

## **S SUDAN: Do not squander the chance for a better nation, says Agencies**

*JUBA, September 6, 2011 (CISA)* -A coalition of 38 aid agencies, Tuesday September 6, called on donors not to squander the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of the people of South Sudan, the world's newest nation. The call came as new violence increased emergency needs.



Donors are due to meet with Government of South Sudan officials over the coming months to discuss development priorities. The country is one of the poorest in the world, with half the population living below the poverty line and, after decades of brutal war, is being built up almost from scratch.

In a joint report, the aid agencies, which include Oxfam, World Vision and the South Sudan Law Society, said it was vital that donors get their priorities for tackling poverty right from the start. The report outlines key priorities for donors working to improve lives in South Sudan.

Mary Kudla, Acting Country Director from Oxfam in South Sudan said,

“The war is over, and the struggle for independence achieved, but the struggle to ensure peace and safety for all and win the battle against extreme poverty in South Sudan is only just beginning. Today a 15-year girl is more likely to die in childbirth than finish school and people are still being displaced from their homes due to new violence. The excitement following the birth of a nation is hard to overstate, but the disillusionment following a failure to deliver change for the poorest would be equally severe. Donors need to get their policies on South Sudan right from the start.”

Dong Samuel Luak, Secretary-General from the South Sudan Law Society said:

“South Sudan has a complex mix of emergency, recovery and development needs. The country remains vulnerable to natural disasters such as floods and drought and is still susceptible to conflicts.

As the recent clashes in Jonglei show, people still need emergency aid. Sustained humanitarian funding is required, along with increased support for basic services and security and justice provision.

The report also calls on donors to build up the capacity of the government of South Sudan, so it is able to provide more and better services for its people including effective security and rule of law across the country. Government structures are extremely weak and being built up from almost nothing, especially outside the main towns. The agencies say that it will take time for South Sudan to assume full responsibility for the delivery of services. NGOs are currently responsible for the majority of basic service delivery in South Sudan, such as health, education and water and sanitation, and it is vital that donors continue supporting these services as they support the government to build up its capacity to deliver these services itself.

The aid agencies also urged donors to support agriculture and income generating opportunities for the poorest communities. Currently only an estimated 4 per cent of arable land is cultivated, the production of livestock and fish is just a fraction of the potential and exports and trade between different regions of South Sudan are minimal.

The agencies also called on donors and the government to help build up social protection schemes to help the most vulnerable in South Sudan, such as cash transfers for those prone to food insecurity.

[Fr Joseph Callistus - Solidarity with South Sudan - speaking ahead of the Misesan Cara Conference 2010](#) from [Misesan Cara](#) on [Vimeo](#).