



RIEL NYAN ABYEI G8+

EMERGENCY FOOD DELIVERY TRIP REPORT

MARCH 20 – 27, 2021

By Mamer Kuer Ajak, founder of AgSudan, in consultation with Ashai Arop Bagat, Founder and Executive Director of Riel Nyan Abyei G8+

Riel Nyan Abyei G8+ visited 13 remote villages as well as locations where IDPS are camped. The people in the Abyei Administrative Area are in dire need of food, health services and human security. World Food Programme stores are empty. Riel Nyan Abyei G8+ distributed 500 bags of sorghum, 300 bags of beans and rice each, 300 jerricans of oil and 100 bags of salt. The people we met fear they have been forgotten.





1. Project Background

Since its founding in 2019, RIEL NYAN ABYEI G8+ (RNAG8+) continues to restore hope for the Abyei vulnerable women, children, elders, returnees and the newly displaced persons through humanitarian provisions, sharing of health information as well as partnering with community-based and church organizations in Abyei. As per the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement that ended Sudan's 23 year civil war, Abyei Area was accorded a special transitional status - a political settlement defining Abyei area as belonging to the nine Ngok Dinka Chiefdoms, and effectively placing it under a joint rule by the governments of the Republic of South Sudan and Sudan.

This special status has proven controversial for Abyei and its people who continue to face military invasions from Sudan's arm forces as well as intercommunal clashes resulting in the destruction of property, burning of villages, and mass displacements of people. Not only is Abyei rich in natural resources, but yearly, Misseriya nomads move across Abyei in search of pasture and water for their livestock along Kiir River. These movements of people and livestock have not been peaceful as settled Dinka Ngok farms are either destroyed or forcefully occupied. Although there are significant improvements in the relations between Sudan and South Sudan, tribal armed attacks, cattle rustling, kidnapping, and natural disasters (floods and COVID-19) have exacerbated the dire situation people of Abyei were already experiencing.

According to a report submitted to the UN Security Council, intercommunal violence incidents have had significant effect on humanitarian and recovery needs in the Abyei Area. In April 2020, the area experienced deadly conflict due to increased arms in the hands of Misseriya tribesmen. Moreover, the COVID-19 global pandemic and subsequent lockdown measures from



the neighboring areas and countries as well as flooding have affected the pre-positioning of food before the rainy season as well as the provision of basic social services including health-care, nutrition, education, clean drinking water, and hygiene supplies.

In 2011, these conflicts became increasingly destructive and deadly, and so the UN Security Council mandated the establishment of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) to provide security and stability. Although there are still a lot of challenges to overcome, the creation of this force has encouraged communities to slowly return, and start rebuilding livelihoods, homes, and has also led to increased women participation in peacebuilding and enhanced Dinka-Misseriya engagements.

From 2019 and 2020, flood waters devastated farmland, and submerged most of the cultivated crops. It also made roads inaccessible beyond the usual rainy season inaccessibility. Moreover, the global coronavirus pandemic and measures to control it have greatly affected people of Abyei because the bordering regions were made inaccessible to the area. Although people in Abyei generally practice subsistence farming, the little that is produced yearly and supplemented by humanitarian assistance was no longer there. In 2021, the effect of these natural and manmade shocks have increased the likelihood of famine in Abyei Area because the bulk of the population is entirely dependent on food aid for survival

2. Target group

To amplify this great initiative and other voices within Abyei, RNAG8+ initiated an emergency response to help the vulnerable people with food stuffs, and to empower women through information sharing, partnership, and resource sharing aimed at supporting comprehensive



and sustainable livelihoods in Abyei. The vision is to build healthy, productive and self-reliance households in all the 9 Ngok Chiefdoms and other parts of South Sudan.

RNAG8+ maintains partnership with the Anglican Church and the Abyei Women Centre, whose humanitarian and social outreach expands across Abyei Administrative Area. Such extensive network has enabled RNAG8+ to organize resources, disseminate health information to women, and access real situational updates on the ground or in a particular locality.

The Dinka Ngok people are predominantly agro-pastoralists and their livelihoods are characterized by subsistence farming and rearing of cattle, goats and chickens. Like most of South Sudan rural households, crops are produced on small, hand-cultivated plots, mostly headed by a woman.

In almost all the meetings with the Chief Administrator, Chiefs, women groups and other stakeholders, people expressed the importance of livelihood projects and how sustainable and achievable for the household it is - if only the human security situation was normal or lasting peace was in sight.

To demonstrate their support, the community gave RNAG8+ a piece of land near Kiir River. Each of the chiefs has also promised to discuss with their respective communities the matter of sustainable food security and household self-reliance. With the land, RNAG8+ livelihoods project will help the people of Abyei learn to build resilience and mitigate future shocks and other vulnerabilities by adopting modern and environmentally proven farming technics. This is in conformity with South Sudan's Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Cooperatives, and Rural Development, which strives to transform the country's agriculture to achieve food security through the development of a scientific, market-oriented, competitive and profitable farming system



without compromising the sustainability of natural resources for the future generations. The objective of RNA project is to:

- Build household livelihoods through agricultural best practices;
- Introduce market-oriented or welfare production for household prosperity; and
- Create stable income streams and employment for on and off farm participants through market coordination.

3. Agriculture (Rural Livelihoods)

The need for emergency food assistance can't be underestimated in the Abyei area; however, the farming households have pinned their hopes on cultivating the land in places like Agok area across River Kiir. It is a relatively safe place where most of the displaced persons have resettled to reestablish life again. Currently, they prioritize seeds to plant this rainy season in the hope that they will be able to harvest it in October 2021 to supplement any food assistance.

Through follow up calls with Abyei farmers, RNAG8+ has compiled a short list of cereal crops, pulse and vegetables, which are commonly grown in the area and available in the market in Juba and Abyei. It is not comprehensive, but it will help those farmers who are ready to rebuild life and self-reliance. This will also be a motivator for others to adopt the livelihood project for their own welfare. Sorghum does very well in Abyei and it is the staple food crop across South Sudan and Sudan.

Four decades ago, a Canadian diplomat described the southern region of Sudan as a granary of the world and a land of tomorrow that has potential to feed about 34% of the world population. Abyei Area included, South Sudan's agricultural prospect is very high, and 95% of both rural and



urban households primarily depend on farming, fishing and herding. In other words, domestic consumption is high and it is good for market-oriented production. This land of tomorrow is underutilized and 70% of it is suitable for cereal, vegetables, pulses cash crops and agroforestry. If sustainably utilized it could generate sufficient income for households and employment both on and off farm.

Half of South Sudan’s cereal demand is imported from the neighboring countries or through humanitarian food aid for the vulnerable population in the rural villages and IDP camps. It is also to be noted that bulk of the population and most of the extremely poor live in rural areas and for the most part depend on farming, forestry, fisheries, and other related activities for survival.

List of seeds showing prices and the number of households to benefit.

ITEMS	Wgts	Qty	Unit cost	Total	Remarks
Seeds					Targeted Households
Sorghum (Gadam)	2kg	2500	\$ 5.00	\$ 12,500.00	111 (45kg/house)
Groundnuts (Peanuts)	1kg	1000	\$ 1.98	\$ 1,980.00	200 (5kg/house)
Yellow Beans	1kg	4500	\$ 1.25	\$ 5,625.00	150 (30kg/house)
Tomato	25g	250	\$ 4.75	\$ 1,187.50	62 (100grams/house)
Orkra	10g	4000	\$ 0.80	\$ 3,200.00	400 (100grams/house)
Cabbage	25g	50	\$ 31.95	\$ 1,597.50	50 (25grams/house)
Cowpeas	1kg	1200	0.95	\$ 1,140.00	240 (5kg/house)
Egg plants	10g	100	\$ 64.00	\$ 6,400.00	100 (25grams/house)
Simsim	10kg	100	\$ 30.00	\$ 3,000.00	100 (10kg/house)
Subtotal	\$ 36,630.00				



4. Implementation

RNAG8+ will train participating households in modern farming technics that are environmentally sustainable. With RNAG8+'s other projects, farming will encourage people to return home and will also promote local markets and consumption.

With partners in Aweil, Abyeit and Juba, RNAG8+'s international presence in the United States is also impactful both as a platform for highlighting the needs of the people of Abyeit at home and abroad, and in raising financial resources.

A recent World Bank studies show that, in East and Southern Africa, staple foods are the fastest growing commodities with an estimated annual value of \$50B and makes up 75% of agriculture output market. After many years of conflict and high levels of insecurity, female-headed households have become accustomed to cultivating land close to the homestead. With RNAG8+ support, farmers will be encouraged to expand their acreage using modern tools and high yield organic seeds.

Visibly across Africa, women dominate local markets and are more likely to sale produce as both producers or buyers. Therefore, sustainable innovation in rural agriculture has greater potential of lifting female-headed households from extreme poverty to employment, reduce income disparities and mitigate against inadvertent relocation necessitated by a lack of alternative rural livelihoods.

5. Previous and the Current Projects

With the working relationship with the community and church-based organizations, RNAG8+ was able to raise funds, rally friends and well-wishers to support rapid humanitarian



response and livelihood projects. In April 2020, RNAG8+, through partners, distributed 207 bags of rice, 207 bags of sorghums, 108 bags of beans, and 108 jerricans of cooking oil to the vulnerable households in Abyei town, Agok and the surrounding villages. The same year, RNAG8+ initiated Moringa tree planting in 9 locations in the Abyei Administrative Area. Moringa leaves and seeds are rich in essential minerals for humans and it is medicinally useful in treating a number of ailments.

In March 2021, to further highlight the situation and to provide food assistance, RNAG8+ initiated another food delivery to Abyei and traveled to the area to assess sustainable livelihoods opportunities for the vulnerable households particularly in the agricultural sector. The RNAG8+ team toured and visited 13 remote locations in two days.

From March 22 to March 27, 2021, RNAG8+ visited far and remote villages as well as locations where IDPS are camped. After the assessment, it was obvious that people in the Abyei Administrative Area are in dire need of food, health services and human security. With the support from well-wishers and the organization's sheer determination to help the vulnerable, RNAG8+ distributed 500 bags of sorghum, 300 bags of beans and rice each, 300 jerricans of oil and 100 bags of salt. Though it was small, the people of Abyei were very appreciative that RNAG8+ and the world have not forgotten them, but instead continue to advocate for their plight and livelihoods.

In Abyei, the team learned that it is impossible for the international and national NGOs in South Sudan to operate in the Abyei Administrative Area without obtaining a second license from Sudan, which is expensive and the office is located far from Abyei Town. The same rule applies to organizations operating in Sudan because they cannot enter Abyei without obtaining a permit from Juba.



Although UN agencies have the license to operate, World Food Programme (WFP) is the only agency providing aid for the IDPs, returnees and households whose farms were flooded. However, in most of the areas visited by the RNAG8+ team, all WFP stores were empty from Abyei town, Agok, Rumamer, Rumkor, Noong and other locations. These are the safe havens where displaced persons and returnees have gathered in large numbers for security and for food assistance. Unfortunately, it seems these areas have been left in uncertainty. Places like Kolom, where the massacre of more than 35 people took place, Tajalei, and Amet Market are left with few structures displaying how desperate the situation is for the women and the elderly still living there. Most of these areas are far from River Kiir. Their land is arable and prime for farming. Farmers in the area report that, during a good year, they have two harvests in October and February. Though these locations are annually cut off from the mainland by the rainy season, these areas have the highest prospect for real social change in Abyei. The soil in these areas is fertile and most of the land is covered with forest. Development in these areas can change Abyei for good in terms of food security and income generation.

To build sustainable livelihoods and long term peace and development in Abyei, RNAG8+, in collaboration with community and church organizations, has been given a piece of land along Abyei – Agok road and all the chiefs have promised to give land in each of the 9 sections.

This report highlights the team observations and statements given by the community and their leaders. The Abyei Administration is very supportive of Riel Nyan Abyei G8+ and has promised to work hand in hand with the organization.



6. Acknowledgements

Riel Nyan Abyei G8+ expresses its sincere appreciation to Pam Omidyar for her financial support of the 2020 and 2021 emergency food deliveries for the vulnerable populations of Abyei. We are also grateful for the ongoing support of Tom Prichard of Sudan Sunrise, which serves as the fiscal sponsor for these projects; Esther Sprague of Sudan Unlimited for consulting on the projects; and Mamer Kuer Ajak of AgSudan, who participated in the 2021 food delivery, assessed the opportunity for agricultural development and helped document the trip. We are thankful for members of the Riel Nyan Abyei G8+ team, Mrs. Awadia Daw and Mrs. Aluel Manyiel Rou, who helped with the food delivery, and Mou Deng Nuan, who filmed the trip. Our sincere thanks to Abyei community leaders for their support and collaboration:

Paramount Chief: Bulabek Deng Kual

Ngok Dinka Chiefs: (1) Bagat Makwaj Abem, Chief of Mannyuar; (2) Aknon Ajuang Deng, Chief of Anyel; (3) Bith Ajak Malual, Chief of Achueng; (4) Belbe Chol Akwi, Chief of Alyi; (5) Majok Kon Lual, Chief of Mareng; (6) Nyol Fagwat Deng, Chief of Bango; (7) Arop Kual Kon Tingloth, Chief of Dill; (8) Ring Makwaj, Chief of Achanck, (9) Achweil Gong Abiur, Chief of Abior

Chief Administrator of Abyei Special Administrative Area: Hon. Lt. Gen. Kuol Deim Kuol



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if Abyei have two Achaian daughters as Achai Arop Bagat proselytizing her personal funds for food supplies to her communities needs with collaboration of CA Abyei ADMINISTRATIVE area Lt.General Kuol D. Kuol . This step will Encourage those guys who want to be in the famousenss mod .

Reply to Aker...

مشاركة تعليق اعجبني