

UNAMID's publication for the people of Darfur

# VOICES

of Darfur

OCTOBER 2011



**ENSURING THE SAFETY  
OF CIVILIANS THROUGH  
COMMUNITY POLICING**

**NORTH DARFUR NOMADS  
SEEK SUPPORT**



**AFRICAN UNION - UNITED NATIONS  
MISSION IN DARFUR  
(UNAMID)**

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A peacekeeper during a patrol in Zam Zam IDP camp, North Darfur

Girls at school in Darfur

Front Cover Photo by Olivier Chassot

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# SEPTEMBER AT A GLANCE

resolution to explore different traditional ways including folklore to support the Darfur peace process.

**SEPTEMBER 25** The Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue of Geneva with support from the Government of Canada in collaboration with the North Darfur Nomads Peace and Development Network holds a workshop for North nomads at El Fasher University. It addresses the needs of the nomads in Darfur including water, health care, education and vocational training. UNAMID's nomad projects include a capacity-building programme to train members of the Nomadic Forum for Peace and Social Coexistence to increase their administrative management and proposal writing skills. Another project will do awareness raising on conflict prevention and peaceful coexistence between farmers and pastoralists. A third will help the Forum establish an administrative office.

**SEPTEMBER 25** At their 11th meeting since July 2008, held on 24 September in New York, the Tripartite Coordination Mechanism on the African Union-United Nations Mission in Darfur agreed that UNAMID had achieved progress and that cooperation and coordination with the Government of the Sudan had improved, as had security conditions on the ground. Participants encouraged UNAMID to support the peace process in Darfur, by engaging other movements and preparing for the internal dialogue and Darfur political process. The participants agree to meet next in Khartoum, possibly in January 2012.

**SEPTEMBER 25** The South African Ambassador to the Sudan, Graham Maitland, concludes a two-day visit to North Darfur, where he gains first-hand knowledge of the situation on the ground and UNAMID work. While in Darfur, Ambassador Maitland visits the South African military and police stationed in Malha, Mellit and Kutum.

**JUNE 26** Nigerian peacekeepers provide a one-day free medical treatment for about 120 residents of Kurti village, located 13 kilometers from El Geneina, West Darfur. The activity is sponsored by the Nigerian Government.

**SEPTEMBER 06** On the margins of his participation in the African Union 2011 High Level Retreat, Making Peace Happen -- Strengthening Political Governance for Peace, Security and Stability in Africa, UNAMID Joint Special Representative (JSR) and Joint Chief Mediator ad interim, Ibrahim Gambari, holds separate consultations with Foreign Minister of Egypt, Mr. Mohamed Kamel Amr, Chief of Armed Forces Operations, General Mohamed Saber, Minister of Planning and International Cooperation, Ms. Fayza Abou El Naga, and Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, Mr. Nabil El-Arabi. He briefs them on recent developments in Darfur as well as on the efforts of UNAMID and the Joint Mediation in the implementation of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (DDPD), notably through the Ceasefire Commission.

**SEPTEMBER 07** African Union (AU) Commissioner for Peace and Security, Ramtane Lamamra, visits El Fasher, North Darfur, to gain first-hand knowledge of recent UNAMID work on the ground. He is briefed on the latest in developments in the region and visits Abu Shouk IDP camp.

**SEPTEMBER 08** The second meeting of the Ceasefire Commission (CFC) is held in El Fasher, North Darfur, chaired by UNAMID's Force Commander, Lieutenant General Patrick Nyamvumba, senior representatives of the Government of the Sudan and the Liberation and Justice Movement (LJM) participate and decide to meet on a regular basis every two weeks.

**SEPTEMBER 11** In an address to the inaugural meeting of the Implementation Follow-Up Committee (IFC) of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (DDPD) in Qatar, JSR and Joint Chief Mediator ad interim for Darfur, Ibrahim Gambari, says the agreement signed between the Sudanese government and one of its armed opponents gives hope that a permanent ceasefire and comprehensive and lasting peace in Darfur are realizable objectives. He adds that the agreement "debunks the widely held view that the conflict in Darfur is intractable and defies solutions".

**SEPTEMBER 13** UNAMID presents 25 vehicles to the local police anti-car-theft unit that was established in 2009. The vehicles will assist the unit to swiftly respond to carjacking incidents and reduce their reaction time to apprehend and deter those engaging in carjacking and other crimes.

**SEPTEMBER 13** The Sudan Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration in collaboration with West Darfur DDR Commission, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), with the support of UNAMID, begins a demobilization campaign in El Geneina, West Darfur, where approximately 350 ex child soldiers are expected to participate. They will undergo a security screening, medical examination and psychological assessment, and attend a workshop on HIV/AIDs organized by UNAMID.

**SEPTEMBER 14** JSR and Joint Chief Mediator a.i Ibrahim Gambari briefs members of the local and international press in Khartoum on the latest developments in Darfur, as well as the peace process following the signing of the DDPD.

**SEPTEMBER 15** As part of the Mission's quick impact projects initiative, a UNAMID team comprising a patrol detail and medical personnel visits Al Riyad IDP camp located about 10 kilometers south west of El Geneina, West Darfur to treat community members, including women and children.

**SEPTEMBER 16** UNAMID Joint Special Representation (JSR) and Joint Chief Mediator a.i Ibrahim Gambari briefs members of the Kenyan media in Nairobi on latest developments in the Darfur peace process. He also meets UN agencies, including UN Environmental Programme and UNESCO, whose partnership is important in the early recovery and development programmes in Darfur.

**SEPTEMBER 18** UNAMID Rule of Law section, in collaboration with El Fasher University, organizes an English language training programme for 50 lawyers from North Darfur. The course will last for 45 days and will feature grammar rules, basic conversation skills, as well as legal, judicial and police terminology.

**SEPTEMBER 21** On the occasion of the International Day of Peace, the African Union-United Nations Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) Joint Special Representative Ibrahim Gambari says, the Mission "will continue to do our utmost to advance sustainable peace, prosperity and development in the region".

**SEPTEMBER 21** Thirty women leaders in El Geneina, West Darfur, participate in a three-day training on conflict



Azza Alhag

## The Necessity of Ambition: Azza Alhag's reflections on the expanding role of Darfuri women in public service

BY AILEEN VILLAREAL AND HALIMA MOHAMAD

**"D**arfuri women have become ambitious, and inevitably so, actively carving out a role in public life that was once beyond their reach," says Azza Alhag, as she reflects on her own journey as a public servant.

Azza has a unique historical vantage point. In 1982, she was elected as the first ever female legislator to represent the Darfur region in the People's Assembly, a legislative body under President Gaafar Nimeiry's government.

After serving for three years as a legislator, from 1986 to 1990 she went on to become the General Director for El Fasher Rural

Education and later to the Executive Office of the Woman Central Union in Khartoum and its counterpart the Sudanese Woman Union in North Darfur.

Currently, Azza is a member of the National Congress Party and of several charitable institutions, and serves as Secretary-General of the Board of the Women's Labour Association in North Darfur. In 1996, she established Umjuma Charitable Association, as a tribute to her mother, to help address issues of community women and their children in North Darfur.

In a society where roles of men and women are rigidly defined, Azza's successful 30-year public career piques our interest. How

did she navigate through social and cultural boundaries and penetrate the political realm traditionally reserved for men?

Azza says inspiration, commitment, education and timing were the elements that worked in her favour. Her mother, Umjuma, was a powerful role model -- a strong, compassionate woman who understood issues of women in her community -- who inspired her work in public service. Umjuma was the first female prison officer stationed at Khier Khanaga Women's Prison in El Fasher, a job she took out of economic necessity. Azza recalls that her mother would bring home and take care of children whose mothers were awaiting



PHOTO: OLIVIER CHASSOT

trial. At a very young age, Azza's path was set in Umjuma's footsteps.

Azza emphasizes the power of good education, which established her as a respected teacher who served in many parts of Darfur. She attributes her winning votes to former students who believed in her sincerity, credibility and commitment to public service. Teachers, she says, are born ambassadors as they engage in community issues, one of which is encouraging women's role in public life and charitable activities.

Timing was equally important. In 1982, President Nimeiry merged Nyala, El Fasher

and El Geneina back to one region which was consistent with his policy of decentralization, a move that divided Sudan into six regions, Darfur being the West Region. Nimeiry's party, the Sudanese Socialist Union, decided that each region should have one woman elected to the People's Assembly. This was to test people's readiness to accept women as leaders and their capability to mobilize votes and address issues. Azza was at the crest of political reforms favouring women's increased role in politics and governance.

The theory goes that increasing the number of women in political and governance structures will improve government and societal response to issues vital to women's welfare, interest and rights. Does Azza believe this will happen after the April 2010 elections which gave women 25 per cent of seats in the National Assembly in Khartoum and State Legislative Councils all over Sudan?

"Quantity is a necessary but not sufficient condition for change. Women leaders have to possess quality, which means an in-depth understanding of issues, capability to articulate them and seek answers, and a commitment to serve beyond the interests of their political parties," Azza explains. She advises that women legislators should support each other regardless of affiliation because of their shared experiences and pursuit of common concerns. She also proposes greater support for capacity-building for female legislators particularly those at the State Legislative Councils and mentoring from experienced ones.

As a legislator, Azza recalls not being daunted by the task of championing the cause of Darfuri women at the Assembly because she knew her constituents' issues by heart. The rigorous process of electoral campaigning demanded that she proved herself worthy of the post and not because of her political party affiliation. Back in 1982, Darfuri women had no right to vote for their representatives to the People's Assembly with the exception of 120 women members of the Sudanese Women's Union who were given the privilege to vote by Nimeiry's party. Azza got 83 of these votes defeating seven other candidates. She fears that the current practice of enlisting women to political parties to win seats in the parliament instead of rallying constituents' support around legitimate issues dilutes the spirit behind women's political empowerment.

However, Azza remains hopeful that today's women leaders will build on the milestones of trailblazers like her who expanded women's opportunities in politics.

We wonder if Azza would advise young girls to follow her path. Does she think girls should be as ambitious?

"Women and girls have to embrace three things -- education, marriage and public service," Azza says. She believes girls should receive a good education before committing to marriage, and that is if they choose to be married. In her view, marriage is even more essential because it provides women and men a solid support system in a society that is increasingly becoming individualistic. Azza also believes that marriage need not prohibit women from pursuing productive work and a political career and that Darfuri society has slowly awakened to the reality that women have to take on responsibilities that were traditionally for men. Rarely now would husbands prevent their wives from venturing outside the home for work. Economic necessities dictate that the traditional role of women in society must be transformed.

How does one explain to men (and women) the need for ambition among Darfur's daughters, sisters, wives and mothers?

"One should not underestimate the ability of women to communicate with and encourage men to support their cause or the ability of men to discern, understand and be supportive," Azza emphasizes. She shares that in her 30 years in public service, men proved to be her staunch supporters.

"My life is proof that respect begets respect. Women and men should respect each other in order for true partnership to work," Azza declares.

THE AUTHORS WORK AS GENDER AFFAIRS OFFICERS  
IN UNAMID





Mohammed Yusef Ali Dinar

PHOTO : ALBERT GONZALES FARRAN

## Darfuri traditions in the good old days

BY ALA MAYYAH

**M**ohammed Yusef Ali Dinar is the grandson of one of the most popular sultans (King) in Darfur's recent history, who died in a fierce battle against foreign troops in 1916. Of his 120 sons and daughters, only one of them is still alive, Mrs. Harem Ali Dinar, and she inherited his noble values and love for the region. She passed it on to their descendants.

Sixty-one year old Mohammed states that not so long ago, Darfuris lived in social harmony, giving and forgiving and supporting each other regardless of different tribal origins. These traits had deep roots in Darfuri society and shaped the oldest social traditions and civil activities when people stood up for each other in times of crises, and solved their problems without violence.

"In the sixties, students from different suburbs and towns studied together and established good friendships with each other. In those times, no one asked which tribe his friend was from," Mohamed says. "When I was a student in Atbarah school in the Nile state in North Khartoum, I made friends from various areas of Sudan and Darfur. They are still my friends today," he adds.

One of the old traditions, Al-Diya, a civil way of solving disputes between families during which a panel of local leaders

judge cases impartially, is still upheld in many villages and cities in the region. In some cases, people turned to their acquaintances to help them solve their issues.

Mohamed recalls such a story which occurred in the seventies. He narrates, "Once an old man was heading to the outskirts of El Fasher in a carriage. As the road became too bumpy, he lost his balance, fell out of the carriage and one of his legs was badly broken. A stranger who lived nearby took him to his house and treated him for a whole month until his family came to get him. Seeing his situation, the family requested that the carriage driver should pay 450 SDG (almost \$110) to compensate for the broken leg which hindered the man from his work. As the carriage driver didn't have the money, negotiations became tense. I was one of the people who mediated between them to solve the problem. Then, the same stranger who had rescued him offered to pay the old man without asking for repayment. That's how the matter was solved satisfiably."

Another neighbourly tradition is Al-Nafir, when people collectively gather their efforts voluntarily to help others in crises such as in cases of fire or floods. "If someone lost his house, all the neighbours would come together to help him rebuild. They would bring all the construction

materials and even house the family until the house was completed. Sometimes, they took care of their neighbour's farm if it was burnt, feeding the family while replenishing the land and replanting," Mohamed says.

Mohamed also recalls with a wide smile that people attended weddings without the need for any invitation. "They simply walked in with gifts and celebrated with the groom and bride's families until the party was over."

"As a man who has lived in those good old times in Darfur and understands the values of unity, peace and coexistence, I hope the young generation will follow these traditions and others like them that could only pave the way for real peace in Darfur," Mohamed says.

During his career of 40 years in education, Mohamed Yusuf Ali Dinar has taught history and English to thousands of children in primary and high schools in Darfur, in different areas in the Sudan and in Oman. From 1983, he worked as Director in the Ministry of Education of North Darfur state until he retired in 1999. Some of his students are now successful engineers, writers, doctors, such as the optician Dr. Usman Yusuf, and leaders, the well known Wali [Governor] of south Darfur, Abdul Hamid Musa Kasha.

# School meals feed displaced child's hope of becoming doctor

BY HAYMANOT ASSEFA



Children at Al Salam school wash their hands before eating

WFP PHOTO

Enrollment at schools in Northern Darfur where kids get free meals from WFP rose substantially over the 2010-2011 school year, statistics show. One of the kids benefitting from the daily meal of nutritious porridge is Haythum, 12, whose family was displaced by conflict 4 years ago.

Haythum Siddiq was eight years old when the conflict in north Darfur forced his family to flee their village Tabit and take refuge in Zam Zam camp, just outside the regional capital El Fasher. Four years later Zam Zam has become home. Haythum attends school in the camp and at weekends he works at a fruit juice shop in downtown El Fasher, earning four Sudanese Pounds per day (1.3 US\$). He can't remember much about fleeing from his home village with

his family. But he knows he would like to go back. In the meantime, school offers Haythum the hope that he will be able to realize his dream of some day becoming a doctor.

Haythum attends the Al Salam School for Boys No. 19 together with his two brothers. His four sisters attend another school in Zam Zam, which is home to more than 100,000 displaced people in North Darfur. Most of the schools in displaced people's camps are made of thatched grass roof and walls. The children sit mats on the ground.

Although they don't have desks or chairs, kids like Haythum and his siblings do get a nutritious lunch every day at school. "They get cereals, lentils and corn soya blend cooked

with vegetable oil and salt or sugar," said WFP Programme Officer Haymanot Assefa who is responsible for overseeing the agency's school feeding programme in 734 schools across North Darfur. Some 56 of the schools are inside displaced people's camps like Zam Zam.

"In addition to meeting the children's nutritional requirements, a school meal also makes up more than a quarter of their daily caloric requirement," Assefa said.

Haythum put it differently: "I like the food, it keeps me alive."

Recent analysis of data collected from schools with WFP-assisted school feeding programme in North Darfur shows a 21 percent increase in school enrollment over the 2010-2011 school year and a very high attendance rate.

A dedicated team of education officials and teachers who work with the Parents and Teachers Associations (PTAs) make these schools a haven for children to learn and eat healthy meals. Since the beginning of 2011, WFP has trained over 1,200 education officials, teachers, members of PTAs and cooks on how school feeding programme should be implemented.

"With school meals we help nourish children's bodies and minds," said Assefa.

North Darfur is one of the three states of Sudan's Darfur region which has been mired in conflict since 2003. The conflict has devastated the region's infrastructures including schools, where free lunch schemes began some 40 years ago in 1969 with the State Ministry of Education. But conflict later forced the government to cut the programme which was revived by WFP when it first established its office in the state in 1987.

Again conflict got in the way and forced WFP to temporarily suspend its school feeding programme in August 2004. A year later, the agency revived the programme in 26 pilot schools in El Fasher and later in 95 primary schools across Kabkabiya and Kutum towns, reaching more than 60,000 school children. WFP further scaled up the programme in 2011 to reach 734 schools feeding more than 300,000 school children.

By the end of 2011, WFP plans to have reached more than four millions conflict-affected people in Darfur through school feeding and a range of other programmes.

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# North Darfur nomads seek support

BY SHARON LUKUNKA AND RANIA ABDULRAHMAN



Participants at the nomads conference in El Fasher

PHOTO: OLIVIER CHASSOT

**“W**hen the conflict broke out in Darfur in 2003, it not only destroyed property and displaced thousands of civilians but it also disrupted the means of livelihood for nomads,” Amina Omer Alhaj, a Darfur nomadic woman, told a conference dedicated to Darfur’s nomads in El Fasher, Sudan.

For the past decade, several UN organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as OXFAM have started projects to assist nomads. Nomadic women have been trained in a variety of income-generating activities to support their families. Yet Darfur’s nomads continue to suffer from lack of basic services, such as education, medical care, jobs training and access to water.

Hassan Abedlaziz, leader of the new network, said that for years the term nomad never appeared in humanitarian agencies programmes and that now they have begun to work with nomads, but stark needs remain in terms of water, health care, education and vocational training.

Many of them have been displaced by conflict but have been hard for agencies

to locate and assist, one aid worker said. Some live partly settled lives, living in damras, or small settlements, but these lack midwives and other basic social services, Abedaziz said. “There are no dividends for settlement. Not even five per cent of their needs are met.”

During a two-day workshop at El Fasher University sponsored by the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, representatives of nomad groups such as the North Darfur Nomads Peace and Development Network asked for such projects to continue to enable them to stand on their feet and support themselves and their families again as they had before the conflict.

Women nomadic leaders highlighted the challenges they are facing in their communities and presented some fundamental proposals that they would like to be funded. They emphasized the need for development projects in the education, health care, vocational training and mostly raising general awareness about the lives of Darfur’s nomads.

Sudan introduced primary schools for nomads in recent years, but those left children without opportunities for higher

education. Before then, nomadic girls were not even allowed to be educated, due to early marriages and other traditional practices. “Out of 200,000 girls, only 1,000 were allowed to go to school,” said Zahra Eissa, a nomadic woman.

One of the girls affected was Bakhita Ali Izat from Kabkabiya in North Darfur said she was forced into marriage at the age of 12 years, and two years later she had her first child. Unfortunately, her husband was killed. As she was preparing herself to return to school, her family forced her to marry her late brother in-law despite her refusal to do so. Her family threatened to cut her off then she would never be considered part of the family. She found herself with no other solution but to accept the marriage and had her second child. The second marriage did not bring much happiness either to her nor her family and after four years, Bakhita managed to leave the husband. She returned to school to complete her elementary and high school. Today Bakhita is supporting her children in school while she works as a domestic worker.

The workshop aimed to bring together the nomads and aid agencies working in Darfur. It gave the nomad representatives an opportunity to raise their concerns and needs and to open a new page in the cooperation between them and humanitarian organizations, as well as with the African Union-United Nations Mission in Darfur (UNAMID).

During the workshop, UNAMID also presented an overview of its quick impact projects dedicated to nomads and explained the process required to receive funding. In this context Mr. Oriano Micaletti, Acting Head of UNAMID’s Humanitarian Protection Strategy, urged the nomad representatives to prioritize their needs and submit their proposals for review.

“The forum provided a great opportunity to the North Darfurian nomads, as it is the first time that the group was able to meet and discuss their needs and requirements at an international level,” said Ibrahim Mohamed, a nomad Network member.





An ex child soldier at welding class

PHOTO: CATERINA VIOLANTE

## Socio-Economic Reintegration of the Children Associated with Armed Forces and Groups (CAAFG)

Vocational trainings for children released from armed movements has started in Nyala

BY CATERINA VIOLANTE

Since 2008, more than 500 children have been released from armed movements in South Darfur. Their reintegration has been a priority for the National Demobilization Disarmament and Reintegration Commission (NSDRRC) well as for the African Union-United Nations Mission in Darfur (UNAMID).

The NSDRRC, with the support of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and UNAMID, created a Committee for Child Reintegration - within a pre-existing inter-organizational space named Child Protection Working Group - to advise, contribute and coordinate activities for the expeditious social reintegration of children in their communities to prevent their return to the lines of armed movements. This committee includes all relevant national institutions and Government bodies, non-governmental organizations, UN Agencies and UNAMID. It is working in the interest of the child and

give appropriate advice for a successful reintegration process of the released children in South Darfur. Chaired by NSDRRC and advised primarily by UNICEF, the committee works in concert with the Population Council and the State Council for Child Welfare in the Sudanese Ministry of Social Welfare.

At the end of July, as a first step toward integration, vocational training began for this special needs target group, ex child soldiers, at the Technical College for the Community of Darfur in Nyala, South Darfur. They are taught carpentry and welding skills in courses that are expected to last six months.

This first group of beneficiaries are 18 young boys who were released from the Sudanese Liberation Army/Peace Wing (SLA/PW) and were profiled considering their vocation and the socio-economic opportunity mapping of the area

where they live. Every day, they attend classes in risk prevention and business administration, and learn the secret of the métier in a three-hour technical course.

The feedback of their welding teacher, Hussein, has been very encouraging, "They are learning very fast," he said. "The most important challenge for them is to be constant and attend classes every day so they can improve their capabilities".

Dean of the Technical College, Mr. Musa Ali Abdeinabi, assured us of his commitment to the partnership between NSDRRC, UNICEF and UNAMID and expressed his willingness to receive any kind of technical support that would ensure the success of his institution's efforts to reintegrate these children and young people back to their communities.

THE AUTHOR IS A DDR OFFICER WITH UNAMID



## Keeping the peace in Um Kadada

STORY AND PHOTOS BY ALBERT GONZÁLEZ FARRAN

The town of Um Kadada is located approximately 150 kilometres east of El Fasher in North Darfur and is known for its quiet and peaceful atmosphere. Since 2010, there have been no reported clashes in the area between the different belligerents. Also, the region does not host any displaced persons camps.

The 860-strong Egyptian contingent deployed in the UNAMID base there is responsible for maintaining the 'status quo' in the area.

The troops have been building confidence among the local population, which is also intended to strengthen relations between UNAMID and the host communities. Each day, they distribute more than 400 litres of potable water to the villages and assist in providing medical assistance, while those who are engineers construct infrastructure and improve existing buildings, among other services.

Many villages in Um Kadada lack basic services. They do not have schools, clinics and water pumps. Yet, they have peace.

The UNAMID Egyptian contingent is dedicating all its efforts to ensure a lasting peace and security in the area.



*top left. An Egyptian medical peacekeeper examines a young child*

*middle left. On the alert during a daylight patrol*

*bottom right. Assisting the elderly*

*top right. Egyptian peacekeepers on patrol in an armored personnel carrier (APC)*

*bottom right. Confidence building patrols are conducted on a 24/7 basis*









## Ensuring the safety of civilians through community policing - UNAMID Police contribute to security in IDP camps

BY SHARON LUKUNKA

**T**he deployment of the African Union-United Nations Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) has contributed to the improvement of security in the region, especially with their initiative to set up community policing centres in internally displaced persons (IDP) camps throughout Darfur. To date, close to 6,000 IDPs have been trained as community policing volunteers in Darfur.

In September 2011, the Mission was further expanded to 77 per cent of the total authorized strength of 3,772 when the number of civilian police increased to almost 3,000. Their main focus in Darfur is to promote confidence building and a culture of peace and stability. With their mentoring, community policing centres are therefore expected to oversee all safety and security issues in the camps.

"A community policing centre (CPC) is the first level and primary direct point

of contact between the UNAMID Police and the IDP community, and provides a basis for the Mission's implementation of its mandate," said Sector North Police Commander, George Rumanzi.

To join hands with the community police in crime prevention and maintenance of law and order, UNAMID Police advisors maintain a 24/7 confidence building presence in the camps. Additionally, they are responsible for the establishment of community safety committees, zone safety coordinators and the selection and training of community policing volunteers.

"During the patrols, Police Advisors interact with the IDPs, conduct awareness raising campaigns and give advice on a range of community policing issues, such as the neighborhood watch scheme, reporting crimes, cooperation, coordination, collaboration, partnership, drug awareness, environmental,

sanitation and crime prevention strategies," Officer in charge of UNAMID's Community Policing Unit, Alhaji Kamara, stated as he outlined the role they played in the IDP camps.

Community police are also responsible for sensitization on a range of issues, from safety and security to social and health. Referring to the collaboration on the provision of water for the camps, Acting Deputy Police Commissioner for Operations and Plans, Mr. Richard Luhanga, said, "Police advisors identify the needs of the people, including the requirements for the supply of water, which is conveyed to the relevant humanitarian agencies. In terms of emergency response to a situation, the police have requested the Mission to provide water for the IDPs until an appropriate sustainable water source is identified." The scarcity of water in the region has been one of the driving forces of the conflict.



*left. A female civilian police officer with Darfuri women while on patrol in Kutum, North Darfur*

*right. A UNAMID civilian police officer interacts with community leaders during a long range patrol in Darfur*

Meanwhile, according to Police Commander Rumanzi, “Community safety committees were established to regularly meet and identify, discuss and jointly seek solutions to safety and security problems affecting the IDPs.”

The visibility of UNAMID Police Advisors escorted by Formed Police Units in the IDP Camps on 24/7 basis has greatly improved security and built confidence among the IDP Communities. Also, community policing encourages mutual trust through joint implementation of various activities.

“The Mission’s night patrols have been successfully introduced in the camp with full support from the local police and the community, including women and youth,” Rumanzi adds.

Another initiative of UNAMID Police has been the establishment of co-location

programmes in the camps to ensure the presence of female Sudanese police officers. With a special focus on women and children, UN Police are working through the community centres to promote crime prevention strategies and to improve safety awareness in the camp. UNAMID police advisor and officer-in-charge of Gender and co-location, Aja Saffie Njie, notes that, “the forum provides valuable inputs in the daily operations of local police in, among others, maintaining professional investigation and handling of sexual and gender based violence cases, especially in ensuring that they are properly handled”.

The successful implementation of CPCs has come with remarkable benefits to security in the IDP camps with the reduction of the number of criminal incidents paving the way for increasing visits by non-governmental organizations and donor representatives.

As UNAMID Police Commissioner James Oppong-Boanuh emphasizes, “Peace and security work together. UNAMID will continue to cooperate and coordinate with the Sudanese Rule of Law institutions and support them to ensure that they are able to improve service delivery to the people of Darfur.”

Since their arrival in the Mission, the 16 Formed Police Units from Nigeria, Bangladeshi, Indonesia, Egypt, Nepal, Togo, Burkina Faso, Jordan and Pakistan have been providing escort and protection to the police advisors during their day to day activities in the IDP camps as well as on farming patrols during the rainy season when they provide security for farmers. The FPU also provide firewood escorts, long range patrols and conduct rescue operations.





Senegalese peacekeepers provide water to villagers of Salamleck, West Darfur

PHOTOS: SENEGAL BATTALION

## Senegal Battalion 8 wins hearts of the local community in West Darfur

BY MAJ. DIENG SHEIKHNA

Since UNAMID's Senegal battalion 8 (SENBATT 8) was deployed to Umbarru, West Darfur in March 2011, it has conducted many civil military cooperation (CIMIC) activities in remote villages to address the needs of the local population and to strengthen relations between the Mission and its host communities.

These peacekeepers are committed to what has become a tradition of the Senegalese Armed Forces to provide assistance to the local community through CIMIC activities as part of efforts to win their hearts and minds.

"We interact with various people around our team sites and, through our contacts, we have learnt that Darfuris are kind and generous people -- committed to their community's development," said Major Dieng Sheikhna. "We, the Senegalese troops, consider ourselves fortunate to have the opportunity of coming to Darfur as UNAMID peacekeepers so that we could help Darfuris overcome these hard times and enjoy a better future."

The troops established their good relationship with the local population in several ways. Most recently, during the Eid El Fitr celebration, the Sheikh of Umbarru town, Diafar Ali, was moved to express appreciation for the pleasant relations that the community enjoyed with and contributions of the Senegalese troops.

"We are fortunate and grateful to have an exemplary group of peacekeepers. Our brothers from Senegal are doing well within the localities, especially in Umbarru. And this was since the arrival of their first troops. We have been receiving tremendous help from them," Ali stated.

Earlier this year, on 18 May, the Senegalese medical team treated the villagers and dispensed medications in Miski, 17 kilometres south of Umbarru. Meanwhile, through their ongoing medical service to the community at the Level 1 hospital, they treated almost 4,000 patients between March and August this year.

Since March, SENBATT has also repaired a water pump in Orchi village, 28 kilometers

east of Umbarru, and distributed water to the population in Salamleck village, 35 kilometres to the southeast. The battalion is also always prepared to provide urgent assistance, such as extinguish fires that might arise due to high temperatures and heat waves in the area. "Besides the continuous help with medical care from the UNAMID camp, they also assist with our needs for water. Our population is very grateful for the efforts they are rendering to the localities," Ali added.

According to Major Dieng, "SENBATT believes that Darfuri civilians can play an active role in the development Darfur in all key aspects -- social, political, cultural, economic, environmental, educational, and humanitarian. Thus, we've also encouraged forming effective relationships between the military and civilian authorities, organizations, agencies and populations to maximise the civilian contribution in achieving a stable environment."

THE AUTHOR IS A MAJOR WITH SENEGAL BATTALION



The background of the entire page is a collage of photographs from Darfur. At the top, several young boys are looking towards the camera. On the left, a woman is wearing a bright blue headscarf and a matching top with a white star emblem. In the bottom right corner, a group of young girls in white headscarves are smiling. The central text is overlaid on a dark, semi-transparent rectangular area.

## Announcement

# Yala Nebni Darfur

Tune into UNAMID Radio's twice daily broadcasts on Omdurman-based Al Salaam Radio from 08:30-09:30 hours and from 14:00-15:00 hours to listen to the programme *Yala Nebni Darfur (Lets Build Darfur)*. The programme features real life issues related to peace building, women, children, culture, health, education and the economy in Darfur.

*Yala Nebni Darfur* - produced by Darfurian for the Darfurian community - is part of UNAMID's outreach activities to create awareness about the Mission's mandate and related work.

***You can find Al Salaam Radio on 95.0 MHz FM in Khartoum and 7.2 MHz, 41 Metre Band on SW in Darfur***

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***LET'S BUILD DARFUR TOGETHER***





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