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May 27, 2008

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## PRESS RELEASE

### **USAID Electrification Project Benefits Thousands in Southern Sudan**

**WASHINGTON** - On Tuesday, May 27, the Government of the United States and the Government of Southern Sudan will join members of the Yei community to celebrate completion of the first community-built and -operated power generation and electricity distribution system in Southern Sudan.

The pilot project is part of USAID's Southern Sudan Rural Electrification Program, implemented by the National Rural Electrical Cooperative Association (NRECA) International since 2004. With funding from USAID, NRECA has trained Yei residents in the wide spectrum of skills needed to build and operate a small utility. Local skilled crews erected the electrical distributions lines, constructed the substation, erected the powerhouse, and now operate the system.

More than 17,500 people directly benefit from the reliable supply of electricity to residences, businesses, health facilities, schools, police stations, local government offices, and other public institutions. Electricity has also improved the quality of health care and other basic services, raising the standard of living for all residents of Yei. The installation of streetlights has been a key factor in increasing public safety, reducing violent crime activity, and fostering business development in diverse ways. Roughly 80 percent of the cooperative's consumers are small commercial establishments which have taken advantage of the access to electricity to expand their operations, improve community services, bring in new products, and create new jobs.

The Yei electrification project is part of USAID's larger efforts, in close collaboration with the Government of Southern Sudan, to support the rehabilitation and operation of the Southern Sudan electric power supply system through construction projects, capacity building, and training. Through the support of the American people, Yei's electric utility provides a bright example of the ways that a cooperative utility can meet the unique challenges of supplying electricity to remote African communities.

The United States is the single largest donor to Sudan, contributing nearly \$4 billion in assistance to Sudan and eastern Chad since 2005. For more information on USAID programs in Sudan, please visit [www.usaid.gov/sudan](http://www.usaid.gov/sudan).

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