

Inspiring Local Government Leaders



Undeterred by heavy flooding, County Education Director Jamesco Deng Deng and colleagues travel to deliver PTA training.

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- Jamesco Deng Deng, County Education Director

Reflecting on his life and the struggles that he and his neighbors have endured, Jamesco Deng Deng knows he has come a long way. Serving as the County Education Director for Aweil West, Southern Sudan, Jamesco works to improve the quality of education in his state. Like so many other government staff in Southern Sudan, Jamesco and his colleagues at the Ministry of Education do their jobs despite a severe lack of resources and training. Moreover, he admits that it has been hard at times to connect with communities that, like him, still struggle with the aftermath of the long civil war.

Training from the USAID-funded Sudan BRIDGE program has helped Jamesco overcome these hurdles, giving him renewed hope and resolve to serve his

community. “Some people often get disconnected due to war, and have lost hope. Re-connecting can be an extremely positive experience, and this is exactly what the Sudan BRIDGE Program has done to my life. It has bridged local government education officials to provide services to the communities,” Jamesco asserts.

BRIDGE has provided training to Jamesco other government education officers across three states of Southern Sudan, building their capacity to prioritize, plan for, and implement solutions to meet community needs. One such training is focused on Parent-Teacher Association development. Sudan BRIDGE worked with Jamesco and other Ministry of Education staff to refine their PTA manual and explore ways to more effectively reach out to local PTAs.

The support provided by BRIDGE has strengthened the skills of Jamesco and his colleagues and has empowered them to take initiative in their communities. Their efforts have already paid off.

“At first it was not easy to persuade parents to accept the government initiatives, but after concerted efforts that included training local government education officials on how to train PTAs ourselves, we started realizing results. I am glad to note that my office is now connected to the community and parents. Aweil West has realized a remarkable increase in enrolment of female students of all ages. It is even more encouraging that over 70 trained PTA members have increased community mobilization,” Jamesco proudly explains.