



USAID
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SOUTH SUDAN

MONTHLY UPDATE

August/September 2011



The joy of independence is evident in the broad smile of this South Sudanese. Photo: Jenn Warren

USAID ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN SOUTH SUDAN

Primary school enrollment increased from 20 percent in 2005 to 68 percent in 2010.

Routine childhood immunization increased from less than 20 percent to 71 percent.

Improved hundreds of kilometers of roads and built safe new bridges.

Brought electricity to three market towns.

Improved access to basic health care and clean water.

Helped survey and protect wildlife.

South Sudan Becomes the World's Newest Nation

On July 9, the Republic of South Sudan declared its independence, marking the culmination of the six-year Interim Period laid out in the landmark 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement that ended Sudan's long civil war. Independence was a result of the January 2011 referendum that gave the people of South Sudan the opportunity to democratically choose their future. Nearly 99 percent of those who voted chose secession.

In support of the United States' goal of promoting peace in Sudan, USAID provided comprehensive assistance to help carry out the referendum, including technical and material assistance, civic and voter education, and support for domestic and international observation of the process. USAID also funded out-of-country registration and voting in the eight diaspora countries where voting took place. At July 9 Independence Day ceremonies, South Sudan unveiled its new flag and national anthem, swore in its first President, Salva Kiir Mayardit, and approved the country's transitional constitution.

July 9 also included a U.S. Government ceremony that elevated the U.S. Consulate in Juba to the U.S. Embassy to the Republic of South Sudan. USAID's presence in South Sudan, which was until July 9 a field office of the Sudan Mission based in Khartoum, was officially



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Emotions ran high at the raising of the South Sudan flag in Washington on July 9 as the Government of Southern Sudan Mission to the United States officially became the South Sudan Embassy. Photo: Susan Quinn/USAID

re-designated as the USAID/South Sudan Mission. Kevin Mullally is USAID's first Mission Director for South Sudan.

While there is much to be celebrated in the new nation of South Sudan, there are many challenges as well.

Lack of Infrastructure: The severe lack of infrastructure in South Sudan has hindered economic growth. "In most developing countries that come out of conflict, you talk about reconstruction, but in South Sudan, you're really talking about construction. They had very little to start with," said William Hammink, who was USAID/Sudan Mission Director 2009-2011.

"In 2005, Juba was still a garrison town that armed forces of the north controlled. All the various infrastructure, such as sewers, electricity, roads—dated to the British colonial days of the 1950s. So not only is South Sudan starting from scratch in terms of government institutions, but also its infrastructure," he said.

Human Capital: With a literacy rate of only 27 percent, one of the world's lowest, South Sudan faces a severe shortfall of educated and trained workers necessary to lift the county out of poverty. The literacy rate is even lower among women. To help alleviate this disparity, USAID is providing scholarships to girls to help them enroll and remain in school, while offering training opportunities for women, including teacher training.

Compounding this problem is the challenge of integrating into productive employment hundreds of thousands of recent returnees who have returned to their ancestral homes after years or even decades living in northern Sudan. Since October 30, 2010, more than 370,000 Sudanese have returned to South Sudan and the Three Areas (the Abyei Area and Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile states).

Managing the Petroleum Sector: South Sudan's petroleum sector is inextricably linked with Sudan's oilfield infrastructure in the near term, and the governments of South Sudan and Sudan must find ways to negotiate outstanding issues and cooperate for the mutual benefit of both countries.

The immediate challenge facing South Sudan in marketing for the petroleum sector is the need to build capacity to understand the global marketplace for oil, as well as the day-to-day operational activities necessary to sell oil.



National anthem singers at the Dr. John Garang Memorial site in Juba, South Sudan, celebrating Independence Day on July 9. Photo: Jenn Warren



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Thousands stand under the newly hoisted Republic of South Sudan flag during independence celebrations in Juba on July 9, 2011. Photo: Jenn Warren

Government Communication with Citizens: Facing heightened public expectations about government services and economic opportunities following independence, the South Sudan government now must communicate its programs and policies to the population of more than 8 million, which comprises more than 67 ethnic groups spread over an area slightly larger than France. Many do not understand English, the official language, and live in areas without roads, electricity, or radio coverage.



South Sudanese-American former refugee "Lost Boys" with the U.S. delegation to the South Sudan independence ceremony. U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Susan Rice (front) led the delegation, which included U.S. Special Envoy to Sudan Princeton Lyman, U.S. Representative Donald Payne of New Jersey, former Secretary of State Colin Powell, who witnessed the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005, and USAID Deputy Administrator Donald Steinberg (at upper right). Photo: Jenn Warren

Transitional Constitution: One immediate challenge facing South Sudan and all 10 states is implementing changes to the fiscal year arrangements in accordance with the transitional constitution. Preparing a budget for the 2011-2012 financial years after the period has already begun presents significant challenges.

The change of the fiscal year also affects budget execution. Information will need to be adjusted in the central government and all 10 states, requiring several weeks to complete. These adjustments will separate the pre-independence Government of Southern Sudan financial records from those of the new Republic of South Sudan. ♦



South Sudan Vice President Dr. Riek Machar Teny inspects the first issue of a passport for the new nation of South Sudan. Photo: Deloitte Consulting

Moving Forward in the Financial Sector

In July, South Sudan President Salva Kiir Mayardit signed a provisional order into law establishing the Bank of South Sudan as the central bank of the newly independent nation. The law was developed with support from USAID, which also provided monetary policy advice on issuing a new currency. On July 18, just nine days after declaring independence, South Sudan launched its new national currency. President Kiir was the first to exchange currency, and the new banknotes are now in circulation. On September 2, use of the Sudan pound ceased in South Sudan.



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South Sudan's new currency. Photo: Jenn Warren

On July 28, the Central Bank held its first currency auction of U.S. dollars for the South Sudanese pound—an auction declared by international experts as "successful and transparent."

It was monitored by USAID experts, the U.S. Treasury, and International Monetary Fund and was carried out under simple and transparent written rules (developed with USAID assistance), with eligible bidders (banks and foreign exchange bureaus) notified two days in advance. The auction announcement informed bidders of minimum and maximum bids and the minimum bid rate. ♦

New Peace Center in Northern Bahr el Ghazal to Address Conflict along Sudan-South Sudan Border



The new Peace Center in Warawar, Northern Bahr el Ghazal, completed with USAID assistance to promote local peace efforts. Photo: AECOM International Sudan

On August 13, USAID took part in the opening of a new Peace Center in Warawar, Northern Bahr el Ghazal state, designed to promote dialogue on inter-ethnic violence between the Dinka Malual of Northern Bahr el Ghazal and nomadic Misseriya and Rezeigat tribes from Southern Kordofan and South Darfur. USAID started implementing conflict mitigation and stabilization activities in Warawar in February 2011 to reduce conflict in the border areas of Northern Bahr el Ghazal.

Working with the Northern Bahr el Ghazal State Ministry of Peace and Comprehensive Peace Agreement Implementation, USAID supported the construction, furnishing, and equipping of the Warawar Peace Center and helped to build the capacity of the Warawar Peace Committee to address inter-ethnic violence.



Location of the new Warawar Peace Center

The new Peace Center serves as a meeting venue for the Peace Committee, which was established in 1991 with 18 members—10 Misseriya and eight Dinka chiefs—in order to mitigate conflict during the seasonal migration of the Misseriya into Northern Bahr el Ghazal and institute governance structure in "peace markets."

Peace markets existed during Sudan's north-south civil war to provide communities isolated in opposition areas of the South (Southern Kordofan



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U.S. Chargé d'Affaires Ambassador R. Barrie Walkley (with microphone) participates in the opening of the USAID-funded Peace Center in Warwar, Aweil East County, Northern Bahr el Ghazal State. Photo: Sarah Armstrong/USAID

and Blue Nile) access to essential food and household commodities. They also facilitated nomadic grazing agreements between warring sides. During and after the war, the committee promoted communication and reconciliation across political and ethnic divides.

During the ceremony that marked the center's opening, U.S. Chargé d'Affaires Ambassador R. Barrie Walkley said, "We wish to help this new nation by assuring the security of its people and its territorial integrity as well as partnering with the Government of the Republic of South Sudan [RSS] to build the economy and consolidate democratic reforms."

"Those three elements—security, a vibrant economy, and functioning democracy—are essential for any country to succeed and allow its people the opportunities they deserve," Ambassador Walkley added.

Pagan Amum, who was Caretaker Minister of Peace until the new Cabinet was named on August 26, also spoke at the event. "The Peace Center will strengthen ties between the bordering communities of Sudan and South Sudan," he said. "The countries will be neighbors and we in the RSS and in the Sudan People's Liberation Movement aim to build good bilateral relations between the people living in the border regions between our two countries."

USAID seeks to reduce conflict and promote long-term stability in areas where violence is high, by building the capacity of local authorities to extend the state's reach to rural areas while supporting productive economic activities of vulnerable groups.

USAID is also working with other areas around Warwar to strengthen local responses to conflict. Activities include rehabilitating and equipping the Aweil East County headquarters with furniture and communication equipment including computers, satellite phones, a VSAT (satellite communications system), and high frequency radios to address the lack of a reliable communications network in the county. The county headquarters also received mobility equipment including motorbikes to improve accessibility to remote areas.

In Gok Machar, Aweil North, USAID is building a new county headquarters facility and rehabilitating the existing county headquarters infrastructure, which will be used as a meeting hall, and providing transportation and communications equipment to county authorities. This equipment is intended to help county authorities effectively monitor insecurity, manage information, communicate, and enhance community security with appropriate responses to potential threats.

USAID has supported several cross-border peace dialogues in Northern Bahr el Ghazal, including two meetings in 2010 between the Dinka Malual and Rezeigat and one with the Misseriya. USAID also helped facilitate a meeting last year of senior leadership of the 10 north-south border states as well as the Government of Southern Sudan in Juba and Government of National Unity in Khartoum that discussed joint efforts to increase stability and positive social and economic links across the border. ♦

Using Technology to Help Prevent and Respond to Conflict Threats

South Sudan continues to suffer from conflict, as was seen in attacks linked to cattle raiding in Jonglei state in mid-August that left hundreds dead. As part of its efforts to help prevent and mitigate conflict in South Sudan, USAID recently supported the establishment of a high-frequency radio network across a vast swath of territory regularly affected by



Radio operators trained in Rumbek through a USAID program to help South Sudan prevent conflict. Photo: AECOM International Sudan

violence and insecurity. A total of 89 high-frequency radios with solar panels were installed in Northern Bahr el Ghazal, Lakes, Warrap, Unity, Jonglei and Upper Nile states, enabling remote villages and counties to communicate with one another and with their respective state governments.

To ensure that local authorities are able to use the new equipment in responding to threats to peace and security, USAID supported trainings for more than 100 radio operators from conflict-prone counties. Held in the state capitals of Northern Bahr el Ghazal, Lakes, Warrap, and Unity, the three-day training sessions covered the operation and maintenance of radios, but also allowed radio operators to build cross-border relations with their counterparts in neighboring areas.

The radios have already been put to use and helped to prevent at least one attack. In June, the county commissioners of Yirol East in Lakes State and Panyijar in Unity State used the radio network to warn security forces of an imminent cattle raid on Tonj East in Lakes, helping successfully thwart the attack. But the project was not without obstacles. Insecurity prevented technicians from being able to install several of the radios destined for Abiemnom, Mayom, Koch, and Pariang counties in Unity state.

As a result, these radios are being stored in their respective county headquarters for installation when the security situation improves. It is important to note that the radio distribution and trainings are in line with each state's conflict mitigation and stabilization plan. These plans were drafted with support from the Department of State in coordination with USAID and are developed with strong involvement and

guidance from the state governor's office and senior members of the cabinet. The state conflict mitigation and stabilization plans provide overarching frameworks to enhance state presence and response to conflicts.

The Republic of South Sudan is characterized by vast distances and low population density. Cell phone communication networks are mostly confined to towns, leaving large areas unreachable in times of uncertainty or crisis. Without the ability to quickly share information and coordinate responses, local authorities are struggling to address and resolve conflict in remote areas where cattle raiding and inter-tribal conflict are still prevalent. Given these challenges, high-frequency radios are a suitable communications tool for remote areas of South Sudan. Unlike satellite phones, which have high recurrent costs for resource-poor local governments, high-frequency radios require little, if any, additional expenditure over their lifespan. In addition, solar power represents a sustainable and environmentally friendly source of energy.

The radio installations and trainings are one of USAID's first steps in supporting South Sudan to develop a better information network. With time, the radios and their newly trained operators will help connect and integrate the country's fragmented and isolated regions, key to nation building and development.♦

South Sudan Roads Authority Installs its First Board of Directors



South Sudan Roads Authority Chairman Monyluak Alor Kuol (bottom left) with caretaker Minister of Transport and Roads Anthony Lino Makana, USAID/South Sudan Deputy Mission Director Peter Natiello, Economic Growth Team Leader David Gosney (bottom right), and the Authority's new Board of Directors (standing). Photo: Sarah Armstrong/USAID



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Vehicles, motorbikes, and pedestrians share this road in Western Equatoria that USAID improved to all-weather standard. Photo: Sarah Armstrong/USAID

On August 18, USAID/South Sudan Deputy Mission Director Peter Natiello joined Caretaker Minister for Transport and Roads Anthony Lino Makana for the inauguration of a board of directors for the new South Sudan Roads Authority.

USAID provided technical assistance to the Ministry of Roads and Transport to design and establish the South Sudan Roads Authority as part of its efforts to help the government create an accountable, transparent, and effective agency for building and maintaining South Sudan's primary road network.

"The establishment of the institution demonstrates this new nation's commitment to getting it right in terms of meeting South Sudan's road maintenance needs," Natiello said. "It marks the realization of one of the key goals of the South Sudan-USAID infrastructure capacity building partnership that commenced over three years ago."

In South Sudan, one of the greatest challenges is the lack of infrastructure, and particularly roads, as it affects almost every aspect of South Sudan's development, including security, health, education, trade, agriculture, and economic opportunity. Upon the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005, USAID supported the construction of 1,500 kilometers of emergency access roads throughout South Sudan to enable critical food and relief supplies to reach people in need.

During the CPA interim period over the past six years, USAID has provided nearly \$20 million of assistance building capacity in the transport sector for public and private sector managers and implementers including funding the construction of

the South Sudan Roads Authority Office complex; training hundreds of Ministry of Transport staff; training 30 local maintenance contractors; providing technical assistance to develop policies and procedures; funding numerous workshops to promote policy awareness; and organizing regional study tours, including in Uganda, for Ministry staff to learn first-hand how efficient and effective transport institutions function.

These efforts are all designed to help South Sudan successfully grow and maintain the roads and transport infrastructure as an independent, well-managed, sustainable roads maintenance program. Many roads recently constructed in South Sudan have already fallen into disrepair. "In some respects, simply building roads is the easy part," Natiello said. "Perhaps the greatest of all challenges is road maintenance."

The event also highlighted the importance of road safety. As roads are improved with USAID assistance, driving speeds have increased, leading to more roadway accidents. The government and USAID are seeking to raise public awareness of road safety practices, including more stringent enforcement of traffic laws and regulations. Much of this public awareness effort is concentrated on the USAID-funded Juba-Nimule road, where nine billboards have been erected with road safety messages.♦

Opening of Badingilo National Park Headquarters Highlights Conservation, Tourism Opportunities

Three days before South Sudan's independence on July 9, representatives of USAID and its partner the Wildlife Conservation Society joined Government of South Sudan officials for the opening of the Badingilo National Park, an area covering approximately 10,000 square kilometers located east of the River Nile just outside of Juba and covering parts of Central Equatoria, Eastern Equatoria, and Jonglei states.

The park protects one of the largest intact savanna ecosystems in East Africa, providing critical seasonal refuge for the great tiang, mongalla gazelle, and white-eared kob migrations, as well as South Sudan's remaining giraffe populations, eland, lion, cheetah, and a host of migratory birds.



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Tiang migration in Badingilo National Park, South Sudan. Photo: Paul Elkan/Wildlife Conservation Society

Despite experiencing decades of civil war, South Sudan is home to one of the largest wildlife migrations in the world, a rich variety of wildlife species, one of the largest untouched savanna and woodland ecosystems remaining in Africa, tropical forests, and the Sudd, the largest wetland in Africa. The land and natural resources are of vital importance to local livelihoods and for the development of the new nation of South Sudan.

As a new nation, the Republic of South Sudan has a unique window of opportunity to address the root causes of many of the threats to land, security,



The white-eared kob in South Sudan. Photo: Paul Elkan/Wildlife Conservation Society

natural resources, and biodiversity. It is critical that pragmatic conservation, land-use planning, and sustainable development objectives and approaches be integrated into the reconstruction and development agenda to achieve peace dividends and long lasting benefits to the people, security, biodiversity, and economy of South Sudan.

The opening of the recently completed park headquarters building is a landmark achievement in the establishment of an effective protected area network in South Sudan that will conserve the new country's rich natural resource base and serve as a driving force for sustainable land and natural resource management contributing to security, stability, and economic growth.

The Government of South Sudan and the Ministry of Wildlife Conservation and Tourism in partnership with USAID and Wildlife Conservation Society, and states and local governments have been working in the Boma-Jonglei-Equatoria Landscape to establish conservation and land-use management policies.

Badingilo National Park has great potential to contribute to South Sudan's economic growth, providing local communities with benefits from employment and support to both conservation and protected area management programs and tourism enterprises.♦

USAID-Funded Motorbikes Significantly Improve Health Care Delivery in South Sudan

USAID funds several nutrition programs in South Sudan as part of USAID's commitment to help reduce chronic malnutrition, food insecurity, and health insecurity, particularly for vulnerable women and children under age 5.

To expand the reach of these important efforts, on August 17, USAID delivered 25 motorbikes to the Southern Sudan Health, Nutrition, and Empowerment (SSHINE) program. The motorbikes will be used to support immunization; transportation of vaccines and other medical supplies; screening of children for malnutrition; tree planting and home gardens for women's groups; and house-to-house health education and nutrition.

USAID's SSHINE program is being implemented in Warrap and Northern Bahr el Ghazal states by a consortium composed of the Adventist



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USAID/South Sudan Deputy Mission Director Peter Natiello (left) and Idrissa B. Kamara, Chief of Party of USAID's Southern Sudan Health, Nutrition, and Empowerment program test new USAID-supplied motorbikes that will help expand health and nutrition services in Warrap and Northern Bahr el Ghazal states. Photo: Sarah Armstrong/USAID

Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), Food for the Hungry, Concern Worldwide, the Malaria Consortium, Johns Hopkins University, the Bloomberg School of Public Health, and two local partners—Aweil Community Development Organization and Assistance Mission for Africa.

“We are so proud to work with you and to support this new nation to bring better health care to those most in need,” said Peter Natiello, Deputy Mission Director for USAID South Sudan. ♦

Assisting Abyei Area Residents Displaced by Conflict

USAID staff visited Wunrok and Turalei in Twic County, Warrap State, July 20-22 to assess progress of emergency aid delivery to Abyei Area residents who were displaced from their homes by conflict that broke out in May.

On July 22, U.S. Chargé d’Affaires Ambassador R. Barrie Walkley and USAID/South Sudan Mission Director Kevin Mullally joined USAID staff in Turalei to meet with internally displaced persons (IDPs) from Abyei.

In Mayen Abun and Turalei, where approximately 40,000 displaced Abyei residents currently reside,

the USAID team discovered that emergency shelter was the most significant outstanding need. While Twic County authorities have designated land for displaced person sites, the Abyei residents were reluctant to move to the sites without adequate shelter. Rain prevented them from building traditional mud structures, and the amount of plastic sheeting distributed for emergency shelter was insufficient. Many preferred to stay in town centers with family members, or seek assistance from town residents.

The U.S. Government team and the Twic County Commissioner also met with displaced Abyei residents, mostly women and children, at the Majok Kol IDP site located outside of Turalei. Ambassador Walkley reiterated the U.S. Government’s commitment to continued support for Abyei IDPs and final resolution of the Abyei issue that would determine whether Abyei is part of Sudan or South Sudan.



U.S. Chargé d’Affaires Ambassador R. Barrie Walkley visits displaced Abyei residents at a USAID-funded health clinic in Warrap state. Photo: Sarah Armstrong/USAID

“We know you want to go back to your homes,” Ambassador Walkley told the IDPs. “And we want you to. In the meantime, we will be certain you get the food and water, as well as the health assistance, you need.”

The USAID/OFDA team found that the water supply was adequate due to newly installed or repaired water wells. Health services are available through health centers and mobile clinics. Because of USAID support, according to partner GOAL, normal rates of patient intake at health centers have been



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reported, while USAID partner Action Against Hunger reported continued above-normal enrollment in therapeutic feeding programs.

Food insecurity remains a concern and is attributable to rising food prices due to trade restrictions imposed by the Government of Sudan across the Sudan-South Sudan border and increased pressure on the food supply due to the influx of IDPs. ♦



Rains kept displaced Abyei residents from building traditional mud structures and most were living under plastic sheeting. Photo: Sarah Armstrong/USAID

Microfinance Program Helps Southern Sudanese Realize Their Dreams

In order to strengthen the financial sector in South Sudan and help provide small entrepreneurs access to credit, USAID is funding the Finance Sudan Limited (FSL) Program, established in 2006 when only one other microfinance organization was in South Sudan.

The mission of FSL is to contribute to the economic rebuilding and stabilization of the country by providing quality financial services to low-income entrepreneurs and individuals through a profitable, nationwide microfinance institution. FSL has branches in Juba, Malakal, Wau, and Yei, which are all equipped to respond to South Sudan's poor infrastructure and low levels of financial literacy. The branches provide microloans as well as training to increase financial literacy.

With USAID funding, Finance Sudan Limited (FSL) has grown its client population from 2,535 in March 2010 to 9,385 clients currently benefiting from financial services offered by FSL.

Adam Abraham is one of FSL's beneficiaries in Juba. In 2007 he earned his living as a driver around Juba town but had dreams of starting his own business. Mr. Abraham knew he had to acquire funding and needed business advice. He turned to FSL in November 2010 for both.

After four weeks of training on business management skills and the loan policies of FSL, he qualified for his first loan cycle of 1,000 Sudanese pounds, an equivalent of \$350 and the maximum amount a new client could receive under the FSL group loan policy.

With the loan, he opened his own shop and was so successful, he was able to finish paying off his first loan in six months. Now, Mr. Abraham is finishing repayment of a second loan of 2,000 Sudanese pounds (\$700) to grow his business and he will be able to access a third loan in the coming months.

"The loan of 2,000 Sudanese pounds I am currently servicing has significantly multiplied my market's stock and, through FSL, I am also opening another business. Now I am able to feed my family well out of the increased profits of the two businesses."

Mr. Abraham plans to diversify his business by investing in the transport sector. ♦



Adam Abraham, a USAID-supported microfinance beneficiary, in his shop, and a customer. Photo: FSL



New USAID Mission Director Sworn in for South Sudan



USAID/South Sudan Mission Director Kevin Mullally (left) is sworn in by USAID Counselor Hilda Arellano (right) as his children, Jade Eugenia and Brian, look on. Photo: Pat Adams/USAID

On July 7, just before the declaration of an independent South Sudan, USAID swore in Kevin Mullally as the first Mission Director to the new country.

Stationed in Juba, Mullally oversees USAID's development program that focuses on developing South Sudan's promising agriculture sector; delivering essential services including health and education to citizens; strengthening governance that is effective, inclusive, and accountable; and helping to prevent or mitigate conflict.

With nearly 30 years in the Foreign Service, Mullally has extensive USAID experience in Africa. He served as Mission Director in Senegal from 2007 to 2011, as Mission Director in Rwanda from 2005 to 2007, and as Deputy Mission Director in Mali from 2002 to 2005.

He also has extensive experience in agriculture assistance, which is a major focus of the South Sudan Mission. He was Director of the Food and Agriculture Office at the Bangladesh Mission from 1992 to 1995 and Deputy Director of the Agriculture Development Office in Haiti (1989-1992) and in Niger (1984-1989).

Mullally also served as Office Director for Human and Institutional Development at USAID's Ethiopia

Mission from 1997 to 2002 and as Supervisory General Development Officer in Mali from 1995 to 1997. His first assignment for USAID was in 1982 in Upper Volta (now Burkina Faso), where he managed a forestry development project.

In June 2011, Senegal awarded Mullally one of the nation's highest honors, Officier de l'Ordre National du Merite, for his leadership in supporting education in Senegal through a USAID program that repaired or built more than 100 middle schools, donated more than 2 million textbooks, provided Internet connections for more than 408 rural schools, improved curricula and school management by local administrators and parent associations, and promoted public-private partnership in education.

Prior to joining USAID, Mullally was a Peace Corps volunteer in Chad and Niger, where he worked in forestry.

"I am honored to be USAID's first Mission Director in South Sudan, the world's newest nation," Mullally said. ♦

USAID Launches Agriculture Higher Education Partnership

On August 11, USAID South Sudan Mission Director Kevin Mullally joined representatives of the Government of the Republic of South Sudan and higher education institutions to recognize the commitment of the new government to the development of higher education and economic development.

The event concluded with the signing of a communiqué by representatives of USAID, the American Council on Education, University of Juba, Catholic University of Sudan, and the Caretaker Minister of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology.

The communiqué acknowledges that food security and the development of South Sudan's agriculture potential are top priorities for the government.

"This partnership offers an opportunity to begin the long process of rebuilding the human capacity necessary to promote agricultural growth, increase food security, and enhance livelihoods for South Sudan's farmers," said Mullally. "It is an important part of helping train a new generation of leaders." ♦