

The International Republican Institute  
**Southern Sudan Political Party Development & Legislative  
Strengthening Program**  
**USAID CEPPS II Agreement 623-A-00-04-00072-00**

**USAID Semi-Annual Narrative Report**  
**September 15, 2004 – March 15, 2005**

**Total Budget: \$600,000 Expenses to Date: \$194,342**

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

Since the onset of IRI programming a number of encouraging developments have occurred in Sudan. The SPLM, southern Sudan's primary opposition group, and the Sudanese government signed a Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) that establishes a six-year Interim Period. The SPLM will, for at least the first several years, enter into a power-sharing deal with the National Congress Party-controlled government in Khartoum. This power-sharing agreement provides the SPLM, and its allies, with a percentage of government positions, including the post of first Vice President, and will give the SPLM *de facto* control over the autonomous regional government of the South. This peace agreement outlines a six-month Pre-Interim period (the first 6 months after the signing of the agreement), before the Interim Period officially begins in mid-2005. During this lengthy Interim Period before the elections (to be held in year three or four), the SPLM and other parties that have been excluded from government have a valuable opportunity to take the much needed time to structure themselves into well organized political parties.

This crucial time comprising the Pre-Interim period, during which the SPLM and the government in Khartoum are meant to reach specific deadlines, is occurring now. Among the most important of the decisions are the drafting and ratification of a national constitution, the drafting and ratification of a constitution for Southern Sudan, and the appointment of representatives for both legislatures. To date, the deadlines of the Pre-Interim period have fallen behind. This delay has been caused by several factors, including an unrealistic timeline and wrangling among groups that have felt they were left out of the peace process.

The National Liberation Council (NLC), the main decision making body of the SPLM, one of the two parties responsible for the implementation of the agreement, is overwhelmed and understaffed. Within the first weeks of the Pre-Interim Period, it was announced that the NLC had been disbanded and that a convention would be held on March 15 to elect a new body. With the time available to plan and organize the convention clearly too short, it had to be postponed. As a result, the SPLM leadership has reigned in much of the decision making and is in the process of prioritizing their needs, which has slowed down IRI's work considerably.

## **II. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES**

### **Political Party Development**

**Objective 1: Democratic parties in Southern Sudan develop participatory and inclusive political processes inside their parties.**

*While IRI intends to work with all political parties in the South, at the present time, the SPLM is the only viable party now in existence. Once more parties develop and enter the political space; IRI's programming will be available to them as well. Currently, IRI is focusing on assisting the SPLM transform itself from a guerrilla movement into a robust and internally democratic political party. The SPLM started this process back in 1994 when the first SPLM convention was held in Chukudum, where a constitution which separated the civilian and military structures was prepared. The transition is still not complete and the transformation from military structures into a civilian political party represents a formidable task. IRI is working with the party cadres and members of the leadership through a series of trainings, seminars and continues to give technical assistance in the development of party documents and in the preparation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> SPLM convention.*

### **Supporting Activities:**

#### **Leadership training/seminar**

At the request of, and in conjunction with, members of the SPLM's political secretariat, IRI developed a four day retreat program focused on capacity building for the party leadership. Unfortunately the program was cancelled days before the event owing to conflicts in the calendar of the leadership. The program was to cover the following topics:

- Political institutions, competing principles, and the role of the party
- Institutional development after transitions to democracy
- Means and measures of managing expectations realistically: A comparative example: Challenges to meeting expectations in post-apartheid South Africa
- Turning the party vision into practical and implement-able programs

The trainers for this retreat had been sourced from South Africa, UK and the USA. The agenda is attached. IRI is in discussion with party leadership regarding the reschedule of this leadership retreat.

### **Party Convention:**

The last SPLM convention, which is responsible for the election of the National Liberation Council (NLC), the highest decision making body in the SPLM, was held in 1994. The current SPLM constitution requires conventions to be held every four years.

Plans for the second party convention have been underway for some time, although they slowed considerably during the peace negotiations. During this time, IRI has continued to work with party leadership, in an effort to prepare in advance as much as possible for the upcoming convention. IRI has assisted in the development of key documents that are to be presented at the convention namely: the party constitution, the SPLM party charter, and the SPLM's "Promise Paper", a document which outlines the SPLM's development goals and democratic commitments to the people of Sudan. To date these documents have yet to be presented to the party's Leadership Council (LC) so as to enable their printing and distribution to the delegates who have already been elected to attend the upcoming convention.

The original timing for the convention was May 2004, but scheduling conflicts with the Naivasha talks forced it to be delayed further. With the signing of the CPA on January 9, 2005 there has been an effort to organize and hold the Convention within the pre-interim period. The 1994 NLC converged in Rumbek in February 2005, and ratified the CPA. Since this time, reports about the date of the convention have remained fluid, due to the time constraints placed on SPLM leadership during this period. Attention has currently been focused on the reconciliation process between the various southern armed and political factions, also known as the South-South Dialogue (scheduled April 18). Once completed, party leadership will work with IRI to schedule and hold the party convention.

In spite of these scheduling troubles, IRI continued to work under this grant with members of the party's political secretariat, now known as the Political Affairs Commission (PAC), and the LC. IRI has assisted in the development of a model program for the convention which has been distributed to the party leadership and is currently under review. IRI has worked with the PAC to establish three teams that will finalize the key documents for the convention once they have been reviewed by the LC.

### **Training of Party Cadres**

In September 2004 and prior, IRI trained several party cadres from all regions of South Sudan. Currently, IRI has delayed the further training of these cadres until the party holds its party convention, at which time decisions will be made as to the current office holders who will take positions in the government, and others who will become or remain party professionals. There are several changes likely to be ushered in by the CPA that will affect the available positions in the GoS and the GoSS. Compounding this difficulty is the fact that the individuals who have emerged as key decision makers in the party and upcoming government have had to devote their energies to other nation-building activities. IRI has opted to wait before continuing with this line of programming to ensure that the appropriate people receive training.

Over the past several months, IRI has utilized a consultant who had run programs with parties in Russia, Bulgaria and the UK, among others, as the Interim Country Director. He has spent considerable time over the course of the grant to put together a party building/campaign manual to be used in Sudan. This manual is being created to reflect

and suit the needs of a transitional democracy. It will include material on party building, the role of the party outside the election cycle and other aspects typical of partisan politics in an emerging democracy. Once completed, the manual will be distributed at IRI trainings throughout southern Sudan, with the goal of reaching party professionals in all ten of southern Sudan's states.

## **Legislative Strengthening**

**Objective 2: The capacity of the new Government of Southern Sudan (GOSS) Legislative Assembly is strengthened to allow its representatives to adequately perform their functions.**

*IRI's legislative program in Sudan will provide technical assistance to the Southern Sudan Assembly and to legislators who will be elected/selected to represent the south in the National Assembly (NA). The aim of training will be to help foster skills and organizational capacity so as to ensure that the legislators govern effectively during the interim period. At the core of this program will be the training of legislators on topical issues such as parliamentary procedures, standard of conduct, executive/legislative relations, budget process, and development of Legislative agendas. For those going to the NA the focus will also include means and measures of how to be an effective opposition. Their roles and responsibilities in view of the CPA will also be emphasized.*

### **Training of legislators:**

The timelines established by the CPA have fallen behind during this time of adjustment in Sudan; this has hampered the launch of IRI's legislative work. According to the CPA, the Interim National Constitution (INC) should have been drafted and adopted by the end of March; members of the National Assembly (NA) were to have assumed their positions by April and the members of the South Sudan Assembly (SSA) two weeks after the INC, none of which has been achieved at the time of this report.

IRI's legislative training program will therefore commence once legislators have been elected/selected. Similarly the training program for parliamentary staffers will commence once the appointments have been made.

### **Development of Legislative Process**

As one of the two signatories to the peace agreement and its related documentation, and as the majority party of southern Sudan, the SPLM will play a seminal role in the design and establishment of all branches of the GoSS. The SPLM has broken down the tasks ahead of it into three key distinct clusters: namely the political, the military and the governance clusters. The latter group has been charged with the established of the processes that will guide the legislature, amongst other duties. They have issued a final report, which outlines the design of the new GOSS. A look at the governance cluster report reveals several gaps, and because of this IRI has developed a program based on discussions with the head of this cluster, Dr Riek Machar. Some of the deficiencies

identified include various details related to legislative process for the SSA. Issues such as the development of rules and procedures and the development of the committee structures will be covered in depth by IRI experts. IRI has also been requested to share expertise on other models of federalism, and will be utilizing resource persons from countries such as India, South Africa, Nigeria, Canada, and the United States to give the Sudanese a full range of options as they design this new system. IRI's first legislative development seminar is scheduled to take place in early May 2005.

### **III. SUPPORT ACTIVITIES**

#### **Establishment of the IRI Sudan Field Office**

**To establish an office and to hire staff that will be on the ground to carry out IRI programs.**

Due to southern Sudan's lack of basic infrastructure (and consequently banking and other support systems) and the fact the Sudanese political elite still operate out of both Sudan and Kenya, IRI-Sudan anticipated that it would be necessary to set up its initial offices at the IRI Nairobi compound, for ease in the carrying out of its programmatic work. Once the IRI compound in Rumbek, Sudan, is completed, IRI staff will be able to travel back and forth between the two offices as needed, in order to better meet the needs of the Sudanese parties. IRI is currently working with Consultant Dr Lee Peterson, who will be replaced by Resident Program Director Stephanie Blanton in April. Blanton comes to the Sudan office from Malawi and Nigeria, where she was the Resident Country Director and Interim Country Director, respectively. She has extensive Capitol Hill and campaign experience. IRI has also engaged two program officers with several years of IRI experience, Victoria Cherwon and Ted Levasseur, and will hire Southern Sudanese residents to fill the other available slots as the need arises.

IRI will move primary operations to Rumbek as soon as the construction of offices and housing quarters has been completed, which is likely to be the end of May. In the interim, Nairobi serves as a point of origin for IRI staff and consultants, who can fly in and out of Rumbek with relative ease.

### **IV. UPCOMING ACTIVITIES**

#### **Communication and Message Development**

Because the political parties operating in the South were marginalized and prevented from political participation for many years, they understandably lack many of the attributes necessary for successful growth as a party. Two areas in need of growth are communications and message development. After consultations with party leadership, IRI has supplied a communications expert who will be available for on-the-ground consultation on a quarterly basis. This expert has considerable experience in Washington DC political communications, and has worked successfully with IRI in both Sudan and Macedonia in the past.

IRI's communications expert will focus on building the capacity of the party to get their message out in an effective and clear manner. He will touch on how to communicate regarding the issues of most importance to the Southern Sudanese populations, including reconstruction, re-integration of refugee populations, the implementation of the CPA, managing expectations, and setting realistic timelines. Stress will be placed upon the party regarding the need to manage expectations, both public and inter-party, and also to institute a more organized manner by which they disseminate information within the party, and to the public.

### **Document Printing for SPLM Convention**

IRI will provide for the printing of SPLM Party Convention documents to be distributed to the convention delegates.

## **V. CHALLENGES**

Implementation of the IRI program in Sudan has been hampered by several factors. The finalization of the peace talks were delayed for several months, which hindered IRI's ability to start up any significant amount of programming work, as the final details were not yet decided on the peace agreement. Since the signing of the agreement in January 2005, IRI has moved their programming forward substantially, but has been challenged by the busy schedules of those with whom they are tasked to work. The SPLM leadership is structured so that all decisions are centered in the hands of a few key individuals. In order to move any type of programming or scheduling forward, approval must come from one of those individuals. Unfortunately, the key players in the leadership have found themselves being pulled in several different directions and as a result, there has been an inability to properly set priorities and make decisions. Additionally, because the timelines set out in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement are so stringent, the party members have had to devote much of their time to meeting these deadlines and are unable to focus their attention on other important issues. Lastly, because the GoSS and GoNU are being created during this time period, those who will occupy key positions within the governments have not been clearly designated. Once this matter is resolved, IRI will be able to more clearly delineate structures of authority and hierarchy within the party.