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A CONCEPTUAL APPROACH TO

EXPANDED FOOD SECURITY IN NORTHERN UGANDA AND SOUTHERN SUDAN

A RE-DEVELOPMENT PARADIGM

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I INTRODUCTION

1.0 Southern Sudan and Northern Uganda share the unhappy fate of being at the epicenter of a very long-term complex (political) emergency which has for years laid waste to the lives and livelihoods of millions of people. It has destroyed much of their natural resource base and disintegrated time-tested cultural organizational patterns for self-survival. Southern Sudan is still locked into its seemingly endless crisis with the continuation of the tragic, and uncommon suffering of its people. Northern Uganda, despite the spill-over effects of Sudan's civil war, has been attempting to rehabilitate its own war-torn economy after two decades of brutal civil strife. Major large-scaled international humanitarian operations continue in both places (for Sudan's internally displaced and those who took refuge in northern Uganda) to avert starvation and reduce the disease problems worsened by malnutrition. These are consuming a dwindling base of inside and outside resources and are taxing the ingenuity of international agencies beyond their existing financial and organizational capacities and preferred role definitions.

1.1 In both places, however, there seems to be emerging a new approach which offers promising possibilities for reducing the exorbitant costs of emergency operations while laying foundations for sustainable development. These new directions are reflected in the growing number of production and organizational activities in southern Sudan during the last three years, as well as the incipient expanded food security project in northern Uganda. Both projects - the Northern Uganda Food Security Project (NUFSP) and, what we will call here, the South Sudan Food Security Project (SSFSP) - are based on the concept that Relief and Development strategies must be designed and implemented as a single, integrated idea and effort, making development part of the solution to emergency situations.

1.2 The purpose of this paper is threefold:

a) The first, as background to what follows, is to briefly summarize the reasons for why both development and relief strategies of the past have failed to be adequate in both practical and philosophical terms - inadequate to meet basic needs of millions of people, and inadequate as methods to provide a sustainable solution for their future. The so-called conventional "development" strategies throughout the last century share a common failure to, at best, eliminate the process of underdevelopment and to initiate (or restore) autonomous and **self-reliant development** for the largest part of the population. At worst, they have been responsible for that deepening process. The conventional relief-only humanitarian strategy (being the response to the extreme and more visible political/military manifestations of that process of

underdevelopment) has failed in its inability to create **sustainable survival** for millions of displaced people.

b) The second purpose of the paper is to sketch (with examples from southern Sudan and northern Uganda) a conceptual framework of making development part of the solution to emergencies, through facilitating a local capacity to simultaneously and adequately serve both the short and long-term needs of both resident and displaced populations. And, thereby, attempting to begin a process of (un)doing the dependency and (un)derdevelopment of the past.

c) The third purpose is to suggest some modest follow-up activities in both southern Sudan and in northern Uganda which will assist in strengthening this strategy of convergence, by linking both areas into a larger geographical space.

1.3 Conditions As Requirements for a Convergence Strategy

a) Such a strategy of linking relief and development presumes hospitable political environments which give de jure and institutional support to its conceptualization and direction. Though in their infancy, the recent developments in Eritrea, Ethiopia, Uganda and southern Sudan (where more than mere slogans of democracy, pluralism, transparency, accountability, self-development, etc. are finding expression) represent such positive examples in the Horn of Africa which offer promise for such a strategy to become part of their (long-term) process of transformation to democracy.

b) Alongside these political developments is the growing awareness of local populations and outsiders of the contributory role which the latter have played in creating and exasperating the crises. Such new understandings by participants at all levels, from inside and without, must therefore be translated into a new ethic of mutual involvement which will respect the articulated local, regional, and national priorities which seek for the restoration of their societies and the self-development of the people.

1.4 This conjuncture of political developments and new understanding lies at the base of the possibility of forging a synthesis of relief and development - a strategic shift to a new paradigm - by simultaneously addressing the needs and production possibilities of both displaced and resident populations, and thus reducing a dependence on outside sources to meet and sustain food and other needs, as well as development in the region. Here lies the principle of **Emergence** which characterizes both situation and solution but which requires different modes of perception and problem-solving than has been typical of the western engineering and organizational mentality in both conventional development and relief activities.

While it would be naive to ignore other agendas of both internal and external actors, as well as the historical baggage of experiences, attitudes, and structures, the propelling and positive forces for change are found within those democratic movements which are encouraging of more participation of people in their economic and political lives. While the challenges are great and the outcomes indeterminate, timid reluctance or resistance will yield only more of the same folly.

II THE ROOTS OF THE CRISIS: FOUR KEY MANIFESTATIONS

2.0 The roots of the chaotic and destructive rivalries affecting northern Uganda and southern Sudan trace back several generations, from the brutality of the slave trade, through the exploitive mercantilism of colonial rule, and its intensification during the post-colonial "independence" period, up to the present. The dynamic accumulation and interaction of all those external and internal forces, being part of a deepening process of underdevelopment, have shaped the current realities characterized by impoverishment, unequal external and internal relations, predatory behavior and the disintegration of much of the social and economic fabric of these societies.

2.1 To understand more clearly the dimensions of underdevelopment and impoverishment (to help in the conceptualization of an alternative strategy) it is useful to look at four of the more significant manifestations of underdevelopment and impoverishment: the material, scientific, political/social and spatial.

a) Material: Here is seen the growing divergence in the pattern of domestic resources use from meeting domestic demand and the needs of the largest part of the population. This pattern of divergence has also been accompanied by a rapidly diminishing natural resource base. In the extreme (jolting) case of forced displacements (emergencies), the divergence is complete and the ecological damage the greatest.

b) Scientific: The disappearance/absence of an ecologically based indigenous science and technology which would otherwise (and once did) provide the organic and positive link between the pattern and growth of domestic resource use with that of domestic demand and the basic needs of people.

c) Political/Social: The dynamics of this process which has given rise to this divergence is found in the production relations which have characterized these underdeveloped economies. External ownership and decision-making has historically dominated over domestic economic processes resulting in dependence on highly specialized primary products marketed as export sales, and dependence on imports of foreign capital, technology and expertise. The persistent and growing imbalance of income earned against income paid, ie. the transfers of locally produced surplus to the owners of capital, technology and managerial skills, has been exacerbated by an array of restrictive and conditional international trade and finance policies. These have led to the greater impoverishment of the largest part of the populations and the abandonment of traditional social and cultural modes of survival.

The dominance of external control is likewise found in the conventional welfare-type humanitarian strategy where ownership of program activities is restricted to external agencies - donors, UN, International NGOs - and by definition mostly excludes local production, structures and institutions. The conceptual, organizational compartmentalization and separation of relief and development fosters the reproduction of these dominant social relations and masks the contradictions inherent in them. The participation of people in democratically exercising authority in their political and economic affairs and in their own survival has been conspicuously absent.

d) Spatial: The last, but not insignificant, characteristic of underdevelopment and impoverishment is the spatial isolation of small dependent economies. The absence of vibrant trade in commodities which are extensions of domestic resources utilized in the production of domestic demands has aggravated the underdevelopment process. And it is in this same isolation - not size - that most emergency programs are managed and implemented, with little or no attention given to the merits of enlarging the geographic scope of operations, for resourcing supplies, accessing local, regional and international markets, and coordinating activities.

The ultimate consequence of these developments has been that the productive and organizational forces of these countries were torn loose from their roots in the domestic market with production becoming increasingly divergent from, and unresponsive to, the needs of the local people.

III APPROACHING A NEW PARADIGM OF RE-DEVELOPMENT

3.0 The conceptualization summarized below attempts to capture only the elements of a theory of re-(lief) and development. Re-development (as in re-lief, re-storation, re-habilitation, re-organization, re-gionalization, re-turning) must be seen, however, as an integrated web of mutually reinforcing activities which seeks to (un)do the (un)derdevelopment of the current situation while laying foundations for a sustainable alternative. Each situation varies according to the unique environments which people find themselves and therefore, an awareness of each situation is essential for determining the combination of strategic components which should apply at any one time.

3.1 The resultant poverty, misery and death which has occurred over the past and especially in complex emergency situations is primarily through the loss of means of subsistence - of the ability to sustain life at any reasonable and meaningful level. Subsistence, however, is too rarely understood as a strategy which has provided, over the long term, sustainability for the basic needs of families, most groups and peoples or cultures over generations. **Restoration** is an important concept. It means restoration of many traditional and indigenous values, norms, skills. It means restoration of economic forms that can survive in local ecological conditions, and with reliance on local markets with local production for local consumption as much as possible. And it means restoration and replenishment of the local environment for sustainable survival. Restoration of self-reliant subsistence, therefore, should take priority. Programs which have not been conceptualized initially as ways of assisting people to restore subsistence conditions based upon pre-existing patterns sets in motion a vicious cycle or downward spiral of failures which leave peoples stripped of crucial but fragile resources. Subsistence represents then a crucial foundation to be restored and upon which further development, i.e. surplus production, can be built.

3.2 However, in approaching this convergence it must be viewed as a process with a people rather than a program orientation. It is the particular people and their unique circumstances that require attention, not the delivery of some pre-packaged, administratively easy, or theoretically elegant program. It is a process to restore self-reliance and sustainable survival through enhancing individual, family and institutional abilities of local people to meet their own needs

and development aspirations. This is a learning process which must be viewed over the long-term. While failures are inevitable they are only permanent if lessons are not learned and proper adjustments made to correct them.

3.3 Convergence of Domestic Resource Use, Needs, Demands:

From the point of material development, a priority is to begin economic processes which promise to overcome the divergent pattern of needs, domestic production and domestic consumption. A necessary condition to facilitate such a planned convergence is that the production of food and basic materials which are required as primary inputs for the manufacture of the basic goods of both the settled and displaced communities be substantially derived from domestic resources. To accomplish this, however, it is necessary for producers to access consumers through restoring, rehabilitating, reorganizing the necessary linkages from the farm to the market. Storage, transportation, roads, and credit facilities all enter this chain of marketing and should receive their due and coordinated attention. Only in this way will it be possible to ensure the dynamic interaction of domestic resource use and domestic demands and needs.

3.4 Development of an Indigenous Technology:

The above necessary, if not sufficient, condition then provides for the basis of developing an organically linked indigenous technology which is also rooted in the use of domestic resources and servicing domestic needs, while recognizing and living within environmental constraints - something traditional systems have been more successful doing than modern societies. To approach this, however, it is necessary to make different assumptions and to tap different resources. Among those domestic resources are traditional culture, social relations and skills, indigenous knowledge, basic human drive to self-reliance, local ecology, etc.; those items which have historically been associated with sustainable survival.

Combining old ways and knowledge with some new understanding and techniques is to be encouraged since an overall effort to establish the process of rebuilding and maintaining self-reliance is often to be done in new and different environments or changing ecological conditions. One of the strengths of healthy societies has been to develop and continually enlarge a repertoire of responses to the constancy of ecological fluctuations and change. A large number of important innovations are available to decrease the labor time of people whose time is especially limited given the myriad of activities which they are engaged. What must be demonstrated, however, is that modern methods, techniques and outside services are complementary to the local time-tested ways of surviving, and compatible with local individual and group initiatives, subject to local acceptance and control and demonstrated to be appropriate to the situation, including monetary cost and maintenance, size and scope, as well as ecological and cultural sustainability.

What is required is the establishment of facilities for rapid and effective technological training where such training is capable of generating positive economic returns to producers and consumers while being environmentally friendly; thus providing the source of its sustainability. This is not to be confused with the model of technical training established during colonial administrations and the policy of independent states of "taking over" these, mostly, large

facilities which have been unsustainable without outside assistance because of their separation from the direct producers and consumers.

3.5 Social Relations of Production:

While a dynamic convergence of domestic production for domestic consumption clearly contains its own material, economic and scientific dynamics, it also contains, by necessity, its own social and political dynamics as well. Such convergence, critically depends on broadening decision-making processes for people to participate more meaningfully in exercising **economic** as well as **political** authority in their customary roles as producer, consumer and citizen.

The failure to establish relations of production as contained in economic democratic organizations and enterprises carries the high risk of a deepening of the divergent pattern of domestic resource use and needs. This is particularly true since the end of the cold war which has witnessed the freeing-up of the globalization of capital (the privatization process). Since small, poor and dependent economies do not possess the key ingredients - entrepreneurship, private wealth, ability to take risks and preference for risk-taking, or anything like them in sufficient proportions - to establish independent and similarly structured private local economic processes, then the current privatization phenomenon will only deepen the predominance of foreign capital, technology and expertise and reproduce production relations which further accelerate the dynamic divergence of domestic production and consumption. On the other hand, if privatization equally encourages and protects small producers coming together to form farmer/worker owned and managed democratic cooperative societies and enterprises (unobstructed by government bureaucracies which have historically undermined local control and management) then such a move to invest control democratically in the hands of small farmers and producers (while learning simple accounting principles and about the linkages between their efforts and their incomes) will provide the countervailing influence for dynamic convergence.

It is critically important, therefore, that activity which attempts to strengthen the institutional structures and managerial procedures through which people resolve local problems, be accorded equal status with production and consumption activities. They are the structures, without which, successful production and consumption programs will be impossible to implement.

3.6 Inter-Regional Trade and Coordination of Activities:

Such a convergence strategy does not preclude regional and international trade. The small size of the countries in the Horn (as in most of Africa) with their different and in some cases limited resource endowments, requires such activity. Trade, however, would take on a changing character by beginning to reflect an extension of a nations own efforts to satisfy its own demands and needs. Trading relations, rather than just being liberalized, would begin to reflect an increasing and mutually reinforcing regional self-reliance in basic needs including the emergency needs of displaced populations, while protecting and restoring ecological and cultural sustainability. A convergence strategy, therefore, requires inter-country and inter-regional planning and implementation, which must include, also, any outside organizations (NGOs, UN, donors) which are trying to serve these national and regional priorities of Re-Development.

IV THE NORTHERN UGANDA (NUFSP) AND SOUTHERN SUDAN (SSFSP) FOOD SECURITY PROJECTS AS RE-DEVELOPMENT

4.0 The SSFSP and the NUFSP were initially conceptualized as Re-Development strategies, both in terms of their key components as well as in the context of possibly establishing a regional strategy. While they differ in their origin and in their special circumstances and conditions, there is much room to tighten the strategies in both places and to move forward in their re-organization and cross-border coordination. By straddling borders in similarly structured organizations and objectives, it becomes possible to plan for the least painful (re-)turn of people - the refugees and displaced - to their homes. With many of the foundations of Re-Development, already having been begun.

4.1 Summary of NUFSP: A three-pronged strategy

The goals of the project are to facilitate expanded food security amongst both the national and refugee populations while simultaneously providing the basis for economic recovery and environmental restoration in the area. Strategies to accomplish this focus on:

a) Convergence of domestic resources and need: The establishment of agricultural production programs amongst local national farmers to produce a larger proportion of refugee food requirements (as refugees begin, also, to provide for their own) and, concurrently, finding access to and development of markets. This is to be accomplished through supplementing agricultural inputs, a market information and credit system, and improved transport and storage from the farm to the market.

b) Development of Indigenous Technology: The organic link for this convergence is found in the proposed resource centers which are intended to broaden the local skills base - appropriate to the environment and the local economy - by utilizing and upgrading existing skills and available materials to support expansion of agricultural production, tool manufacturing, short distance transport and storage. These elements are integrated into a long term program from which productive and income generating outreach programs to communities can be established, with extension activities also focussing on increased environmental rehabilitation.

c) Relations of Production: (1) In order to develop the organizational capacity consistent with this convergence process, a cooperative and private enterprise organization and management training program was proposed to ensure a stronger and more viable local economic system. This program is to focus on building strong local cooperative structures at the level of the primary society where the fundamental organizing principle is to be democratic (one-person-one-vote). Uganda has recently promulgated a new constitution which has institutionalized the political democracy of the local council system. It has also legally affirmed (through privatization) the freedom for cooperatives to organize and operate privately without being encumbered and undermined by government bureaucracies. While the local district council structure will provide the enabling political environment, strong economically

independent and democratic farmer cooperatives as well as small-scale business enterprises will further enable, popularize and strengthen the larger democratization process.

(2) To be consistent with this democratization process and the need for coordination of this Re-development strategy, a Northern Uganda Food Security Consortium was proposed with membership drawn from community organizations, government, NGOs, and the private sector which will participate in the planning, coordination and implementation of the project objectives. The purpose of the consortium is to be the enabling structure through which the targeted populations can effectively participate in its ongoing direction. It is the way whereby NGOs, UN, civil servants and private organizations can channel their initiatives to serve national priorities while being held accountable democratically to the beneficiaries.

4.2 Summary of SSFSP:

a) One million people still require relief assistance, primarily in the least accessible and war-affected areas of Bahr el Ghazal and Upper Nile. Access is limited, however, by the enormous cost of airlifting food, coupled with the consistent behavior of the GOS in refusing flight permission (or permission for adequate sized planes) to these areas of need. These were two of the reasons which led to a plan of organizing local production in secure and fertile areas for satisfying part of the needs of displaced populations.

b) Convergence of Local Resources and Needs: Domestic production for domestic need has, therefore become an option which many organizations have been keen to pursue. OLS, for almost four years, has been operating a very successful community-based livestock restoration program in the pastoral areas of the south. The "green belt" of western Equatoria has been the scene of significant agriculture production, having remained more or less secure for four years now. Several NGOs (CARE, WVI, AAIN, NPA, NCA) working in this productive farm belt have been facilitating agricultural production programs where modest but growing surpluses are either bartered or sold with the largest share of surplus being transported to locations where needy displaced populations reside (in western Equatoria as well as in Bahr el Ghazal. A major road rehabilitation program was implemented three years ago which has facilitated the movement of these surpluses. The original intention of this road rehab program was to link with northern Uganda both as an additional source of needed food supplies as well as an outlet for other marketable commodities. Unfortunately, this connection was not possible with the loss of the border town at Kaya to GOS forces.

c) Indigenous Technology: Following on the heels of expanded agricultural production, several small-scale production and processing projects for other needs have been established in different areas. Soap is being produced in Yambio (CRS) from the palm nut, it is about to begin in Maridi and Akot (Medic, SEOC). Cooking oil will soon be pressed in Akot, Maridi and Kajo Kaji (Medic, SEOC, NPA) from the ubiquitous shea (lulu) nut, with small-scale technology provided by COVOL working in Lira (a founding member of the NUFSP). In Yambio cooking oil production from simsim is about to begin (CRS). Local farmers are being contracted to produce simsim in exchange for soap. A large number of bicycles have been exchanged for surpluses to transport surpluses to markets. Pig projects have begun in Yambio (CRS) and will soon take-off in Chukudum.

NPA has established a model resource center in Chukudum where over 40 students are engaged in hands-on training in appropriate skills which have readily available markets - oxenization, ox cart production, tool production (knives, slashers, sickles, etc. from scrap steel and iron), agroforestry, demonstration gardens, aquaculture, carpentry, construction. A fuel efficient stove/oven has been developed which uses grass as fuel rather than wood. Wheat is being transported by donkeys (CRS) from the mountains at Nagachot to Chukudum where wholewheat bread is being baked at the resource center. NPA plans to extend its training expertise to other areas in the south, by first ascertaining what needs in each area can be satisfied by locally available domestic resources. Beginning small with clearly defined possibilities, and building on the logic of these fundamentals in other areas is what is envisaged by the resource center concept. All of these activities represent a first-class effort to begin a process of developing indigenous technologies which organically links the process of converging domestic resources with the needs of the people.

d) Relations of Production: Here lies the greatest challenge in the southern Sudan. Given the nature of the war and the kind of military governing structure which has dominated the scene for over a decade, the most important single challenge to the southern leadership is to now provide de jure and institutional support to this fledgling Re-Development strategy at the level of the production unit (the enterprise, the farm, the community). For it to succeed, however, the necessary social relations of production must be characterized by institutionalized participation, ownership and control by the people in their economic and political lives. During the last three years significant developments have been taking place which could lead to this realization. Under a program of developing institutional and organizational capacity, the SPLM leadership has been engaged in several exercises (NPA, OLS) which are leading in the direction of establishing civil structures which are supportive of economic and political democracy for its people as the foundation of a New Sudan. The National Liberation Council (NLC) sees that assistance is required at both levels simultaneously - "[t]hose who hold power will need as much assistance to devolve it, as those who need to be supported to participate in decision making processes". Devolving civil authority has been identified by the NLC as a key area of focus which requires immediate attention.

While 'liberation councils' have been established at the village, payam, county and regional levels, the NLC is now working on legislation which will define their functions, composition and basis of representation, ie. a process of state building. Organizing economic democratic production units and primary cooperative societies is a critical intervention which offers the promise of facilitating the democratization process. Unreserved support from both the existing civil authorities as well as the military is a necessary condition for this to begin.

4.3 Linking NUFSP and SSFSP:

Northern Uganda is home to 200,000 Sudanese refugees. Their home areas are currently occupied by a similar number of Sudanese displaced from their homes in Upper Nile and Bahr el Ghazal. Both the refugees and the displaced, when possible, want to return to their homes. Advance planning for these moves could be more effectively achieved through coordination between both places. It makes sense that outside organizations working in either southern Sudan or northern Uganda consider the advantages of working on the other side of the border, as well.

Plans to facilitate displaced peoples (re)turn home and a structured reception when they arrive could be most effectively achieved through the consortium structure being replicated in both places with regular coordination between the two. The example of the resource center in Lira in northern Uganda (COVOL) which has focussed on the production and processing of oil from the shea tree illustrates the point made. COVOL has now connected to Medic which operates in Lakes District where the shea (lulu) forest extends into southern Sudan. COVOL has supplied Medic with a number of its own oil presses (from Ghana) for the development of lulu oil production in the Sudan which, with a simple processing technique, provides a shelf life of the product for up to two years. People from the Lakes community will be identified to receive training in this production process as well as training in the establishment of small worker-owned and managed lulu oil companies.

It is in this sense that the consortium structure proposed for the NUFSP be similarly organized in the SSFSP so that participation in planning, coordination and implementation by all participants be implemented in this larger catchment space.

V SUGGESTED FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

5.0 The last purpose of this paper is to propose to move another step forward in the pursuit of a Re-Development strategy in southern Sudan and northern Uganda, in strengthening economic processes which utilize abundant local resources in the production of local needs and demands of both resident and displaced groups. Three interconnected exercises are suggested:

a) Inventory of Basic Domestic Resources, Production Possibilities and Appropriate Technologies:

It is not enough to consult resource inventories conducted by former colonial and post-colonial administrations, since by nature of these economic systems, the search for natural resources primarily reflected the demands and priorities of the metropolitan markets. While a full and complete inventory of natural resources would be desirable, as a first attempt it would be sufficient to ascertain those which are readily available and which could, with modest support, enter into expanded production of basic needs. These possibilities, however, will face constraints of ecology, available labor, production and processing technologies, storage, transportation and markets. The purpose of this exercise would be to identify only a few of the highest priority, mutually reinforcing activities which could be undertaken from amongst a large number of seemingly attractive possibilities. And to suggest a range of appropriate technologies and techniques (including environmental requirements) upon which resource centers could begin. For example: mangoes and other fruits grow "wild" in many parts - naturally transplanted over time - with enormous quantities going to waste each year for lack of simple processing and storage techniques (dehydration/drying) and markets. This important source of nutrition during harvest time, could be extended throughout the year to larger numbers of the population with additional surpluses having ready markets in the region. Palm trees, a source of oil for soap production, is abundantly available, untapped forest products utilized in housing and furniture - bamboo, teak, mahogany, ebony, African blackwood, etc. exist in large quantities. Many teak plantations are in need of being harvested/managed. Most of these hardwoods command a high price on the international market and could be a substantial source of hard

currency; high quality limestone deposits exist in Eastern Equatoria. Their ubiquitous outcroppings may be an immediate source for improved housing and road construction if simple techniques were available, etc.

By cataloging these readily available resources, and suggesting production possibilities and appropriate techniques, a ready source of information would be available for planning, project design and funding - for production and training priorities. This will also form part of the market data base being established in the NUFSP. By expanding its geographical scope to southern Sudan (and to other parts of the region) this would serve as a catalyst for increased regional coordination and planning; in order to capture the larger possibilities of moving toward regional food security by making development part of the solution to emergencies and restoration. And avoiding the unsustainable piece-meal project approach where critical linkages in the production and marketing chain are weak or absent.

b) Food and Seed Storage Training Project:

Increasing food production in itself, without linking it to local and national markets through safe and adequate storage and efficient transport, is not sustainable. From harvest to home consumption and the market, food passes through different storage and transportation conditions. Such post-harvest losses which occur along this chain can result in food insecurity for the farmer whose losses in the family store may exceed that which is required for family consumption and planned production. And, also, for the larger community, damaged food will lead to economic disincentives through lower demand and depressed prices. The same holds for that part of surplus production which has been targeted for relief needs in the area or region. Unacceptably high losses and poor quality would undermine the strategy of expanding local food production for both domestic demand and needs.

In order to give support to both the NUFSP and the SSFSP, a Food and Seed Storage Improvement Project will be proposed which will facilitate the transfer of safe food storage techniques and practices to farmers, cooperatives and individuals handling grain during storage and marketing. This is to guarantee sufficient and good quality food for farm families as well as surplus which is able to meet national and international grain marketing standards.

Additionally, irreplaceable agricultural reserves upon which self-sufficiency depends includes a highly diversified genetic pool of ecologically adapted staple crop varieties which are particular and often unique to specific areas. Attention will focus on maintaining these bio-diverse seed varieties which have taken up to generations to develop by traditional farmers. Thus seed banking of time-tested varieties will form part of this storage exercise.

To accomplish the above objectives through a Food and Seed Storage Improvement Project, it is proposed that an assessment be carried out (in the operational project areas of northern Uganda and southern Sudan) of existing storage systems and practices, from farm level to markets. Based on the availability of skills, knowledge (including indigenous knowledge) and other material resources, a storage improvement strategy will be proposed that will be adapted for farmer home storage, cooperative groups which will handle larger bulk of grains, and district central stores which may market grain to national and international markets. The assessment in northern Uganda will be carried out in cooperation with the northern Ugandan consortium which will first identify high priority areas where expanded food production is being organized. In the southern Sudan, the assessment will be conducted in cooperation with the

Frankly, this is a tough one. Let me explain.

1. **Storage:** I have spoken at length with Dr. Anne Itto who is the storage expert who I mentioned to you. She currently is working with CRS on the OFDA funded umbrella grant. And doing outstanding work. Ted Chaiben, the CRS country director does not want to lose her on the projects she is managing in the field. I agree with him. Ted wants to see the concept paper, discuss it with his colleagues (especially Anne) to see if, how and when she (CRS) could become involved in developing an improved storage project. Anne has the best of track records and I am unreservedly confident that she would make things happen. Such an exercise will require a substantial amount of travel, but it could possibly be done in segments to minimize her being away for long periods from her base in Yambio. From where she may have some time (?) to develop a training format. But I would rather not elaborate until Ted and Anne have seen the paper, discuss it and react to the suggestion that Anne (CRS) become involved.
2. **Inventory of Resources and Technologies/Techniques:** I have spoken with Derek Wright about this exercise. He is a master craftsman who is very tuned in to indigenous technologies - he was responsible for establishing the resource center in the Rhino Refugee Settlement in northern Uganda. Derek played a major and key role in the development of the NUFSP. He currently is engaged in establishing a resource center in Arua in northern Uganda. Derek is interested in participating. Helge Rohn, of NPA until recently, is also very keen to participate in such an assessment of domestic resources. He has already written to the southern Sudan leadership about such an inventory. He will travel to northern Uganda next week on a short assignment for Roger Winters of the Refugee Committee. I will be speaking with him this week. Travel will also be necessary for this component to be completed.
3. **Cooperative Training Proposal:** I have been intending to do this one for some time now. It was proposed in the NUFSP. And I believe the SS leadership will be keen to become involved in it as well. This too will require substantial travel.

Much of the exercises could be conducted by a "team" visit to several locations in both SS and NU. But this may not always be possible. There is much ground work to be done in preparing information queries, organizing visits, coordinating with organizations, etc.

My point is that this will not be a simple thing which can be completed in a short time-frame. And it will only be possible if there is adequate support. If it were me or somebody else to become engaged in coordinating this set of exercises, then adequate transport would be necessary. Hitch-hiking and matatus don't work well.

I would rather speak with you first before any such budget is proposed. And to discuss possible candidates who may be suitable for this follow-up.

I hope paper is something like you expected.

Take care! I will likely leave for Chukudum by Thursday for 2-3 weeks to work with my son and his colleagues on the resource center they have established.
Would appreciate speaking with you before I go.

Cheers