

Final Report

DFID Sudan. Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund Impact Assessment.



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Abbreviations and Acronyms

AHCT	Area Humanitarian Country Team
ADRA	Adventist Development and Relief Agency
AUPD/AUHIP	African Union High Level Panel on Darfur
CSO/NGO	Civil Society Organisation/Non-Governmental Organisation
DCPSF SC	Darfur Community Peace & Stability Fund Steering Committee
DCPSF TS	Darfur Community Peace & Stability Fund Technical Secretariat
DDDC	Darfur Darfur Dialogue and Consultation
DFID	UK Department for International Development
DRA	Darfur Regional Authority
DDPD	Doha Darfur Peace Document
GoS	Government of Sudan
HAC	Humanitarian Assistance Commission
INGO	International non-governmental organisation
LJM	Liberation and Justice Movement
NSIS	National Security and Intelligence Service
UNAMID	United Nations African Union Mission in Darfur
UNDP	United Nations Development Program

Executive Summary

Darfur Community Peace and Security Fund impact assessment: background and purpose

DFID contracted Coffey International Develop to conduct an impact assessment to understand how the activities funded by the Darfur Community Peace and Security Fund (DCPSF) are contributing to stabilising communities in its target areas, especially in relation to the engagement of women and the young. The impact assessment must also consider how the recommendations made in the 2010 DCPSF Review have been taken on board to support improved results. This current impact assessment is commissioned by DFID for its own evaluation purposes and its findings will be shared with other donors contributing to the DCPSF.

As detailed in the DCPSF Impact Assessment Terms of Reference (ToR), the DCPSF was established in October 2007 to promote peace building and reconciliation in Darfur. Now in Phase 2, the DCPSF is implementing community-based recovery and development activities. The impact assessment covers the £6.2 million investment to the fund made by DFID during Phase 2. DFID's contribution to the DCPSF Phase 2 represents 34% of the total fund. The difference is co-financed by SIDA, the Government of the Netherlands, the Government of Denmark, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Government of Switzerland and USAID, All funding is placed in a general pool that is then allocated to the different projects. The assessment team is not evaluating the contribution of these other donors yet must examine the portfolio as whole in order to assess the DCPSF's impact.

DCPSF performance against outputs

The research team examined a sample of projects being implemented by DCPSF implementing partners that fall under five outputs. The majority of projects by implementing partners focus on Output 1 which seeks to *"support effective community level conflict resolution and prevention mechanisms"*. Projects include:

- Formation of community Peace Committees;
- Networks for women, youth, CBOs, farmers and herders;
- Creation of new local NGOs; support to local native (tribal) administration and its reconciliation judiyya councils; and
- Support to youth and women organizations to effectively engage in conflict resolution and peace building processes.

Output 2 seeks to *"help increase cooperation between communities on disputed livelihoods assets and income generating activities"*. Significant accomplishments include:

- Demarcation of the animal migration routes;
- Support to judiyya reconciliation councils with the engagement of the peace committees;
- Provision of improved water resources and its management in a way to contribute to substantially reducing competition and conflict between farming and nomadic communities leading to community coexistence and sustainable social peace.

Output 4 seeks to *"promote equitable and sustained growth, as well as basic services to ensure that stabilised rural and urban areas remain stable"*. This is largely an output where partners innovate and experiment and includes:

- Services and income-generating activities targeting women and youth

Progress against Outputs 3 (largely a repeat of output 2) and 5 is negligible which is explained in the body of the report.

Overall impact

The evaluation team defines the DCPSF impact assessment as the process of identifying the actual impacts of the fund's portfolio of interventions that contribute to the fund's desired outcome that DFID defines as "more Darfur communities stabilised, with trust and confidence between communities restored, paving the way towards early

recovery.” The theory is that by delivering this outcome, the fund will contribute to a wider increase in local level peace and stability in Darfur that is inclusive and sustainable. Despite the lack of centrally collated programme data for performance against the logframe, this assessment concludes that the DCPSF model of a multi-donor fund implemented by a network of independent partners is indeed contributing to improved peace and stability in Darfur.

The most significant contribution to the desired Outcome is through the activities under Output 1. The activities being delivered under Output 2 shows some evidence that they are contributing to the overall Outcome, though on a limited scale. Activities under Output 4 may well contribute to the desired Outcome, yet these are generally smaller, innovative activities and it is premature to conclude their overall impact. Outputs 3 and 5 respectively show negligible progress to date.

Key constraints and risks

The key constraints and risks to success of the DCPSF include: rapidly changing security situations; difficulty of access (season, travel, visa); lack of genuine engagement of rural and nomad women; interference by the Humanitarian Assistance Commission and the National Security and Intelligence Service; incomplete and instable staffing of the DCPSF Technical Secretariat; inadequate staffing of some of the implementing partners; and lack of capacity of the implementing partners to conduct peace building and recovery projects when many of their strengths relate to the provision of humanitarian assistance.

Key factors for success

The fund’s most important factor for success is the on-going engagement of local communities through their pre-existing institutions (e.g. native administration, reconciliation judiyya councils or the newly created peace committees and youth committees). Any long term sustainability of the fund’s activities will also depend on identifying and capacity building local NGOs and communities to continue work when the INGO programmes close. Evidence suggests that the targeting of youth in particular appears to be a successful way to increase community cohesion.

Recommendations

To enhance the impact of the fund, the assessment recommends the following actions:

- The capacity of the Technical Secretariat should be strengthened in areas of immediate need such proposal management and project reporting which will free up other resources to improve the management and coordination of the DCSPF with other actors.
- Deepen the time and resources spent on identifying and capacity building local NGOs to complement (and eventually absorb) the work of the INGO implementing partners to improve sustainability. This may further be enhanced through carefully designed partnerships with local state authorities/units.
- Develop a DCPSF donor-wide theory of change to commit donors and implementing partners to a shared vision of success which will enable the harmonisation of M&E systems across the portfolio and improve the fund’s evaluability at the both the project and programme level.
- Both the DCPSF and the project implementing partners need to develop clear gender policies and strategies. All the partners are dealing with gender issues on an ad hoc basis.
- Develop a DCPSF-wide M&E handbook to ensure that common indicators, measurement approaches and attribution guidance are used allowing consistency in reporting and enabling results to be aggregated.
- Introduce qualitative indicators to assess impact on the ground. Project reporting currently is heavily based on numbers of workshops, number of training sessions and number of participants without qualitative evidence to explain the quality and impact of these numbers.
- A critical assessment of the peace committee model is needed to verify and validate their impact. The DCPSF projects focus on the number of peace committees that they are establishing rather than critically assessing the impact of these committees and the validity of the model.
- There is a need for more projects specifically designed to engage IDPs in the camps and returnees as well as ex-combatants in peace and livelihood activities;

- Organisation of literacy programmes, primary health care services along the opened migration routes in North and West Darfur
- Pressure to engage women at all levels must continue. The focus groups revealed a phenomenon that can be understood as positive discrimination whereby the design and implementation of policies overly favour marginalised and disadvantaged women groups. The focus group discussions also elicited the following targeting recommendations for different types of women:
 - Priorities for urban women included capacity building in relation to the inclusion of women in decision making, wealth sharing and health (especially in relation to reproductive health and HIV/AIDS);
 - Priorities for agro-pastoralist women included water access closer to their homes, in addition to health and livelihood training;
 - Priorities for nomad women include training on health education for humans and animals, and livelihood training relating to handicrafts and milk production.

1 Background and Context

1.1 The Peace Process in Darfur

The current context in Darfur is still characterized by violence, insecurity, instability, proliferation of arms and displacement. The recent large-scale violence in the localities of Kutum and Millit and close to El Fasher in Shawa, Tawila and Shangil Tobai is raising serious concern about the Doha Darfur Peace Document (DDPD) signed in 2011 and its ability to bring peace to the region. Communities in Darfur have serious doubts about the Doha track to bring a sustainable peace to Darfur. A major criticism of the track is that it is not yet based on a holistic approach to the crisis and has not learned the lessons of the first Abuja agreement which was signed with one rebel faction and ignored the root causes of the problem. The current DDPD is similarly signed with one faction, the Liberation and Justice Movement (LJM) while the other principal factions are left out and continue fighting. Communities visited by the assessment team express deep frustration about the DDPD and the Doha track. One community leader said to the team that “Any single DCPSF project is more relevant and useful to peace than the whole Doha business.”

The conflict in Darfur continues and despite a decrease in intensity of organised fighting between the government and the armed groups, violence continues at the community level. The recent events in Kutum and Millit areas of North Darfur prove that peace agreements and negotiations at the macro level do not necessarily build peace at the local level. Therefore, there has been growing attention to efforts of peace building from below to complement the accord-based peace processes.

1.2 Peace building From Below: the DCPSF Model

The failure so far of peace from above is adding to the significance of efforts of achieving reconciliation and building peace from below. Since 2007, two significant programmes of peace building at the community level can be identified: the Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF) and the Darfur-Darfur Dialogue and Consultation (DDDC). The latter is part of UNAMID but with a margin of autonomy and works through community consultations to promote peace and reconciliations.

The DCPSF is a multi-donor collaborative programme that combines peace building and reconciliation efforts with an element of humanitarian assistance. Recognising the need for visible peace dividends for the people of Darfur during the political negotiation process, the Darfur International Partners (DIP) group created the DCPSF in October 2007. The Fund seeks to promote community level trust, confidence and peace building throughout Darfur. It is envisaged that by facilitating confidence and trust at the grass roots level, the DCPSF will address the root causes of violence, providing a platform for dialogue and promoting reconciliation across ethnic, tribal and political divides.

The DCPSF since 2008 has supported over 30 projects covering a wide range of issues that are connected to the conflict at its root causes and to peace building. Paramount among these issues are: resource management, competition between farming and herding, animal migration routes, tribal/community reconciliation, rehabilitation of traditional reconciliation and justice institutions, capacity building for peace, income generating activities and basic services including water and basic sanitation. These projects are implemented by over twenty non-governmental organisations with a minor number of Sudanese agencies among them.

1.3 Objectives of the impact assessment

The overall objective of the team is to answer the following key questions as identified in the DCPSF Impact Assessment ToR (See Annex 1 of the Inception Report):

Table 1: Key evaluation questions

DFID’s key evaluation questions from the TOR	Location in the impact assessment report
What are the impacts, intended or unintended, of the DCPSF on the ground?	See section 3
What are the perceptions of the project and expectations of participant communities?	See section 4.1
What are some simple mechanisms which can better capture and represent the impacts of the project? What is the best format for reporting results?	See sections 4.2, 6, 7 and Annex 3
What is an appropriate and representative set of indicators for DFID’s monitoring of the project?	See Annex 3
What additional risks there are on the ground (political, security)?	See section 4.4
What is the role and engagement of women and youth in the peace process and mediation at the community level?	See sections 4.5 and 4.6
What are the ways forward/exit strategies for the project?	See section 7
How have recommendations from the 2010 review have been incorporated into the DCPSF to provide improved results on the ground?	See section 4.7
What are the lessons learnt and successful programme models?	See sections 5, 4.8, 4.6, 4.5

In addition to the research questions above, DFID requires the assessment team to employ a gender and conflict lens in its research approach. The assessment has also broadly test awareness levels of how DCPSF projects align with the Fund’s stated objectives, and how well the DCPSF’s objective align with DFID Sudan’s Business Case and Sudan Operational Plan. The impacts stemming from DCPSF projects that are relevant to the DFID Sudan Operational Plan will receive special emphasis.¹

1.4 Scope of Work

The key tasks set out in the terms of reference are to:

- Review of previous DCPSF assessments and available documentation;
- Hold consultations with the DCPSF Steering Committee;
- Conduct interviews with implanting partners, local government and sub-grantees;
- Conduct focus groups with beneficiary communities based on key themes;

¹ Results might include increased income for poor families, jobs created, communities stabilised and people gaining access to financial services.

- Present findings to the DCPSF Steering Committee;
- Submit a 20 final report, including executive summary and annexes; and
- The level of effort by the evaluation team is captured in the work plan (Annex 10 of the DCPSF Impact Assessment Inception Report)

2 Assessment process

2.1 Methodology

The DCPSF impact assessment is a predominantly qualitative study of the contribution of the fund's portfolio to higher level effects at the outcome level. The review relied on this approach since there is no centrally collated data for programme performance against the logframe. The Technical Secretariat lacks an established reporting officer to manage this reporting information, and data that was identified is raw and exists in the form of quarterly reports. The quarterly reports are generally quite descriptive yet these are not based on the logical framework. Subsequently, any subsequent review of the logframe against its indicators would be based on incomplete data.

Assessing such a varied range of projects in a region that is notoriously difficult to work required that the assessment team take a highly inclusive and collaborative approach. For this purpose the methodology set out in the terms of reference is one that the assessment team fully adopted for the assessment:

- Desk-based study of DCPSF and other relevant policy implementation, monitoring and reporting documents;
- Intensive consultations with key DCPSF stakeholders to frame the Field Data Collection phase; and
- Collection of data through participatory approaches with a special emphasis on the views of women and young people

The team's methodology for conducting the assessment was structured by 3 phases: (1) Mobilisation and Review; (2) Field Data Collection; and (3) Analysis Presentation of Findings. The overall approach of the assessment is grounded by inclusive, participatory approaches. The assessment team gathered key findings on the results, drivers, barriers, what works/does not work and lessons from the implementing partners. The assessment team then tested and verified these findings with other key DCPSF stakeholders, including beneficiaries, local government, DFID and other donors.

The data collection methods consisted of semi-structured interviews, quantitative review of project management documents, focus groups discussions and site visits. Interviewees included DFID program staff, donors contributing to the DCPSF, the DCPSF Technical Secretariat, implementing partners and project staff. Most interviews took place in person, and when not possible, were instead conducted over the phone (see annex 1 for a full list of people who were consulted). Interview guides for this assessment consist of a set of questions that are linked to the evaluation questions listed in the DCPSF Terms of Reference (see annexes 7-9 in the DCPSF Inception Report).

Focus groups discussion were conducted in West, South and North Darfur with project communities, peace committees, native/civil administration, women, youth, nomad leaders, Farmers Union, Herders' Union, the three community networks of North Darfur: Women Development Association, El Fasher Rural Development Network, and the Voluntary Network for Rural Development (see annex 3 for more details on the focus groups, including participation disaggregated by gender).

Coffey's approach to Quality Assurance comprises an in-house team of research consultants, senior and principal consultants, with substantial experience with DFID's evaluation methods and expectations. Coffey International's London office provided backstopping support for the Inception Report and for the draft Final Report.

2.2 DCPSF Assessment Sampling Approach

Due to practical time and travel constraints, the assessment was unable to review and visit all of the DCPSF projects. Instead, the team developed a sampling approach to capture what it views as a reasonably representative sample of projects in order to assess to what extent DCPSF portfolio of activities may or may not be contributing

towards “more Darfur communities stabilised, with trust and confidence between communities restored, paving the way towards early recovery.”

The DCPSF provides funding to 18 different projects across two funding phases from 2010-2015. Nine of these projects ended in September 30, 2012 and the remaining nine end in either 2013 or 2014. Of the six sites that have been selected, three of them have completed their grants in September of 2012, and three of them have at least 1 year remaining of grant funding. Moreover, DFID Sudan requested that the assessment team visit project sites that account for the geographic and programmatic breadth of the DCPSF. Therefore, while accounting for the logistical and security challenges of travelling into the deep interior and the short time for field collection, the assessment team selected the following six specific sites - two in each of West, North and South Darfur States- based on pragmatic factors related to travel and security considerations. There was inadequate time for the team to visit the two new states of Central and East Darfur. The sample selection process has also tried to ensure a reasonably representative selection of projects with regards to:

- geographic coverage;
- implementing agencies;
- project lifecycle stages; and
- And thematic coverage.

Table 1: Overview of the projects selected for site visits

Darfur State:	West Darfur	South Darfur	North Darfur
Site Visit 1	<p>Gineina:</p> <p>Consultations with DCPSF, the Peace Network, Civil Affairs and DDDC</p> <p>Project visit to War Child Canada (Phase 1 grant completed September 30, 2012)</p>	<p>Nyala:</p> <p>Consultations with DCPSF and UNAMID</p> <p>Project visit to Mobadiroon (Phase 1 grant completed September 30, 2012)</p>	<p>El Fasher:</p> <p>Consultations with UNAMID and Peace Centre</p> <p>Project visit to UNDP Darfur Community Recovery for Coexistence Project (Phase 2 grant ongoing to December 2013) *in Tawila</p>
Site Visit 2	<p>Kereinik:</p> <p>Project visit to ADRA (Phase 1 grant completed September 30, 2012, Phase 2 grant commencing)</p>	<p>Abga Rajil:</p> <p>Project visit to Mercy Corps (Phase 2 grant on going to December 2013)</p>	<p>Kafut:</p> <p>Project visit to Practical Action (Phase 1 grant completed September 30, 2012)</p>

2.3 Changes to the Evaluation Plan

In designing the work plan the team had to take a number of factors into consideration including the security situation on the ground, arrangement of logistical support and the observation of Eid, which significantly affected the original work plan. As a result of acute time pressures, rather than conducting a theory of change workshop as originally envisioned with key DCPSF stakeholders prior to the field work, the assessment team instead reviewed and validated the theory of change through an on-going formative approach involving:

- reflecting on emerging findings against the theory of change;
- adapting the research instruments throughout the data collection process; and

- Revalidating the theory of change underlying DFID's assessment prior to completion of the analysis and formulation of the final set of findings.

Other key changes for the assessment team

Security

- Changing security situations as recently illustrated by the events in Millit, Kutum, Shawa, Shangil Tobai, Abu Dilaig, Shawa)

Access

- The team was denied access to locations in Kass and Abga Rajil in South Darfur (although the Humanitarian Assistance Commission did not provide clear and convincing reasons for this denial). The Humanitarian Assistance Commission (HAC) and the National Intelligence and Security barred the assessment team and the DCPSF partner, Mercy Corps Scotland from visiting the project sites outside of Nyala.
- The research team's Evaluation Manager was unable to secure his visa to Sudan on time to conduct a theory of change workshop for the DCPSF stakeholders and fully participate in the conduct of the evaluation.

Timing

- The team was unable to review how implementing partners identify, evidence and report their key cost drivers as planned as part of a light-touch VfM review owing to time constraints.

Staffing

- Staffing of the DCPSF Technical Secretariat has been instable and incomplete since the inception of the programme in 2008 as will be further discussed below. Some implementing partners are also short of staff to properly conduct, manage and monitor the individual projects. Their staffs are in most cases limited and stretched over too many other projects.

3 Evaluation Findings

Overall Impact Assessment of DCPSF Activities

The desired outcome as per DFID's theory of change is for "more Darfur communities stabilised, with trust and confidence between communities restored, paving the way towards early recovery." The assessment team focused its research on the effects of the funding at output level, which given the ways in which the outputs were defined overlapped (in parts) with changes that would be expected at outcome level.

The assessment of each output area involved the review of a sample of projects (as presented in Table 1) that contributed to the delivery of the respective outputs. Only those output area that had delivered a significant amount of activity involved project reviews in this way i.e. Outputs 1-3. The assessment first considered the performance of the activities in delivering each output statement and secondly, its contribution to the programme's outcome.

3.1 Output 1: Support effective community level conflict resolution and prevention mechanisms

Output 1 is where the bulk of the DCPSF projects are focused. The verified achievements under output 1 include:

- Formation of community Peace Committees;
- Networks for women, youth, CBOs, farmers and herders;
- New local NGOs established;
- Engagement of the Arab nomad communities;

- Extensive training and capacity building for above institutions;
- Support to local civil (tribal) administration;
- Improved capacity of traditional authorities and structures to effectively mediate peace and reconciliation (which is an output that is shared by almost all the DCPSF projects);
- Support to peace and judiyya reconciliation councils at the community level; and
- Support to youth and women organizations to effectively engage in conflict resolution and peace building processes.

3.1.1. ADRA, West Darfur

The ADRA project in West Darfur has managed to conduct six peace building training sessions for leaders from 34 communities/villages in the project area of operation and provided support to the already existing judiyya reconciliation councils for community conflict mediation and reconciliation. In this regard, 238 local community leaders including omdas and sheiks have been trained (of whom roughly 30% are women and 30% are youth). The communities in the project area have managed to peacefully resolve 376 out of 473 conflicts reported in the area during 2011-12. The leaders interviewed confirmed that tensions around water, land and pasture are becoming much less prevalent than before the project.

The local partner of ADRA in this project is Al Masar which is an all-Darfur NGO supporting the needs of the pastoralist population in the region who are almost entirely Arabs. Interviews suggest that the involvement of Al Masar was instrumental in engaging the Arab communities in the project and its peace building activities.

It was noted by the assessment team that the project reporting provides breakdowns of numbers and percentages without explaining the methods of calculation or the means to verify these figures. The team could not verify these percentages with the communities. A better indicator might include the number of conflicts resolved by those leaders trained by the project.

Key factor(s) for success

- Involvement of local partners such as Al Masar
- Support to pre-existing reconciliation mechanisms in the form of the Judiyya councils

Key risk(s)/constraint(s)

- Reporting systems and monitoring metrics that are difficult to verify are less transparent

3.1.2. War Child, West Darfur

The War Child project in West Darfur has a special focus on youth and has helped establish 20 youth committees and centres with at least half of them now fully engaged in reconciliation and peace building activities. Training sessions were organised for members of these committees on a wide range of themes including peace building, conflict management, and reproductive health, effective communication for peace and rights and protection. With support from War Child, the youth committees collectively established the West Darfur Youth Organization for Development which is now registered as a local NGO.

One concern noted by the evaluation team is that these youth centres have now been handed over to the Ministry of Social Affairs and this might affect their sustainability as well as their autonomy. As far as gender balance is concerned, the assessment team noted that the participation of female youth in these committees is still below expectations. The committees and War Child are fully aware of this but they refer to socio-cultural barriers which they are working on to overcome.

Key factor(s) for success

- Capacity building activities that target youth

Key risk(s)/constraint(s)

- The Ministry of Social Affairs and HAC undermining the independence of the West Darfur Youth Organization

- Socio-cultural barriers to female participation

3.1.3 Practical Action, North Darfur

The Practical Action project in North Darfur has a solid partnership with three broad based networks: El Fasher Rural Development Network (FRDN), Voluntary Network for Rural Helping and Development (VNRHD), and the Women Development Association Network (WDAN). These networks represent over 150 community-based organizations (CBOs). They represent about 600 villages across North Darfur and about 170,000 individuals.

One of the successes of this project is its engagement of the Arab nomad communities who are part of the conflict but they have rarely been engaged in peace building efforts. The engagement of the Arab nomads is a major factor behind the success of the project in demarcating the animal migration routes and hence contributing to, cooperation and coexistence between the Arab nomads and the non-Arab farmers. Therefore, the project here addresses one of the main root causes of the conflict in Darfur.

The evaluation team conducted a focus group discussion with the peace committee and other members of the community and the conclusion is that the committee is becoming the only legitimate representative and voice of the community. It remains a challenge for the project to organise peace committees for the nomadic groups but there are efforts underway by the Herder's union and al Masar CBO to help achieve this goal.

Key factor(s) for success

- The engagement and targeting of Arab nomads in demarcating the animal migration routes

Key risk(s)/constraint(s)

- Inability to successfully organise peace committees for the Arab nomad groups

3.1.4 UNDP Project, North Darfur

This project has a nine-month delay for reasons of staffing as explained by the UNDP in El Fasher. The assessment team interviewed the project staff in El Fasher who had just finished the planning phase and identified Ajaweed Organization as a local partner. There was nothing yet on the ground, so the assessment team had no sites to visit.

3.1.5 Output 1 Performance Assessment

Based on the projects reviewed, the programme's activities are successfully supporting effective community level conflict resolution and prevention mechanisms.

3.1.6 Output 1 Contribution to Programme Outcome

Output 1 is contributing significantly to the desired outcome. The above examples are contributing to the creation and consolidation of community-based institutions that are capable of resolving conflicts at the community level and hence stabilising these communities. The judiyya councils have been in place for many centuries in Darfur yet the additional activities of the DCPSF-funded projects are reaching a broader more inclusive segment of the population through the new community peace committees and the specific organisations representing specific groups of women, youth, nomads and others.

The contribution of these institutions to the stabilisation of communities centres on their ability to contain disputes before they develop into conflicts. This is especially relevant containing disputes between farmers and pastoralists. The quarterly reports of all the projects covered in this assessment cite that the number of disputes managed by the committees and councils. The communities interviewed confirm these reports and attribute the relative stability in their areas to the functioning of the committees.

3.2 Output 2: Help increase cooperation between communities on disputed livelihoods assets and income generating activities

Output 2 is also a major area of focus in almost all the projects in the DCPSF programme. The key DCPSF achievements verified under this output include:

- Establishment of conflict mediation mechanisms to resolve disputes between farmers and pastoralist communities (peace committees and judiyya councils);
- Community-led demarcation and management of nomadic migration routes (maraheel);
- The joint demarcation and joint management of the maraheel;
- Improved water resources and resource management systems contribute to substantially reducing competition and conflict between farming and nomadic communities; and
- Promotion of mutual trust and peaceful coexistence of farming and nomadic communities.

3.2.1 ADRA, West Darfur

The ADRA project in West Darfur has rehabilitated and expanded two main hafirs (rainwater reservoirs) in Kabbas and Abu Ramad communities in Kireinik Locality. Both hafirs are located along an animal migration route and they are accessible to users from both the sedentary and the mobile communities of Arab nomads. The hafirs and the wells are managed by local committees with membership including all the users regardless of ethnic background or farming/pastoralist way life. The local committees are trained in water management as well as dispute resolution.

A direct impact of this project is a drop in cases of inter-community conflicts and a substantial decrease in cases of violent conflicts. The project has led to increased cooperation between competing communities and contributed to restoration of trust and confidence.

Key factor(s) for success

- Access to the hafirs that is equitable for all types of nomads
- Local committees with broad based membership manage the wells

Key risk(s)/constraint(s)

- The possibility of external violence in the region reaching and dividing the local committees

3.2.2 ADRA, West Darfur and Practical Action, North Darfur:

The community-led demarcation of nomad migration routes is one of the most useful tools for resolving and preventing community conflicts. Practical Action in North Darfur and ADRA in West Darfur have both managed to demarcate some important migration routes which had not been in use since the beginning of violence in the region.

Two major animal migration routes (masarat or maraheel) have been demarcated by the Practical Action project in North Darfur. The communities interviewed by the evaluation team appreciate this effort and referred to it as the most effective way of reducing friction and conflict between farmers and herders. Practical Action mediated between farmers and nomads to agree on the route and mark it with colour-coded concrete posts which indicate to the farmers where they can cultivate their crops, and where the pastoralists can allow their herds to pass and where they must stay within boundaries. The concrete posts are colour coded depending upon the intensity of cultivation in the area, and are placed into the ground with the agreement of both sides.

The demarcation process is based on consensus of both groups is contributing to rebuilding trust between farmers and pastoralists and attacking a major root cause of conflict in the region. The evaluation team toured the Kulkul-Shala route and came across nomads using it with complete ease and no reports of friction with farming communities along the route. The communities visited by the evaluation team reporting being content with this arrangement which provided them with a sense of ownership in the process as well improving the livelihood.

Key factor(s) for success

- An overall process that is based on consensus of both farmers and nomads

Key risk(s)/constraint(s)

- Changes to environmental conditions make the current migration routes untenable
- The scope of the new migration routes is limited in geographical size, affecting its effectiveness

3.2.3 Output 2 Performance Assessment

Based on the projects reviewed, the funded activities are moderately successful in helping to increase cooperation between communities on disputed livelihoods assets and income generating activities.

3.2.4 Output 2 Contribution to Programme Outcome

The projects under Output 2 are contributing to the desired Outcome, though on a moderate and limited scale. The provision of water resources and the demarcation of migration routes in the above examples directly deal with two major root causes of the conflict in Darfur. The two examples are conflict prevention mechanisms that will contribute to the stabilisation of the communities in the project area. However, the scope of these activities is still limited in geographical terms and this makes it difficult to measure its overall contribution at the higher level outcome. The routes of migration now open are less than 10% of the traditional migration routes and their influence is limited to the small number of communities that they pass through.

3.3 Output 3: Help to increase cooperation between competing communities over access to natural resources

This output is a repetition of output 2 in the DCPSF Terms of Reference, as confirmed by the DCPSF Mid-Term Review of 2010

3.4 Output 4: Promote equitable and sustained growth and access to basic services to ensure stabilization of communities

This is a very broadly phrased output and it is much more ambitious than the reality on the ground. It is providing some very basic and necessary services at the micro level but it is difficult to say that it is promoting growth. The key DCPSF achievements verified under this output include:

- Creation of income-generating activities, including community farms, with emphasis on women and youth as major beneficiaries;
- Provision of partial farm extension support (seeds, technical advice, training);
- Limited veterinary training and support (Mercy Corps);
- Modest reforestation and environmental conservation activities;
- Provision of water and services is used as a community reconciliation and cooperation tool;
- Improved water resources and water resource management systems;
- Building and rehabilitation of schools to increase enrolment; and
- Opening of markets that have been not functioning for many years.

3.4.1 Mercy Corps, South Darfur and ADRA, West Darfur

The evaluation team reviewed the ADRA project in Kereinik which established 15 youth peace clubs and 35 women clubs. In addition to providing space for social coexistence, all the clubs have income-generating activities including crafts and farming. Two farming cooperative societies are also in place in the project area producing okra, maize, watermelon, millet, sorghum, peanuts and vegetables. The evaluation team reviewed reporting evidence that suggests that 1126 young people and 110 women directly benefited from the community farming scheme with an estimated 5000 family members also indirectly benefiting.

In response to the recommendations of the 2010 DCPSF Mid-Term Review, an increased attention has also been given to women. A total of 2160 women in the project area received training on income generating activities including farming and handicrafts making and marketing.

Similar DCPSF projects under Output 4 are experimenting with small community farms involving women and youth yet there is limited evidence of the effectiveness of this approach to date. A major problem facing this innovative approach is the prevailing hakura land tenure system. Only one farm has managed to get a plot of land on its own

in Abga Rajil in South Darfur with the help of Mercy Corps project. The other groups rent small plots from individual owners and at a high rate that substantially reduces the net proceeds. However, these small farms are becoming attractive to women and youth not only because of their economic reward but because they provide a good space for interaction and community cooperation.

Key factor(s) for success

- Increased focus on female and youth beneficiaries as per the 2010 DCPSF Mid-Term Review

Key risk(s)/constraint(s)

- Availability of land is limited owing to the hakura land tenure system
- High rental rates for land is substantially reducing new proceeds

3.4.2 Mercy Corps, South Darfur

The opening of closed markets has been another area of focus for the DCPSF projects. Mercy Corps Scotland (MCS), for example, supported opening of the weekly market in Abga Rajil and Practical Action opened the one in Tawila. Subsequently, the evaluation team found through interviews that the nomad camel herders who were previously in conflict with the Zaghawa in Abga Rajil East are now coexisting with the Zaghawa and they do their mutual trade in the market. In fully absorbing the camel nomads in the project, MCS is coordinating efforts with the Nomads Commission for South Darfur.

The general security environment still makes people reluctant to fully use these markets. This is specially the case where some rebel camps are in close proximity to the markets and attacks and looting are possible.

Key factor(s) for success

- A community that increasingly trades together at market is more peaceful

Key risk(s)/constraint(s)

- General security conditions and the close proximity of rebel camps continues to threaten peace and participation in the markets

3.4.3. ADRA, West Darfur

The ADRA project has rehabilitated and furnished two schools, one in Shawaya village and the other in Khairban village. School enrolment in the project area has increased as a result of the building and rehabilitation of the two schools. Reporting shows that child enrolment in Shawaya School increased by 75% with girls making 56% of the total school population.

The two schools have increased interaction among different communities in the area by bringing together the children and parents of farming and pastoralist households whereas previously there was little interaction between the communities. Monthly peace days are organised in schools for different communities to socialise and discuss community issues. Major community events are hosted at the schools, and the review team found qualitative evidence to suggest that the schools are gradually becoming centres of social interaction and community cooperation. The school peace days in particular contribute to social interaction and community cooperation as the schools include different tribal groups including Arabs and non-Arabs. Moreover, the schools are used to teach the parents -especially mothers- about health and hygiene, HIV/AIDS and reproductive health.

Key factor(s) for success

- Using shared schools as a vehicle for enhancing community interaction on issues of shared concern

Key risk(s)/constraint(s)

- How these schools will be maintained when the project ends

3.4.4 Output 4 Performance Assessment

Based on the projects reviewed, the programme's activities are nominally promoting equitable and sustained growth and access to basic services to ensure stabilization of communities.

3.4.5 Output 4 Contribution to Programme Outcome

The projects under Output 3 are showing some early signs of contributing to the desired Outcome, yet the reviewed evidence make any definitive conclusions premature. Improved livelihood opportunities for youth and women appear to have having positive impact on their communities, despite issues around land availability. Similarly, opening shared markets show signs of enhancing commercial interaction. Opening more schools and increasing enrolment will likely have a medium and long term effect on stabilisation of the communities, especially in communities with high social and ethnic diversity. The team noted that the implementing partners are fully aware of this potential for the high impact of schools in diverse areas, and the selection of school sites are based on the potential of bringing as many different communities together. However, the number of markets opened so far is still limited and its effectiveness is particularly constrained by the presence of rebel groups in the vicinity and the threat of attacks and looting of merchandise.

3.5 Output 5: Collect evidence of effective DCPSF grassroots peace building initiatives and feed them in wider peace fora and Darfur agendas

There are no verified achievements to report against this output to date.

Key factor(s) for success

N/A

Key risk(s)/ key constraint(s)

- Understaffing of the DCPSF Technical Secretariat
- Lack of cooperation between DCPSF and other major actors

3.5.1 Output 5 Performance Assessment

Based on the projects reviewed, the programme is not collecting evidence of effective DCPSF grassroots peace building initiatives and feeding them in wider peace fora and Darfur agendas.

3.5.2 Output 5 Contribution to Programme Outcome:

The contribution of Output 5 to the desired outcome has been negligible. The evaluation team finds that the key constraint is the understaffing of the DCPSF Technical Secretariat (as expressed confirmed by the Technical Secretariat during extensive interviews). In addition to the capacity of the Technical Secretariat, the implementation of this output requires a high level of collaboration between the DCPSF and the other institutions involved in the peace process. This level of collaboration has not occurred to date. Currently, DCPSF does not have an institutionalised relation with the Joint Mediation Team, nor with UNAMID Civil Affairs and the mediation team of the office of the UNAMID Joint Special Representative (JSR). Therefore, there are no channels in place for feeding any input from the community level DCPSF initiatives into the broader peace process. The collaboration between DCPSF and UNAMID Civil Affairs at the moment does not go beyond some coordination regarding the UNAMID Quick Impact projects (QIPs).

4 Further research questions

4.1 Participant community perceptions and expectations

The evaluation team concludes that the overall DCPSF programme and the individual projects respond to and reflect the real needs of the communities. The specific project and needs identification has in most cases been completed with the communities through the local peace committees or at least through extensive consultation with the communities (ADRA and War Child).

One observation by the team is that the linkage between peace building and provision of basic services is not fully understood by the communities in the rural areas in particular. The communities still look at the DCPSF within a humanitarian perspective that focuses on providing essential services. Therefore when they identify their needs

they go straight to water, health services and education and the project staff have to do tremendous effort to make and clarify the linkages to peace building.

4.2 Good practice mechanisms for reporting results

Reporting of results is one of the challenges facing all the DCPSF projects. The partners do regularly prepare quarterly reports but these reports are generally quite descriptive and are not based on the logical framework. For example, there is clear focus on reporting the numbers of peace committees established, number of peace building meetings, number of people trained, etc. But there is no systematic reporting on the impact and implications of these numbers. What is still missing is how do these committees function and how do they contribute to building peace. Also it is not clear how training and the raising of capacity has positively translated into results. For example, how does the training of community veterinary assistants contribute to community livelihood and better animal health? The UNDP, DFID and other donors are aware of the above reporting problems and have discussed options for resolving these issues. Based on a DFID proposed reporting format, UNDP will soon be using a results-focused logical framework which links to the DCPSF logframe. If thoughtfully implemented, such a harmonisation of tools could provide stakeholders with improved, consistent information.

4.3 Appropriate and representative monitoring indicators

See Annex 3 for analysis of current DCSPF indicators.

4.4 Risks to the DCPSF funding mechanism and projects

4.4.1 Fund Management Risks

The scope of this evaluation focuses on the impact of the DCPSF programme on the ground. However, some aspects of the management model have direct impact on the efficiency and performance of the overall programme.

Possible Conflict of Interest

Two main issues are of concern here: the status of the DCPSF vis-à-vis the UNDP and the capacity of the Technical Secretariat to run the vast DCPSF programme. Stakeholders have expressed discomfort with the current status of having the DCPSF almost subsumed under UNDP. The main concern is a possible or potential compromise of the autonomy of the DCPSF. Another concern is a potential conflict of interest as a result of the fact that the UNDP is managing the DCPSF and at the same time it is a recipient of funds as a DCPSF implementing partner. Stakeholders reported that discussions are underway to address these issues.

Human Resources

The Technical Secretariat is understaffed and this is affecting its ability to manage and monitor the large number of projects in the DCPSF portfolio. Currently the head of the Technical Secretariat is supported by the Peace building Specialist and two monitoring specialists. There is no reporting officer and this is handicapping the Technical Secretariat's ability to manage the field reporting by the implementing partners, which in turn inhibits timely analysis and disseminating of the programme's progress, result and learning. Interviews suggest that an entire output (output 5) has not been developed because of the lack of capacity. The Technical Secretariat is struggling to cope with the stream of reporting coming from the field partners and there no capacity to monitor and analyse the reporting in a timely manner. Despite requesting UNDP and the DCPSF Steering Committee to hire an officer for proposal management, instead the Technical Secretariat spends much of its time on this activity at the expense of the management and monitoring of the projects and proper reporting on their progress and results. As a result of the above, the Technical Secretariat is unable to verify monitoring data and project progress in the field.

A further constraint relates to geography. The Technical Secretariat is now "physically in the wrong place", according to one member of the Technical Secretariat. They are currently located in Nyala while El Fasher is the centre of activity in Darfur. One suggestion in the same interview is to move the Technical Secretariat to El Fasher to increase the visibility of the DCPSF and improve its performance.

4.4.2 Programme Risks

Security Situation

The threat of continued insecurity and violence at the local level remains the most significant risk affecting the effectiveness and sustainability of DCPSF activities. As illustrated in the example of reopening markets in Abga Rajil and Tawila, general insecurity, fears of looting and the proximity of the rebel groups continues to undermine the confidence of communities in the peace building process.

At a higher level, implementation of the Doha Darfur Peace Document (DDPF) by the Darfur Regional Authority (DRA) continues to be problematic. In accordance with the DDPD, the DRA is tasked mainly with the implementation of the peace accord. It also has to coordinate the post-conflict development projects with the federal government and different states in Darfur. However, there is visible frustration at the level of the DRA and local communities in Darfur that the DDPD is not working because the central government is not honouring its obligations regarding the security arrangement and recovery efforts. These concerns extend to the status of Darfur (i.e. a single region or multiple states) and guarantees for return of IDPs which could potentially destabilise the region renew conflict.

Access

Access in its many forms is a significant risk for the fund. The continued presence of armed groups and the interference of the HAC and local government to register NGOs restricts access to certain geographic areas. Severe seasonal challenges, such as flooding during the rainy season, frequently results in road closures and general inaccessibility.

Sustainability

Sustainability is a further risk. Most of the reviewed projects show a high level of community dependency on external support with a dearth of national NGOs. The handover of projects to the government remains a concern as the government's capacity to sustain projects and their community orientation is questionable. The best example, however, of the a handover is of the youth centres supported by the DCPSF project to the Ministry of Social and Youth Affairs in West Darfur.

4.5 Roles of women in the peace process

The degree of female participation in peace building varies significantly from urban to rural settings. However, generally speaking, the role of women in Darfur is better compared to other parts of Sudan. Women in Darfur are active economic actors and recently they are taking a larger role in community reconciliation and peace building and are engaged to varying degrees in peace committees formed by the DCPSF projects. One particularly strong example comes from The Women Network in North Darfur and its engagement through the DCPSF Practical Action project.

Arab nomad women, however, are still less engaged and this remains a challenge to the DCPSF programme. While prevailing cultural values hinder full women participation, the State's mandatory rules of assigning 25% of seats in all formal decision making bodies to women provide a positive legal framework. However, these rules are often manipulated by men and are rarely used for the real benefit of women. Women are alternatively more active in their own communities and through their own independent networks, especially in urban areas.

One major contribution of the DCPSF projects is that it is contributing to a noticeable change in the local communities' attitude towards women participation in peace building and social development. In the focus group discussions organised by the evaluation team, it was evident that even conservative tribal leaders are now appreciating the role of women in peace making and peace building. One person in particular was proud that his wife is an active leader in the North Darfur Women Network and she is a full-time advocate for peace and reconciliation. Other tribal leaders in the group discussions expressed their belief that women are the ones most capable of bringing and facilitating lasting peace to the region.

Best Practice: Practical Action engagement of women in North Darfur

The evaluation team observed a high level of women engagement in reconciliation and peace building in North Darfur. The Practical Action project has developed a strong partnership with already existing women groups and networks. The North Darfur Women Development Network is composed of 11 women development associations in

both urban and rural areas. As a result women are actively engaged in the peace committees formed by the DCPSF projects. They make 30% of the total membership of the 33 community peace committees in the project area. However, in only one case the head of the committee is a woman. The focus group discussion in Mugabil village/community north of El Fasher revealed a high level of readiness and willingness of women at village level to fully engage in community affairs and peace building.

There are two factors that explain why Practical Action has been successful in constructively engaging women. First, there had already been a tradition of women mobilization and activism in El Fasher and surrounding localities and the women networks had already been in place before the Practical Action intervention. El Fasher is historically the main urban centre of Darfur and it is the centre of education and social awareness. The second reason is that Practical Action came from a relief and humanitarian assistance background and it had already had partnerships with those women groups within the humanitarian context.

4.6 Roles of youth in the peace process

As a response to the recommendations of the DCPSF mid-term review of 2010, all the partners interview are now aware of the need to fully incorporate women and youth in recovery and peace building. The engagement of youth through youth committees and youth centres is contributing to conflict management and reduction of maladaptive and violence practices. Female participation is visible but it needs to be further increased.

Best Practice: War Child engagement of youth in West Darfur

The War Child project in West Darfur is exclusively designed for youth with the sole purpose of training them as leaders for peace promotion and community development and to empower them to be tolerant and capable agents of peace and development. Participation of youth in life skills and conflict management has led to the reduction of maladaptive and violence practices that have been interrupting local efforts made by elders and administrations. Youth are now taking initiatives to participate the local initiatives in resolving conflicts and tensions as they are part of the committees that are frontline in resolving disputes in the area.

Through the youth committees and youth centres, the project is contributing to the integration of various tribes, community members and youth through recreational activities, mobilizations, peace forums and local meetings have on-going implications on stronger inter-action between various tribes, youth and community members mainly sports and arts. Therefore, youth are becoming agents of stability, confidence and trust between the various tribes they originated from. This confidence and trust have increased creativity of community initiatives in addressing common needs and sharing common concerns.

War child is fully engaged in building the capacity of WDYOD. Most recently, War Child provided the new organization with training on financial management. The new youth NGO has recently submitted a proposal to DCPSF on its own and the organization is willing to transfer to and share its experience with youth in the other states of Darfur.

4.7 Incorporation of recommendations from the 2010 DCPSF review

The 2010 review made recommendations on the overall strategy of DCPSF and its financial and programmatic operation and focus. The recommendations are the following:

1. DCPSF ToR should be thoroughly revised to create unambiguous accountabilities and structured, results-oriented management. The TS and all implementing partners should present detailed, time bound Annual Work Plans and Budgets for SC approval.
2. The Steering Committee should review the need to clarify financial accountabilities and where liability lies for funds that cannot be unaccounted for. A final decision is needed on funds left unaccounted for on the expulsion of two DCPSF partners from Sudan.
3. DCPSF should rapidly implement a programme of strategic foundational work to draw out key lessons from partner experience; devise coherent strategies for support to the Native Administration, livelihoods, gender and rural services and advocate those strategies to Darfur state governments and civil society, as well as other stakeholders

4. DCPSF should make a reality of the ToR commitment that indirect costs should vary with the size and complexity of the project. It is important that the fund demonstrate value for money at all levels: intermediation, programme development and support, and implementation.
5. The SC should widen the DCPSF remit to cover ER activities which directly contribute to stability. It should also ensure that provision is made to give the TS access to the technical skills it will need to oversee ER activities.
6. The SC should make the case to donors for a longer DCPSF commitment and for larger, longer grants delivering clear strategic objectives.
7. The SC should review how it can widen the pool of potential partners, especially for ER activities.
8. The SC should review the case for including a stronger gender element in DCPSF's work and how best to implement this element.
9. The SC should instruct the MA to terminate the SGS management agreement on a no-fault basis. The TS should investigate which SGS grants are worth taking into direct management and review alternative approaches to building the capacity of Darfur civil society.

Findings

The current review team finds that only recommendations 8 and 9 of the 2010 review have been systematically incorporated into Phase 2 of DCPSF activities. The Steering Committee has not taken action to ensure that the remaining 2010 recommendations are incorporated into the fund's structure.

All the partners are now fully aware of the recommendation to strengthen attention to women and youth, and this awareness is reflected in the increased targeting of women in youth in implementing partner activities. However, a major constraint remains the absence of clear gender and youth strategies. Because of the lack of these strategies, the incorporation of the recommendation currently takes the form of more numbers of women and youth represented in activities, yet with little attention to the quality of engagement and its direct impact on community peace, reconciliation and recovery. The DCPSF is currently developing a gender strategy that may eventually help partners to develop their own focused strategies.

For all the rest of the recommendations, the capacity of the Technical Secretariat is provided as the major factor for preventing their incorporation. However, the UNDP claims that they are working on all these recommendations as part of their new role as the sole manager of the DCPSF.

4.8 Observations on the DCPSF Programme Structure

A thorough appraisal of the management and governance structures of the DCPSF is beyond the Observations on DCPSF partners.

Practically speaking, the implementing partners are the ones whose performance on the ground work will determine the impact of the DCPSF. Most, if not all, of these partners are international NGOs with significant experience working in Darfur and Sudan. However, the DCPSF projects are distributed among a small number of these NGOs especially after the expulsion of more than ten NGOs by the Government of Sudan in 2009. There is a concern expressed by national NGOs that they are excluded from participating in the DCPSF programme and that work is dominated by a small group of powerful INGOs. The Technical Secretariat validates this claim, yet explains it as an avoidable consequence of the weakness of local NGOs in their capacity, organisation and governance structures.

Considering the volatile political situation in the country and the government attitude towards foreign NGOs, a relative lack of involvement of local NGOs situation poses a potential threat to the DCPSF programme and the sustainability of its projects. The small grant project recently designed by the DCPSF is just a very small step towards engaging local NGOs in the DCPSF operation. It is not clear yet how this project might help develop the capacity of the local NGOs to a level that makes them equal partners/competitors with INGOs.

Example of best practice

Two INGO partners have developed their own creative approach to promote the capacity of local NGOs to become effective partners of DCPSF. War Child Canada in West Darfur has managed to help establish a local youth NGO that focuses on skills training that is already now in a position to submit its own proposals to the DCPSF. The

evaluation team noted that this new organisation, the West Darfur Youth Organization for Development, could become a model that is transferrable to other INGOs and other states in Darfur. This is especially relevant given the fact that youth are a special target of the DCPSF programme. The other INGO is FAR which has helped organising an NGO in South Darfur for the promotion of the mostly Arab pastoralists and their engagement in reconciliation, peace building and recovery.

4.9 Assessing the DCPSF theory of Change

DFID articulated the desired outcome for the DCPSF as “more Darfur communities stabilised, with trust and confidence between communities restored, paving the way towards early recovery”. However, as the DCPSF is a multi-donor fund under the oversight of UNDP, part of the purpose of this assessment is to test how well this theory of change aligns and is understood at the programmatic and implementation level.

At the programme level, the assessment finds that DFID’s explicit theory of change does not necessarily align with the implicit theories of change of other donors. The evidence from interviews suggests that there is a mixed vision amongst donors for what the DCPSF is supposed to accomplish. While DFID looks at the DCPSF as a tool of peace building, other donors regard it as a mechanism for delivering “humanitarian assistance”. It is sometimes difficult to reconcile the different perspectives and expectations of different donors contributing to the fund which in turn makes defining its purpose and evaluating its effectiveness difficult.

At the project level, evidence suggests that DFID’s core assumption that grass-roots, community peace building initiatives are effective approach is holding true, especially for activities under Output 1. However, the lack of capacity at the Technical Secretariat to timely analyse and disseminate monitoring information means that the validation of DFID’s theory of change is based more on coincidence than evidence. Without a reliable feedback mechanism for DFID and other donors to understand the extent to which the DCPSF is having effects on the ground, it will be difficult for stakeholders to know “what works” with credible evidence. Moreover, interviews with implementing partners indicate that they are not aware of how their activities fit within DFID’s theory of change, nor of DFID’s Sudan Operation Plan (or those of other donors).

4.10 Assessing Value for Money

The assessment team agreed in the Inception Report to conduct a light touch review of how implementing partners are rationalising and reporting their key cost drivers, and why projects performance requires these costs. However, in light of the short time period for field collection (7 research days) combined with the numerous sites that were visited, the review team prioritised reviewing project progress against the DCPSF’s outputs and their respective contributions to the overall outcome rather than review value for money.

5 Lessons Learned

5.1 Key factors for success

- Complementing and enhancing the judiyya councils with youth committees is an effective approach to improving community level dispute and reconciliation mechanisms;
- Capacity building projects that target youth seems to be showing evidence of success, especially when combined with issues that are of broad concern to communities like education and health;
- Implementing partners that partner with local community groups is a consistent theme amongst the relatively more successful projects;
- Effective mobilisation of youth is a key to ensuring the sustainability of peace building activities and the youth are capable of spearheading the peace building process even when the older community is more hesitant to engage;
- Evidence suggests that there is an increased awareness and acknowledgement of communities of the role of women in building peace and engaging in recovery;
- Training of local communities to manage, repair and maintain facilities is essential for sustainability; and

- The extent to which activities rely on local communities, resources and community based organisations; correlates with their relative success.

5.2 Key barriers to success

- The inability of DCPSF partners to effectively help identify, develop and empower local NGOs as future partners and keepers of the accomplishments of the current DCPSF projects;
- Genuine engagement of women is still a challenge in rural areas. Some women are attached to peace committees, for example, but their effective contribution is constrained by prevailing social values;
- Community power structures vary widely, and an increased role for women and youth in peace building and development is threatening to some community members;
- The sustainability of many the interventions after the programme ends (such as maintaining schools) remains in doubt;
- Many of the interventions are limited in scope and geographical coverage, affecting overall effectiveness;
- Understaffing of the DCPSF Technical Secretariat is a chronic issue with ramifications at multiple levels; and
- Lawless conditions and the close proximity of rebel camps continue to threaten participation in peace building projects in many areas.

6 Conclusions

DCPSF Impact assessment context

DFID contracted Coffey International Develop to conduct an impact assessment of its £6.2 million investment in the Darfur Community Peace and Security Fund during the current Phase 2 of the fund's activities. The purpose of the assessment is to understand how the funded activities are stabilising communities in its target areas, especially in relation to the engagement of women and the young. Specifically, the team assessed to what extent the sample of reviewed activities are contributing to the desired Outcome of "more Darfur communities stabilised, with trust and confidence between communities restored, paving the way towards early recovery." The impact assessment must also consider how the recommendations made in the 2010 DCPSF Review have been taken on board to support improved results.

Overall findings

Despite the lack of collated DCPSF data for programme performance against the logframe, the evidence collected from the impact assessment suggests that some DCPSF activities are indeed successful in contributing towards the overall desired Outcome: "More Darfur communities stabilised, with trust and confidence between communities restored, paving the way towards early recovery." Activities under Outputs 1 and 2 in particular are show evidence contributing towards this Outcome. Activities under Output 4, by contrast are on a smaller, innovative scale and the results from these activities are not yet definitive, although they too show potential for making contributions to the desired Outcome. Output 3 is in effect a repeat of Output 2 so is not relevant as a separate Output area of activity. Output 5, however, shows no evidence of contributing to the fund at all, which evidence suggests relates to lack of capacity at the DCPSF Technical Committee.

Lessons Learned

Summary of Key Success Drivers

- Complementing and enhancing the judiyya councils with youth committees is an effective approach to improving community level dispute and reconciliation mechanisms;
- Capacity building projects that target youth seems to be showing evidence of success, especially when combined with issues that are of broad concern to communities like education and health;

- Implementing partners that partner with local community groups is a consistent theme amongst the relatively more successful projects;
- Effective mobilisation of youth is a key to ensuring the sustainability of peace building activities as the youth are willing to spearhead the peace building process even when the older community is more hesitant to engage;
- Evidence suggests that there is an increased awareness and acknowledgement of communities of the role of women in building peace and engaging in recovery;
- Training of local communities to manage, repair and maintain facilities is essential for sustainability; and
- The extent to which activities rely on local communities, resources and community based organisations; correlates with their relative success.

Summary of Key Risks and Constraints

- Lawless conditions and the close proximity of rebel camps continues to threaten participation in peace building projects in many areas;
- Genuine engagement of women is still a challenge in rural areas. Some women are attached to peace committees, for example, yet their effective contribution is constrained by prevailing social values;
- Implementing partners are largely unable to successfully engage Arab nomad groups in the peace committees;
- The sustainability of many of the interventions after the programme ends (such as maintaining schools) remains in doubt;
- Mass fighting in the region may recommence and divide local committees;
- The Ministry of Social Affairs and HAC continue to impede on the neutrality and independence of NGOs;
- Many of the interventions are limited in scope and geographical coverage, affecting overall effectiveness;
- Understaffing of the DCPSF Technical Secretariat is a chronic issue with ramifications at multiple levels; and
- Reporting systems and monitoring metrics by implementing partners can be overly difficult for external parties to verify.

7 Recommendations

With the difficulties facing the Doha track of the peace process and the absence of formal support to local peace building, the DCPSF remains a useful and appropriate mechanism for contributing to community peace building at the grassroots level

The ToR for the DCPSF impact assessment calls for clear, actionable recommendations. In light of this requirement, the assessment team organised the 10 most urgent recommendations that it believes are actionable and can further enhance the effectiveness and long term impact of the fund.

Fund Level Recommendations

The model of a multi-donor fund implemented by a network of independent partners is working but needs some management improvements and more attention to local partners. In light of this understanding, the assessment team makes the following recommendations:

- The capacity of the Technical Secretariat should be strengthened in areas of immediate need such as proposal management and project reporting which will free up other resources to improve the management and coordination of the DCSPF with other actors.

- Deepen the time and resources spent on identifying and capacity building local NGOs to complement (and eventually absorb) the work of the INGO implementing partners to improve sustainability. This may further be enhanced through carefully designed partnerships with local state authorities/units.
- Develop a DCPSF donor-wide theory of change to commit donors and implementing partners to a shared vision of success which will enable the harmonisation of M&E systems across the portfolio and improve the fund's evaluability at the both the project and programme level.
- Both the DCPSF and the project implementing partners need to develop clear gender policies and strategies. All the partners are dealing with gender issues on an ad hoc basis

Reporting Recommendations

Standard and simplified reporting models are urgently needed. Individual partners follow different reporting formats which makes analysis of all the program data a difficult task. In light of this understanding, the assessment team makes the following recommendations:

- Develop a DCPSF-wide M&E handbook to ensure that common indicators, measurement approaches and attribution guidance are used allowing consistency in reporting and enabling results to be aggregated.
- Introduce qualitative indicators to assess impact on the ground. Project reporting currently is heavily based on numbers of workshops, number of training sessions and number of participants without qualitative evidence to explain the quality and impact of these numbers.

Recommended Research to be commissioned

The assessment team finds that many of the activities in the DCPSF portfolio are successfully contributing to the desired outcome. However, the assumptions behind the effectiveness of some of the activities remain untested. In light of this understanding the assessment team makes the following recommendation:

- A critical assessment of the peace committee model is needed to verify and validate their impact. The DCPSF projects overly focus on the number of peace committees that they are establishing rather than critically assessing the impact of these committees and the validity of the model.

Targeting Recommendations

The assessment team finds that the targeting of beneficiaries by implementing partners is generally broad based and relevant, however there are specific groups and/or issues that the assessment team identified through interviews and focus groups that are inadequately represented in interventions. In light of this understanding, the assessment team makes the following recommendations

- There is a need for more projects specifically designed to engage IDPs and young militiamen in peace and livelihood activities;
- Organisation of literacy programmes, primary health care services along the opened migration routes in North and West Darfur
- Pressure to engage women at all levels must continue. The focus groups revealed a phenomenon that can be understood as positive discrimination whereby the design and implementation of policies overly favour marginalised and disadvantaged women groups. The focus group discussions also elicited the following targeting recommendations for different types of women:
 - Priorities for urban women include capacity building in relation to the inclusion of women in decision making, wealth sharing and health (especially in relation to reproductive health and HIV/AIDS);
 - Priorities for agro-pastoralist women include securing water access closer to their homes, in addition to health and livelihood training;
 - Priorities for nomad women include training on health education for humans and animals, and livelihood training relating to handicrafts and milk production.

Exit Strategies

An emerging issue for the DCPSF is how it can ensure long term sustainability (DAC Principle 9) when nearly all of its implementing partners are international NGOs and the government is sometimes reluctant to allow autonomy of potential local partners. This issue is compounded by the fact that DCPSF projects are operating under difficult and very unpredictable circumstances, especially in light of an uneven peace process and inherent weaknesses in the DDPD. Despite the efforts of the DCPSF and similar initiatives, the potential of large scale violence in the region disturbing the DCPSF projects remains high and any exit strategy must be cognisant of this risk. The assessment team recommends that an exit strategy be developed with local partners to enable these partners to build or continue peacebuilding initiatives. An exit strategy should be designed based on the following pillars:

- Develop an explicit strategy to identify, engage and build the capacity of potential local partners with the goal that this will improve the likelihood of project sustainability;
- Once identified, agree to a workplan with the local NGOs with clear objectives and deadlines in an effort to apply mutual accountability;
- Conduct needs assessments of local partners and allocate appropriate resources and technical support;
- Harmonise the activities and timelines of local partners with the overall indicators for the DFID DCPSF logframe;
- Enhance day-to-day monitoring of the security and political situation in Darfur;
- Develop a strategy for DCPSF donors to coordinate their efforts to engage the government of Sudan in DCSPF exit strategies; and
- Mitigate project implementation risks by avoiding areas that are especially volatile and instable e.g. Kutum, Sayyah and Malha in North Darfur.

Annex 1: List of people consulted in semi-structured interviews

	Name	Position	Institution	Date
1		Sudan Conflict Advisor	DFID Sudan	9/10/2012
2		Deputy Programme Manager	DFID Sudan	9/10/2012
3		Humanitarian Programme Officer	DFID Sudan	9/10/2012
4		Head, DCPSF Technical Secretariat	DCPSF	11/10/2012 24/10/2012
5		Head of Political Sector	Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands	14/10/2012
6		Sudan Conflict Advisor	DFID Sudan	11/10/2012
7		Member of DCPSF Steering Committee	Embassy of Norway	01/11/2012
8		Senior Program Manager	War Child Canada, West Darfur	17/10/2012 18/10/2012
9		Youth Development Program Manager	War Child Canada, West Darfur	17/10/2012
10		Program Officer	War Child Canada, West Darfur	17/10/2012
11		Program Manager	West Darfur Youth Organization for Development	17/10/2012
12		Project Manager	ADRA, West Darfur	18/10/2012
13		Social Mobilizer	ADRA, West Darfur	18/10/2012
14		Social Mobilizer	ADRA, West Darfur	18/10/2012
15		Head of Office, South Darfur	Mubadiroon Organization for Prevention of Disaster & War Impacts	3/11/2012
16		Manager	Mubadiroon Organization for Prevention of Disaster & War Impacts	3/11/2012
17		Peace Building Expert	DCPSF, Nyala	4/11/2012
18		M & E Officer	DCPSF, Nyala	4/11/2012
19		Program Manager	Mercy Corps Scotland, South Darfur	4/11/2012
20		M & E Officer	Mercy Corps Scotland, South Darfur	4/11/2012

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21		Administrative Officer	Afag Organization	4/11/2012
22		Agricultural Officer	Afag Organization	4/11/2012
23		Program Development Officer	Practical Action, El Fasher	7/11/2012
24		Project Officer	Practical Action, El Fasher	7/11/2012
25		Project Officer	Practical Action, El Fasher	7/11/2012
26		Project Manager	UNDP, El Fasher	8/11/2012
27		Project Officer	UNDP, El Fasher	8/11/2012
28		Program Officer	UNDP, El Fasher	8/11/2012
29		Director	Ajaweed Organization for Peace, El Fasher	8/11/2012
30		Range Officer	North Darfur Ministry of Agriculture	8/11/2012
31		Range Director	North Darfur Ministry of Agriculture	8/11/2012
32		Peace drama producer	El Fasher	8/11/2012
33		Civil tribal administration	El Fasher	8/11/2012
34		Civil tribal administration	El Fasher	8/11/2012
35		Arab nomads leader	El Fasher	8/11/2012

Annex 2: Focus Group Details

	Group	Date	Location	No of Participants	Men	Women
1	Tortu Youth Committee	17/10/2012	El Geneina	18	14	4
2	Kirinding Youth Committee	17/10/2012	El Geneina	16	10	6
3	Three networks: 1. El Fasher Rural Development Network 2. Voluntary Network for Rural Helping and Development 3. Women Development Association Network	8/11/2012	El Fasher	22	14	8
4	The North Darfur Herders Union, Farmers Union and Native (Tribal) Administration	8/11/2012	El Fasher	8	8	None
5	Mugabil Peace Committee and community members	9/11/2012	Mugabil village, 45 km north of El Fasher	43	30	13
6	The women of Mugabil village	9/11/2012	Mugabil village, 45 km north of El Fasher	13	None	13

Annex 3: Indicator analysis

Time pressures and the current emphasis on results often encourage logframe and performance indicators to be limited to what is quantifiable. In light of the many sensitive and complex systems present in the Darfur region, the review team recommends that quantitative indicators be supplemented (where appropriate) with rigorous mixed method research such as perception studies. Generalizable comments on the logframe include issues relating to sampling bias, the over ambitiousness of time frames and the apparent lack of baseline data which is essential to measuring change.

Desired Change	Current Indicator	Critique	Recommended Indicators
Impact: An increase in local level peace and stability in Darfur, supporting more inclusive, sustainable and successful Darfur wide peace negotiations	Number of best practices in peace-building identified and shared with stakeholders and fora in the wider peace fora and Darfur agendas	The indicator focuses on the delivery of programme activities rather than the extent to which the desired change at impact level has been achieved.	% of residents in treatment area expressing positive outlook for local peace and stability (the terminology I'm using is generic, so make more specific). *this impact is admittedly contingent on assumptions/risks that are beyond the level of control of DCPSF.
Outcome: Darfur communities stabilised, with trust and confidence between communities restored, paving the way towards early recovery	% of community members sampled declaring that trust & confidence is restored	Assumes there was trust in the first instance and is also difficult to sample an unbiased population. The time timeframe to achieve the increase in confidence is overly ambitious (going from 30% to 88% from 2012 to 2014) given the scope of the DCPSF. The sampling approach must account for numerous regions as this will invariably affect findings.	% of sampled youth who perceive a stake in the maintenance of a peaceful society. Level of social interaction/willingness to engage in social groups such as NGOs, community organisations (perception study).
	% of tribal/civil society leaders sampled agreeing to a common and/or collaborative approach on how to address root causes of conflict	Potential for bias is high here. Similarly, the time timeframe to achieve the increase in confidence appears overly ambitious (going from 60% to 88% from 2012 to 2014). The sampling approach must account for numerous regions as this will invariably affect findings.	% of sampled tribal/civil society leaders who express preference and willingness to use dispute mechanisms as a first recourse for dispute settlement.
Output 1: Effective community level conflict resolution and prevention platforms in Darfur are in place	1.1 Number of community based resolution mechanisms functioning effectively	The indicator is unclear because the term 'functioning effectively' is not objectively defined.	% of sampled community member who believe in the possibility of obtaining fair treatment through these resolution mechanisms. Level of need by leaders and community for outside assistance in managing disputes and developing supporting structures for peace (perception study).

	1.2 Number of vulnerable group representatives (women, youth, minorities) within community based resolution mechanisms	Sufficient	
	1.3 % of community members with access to and satisfaction with reconciliation mechanisms	While 'access' and 'satisfaction' are related, the indicator describes two separate phenomena which cannot be aggregated into a single measure.	% of community members with access to reconciliation mechanisms. % of community members satisfied with reconciliation mechanisms.
Output 2: Cooperation between communities over disputed livelihood assets and income generating opportunities increased	2.1 Number of community initiatives that deliver collaborative livelihoods and income generating strategies (including joint labour, transactions)	Sufficient	
	2.2 % level of commercial interactions between target sample communities	Sufficient	
	2.3 Number of new/re-established markets that enable diverse communities to interact/cooperate	Sufficient	
Output 3: Cooperation between competing communities over access to natural resources and basic social services increased	3.1 Number of community initiatives jointly managing water resources (water points, hafirs, borewells, water pumps etc)	Sufficient	
	3.2 Number of joint education and health initiatives	This indicator is unclear.	Revise in relation to who is leading the education and health initiatives.
Output 4: Equitable and sustainable growth and access to basic services and infrastructure promoted, with particular attention to ensuring that stabilised rural and urban areas remain stable	4.1 Number of civil society organisations able to prioritise, plan, design and implement priority projects leading to equitable and sustainable growth (including livelihoods, vocational training, employability)	Impractical to measure and track over each stage of the project life cycle.	Number of locally-initiated and locally-run growth initiatives.
	4.2 Number of well-equipped new or rehabilitated schools	Both 4.2 -4.4 could be captured together	% of population have access to social services (health, education, training).
	4.3 % in increase of enrolment in formal or nonformal (vocational) training	See 4.2 above	
	4.4. Number of people with reasonable access to primary health care services	See 4.2 above	
Output 5: Evidence of effective DCPSF grassroots peacebuilding initiatives collected and fed in wider peace fora and Darfur agendas	5.1 % in increase of enrolment in formal or nonformal (vocational) training	See this as less relevant to the output.	Suggest deleting (repeat of 4.3)
	5.2 Number of activities informing future early recovery processes	"Informing future" is vague and open to interpretation.	Number of good practice activities adopted and/or replicated by implementing partners.
	5.3 Number of best practices in peacebuilding identified and shared with stakeholders and fora in the wider peace fora and Darfur agendas	Sufficient	