A woman in traditional South Sudanese attire, including a large basket on her head and a colorful patterned skirt, is holding a large, brown and white speckled chicken. She is wearing a gold lip ring and beaded necklaces. The background is a clear blue sky.

**IMPROVING  
LIVELIHOODS  
AND FOOD  
SECURITY IN**

# **SOUTH SUDAN**

**FEATURED:**

SSLDP: AN OVERVIEW

MORE FOOD ON  
THE TABLE

INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS  
FOR A BETTER FUTURE

SUCCESS STORIES  
AND LESSONS LEARNED

**SNV**

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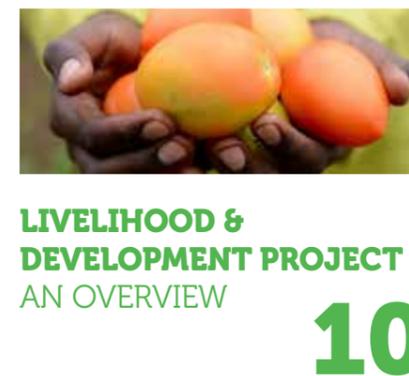
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## Sources

FAO  
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# SNV AND SOUTH SUDAN LIVELIHOOD AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

## SNV

SNV is a Dutch development organisation. Founded in the Netherlands in 1965, we have built a long-term, local presence in many of the poorest countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Our global team of local and international advisors works with local partners to equip communities, businesses, and organisations with the tools, knowledge and connections they need to increase their incomes and gain access to basic services – empowering them to break the cycle of poverty and steer their own development. Our mission is to make a lasting difference in the lives of millions of people living in poverty.

SNV's work in South Sudan is currently focused on the Agriculture and Water sector and the Sanitation and Hygiene sector, with governance, gender and conflict resolution as cross-cutting themes.

## SOUTH SUDAN LIVELIHOOD AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECT (SSLDP)

In February 2009, the government of South Sudan launched a six-year project funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (EKN) to help sustain peace and alleviate poverty among the poor and vulnerable population in six counties in South Sudan. The project, called the South Sudan Livelihood and Development Project (SSLDP), ran from 2010 to 2016 and was organised into three components: 1) community development, 2) infrastructure and buildings and 3) project management and coordination. Together with two other international NGOs, SNV was commissioned to implement the community development component of the project.

The goal of the community development component is to improve food security and generate income through commercial farming by:

**EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES TO IDENTIFY THEIR DEVELOPMENT NEEDS AND ENGAGE IN RELEVANT AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES FOR THEIR OWN LIVELIHOODS.**

**TRAINING COMMUNITY INTEREST GROUPS (IGS) TO SUCCESSFULLY CARRY OUT THE PRODUCTIVE ACTIVITIES THEY'VE DESIGNED.**

**USING RESOURCES AND GRANTS TO FINANCE THE PRODUCTIVE ACTIVITIES SELECTED BY THE IGS.**

This magazine focuses on the community development component of the SSLDP carried out by SNV.

# PREFACE BY FUNGAI MAKONI



The South Sudan Livelihood Development Project (SSLDP) has been a very important initiative in South Sudan. It was first inspired by the need to ensure food security and increased incomes through improved agricultural productivity and marketing of surplus products. The programme's community development and capacity building components were designed to revitalise communities' livelihoods by providing improved extension services like micro grants, trainings, and access to quality input. We did this through the establishment of so-called interest groups (IGs).

The experience of implementing such a project in a predominantly humanitarian aid context was very fulfilling. Our experiences demonstrate that implementing a recovery programme for a development project in a fragile environment is still feasible. While the micro grant was intended to enable interest group members to access quality input and labour for developing their cropped land, findings show that the grants were initially misused by members.

This experience led SNV to change the way the micro grant was provided, creating more accountability for how

the funds were used. Members of interest groups were encouraged to borrow the amounts they needed for financing their productive activities and to pay back the full amount at an agreed interest rate, which varied from one interest group to another. This arrangement pushed members to take responsibility for the use of the grant money and to use it sustainably. In the end, the grant became a revolving fund for the interest group even beyond the project period.

With technical and creative guidance from SNV, the micro grant was used to access quality planting materials and seeds of improved crop varieties for maize, sorghum, groundnuts, sesame, cassava, and bananas. It also provided processing machines to transform maize grains into milled flour and groundnuts and sesame into paste. The micro grant was also used to acquire and introduce improved beekeeping equipment, such as the Kenyan Top Bar (KTB) hives, that significantly improved the productivity of the sector. While the beehives were initially owned and managed by the interest group, they were later allocated to individual members. This approach instilled a sense of ownership in the hives, which in turn promoted more sustainable management, better maintenance and productive use.

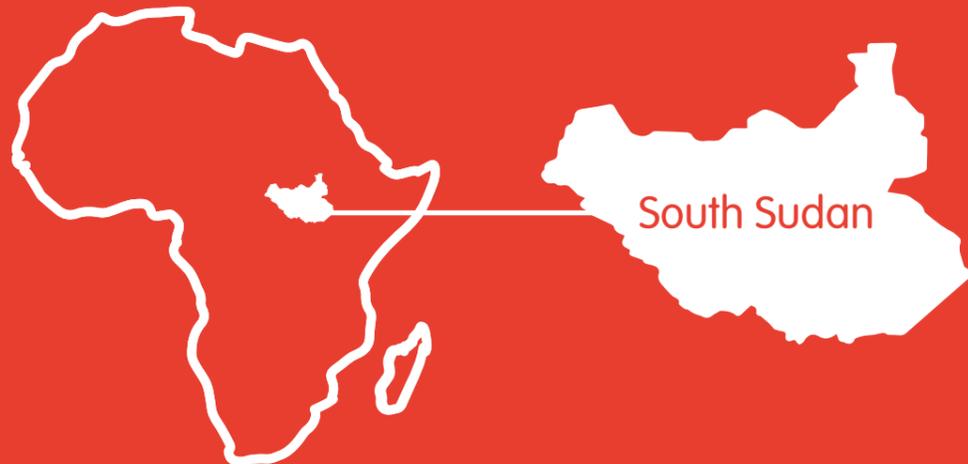
In this magazine, it is our pleasure to present the results, experiences and achievements of the SSLDP. I hope that the lessons we've learned from this project will benefit other stakeholders, including the government, private sector and others, in upscaling the best practices.

Kind regards,  
**Fungai Makoni, South Sudan Country Director**

# WAR AND PEACE IN SOUTH SUDAN

## A TURBULENT HISTORY

One cannot understand the complex and challenging context in which organisations like SNV work without first considering South Sudan's turbulent history. This history is especially relevant when focusing on long-term improvements to food security rather than short-term humanitarian relief efforts. This timeline gives insight into the most important moments in the recent history of South Sudan.



 9th July 2011  
**INDEPENDENCE**

 Juba  
**CAPITAL**

 12,340,000 (2015 estimate)  
**POPULATION**

 > 50% (less than \$1.90 p.p day)  
**BELOW POVERTY LINE**

 Salva Kiir Mayardit  
**PRESIDENT**

 English  
**OFFICIAL LANGUAGE**

 Bari, Dinka, Luo, Murle, Nuer, Zande and around 60 other languages  
**NATIONAL LANGUAGES**

 South Sudanese Pound (SSP)  
**CURRENCY**

 Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Central African Republic, Chad and Democratic Republic of Congo  
**NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES**

## TIMELINE

**JANUARY 2005**   
**A PEACE AGREEMENT ENDED MORE THAN TWO DECADES OF CIVIL WAR** FOUGHT BETWEEN AFRICAN REBELS IN THE SOUTH OF SUDAN AND THE GOVERNMENT IN KHARTOUM.

**2011**   
**MILLIONS OF SOUTH SUDANESE VOTE TO SPLIT FROM THE NORTH** IN THEIR SECESSION REFERENDUM. **KIIR WAS SWORN IN AS PRESIDENT OF SOUTH SUDAN AND RIEK MACHAR BECAME FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT.**

**DECEMBER 2013**   
**A POLITICAL POWER STRUGGLE BROKE OUT BETWEEN PRESIDENT KIIR AND HIS FORMER VICE-PRESIDENT MACHAR,** FOLLOWED BY A CIVIL WAR IN WHICH THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE WERE KILLED AND DISPLACED.

**JULY 2005**   
**GARANG WAS SWORN IN AS FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT OF SUDAN.** THREE WEEKS LATER HE WAS KILLED IN A HELICOPTER CRASH. SALVA KIIR BECAME THE FIRST VICE PRESIDENT.

**2012**   
**SOUTH SUDAN STARTED SHUTTING DOWN OIL PRODUCTION** AND ACCUSED SUDAN OF SEIZING HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS WORTH OF CRUDE AND ESCALATING AN INCREASINGLY BITTER ROW OVER OIL REVENUES.

**AUGUST 2015**   
**A PEACE AGREEMENT BETWEEN KIIR AND MACHAR, KNOWN AS THE "COMPROMISE PEACE AGREEMENT",** WAS SIGNED IN ETHIOPIA UNDER THREAT OF UN SANCTIONS ON BOTH SIDES.

**2009**   
**THE REFERENDUM LAW WAS PASSED,** OUTLINING THE TERMS OF THE PLANNED VOTE ON SOUTHERN INDEPENDENCE.

**FEBRUARY 2013**   
**MACHAR PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED HIS INTENTIONS TO CHALLENGE PRESIDENT KIIR.** HE WAS DISMISSED FROM OFFICE IN JULY.

**2016**   
**MACHAR RETURNED TO JUBA TO IMPLEMENT THE PEACE AGREEMENT TOGETHER WITH KIIR.** WEEKS AFTER HE WAS AGAIN SWORN IN AS VICE-PRESIDENT, FIGHTING BROKE OUT IN JUBA BETWEEN SPLM AND OPPOSITION SOLDIERS. THE SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY REMAINS VERY UNPREDICTABLE AT PRESENT.

# 'A THRIVING AGRICULTURAL SECTOR IS CRUCIAL TO LONG-TERM —



## AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY

With its fertile soils and favourable climate, South Sudan has great potential for agriculture. However, the agricultural sector is underdeveloped due to conflict and economic and political instability. About 50% of food is imported from neighbouring countries. “To develop our country, we have to focus on agriculture. You cannot achieve anything without food”, says SNV’s Isaac Wojah, former project manager of the *South Sudan Livelihood and Development Project (SSLDP)*.

### AGRICULTURE IN SOUTH SUDAN

Agriculture used to be the backbone of the South Sudanese economy. The Greenbelt region in particular has high agricultural potential. However, according to the World Bank, agricultural production has declined since 1999, when Sudan first started exporting oil. Yet with up to 80% of the population living in rural areas, the primary livelihood for the majority of households is still agriculture, cattle herding and fishing. Most activity in the rural sector is currently

focused on low-input low-output subsistence agriculture instead of production for markets. Sorghum is the main crop throughout the country and the most important staple food. Agriculture in South Sudan is mostly based on small manually farmed plots, which are often run by women-headed households.

### FOOD INSECURITY

South Sudan currently faces one of the world’s worst food security crisis. The situation has deteriorated since the outbreak of conflict in 2013 and further worsened with renewed violence in 2016. “Famine may be looming in South Sudan, where people are fleeing conflict and leaving their crops to rot in the fields,” the World Food Programme (WFP) stated in November this year. According to WFP spokesperson Bettina Luescher, over a third of the population is severely food insecure. “The current level of malnutrition is unprecedented,” she states. Furthermore, South Sudan is suffering from severe weather changes. Wet season often starts too late and when the rains do come, they are too heavy. The future will bring more prolonged droughts and most farmers do not have the instruments and knowledge to deal with this.

### JOBS, INCOME AND EMPOWERMENT

Even though multiple factors are at stake, Wojah is convinced that a thriving agricultural sector is crucial to long-term peace and development in South Sudan. “It could really bring the country forward in the long run,” he says. He emphasises the importance of commercial farming: “Besides farming for own consumption, people should

sell their products to be able to afford domestic needs, healthcare and education.” The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) adds to this that local food production is also increasingly important because markets have been severely disrupted by economic shocks and insecurity. Wojah also underlines the enormous unemployment rate among youth. “Most young people do not have a job. Agriculture can create employment and this will simultaneously decrease crime and stimulate sustainable economic development.”

### CHALLENGES IN THE SECTOR

There are several major constraints to agricultural and rural development in South Sudan. In order to achieve sustained and wide-spread economic development, these challenges must be addressed. The African Development Bank (AfDB) came up with a list of nine constraints: crop diseases, seed shortage, erratic rainfall, lack of agricultural tools, poor soil fertility, insufficient labour, insecurity, lack of ox ploughs

to prepare land and limited access to land. Wojah adds to this list that skills and knowledge of farming practices, marketing and the development of extension services are also lacking. He highlights that the SSLDP is trying to tackle some of these challenges by training farmers, introducing new crops, increasing the accessibility to seeds and teaching people in rural areas how to build their own ox plough.

### CONFLICT

According to Wojah, one of the main obstacles to achieving a progressive agricultural sector is constant conflict and insecurity in the country. “We can overcome other challenges, but this is out of our hands and we are not able to control it, which makes things very difficult.” When war enters an area, people flee and abandon their farms, leaving behind years of investment. They have to start all over again. “If we really want to move forward in this country, the fighting must stop and peace must come.”

# — PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH SUDAN’

# SOUTH SUDAN LIVELIHOOD AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECT: AN OVERVIEW

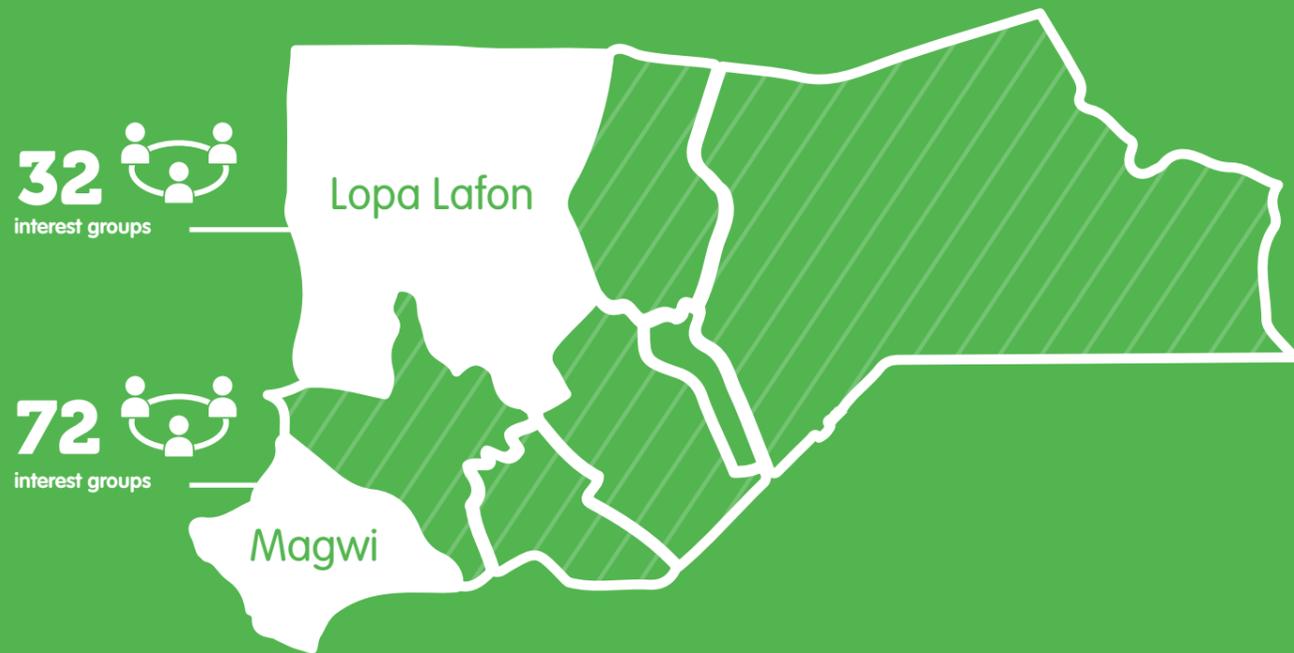
The SSLDP has been implemented between 2010 and 2016. SNV carried out the community development component in Magwi and Lopa Lafon counties, in Eastern Equatoria State.

## ORGANISATION WITHIN SNV

Country Director: Fungai Makoni  
 Sector Leader Agriculture: Justin Miteng Amos  
 Project Manager: Isaac Wojah  
 2 Project Officers in Magwi County  
 2 Project Officers in Lopa Lafon County  
 2 Field staff members in each *boma* (village)

## LOCATION

Eastern Equatoria State: 2 counties  
 Magwi: 72 interest groups established  
 Lopa Lafon: 32 interest groups established  
 Total 104 (established in total throughout the project)  
*(These counties are part of the Greenbelt where soil is good for agriculture)*



## INTEREST GROUP ACTIVITIES

 Beekeeping	 Fishing	 Cultivating crops (sorghum, groundnuts, maize, cassava, simsim)
 Goat keeping	 Producing peanut butter and posho	 Smoking fish
 Making ox ploughs	 Small businesses	

## CHALLENGES

 Conflict and political instability	 Climate change (drought, floods)	 Diseases and pests
 Inflation	 Communication difficulties (poor phone networks)	 Illiteracy among beneficiaries
 Time management	 Group dynamics (different ethnic backgrounds)	 Misuse of money from micro grants (in beginning of project)

## ACHIEVEMENTS

 Cooperation in groups	 Better use of micro grants (in later phase of project)	 Newly acquired skills
 Development of extension products (like peanut butter, smoked fish)	 Introduction of new crops (cassava)	 Production of ox plough
 Increase in commercial farming	 Improved livelihoods (more food, education, healthcare)	 Employment created



## THE IMPORTANCE OF AGRICULTURE

### Interview with SNV Agriculture Sector Leader Justin Miteng Amos

#### WHY IS THE FOCUS ON AGRICULTURE IMPORTANT IN SOUTH SUDAN?

"Given that over 80% of the population lives in rural areas and relies heavily on agriculture for their livelihoods, agricultural development is one of the government's top priorities. The potential is huge, especially in the Greenbelt, where our projects are located. This particular project also focused on agriculture because the region was populated by many people who had recently returned from displacement areas and refugee camps. Assistance with farming and developing income-generating activities has helped them to settle and build a new livelihood."

#### WHAT MAKES THIS PROJECT SPECIAL COMPARED TO OTHER AGRICULTURE PROJECTS?

"The integrated nature of the project sets it apart from many other projects. In addition to teaching people farming practices, we also focused on creating interest groups in which they could decide for themselves which activities they wanted to undertake. Not many other organisations focus on production as well as working in groups, improving technologies and marketing produce. Moreover, we encouraged cooperation between different counties. For example, in one county, people would produce groundnuts and in another, they would buy them and use the seeds for their own production."

#### WHICH RESULTS ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF?

"Many of the interest groups that were set up during the project have become cooperatives where people continue to work together, even now that the project is over. In some areas, groups have become business hubs where people sell seeds, farming tools and vegetables. The capacity building part of the project is what really makes me proud. People will be able to use their new skills now and in the future."

#### IN YOUR OPINION, WAS THE PROJECT A SUCCESS?

"Yes, the project was successful to a large extent. However, the outcome of a project like this depends on many factors. The three objectives [described on page 4] were achieved,



but the quality of the achievement could have been better in some cases. For example, we had intended to set up more interest groups than we were able to. In my opinion, the interest groups were a very important and successful part of the project. Early on, people could decide which product to focus on based on their own interests and our advice on feasibility. Some chose to start breeding goats while others wanted to keep bees and cultivate crops. We assisted them in choosing a particular enterprise and developing a business plan. We also helped them access seeds and machinery, such as milling machines, or find ways to make new machinery, such as ox ploughs."

#### WHAT IS THE SUSTAINABLE IMPACT OF THE PROJECT?

"In general, the two major components of the project each have a long-term sustainable impact. As far as infrastructure is concerned, roads, buildings, bridges and boreholes have been built, thus enhancing people's livelihoods and improving access to the markets. In terms of community development, which was one of SNV's main focal points, the transfer of skills and knowledge has been sustainable in itself. Communities have been trained and can use these skills in the future. Nevertheless, I must add that there has been significant political tension and security problems in the country. The outbreak of violence this past July resulted in the displacement of many people in Magwi and Lopa Lafon, the areas where we work, including our beneficiaries. Throughout this project, conflict destroyed many communities and drove them apart. It is very disappointing. We just hope that the people won't forget what they have learned and are able to begin again when the time is right."

#### WHAT RECOMMENDATIONS DO YOU HAVE FOR SIMILAR PROJECTS IN THE FUTURE?

"My major recommendation is to have a more flexible approach to implementing the project in a fragile environment in South Sudan. The SSLDP was designed by the government in a rather rigid way, focusing primarily on numbers of groups and training programmes. For example, we were required to establish a specific number of interest groups. There was not a lot of room for flexibility, yet it is essential to get to know the communities and their needs before you start implementing. I think it is important to focus on quality rather than quantity. A large project like this should be tailored to needs of the people you're working with."



# IMPROVED LIVELIHOODS: MORE FOOD ON THE TABLE

6 PORTRAITS OF SUCCESSFUL PROJECT BENEFICIARIES



## THE CASSAVA FARMER

NAME: **LUCA**  
 FAMILY: **2 WIVES AND 13 CHILDREN**  
 LOCATION: **LOPA LAFON**

"I did not want to be dependent on groundnuts and sorghum alone, so I started growing cassava. Cassava is a strong crop that can deal with hot and dry weather, unlike many other crops. Since I started selling cassava at the local market, I am able to send my children to a private school instead of a government school, which is a big improvement for our family. Now all my neighbours want to start growing sorghum as well."



## THE GOAT KEEPER

NAME: **JESSICA**  
 FAMILY: **WIDOW, 5 CHILDREN**  
 LOCATION: **MAGWI**

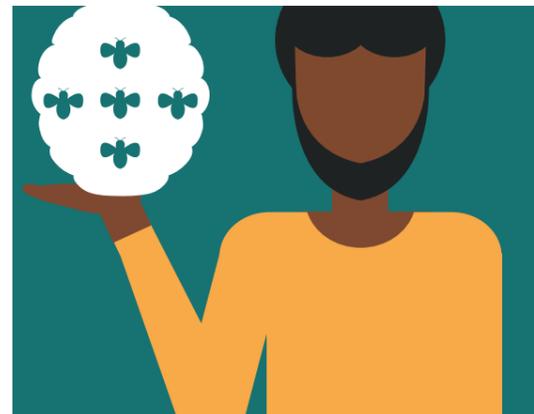
"The project provided me with the opportunity to get two goats, a male and a female. I took care of them and they produced offspring. We don't consume the meat ourselves, I sell the goats on the market. By the end of the project, I had sold 7 goats. I use the money to pay school fees for my children and to buy medicines when we are sick."



## THE PEANUT BUTTER PRODUCER

NAME: **LYDIA**  
 FAMILY: **MARRIED, 6 CHILDREN**  
 LOCATION: **LOPA LAFON**

"When new interest groups were formed, we could pick a product that we wanted to focus on. I became part of the 'peanut butter group'. We are all women and it is important for us to earn our own money and be independent. Peanut butter is very popular in Juba, so we were hoping to sell a lot and earn a good amount of money. We learned how to produce the product and started selling it. It worked out well and now our business is expanding."



## THE BEEKEEPER

NAME: **FRANCIS**  
 FAMILY: **1 WIFE AND 7 CHILDREN**  
 LOCATION: **MAGWI**

"I kept bees for a long time using traditional methods. I used to harvest 1 to 2 litres of honey from every beehive. The SSLDP advised me to start keeping the better Kenya Top Bar hives (KTB). I now harvest 20 litres of honey every three months, so my income has increased dramatically. I am using the money to send my kids to a school where they can get a better education and to buy extra household items like buckets and cooking materials."



## THE VEGETABLE FARMER

NAME: **NICOLE**  
 FAMILY: **MARRIED WITH 4 CHILDREN**  
 LOCATION: **MAGWI**

"I wasn't farming at all before, but then I joined an interest group. I now have my own field. I grow eggplants and sell them at the local market. I have never had so much money, I can even pay school fees for the children and buy pesticides for the crops. Now I also train other women to use seeds and grow crops."



## THE FISH SMOKER

NAME: **JOSHUA**  
 FAMILY: **2 WIVES, 7 CHILDREN**  
 LOCATION: **LOPA LAFON**

"From December till April, there is a lot of fish in the river. When it is very hot, the fish will rot very quickly. This is a problem, as we have to take it to the market when it is still fresh. SNV taught us how to smoke the fish in order to keep it fresh. We are now smoking the fish in a new way, on a special platform. A limited amount of firewood is used and there is hardly any smoke produced while smoking the fish. This method allows us to add value to the product so we can sell it for a better price."

These portraits are based on interviews with Isaac Wojah, SNV's SSLDP Project Manager, and case studies described in the Impact Assessment Report.



## INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR A BETTER FUTURE

The South Sudan Livelihood and Development Project provided room for creativity and innovation during the project period. This allowed staff members, interest groups and other beneficiaries to come up with relevant ideas that were new in the South Sudan context and that suited the communities' needs. A few promising and sustainable innovations are highlighted here.

### PRODUCING OX PLOUGHS LOCALLY

The use of ox ploughs for cultivating land has a direct, positive effect on productivity. However, most of the ox ploughs are brought in by international NGOs. When they break down, spare parts are not available and they can't be used anymore. To solve this problem, some interest groups decided to make their own ox ploughs. The project invited trainers from Uganda who taught them how to make ox ploughs from locally available materials like metal. They now sell the ox ploughs to other farmers in the communities and even to NGOs such as Norwegian People's Aid.

### MICRO GRANTS

Interest groups started using micro grants as a tool to increase their production and improve their livelihoods. Individuals and groups can borrow small amounts of money to buy seeds, farming tools or even a piece of land for cultivation. Once enough money has been made, the micro grant has to be paid back. At the beginning of the



project, money was handed out to groups to purchase necessities such as seeds and farming equipment. However, this did not work because the money was also spent on other things. By introducing a lending scheme, people were motivated to use the money in a good way and pay it back afterwards. This has been a highly significant change to the initial project design.

### CASSAVA FARMING

Before the start of the project, no one cultivated cassava in Lopa Lafon. Farmers mainly focused on local crops like maize and groundnuts. The project introduced the area to a new crop: cassava. This strong plant does relatively well in a hot and dry climate and can also withstand heavy rainfall, making it the perfect crop to cultivate in rotation with other vegetables. Increased farm diversity creates a safety net for farmers, as they are no longer dependent on one single product for their income.

'USING OX PLOUGHS FOR CULTIVATING LAND HAS A DIRECT, POSITIVE EFFECT ON PRODUCTIVITY'

### VALUE ADDITION

During the project, the interest groups learned how they could add value to existing products. These methods enabled them to introduce new products to the market. An interest group of women decided to start making peanut butter, which they could sell in Juba. Other groups were trained in processing fine posho from maize and groundnut paste. This turned out to be very successful and created a new market for farmers who produce these crops. Along the river in Lopa Lafon county, people were taught how to smoke fish in a healthy, food-safe and efficient way – and still use less firewood.

## **"SUCCESS STORIES & LESSONS LEARNED"** 5 QUESTIONS FOR ISAAC WOJAH



Isaac Wajah was SNV's project manager for the South Sudan Livelihood and Development project from 2013 to 2015. Sitting in his office in Juba, he shares the success stories and the insurmountable challenges he faced during the project.

### **WHAT WERE THE MAIN CHALLENGES OF THIS PROJECT?**

"We've faced many logistical problems. Infrastructure is often very bad. Bridges are ruined, roads are non-existent or in a terrible state, and when it rains, some areas are unreachable. At an organisational level, another challenge was the flow of funds. In the project's early stages, SNV had to finance the micro grants for the interest groups upfront, but sometimes this was not possible. War and insecurity also took a toll on the implementation of the project. During the 2013 outbreak of violence in particular, many people, our beneficiaries included, had to flee to refugee camps and were forced to leave their farms behind. This has been a major disappointment, as some of our impact has been destroyed by conflict. Fortunately, the acquired skills will not disappear."

### **WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER THE MOST IMPORTANT ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE PROJECT?**

"I am proud of the innovations that came out of this project. We introduced cassava in Lopa Lafon. This crop did not grow here before. At first people were sceptical, but now they see how well it grows and that they can actually sell it at the market and generate income. Along the river in Lopa Lafon county, fishermen learned to smoke their fish in order to preserve it longer. Not only does this contribute to food security in their own households, it also adds value to the fish, which raises more money. In general, we really emphasised the importance of farming as a business. Now people farm not only to feed their families but also to earn money, which improves their lives significantly."

### **HOW DO YOU DEAL WITH CONSTANT INSTABILITY AND SAFETY ISSUES IN THE COUNTRY?**

"It is definitely difficult to implement a project like this in a country torn apart by civil war. However, this doesn't mean we shouldn't support the people in improving their livelihoods as much as we can. Many people do not receive reliable information, so we try to put their minds at ease by telling them what we know. This gives people confidence and hope. Most importantly, you have to be very flexible. Not everything will go according to plan."

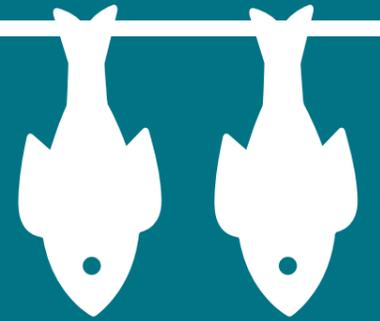
### **WHAT LESSONS DID YOU LEARN PERSONALLY WHILE IMPLEMENTING THIS PROJECT?**

"First and foremost, I learned that it is better to work with individuals, because their feeling of personal responsibility is greater than when you approach them as part of a group. This way, they cannot blame others for their mistakes. However, groups are good for market access purposes and offer the opportunity to learn from each other and share experiences. I also learned that you should never give away money for free, like we did in the beginning of the project. This only stimulates dependency. But we've learned from our mistakes, and now our beneficiaries are committed to working for their food and money."

### **HOW DO YOU SEE THE FUTURE?**

"The security situation in South Sudan remains very unpredictable. We don't know what will happen in the future. Entire communities have fled to refugee camps or neighbouring countries, including many of our beneficiaries. This also has an impact on the people who are still there; they are not willing to take the risk to invest in their farms and businesses. But on the bright side, not all our project locations have been affected by war. Quite a few interest groups are still doing their work and their lives have significantly improved. Other communities will see their success, like the cultivation of cassava, and try to copy their practices. We are confident that slowly mindsets will change."

# **SOUTH SUDAN LIVELIHOOD AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECT**





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