

# Strategy for Humanitarian Assistance to Sudan

*1 January 2000 – 31 December 2001*



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## Government Decision

29 June 2000

Ministry for Foreign Affairs  
Stockholm, Sweden

Swedish International Development  
Cooperation Agency (Sida)  
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### **Humanitarian assistance to Sudan**

#### **The matter**

On 17 June 1999, the Government instructed the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) to draw up a proposal for a strategy for humanitarian assistance to Sudan during the two-year period 2000-2001. Sida submitted the requested proposal on 18 April 2000.

#### **The Government's decision**

The Government has decided that Sida's proposal should serve as a guide for the focus of humanitarian assistance to Sudan, and approves a funding framework of approximately SEK 70 million per year for humanitarian assistance to Sudan in 2000 and 2001.

Sida should devote special attention to the following:

- Within the framework of Sweden's overall humanitarian assistance objectives and taking into account the humanitarian principles of neutrality, impartiality and independence, the proposed assistance framework should provide opportunities for initiatives to promote reconciliation and conflict resolution at the local level, including support to capacity-building initiatives in the fields of human rights and democratic working procedures;
- Sida and the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs shall confer on the issue of the humanitarian assistance's dependence on, and relationship to, ongoing peace initiatives, including negotiations on humanitarian access under the aegis of the Technical Committee on Humanitarian Assistance (TCHA) and an extension of the humanitarian ceasefire. Sida's experiences as regards humanitarian access, including the security risks to which aid operations are exposed, should be highlighted in the consultation group between Sida and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs;

- Humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons shall be steered by the UN's Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. Sida shall take the necessary measures to follow up initiatives supported by Sweden. The operative guidelines adopted by the UN's humanitarian coordinating committee, IASC, and ECOSOC should also guide operations.
- Strategic coordination of humanitarian assistance and the aid disbursed under budget sub-heading "Non-governmental organisations" is desirable. Sida should also seek to ensure coordination between development cooperation in Sudan among NGOs and the Humanitarian Aid Office's (ECHO) humanitarian support and in this context promote cooperation between Swedish NGOs and ECHO;
- Sida shall ensure that the Swedish annual contribution to the UNHCR is taken into account in the administration of support to refugee programmes in Sudan, including the repatriation of refugees to and from Sudan.

Sida is asked to submit an account of its experiences of the humanitarian assistance operations, which are to cover the whole of Sudan, by no later than 1 October 2001. The account should include the results of the studies and evaluations described in Sida's report, and indicate whether there is a need for reorientation. Special attention should be given to support for internally displaced persons, including the results of the planned study on internally displaced refugees and the conflict situation in Sudan.

On behalf of the Government,

Maj Inger Klingvall

Pereric Högberg

**Proposal for strategy for humanitarian  
assistance to Sudan  
2000 – 2001**

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Administrative map of Sudan

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## 0 SUMMARY

The overall objective of Sweden's humanitarian assistance to Sudan is to alleviate the consequences of armed conflict and natural disaster. A further aim is to create suitable conditions for lasting solutions for the affected population and to improve the prospects of peaceful development.

The funding framework should amount to approximately SEK 70 million per year, but should allow room for flexibility depending on the situation. An even distribution between government- and rebel-held territories is desirable, but needs and access should nevertheless guide operations.

### **Strategic considerations:**

- Strengthening of local/social structures and capacity-building
- Importance of humanitarian access and the role of Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS)
- Post-conflict peace-building operations/reconciliation processes
- Support to the repatriation of Eritrean refugees

### **Priority target groups:**

- Internally displaced persons (the situation of women and children should have special priority)
- Refugees in Sudan

### **Priority sectors:**

- Health care, water/sanitation, education and food security, awareness of humanitarian principles

### **Analyses/studies that should be carried out during the strategy period**

- Conflict analysis, including among other things a study of how to strengthen local structures and develop capacity
- Studies on the situation of children, highlighting issues such as slavery, exploitation, child soldiers etc.
- Studies on the situation of citizens who have been internally displaced as a result of the conflict and understanding of the needs of different categories of internally displaced refugees.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### **1.1 Points of departure for Sida's assignment**

In a Government decision of 17 June 1999, Sida was instructed to submit a proposal for a strategy on humanitarian assistance to Sudan for the period 2000-2001. According to the instructions, Sweden's development cooperation to Sudan should be characterised by humanitarian policy principles.

Conflicts, clashes and population resettlements, compounded by recurrent drought and other natural disasters, have led to continued instability and volatility in Sudan. This situation seriously impedes the development of any long-term strategies.

We propose a reassessment of the situation in Sudan at the end of 2001. If the situation remains essentially unchanged, and the stated strategic areas are

still realistic and have priority, we propose an extension of the strategy until the end of 2002.

### **1.2 The structure of the report**

Sida's country strategies normally consist of three parts: an analysis of the situation in the country, an evaluation of the results of development cooperation to date and the actual strategy. This strategy for humanitarian assistance to Sudan does not follow the regular pattern, but describes the humanitarian assistance operations and the environment in which the operations take place.

According to the guidelines for the development of a strategy for Sudan, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs is responsible for analysing the political climate in which the humanitarian operations are conducted, and Sida will evaluate results to date and draw up a strategy on the basis of the Foreign Ministry's situation analysis. A document entitled "Sweden's positions" drawn up by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs is also enclosed.

## **2. CONCLUSIONS OF THE SITUATION ANALYSIS**

### *Introductory summary*

The civil war in Sudan is Africa's longest-standing internal conflict and dates back several decades. Since 1983, the conflict area has expanded from the south to western, eastern and central parts of the country. Acts of war and organised violence have caused immense human suffering. Twenty-seven years of civil war have claimed a total of 2 million lives and over 4.5 million of the country's citizens are internally displaced. Another 300 000 are refugees in six neighbouring countries. Years of low-intensity warfare and a situation aggravated by floods, drought and environmental damage have undermined the population's hopes of living a normal life. The conflict has depleted the resources of many local communities, increased their vulnerability and obstructed recovery and normalisation. The drought in 1998 is a clear example of how a combination of armed conflict, clashes between different factions and no rain have affected the survival of the civilian population.

Both the Government and the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) have armed militia groups in different parts of the country, which are responsible for serious attacks on the civilian population. Rural areas have become militarised and armed groups have destabilised large areas over which neither the Government nor the rebel organisations have any control. Different factions have broken free from SPLM/A. At present there are estimated to be approximately eight different factions. The Southern Sudan Liberation Movement (SSIM) is the largest, with most of its supporters in the north-eastern part of southern Sudan. Clashes occur between the SPLM and SSIM.

Another kind of violence is found in south-western Sudan, where the *Murahallen* (militia), who have close ties to the Sudanese Government, accompany trains in order to protect soldiers transported between Khartoum

and Wau. The *Murahallen* are not remunerated by the Government, and have therefore set about systematically plundering local communities and kidnapping women and children for slave trade. Cattle are also stolen during these plundering raids.

#### *Internally displaced persons*

Just over half of the approximately 4.5 million internally displaced persons in Sudan have sought refuge in the outskirts of cities in the northern parts of the country. Approximately 2 million people are estimated to have settled a few kilometres from the capital Khartoum, where they have lived for a long time under extremely harsh conditions, without access to social services or the possibility of satisfying their basic needs. A majority of these internal refugees in the north are from southern or western Sudan. They are exceptionally marginalised in Sudanese society. The UN has had difficulty in reaching these internal refugees but has recently intensified its efforts to support them. An important aspect of this issue is respect for humanitarian principles, which means that procedures for resettling groups of the population must follow certain fundamental principles including sufficient notice, voluntary participation, and provision of basic social services in the new housing areas.

Basic conditions for farming and cattle farming are more favourable for the two million internally displaced persons in the southern parts of the country, in both government- and rebel-held territories. However, owing to recurrent conflicts, this group of internal refugees are continually uprooted, making it difficult for them to achieve economic self-sufficiency and lead reasonably tolerable lives. In these conditions, normal survival mechanisms are thrown out of joint, and the capacity to deal with the effects of natural disaster severely diminished.

#### *Refugees from Eritrea and Ethiopia and Sudanese refugees in bordering countries*

There are several categories of refugees in Sudan: refugees in camps, refugees who have more or less become integrated into the community and refugees who are neither integrated nor live in camps. The needs of these different groups should be taken into account in repatriation and re-integration efforts.

There are 340 000 Eritrean refugees in Sudan. 140 000 of these live in refugee camps and many have done so for 25-30 years. There has been no organised repatriation since June 1995 on account of political discussions between Eritrea and Sudan. Spontaneous returns took place in 1996 and to some extent in 1997. The war between Ethiopia and Eritrea has, however, put a stop to these spontaneous returns and, instead, more refugees have crossed the border into Sudan, primarily from Eritrea. It is now possible for them to return following an agreement between Eritrea and Sudan to initiate repatriation and re-integration programmes. These efforts are facilitated by the fact that the UNHCR has resumed operations in Eritrea. However, in view of the war between Eritrea and Ethiopia, the question remains whether refugees want to return.

The refugees in camps are entirely dependent on external support for their survival and subsistence, but because of the difficulties of obtaining permission to access the camps, only a limited number of humanitarian organisations operate there. The situation of the refugees has therefore become extremely precarious. Limited funds mean that the UNHCR must give priority to the most needy.

The other Eritrean refugees have become more or less integrated into Sudanese society. The UNHCR and Sudanese Government are currently conducting discussions on whether these people should retain their refugee status or become Sudanese citizens. An unknown number of refugees live in a grey zone, neither integrated nor living in refugee camps.

In 1991 there were 970 000 Ethiopian refugees in Sudan, of whom just over 40 000 remain today. A massive repatriation initiative enabled a great many people to return. Of the remaining refugees, 12 000 live in refugee camps where continued repatriation is planned. The other refugees have roughly the same status as Eritrean refugees.

Today there are some 300 000 Sudanese refugees in six neighbouring countries, most of whom are in Uganda (177 300), Ethiopia (70 000) and Kenya (60 000). Their situation and the prospects for a solution to their problems are mainly monitored by the UNHCR.

#### *The situation of children*

Children constitute an especially vulnerable group in the war-torn Sudan. It has become clear that traditional humanitarian assistance is not enough to ensure the fulfilment of children's basic rights and needs. What is needed is a long period of peace.

Several factors affect the situation of children in Sudan, both in the North and the South. Firstly, the ongoing civil war and famine in southern Sudan have led to massive population resettlements and children have been forced to live for long periods in extremely difficult conditions. During the drought and famine disaster in 1998, exceptionally high levels of malnutrition were recorded among both children and adults and a large proportion of the 250 000 who died were children.

Secondly, the conflicts, constant population resettlements and recurring natural disasters have led to limited access throughout the country to basic social services such as health care and education. It has been virtually impossible for internally displaced persons and refugees to obtain a formal school education, especially in the southern part of the country. In this context, one cannot overemphasise the importance of providing protection for children in conflict situations and of trying to make their everyday-lives as normal as possible.

Children are especially vulnerable and exploited in military contexts as child soldiers and for child labour. They are also the victims of sexual exploitation

and other forms of abuse. Women and children have also been known to be abducted and forced into slave labour in other parts of the country or abroad.

#### *The situation of women*

Women in Sudan are extremely marginalised both in government- and rebel-held territories. Their situation, socially and economically, is far from equal to that of men and they lack the freedom of choice enjoyed by men. The protracted war and conflicts have further aggravated the women's situation and women make up a large proportion of both refugees and internally displaced persons. Displacement has also led to increased separation among families, which has forced many women to assume responsibility for their family's livelihood and survival in extremely difficult circumstances. The average life expectancy of women in Sudan is lower than that of men.

Women and children in Sudan are also the victims of international law and human rights violations. There have been several cases involving the abduction of women and children for slavery and other forms of exploitation. UNICEF has taken on the specific task of investigating the occurrence of slavery, which is a particularly sensitive and complex issue in Sudan, in both the northern and southern parts of the country. The payment of ransom by a non-governmental organisation was strongly criticised by UNICEF and the international community, because it was said to encourage the development of a market for slave trade. Such measures could also serve to engender conflict and contribute to increased arms trade since they give the slave-traders greater access to hard currency.

#### *The situation in the Nuba Mountains*

The Nuba Mountains are a particularly remote region in southern Sudan and have been isolated from their surroundings for decades. Even though the local communities are well-organised, they are also extremely disadvantaged and lack basic social services such as health care, education and food security. After several years of negotiations with the Government, the UN was able to carry out an assessment of the situation in the Nuba Mountains in June 1999, and established that there was considerable need for humanitarian assistance in the region, although perhaps not as great as initially feared. However, the difficulties of gaining access to the rebel-held territories in the Nuba Mountains remain.

#### *The interplay between the political climate, peace initiatives and humanitarian efforts*

In Sudan there is a close correlation between the political climate, peace initiatives and humanitarian efforts. The peace process is primarily driven by the International Authority on Development's (IGAD) sub-committee on Sudan which is led by Kenya and also comprises representatives from Ethiopia, Eritrea and Uganda. The committee's work is hampered by the fact that these countries are involved in conflicts of their own and with each other. The IGAD Partners Forum (IPF), of which Sweden is a member, has been set up to support IGAD. So far the peace negotiations under the

auspices of IGAD have failed to make any substantial headway, but in the long term it is hoped that the newly-established secretariat in Nairobi will improve the prospects for an accelerated peace process.

Tortuous negotiations between the Sudanese Government and the SPLM have on several occasions led to temporary humanitarian ceasefires, giving relief agencies a respite during which they have been able to reach the civilian population. However, these have been limited in time and space and have been breached by both sides. The ceasefires represent one of the most essential requirements for conducting humanitarian operations in Sudan and the political ability to conduct negotiations is a vital key to gaining access.

The security of relief workers is a related area, where interaction between political initiatives and humanitarian interests is possible. In appeals for Sudan today, security is included as a separate item with a separate account. Although humanitarian access has increased since the establishment of OLS ten years ago<sup>1</sup>, the overall security risks to relief workers have also increased, with a greater number of incidents involving abductions, injuries and death among aid workers in Sudan. The plundering of transports, imposition of charges, flight blockages, bombings of civilian targets such as schools and hospitals etc. are examples of other security risks to humanitarian operations and mean that humanitarian security must be asserted and supported in all contexts and at all levels. Security risks affect the quality of humanitarian assistance since projects are frequently delayed and thereby lose impetus.

In January 2000, the SPLM's humanitarian arm, SRRA, issued an ultimatum to NGOs working in SPLM-controlled areas in southern Sudan to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) by 1 March 2000. Those organisations that failed to sign an agreement would be forced to leave the country and there would be no guarantees for their security. By mid-March about ten NGOs had left southern Sudan after diplomatic efforts to resume negotiations with the SRRA had failed. Signing an MoU is primarily an issue between the SRRA and the individual NGO, whereas assessments of whether an NGO should receive financial support should mainly be based on the organisation's ability to access the civilian population.

It is also worth bearing in mind the local peace initiatives in Sudan which, in certain cases, have led to concrete results. Examples include the Nuer-Dinka peace negotiations that led to peace in March 1998 between two factions engaged in violent conflict for over seven years. Several local peace conferences are planned in Sudan.

### **3. CONCLUSIONS OF THE STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS**

#### **3.1 Focus, scope, channels and results of development cooperation**

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<sup>1</sup> OLS, Operation Lifeline Sudan was established in 1988 and was the first humanitarian programme with the aim of helping internally displaced persons and those affected by the war – wherever they were – during a civil war.

The statement of operations covers the years 1997-99 and primarily concerns humanitarian assistance. During this period, Sida has also contributed a total of SEK 17 million to development operations by individual Swedish NGOs in Sudan.

Throughout the period, Sweden's humanitarian aid to Sudan totalled SEK 158.3 million. A primary ambition was to combine short-term humanitarian needs with more long-term development perspectives. Most of the support has been paid to health care, water/sanitation, food security and education projects. The 1998 drought led to a dramatic increase in aid and was mainly targeted at survival-related initiatives, but long-term measures to improve food security (e.g. through seed and hoes) were also an important component. The aid was primarily channelled through UN bodies and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). In 1998, a larger proportion of the allocation was paid to Swedish NGOs than in 1997 and 1999 because of the drought. During the period Sida personnel visited 25 of the 39 projects financed. On the whole, Sida's experience of its cooperation with these relief organisations has been good. At present the NGOs have no strategies for phasing out their operations since they see no possibility of transferring responsibility to local organisations. Discussions are being held on the reality of transferring funding from the budgetary sub-heading for humanitarian assistance and conflict prevention to the sub-heading for cooperation with NGOs.

The results of relief operations have been satisfactory. In 1998, for example, Swedish organisations distributed emergency relief in the form of food, oil, salt, vitamin-enriched biscuits, seed and hoes to some 77 000 affected civilians. Food and seed were also distributed to schools so that children would not need to flee or join the army to find food. Attendance at one school increased from 6767 pupils to 15 330. The number of girls increased substantially.

It is, however, difficult to show any measurable long-term development results. A recurring problem has been instability in the country and the lack of competent staff. Health projects have focused on emergency relief and sustenance, and substitution or re-establishment of basic primary health-care systems in hospitals or health centres. Water and sanitation projects have primarily involved the drilling of wells, restoration of water holes and the building of latrines. Support to these sectors has created more favourable conditions for providing the population with basic health care, medicines and nutritional supplements and provided better access to clean water and sanitary facilities. Education programmes have centred on renovation of schools, provision of teaching materials and equipment and teacher training. The international presence is considered to have had a somewhat stabilising influence.

Support to the strengthening of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs' (OCHA) coordination activities has facilitated the effective functioning of both the UN and NGOs. Support to OLS has also played an essential role. The UN cannot operate in Sudan without OLS, and

NGOs working within the framework of OLS cannot be guaranteed security and help with transports without OLS.

In view of the experience of operations so far and the more efficient supervision and follow-up of, primarily, government-controlled areas, a slight shift in the focus of humanitarian assistance to Sudan is suggested. This would highlight education and the role of local structures in a long-term humanitarian assistance perspective. A continued but greater focus on awareness of humanitarian principles is also proposed.

The appendix to the statement of operations shows the donors' contributions in 1999 as well as the focus of the different projects.

### **3.2 Follow-up and evaluation**

During 1999 several evaluations were initiated as a result of the drought in 1998. Denmark has carried out an evaluation which, inter alia, concluded that a general policy for humanitarian assistance should be drawn up, as well as a special policy for Sudan. Evaluations are also being carried out by the United Kingdom, ECHO, MSF-H, MSF-B and WFP. UNICEF has studied the evaluation conducted by OLS and examined UNICEF's role. Sida has therefore not carried out an independent evaluation. As yet, no conclusions have been drawn from the existing evaluations, but Sida plans to participate in a workshop in Nairobi, during which the overall conclusions of these evaluations will be discussed.

Efforts to follow-up development assistance to northern Sudan have intensified during this period. This has led to greater knowledge of conditions in the northern part of the country and a more fruitful dialogue with organisations operating in this region.

## **4.FUTURE HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE**

### **4.1. Strategic considerations**

Progress in Sudan will only be possible through peaceful and democratic social development, with greater respect for human rights. Efforts to achieve peace between the contending parties and various factions in Sudan have not yet succeeded and the problem of implementing a possible peace agreement cannot be underestimated. Contention between the various rebel groups and organised violence are the prime cause of the desperate circumstances of the civilian population. An optimistic scenario may bring hope that, as local peace initiatives successively lead to reconciliation and peace between the different groups, opportunities for rehabilitation and reconstruction may arise.

In order to improve the situation for the civilian population, it is important to strengthen social structures such as religious communities, village councils, local NGOs, women's groups, family structures, etc., all of which

are currently in a state of collapse. Functioning social structures would be able to canalise democratic pressure so that demands were made on both the Government, the SPLM and other rebel groups to work towards peace. Although Swedish humanitarian assistance intends primarily to alleviate suffering, it should be possible to combine this aim with support to these disintegrating social structures.

A political solution to the issue of repatriation of refugees between Eritrea and Sudan is not enough. A prerequisite for changing the circumstances of Eritrean refugees is a peaceful solution to the conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia. If repatriation were to be started, Swedish humanitarian assistance should be focused on the implementation of returnee programmes, where the UNHCR has a central role.

#### *Humanitarian access and the role of OLS*

For humanitarian assistance to be effective, there must be guarantees to ensure access to those needing help and the security of relief workers. OLS is based on a three-party agreement<sup>2</sup> between the United Nations, the Government of Sudan and the rebel organisations. The agreement was negotiated with consideration to the sovereignty of the country, and regulates the general principles and areas to be reached by humanitarian assistance. A supplementary agreement established the right of OLS to move freely within all regions of southern Sudan to transport food and other necessities. The agreement means, among other things, that humanitarian rights and respect for human rights and democracy should permeate humanitarian operations. In December 1999, a further three-party agreement was signed, which will form one of the most important instruments in continued negotiations on access and security.

The credibility of OLS is based on efficiency, firmness of principle and consistency. The OLS organisation is divided into northern and southern branches negotiating with both the Government and the SPLM to be able to work in the areas. The northern branch of OLS negotiates daily with the Government of Sudan on access for transports and necessities throughout southern Sudan, including in SPLM-controlled areas. This means that a balance must be struck between dealing with sensitive issues on the one hand, and obtaining permission to carry out humanitarian assistance on the other. This, in turn, may result in the Government of Sudan refusing permission for what it sees as security reasons.

Efficient humanitarian assistance must look to the organisations that can give the best possible assistance to those in need. This means that use must

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<sup>2</sup> Agreement on the Implementation of Principles Governing the Protection and Provision of Humanitarian Assistance to War Affected Populations (Beneficiary Protocol).

be made of all available channels, irrespective of whether or not they are members of OLS in the areas covered by this organisation. At the same time, exclusion of an organisation means that it will be working outside the legal OLS agreement, in which the Government and rebels have signed a regulatory framework. Coordination within OLS and between OLS and NGOs working outside its framework is therefore imperative in order to carry out humanitarian assistance.

#### Local structures and capacity-building

Local shortages of capacity (such as resources and education) at different levels and within different sectors are a limiting factor in a number of ways. Such shortages of capacity are said to explain the occurrence of violations of humanitarian agreements and human rights. In northern Sudan, the shortage of capacity is seen to be a contributory factor to the poor treatment of internally displaced persons outside Khartoum. Both the Government's coordination body for humanitarian issues, the HAC, and the SRRA in southern Sudan have also named the shortage of resources as a limiting factor. At the same time, the SPLM/A and SRRA have both been criticised for lack of awareness of, and respect for, human rights and democratic forms of government, and for weak civilian structures.

Experience has shown that the development of local capacity is an important, but also complicated factor in sustainable humanitarian assistance. Armed conflict and organised violence causes local social structures to break down. When vulnerable groups are confronted with hostilities, combined with drought and crop failure, their weakened social structures have no chance of maintaining social security networks.

Making decisions on the sensitive issue of capacity building in such a conflict-torn environment as Sudan is problematic. Support in a particular direction may be perceived as taking sides in the conflict if it directly or indirectly favours one of the parties and thus helps to strengthen its legitimacy and authority. However, this does not rule out the possibility of measures to strengthen local capacity. It is, in fact, extremely important to support such projects in order to boost respect for human rights and create better conditions for providing humanitarian relief. However, the difficulties of identifying potential actors within civilian society and of defining the criteria suitable for support are considerable. Local capacity building may also consist of support towards strengthening the national Red Crescent organisation.

#### Post-conflict peace-building

The main reason for the problematic humanitarian situation in Sudan is the civil war and organised violence. Humanitarian assistance may be able to

alleviate the suffering of the people affected by the war but it cannot replace political solutions.

Post-conflict peace-building efforts are directly dependent on the social, political and cultural setting at the time, processes occurring in the conflict situation being dealt with, and the will of the parties to cooperate. Without this will, the chances of achieving well-functioning programmes are limited. However, work at several levels of society and with those willing to talk and live in peace may be possible.

One aspect of humanitarian operations is thus to stimulate social processes which could facilitate locally supported reconciliation operations. Close discussions and the exchange of experience between humanitarian and political actors are, however, extremely important in collective efforts to promote peace, prevent new conflicts, support reconciliation and the rehabilitation of the societies afflicted by the conflict. At grass-roots level, where conflicts occur between different ethnic groups, mediation in talks and negotiations has often proved valuable. Such dialogue-promoting activities can influence the culture of violence and affect the behaviour of the different parties. In the long term, they may possibly lead to greater trust between the rebel groups and the Government/SPLM/NDA. Participation in such sensitive processes requires a high level of awareness of the conditions and risks involved. It is therefore desirable that organisations active in this field have clearly defined ambitions and methods as regards the resolution and prevention of conflicts.

#### **4.2. Objectives and target groups**

The overall aim of humanitarian assistance to Sudan is to alleviate the effects of conflicts and natural disasters. A further objective is to create better conditions for permanent solutions for those affected and improve the prospects for peaceful development. Assistance should also be directed at preventive measures, such as household food security, improving access to medical care, water/sanitation and education, and increasing awareness of and respect for humanitarian principles and human rights.

Individual projects in Sudan are having a positive effect at the local level but their effect on overall goals is unclear. The guiding principle for projects supported by Sida must, however, be that they strengthen the prospects for peaceful development. At the same time, it is obvious that all development assistance in this conflict-torn region is associated with great risks.

Where needs are acute, pure survival relief and food may be given.

The humanitarian operations are guided by humanitarian considerations (the moral obligation of fellow people and states to help other human beings in need), human rights and basic humanitarian principles such as impartiality, neutrality, independence and free access. Despite the correlation between the political climate, peace efforts and humanitarian operations, political motives should not determine humanitarian assistance.

Peace efforts at national, regional and international levels have not yet led to a peaceful solution of the conflict in Sudan and peace and stability will probably not be achieved within the period covered by this strategy. It is therefore proposed that the assistance should continue to be targeted both at the people affected by conflicts and natural disasters and at internally displaced persons, and should focus especially on the situation of women and children. Internally displaced persons in Sudan can be divided into different categories: a) internal refugees in urban areas under governmental control; b) internal refugees in rural areas under the control of SPLM/A or SSIM; c) internal refugees in camps under governmental or SPLM/A or SSIM control. Local populations whose basic livelihood has been destroyed by war or plundering, and orphans and children made vulnerable in other ways may also be included in these categories.

We suggest that the size of assistance remains at the same level as that of 1999, i.e. approximately SEK 70 million per year, with room for flexibility depending on the situation. A balance between government and rebel-controlled areas is desirable, but needs and access are primary criteria.

If a permanent, comprehensive ceasefire is negotiated, future humanitarian assistance should be directed towards the people affected by conflicts and natural disasters, and internally displaced persons, and include efforts at reconstruction and reconciliation.

#### *Internally displaced persons*

Those responsible for Swedish development assistance should be especially aware of the extremely vulnerable situation under which internal refugees in Sudan have been living for years; internally displaced persons in the northern areas are particularly vulnerable. Access to these refugees is essential, as is ensuring that agreed principles on protection against compulsory removal are respected. Sweden should promote the development of clear principles and policies on aid for internal refugees in Sudan involving the UN, the EU and NGOs. It should also give support to these efforts.

#### *Children*

Swedish humanitarian assistance should encourage respect for the rights of the child and help to meet children's needs. Children's rights to food, health care, shelter, psychosocial assistance and education must be fulfilled. As a result of the protracted conflict, many children in southern Sudan have received no schooling at all, or have had their education interrupted and have therefore voluntarily or under coercion joined up with militant groups. Swedish humanitarian assistance should give support, inter alia, to education in order to counteract such tendencies.

### Women

Swedish humanitarian assistance should work to promote gender equality. This is essential from the point of view of justice and efficiency, even in emergency situations. Access to assistance should be guaranteed to women and men on an equal basis and according to their individual needs. The right of women to decide over their own lives should also be supported. Violence and acts of cruelty against women are common in conflict situations. There are also a number of cases in which women and children have been abducted and held to ransom. This may encourage the development of a market for slave trade, which may in turn contribute further to the conflict by giving slave traders access to hard currency, thereby increasing arms trade. Swedish humanitarian assistance should therefore not contribute to the ransom of abducted persons.

### **4.3 Sectors/areas**

Despite the great number of needs, assistance should be targeted at a limited number of sectors/areas: primarily health, water/sanitation, education, household food security, and information on humanitarian principles. Priority should also be given to coordination of humanitarian efforts and logistics.

### Education

Education is a much neglected area in Sudan. Access to education, including adult education, helps in the long run to improve people's chances of dealing with their situation. Providing for the right to education can be facilitated through efforts to strengthen capacity in the education sector, which may mean, for example, repairing school buildings, the provision of school materials and teacher training.

Educational programmes for children in conflict areas may also have a dampening effect on the conflict by diminishing its recruitment base. The possibility of going to school every day provides security to children in conflict areas and helps them escape from their stressful and traumatic everyday lives. Peace education for children is an important further dimension, especially for those living in conflict areas. In southern Sudan,

training in reconciliation and peace issues outside the curriculum, but sanctioned by the SRRA, is being carried out. Discussions are being held between UN bodies, NGOs and SRRA on the best ways of integrating peace training into curricula. Similar discussions are also taking place in government-controlled areas.

#### Health care and water/sanitation

Clean water and access to good sanitary arrangements are a condition for all human life.

The civil war has affected the welfare of people in Sudan both directly and indirectly. A devastating result of the war is that people, especially internal refugees in the majority of conflict areas have no access to health care. This, together with a lack of adequate food security has caused a drastic rise in disease and death, where mortality caused by disease is higher than war/violence-related mortality.

Humanitarian assistance should be targeted at improving the population's health status by giving access to clean water, sanitation, and basic medical care, of a long-term nature and built to last, even after the conflict is over. Local capacity should be developed in order to obtain sustainable results. Sida's current work on drawing up general principles for health projects under humanitarian operations will serve as guidance in this respect.

#### Household food-security

The need for food assistance in the acute phase of a disaster is absolutely necessary and is often the first of all needs to be dealt with. The evaluations made by Sida of the drought in Southern Africa<sup>3</sup> and of Swedish humanitarian relief to the Horn of Africa (1991-1994)<sup>4</sup>, showed that food relief on its own may lead to a long-term dependence on food distribution. This meant that farmers had fewer incentives to begin farming their land again because of the availability of free foodstuffs. Sustainable humanitarian assistance is based on avoiding such dependence on external food distribution and creating conditions for self-help through cultivation of land and/or cattle farming. Priority should be given to strengthening such conditions.

#### Humanitarian principles

From the perspective of promoting security, the building up of knowledge of, inter alia, international human rights among the military, the militia and civilian sectors is crucial. Even if violations of humanitarian agreements and

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<sup>3</sup> Evaluation of Swedish Support to the Drought Operations in Southern Africa, 1994.

<sup>4</sup> What Relief for the Horn? Sida-supported Emergency Operations in Ethiopia, Eritrea, Southern Sudan, Somalia and Djibouti, 1995.

human rights are largely due to a lack of resources, an influx of further resources would do little to change the general picture. In order to achieve long-term development, programmes must give priority to information on and awareness of humanitarian principles.

A study has shown that awareness of humanitarian principles among the organisations active in the region varies considerably, which indicates that it is important to allocate funds to those organisations that possess this information.

#### **4 Methods for administration of humanitarian assistance**

##### 4.4.1 General methods

Sida's directions for contributions to Swedish and international organisations serve as guidelines when humanitarian operations are assessed. The model has been drawn up in accordance with the LFA model, albeit adapted to the special circumstances associated with humanitarian assistance. The criteria also include consideration of development promotion effects, gender equality and environmental aspects as well as conflict analysis.

The aim of humanitarian assistance focusing on development promotion is to encourage long-term and locally supported solutions in an emergency situation. Acute needs should be seen in the context of the entire life situation of those affected, an element of which may be the strengthening of local capacity.

Sida's strategy for conflict management and post-conflict peace-building and the Swedish action plan *Preventing Violent Conflict* (ds 1999:24) guide both post-conflict peace-building and humanitarian efforts.

It is proposed that a conflict analysis be carried out, including, inter alia, an inventory, description and study of the ongoing conflict. Light should be shed on the issue of internally displaced persons as the seed of renewed conflict. In view of the slightly changed approach, giving importance to strong local structures, the complexity of efforts to increase capacity should be analysed. Furthermore, the role of humanitarian assistance in a conflict environment such as that in Sudan should be made clear.

At present Sida is carrying out a follow-up of efforts in the areas of conflict management and post-conflict peace-building and also formulating guidelines for work in this area.

OLS may also be seen as a means of implementing humanitarian assistance. A dialogue concerning OLS working methods is carried on in different

contexts in the UN and UN agencies, at joint donor meetings, coordination meetings and the International Advisory Committee (IAC). In concrete terms, this is done through participation in donor meetings within the framework of OLS/southern branch in Nairobi and meetings every six months in Nairobi and Khartoum for coordination between OLS northern and southern branches. Structural and policy coordination takes place in the IAC, which should be given a more strategic role in accordance with the evaluation of OLS.

#### **4.4.2 Target-group related methods**

##### *Internally displaced persons*

Humanitarian assistance to internal refugees should follow the guidelines drawn up by the UN (the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Internally Displaced Persons). These guidelines are based, inter alia, on international law and identify the rights and relevant guarantees for the protection of internal refugees against arbitrary removal. The guidelines also establish basic principles for protection and assistance during removal, include guarantees for being able to return and settle, and discuss the question of reintegration. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has a mandate to deal with the matter of internal refugees in Sudan and since 1999 there has been an officer stationed in Khartoum with special responsibility for IDPs. A study of the IDP issue as a consequence of the conflict and of the needs of the different categories of internal refugees is proposed.

##### *Children*

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child serves as central guidelines in this area. The Secretary-General's Special Envoy for children in armed conflicts has produced recommendations pertaining to children in conflicts. It is of utmost importance to ensure that they are followed.

Assistance should also contribute to strengthening awareness of and respect for humanitarian principles, human rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child in both rebel- and government-held areas. Work on behalf of the rights of the child and support for children should be included in all programmes.

Attention is given to children in armed conflicts in the strategy for conflict management and post-conflict peace-building. It is proposed, among other things, that special support and attention should be given to children used as soldiers, children subjected to sexual abuse and other forms of sexual exploitation, disabled children, children who are internal refugees and children who are refugees outside their own country, children from

indigenous populations and minority groups, as well as children who take care of other children and act as head of the family.

Investment needs to be made in education for children and the protection of children affected by war. An alternative must be offered to the spiral of violence that affects children either as child soldiers and/or victims of combat.

An in-depth study of the situation of children in Sudan is proposed in which light is shed on complex and culturally sensitive issues such as slavery, the exploitation of children, child soldiers, etc. from a perspective that promotes the rights of the child at the same time as it takes into consideration the cultural environment in which the child lives.

### Women

Sida's action plan for gender equality serves as guidelines for work in this area. Sida's review of gender equality and humanitarian assistance/conflict management contains further guidelines for assessing efforts. The objective of adopting a gender equality approach in humanitarian assistance is to improve the health of families (including sexual and reproductive health and rights), create the preconditions for post-conflict peace-building contributions and to give greater attention to analysis of the difference between men's and women's needs.

### **4.4.3 Observation and follow-up**

It is strategically important to monitor developments in both rebel- and government-controlled areas. In addition to the coordinating meetings described above under general methods, the situation is monitored through informal contacts with other donors and actors. This field observation is mainly effected from the Embassy in Nairobi by the humanitarian coordinator in close cooperation with the Embassy's political observer. government-controlled areas are monitored by the political observer at the Embassy in Cairo and humanitarian aspects by the humanitarian coordinator at the Embassy in Nairobi.

Observation of northern Sudan is not as intensive as that of the southern sector. However, in 1998 and 1999 Sida reinforced its monitoring of northern Sudan through a representative in Khartoum who closely followed humanitarian issues and Sida-financed programmes. It is advisable that Sida continue to intensify its dialogue with and follow-up of the northern sector and that this takes place under flexible forms. Observation of Sudan should include recurring field visits in order to monitor efforts and follow

developments in the country at close range and not solely from a Nairobi or Khartoum perspective.

In order to increase knowledge of the situation in Sudan and the role of humanitarian assistance in a conflict environment, it is vital from the strategic point of view that there is a greater degree of follow-up, evaluation and analysis and also that particularly urgent issues are clarified by in-depth studies and research assignments. This will mean that Sida's chances of intensified dialogue and relevant assessments increase. The humanitarian actors and organisations should be encouraged to contribute more analyses of the preconditions for dialogue and reconciliation, the conflict scenario as it appears in Sudan, the security situation, violent tendencies and humanitarian consequences.

#### **4.5 Channels for and coordination of humanitarian assistance**

Assistance to Sudan will continue to be channelled through UN agencies and Swedish and international NGOs that have experience and knowledge of the sensitive political and humanitarian conflict environment in which the assistance operates. Priority should be given to organisations that work within the framework of OLS. However, in view of the matter of access, we should be open to using other channels. In this latter case, the advantage of gaining access to non-OLS areas should be weighed against the risk involved in not enjoying the security afforded by being part of the negotiated humanitarian corridor and security network that OLS implies.

In connection with natural disasters and other emergency situations in conflict areas, we should be prepared for contributions through the UN, NGOs and the Red Cross.

To maximise resources, it is of vital importance that the contributions of all actors in humanitarian assistance be coordinated. Coordination may refer to exchanges of information of a general nature but is most importantly about avoiding overlaps or gaps and formulating common positions on specific issues, thereby implying more efficient assistance.

### **5. ADMINISTRATIVE CONSIDERATIONS**

Since 1994 there has been a humanitarian coordinator stationed at the Embassy in Nairobi to monitor the humanitarian situation in Sudan which, in terms of resources, at present uses 0.4 man-years. Continuation of the present monitoring from Nairobi is planned. Resources required at Sida-S are estimated to be 0.6 man-years and refer to the SEKA and AFRA departments.



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Cover: Maria Beckius, Editorial Office

Printing and Graphic Reproduction centre, Stockholm 2000

Article no: UD 00.194