

# Unity state child soldiers given goats

Thursday 26 January 2012

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January 24, 2012 (BENTIU) – Child soldiers demobilised last year in Unity State by the South Sudan Disarmament Demobilisation Reintegration programme (SSDDR) have been given goats by Veterinaires Sans Frontieres (VSF) on Monday.

Of the 130 demobilised children, 70 were members of the rebel forces of Peter Gatdet in Mapel County of Lake State and other 60 were disarmed from the South Sudanese army, Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) 4th division in Unity State.

SSDDR targeted soldiers below the age of 18 years.

Unity state director for disarmament, George Gatloi Koang told *Sudan Tribune* on Tuesday that SSDDR in collaboration with NGO's witnessed VSF handover of 30 goats to six children who were reunited with their family last year in Rubkotna county.

“Last year we demobilised 133 children. [...] 69 children have now received their goats and also together with a food for three months”, said Koang.

Koang added that they are working with the SPLA section on child protection to make sure that children do not involved in army.

He urged children who were disarmed not to enter to the army and cautioned any child found re-entering army will be arrested.

He called upon parents to encourage their children to continue with their schooling rather than joining militarily.

Nyakuony Tuel a mother reunited with her children in Rubkotna County told *Sudan Tribune* that the “true shame goes to us as parents; but that we don't have full responsibility for our family”, explaining that it can difficult to control unruly children.

Majjongdit, a veterinarian officer for VSF said, during the handover, “we are giving those goat, for them to multiply, within four to five months.” He suggested that the resulting goats could be used some as marriage wealth.

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