

UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEER DAY.

BNS DAMAZINE UNV ACTIVITY 6 DECEMBER 2008.

INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEER DAY was observed worldwide on 5 December 2008. UNVs in Damazine – Blue Nile State – Sudan, joined other colleagues worldwide to observe this important day in volunteerism. Michael Were (focal person) – UNHCR together with other UNV colleagues – Juliana Hakalabo (UNMIS Nurse), Dr. Patrick Nzene (UNMIS Medical Officer) and Fidel Tugume (UNMIS staff welfare Officer) organised a visit to an orphanage for children. The orphanage – **Abulfeed Islami Centre for Islamic Studies** – was established a few years ago by Mr. Adam Musa Mohamed at his house in Damazine town. He started a religious study session in his house to cater for those who wanted to study Kuran during normal school vacation. It, however, turned out that many of the children who attended his classes were homeless children who were roaming in town while their age mates attended normal schools. He housed those who were totally vulnerable but also continued conducting classes for any other willing students. Last year, he approached the state government for a portion of land where he could put up a building to house the children. He was allocated a small portion where he has now constructed a small mosque and two grass huts where 76 children are accommodated. He and the children live in very poor conditions since he does not receive any form of assistance from anywhere. Recently when fire burned down the premise, the UNMIS staff welfare officer (IUNV) and his colleagues from DPKO and PAK Battalion donated a few items to assist the stranded children. Currently a few staff of PAK Battalion have donated a water tank which is currently under construction.

On 6 November 2008, IUNVs Michael Were (Kenyan and focal point for IVD in BNS), Ms Juliana Hakalabo (Zambian), Dr. Patrick Nzene (Nigerian) and Fidel Tugume (Ugandan) spent a day with Mr. Adam and the children at the orphanage as part of the activities to celebrate the IVD.

They donated food comprising of 100kg of flour, 100kg of beans, 5kg of sugar, 5kg of rice, 5kg of cooking oil, 20 mosquito nets, 30 bars of washing soap, medicine to de-worm the children, candies and sweets. The donation also served as gift to the centre for celebrating IDD MUBARAK which was being observed on 8th and 9th December 08

Plans are underway to hold a major medical camp at the centre in January 2009. The OIC of UNICEF has accepted to assist the UNVs with medical items for the camp. Dr Patrick Nzene and Juliana Hakalabo will perform the medical checks for the children and carry out treatment for minor ailments. The children seemed to be suffering from cough largely caused by the stuffy conditions in which they live.



Donating foodstuffs to Abulfeed Islamic Centre Orphanage. Left – Fidel Tugume-UNV (forefront in yellow cap), Juliana Hakalabo-UNV (third holding net), Alminia and Gloria-UNMIS staff. Right – Sheikh Mohamed (volunteer Islamic teacher), Michael Were-UNV (in blue UNV shirt), Dr. Patrick Nzene-UNV (yellow cap) and Ahmed (student at the centre).

Recreational facilities are lacking at the centre. Mr. Adam appealed for donations to help him set up at least a proper kitchen and dormitory for the children. We intend to coordinate with other well wishers and continue to provide assistance by engaging in cleaning exercises and any other activity that may help the centre improve.



A grass thatched rakuba serving as the classroom, reception and dining hall.