

## The Capacity Project in Southern Sudan

More than two years after the signing of the historic Comprehensive Peace Agreement, the health situation in Southern Sudan remains dire. However, after over two decades of civil war, peace has afforded a welcome opportunity to the Ministry of Health (MOH) to work closely with the Capacity Project and other partners to rebuild the health sector's capacity to deliver quality health services to the people of Southern Sudan.

In the context of post-conflict recovery, the Capacity Project is helping to strengthen the efforts of the MOH to hire and manage Southern Sudan's health workforce. The Project is supporting the MOH in implementing a strategic approach to workforce development and improving access to health information. Following an assessment of the current human resources data collection systems, the Project is helping to establish a national human resources information system, coordinated with the state-level systems. With partners, the Project is supporting the repatriation, training and integration of Southern Sudanese health professionals in the public and NGO sectors, beginning with the repatriation of 15 doctors. To foster leadership development, the Project is facilitating a program that includes skills development workshops, executive coaching and study tours. An additional aim is to support the development of nursing and midwifery services through targeted leadership and management skills development at all levels of the nursing workforce.

### Activities in Brief

#### **Implementing a Strategic Approach to Workforce Development**

The Capacity Project is supporting the MOH in implementing a strategic approach to workforce development, including establishing comprehensive and operational management systems, implementing mechanisms for competency-based continuing professional development of the health workforce and improving access to health information.

In 2006, the Project conducted the first multisectoral human resources for health (HRH) forum in Southern Sudan. The meeting brought together staff from the ministries of health, finance and public service with representatives of major health-sector partners to disseminate information and collectively make recommendations to move forward. A working group, including representatives from the Capacity Project, formed to draft a strategic plan and policies for the MOH.

The forum identified a roadmap and taskforce to develop the inaugural HRH policy for Southern Sudan. Chosen as one of the members of this taskforce, the Capacity Project helped develop a comprehensive HRH policy that will guide all HRH programs in the country. A draft policy was presented to a stakeholders' workshop in February 2007 and published. A CD containing the proceedings of the workshop and materials from the Project's HRH Global Resource Center

was produced by the Project and distributed to the participants of the workshop and other stakeholders.

In Juba Hospital, the Project is establishing a multi-media resource center in a space made available by the hospital. The center will bring access to a range of materials of interest to hospital-based and other clinical staff. Training for staff will help support the center. A second resource center is planned for 2008 in collaboration with the African Medical and Research Foundation.

The Project is continuing to work in close collaboration with partners to support the MOH to develop and implement a comprehensive health workforce development strategy.

#### **Establishing a National Human Resources Information System**

In 2007 the Project began assistance to strengthen human resources information systems (HRIS) in Southern Sudan. Officials from the MOH and all ten states attended a national HRIS stakeholder leadership meeting, resulting in a commitment to form centralized and state-level HR leadership groups and develop a complete HRIS. As an initial step, the Project assessed the existing health personnel registry and additional HR data and systems. Following up on the assessment, the Project is working with the Government of Southern Sudan to establish a national HRIS that regularly provides current data, coordinated with the state-level systems.



Visit the HRH Global Resource Center—[www.hrresourcecenter.org](http://www.hrresourcecenter.org)—to find, share and contribute human resources for health knowledge and tools.



Based on needs analysis, use cases and system review, the Project is creating a complete development and implementation project plan, and will work with the stakeholder group to refine the plan for adaptation, development, implementation, training and ongoing support.

**Supporting Repatriation, Training and Integration of Health Professionals**

In partnership with Samaritan’s Purse, IMA and Christian Health Association/Sudan, the Project is supporting the repatriation and training of 15 Southern Sudanese doctors who had been living in Canada.

Following a nine-month medical retraining at the University of Calgary, the doctors are being mentored in a practical training program in Kenya. Upon completion of this program, they will be deployed to Southern Sudan to work in the NGO and public sectors. The Government of Southern Sudan has shown great interest in this innovative health care worker repatriation program. These doctors will increase the number of practicing doctors in Southern Sudan by more than 10%.

**Facilitating Leadership Development**

The Project’s HRH baseline assessment identified lack of strong leadership skills among health managers as one of the key obstacles to scaling up provision of health services in Southern

Sudan. In response, the Project rolled out an innovative leadership development program targeting key health managers in the public and NGO sectors. To date the Project has taken over 30 health managers through the program, aiming toward a total of approximately 100 trained managers by Fall 2007.

In 2006, the Project sponsored the MOH’s Director General of Human Resources Development to participate in a one-month customized HRH course at the University of New South Wales, School of Public Health. The course covered areas such as workforce planning, pre-service and in-service training, curriculum development, human resources management (HRM) and health workforce financing. Intended to jump-start the country’s HRM capacity at the highest level, this training was the first in a series of capacity-building activities that will support Southern Sudan’s nascent but rapidly expanding HRM initiative.

**Supporting Leadership in Nursing and Midwifery Services Development**

The Project will support the development of nursing and midwifery services in Southern Sudan through targeted leadership and management skills development at all levels of the nursing workforce. The Chief Matron will be included in leadership development activities, and the Project will collaborate with the Chief Matron and nursing schools to identify teams of nurses at all levels and in at least three states, to develop leadership and management skills.



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**The Capacity Project Partnership**



**Additional Partners in Southern Sudan**

World Health Organization  
 World Bank  
 African Medical and Research Foundation

John Snow, Inc.  
 Christian Health Association/Sudan  
 Samaritan’s Purse