UNMISS Quick Impact Projects improve the lives of communities across South Sudan

A series of special projects funded by the United Nations Mission in South Sudan are improving the lives of communities across the country by providing access to clean water, education and healthcare, safe houses for vulnerable women, and strengthening the justice system to hold perpetrators of sexual violence to account.

A new report titled The People’s Project was released today by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNMISS, David Shearer. It features the stories of those who have benefited most from Quick Impact Projects, which are small-scale and low-cost but have a significant impact on people’s lives.

“The people of South Sudan have suffered immensely as a result of the civil war and many of the basic services they need to survive have been destroyed,” said David Shearer. “These projects make an immediate impact by improving living conditions so that those who have been displaced by conflict can return home and by building new infrastructure in communities to bring people together in the pursuit of peace.”

UNMISS has invested at least $7.5m in about 140 projects since 2011 to help protect civilians and build durable peace. Details of each of the projects can be found on an innovative new online portal, that identifies the type of project, the location and the impact on the community at: http://bit.ly/UNMISS-QIP

“These projects include drilling dozens of waterholes, renovating court houses and police stations to improve the rule of law, building infrastructure such as fish markets and youth sports complexes to encourage economic development and peace-building, as well as rehabilitating health and education centers so children can reach their full potential,” said David Shearer.

While UNMISS funds each project at a cost of less than US$50,000 each, it partners with community-based or non-governmental organizations to complete them which empowers local people, provides jobs, and injects money into the economy.

An example of a successful project is the construction of a safehouse in Torit for women suffering from domestic violence, which offers a full-time haven to women who either live there for a period of time or receive counselling and support on an out-patient basis. Similar projects have also improved security in the area, including the installation of security lighting, clearing of vegetation in high-crime areas and upgrading of detention facilities to ensure that those accused of crimes are held in humane conditions.

In Romich, a town in the Warrap region, doctors used to have to deliver babies out in the open where it was difficult to keep things clean and many of the women and children suffered from infections. The construction of
a new primary healthcare center has since reduced the number of deaths during childbirth and vital medicines that were often destroyed by weather and termites can now be safely stored.

“The role of UNMISS is to protect civilians by deterring violence in communities and to be a partner in the peace process,” said David Shearer. “Through these Quick Impact Projects, we can make a real difference to people’s lives and help South Sudan build a peaceful and prosperous future.”

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