



Norwegian People's Aid
South Sudan

117 USAID Final Report NPA Food and Agricultural Support to Conflict Affected Populations in Blue Nile State Phase II 2015

Agreement Number: AID-FFP-G-15-00018

END OF PROJECT REPORT



Norwegian people's Aid (NPA), 2015



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1. Project Background

Since June 2011 the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) has continued to conduct counterinsurgency campaign in both Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile State against the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N), with devastating consequences on people's lives and livelihoods as well their well-being. Continuous conflict related displacement combined with loss of agricultural assets has severely constrained food production in SPLM-N controlled areas of Blue Nile State. Limited movement of people and goods has disrupted trade and small businesses, leaving majority of the conflict affected populations with limited livelihoods options. By end of August 2014 a total of 116,000 people¹ had been newly displaced majority of whom were concentrated in 5 project locations of; Yabus Ballah, Beletuma, Soda/Chali, Sumari /Mayak and Tampona

It is against this background that NPA, with support from USAID FFP and OFDA, aimed to provide emergency food assistance to 40,000 most vulnerable newly displaced IDPs and extremely vulnerable conflict affected households. The project also provided emergency food production assistance to support vulnerable households resume own food production. Given the humanitarian blockade imposed by the Government of Sudan to SPLM-N controlled areas, this project used Emergency Food Security Program (EFSP) resources for regional procurement. This project was implemented in partnership with Funj Youth Development Association (FYDA) a local-based organisation.

The project has two strategic objectives: *SO1. Targeted households have increased access to adequate food that meets minimum dietary requirements during the hunger gap to avoid short-term hunger; SO 2: Targeted smallholder farming households have increased months of adequate household food provisioning*

To achieve the above strategic objectives, NPA planned to provide a 50% food ration to augment the food needs of 40,000 beneficiaries for a period of 6 months; ultimately this assistance reached 67,584 beneficiaries. In addition, with support from OFDA, 6,667 extremely food insecure households were supported with cereal, pulses and vegetable seeds and tools to enable them resume own food production during the 2015 cropping season. The project also identified and trained promoter farmers on improved agronomic practice.

¹ UNOCHA, Humanitarian Snapshot, Sudan, September 4 2014

2. Implementation Strategy and Process

2.1 Partnership and cooperation with key stakeholders

NPA's continued investment in our local partner Funj Youth Development Agency (FYDA) resulted in a timely and robust response in SPLM-N controlled areas of Blue Nile State. Value addition of working with FYDA as a local partner is summarized thus:

- Accurate analysis of the context: FYDA has significant understanding of the conflict dynamics as well as the needs of local communities, which is very important in the context of Blue Nile State. During project implementation FYDA's accurate analysis of the context enabled NPA to have a fuller picture of the ongoing insecurity and the underlying sensitivities.
- Mitigation of contextual risks: FYDA has established contacts and knowledge of the context of the areas of operation, which contributed majorly to safety and security of staff. For instance, early detection of impending attacks in NPA's areas of operation by FYDA and local authorities end of May last year, enabled timely evacuation of all non-local staff. Further, FYDA was able to minimize disruptions to the operation as they were able to keep essential activities running.
- FYDA also added value in timely response and operational planning due to their links with local communities and authorities.

In addition, further collaboration and coordination continued with other key stakeholders and institutions such as; Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Agency (SRRA), village administration/chiefs, the government and military to guarantee the security and safety of beneficiaries, humanitarian workers as well as security while transporting food commodities and other items.

2.2 Increased emergency response capacity in Maban and Blue Nile

- Increased technical and support staff capacity: To address some of the operational challenges experienced in 2014, NPA deployed an experienced expatriate team leader who provided technical and operational support to FYDA and NPA implementation staff; a senior accountant based out of Maban fully dedicated to oversee financial management at the field level and a logistics officer who oversaw all logistical components of the operation at the field level, including warehousing. In coordination with the team leader the logistics manager ascertained operational capacities and challenges and developed contingency plans which capitalized on windows of opportunity. This enabled NPA to deliver food commodities and seeds and tools timely, despite the fluidity in the security situation.
- Increased operational and technical capacity of FYDA and NPA field implementation staff: To facilitate better implementation, NPA and FYDA operations and technical staff were trained/refreshed on inventories control and management for all commodities, gender and

protection when planning, executing and monitoring the food assistance and seeds and tools components. There was special focus on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) and the role we play as humanitarian actors to prevent and report SEA cases. Also discussed was the Community based feedback and complaints mechanism. The community extension workers received a refresher session on good agricultural practices to improve their knowledge and delivery of extension services.

NPA Monitoring and Assessment Officer also trained (theory and practice-based) FYDA and NPA staff on how to conduct post distribution monitoring, monitoring of indicators and reporting.

- Increased food commodities management capacity: First of all, NPA was able to improve warehousing at the primary locations in Maban by procuring and erecting two rub halls, each with a capacity of 700 MT and equipping each rub hall with palettes. This infrastructural investment was accompanied by training of staff on warehousing and food commodities management. Consequently, NPA was able to account for the receipt, storage, and distribution of all inventories at each node in the logistics network i.e. Primary warehouses in Maban and secondary houses inside Blue Nile.
- Increased operational capacity: NPA supported FYDA to establish Food Distribution Points (FDPs) and operational camps in six locations. Two locations-Yabus and Tamfona- are equipped with full solar system and V-Sat for internet communication. This has improved communication between the different field locations and enabled the FDPs to report any security situation timely. In turn this facilitated timely decision making in terms of rolling out contingency plans to continue with project implementation while ensuring staff safety and security.

3. Logistics: commodity movement and Distribution

3.1 Procurement, Commodity reception and Dispatch to Secondary stores

NPA targeted to procure and deliver 1144.8 Mt of assorted food items, 38.4 Mt of assorted seeds and 13,337 pieces of assorted tools. All commodities planned for the operation were procured and delivered to primary warehouses in Maban during the second quarter of the year. The respective commodities were also dispatched to six secondary community stores inside BN during the second and third quarter of the year (*refer to summary table 1 below*). The operation did not experience any pipeline breaks as NPA and FYDA implemented an effective commodities tracking system that ensured real time information on the status of commodity reception, dispatch and distribution, at each node of the logistics network.

The commodity tracking records indicate that 100% of the commodities received at NPA primary warehouse in Maban were dispatched to secondary stores. To mitigate losses during transportation from the primary warehouses into the secondary food stored inside Blue Nile, a clause was added on the transporters' contract, holding them accountable for any losses or

damage occurring during transit. Consequently, the operation registered very small losses (*Refer tables below for commodity movement details*)

Commodity Reception at NPA Doro Warehouse					Dispatched & received at secondary store-BN		
Item	Unit	Expected	Received	Balance	Dispatch to sec. stores	received at sec. store	% received @ sec. store
Sorghum Grain	Mt	972	972	0	972	970.83	99.9%
Sorghum Seed	Mt	16.67	16.67	0	16.67	16.58	99.5%
Sesame seeds	Mt	5	5	0	5	4.99	99.8%
Maize seed	Mt	16.67	16.67	0	16.67	16.67	100.0%
Oil	Mt	64.8	64.8	0	64.8	64.6	99.7%
pulses (lentil & beans)	Mt	108	108	0	108	107.26	99.3%
Tools (Pieces)	pcs	13,334	13,338	0	13,334	13,310	99.8%

Table 2. Summary of food commodities dispatch from Maban/ receipt in BN

	Target Beneficiaries	Actual Beneficiaries	Sorghum grain (90 Kg/Bag)	W. beans 50kg bag	Lentils 20kg bag	Vegetable oil (Jerry cans)
Yabus	9758.0	19711	2511	189	450	1029
Belatuma	5508.0	6866	1494	159	243	434
Chali	8723.0	15277	2420	285	331	693
Jebhlala /sumari	7629.0	15788	2133	188	647	654
Tanfona	8382.0	9942	2243	286	950	982
Total	40000.0	67584.0	10801.0	1107.0	2621.0	3792.0
Total (MT)			972	55.4	52.4	64.8

a) Losses during transportation from Maban to Blue Nile

During transportation, 1.17MT of sorghum staple and 0.7 MT of mixed beans were not delivered to the secondary food stores in Blue Nile State, while 0.4MT of oil was damaged on transit. (*refer to table 3 below*). Generally, losses and damage was associated with the bad road conditions and as food was transported to the various locations, some bags would split. Further damage and losses were minimized by ensuring transporters used tarpaulins, and ensuring that transporters understood that they would be liable for any losses.

b) Commodity quality and safety control:

Quality and safety testing of commodities was conducted for the seeds and vegetable oils. Seed quality testing was undertaken by Upper Nile University to ensure that the seed delivered met FAO’s phyto-sanitary standards for locally produced and supplied seeds (*Refer annex 4 seed quality certification*). Similarly, quality and safety of the vegetable oil was checked and confirmed by South Sudan Bureau of Standards and was certified as fit for human consumption (*Refer Annex 3 certification*).

c) Distribution

Food Commodities: Following the timely food reception and dispatch to secondary stores, 1144.4 MT; and 1142.69 MT of assorted food commodities were received in six secondary stores and distributed to 67,584 beneficiaries. The actual beneficiary figure was 67% higher than the targeted 40,000 beneficiaries and occurred as a result of inter-household sharing. The first block distribution was conducted between the last week of June and 1st week of July; while the second block was conducted in the first week of August. The timing of the distributions was optimal as it enabled targeted households weather the lean season.

Table 3: Food items distribution

Item	Unit	Planned Beneficiaries	Actual Beneficiaries	Expected Mt for distribution	Actual Quant. Distributed	Remark
Sorghum staple	Mt	40,000	67584	972	970.83	1.17 MT Loss and damage
vegetable oil	Mt	40,000	65584	64.8	64.6	0.2 Mt damage (leakage)
Mixed Beans	Mt	40,000	67584	108	107.3	0.7Mt loss and damage

Improved Seeds and tools: A total of 38.24 Mt of assorted seeds and 13310 Pieces of improved agricultural tools were distributed to 6667 HH as planned (*refer table3 below*). Distribution was conducted from late June to mid-July. Given the poor seasonal performance characterized by late and erratic rainfall, the farmers who planted early, had their seeds failing to germinate. They tried to replant but with erratic rainfall, harvest was still low.

Table 4: ESO 2015 Improved seeds and tools distribution

input type	Unit	Beneficiary HH		Distribution		Remark
		Target	Actual	Expected	Actual	
Sorghum seeds	Mt	6,667	6,667	16.67	16.58	0.09 Mt loss& damage
Maize seeds	Mt	6,667	6,667	16.67	16.67	
Sesame seeds	Mt	6,667	6,667	5.00	4.99	0.01 Mt loss & damage
Hoes &	Pcs	6,667	6,667 (6643 received 2 pcs, the	13,334	13,310	24 pieces lost

Maloda			<i>rest 24 received 1 pc each</i>			
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4. Farmers training and extension services

NPA together with FYDA organised and executed a series of lead farmers’ trainings across the project sites inside BN. Insecurity was a major impediment as some lead farmers could not be reached and on-farm training could not take place due to disruption caused by Antanov hovering. The late and rainfall rains also impacted the training negatively as most farmers were more focused trying to plant and replant as the season moved along. Consequently, out of the planned 1000 farmers only 540 were trained of which 45% were women. (Refer Table 5 below). Out of those trained in Yabus payam, those that were interested in vegetable growing were grouped around nine existing irrigation water pumps that NPA planned to repair and which would be used for dry season vegetable growing.

Table 5. Lead farmers trained

	Male	Female	Total	% Female
Chali	75	48	123	39%
Yabus	98	82	180	46%
Wadaka	125	112	237	47%
Total	298	242	540	45%

Gender and protection considerations

Every effort was made to plan distributions that are safe in terms of location, timing and security for beneficiaries. Each of the 5 FDPs have a few “foxholes” where beneficiaries can take cover in case of aerial bombardment. Planning distributions in two main tranches, as opposed to monthly distribution, minimized beneficiary exposure to aerial bombardment. Some beneficiaries had to travel almost 8 hours to reach the nearest GDP- (unfortunately, there are some locations where it is unsafe to establish an FDP). During community consultations that took into account the views of women and men, the community stated that they preferred to collect their food rations from safer locations and they built consensus on which were the safest locations for establishment of FDPs. Making that journey once and collecting food rations for 3 months was much safer than doing so every month to collect a monthly ration. While at the FDPs activities were organized to minimize waiting time and took into account the distances beneficiaries needed to travel.

NPA as per policy and practice continued to ensure that measures were in place to prevent and protect against sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) by our or FYDA staff with control over food resources. All staff were trained on SEA and each one signed the Code of Conduct. Beneficiaries were sensitized on the Complaints and Feedback mechanism and before any distribution it was

made clear that they didn't have to "pay" anything to receive their rations. Post distribution monitoring included ensuring that female and male beneficiaries had received their rations and were able to get home safely with them.

The project facilitated the participation of both women and men in all activities. The inclusion of women in food distribution committees and among lead farmers are some examples of ensuring that the needs of both women and men are met.

5. Key project outcomes and outputs

SO1: Targeted households have increased access to adequate food that meets minimum dietary requirements during the hunger gap to avoid short-term hunger

Severity of Hunger: Typically the hunger gap starts in May and goes up to October when the first harvest begins. The hunger gap starts to peak from June/July and this is the point where the project intervened and ensured that beneficiaries received 50% food ration to cushion them from hunger. The food assistance, when combined with other sources of food, saw the Dietary energy consumption maintained at an average of 1,750Kcal/person/day from July to October. Despite the total failure of the first harvest, households faced stressed levels of food insecurity and FEWSNET reports indicate that the situation would have been one stage worse without humanitarian assistance. Hence, the severity of food insecurity was mitigated by this project.

Household Diet Diversity: Majority of households in the target localities consumed 6-7 food groups, composed of cereals (sorghum and maize), legumes (cowpea and green gram), oil crops (sesame), wild and "locally grown" leafy vegetables (okra, kudura.), wild yams and pumpkin².

Coping Strategies Index (CSI): NPA conducted a food security and livelihoods assessment in November 2015, which revealed that CSI in the project areas ranged from, 32-39 out of 63 indicating most households were applying medium coping strategies. There were differences across the different project localities with Yabus having the best CSI score of 32; Wadaka's CSI score was 36 while in Chali where households were most food stressed, the CSI score was 39 which is tending towards the severe coping band. Although the CSI scores indicated medium coping strategies it was noted that this was during the post -harvest season when coping strategies should be low. This situation was mainly due to the poor 2015 cropping season.

SO2: Targeted smallholder farming households have increased months of adequate household food provisioning

² Food Security and Livelihoods Assessment Report, NPA December 2015

Number of months of household food sufficiency: The 2015 agricultural season performed poorly due to erratic rainfall, dry spells and flooding in that latter part of the year. From the Post Distribution Monitoring and the Food Security and Livelihoods assessment, 92% of the farmers actually planted the seeds that they received with almost all of them re-planting after the first seeds failed to germinate due to lack of rainfall. As the season progressed, the rainfall improved slightly especially in Yabus. Consequently, from the harvest projections, sorghum stocks were projected to last for 5 months in Yabus Payam while in Chali and Wadaga Payams, the period was only 4 months starting from the main December harvest.

Despite the poor harvest, households were observed to have stored some seeds for the 2016 cropping season. (See picture on household in Belatuma storing maize seeds)



Cassava-only produced in Belatuma.
Women selling cassava

The poor 2015 agricultural season had a silver lining. Households in Belatuma, who traditionally grow cassava, were able to use cassava as a “drought” reserve crop and sell to other non-cassava growing communities. This generated interest amongst farmers in other areas to adopt cassava as one of the staple crops.

6. Implementation Challenges

- Insecurity is an ongoing challenge. Aerial bombardment affected beneficiary registration, farmers' training and effective monitoring of the cropping season.
- Strong social cohesion in the target community means that assistance provided to the most vulnerable will almost always be further shared-which has the impact of diluting the assistance.
- Due to the short term nature of this funding, NPA is lurching from one short-term plan to the next which undermines efficiency and, among beneficiaries, creates unhealthy dependencies on external support. This is a protracted crisis, and it would greatly benefit the response, to have a multi-year approach that enables multi-year planning and a focus on outcomes rather than sets of short term inputs and outputs.
- The South Sudanese Pound (SSP) has greatly weakened against the US\$ resulting in exchange rate fluctuations resulting in increased project operational cost. Further, the unstable SSP has seen traders in Ethiopia being reluctant to use it, preferring to transact in either Ethiopian Birr or US\$. The mechanism for getting Ethiopian Birr remains an ongoing challenge to the operation.
- The political crisis in South Sudan has exacerbated tensions between refugees from Blue Nile State and local communities in Maban. During implementation there were spontaneous returns from the refugee settlements in Maban County and this is something that NPA and FYDA will continue to monitor.

7. Lessons learned

- The type of tools distributed as opposed to farmer's preference was a key lesson learnt and adjustments will be made in the design of the subsequent phase of the response. The project provided both *malodas* and hoes to each household and it was observed that later, households worked with local blacksmiths to modify the hoes into local hoes called *mntubabs*. It therefore makes sense to provide *malodas* rather than hoes.(picture below shows difference between hoe (to the left) and *mntubab*)



- There are opportunities for livelihoods recovery and resilience building, despite this being a protracted crisis. Therefore, while it is critical to continue responding to urgent humanitarian needs, the program should consider continuing with medium- term livelihoods recovery interventions where the situation allows. This will contribute to strengthening resilience in SPLM-N controlled areas of Blue Nile State.

Annex 1: ESO 2015 Results Framework

Intermediate Results and output Indicators	Baseline 2015	Annual Target	Q1 Feb-Mar. 2015	Q2 April-June 2015	Q3 July-August 2015	Q4 Sept-Oct 2015	Annual Performance Achieved to the End of Reporting Period (%)	On Target Y/N
Dietary energy consumption (kcal/person/day)	1,050-1,176	2,100	N/A	Will be provided next quarter after all distributions are complete	1650-1800 Kcal/person/day	1915Kcal/person/day	Daily Kilo Calorie intake increased and sustained at an average of 1750 K Calorie/person/day	Partly yes
% increase in seeds actually sowed amongst seeds and tools beneficiaries	85%	100%	N/A	Will be provided next quarter since planting started end of June	92%	92%		yes
Number of farmers (gender disaggregated) who receive training	0	1000	N/A	Will be provided next quarter since planting started end of June	20 (13 female and 7 male)	540 (42% female)	540 (45% (243 female, 297 male) 54% of the target	Partly Yes
Proportion of targeted farmers (gender disaggregated) demonstrating improved agronomic practices for staple crop and vegetable production	0	60%	N/A	Will be provided next quarter since planting started end of June	Not measurable at this point	90 farmers, (33 female and 57 male farmers)	90 farmers, (33 female and 57 male farmers) (16.7%)	No
Actual metric tonnage and cost for commodities purchased, by commodity type and origin, compared to planned purchases and tonnage tendered		Sorghum: 972mt Pulses:108 Oil:	0	Sorghum: 972MTsorghum; Pulses 108 MT Oil: 0 MT	Sorghum: 972MTsorghum; Pulse: 108 MT Oil: 64.8 MT	Sorghum: 972MTsorghum; Pulse: 108 MT Oil: 64.8 MT	100% of the target commodities were procured & delivered. This include: 972MTsorghum;	Yes

		64.8mt Agric inputs (38.34mt seeds, 13,334 pcs tools)		Agric. Inputs: Seeds 38.34mt and 13,334 pcs of tools)	Agric. Inputs: Seeds 38.34mt and 13,334 pcs of tools)	Agric. Inputs: Seeds 38.17 MT and 13,334 pcs of tools)	Pulse: 108 MT Oil: 64.8 MT Agric. Inputs: Seeds 38.34mt and 13,334pcs of tools)	
Time from agreement with donor to possession by beneficiaries	7 months	4 months	N/A	4 months				Yes
Number of beneficiaries targeted and reached (disaggregated by gender and age)	35,000	40,000	N/A	9,758 (6,635 F and 3,123M)	67584 of this, 47% (31,764) female & 53% (35820) male 47% female and 53% male beneficiaries	67584 of this, 47% (31,764) female & 53% (35820) male 47% female and 53% male beneficiaries	67584 of this, 47% (31,764) female & 53% (35820) male 47% female and 53% male beneficiaries	Yes
Actual quantity and value of food commodities distributed to beneficiaries	1,266MT	1,144 MT	N/A	195MT	1041MT (969MT sorghum grain +72 Mt pulses)	1142.69 MT (970.86 MT Sorghum grain, 107.26 MT pulses, 64.6 MT Oil)	99.9% of the commodities planned & procured were dispatched & distributed to beneficiaries: 1142.69 MT of assorted food commodities 38.24 Mt of assorted seeds And 13310 pieces of tools	Yes

Quantity of commodities lost by commodity type, value and reason of loss	<0.1%	<0.1%	N/A	<0.05%	<0.12	2.1 MT (0.12%) loss and damage during Transportation to secondary store in BN.	2.1 MT loss. This is equal to 0.1% of the total commodities transported and distributed. Loss & damage is related to transportation between NPA primary store and the secondary store.	Yes
Number (gender disaggregated) of beneficiaries provided with seeds and tools	35,000	24,000	N/A	918HH (624F and 294F)	6667	6667	2,867 female headed/HH represented by female; and 3,800 Male	Yes
Number of lead farmers (gender disaggregated) trained on improved agronomic practices	0	1,000	N/A	Next quarter	20 (13 female and 7 male)	540 (42% female)	540 (42%) female, 106 (58%) male	Yes

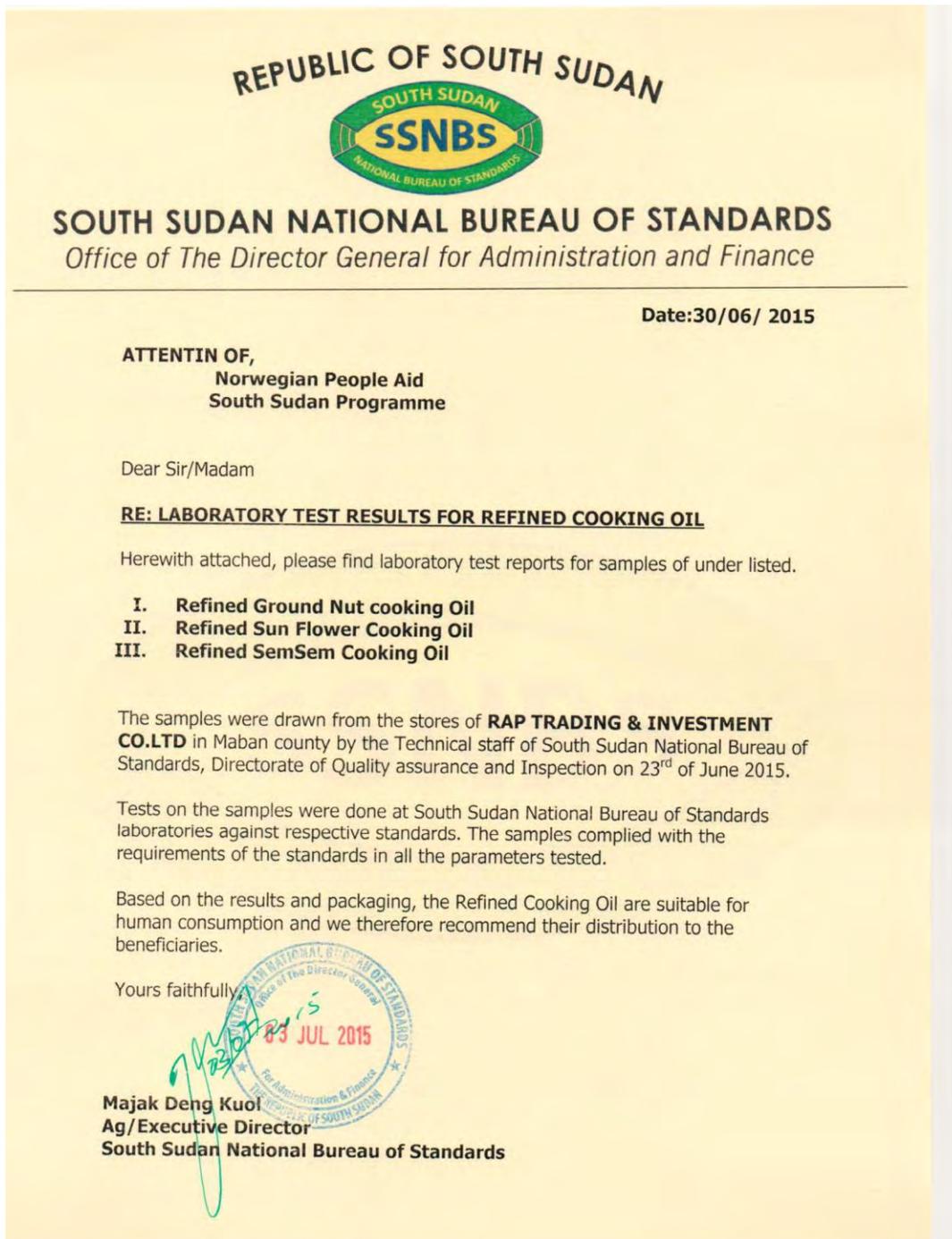
Annex 2: Project Expenditure summary

	Values			
Donor Budget Line (DBL)	Sum of Budget	Sum of Amount USD	Variance	% Unspent
A. Personnel	427 290,00	512 897,50	(85 607,50)	-20 %
B. Fringe Benefits	150 505,12	171 458,34	(20 953,22)	-14 %
D. Travel & Transport	1 236 977,83	1 238 732,96	(1 755,13)	0 %
E. Overseas Allowances	12 000,00	13 000,00	(1 000,00)	-8 %
F. Program Supplies	1 776 244,96	1 254 636,40	521 608,56	29 %
G. Other Direct Costs	281 162,88	292 495,56	(11 332,68)	-4 %
I. Indirect Charges	515 819,21	462 601,31	53 217,90	10 %
Grand Total	4 400 000,00	3 945 822,07	454 177,93	10 %

Comment on expenditure summary

The project made substantial savings on transportation contracts as NPA managed to move food before the rainy season. Also, NPA was able to negotiate lower prices for food commodities as well.

Annex 3: ESO2015 Food Quality and safety certification



Annex 4: Seed quality testing Certificate



Date:25/05/2015.....
No:UNU/FAJ/17-A-1.....

التاريخ:
التمرة:

To: Manager Food Security and Livelihood Emergency Special Operation,
Norwegian People's Aid, South Sudan Program.

Subject: Seeds Analyses Report

Production location: Renk County
Harvest season: 2014/2015
Date of test: May 2015
Producer: RAP

Crop	Variety	Lot No.	Purity level	Germination capacity	Pure live seed	Remark
Sorghum	Wadahmed	98	97.6	83.3	81 %	
Sorghum	Wadahmed	68	98.0	89.3	91 %	
Sorghum	Wadahmed	-20	98.1	52.0	51 %	rejected
Sorghum	Wadahmed	20	98.3	98.0	96 %	
Sesame	White	50	95.3	97.0	92 %	

Summary and Recommendation

1. Purity percentage was high. Mixed varieties are preferred in subsistence agriculture.
2. Generally, germination capacity was very low. Because of seed scarcity lots Nos. 98, 68, 20 and 50 could be considered for sowing purpose.
3. Wadahmed lot No. -20 was considered non productive having pure live seed level 51%. Not recommended for sowing.
4. Wadahmed lot No. 20 had pure live seed 96% high enough for sowing purpose. Seed rate increase not necessary.
5. Increase seed rates for lots Nos. 98, 68 and 50 to cater for the dead seeds.
6. Seeds health was found satisfactory, no pests or disease infection detected.
7. Low germination capacity might have been caused by intense heat the seeds might have been expose to during storage period.


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