



SUCCESS STORY

Collaboration Bolsters Schools in Kebkabiya



Residents celebrate the delivery of musical instruments and other educational supplies to four secondary schools in Kebkabiya.

Community leaders emphasized that USAID partner AED is the first organization to provide substantial support to Kebkabiya's secondary schools.

July 2009 – Four secondary schools in the North Darfur town of Kebkabiya received new equipment and supplies in June, and the schools' Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) held a celebration to mark the safe arrival of the materials. Parents, teachers, government officials, and community leaders attended the event that concluded with a visit to one of the schools where they could see some of the furniture, textbooks, musical instruments, and science lab equipment that had traversed great distances on insecure roads.

Earlier in the year, the PTAs consulted with more than 1,300 community members on school improvement issues. After identifying priorities, the groups formed a steering committee to mobilize local resources and external support.

The delivery signaled that their efforts have started to bear fruit.

The groups worked with the Darfur Community Strengthening Program, which is funded by USAID and implemented by the Academy for Educational Development (AED). The program is supporting secondary school PTAs across Darfur to provide schools with educational supplies and strengthen PTAs' ability to engage local communities and government.

AED donated the equipment and the groups sought additional assistance from the local commissioner, who pledged help with shipping logistics and security to ensure that the donations would reach the schools safely. In addition, the PTAs' advocacy groups petitioned the Ministry of Education for assistance and are receiving building materials, labor, and furniture needed to establish science classrooms to house the new chemistry, biology, and physics equipment.

Darfur has long suffered from economic and political isolation, and the current armed conflict has only exacerbated the marginalization of Darfuris. The state of North Darfur has not seen a fully funded education budget in nearly a decade, so community-based organizations such as PTAs have been invaluable in mobilizing support to keep schools operating.

According to community leaders, AED is the first international organization to provide substantial support to secondary schools in Kebkabiya. And with USAID support, the organization is strengthening the capacity of PTAs to work in their communities to identify school improvement needs and advocate for the delivery of essential education services.