with SPLA barracks in Panyijar to release child soldiers.</i>	-
Involvement in demob and reintegration of CAFF in the area	<i>"Tried to persuade military personnel to present themselves as good role models".</i>	<i>250 children released from SPLA in 2006 & supported following demobilisation.</i>	-
Establishment of local networks for family tracing	-	-	-
Provision of direct services to the most vulnerable	<i>"Very basic" additional schools set up in 3 payams. 2 dilapidated schools re-established benefitting 175 children.</i>	<i>Vocational courses in brick-making ; grants for seed purchase; small finance arrangements to initiate business activities.</i>	<i>Vocational courses in brick-making ; grants for seed purchase; small finance arrangements to initiate business activities.</i>
Build capacity of local authorities through mentoring & training	<i>800 community reps attend awareness workshops</i>	<i>NCDS working with 4 indigenous organisations on HIV/AIDs, peace education & adult education</i>	<i>NCDS working with 4 indigenous organisations on HIV/AIDs, peace education & adult education</i>
Establish & support at least 15 community groups	<i>90 Child Welfare Committees (CWC) established</i>	<i>Youth networks established in each of the counties. CWC reps provided with bicycles and T-shirts.</i>	<i>Youth networks established in each of the counties.</i>
Advocacy for children to access	<i>180 adolescents trained in child protection issues.</i>	<i>NCDS persuaded Catholic Fathers in Malakal to mainstream</i>	<i>NCDS persuaded Catholic Fathers in Malakal to mainstream</i>

local services		<i>child rights in catechists training sessions.</i>	<i>child rights in catechists training sessions.</i>
Develop database of returned & reintegrated children	-	<i>NCDS "involved in" monitoring returnees in Upper Nile and Unity States. 597 children identified.</i>	<i>NCDS "involved in" monitoring returnees in Upper Nile and Unity States. 597 children identified.</i>
Establish NCDS Integrated Centres for Community Empowerment	<i>8 children's clubs established with collective membership of 600.</i>	<i>10 community institutions rehabilitated to serve as youth centres.</i>	<i>Rehabilitation started on 10 community institutions.</i>
Take leading role in child protection by end of 1st year	-	-	-

In October 2007, UNICEF signed a second Project Co-operation Agreement (PCA) with NCDS providing an additional \$109,000 (utilising unspent Baring/Ellerman funds) for a reduced range of child protection activities in the same localities. The new project document drops the more formal reintegration activities of the original project on which NCDS had made no progress, instead focussing on community education and mobilisation.

The extended project's revised activities and subsequent achievements are summarised in the table below, taken from the Update to Barings/Ellerman of February 2009.

Table 2: Objectives & Achievements of Oct 2007 – Feb 2009 Project

Activities planned in Original PCA October 2007	Progress reported by NCDS	UNICEF findings after monitoring visits
Conduct child protection training of trainers for NCDS, community leaders, parents associations and child welfare committees in Panyijar and Maiwut counties	<i>10 CWC members trained as trainers from 6 payams (5 males and 5 females). The training focused on CRC and community mobilization. Each CWC in the payam has 2 members (1 male and 1 female). The CWC meets twice a month to discuss issues identified affecting children and try to find a way to solve them or report them to NCDS.</i>	<i>2 CWC members confirmed they had not been trained. They requested UNICEF to train them and NCDS staff also confirmed that training had not conducted. No records of any meetings conducted about this.</i>
Conduct 10 community workshops for 40 people each, including community leaders, women and young people, Child Welfare Committee members, local authorities, military, police, church leaders and schools	<i>84 community meetings held of which 440 community members have benefited (300 men and 140 women). This meeting is held 3 times a week on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. The issues discussed mainly are children's right to education, hygiene</i>	<i>No records of any community meetings held. Even during visits, UNICEF staff asked to participate in these meetings and were invited to attend community meetings twice but no one</i>

authorities.	<i>promotion and concerns over early marriage.</i>	<i>turned up.</i>
Initiate income generating activities to support vulnerable families and groups through provision of gardening tools, seeds and goats.	<p><i>35 children benefited from one garden and its income generating activities. The income was used to purchase exercise books and school bags, and to pay school fees for vulnerable children such as orphans, demobilized child soldiers.</i></p> <p><i>Trained 26 youths from 4 payams (21 boys and 5 girls) for 10 days in brick making, carpentry and roof tiling skills in Pagak.</i></p>	<p><i>No garden project was seen during field visits nor mentioned by NCDS staff on ground. Staff informed team that no demobilized child soldiers were identified for this part of the project. Children were trained in brickmaking and carpentry skills, but there were no tools seen by UNICEF staff to go alongside this. NCDS staff informed the team that the materials were still in Gambela (Ethiopia) waiting to be brought across.</i></p>
Provide sports, recreational and cultural materials to support development of children and youth networks.	<i>NCDS provided sports materials to the youth groups (skipping ropes, footballs, valleyballs and nets, uniforms for football and valleyball games)</i>	<p><i>One youth group was evident in Pagak but none seen in Nyal. Team visited another location to meet with youth group but no group was available. Sports materials were seen with the youth group in Pagak (jerseys, football and valleyball) but no such materials seen in Nyal.</i></p>
Provide support for rehabilitation of 10 community centres to increase child safety and youth participation.	<i>One resource centre was rehabilitated in Ganyiel for young people to raise awareness on issues affecting children like HIV/AIDS, harmful practices, early/forced marriages, and mine risk education.</i>	<p><i>UNICEF could not see adequate resource centres during visit. In Maiwut county, the structure shown to UNICEF as a resource centre was used by the police as accommodation for Somalis. In Turu, the structure shown was just sticks and a roof. We were informed that the structure could not be completed because of the rains, though construction materials were not seen and the stick structure was located in the forest, made of very old sticks that were almost rotten. The location was not considered ideal for a children's centre.</i></p>

<p>Organise parents and community meetings, providing them with training to enable them obtain efficient advocacy skills to defend mothers' and children's rights.</p>	<p><i>NCDS conducted 3 forum meetings in Nyal, Mayom and Maluak where rights of the child, harmful cultural practices, HIV/AIDS and importance of going to school were discussed.</i></p> <p><i>4 PTA groups formed in 4 payams (Kigile, Turu, Maiwut and Pagak). The PTA in each payam has 12 members (6 males and 6 females) who meet three times a month to monitor school activities and issues in the school and with children in the school</i></p>	<p><i>These meetings could not be verified by UNICEF team as there were no minutes or reports nor statements from community members to ascertain the claim.</i></p> <p><i>UNICEF team met one PTA group in Pagak that monitors and supports school activities in the community.</i></p>
<p>Make follow-up visits to monitor the reintegration of demobilised ex-child soldiers. Train staff in the principles and practices of family tracing and develop an active community-based family tracing and reunification network in Payinjar and Maiwut Counties.</p>	<p><i>NCDS is currently following up on 25 demobilised child soldiers. Nyal has 4, Yop has 5, Kanynhial has 4, Pathiel has 3, Kol has 7, Nyadong has 1, and Janglow has 1. Some of these children are living in cattle camps and others are directly engaged in school where they are concentrating well with their studies.</i></p>	<p><i>No follow-up forms have been completed. UNICEF staff met one demobilized child soldier in Nyal who informed the team that he has no link with NCDS that even the ball played by them in the community had been provided by the community not NCDS. He also said there was no group of children who meet to discuss issues.</i></p>

This comparison of objectives, planned activities and reported achievements reveals what the Evaluation found to be the four key areas of difficulty for the project: **project scope, management arrangements, monitoring and NGO capacity:**

(i) The intended scope of the original project was unclear and overly ambitious.

The original project document/grant application failed to distinguish between the *wider goals of the larger programme* of child protection and reintegration for children in southern Sudan and the *specific project activities* which could be attributed to NCDS and Barings funds. The project document in one place states that the project target is "4,000 child soldiers and 4,000 other vulnerable children", and in another that NCDS will reach "15 communities".

Total target beneficiaries of 4,000 CAFF and 4,000 other vulnerable children would have entailed reaching the entire estimated population of children in Southern Sudan associated with the SPLA around that time (see section 3.3 above) *plus* the same number again of other vulnerable children. This was presumably to be the result of the wider national network of child protection and reintegration organisations that were to be catalysed by the project, with NCDS targeting just an initial 15 communities. Yet the steps (and the arithmetic) by which the initial target of 15 communities was to become the ultimate goal 8,000 children was not made clear. If it had been, it may have become apparent at the design stage that project was too ambitious.

The overly ambitious scope of the project might also have been detected by calculating and benchmarking the implied unit costs. Reaching 8,000 children with a total project expenditure of £172,000 would imply a unit cost per child of £172,000/8,000 = £22 (approximately US\$35). Yet

unit costs available at the time for a range of other vulnerable child (OVC) projects in Africa¹⁶ ranged from \$500 to \$2,500. A 2003 evaluation¹⁷ of DDR in Congo worked on the basis of a per combatant cost of \$350. While many obvious caveats must attach to comparisons of unit costs, the order of magnitude of difference should have created an alert, especially in view of the known difficulty and cost of working in southern Sudan.

With the accuracy of reporting demonstrated by UNICEF in the final update report to Barings-Ellerman in February 2009 to be in some doubt, it is difficult to assess just how many children may in fact have been reached during the life of the project. The Evaluation was told by NCDS staff that 45 children had been demobbed to the project in 2006, 25 in 2007 and 25 in 2008. Evidence from the Evaluation field trip to a similar project run by CHORM in Baliet just outside Malakal, which reported 2 demobilised child soldiers in a visible population of about 30 children, suggests that with a similar ratio of 1:15, **NCDS may have reached a maximum of 1,500 children with child protection messages and psycho-social (recreational) support – 20% of the larger 8,000 target.** An alternative approach of estimating plausible numbers of beneficiaries is to divide the total project cost (£172,000/US\$275,000) by the most favourable (lowest) available estimated unit cost for vulnerable child projects (\$350). This suggests the project might have reached 800 children over its lifetime – 10% of the original target. This range of possible beneficiaries of 800-1,500 is, coincidentally, very close to the 1,326 children reported by UNICEF to be registered for child DDR programmes in Southern Sudan and the 770 of which had been demobilised and supported back into their communities with UNICEF assistance by the end of 2007¹⁸.

(ii) The management arrangements for the project have been problematic. A timeline for the project is at Annex 3. It demonstrates that the project was managed for a significant part of its life from another country – Kenya. For the first year (2004-5), both UNICEF and NCDS were still based in Nairobi as part of the emergency operation for Southern Sudan, Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS). UNICEF moved its Southern Sudan headquarters to Juba in late 2005. “Zonal” UNICEF offices were also established at this time, with the Malakal Zone office for Greater Upper Nile, which prior to 2005 had been working to the North Sudan programme in Khartoum, now taking on the day to day management of the project. It is likely that transferring the responsibility of an on-going project to a new office with few staff, new activities and as yet weak links back to Juba and Nairobi will have contributed to gaps in monitoring. Furthermore, project management responsibilities in UNICEF Malakal were divided along state lines, with the result that the project, operating in both Unity and Upper Nile states, had two project managers.

NCDS also had multiple projects and activities during at least part of the Barings Project. As one of the few local NGOs operating on the ground in the area, they were popular partners for international aid agencies. In 2004-5, NCDS report that they were partnering four other aid agencies with a wide range of interventions. With a very limited number of HQ staff, based in Nairobi, it is unlikely that the Barings project would have received the management attention necessary to deliver in a difficult environment.

¹⁶ The Unit Costs of Programmes to Prevent or End Child Labour. ILO, 2002.

¹⁷ The Long Shadow of War: Prospects for Disarmament Demobilisation and Reintegration in the Republic of Congo. A Joint Independent Evaluation for the European Commission, UNDP and MDRP Secretariat. 2003

¹⁸ UNICEF Sudan Annual Report 2007.

It has been stressed to the Evaluation that the disruption of the transition period of the 2005 CPA extended beyond UNICEF's managerial arrangements to a major shift in attention of both donors and partners. Not only did UNICEF's strategy change from one of emergency to long-term development, but its approach shifted from opportunistic partnering of non-governmental and civil society organisations to a consistent engagement with the agencies of the new Government of Southern Sudan. Furthermore, Sudanese individuals, who had previously chosen to be active in their homeland through NGOs, were now seeing new opportunities to enter new local bureaucratic and political posts. This may well explain the project's reported loss of senior staff in 2006.

(iii) UNICEF's monitoring & reporting is, in principle, rigorous - especially of finances – but in the event genuine activity monitoring was poor. Quarterly activity reports were expected, and generally received, from NCDS and annual summaries were provided by UNICEF to Barings. In terms of finances, UNICEF makes an advance of project funds sufficient for three months activity, which must then be accounted for ("liquidated") before the next quarterly advance can be made. "Partial liquidation" – where the partner is able to provide less than complete validation of previous expenditures – is permitted in order to keep project funds flowing, but if liquidation is not fully achieved by the third quarter, all project funding halts. It was this financial monitoring, rather than project activity monitoring, which alerted UNICEF to problems with NCDS in 2007. In view of the distances involved, the difficulty of movement between UNICEF offices and project locations, and the general instability of the situation in Southern Sudan during the life of the project, UNICEF monitoring visits either from Malakal or Juba HQ, were only occasional. The Evaluation found only one monitoring visit report (for February 2008) on file in the Malakal office, though others are said to have been undertaken (and the reports possibly archived). Reporting of progress and problems depended therefore on the accuracy and honesty of the NGO. NCDS project reports on file appear regular, comprehensive and well written. However, the obvious risks associated with a culture of pleasing the donor and "accentuating the positive" in reporting appear to have been neglected.

(iv) The capacity of the NGO, NCDS, to implement the original programme of activities under the conditions was over-rated, as was UNICEF's ability to build and nurture the NGO and the proposed wider network. UNICEF did put significant effort and resources into training and supporting NCDS, and continues to bring together Government agencies and international and indigenous NGOs working on child protection in southern Sudan in regular workshops and other events. Yet capacity building in conflict/post-conflict situations is a huge challenge, requiring more than overcoming the obvious destruction of physical infrastructure, presence of armed groups, and difficult working conditions; old social structures have also been destroyed, competent personnel are lacking and new tensions and aid-distorted incentives arise which conspire to frustrate the simplest of objectives. This is discussed in more detail in 4.4(ii) below.

4.4 Impact

i) Child Protection

It is possible that, as a result of the project, up to 1,500 children and adults have received - and have been influenced by - child protection messages and have received cultural and recreational support. It cannot be demonstrated that this has averted abuse. UNICEF's rights-based approach holds that enshrining child protection in legislation works to empower individuals to resist the worst abuses. Sudan's Child Law has only very recently (2009) been

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enacted. While this is a commendable achievement, including for UNICEF who have worked hard with GoSS for it, it was not in existence during most of the life of the project. It is debateable whether messages warning against early marriages of girls or child labour, for instance, whether underpinned by formal legislation or not, would in any case reach into households and communities with traditional practices or carry much weight with such distressed populations on the edge of survival. The Evaluation was told by some Sudanese that the western approach to child rights was inconsistent with traditional views of the role of children while mothers on the Evaluation field trip were clear that what they wanted for their children was clean water and nearer health services. The children wanted teachers.

Child Welfare Committees (CWCs) were set up by the Project in ten communities. UNICEF monitoring visits reported them to be populated (unsurprisingly) by elder males, with some evidence of expectation of remuneration - rather than their intended functions - the main incentive for membership. UNICEF argue that the fact that CWCs were dominated by elder males should be understood in the context of Southern Sudan's traditional society in which women are expected not to participate in public life and that it is not realistic to hope that traditional roles could be changed over the time-span of this project. However, there was no evidence available to the Evaluation of attempts to address gender bias at any level. The field trip¹⁹ found all activities - CWCs, field workers and youth activities (predominantly related to football) - to be extremely male dominated, with no specialisation of activities to address the different needs of different children, especially of girls.

ii) Capacity Development of Indigenous NGO(s)

A secondary objective of the Project, and one of the main motives for the Barings and Ellerman Foundations in supporting it, was the intended capacity building of an indigenous NGO (NCDS) and, through them, the development of a wider network of local capacities around child protection and reintegration. **The Evaluation found this objective to be partially achieved.** The main indicator for this conclusion is that the NCDS remains in existence today and has been a partner for UNICEF in Southern Sudan more recently (in the distribution of school materials, which they are reported to have executed satisfactorily). Furthermore, many of the individuals trained and developed by UNICEF, though they left the project, remain in Southern Sudan and several are known to continue to work in child protection.

More substantive issues arise around the notion of capacity development in this project, however:

- **UNICEF is not well suited to working one-to-one with indigenous NGOs.** As a multilateral agency it works best at the international level, and as a member of the UN agency it is most comfortable, and in conflict situations is often required to prioritise, working with its own UN partners. When operating in emergency situations UNICEF tends to prioritise delivering results, rather than developing intermediaries. UNICEF usually expects to work through international NGOs²⁰, and for these to act as intermediaries with indigenous counterparts. UNICEF prefers to take a coordinating role – they are able to put NGOs in touch with their relevant government ministries and

¹⁹ Remember, the Evaluation field trip was *not* the NCDS project being evaluated, but to a more accessible one reported to be very similar.

²⁰ And when UNICEF works with international NGOs, it tends to be the funder, rather than the recipient; this situation where Barings-Ellerman funded UNICEF in a specific project relationship appears to be unusual.

improve how they work together²¹. While this may not fit with a “mentoring” view of capacity building, it is an important factor in building civil society in situations such as Southern Sudan. Given their programmatic approach and overview of the government and NGO actors in child protection, UNICEF prefers to have flexibility around who they partner for activities in order to get the best results for children – an approach they regard as particularly necessary in situations as complex and fluid as Southern Sudan.

This need for flexibility, and the different views of capacity building to which it is linked, goes to the heart of the differences between UNICEF and Baring/Ellerman around the project. It affected both the progress of the project and had some financial impact on UNICEF UK. This is discussed in more detail in section 4.6 below.

- In longer term development situations, UNICEF tends to take what it calls a “programmatic approach”, establishing the legislative and judicial framework and working with the key formal institutions. With the signing of the CPA peace agreement in 2005 and the creation of a new Government of Southern Sudan, **UNICEF’s country strategy changed** to give priority to this programmatic approach.
- UNICEF has a strongly technical ethos arising from its core of legal, medical and educational staff. It tends therefore to view capacity building as largely instrumental – as the technical capacities necessary to get the job done. **UNICEF can probably be said to do narrow “capacity building” rather than broader the “institutional development”** expected by Barings-Ellerman.
- The absolute scarcity of indigenous NGOs in Southern Sudan, as in other similar country situations, means that donors are often effectively in competition with each other to channel funds through only a handful of NGOs, which have a tendency to be, in the early stages of development, general intermediaries of donor money rather than specialists in a particular field. NCDS certainly fell into this category, with its various projects at the time ranging widely through agriculture, water and child protection. This may not be a problem if the NGO is required only to do standard logistics, eg deliver kit or organise public information campaigns (educate field workers, organise football matches, distribute t-shirts). But these simple functions boil down to fairly straightforward services rather than nascent civil society-type activities. **The question arises whether NGO capacity building is appropriate or feasible in these conditions.**
- Following from this, **some degree of trade-off between NGO capacity development and delivery of results needs to be recognised.**

4.5 Sustainability

The timing of the project has been a key determinant of the sustainability of the institutions involved. It straddled the signing of the 2005 peace agreement and coincided with the important social and institutional changes that followed. New opportunities in political and bureaucratic avenues were opened to the very small cadre of educated southern Sudanese that were the target of the intended capacity building and the aim of developing an NGO/CBO network was largely lost to the project (though not necessarily to the country) as a result.

²¹ For example, with UNICEF support, the Ministry for Social Development in each State has set-up child protection working groups as a coordinating mechanism between different agencies, NGOs and UN agencies. These groups meet every month.

The sustainability of the child protection activities undertaken by the project is very difficult to assess. In contexts of such deprivation and such deeply damaged social and economic conditions, where children are key assets in a daily battle of survival, and where basic health and education services are lacking it is difficult to see how community education and mobilisation around child protection and psycho-social support activities, *on their own*, could have a sustained impact.

UNICEF agrees these activities in themselves are indeed not sufficient; they must be regarded as just one part in a larger and longer process of development of the knowledge, conditions, laws and structures that lead to a full and genuine observance of children's rights. UNICEF's ongoing wider work in Southern Sudan in helping to establish child protection laws and to build the institutions to enforce them, as well as more specifically to support ongoing child-related DDR are, along with community measures, all part of that bigger picture which may yet emerge.

4.6 Other Issues not covered in the original proposal: the donor partnership

The implicit differences in UNICEF's and Barings/Ellerman's views of what is meant, and entailed, by "capacity building" came into relief during the progress of the project. It lay at the heart of disagreements and misunderstandings between them about how to respond to setbacks, materially affecting both the progress of the project on two occasions and, in 2008/9, UNICEF UK's financial position:

1. With the signing of the CPA, SSDRC (Southern Sudan Demobilisation & Reintegration Committee) was nominated the *only* institution in Southern Sudan with the official mandate to demobilise children. Early in 2007, UNICEF requested that £30,000 of Baring/Ellerman's grant be re-directed to SSDRC. Baring/Ellerman did not agree, on the grounds that SSDRC was a government institution and did not fit their remit of supporting indigenous NGOs. While this was understandable in relation to their remit, it posed difficulties for UNICEF's priority to demobilise the remaining children in armed forces.

2. In 2009, when problems with NCDS reached a stage where UNICEF assessed they were no longer a reliable partner, UNICEF requested re-directing funds to another NGO identified as better able to deliver the activities – CMCM (Christ Mission Continuous Ministry). This was when Baring/Ellerman withdrew their grant²². As some of the funds had already been spent in Southern Sudan and as planned activities were still in line with the original grant agreement, UNICEF UK decided to cover the full costs of the final instalment. Project activities with CMCM have now been completed with reportedly much greater success²³. However, this had some financial impact on UNICEF UK.

UNICEF UK believe that they complied with the terms of the Baring/Ellerman Foundation grant and that the first two years of the grant total had been spent on purposes which had been agreed with them. Having fulfilled their obligations under the agreement and complied with Charity Law, UNICEF feel that they were not obliged to make any refund. They nevertheless agreed to repay £54,000 in order to preserve goodwill between the organisations, and minimise any unnecessary further costs for the project. UNICEF UK

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²² having reportedly not put any conditions on it when it was released.

²³ see final report sent separately by UNICEF.

carried the cost on their contingency fund as an unplanned expenditure, "reducing what was available that year to help children in other countries."

5. Lessons Learnt and Recommendations

5.1 Be clear about the challenges and risks from the outset. The project document/grant application was not clear about the implementation challenges around local interventions with very limited human resources or about the riskiness of attempting to establish local structures in remote areas. It did not set out the context of Operation Lifeline Sudan, the fact that NCDS was itself also based in Nairobi, or the distances and logistical difficulties inherent in the project area. Being explicit about the challenges and risks in the project document signals to donors that all may not run smoothly, and that some flexibility around the project's direction and progress may be required.

5.2 Look for feasibility tests in project proposals. The overly ambitious scope of the project could have been detected by comparing the implied unit costs and targets with similar projects elsewhere. While many obvious caveats must attach to comparing very different situations, there is value in exploring any large differences in results. In view of its long-standing and worldwide experience, UNICEF is well placed to use its own extensive programme database to develop unit costs for feasibility and value for money testing.

5.3 Check the extent to which the project is a priority and a "correct institutional fit" for the implementing agency. The project document/grant application struggles to fashion a defined *project*, with discrete timelines and attributable outputs, out of what was in reality is a bigger, broader, more flexible, *programme* of support. UNICEF clearly did this in order to accommodate Baring's reporting needs, but it probably contributed to a misunderstanding over the degree of flexibility that would be possible in the application of funds to different activities and partners as a difficult and fluid situation changed. As a multilateral agency and a member of the UN, UNICEF more naturally suits the programmatic approach, soliciting contributions to a large, common programme fund, rather than fashioning bilateral relationships with individual partners.

5.4 Test whether all partners understand key terms in the same way. The notion of capacity development is a challenging one. Rarely contested in principle, what it entails in practice turns out to be wide-ranging and extremely difficult to make concrete. UNICEF's technical ethos and emergency agency status tends to give it a view of capacity building that is largely instrumental - aimed at delivering results - in contrast to the deeper "institutional development" apparently envisaged by Barings/Ellerman. This subtle difference in understanding gave rise to differences in views over what variations in activities and partners were permissible in the course of the project while still achieving enhanced capacity.

5.5 Revisit and revise initial timelines and indicators ASAP. There was no projected timeline for the different activities and outcomes in the original project document/grant application. And there was only a very limited and undeveloped discussion of how the project would be monitored and the kinds of indicators that would be used. The project document says that "indicators around the ability of the project to ensure children remain at home and access services will be developed with the communities themselves and a database will be established" but there is no evidence in subsequent reporting that this was done. In such difficult and fluid conditions as existed in Southern Sudan in 2004, it is not uncommon to defer defining indicators until the project has had some time on the ground. But, once in place, identifying and specifying indicators, as part of how the project will be monitored and managed, should be one of the

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earliest activities. Reporting any revisions back to the donor as soon as possible again helps to keep expectations in line with on the ground realities. Barings should consider requiring all future projects to provide a one-off inception report within the first 3 months notifying any major changes in the original project design and filling in any information gaps. While this would be in addition to the regular annual report, it should not be burdensome to the project.

5.6 Beware local cultures of pleasing the donor in project reporting. In remote locations where project supervision and validation from other sources is limited, it is inevitable that donors depend on the honesty and accuracy of the implementing partner. At the same time, the incentives to “over-report” are strong. UNICEF attempted to reduce the known risks by choosing an NGO that was working with other international donors and therefore had some assumed reputation for competence, while tight financial accounting rules alert against, and limit the impact of, outright fraud. When the conditions are such that there are few other organisations of any kind operating in the same field to provide third party reports and alternative validations, a risk will remain – as it transpired - that failures in the project will not be detected until last resort financial alerts are sounded. To avoid this risk, partnering a sole NGO in a remote area lacking supporting structures and networks should be avoided.

5.7 Consider attempting institutional development of NGOs as a primary objective only in less fragile countries where the NGO sector is more evolved and the supporting context is more conducive. In continuing conflict and post-conflict situations where emergency conditions still reign and aid flows are relatively large and distorting, finding the stable partnerships that are necessary for measurable institutional development is unlikely. The trade-off between developing indigenous NGOs and delivering results in the short term around, eg basic service delivery, is likely to point towards concentrating on the latter in such circumstances.

Annex 1 - People Consulted

Person Consulted	Position/ Organisation	Location
David Cutler	Director , The Baring Foundation	London
Frances Merivale	UNICEF Donor Relations Manager	London
Sylvia Pasti	Head of Child Protection, UNICEF South Sudan (2007-present)	Juba
Una McCauley	Head of Child Protection, UNICEF South Sudan (2004-7)	Nairobi/Juba
Kim Jial	UNICEF Child Protection Officer, formerly NCDS	Juba
Anita Ingabire	Child Protection Specialist, UNICEF	Juba
Peter Crowley	Director , UNICEF S. Sudan	Juba
Christine Clarence	Child Protection Officer, Greater Upper Nile state	Malakal
Abdulkadir Musse	UNICEF Regional Programme Director, Greater Upper Nile State	Malakal
Franka David	UNICEF Child Protection Officer	Malakal
Moses Gai & Jaffer Mbugua	NCDS Director & Programme Manager	Malakal
James Tor	Director, CHORM	Malakal
James Gatgong	UNMIS Child Protection Officer and NCDS co- founder	Malakal
Susanna Ayul	Director Child Welfare, Ministry of Social Development Upper Nile State	Malakal
Celina Peter	Director Child Welfare Ministry of Gender, Social Welfare & Religious Affairs	Juba
Joe Glackin	UNICEF Child Protection Officer (Sudan 2004 – 2006)	Email correspondence

Annex 2 – Terms of Reference

1. Aims of the Evaluation

To review the implementation of the project's objectives and the results achieved as outlined in the grant application

To ensure that donor funds have been spent for the purposes intended and in a proper manner

To feed back to Baring & John Ellerman Foundations, UNICEF Southern Sudan and UNICEF UK on the findings

To assess the likely immediate and long term outcomes of the programme for children in the broader UNICEF programme and country environment

2. Purpose of Independent Evaluation

UNICEF UK has a partnership with the Baring and John Ellerman Foundations which has enabled UNICEF to fund a local partner, Naath Community Development Services (NCDS,) to provide community support for children and young people displaced by the conflict in Southern Sudan.

In order to support an effective partnership between UNICEF UK and these two donors, funds have been granted from the donor to undertake an independent external evaluation of the project.

3. Scope and Outputs of the Evaluation

The evaluation will be co-ordinated by UNICEF UK and the UNICEF Southern Sudan in Juba. The work is expected to encompass the following activities:

- Meeting with UNICEF UK and Baring Foundation to agree contract and terms of reference for the evaluation
- Review of all relevant documentation
- Meeting with UNICEF UK Head of Finance on impact to UNICEF of returning third instalment of grant to Baring Foundation
- Visit to the country programme. This will include (as time permits):
- Briefings and discussions with UNICEF field office staff
- Meetings with NCDS staff
- Interviews and participative discussions with children and families who have benefited from project, incl demobilised child soldiers
- Interviews with community leaders and Child Welfare Committee members
- Meetings with key NGOs and other agencies who have collaborated with the project.
- Visit to youth clubs / schools / community centres supported by the project
- Detailed evaluation report on the project

- Meeting with UNICEF UK and Baring & John Ellerman Foundations to present the findings if required.

4. Making arrangements for the country visit

UNICEF UK will be responsible for liaising with the UNICEF Juba office and for setting the dates of the visits. UNICEF will also be responsible for making travel arrangements to and from the country (in accordance with our procedures and our travel agent) and the country offices will draw up the itinerary and make local travel arrangements. The evaluator should not make direct contact with any of the project partners until this has been approved by the UNICEF programme officer responsible. UNICEF will check the security situation in Southern Sudan and ensure arrangements are in place for the safety of the evaluator.

UNICEF UK will provide information on the project prior to the country visit, including the proposal originally sent to the donor and any updates on the project that have been received.

5. During the country visit

The UNICEF country office will be hosting the evaluator and will make arrangements to meet with partner organisations and to visit project activities. Any changes or alterations to the programme should be discussed in advance with the country office and can be altered when in-country.

An initial meeting will be held with UNICEF to clarify any matters and introduce the country programme as a whole. This should include a meeting with the UNICEF representatives in the Child Protection Team in Southern Sudan.

The evaluator will be permitted to take photographs and video footage during the visit, but we request that this is done in accordance with UNICEF's UK child protection policy. A copy of this will be made available once arrangements are set.

6. Areas to be covered by the evaluation

The following issues are suggested as a guide to what the donors are looking for in the report:

- To what extent has the project been implemented in-line with the original proposal?
- What have been the reasons for the changes in the implementation of the project?
- What monitoring systems and indicators have been used?
- How have the funds been used and how effective has this been?
- Have there been any additional benefits not covered in the original proposal?
- How does the project fit in to broader UNICEF and Government priorities?
- How has the project collaborated with other groups and organisations?

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- What plans are there to replicate the work in other areas/countries?
- How are the partners/collaborators learning from this work? How will the project be developing once these funds have been used?
- What have been the outcomes for children?
- How has the project contributed to UNICEF's ability to advocate effectively for children's rights in the country?
- Does the project meet in practice the criteria agreed between UNICEF UK and the donor as the basis of their partnership? *(see Baring's reporting guidelines and grant agreement letter)*

7. After the country visit

Following the country visit, prior to reporting to the donor, UNICEF would like the evaluator to submit the report to both UNICEF UK and the country office hosting the visit. Their comments (if any) should be appended to the report submitted to the donor.

UNICEF UK may request the evaluator to visit the donors to report the findings directly and present the report to them.

Annex 3 – Country Events and Project Timeline

March 1989	<i>UN-led Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS), set up in Nairobi, Kenya, to deliver emergency relief to both sides of civil war in Sudan.</i>
January 2002	<i>Internationally monitored ceasefire by GoS and SPLA agreed.</i>
January 2003	<i>Ceasefire breaks down due to renewed military activity in oil provinces of Upper Nile (or Unity Province) around Bentiu.</i>
March 2003 in	<i>Government of Sudan in Khartoum responds to the deteriorating situation Darfur by employing military force in the region.</i>
May 2004	UNICEF undertakes Rapid Situation Analysis of children associated with fighting forces (CAFF) in Sudan. In the same month, UNICEF submits grant application to Baring & John Ellerman Foundation in UK requesting £171,608 for 3 year project for the Reintegration of Children Displaced by Conflict in Southern Sudan.
June 2004	Baring Foundation sends grant offer letter for the full amount.
Late 2004	UNICEF sends international consultant, Leonard Bairoh, to work for 9 months with NCDS to build capacity in child protection and family tracing.
January 2005	<i>Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) signed establishing a Government of Southern Sudan.</i>
2005	<i>Operation Lifeline Sudan phased out. NCDS Director reported to have begun campaigning in new GoSS elections and taken money from UNICEF account.</i>
December 2005	New headquarters for UNICEF Southern Sudan established in Juba. Six Zonal UNICEF offices also set up in Aweil, Malakal, Nyal, Rumbek, Wau and Yambio.
Early 2006	NCDS suffer staff losses as missing funds mean salaries are not paid. Conflict in Maiwut, Eastern Upper Nile, causes temporary disruption of project activities “for some time”.
2006	Over 1,000 children demobilized by the SSDDRC, “well over half of them in Greater Upper Nile, where NCDS is based”.
April 2006	<i>‘Go to School’ initiative announced by the Ministry of Education of the Government of Southern Sudan. Supported by UNICEF it aims to get 1.6 million children into primary school by the end of 2007.</i>
August 2006	First Annual Report (June 2005-June 2006) for Baring Project submitted by UNICEF. Admits to NCDS being “a new organization” needing more training than anticipated. Actual expenditure for first year reported to be 63% of budget.

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Oct/Nov2006	UNICEF transfers \$25,000 to NCDS for activities of next 3 months.
November 2006	UNICEF Chief of Child Protection in Juba and main author of project (Una MacCauley) leaves Sudan. Six month gap before she is replaced.
April 2007 she	Una's replacement (Sylvia Pasti) arrives. Picking up reigns of the project, finds serious concerns about NCDS have emerged.
July 2007	UNICEF's Second Annual Report (June 2006-June 2007) for Baring Project submitted. Reports NCDS is receiving funds from other donors and recommends £20,000 go to SSDDRC and £42,000 rolled over to following year. Reveals NCDS HQ still based in Nairobi and contact between NCDS, UNICEF and project locations therefore reduced. Capacity building consultant deployed to NDS in Nyal. Of total £75,938 available in 2006-7, £13,983 (18%) was spent.
August 2007	NCDS finally attempts to "liquidate" an outstanding \$25,000 nine months late and fails to provide receipts. UNICEF freezes funds for another 3 months, as directed by their accounting rules. Result is that project is without funds for almost all of 2007. In the same month NCDS submits a new proposal to UNICEF (\$96,000 for 5 months til Dec 2007) to continue Child Protection activities.
October 2007	UNICEF signs a new PCA (Partnership Co-operation Agreement) with NCDS for a \$109,000/11 months project running til August 2008 in the same counties. (This was later extended, without additional funds, to end Jan 2009.)
November 2007	David Cutler & Tina Wallace from Baring Foundation visit Juba where they meet UNICEF Child Protection staff and Moses, Acting Director of NCDS. In the same month UNICEF Malakal Regional Programme Director sends letter to NCDS notifying them of the intention to terminate the PCA.
February 2008	Revised second annual report submitted, covering an additional 6 months (June 2006-December 2007) of project activity, reporting and explaining some of the project difficulties and apologizing to Barings for various reporting shortfalls.
March 2008	Baring & John Ellerman Foundations release £15K of the final instalment of the grant – the amount proposed in latest report to be needed by NCDS for their activities, including help with their move from Nairobi to Malakal.
June 2008	UNICEF sent response to Baring Foundation's queries following Feb 08 report.
August 2008	In response to Barings' concerns, a teleconference is held between London and Juba to clarify the situation – attended by David Cutler from Baring and Tim Glass from John Ellerman Foundationn. At this point,

UNICEF Juba staff stress that the relationship with NCDS is still proving difficult and it is likely that UNICEF will have to end the partnership. It is suggested that if this happens, project activities will go ahead through a different NGO partner. UNICEF agrees to send an update report to Baring in 6 months.

- September 2008 Baring and John Ellerman Foundations release the remainder of the final instalment.
- January 2009 Government of Southern Sudan passes new Child Act, enshrining in law key child protection measures and principles.*
- February 2009 UNICEF produce an Update Report for Baring reporting that £15,558 has been returned by NCDS. However, there are continuing difficulties under the new Director and failure to find “enough evidence that the project was being carried out”. It was therefore proposed that the returned £15K plus £44,724 of the final instalment released in Sept 2008 go to a new partner Christian Mission Continuous Ministries (CMCM). In response, Baring and John Ellerman Foundations request the full final year grant instalment be returned. Some of the funds have been spent in the 6 months UNICEF have had the grant – Baring request for these to be reimbursed too. UNICEF UK agree to cover the grant from un-earmarked funds so that the project can be completed through CMCM.
- June 2009 UNICEF/SSDDRC workshop confirms northern Unity State (where some of the NCDS project activities were) as “one of the difficult areas of the reintegration programme” due to “lack of service providers and integration opportunities”.

Annex 4 - UNICEF Project Document

The reintegration of children displaced from their homes by conflict in southern Sudan

UNICEF UK

May 2004

Goal

The goal of this project is to reintegrate with their families and communities the thousands of children in Western Upper Nile, southern Sudan, who have been displaced either by involvement with military forces or when fleeing conflict during the on-going civil war that has affected Sudan for three of the last four decades, one of the world's longest conflicts.

Background

Eighty-five percent of the population of southern Sudan is thought to have been displaced at least once since the late 1980s. The fighting has caused the largest displacement of people in Africa. This has included thousands of children who have been displaced from their homes by the conflict. It is estimated that over 60% of the population of southern Sudan are minors. The number of children in displaced populations is even higher. UNICEF and her partners work with educated estimates of up to 17,000 children remaining in the various fighting forces associated with the conflict. In the general population the number of women and girls is higher than the number of men and boys. Children are used in active fighting units and as domestic servants in soldiers' homes, and girls often are used to provide sexual services. Child disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration is a human rights and a child protection issue itself, but it is also a positive step towards the demobilisation of other categories of soldiers and therefore an important step towards a more peaceful society. Many of the children returning from armed forces will return to their families in areas held by the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), having fought for 'enemy' groups. Children returning or arriving from displacement may have spent most or all of their lives living in other cultures, speaking different languages, and practicing different lifestyles. Quality community based reintegration work will be essential.

The prospect of peace has encouraged many tens of thousands of the estimated four million internally displaced people to make the perilous journey home to their areas of origin in southern Sudan. Peace prospects also make the removal of children from all armed forces a possibility for the first time. Throughout the past year, UNICEF and her partners have advocated for the peace agreement to include commitments that children be prioritised in demobilisation. While UNICEF has been involved in the demobilisation of children from the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) to SPLA-held areas of the south since 2000, the official demobilisation of children from other armed forces will now begin. This phase presents UNICEF with new challenges as children begin to return to southern Sudan from the armed forces of old 'enemies' and from displacement in neighbouring countries and other areas of the country.

Location of the project

One of the areas of southern Sudan most affected by the conflict has been Western Upper Nile. This area has not only experienced conflict between the two main parties, namely the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement but, until 2002 was

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subjected to warring between the Sudan People's Liberation Army and its breakaway, the Nuer dominated Sudan People's Defence Forces (SPDF). Additionally, because of its strategic location and the presence of oil fields, it has been subject to regular contests fought between different configurations of forces including militia and local defence forces backed by the main parties.

In addition the area is one traditionally affected by inter tribal and clan raiding. The war and the proliferation of small arms in the area have meant that such raiding is now carried out with guns and no longer with traditional weapons. A culture of revenge killings also exists, and there is a vicious cycle of violence related to raiding in the area which has led to further displacement. Children themselves often own weapons.

Children in the area are vulnerable not only because they have been displaced through their involvement in the armed conflict, because they have had to flee, or because they hold guns; children have been made vulnerable in many other ways. Children who have been separated from their parents and other family members are often forced to live alone or to move to bigger, government-controlled towns to live on the street. The desperate economic conditions brought by war have led to a steep rise in the early age of marriage for female children, as their families trade them for dowries in order to realise capital to sustain the rest of the family. Though the situation is slowly improving, even the most basic infrastructure is limited. Few children have access to education, clean water or satisfactory health care. The reintegration of children who have been displaced from their homes due to conflict will be a huge challenge in southern Sudan. While the provision of tangible services is going to be vital to that process, there are also community and social services which will be fundamental to the success and the sustainability of the return and reintegration of former displaced children and children formerly associated with the fighting forces²⁴.

UNICEF's main partner NGO: Naath Community Development Services

The Naath Community Development Services (NCDS), a Sudanese indigenous non governmental organisation (NGO), has a long established reputation in the area of Upper Nile, working in three locations spread through Western, Central and Eastern Upper Nile. The organisation has been involved in peace building work since 2000, organising and facilitating both large and small intra Nuer and inter tribe peace talks. Equally the organisation has a successful track record of partnerships with international NGOs and community based organisations on community mobilisation, veterinary work and research. The agency implements a number of projects in its three community centres. NCDS takes its mandate from local communities. In 2002 and 2003 UNICEF worked with NDCS on a project monitoring the needs of internally displaced children in camp settings.

²⁴ The term children associated with the fighting forces is preferred to the terms 'child soldier' or 'ex combatant children' as it more broadly encompasses other children who have been taken by/cared for by armed forces, e.g. girls held for sexual and domestic use, small children taken to serve as decoys and porters and the children of camp followers.

In 2004 the the Naath Community Development Services approached UNICEF with a proposal to join the child protection sector. NCDS proposes working in the Nyal area of Western Upper Nile to ensure the reintegration of children displaced from their homes by conflict and to provide community based services which will also help the most vulnerable children in the receiving community. This will be done largely through the development of local capacities for peaceful return and reintegration of children using local structures. In addition, NCDS will also form part of a much wider network of agencies working in partnership with UNICEF to provide protective coverage for children displaced from their homes by conflict in southern Sudan.

The prospect of peace has brought renewed enthusiasm for protection activities, and an emphasis on people who have been displaced. This heightened activity means that numbers of returning 'child soldiers' will increase in the coming months as will the number of children who have been displaced. As a result, UNICEF aims to initiate a comprehensive programme of support to help agencies on the ground reintegrate them successfully into their homes and communities and have hope for the future. UNICEF aims to support a number of indigenous NGOs by building their capacity to lead and to give support to communities and to local authorities receiving children.

The Naath Community Development Services (NCDS) has been selected among UNICEF's partners for this application to the Baring Foundation International Programme because of its firmly established background in the region, because it aims to complement the work of other agencies in other areas of southern Sudan, and because of its commitment to working with the community to find local and sustainable solutions to the many challenges they confront.

The Wider Picture

With NGO partners, UNICEF has developed a strategy for rehabilitating and reintegrating child soldiers and reintegrating children who have been living in displacement. The strategy includes an important policy development component for southern Sudan, capacity building for the southern Sudanese authorities to address reintegration and protection, and support for NGOs working with communities. The strategy envisages greatly improved geographical coverage of NGOs working in this field. A new Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Commission is expected to come into effect after a signed peace agreement and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) has made a commitment to strengthening the Commission of Women and Children. These structures will allow UNICEF to address policy issues to prevent the recruitment of children in the future and to ensure the protection of children in law.

UNICEF will work at the policy level and with the central authorities of southern Sudan on policy. In addition UNICEF will commit considerable resources to ensure quality on the ground and workshop training for partner organisations in all aspects of managing protective programming for children returning from displacement and the armed forces.

This project will significantly strengthen capacity within both military and civil society in the area of child protection, particularly with respect to children affected by war.

Approach

UNICEF and child protection agencies working throughout Sudan have developed a coordinated holistic framework for return and reintegration of displaced children including the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of former 'child soldiers'. It is anticipated that the process of demobilising and reintegrating all children will take up to three years. The process of reintegration is largely one which takes place in the community, and to that end much work must be done at the community level to:

- Prepare for the return of former child soldiers and other vulnerable displaced children.
- Develop a network of community based groups who can address protection of vulnerable young people and help those who have been psychologically affected or disturbed to reintegrate successfully.
- Develop a level of understanding among community members of the particular needs of former child soldiers and other separated young people, so that cultural, sporting and other community activities can be organised to support them.
- Provide sustainable and relevant educational, life skills, and vocational skills services to communities where large numbers of vulnerable young people will return, including former 'child soldiers'.

The strategy will be a challenging one to implement, given the size of the country and the scope of the problem. What is very clear is the need to begin immediately, as soon as funding is available, to build the capacity of local Community Based Organisations (CBOs) and local Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) so that they, in turn, can build capacity at local community and local authority level to respond to the needs of former 'child soldiers' and other vulnerable young people, especially all those whose lives have been disrupted by displacement.

With this project, UNICEF will take the lead in developing a network of NGOs and CBOs. In particular, UNICEF has committed itself to finding qualified people with experience in child demobilisation and reintegration elsewhere in Africa to help build capacity. This submission focuses on work with the Naath Community Development Services (NCDS) in Western upper Nile.

Beneficiaries

Over three years, this programme will benefit at least 4,000 children formerly associated with the fighting forces and their families as well as 4,000 other vulnerable children who have been displaced with or without their families, such as refugees and abducted children who are returning to their communities.

Fifteen communities will benefit from community family tracing committees and from community child protection and reintegration committees being established and trained.

Local civilian and military authorities in the Nyal area of Western Upper Nile will benefit from support and mentoring on the rights and protection of children returning from armed forces and displacement.

Overall objectives of the project

1. Improved geographic coverage of protective services for children returning from displacement because of war.

2. Improved capacity of Sudanese NGOs, authorities and communities to provide protective and basic community services to children returning from displacement because of war.
3. Local ownership of approaches to the return and reintegration of children who have been displaced and associated with the fighting forces

Specific objectives for Naath Community Development Services in utilising the block grant element of funding

1. Identification of children currently associated with the armed forces and advocacy for their release (pre peace agreement).
2. Involvement in the demobilisation and reintegration of children serving in the armed forces in the area.
3. Establishment of local networks for family tracing and for the return and reintegration of children who have become separated from their families because of the war.
4. Provision of direct services to the most vulnerable among the children and young people returning from displacement.
5. Building the capacity of local authorities through mentoring and training to coordinate protection activities and services in line with southern Sudan wide policy and local policy.
6. Establishment of, and support for, at least fifteen local community based groups working on the reintegration of displaced children.
7. Advocacy for beneficiaries to enable them to access basic local services such as schools, catch up and vocational education, English language education, and health care
8. A final goal is for the Naath Community Development Services to be able to take the leading Children Protection role in the area by the end of the first year of the project.

Project phases

The project addresses the disarmament and demobilisation of children associated with the fighting forces separately from the wider protection of other children displaced because of the war. The return and reintegration aspect of the project, however, addresses all children who have been displaced from their homes by war, not only those children forced into armed forces. The project includes a pre-stage and four stages of implementation. This submission addresses each stage in the Western Upper Nile area of greater Nyal:

The ***advocacy and design pre-stage***. At the level of UNICEF, this includes developing a mutually-owned plan with the Sudan People's Liberation Movement and the Government of Sudan based on lessons learned in southern Sudan and best practice from the work of UNICEF and other humanitarian organisations elsewhere in the world. A review of previous demobilisation efforts in southern Sudan was initiated last year. Extensive database work has been done to determine the demography of returns, and more information will be collected to feed into the database on children associated with the fighting forces. In the past year, progress

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was made in developing a coordinated approach and in building capacities. NGOs, the military and the civilian authorities, however, all require extensive capacity building to develop the knowledge and expertise necessary for designing and implementing an effective programme.

Disarmament is the responsibility of the military authorities and concerned military units (including militia). UNICEF and NGOs will seek to provide technical advice and to train military authorities including UN Department of Peace Keeping Operations (DPKO) military observers on their role. In some areas of the country, however, local NGOs will seek community based disarmament and demobilisation of children.

Demobilisation (the transition from military to civilian life) is primarily the responsibility of both military and civilian authorities. Implementing NGOs will be involved in the entire transition.

Family tracing will be led by the International Committee of the Red Cross, supported by NGOs and UNICEF. UNICEF will play an important role in this phase, providing assistance to agencies and churches to enable them to do family tracing which is not covered by the more formal Red Cross response to tracing needs.

Reintegration and family reunification is the responsibility of civil society and the civilian authorities working closely with communities and requiring the cooperation of the military/militia and support from NGOs and UNICEF. UNICEF will support NGOs to work locally and provide extensive training for reintegration and to assist with the provision of educational support to those communities receiving high numbers of former 'child soldiers' and other displaced children.

Activities

Among the activities to be undertaken by UNICEF's main NGO partner, Naath Community Development Services are:

- Assessment of child protection issues in the area, using assessment tools developed by agencies working on child protection in consultation with women and children.
- Based on the outcomes of the above assessment, producing a plan for project activities for the first twelve months.
- Discussion of child protection issues with 15 communities, and the establishment of 15 local reintegration mechanisms, encouraging communities to suggest ways of addressing the problems faced by vulnerable children.
- Lobbying with local authorities on child protection issues, including harmful traditional practices which affect girls in particular (such as very early forced marriage).
- Approaching parents and relatives who have children in active fighting units for identification of such children.
- Approaching the commanders of the fighting units for identification, and negotiations for the release of 'child soldiers' and other children associated with the fighting forces.

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- The use of Naath Community Development Services-run Integrated Centres for Community Empowerment for community activities which will provide children and young people, including those in vulnerable groups, with opportunities to play, compete, perform cultural songs and dances, discuss matters of importance to them, and plan ways in which they can contribute to protecting themselves and other children.
- Take play, sport and other activities out to other communities. Use these activities to mobilize young people and children and to spread child protection messages and encourage young people and children to be involved in child protection.
- Assist with the family tracing of children who became separated during the war or who have returned from fighting forces, and ensure proper follow up for children returned to their families.
- Advocate locally for vulnerable children, including former 'child soldiers', to enable them to access services such as education or vocational training with local skilled people.
- Make follow-up visits to monitor the reintegration of demobilized and rehabilitated children into the communities and education programmes.
- Advocate with authorities and service providers to ensure the protection and reintegration of returnee children and special protection for separated children and other vulnerable children.
- Develop a database of returned and reintegrated children which allows monitoring of progress. Progress will be monitored against indicators established during the last year on child military recruitment, separation, age of marriage of female children, and other abuse levels in local communities. Success will be monitored as these abuses decline.
- Provide advice and training for local authorities and community leaders on the protection of children in the area.
- With UNICEF, encourage coordination on child protection issues by the local authorities (eg. encourage the involvement of the Commission of Women, Gender and Child Welfare).

Timetable

It is anticipated that the process of demobilising and reintegrating all children in this region will take up to three years. The work will start as soon as funds are available, as spontaneous returns and official demobilisation of 'child soldiers' is now beginning and the need will become greater with every month.

The attached press release issued on 23 January 2004, from Tam, southern Sudan shows that the process of official demobilisation of child soldiers has reached a new phase of increased activity. This means that with every month, the numbers of displaced children returning to their homes will increase. As soon as funding is available, UNICEF will activate its support for local Sudanese NGOs to implement this urgent programme for reintegrating these vulnerable children back into their homes and communities.

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Assessment

Monitoring and follow up of reintegrated children is the responsibility of local authorities and communities, with support from NGOs and UNICEF. In Western Upper Nile, Naath Community Development Services (NCDS) will provide training for communities and authorities and those who have responsibility for children in the community such as teachers and community workers.

Using baseline information gathered in the past twenty four months, the broad implications of the work should be possible to measure in terms of the reduction of abuses against children in the community. Indicators around the ability of the project to ensure children remain at home and access services will be developed with the communities themselves and a database will be established.

UNICEF will undertake regular training and capacity building activities with the Naath Community Development Services (NCDS) and will require quarterly narrative and financial reports. As part of a much wider network of agencies working on the reintegration of displaced children in southern Sudan, NCDS will participate in regular coordination meetings which will address monitoring and evaluation.

Reporting to The Baring Foundation

Through its close liaison with UNICEF's Operation Lifeline Sudan Field Office staff, UNICEF UK will be able to provide three annual progress reports of up to 2,000 words (plus appendices) for the Trustees of The Baring Foundation. These reports will include activities carried out since the previous report, progress toward goals, impact on partner organisations and beneficiaries, lessons learned so far, plans for the following year, and details of expenditure to date.

Budget

Budget elements pertaining to core funding are marked 'UNICEF' Block grant elements are marked 'NCDS' (Naath Community Development Service)

Budget Detail	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	TOTAL
Capacity building, and support for coordination mechanisms established by national authorities (training, institutional support and support for database development and management) <i>UNICEF</i>	£6,250	£6,250	£6,250	£18,750
Development of a coordination structure for tracing the families of 'child soldiers' and other separated children whose return will be affected post-conflict <i>NCDS</i>	£6,250			£6,250
Strengthen the community capacity to provide education in locations with significant concentrations of demobilised		£12,500	£18,750	£31,250

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children	<i>NCDS</i>				
Tracing forms and two computers (UNICEF assets for use by NCDS)	<i>UNICEF</i>	£8,125			£8,125
Assistance to community based groups to conduct family tracing	<i>NCDS</i>	£6,250			£6,250
Training for military and other relevant groups on child protection and the issues around the reintegration of children who have left the armed forces	<i>NCDS</i>		£9,375	£5,000	£14,375
Supply of packages of classroom materials to schools and vocational training centres enrolling former 'child soldiers'	<i>UNICEF</i>	£12,500			£12,500
Support for the development of youth organisations led by young people for the benefit of wider community recovery	<i>NCDS</i>		£12,500	£10,625	£23,125
Meetings and workshops with political, military and traditional leaders, parents, and others to prevent re-recruitment of children into military situations	<i>NCDS</i>	£6,250	£5,000	£4,688	£15,938
Subtotals of project budget:		£48,819	£48,819	£48,485	£146,123
UNICEF programme support at 15% per annum of direct programme cost	<i>UNICEF</i>	£6,844	£6,844	£6,797	£20,485
Contingency allowance for local transport, fuel and logistics	<i>UNICEF</i>	£3,194	£3,194	£3,172	£9,560
Independent final evaluation, estimated at: £350 per day for 10 days = £3,500; plus £800 travel costs; £100 per diem for 7 days.	<i>NCDS</i>			£5,000	£5,000
Total project budget:		£55,663	£55,663	£60,282	£171,608

Average core funding per annum: £ 23,140 Average block grant per annum: £ 34,060

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Annex 5 – UNICEF’s Response the Draft Evaluation

The following comments were gathered by UNICEF UK in response to a first draft (dated 29 March 2010) of the evaluation report. Where they correct or add factual information, or present a reasonable alternative interpretation of events (as judged by the Evaluator) the text of the final version of the evaluation report has been changed.

UNICEF comments on draft evaluation report, 29 March 2010

The goal of reaching 8,000 was misunderstood – this was the total we aimed to reach through the wider Child Protection Programme. It is also important to note that the project was developed before the signing of the Cooperation Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005 and that at that time it was almost impossible to verify the information about the numbers reported by NGOs of children associated with armed forces and children affected by conflict.

UNICEF correction: The Global Child Protection framework has 8 pillars (below). The 4 set out in the report are for UNICEF Sudan’s Child Protection Programme.

1. Governmental commitment to fulfilling protection rights
2. Legislation and enforcement
3. Attitudes, traditions, customs, behaviour and practices
4. Open discussion, including the engagement of media and civil society
5. Children’s life skills, knowledge and participation
6. Capacity of those in contact with the child
7. Basic and Targeted Services (for prevention, recovery and reintegration) for children who have been victims of abuse are entitled to care and support.
8. Monitoring and overseeing

We need to make the distinction between what was possible to be done by UNICEF or any other agency before 2005 when, because of the conflict, access to the local population was very difficult, and what is being done by the UNICEF programme now. Also, it’s important to understand that the Child Protection Programme cannot have as its objectives to provide education and water services, but rather to help the children targeted by the programme to have access to those services. The provision of education, water and sanitation and health services is the objective of other UNICEF programmes, and these priorities raised by the children/communities have been taken up. Since the signing of the CPA, about 1 million children have been enrolled in school due to UNICEF’s support.

As mentioned above, 8,000 beneficiaries was the aim for the wider child protection programme. Specific objectives for NCDS and this project were to reach 15 communities. We accept this was not presented as clearly as it could have been in the original proposal, but not that the scope of the project was over ambitious. We never would have expected NCDS to reach all demobilised and vulnerable children in Southern Sudan.

It is fair to say that activity monitoring was poor during the early phase of the project due to the distance between Nairobi and Juba/Malakal and the difficulty of regular travel. This needs to be viewed in context – it was a very difficult period for all international organisations, there was no government in place and the situation was very unstable. There was also a 9 month gap between UNICEF Heads of Child Protection (Una McCauley and Silvia Pasti) being in post. But once the office moved to Juba, activity monitoring was more rigorous. Monitoring visits backed up concerns already highlighted by financial reporting problems and led UNICEF to assess that NCDS were no longer a reliable partner.

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The fact that the CWCs were dominated by elder males should be understood in the context of Southern Sudan's traditional society in which women are expected to stay at home and take care of their families and households and not to participate in community-based activities. In the communities where the project was implemented, the traditional division of roles between women and men is extremely difficult to change and it is not realistic to hope that it could be changed over the time-span of this project.

UNICEF comment: saying that UNICEF is not well suited to working with indigenous NGOs needs to be taken in context, not as a general statement about the organisation as a whole. UNICEF's mandate is to work with governments to fulfil the rights of children in the countries we work in. In the case of this project, when it was first designed there was no government in Southern Sudan and indigenous NGO capacity was very weak – a challenge for all development agencies in the region.

In 2005, when the CPA was signed, UNICEF's focus had to shift from building capacity of local NGOs to building capacity of the government – in keeping with our mandate. This did not mean we ignored building capacity of local NGOs. A number of training courses were organised and continue to be run to train NGO staff in child protection issues and to put them in touch with each other so they can work together on the ground. We recognise there is still a long way to go in this area but progress is being made.

In the case of NCDS, UNICEF Child Protection Officer spent time supporting them with report writing and with developing the revised proposal when their new Director stepped into post. He acknowledged this was very helpful – he felt as a result that the new plans were more realistic and that he had more ownership of the project.

UNICEF has a strong coordinating role – we are able to put NGOs in touch with the relevant government ministries and improve how they work together. While this may not fit with Baring/Ellerman's view of capacity building, it is an important factor in building civil society in Southern Sudan. Since the CPA was signed and the new government has been in place, UNICEF has seen breakthroughs in NGOs and ministries working together – especially in planning and emergency response. With UNICEF support, the Ministry for Social Development

in each State has set-up child protection working groups as a coordinating mechanism between different agencies, NGOs and UN agencies. These groups meet every month.

Given our programmatic approach and overview of the government and NGO actors in child protection, UNICEF prefers to have flexibility around who we partner for activities in order to get the best results for children – especially in a context as complex and changing as Southern Sudan. This need for flexibility affected the progress of this project on two occasions:

1. Early in 2007, UNICEF requested that £30,000 of Baring/Ellerman's grant be re-directed to SSDRC (Southern Sudan Demobilisation & Reintegration Committee) to support the demobilisation of children associated with SPLA. According with the CPA, SSDRC is the only institution in Southern Sudan that has the official mandate to demobilise children – this does not sit with not the NGOs. Baring/Ellerman didn't agree to this as SSDRC was a government-institution and therefore didn't fit within their remit of supporting an indigenous NGO. While this was understandable in relation to their remit, it posed difficulties for UNICEF as the priority was to demobilise the remaining children in armed forces.

2. In 2009, when problems with NCDS reached a stage where UNICEF assessed they were no longer a reliable partner, we requested re-directing funds to another NGO identified as better able to deliver the activities – CMCM (Christ Mission Continuous Ministry). This was when Baring/Ellerman withdrew the grant, having not made any conditions on it when it was released. As some of the funds had already been spent in Southern Sudan and as planned activities were still in line with the original grant agreement, UNICEF UK decided to cover the full costs of the final instalment. Project activities with CMCM have now been completed with much greater success – see final report sent separately by UNICEF. However, this had some financial impact on UNICEF UK, as explained below:

"UNICEF UK complied with the terms of the Baring and John Ellerman Foundation grant and the first two years of the grant total had been spent on purposes which had been agreed with the donor. In this respect, UNICEF UK fulfilled their obligations under the funding agreement and complied with Charity Law, and was therefore not obliged to make any refund to the donors. It is understood that UNICEF UK agreed to repay £53,957 to the Baring Foundation in order to preserve the relationship and goodwill between the organisations, and minimise any unnecessary further costs for all parties. UNICEF UK had to pay this refund from unrestricted funds, and that had not been planned for. This would have caused some organisations financial difficulties but the size and financial stability of UNICEF UK was able to cope with this unplanned expenditure. The impact of the refund was that the unrestricted money available to help children in other countries was reduced by that amount." – Hok Pang, Head of Finance, UNICEF UK.