

## **Riaheen Elsalam for Maternity and Childhood Organization (REMCO) - South Darfur**

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The foundation Riaheen Elsalam (REMCO) was established in 2005 to provide educational opportunities, health care for mothers and children and the possibility of a livelihood for women. It has benefited mainly from international organizations which help Darfur. This year, the name and logo of the organization changed from “Maternity and Childhood Organisation” into “Relief and Mediation Force”.

REMCO became known because of a project called Synergy, a saving scheme which provides funds to encourage reconciliation and cohesion in the community. Groups of beneficiaries were formed to give training in saving money for emergencies. The project was extended to eight areas, where more than 200 saving groups were formed, most of them composed of more than one different tribe. We provided saving boxes; each box with starting capital and three locks. The beneficiaries open the boxes at the beginning of the rainy season and then each participant receives a fair amount, even after discounting what the savers put in. The savings are used for agricultural projects. This exceptional scheme provides valuable proof of how people who save money together, can live in harmony together. This mutual collaboration and inter-dependence has grown and REMCO wants to extend the project still further. Money is required for funds to pay for the boxes, the locks, the books, the calculators, paper, stationary and especially the costs of workshops and transport for monitoring.

After the outbreak of the war between the Fallata and the Salamat tribes in the area of El-Nadief, REMCO participated in the mediation intervention of the Women’s Alliance for Peace in Darfur. In meetings held with the women and local leaders, it was confirmed that in the past, the land had been inhabited by other tribes like Bargo Alsaliahab, who used to have gardens and farms in the region but were now refugees. The Bargo Salihab are known to be peaceful and do not seek quarrels. For this reason, it was proposed that they should return.

The team of REMCO started to collect more information, contacted the Bargo Saliahab and held meetings with them in Daien, East Darfur, in the Assalam IDP camp and the camp of Gereida. Then they contacted the mayors and subsequently persuaded the Bargo Saliahab to return to their villages. The team went to the Nazir (head of the native administration) of the Habania tribe who assured them that the existence of Bargo Saliahab in this region would be a help to local development. All the gardens and farms in the El-Nadief area belong to them and he sees their return as being a boost to the region economically. The team contacted the local government and the Executive Director of the area and they



too confirmed that the return of the Bargo Saliahab would be welcomed. Consequently, there are now 186 families from Bargo Saliahab who are ready to return to their area in the locality of El-Nadief. These families are waiting for news from the government and from REMCO to signal their return and REMCO is now working hard getting ready for this event; renting vehicles, organising shelter and gathering materials and food while homes are being rebuilt.