UNDP | UNHCR

Transitional Solutions Initiative (TSI)

Joint Programme

DURABLE SOLUTIONS THROUGH ENHANCED SELF-RELIANCE FOR REFUGEES, INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS AND HOST COMMUNITIES IN EASTERN SUDAN
The Challenge and TSI’s Response

THE CHALLENGE

Over the last 40 years, Eastern Sudan has received and hosted successive waves of refugees, mainly from Eritrea and Ethiopia, and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), despite the scarcity of natural resources and basic services in the region. Aid dependency now exists, and the majority of host communities also rely on the complimentary basic services provided in refugee camps. A significant proportion of the population lives in poverty and the limited availability of land and work opportunities, coupled with restrictions on freedom of movement, negatively impacts upon refugee, IDP and host community prospects for meaningful livelihoods.

THE TSI: A GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP

The Transitional Solutions Initiative (TSI) is a global initiative spearheaded by UNDP, UNHCR and the World Bank and is also currently being piloted in Colombia. The TSI engages humanitarian and development actors, as well as bilateral and multilateral donors, through successful inter-agency collaboration and tailored area-based interventions to increase the self-reliance of protracted refugees, IDPs and host communities.
The TSI in Eastern Sudan

**CONTEXT**

Eastern Sudan has been selected as a pilot area for the TSI, a framework for transitioning protracted refugee situations to durable solutions through the establishment of self-sustaining settlements. In Eastern Sudan, the TSI consists of three interconnected and closely coordinated interventions:

1. the UNDP/UNHCR TSI Joint Programme (JP);
2. the UNHCR Multi-Year Self Reliance Project; and
3. the World Bank TSI Project.

**UNDP | UNHCR TSI JOINT PROGRAMME**

**Goal:** To enhance self-reliance, reduce aid dependency and assist socio-economic integration by restoring and expanding sustainable livelihoods opportunities for refugees and host communities.

**Phase I:** 2012 – 2014

**Budget:** US$ 41,334,927

**Direct & Indirect Beneficiaries:**

162,879 individuals or 32,000 households

**Key Partners:**

- Government of Sudan
  - Ministry of Finance, Commissioner of Refugees, Line Ministries, Girba & Fashaga Localities

- Implementing Partners
  - Local and international Non-Governmental Organizations

- World Bank & UN Agencies
TSI Joint Programme
Livelihoods Approach

Sudan UNDAF Outcome 3:
Reduce poverty among vulnerable groups
Increase economic growth

Rural Livelihoods
Increase production and diversify:
- Training and extension services
- Technology
- Value chain and market linkages

Microfinance
Enhance access to financial services:
- Village Savings & Lending Groups
- Linkages to microfinance providers
- Capacity building and BDS

Vocational Training
Foster entrepreneurship:
- Apprenticeships
- Start-up kits and grants
- Job counseling and BDS

Women’s Empowerment
Tailored Innovations
Community Ownership

Enhanced Self-reliance & Resilience
Sustainable Local Economic Recovery
**TSI Joint Programme 2013 Progress Highlights**

**ENHANCING VOCATIONAL CAPACITIES & BUSINESS SKILLS**

- **2013 TARGET:** 519 vocational course graduates in mobile phone repair, automechanics, electrical maintenance and food processing.
- **2013 TARGET:** 430 women trained in food processing, handicrafts, milk production and clothes dyeing.

**IMPROVING ACCESS TO BASIC SERVICES**

- **2013 TARGET:** 4,215 students in nine schools benefitted from educational supplies for enhanced learning.
- **2013 TARGET:** 510 people accessing newly constructed latrines, improving hygiene and sanitation.
- **2013 TARGET:** 950 people with access to latrines.

**ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHTS:**
- 14 primary school teachers recruited, improving the student-teacher ratio from 60:1 to 50:1.
- One Hospital renovated and Pediatric Ward constructed for increased access to healthcare.
- 2,000 additional people accessing potable water.
TSI Joint Programme
2013 Progress Highlights

**IMPROVING REFUGEE PROTECTION**

- **2013 TARGET:**
  - 12,883 refugees supported to receive documentation

- **30,000** refugees granted work permits valid in Kassala State through agreement reached with the Commissioner of Refugees and Kassala State authorities

**DIVERSIFYING AND IMPROVING RURAL LIVELIHOODS**

- **2013 TARGET:**
  - 3,000 farmers receive inputs (seeds and hand tools)

- **6,000** farmers received 80 metric tons of seeds and hand tools

- **2013 TARGET:**
  - 90 para-veterinarians trained and 30,000 animals vaccinated

- **35** para-veterinarians and animal herders trained and **24,800** animals vaccinated

**ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHTS:**
- 2,300 farmers benefitted from improved water harvesting techniques

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TSI Joint Programme 2013 Progress Highlights

**IMPROVING ACCESS TO MICROFINANCE**

- **2013 TARGET:** 1,704 beneficiaries, 90% women, established 75 Village Savings and Lending (VSL) Groups and received business training
- **ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHTS:**
  - 1,110 loans provided to beneficiaries

**DEVELOPING CAPACITIES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION**

- **2013 TARGET:** 1,500 beneficiaries, 50% women, form Village Savings and Lending (VSL) Groups and receive business training
- **2013 TARGET:** 2,300 people trained on the use of alternative energy
- **2013 TARGET:** 300,000 seedlings of different species produced
- **2013 TARGET:** 354,858 seedlings of different species produced and planted and 5 community nurseries established for improved agro-forestry and food security
- **2013 TARGET:** 2,140 people trained on clean energy for domestic cooking and the construction and use of fuel-efficient stoves
TSI Joint Programme
2013 Progress Highlights

PROMOTING WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT,
PEACEFUL EXISTENCE AND SOCIAL COHESION

2013 TARGET:
50 women’s groups
trained and supported
to establish home gardens

243 women’s home gardens
established supporting household food security

2013 TARGET:
1,000 women trained
in conflict resolution,
communication and
leadership skills

1,407 women trained in conflict resolution,
communication and leadership skills

BUILDING CAPACITY FOR DECENTRALIZED GOVERNANCE

KEY HIGHLIGHTS:

- Locality Development Plans (2012-2016) for Girba and Fashaga Localities developed
- Local Development Funds established in each Locality
- A range of capacity building support provided to State, Locality and civil society partners to support the sustainable mainstreaming of basic service delivery and enable increased beneficiary self-reliance
Success Calling in Kilo 26 Camp

Mubarek, 23, repairs mobile phones in Kilo 26 refugee camp in Kassala, Eastern Sudan. In 2012, he was selected to take part in a mobile phone repair course under the Transitional Solutions Initiative (TSI) framework. Since then, Mubarek has put his valuable new skills to use better his family’s life.

Fleeing civil war in Eritrea during the 80s, Mubarek’s parents found refuge in Eastern Sudan and settled in Kilo 26 camp, where Mubarak, their second son, was born. Approximately 74,000 protracted refugees live in camps in the East, 58% of whom were born in Sudan. When Mubarek and his brother reached adulthood, his family’s food assistance from WFP ended, as they were no longer eligible for support with Mubarek and his brother now being of working age.

Mubarek struggled to make a living, working in farms surrounding Kilo 26 camp and a bakery. “Working in the bakery wasn’t stable. I never knew if they wanted me for one, two or four days a week, and sometimes they didn’t need me at all. It was so difficult to support my elderly parents and three siblings without stability.” He even tried his hand at running his own shop selling sugar and soap, but despite his determination and efforts, his shop went bankrupt in the face of stiff competition.

Mubarek’s life changed when he was given the chance to study mobile phone repair with the Sudanese Red Crescent as part of the TSI’s livelihoods intervention. “I used to do simple repairs, but the course provided me with the technical know-how to do more complicated things. It really helped me, and I thank God I had the opportunity to take part.”

The TSI, implemented by UNDP and UNHCR, seeks to improve the self-sufficiency of host communities, refugees and IDPs living in a protracted situation through vocational training and business development support. 65% of trainees have secured employment relating to their training after graduation.

On graduating, Mubarek was provided with a start-up kit to put his acquired skills into practice, and he entered into business with his older brother. Together, they rent a small shop in Kilo 26 camp where Mubarek repairs phones and his brother sells staple items. “The kit allowed me to start my own business. At the bakery, I earned around 15 SDG (US$ 2.30) a day, but now I make about 40 to 50 SDG (US$ 7-8). The course increased my income, gave me independence and improved my job security.”

Mubarek using his start-up kit to repair mobile phones in Kilo 26 camp
(Photo: L. Pattison/UNHCR)
Suraya, a creative 22-year-old, just finished the first month of an advanced tailoring course run by the Sudanese Red Crescent under the UNDP/UNHCR Transitional Solutions Initiative (TSI) Joint Programme. Not only is sewing her passion, it is also her primary source of income. Once she graduates, Suraya hopes to put needle to thread to help support her family.

Suraya, one of the 42,600 refugees born in East Sudan, has lived her whole life in Girba refugee camp. Her parents fled conflict-ridden Eritrea in the 80s, and decided to stay in Sudan where they felt safer, even in peacetime. She was raised with her four younger siblings in the refugee community and learnt Arabic, but has been unable to find a stable source of income. Suraya always dreamed of using sewing to help her family. “For years I made handicrafts with just my hands, but didn’t make any money from it. It was a dream come true when I found out about the basic tailoring course and was accepted to participate - and now I’m learning even more in this advanced course.”

The TSI will enhance self-reliance among refugees living in a protracted situation, IDPs and host communities by supporting sustainable livelihoods and vocational training that equip beneficiaries with skills in demand in the current labour market. With these skills, course participants can earn more income and become independent, decreasing their reliance on external assistance.

Over three months, Suraya will learn to use a sewing machine and design clothes. So far, she has made jalabiyas (traditional long robes) and will be designing children’s school uniforms next. Suraya can already see the impact the course will have on her life: “I’m not only sewing by hand now, but also with a machine, which means I can produce more. If I’m able to make more, I’ll be able to sell more clothes and support my family. The best thing about the course so far is learning about the different designs and being creative.”

The conclusion of negotiations in September 2013 to grant 30,000 refugees with work permits in Kassala State under the TSI framework means that Suraya will be able to enter the labour market with greater ease and use her new skills to become meaningfully employed. In accordance with Sudanese law, refugees have the right to work in Sudan but must obtain a work permit first. However, many refugees are unaware of the process or find the application procedure complicated.

Having heard the news about the 30,000 work permits granted in Kassala, Suraya plans to take full advantage. “A work permit means I can work independently without worrying about being fined for trying to work. These permits will benefit the refugee community; many of my friends and family worry about fines and have problems searching for work outside the camp – now they can have more confidence.”

Suraya is optimistic about her future after the course. She plans to use her start-up kit, complete with sewing machine, to work from home and build up her clients, combining her skills and creativity to build a secure future for herself and her family.

In 2013, 450 trainees are expected to graduate from vocational courses supported by the TSI in mobile phone repair, sewing, electronics and food processing. Upon graduation, trainees are offered job counselling, apprenticeships and either grants or start-up kits to establish their own businesses.