

Delivering Sustainable  
Peace across Darfur

Mukjar Youth: Transitioning  
from Instruments of War to  
Agents of Peace

Native Administrators  
Undergo Basic Computer  
Skills Training

Civil Affairs

# In Action

JANUARY - JUNE | 2017 | EDITION 1



UNAMID



# Contents

## The Interview

### 4 Delivering Sustainable Peace across Darfur

## North Darfur

### 6 Peace Campaigns Building Trust Between Communities in North Darfur

## West Darfur

### 8 Mitigating Inter-communal Violence between Farmers and Nomadic herders

## Central Darfur

### 10 Mukjar Youth: Transitioning from Instruments of War to Agents of Peace

### 12 Native Administrators Undergo Basic Computer Skills Training

## East Darfur

### 13 Peace Centre to build relationships and promote inclusive dialogue

## Khartoum

### 14 Working with Shura Councils of Darfur: The Khartoum Experience

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UNAMID Civil Affairs Section (CAS) in collaboration with  
UNAMID Communications and Public Information Section (CPIS)  
Email: [unamid-publicinformation@un.org](mailto:unamid-publicinformation@un.org) • Website: <http://unamid.unmissions.org>

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# Foreword



**Jeremiah Kingsley Mamabolo**  
Acting Joint Special Representative  
UNAMID

Welcome to the maiden issue of Civil Affairs In Action newsletter showcasing the work of the section in Darfur and Khartoum. UNAMID's mandate includes three strategic priorities: 1) support to the peace process; 2) protection of civilians; and 3) prevention and mitigation of communal conflicts, by addressing the root causes, in conjunction with the United Nations country team (UNCT).

With a wide presence in 20 team sites, sector and mission headquarters, Civil Affairs contributes to all three strategic priorities and supports the people and the government in creating and strengthening conditions as well as structures conducive to sustainable peace in Darfur. Civil Affairs supports the implementation of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (DDPD) by facilitating the participation of diverse stakeholders. Through constant liaising and engagement and given its wide presence across Darfur, Civil Affairs also supports the implementation of the Mission's Protection of Civilians strategy through early warning and information sharing. However, the core of its work relates to addressing communal conflicts in Darfur.

The High-level Independent Panel on UN Peace Operations (HIPPO, 2015) calls for a more integrated approach by the UN in conflict prevention and peace. It also encourages Missions to draw on the knowledge and resources beyond the UN through civil society - community, religious, youth and women groups - and the global business community. Civil Affairs works at the social, administrative and sub-national political levels in cooperation with a wide range of international and national stakeholders and partners. Being in touch with all segments of the society, including the youth, women, traditional leaders, influential personalities and decision makers, provides the team with the opportunity to reach out and implement activities in support of peace and peaceful co-existence in Darfur.

In the field, I have seen Civil Affairs colleagues enhancing the work of other Mission components to support mandate implementation. The conflict prevention, mediation and reconciliation efforts undertaken by the Section, in the communities, substantially contribute to preventing and mitigating intercommunal violence across Darfur. The role of mediation of communal conflicts, facilitated by the Mission in general and Civil Affairs in particular, cannot be understated. It brings together conflicting parties to dialogue, provides an opportunity to cease hostilities and lays the ground for reconciliation. This relative peace and security creates an environment for partners from the UNCT and other humanitarian and development organizations to implement long-term development programmes for the people of Darfur.

UNAMID's quick impact projects (QIPs) managed by Civil Affairs do not merely seek to build confidence in the Mission but address some of the immediate concerns of communities in a quick and efficient manner. The projects are diverse and include rehabilitation and reconstruction, livelihoods improvement, and empowerment of community leaders across Darfur. Through QIPs, the Mission positively impacts the lives and wellbeing of the people we are here to serve.

This bi-annual newsletter highlights the activities undertaken by the Civil Affairs teams in North, East, West and Central Darfur as well as Khartoum and the challenges they face.

We trust you will enjoy reading it and learning more about Civil Affairs in UNAMID.

# The Interview



## Delivering Sustainable Peace across Darfur

**T**he Acting Head of UNAMID's Civil Affairs section, Mike Dzakuma, talks briefly about the Mission's new strategy to prevent frequent outbreaks of violence.

**Q: UNAMID recently adopted a strategy in addressing inter-communal conflicts in Darfur. Can you tell us more about it?**

**MD:** The strategy was adopted in June 2016 and it proposes Civil Affairs to work more closely with state authorities by putting them in the lead to address communal violence. The strategy, per se, is not new as most of these activities have been carried out by the Section in particular and the Mission as a whole. As Civil Affairs personnel, we have conceptualised a way to work with the Walis through formal mechanisms. The role of the Walis is to nominate an institution or individual as a conduit between UNAMID and the government.

In terms of the actual implementation, we decided to roll it out, at the state level, involving the government and the UN country team, and other key stakeholders. So once the Walis give us the go ahead, we start implementing appropriate projects or activities.

I'm happy to say that all five Darfur states are actively involved as of now in implementing the strategy.

**Q: What do you hope to achieve through the new strategy?**

**MD:** Well, we have set ourselves two benchmarks internally – to reduce fatalities and displacements by reducing clashes and have more peace agreements signed. But then again, the measure of success is not just on paper. It is to reinforce the relative peace into a sustainable, long-term reality for the people of Darfur. Solutions to inter-communal conflicts are usually found at the community level through a bottom-up, all-inclusive and continuing process.

**Q: How does the Government of Sudan feature in your work?**

**MD:** The government has the primary responsibility to address inter-communal conflicts across Darfur. Civil Affairs or UNAMID, for that

matter, will not only encourage the authorities but also facilitate as well as support as requested by the host government in prevention, mitigation and reconciliation. Actions we take are upon the invitation from local communities. The Government of Sudan at the state levels has been working actively on this front. For instance, the Walis or governors of the five Darfur states, from July 2015, managed to institute mechanisms in their respective states to address security issues and in turn inter-communal issues. However many of these measures are ad-hoc. For sustainable peace we need proactive sustainable measures and policies. Conflicts happen everywhere in the world but when they occur, mechanisms are in place to check or address them. These are, however, lacking or not well developed across Darfur.

**Q: What has UNAMID done to address inter-communal conflicts?**

**MD:** In collaboration with local and international partners, UNAMID has made many positive interventions in the area of inter-communal conflicts. These take into account the understanding that the Government of Sudan is tasked with the primary responsibility of addressing and mitigating any inter-communal conflict.

Having said that, mitigating and preventing inter-communal hostilities and violence is a key aspect of UNAMID's mandate. Civil Affairs is committed to preventing the occurrence of such incidents and supporting the sustainable resolution of the same.

To this end, we support specific reconciliation processes, using our resources across Darfur, and also in Khartoum. We consistently conduct outreach campaigns at the grassroots level through workshops and consultations, which sometimes culminate in peace conferences. ■



# North Darfur

## Peace Campaigns Building Trust Between Communities In North Darfur

To mitigate conflict between nomadic herders and farming communities, Civil Affairs in coordination with a local organization, Al Tawaf Al Rahil Organization and the Native Administrations have been conducting peace campaigns and forums in localities prone to conflicts over access to limited natural resources.

Over a decade of conflict has polarized the two communities. Nomadic herders in search of pasture are reported to forcibly graze their animals on farms owned by farming communities leading to crop destruction and loss of yield.

This results in violent conflict between the two occupational groups and consequently in loss of lives and displacement.



### THE OBJECTIVES

- Raise awareness on peaceful co-existence between communities by delivering messages on peace and social cohesion
- Strengthen the social fabric and relationships between farmers and herders.
- Revive and strengthen traditional conflict resolution mechanisms to resolve conflicts among communities, as well as between farmers and herders.
- Sensitise herders not to graze on farms before harvest and remind farmers not to farm on animal migratory routes and grazing corridors to avert potential conflicts between farmers and herders.

### THE CHALLENGES



Absence of a comprehensive peace agreement continues to negatively impact social cohesion and peaceful coexistence.



Proliferation of small arms and light weapons coupled with weak governance and law enforcement continue to embolden perpetrators to forcibly graze on farms, block roads and harass farmers, igniting conflicts.

### SUSTAINING MOMENTUM

Regular monthly consultation and coordination meetings with the Deputy Governor to advocate for initiatives lead by the government that prevent and resolve communal conflicts.

Briefings to the State government on Civil Affairs activities to support conflict prevention and mitigation through early warning, information sharing and support to reconciliation processes among the various communities including farmers and herders.

### THE OUTCOMES

since 2015



17+ peace forums and peace campaigns held

reached more than **8,500** persons from both communities

About **30%** of participants were women.



Increased agricultural output primarily due to the decrease in of forceful grazing on farms before harvest



Strengthened relationships and interaction between herders and farmers.



Reactivation of dormant farm protection committees at state and locality level in western El Fasher rural areas, and in Korma, Kafoat and Tawila areas.



The Arab community in Um Sayala requested IDPs from Hashaba and Kulkul in El Fasher rural areas to return to their villages to prepare for the farming season guaranteeing their security.



Understanding of UNAMID's mandate by nomadic communities helped to improve trust and confidence and foster good working relations



Fighters from Kabkabiya and El Geneina supporting the Zayadiya in their conflict with the Berti returned to their areas de-escalating the conflict.



In Um Jalbakh nomadic settlement, nomads returned stolen animals to the local community through their respective leaders.



Opening of blockaded roads in the targeted areas. Unofficial check points on the El Fasher – Kutum road were dismantled positively impacting the work of humanitarian partners.



## Mitigating Inter-communal Violence between Farmers and Nomadic herders



In support of UNAMID's strategic priority to prevent communal conflicts, Civil Affairs and the United Nations country team in West Darfur have been building the capacity of community leaders to promote social cohesion and commitment to peaceful resolution of communal disputes.

Tensions between farmers and pastoralists, especially during the farming seasons, account for majority of the inter-communal conflicts in West Darfur.

Inadequate basic services especially in nomadic areas force herders to move into farmlands in search of these resources.

To de-escalate communal tensions and promote peaceful co-existence, Civil Affairs in West Darfur actively supports efforts by local peace mechanisms.

A key measure is through Community Dialogue and Consultation Forums (CDCFs) in areas identified as hotspots. In 2016, Civil Affairs conducted 17 forums with farmers and pastoralists in Krenek, Foro Baranga, Beida, El Geneina and Sirba localities.

Participants include representatives from

“ The previously conducted dialogue forum for farmers and pastoralists in Um Sebeika, El Geneina has significantly improved peaceful coexistence and enhanced relations between the two groups. A joint mechanism from farmers and pastoralists was established to resolve issues and put in place measures to prevent tensions during the farming seasons. ”

**Mohamed Gasi, Fursha of Um Sebeika, El Geneina, West Darfur.**

the Native Administrations, local authorities and members of local crop protection and peace committees.

CDCFs create a platform for farmers and pastoralists to freely interact and raise issues that concern them. In these forums, they explore ways to reduce incidents of crop destruction and empower crop protection and peace committees to peacefully resolve disputes.

Following the forums, participants gave positive feedback and offered several recommendations on possible ways to address seasonal conflicts and promote peaceful co-existence.

To ensure that the farming season (harvest) is protected especially during this period of reduced World Food Programme food rations, they called for better coordination between the Native Administrations from both groups especially on issues related to crop protection and shared access to natural resources and basic services.

Participants noted that the forums provided an enabling environment for both farmers and pastoralists to interact and discuss issues affecting their communities.

The leaders of both groups committed to encourage the culture of peace and peaceful co-existence.

Civil Affairs continues to engage with Native Administration leaders in the areas where the forums were conducted to ensure that the recommendations are implemented.

Other communities in West Darfur have requested Civil Affairs to conduct similar initiatives. ■



Mohamed Gasi, Fursha of Um Sebeika, El Geneina, West Darfur.



# Central Darfur

## Mukjar Youth: Transitioning from Instruments of War to Agents of Peace



A youth leader sharing his opinion during an outreach activity

**M**ukjar is located in the Southern part of Wadi Salih region of Central Darfur State and was among the most affected with majority of its villages destroyed. The youth in Mukjar like other members of the community are greatly affected by the conflicts in the region.

Traditionally, youth in Wadi Salih region did not have a decision-making role to play in the community. They were typically used as instruments to fuel fighting and communal conflicts, rather than agents of constructive social change.

The absence of policies to include young people in peace and development initiatives had worsened their situation. In addition, poor economic infrastructure, deteriorating security situation as a result of the fighting in Jebel Marra and inter-communal tensions, coupled with their exclusion in decision-making and in the peace process had prevented their active engagement in peace building.

In April 2014, the violent conflict between the Salamat and the Misseriya where hundreds of young people from both communities were killed, kick-started efforts by government authorities to invest in the youth as agents of peace.

Recognising the potential of youth to contribute to peace,

“ Youth are a very important element in supporting peace and conflict resolution. When there is a conflict they are the ones who take up the arms to fight. If we can use them as elements of peace building, instead of elements of war, they can be change agents and supporters of community peace building activities. The future belongs to the youth, we work to empower them to contribute to a peaceful future. ”

**Majdi Abdallah, Civil Affairs Officer in Mukjar Office, Zalingei**

“The youth are a powerful asset in the community; they are the future of this country. At the Trust and Development Organization we are training both male and female youth in peace building, environmental protection and other income generating activities including fuel efficient stove making. They have become contributors by sharing these knowledge with the community and participating active in conflict resolution.”

**Mohamed Abdulrahim, Head of Office, Trust and Development Organization, Mukjar, Zalingei**



Monthly meeting with a cross section of Mukjar youth in August 2016.

UNAMID's Civil Affairs Section devised strategies to promote youth engagement in Mukjar. These initiatives included sensitization and capacity building activities in peacebuilding, mediation and negotiation skills.

Through regular dialogue forums, capacity building platforms and brainstorming sessions held with youth unions, the Youth and Sports Office and the School Activities Unit of the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Civil Affairs has enhanced inclusivity and promoted Mukjar youths as active leaders and partners in all peace processes.

The Mukjar youths have come a long way from 2011 when there was only one youth organization in the area. To date there are three local organizations and two national unions recognised as stakeholders on all social issues.

Civil Affairs supports the local youth organizations including Trust and Development (TDO), Solidarity for Community Development (SCDO) and Renaissance for Peace and Development (RPDO).

Jointly with SCDO, CAS facilitated a peacebuilding workshop that led to developing peaceful coexistence programmes in the communities.

Both TDO and SCDO now receive funding from local and international donors to conduct community stabilization activities which contribute to restoring trust and confidence between communities.

Through the capacity building workshops, organized by Civil Affairs, on 'conflict resolution and reconciliation' and 'good governance as a vehicle for peace and sustainable development' amongst others, many youths are now equipped with the required knowledge and skills to frankly discuss issues affecting their communities. The team has also had direct interaction and engagement with the youth to ensure that they are applying this knowledge to create a sustainable and peaceful environment for their communities.

This enhanced capacity has enabled them to significantly participate in the deliberations of the Peaceful Coexistence Committee (PCC), Agriculture Protection Committee (APC) and Mukjar Security Committee. As a testament to their ability to organise themselves and undertake creative initiatives, they were allotted two seats in the APC established by the Wali (Governor) in August 2016. ■

# Central Darfur

## Native Administrators Undergo Basic Computer Skills Training



*Berhanemeskel Nega, Head of Office, Sector South launching the training programme on basic computer skills for Native Administration representatives.*

“This is my first experience with computer. I never touched it before.” These were the words of 43-year-old Musa Ahmed Layin, Omda of the Beni-Halba, following a basic computer skills training for Native Administration representatives organised by Civil Affairs in Central Darfur.

The Native Administration play an important role in building social peace and addressing inter-communal conflicts in Darfur and is a major partner of UNAMID’s Civil Affairs.

Following a capacity building assessment, Civil Affairs identified the need to provide the Native Administrations with computers and office equipment to support their work.

The initial target group was a pilot phase covering Central Darfur State Supreme Council in Zalingei and Azoum localities.

To ensure the effective use of the equipment, Civil Affairs in partnership with the Integrated Mission Training Centre

(IMTC) conducted a week-long basic computer training for 12 participants drawn from the State Supreme Council and Native Administrations of the two localities. They were also taught how to navigate the Internet.

“The acquired skills will enhance my ability to perform my duties,” said Mr Layin promising to utilize the gained skills to document the activities of the Native Administration. Omda Zakariya Mohamadain thanked UNAMID adding, “Now we can protect our documents and easily retrieve them.” The Omda said the course was an added value and would enhance their performance.

Historically, the Native Administration is instrumental in keeping order, resolving conflicts and promoting inter-communal peace in Darfur. Appointment to the Native Administration is done by community elders who command the respect of the community and possess broad knowledge of the traditions, customs and the communal sensitivity in adjudicating issues.

There have been more requests from other Native Administrations across the state following the positive feedback from the beneficiaries of the first phase of the training. The computers and office equipment were donated by the Government of Japan through the Darfur Capacity and Peacebuilding Project executed by UNAMID through the African Union. ■



## Peace Centre to Build Relationships and Promote Inclusive Dialogue



To address inter-communal conflicts through constructive dialogue and inclusive consultations between the Ma'alia and the Southern Rezeigat, on 28 March 2016, Civil Affairs Section handed over a peace centre to the Ma'alia Native Administration in Abu Karinka, East Darfur.

Through the initiative under UNAMID's quick impact projects (QIPs), Civil Affairs constructed the very first peace centre in Abu Karinka to serve as a safe gathering space where elders, youth, women and other members of the community can discuss and address community issues.

The handing over ceremony was attended by the Commissioner of

Abu Karinka locality Osman Gasim, the Deputy Nazir of the Ma'alia, Abdulmana Musa Segiroon, the Humanitarian Aid Commissioner Abdo Abelmahmoud and community members including women and youth unions.

During the ceremony, Commissioner Gasmin said that the centre would provide the Native Administration, civil society organization and other institutions with a space to organize peace campaigns and sensitization workshops in Abu Karinka.

In his speech Mr Segiroon - the Deputy Nazir of the Ma'alia stated that the peace centre is a resource and base for a variety of activities. It fosters an environment for co-

existence, relationship building and team work where stakeholders can support each other and develop a greater consideration for others.

A first of its kind, the project was implemented by El-Nafeer Charity Organization, a local non-governmental organization, following discussions between UNAMID's East Darfur leadership, Civil Affairs, the Ma'alia community and Native Administration leaders on ways to foster peace and social cohesion.

Abu Karinka is predominately inhabited by the Ma'alia. The area was once inaccessible due to the conflicts between the Southern Rezeigat and the Ma'alia.

The centre will provide the space to undertake inclusive consultations and negotiations aimed at contributing to the reconciliation process to resolve the long standing disputes over communal territories and natural resources including water, agricultural land and pasture.

In addition, the peace centre will create an enabling environment to encourage dialogue between and among the diverse stakeholders, to reflect on the triggers and the root causes of the conflict as well as jointly develop and agree on practical solutions.

The peace centre will also function as a space to participate in capacity building programmes to enhance their skills in communication, conflict resolution and mediation facilitated by Civil Affairs officers and other stakeholders including the UN country team.

## Working with Shura Councils of Darfur: The Khartoum Experience

**T**ribal Shura Councils are a consultative group normally formed by community leaders to address communal matters in the society. The membership comprise of prominent personalities, former government officials, and academics among others. They are elected by their kinsmen through a consultative process which makes them credible and acceptable to the community.

Council members could be based both in the capital Khartoum and in their home community and play an advisory role to the community leadership. Depending on the situation, they could act as spokespersons on behalf of a community.

In addition to providing support to the Native Administrations, Shura Councils were created to ensure community leaderships had presence in Khartoum to engage with senior Government of Sudan officials.

The Shura Councils work closely with the Ministry of Decentralization on community-related issues although they are legally administered through the Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC).

Civil Affairs works closely with Native Administrations and their Shura Councils to either resolve communal conflicts or promote peaceful coexistence among Darfur communities through meetings, seminars and workshops.

The Civil Affairs office based in Khartoum effectively collaborated with the Southern Rezeigat and the Ma'alia Shura Councils to address the conflict between the two communities in East Darfur State. In 2015, Civil Affairs successfully managed through the Shura Councils to bring together the leaders of the two belligerent communities for dialogue after 13 months of impasse.

Also in 2015, Civil Affairs managed to resolve the conflict between the Rezeigat and the Habaniya communities in Al Sunta locality in South Darfur State. The same approach was also used in 2015 to successfully engage with the leaders of the Salamat and the Fallata communities to address their conflict in Al Nadeif area in Buram locality in South Darfur until they signed the cessation of hostilities agreement on 7 September 2015.

Similarly, Civil Affairs engaged with the Native Administrations and Shura Councils of the Ta'aisha and the Salamat in South Darfur until they negotiated a peace agreement which they signed on 30 May 2016.

Civil Affairs continues to engage with members of the Native Administrations and Shura Councils in Darfur including the Zayadiya and the Berti in North Darfur, the Dajo and the Massalit in South Darfur to mitigate conflict and support peacebuilding in Darfur. ■

## UNAMID Provides Month-long Training in Making Fuel-Efficient Stoves (FES) for displaced Women in West Darfur



Training for displaced women in making FES. Photo by Elsadig Hassan Daud, UNAMID.

In May 2016, UNAMID Police and Civil Affairs Section concluded a month-long training programme for 150 internally displaced women on the manufacture of fuel-efficient stoves at the Abuzar camp for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in El Geneina, West Darfur. The project, which is part of the Mission's Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) programme, is a joint effort with the Sudan Red Crescent Society (SRCS), and is aimed at protecting the environment as well as minimizing possible security risks which displaced women are exposed to while collecting firewood.

The closing ceremony was attended by UNAMID staff, government officials, SRCS representatives as well as the Sheikh of Sheikhs (community leader) and the camp's residents.

Speaking on the occasion, Oumar Kane, Officer-in-Charge, UNAMID Sector West, stated that the project would help women avoid harassment and assault when they venture out to the fields.

"The Mission is committed to providing support to IDPs, especially women, as part of its mandate to protect civilians. For the next QIPs cycle, we pledge to set aside resources to extend this training to other IDP camps," added Mr. Kane.

On his part, Mohamed Obeidat, Police Commander, UNAMID Sector West, explained that the project was

designed to reduce security risks faced by women who have to travel long distances to collect firewood. "I hope this project will serve to minimize the risk faced by displaced women when they go to collect firewood. As UNAMID Police, we are working hard to ensure security is provided for the women during firewood collection activities," Mr. Obeidat stated.


In her remarks, Souad Mohamed, one of the beneficiaries of this training noted that they learned to produce two types of stoves: the first type is made of bricks, therefore, it does not consume much firewood, while the second model is reinforced with iron for charcoal use. "We were also trained on how to use both types of stoves. The project will definitely benefit women IDPs across Darfur because these stoves greatly reduce firewood consumption. In fact, the amount of firewood we previously used up in one week will now last for at least a full month," said Ms. Mohamed.

Gisma Abdulkarim, another beneficiary, explained that women from the camp felt that the training would significantly decrease the purchase of charcoal and firewood from the market. Additionally, she said she hoped that the use of such stoves would decrease the possibility of fires caused by open stoves which burn down entire communities within villages and IDP camps. ■







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