REPUBLIC OF THE SUDAN

Voluntary National Review for 2022



Poverty Reduction and SDGs Unit- Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning-Sudan
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Abbreviations

AML/CFT	Anti-Money Laundering and Combating Finance of Terrorism
CBS	Central Bureau of Statistics
CD	Constitutional Document
ECF	Extended Credit Facility
EU	European Union
FDIs	Foreign Direct Investments
FGM	Female Genital Mutation
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GEF	Global Environmental Fund
HCENR	High council for Environment and Natural Resources
HIPCS	Highly Indebted Poor Countries
HLPF	High- Level Political Forum
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INFF	Integrated National Financing Framework
JPA	Juba Peace Agreement
LB	Life Birth
MICS	Multi-Indicators Cluster Survey
MoFEP	Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning
MRV	Measurement, Reporting and Verification
NAC	National Audit Chamber
NAP	National Adaptation Plan
NAPA	National Adaptation Program of Action
NCCW	National Council for Child Welfare
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NGOs	Non-Government Organizations
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PEFA	Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability
PFM	Public Financial Management
PHC	Primary Health Care
PPPs	Public Private Partnerships
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
SBF	Sudanese Business Federation
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
SPF	Sudan Partnership Forum
SSTL	State Sponsors of Terrorism List
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNITAMS	United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission Sudan
VNR	Voluntary National Review
UNSC	United Nations Security Council



Opening statement

Minister of Finance and Economic planning

Sudan is privileged to present its second Voluntary National Review (2022 VNR) at the 2022 session of the UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF). The review comes amidst difficult political transition in Sudan following a popular uprising in December 2019 that ended three decades of authoritarian regime, and a dire economic situation compounded by the unprecedented economic and social impact of COVID-19 pandemic. These difficulties have undoubtedly impeded our journey to 2030 Agenda.

The preparation of the VNR for 2022 availed a great opportunity for Sudan to share with the international community its stock taking of the implementation progress of the SDGs, identifying key challenges, and highlighting action to advance implementation at the speed and scale required to meet SDGs by 2030.

The review was prepared through government-led process that involved extensive consultations with host of stakeholders including federal line agencies, subnational governments, private sector, civil society organizations, academia, and media.

The 2022 VNR is being presented while the country is embarking on a Sudanese-led inclusive consultations and eventually consensus on the current political crises, resulting in making headway towards forming a transitional government that will take the country to a free, fair, and credible elections. Sudan will be looking forward to the continuation of the debt relief process under the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPCs) initiatives and resumption of the much needed international financial support.

Despite numerous challenges faced by the country, we are determined to pursue progress towards achieving SDGs by 2030 benefiting everyone and leaving no one behind.



Dr.Gibril Ibrahim Mohamed

Minister of Finance and Economic Planning

Highlights

Sudan's Voluntary National Review for 2022 (2022 VNR) is the second review presented for the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on sustainable development; the first one being VNR for 2018. Several developments have taken place in Sudan since then. A popular uprising in 2019 has toppled the three- decades long authoritarian regime. The transitional government, formed after the revolution, has managed to remove Sudan from the US State Sponsors of Terrorism List (SSTL), signed "Juba Peace Agreement" (JPA) in October 2020, with main armed struggle groups to end the conflict in the country, undertook sweeping economic reforms, and started the debt relief process, reaching the decision point under the Highly Indebted Poor Country (HIPCs) initiative in June 2021.

However immense challenges are facing Sudan. Inter-tribal conflicts escalated. High inflation rates persisted. COVID-19 pandemic has pervasive impacts on the economy. Progress toward the completion point under the HIPCs for full debt relief, and support by the international community was suspended due to military decisions of the 25th of October 2021 that dissolved the transitional government and declared state of emergency in the country. These developments are expected to affect the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The government and all stakeholders including the international and regional partners are determined to resolve the current political crises and reach a consensus on a civilian government that will lead the transitional period.

The 2022 VNR was carried through a wide consultative process with: officials in the government at federal, state, and locality levels, civil society, youth, women, persons with disabilities, media, academia and the Sudanese Business Federation. The preparations were done by government working groups with participation from the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) and the National Audit Chamber (NAC). The process was coordinated by the Poverty Reduction and SDGs Unit under the supervision of the Undersecretary of Planning, in MoFEP. The VNR for 2022 although covers progress on the 17 goals, but with more in-depth reporting on six goals: health and wellbeing (SDG 3), inclusive and quality education (SDG 4), gender equality and women empowerment (SDG 5), life below water (SDG 14), life on land (SDG 15), and partnerships (SDG 17).

Sudan's progress toward SDGs is mixed and mainly influenced by the political and economic context, compounded by COVID-19.

- In the health sector, Sudan has made some progress in reducing maternal mortality rate, which declined from 509 per 100,000 live birth (L.B) in 2000 to 295 per 100,000 LB in 2020, and child mortality rate which declined from 113 per 1000 LB in 2000 to 68 per 1000 LB in 2015. Starting 2017 vaccination that was stagnant for several years, improved, where MCV1 reached 90% for the first time and MCV2 reached 72% at national level. Over thirteen million boys and girls are now protected against measles, resulting in a nine-fold decline in measles cases compared to before the immunization campaign. TB prevalence was reduced from 56 persons per 100,000 in 2015 to 45 persons per 100,000 in 2019.
- Sudan has made significant improvements in basic education during 2015-2020. The total number of basic education schools increased by 3,259 schools in 2019 allowing over one million students to attend school. Completion rate for primary education increased from 56.1 percent in 2015 to 61.6 percent in 2019, and for secondary education from 39.3 percent in 2015 to 42.1 percent in 2019. Participation rate in organized learning was 48.7 percent in 2019, an increase from 46.1 percent in 2015, well above the 32 percent average for Sub- Saharan Africa. Almost as many girls as boys are enrolled in basic education, with a Gender Parity Index (GPI) of 0.95 for basic education in favor of boys, while it is 1.1 for secondary education in favor of girls.

- Landmark achievements in women equality took place. Main legislations were reformed to end discrimination against women and empower them. The Constitutional Document CD of the transitional government, stipulated the protection of women's rights as committed in international and regional agreements ratified by Sudan, and the establishment of Women and Gender Equity Commission. A historic legislation to criminalize Female Genital Mutation (FGM) was enacted in 2020. In November 2019, the Public Order Law-1996, which disproportionately affected women, was repealed. The Combating of Human Trafficking Act 2014, was amended in 2020, with heavier punishment if the victim is female. Social Insurance and Pensions Law equates between men and women in the age and rights of retirements. The first national act on combatting violence against women and girls is drafted and it is in the process of approval. During 2018-2021 Sudan approved the Convention Against Discrimination in Education (1960), United Nations' 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on Women in Africa, which prohibits child marriage. The Personal Status Law is under review. Saleema initiative, the major campaign against FGM, contributed to less women aged 20-24 years being cut before the age of 14 down from 31 to 28 percent.
- On the environmental issues, the Red Sea in Sudan has not been, to some extent, impacted by the widespread degradation. Efforts resulted in protecting two marine areas, Sanganeb Marine National Park and Dungonab Bay and Mukkawar Island Marine National Park, both were declared world heritage sites. Sudan boosted its forest conservation efforts by reducing carbon emissions from forests, expanded afforestation and re-afforestation, established National parks and other protected areas and institutionally unified and empowered the High Council for Environment and Natural Resources- to coordinate environment and natural resources issues.

However, challenges remain for achieving progress in SDGs:

- Nutrition indicators are of concern; there is repeated outbreaks of certain diseases, shortages in health infrastructure persists and universal health coverage is facing some constraints.
- Major challenges are facing the education sector including large number of school drop-outs, education quality, and disparities between states, urban/rural areas and marginalized groups, including Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), nomads, refugees and persons with disabilities.
- Challenges are still facing women in areas of Gender Based Violence (GBV), access to land and labor market, representation in the legal and political processes, and representation in peace negotiations and conflict resolution mechanisms.
- On the environmental side, the situation of pollution and unsustainable practices in the Red Sea is changing rapidly as a result of port activities, fishing, oil and gas exploration, transport, and urbanization. Competition over natural resources between pastoralists and settled farmers is causing degradation and conflicts. Deforestation is high. Land is under increasing pressure resulting in severe land degradation. Deseret is creeping fast. Sudan's biodiversity is threatened. Sudan is also facing several emerging environmental issues, namely: fast expanding artisanal gold mining using mercury, growing electronic waste, and the increasing low-cost transport using diesel/petrol causing significant noise and air pollution.

The government is committed to leave no one behind. Inequality in development and service delivery has left some regions behind, leading to conflict. Also some groups are vulnerable like IDPs, women, youth, children, nomads, persons with disabilities and refugees. The polices of inclusive growth, economic stabilization, and equitable service delivery advocated in the PRSP 2021-2023, will

address among other measures, spatial marginalization and will eliminate disparities among regions. Implementation of JPA will address the challenges facing IDPs and war affected population especially women and children. Legislations ending harmful practices against women like child marriage, FGM, and GBV, inequality in representation and inequality in access to land and labor markets, will continue to be reformed in addition to increased public awareness campaigns. The government interventions in the PRSP which include developing agriculture, increasing financial inclusion, and promoting a robust private sector will increase employment opportunities for the youth. The education sector supported by international partners will continue to provide education to the most vulnerable segments of the population and factors leading to the high school drop outs will be addressed. The National Health Sector Recovery and Reform Policy 2021-2024 based on primary health care, was formulated with the vision of health and well-being for all the people in Sudan.

Data is a constraint for monitoring SDGs progress. Support will be needed for the implementation of the Five Year National Strategy for Promoting Statistics 2021-2025 which is envisaged to produce essential surveys and censuses like agriculture and livestock, Multi-Indicators Cluster Survey, national household budget and poverty survey, and labor market survey. The strategy also aims at improving the availability and quality of administrative data in selected sectors like education and health sectors in line with SDGs indictors. The support will complement the World Bank project for CBS: “Data and Statistics Strengthening Investment Project”.

Three decades of isolation from international community created strong demand for capacity building across many sectors for achieving SDGs. Support is needed to complement the technical assistance and policy advise program by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, EU and other donors in the macroeconomic area as reflected in the PEFA roadmap (2021) developed by MoFEP, so as to extend capacity building to the other sectors and the subnational level in support of the SDGs. Diagnostic study to determine capacity gaps will be required.

The government has agreed with the development partners on specific actions to reform the taxation system and create the fiscal space to finance social services delivery and development. However, the government without significant financial assistance may not be able to achieve the SDGs by 2030. The resolution of the political crises will enable the international community to resume its support for Sudan. Due to the fragmented sources of financing SDGs, support is needed to establish an Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF).

1. Introduction

Sudan has presented its first VNR in 2018. The objective of this second VNR for 2022, is to track progress towards achieving 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals SDGs until 2020, including progress made, remaining challenges, and the way forward. The review takes into account the fact that SDGs are inter-related and need to be seen as a whole, not as isolated goals. Therefore, 2020 VNR will cover Sudan context and impact on the progress towards SDGs; focus on inclusion (leave no one behind); integration of SDGs in the government structures, strategies, polices and legislations; and progress made towards achieving the 17 sustainable development goals. The review also analyses the impact of the emerging challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic on SDGs.

The context of Sudan, since 2018, has been challenging. Sudan has witnesses several developments. The three-decade regime was overthrown by a historic uprising of the Sudanese people in April 2019. In August 2019, a civilian coalition of the Forces of Freedom of Change, mainly composed of political parties, armed struggle movements and civil society groups, signed a CD with the Transitional Military Council forming a transitional government.

The transitional government began its path towards resolving the decades long internal conflicts, unwinding economic deterioration to achieve economic stability and development, and re-engaging with the international community after more than three decades of isolation. On the 3rd of October 2020, Sudan's transitional government and representatives of several major armed groups signed "Juba Peace Agreement" (JPA) to achieve a lasting peace in the country.[1] Sudan in December 2020 was officially removed from the State Sponsors of Terrorism List (SSTL) imposed by USA since 1993. The government has started the debt relief process under the HIPCs initiative to clear its large and unsustainable external debt. It has cleared its arears to multilateral institutions and substantial part of its arrears to Paris Club Creditors, and reached the HIPCs decision point in June 2021. Sudan has agreed with the IMF on a 39-month arrangement of Extended Credit Facility (ECF) to support the structural reform program to reach the HIPC Completion Point. If Sudan continues its steadfast commitment to economic reforms, the country has the potential to reach the Completion Point by June 2024, which could drop Sudan's debt from about US$56 billion to about US$6 billion[2].

However, the military on the 25th of October 2021, froze major articles in the CD of 2019 that governs the transitional period; dissolved the Sovereign Council and the Council of Ministers; and declared a state of emergency. This has resulted in political crises in the country. Development partners have immediately stopped funding, paused their support to the economic reforms, and suspended the debt relief process.

The economy continues to face a macroeconomic instability. Inflation has risen to one of the highest levels in the world, soaring from 55 percent by the end of 2018 to 221 percent in April 2022. GDP contracted from -2.7 percent in 2018 to -3.6 percent in 2020. The exchange rate is distorted with multiple currency practices.

Tribal and intercommunal violence escalated, mainly due to competition over natural resources, marginalization and inability to manage ethnic diversity, resulting in the loss of lives, livelihoods and displacement.

[1] The two main factions are Sudan People's Liberation Movement – North, Abdelaziz al-Hilu and the Sudan Liberation Army led by Abdul Wahid Noor (SLA-AW) are yet to join the peace process

[2] IMF; Sudan; Key messages on Sudan –Enhanced HIPCs

The government and all stakeholders are in the process of undertaking consultations with assistance from the international and regional partners to resolve the political crises and continue the path towards peace and democratic transition. Political stability and resumption of the debt relief process and external assistance will have positive impacts on the progress towards SDGs 2030.

2. Methodology and process for preparation of the review

Poverty Reduction and the SDGs Unit of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MoFEP) was tasked with the responsibility of coordinating and preparing the 2022 VNR, under the direct supervision of the Undersecretary of Planning-MoFEP. The Unit has engaged all stakeholders in the VNR process including the High National Committee, federal line agencies, focal points in the states, CBS, NAC, and the civil society groups.

In preparing for the VNR, the government participated in several international and regional workshops: namely: a workshop organized by ESCWA on data disaggregation for SDGs indicators in November 2019; Arab fourth Ministerial Conference for SDGs in Cairo in mid-February 2020; a workshop organized by the African Union in Kigali; Arab workshop on indicator 6.5.2 in Beirut, mid-march 2022; and the Second Regional Meeting for SDGs in Botswana in April 2022. Inputs from these events informed the 2022 VNR preparation.

The process for VNR 2022 started when Sudan request for the presentation of its second VNR for 2022 at the HLPF on Sustainable Development was accepted in October 2021. The Poverty Reduction and SDGs Unit prepared a roadmap for the preparation of the VNR in December 2021. The roadmap specified the timing for consultations, data collection and information, report writing and the approval process. In preparing the roadmap timelines, the Unit was mindful of the deliverables deadlines stated in the Handbook for the preparation of VNRs-2022 edition, issued by United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) which are mainly: delivery of Main Messages on the 3rd of May 2022, the VNR report on 10 June 2022, and the Audio / visual presentation on 17 June 2022. The roadmap was shared with the relevant government line agencies and other stakeholders.

The technical work started with a meeting for the High National Committee in the Council of Ministers, which gave its guidance to the Technical Committee on the theme and priorities of the SDGs. The High National Committee also discussed the methodology to be followed in the preparation of the 2022 VNR.

Sudan 2022 VNR methodology was guided by the Handbook for the preparation of VNRs-2022 as well as the Secretary-General's proposal for voluntary common reporting guidelines for VNRs at the HLPF. Sudan 2022 VNR covers: overview of the country context and its impact on the SDGs, engagement of stakeholders in the preparation, incorporating the SDGs into the national frameworks, inclusive SDGs coverage by addressing leaving no one behind, institutional mechanism for coordinating SDGs, progress towards SDGs, means of implementation and way forward

The government decided that it will provide brief information on progress and the status of all 17 Sustainable Development Goals in the 2030 Agenda. However, it will report more in-depth on six goals: health and wellbeing (SDG 3), inclusive and quality education (SDG 4), gender equality and women empowerment (SDG 5), life below water (SDG 14), life on land (SDG 15), and partnerships (SDG 17).

Technical working groups from line agencies were formed for the six goals to be covered in depth. The health and wellbeing group was led by the Ministry of Health; quality education group was led by the Ministry of Education; the gender equality and women empowerment group was led by the Women General Directorate in the Ministry of Social Development; life below water, and life on land group was led by the High Council for Environment and Natural Resources; and the partnerships group was led by MoFEP. The working groups coordinated their work with all relevant bodies.

The Poverty Reduction and SDGs Unit conducted several meetings with the technical groups and provided them with copies of the Handbook for the preparation of the VNR for 2022 edition, Sudan VNR for 2018, and the link for the VNRs in the SDGs knowledge platform in addition to other relevant information. The line agencies also made use of their internal reports and reports to international bodies as well as reports produced by UN agencies and other organizations. The Poverty Reduction and SDGs Unit also facilitated and coordinated meetings between the technical groups of the line agencies and the CBS. It has also facilitated meetings among the groups to address cross cutting issues. All meetings between the Unit and concerned line agencies were attended by NAC and CBS.

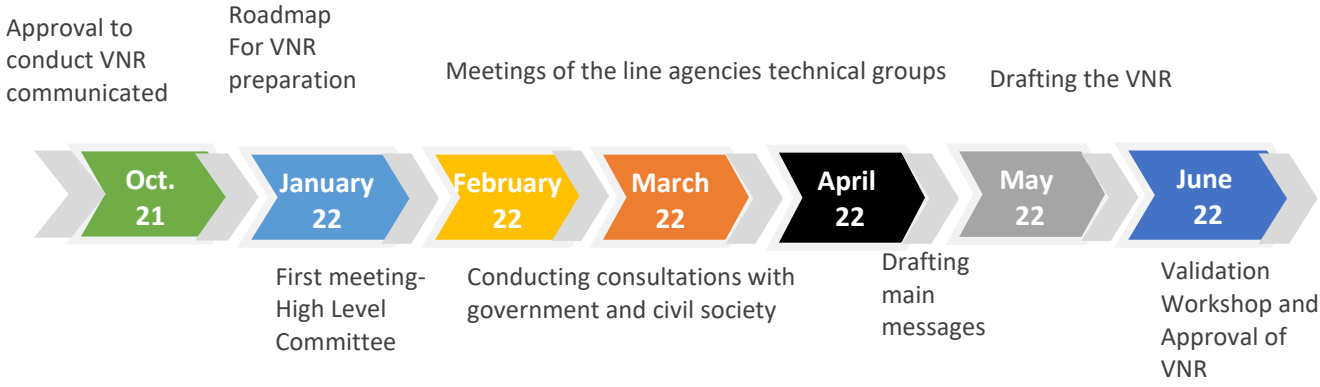
The 2022 VNR process included consultations with the sub national government level. The 18 states in the country were all covered in the consultations conducted during the period of 10th of February to the 19th of April 2022. Representatives from the state government and the civil society in each state attended the consultations.

The Poverty Reduction and SDGs Unit held consultations with the private sector, academia, youth, women, persons with disabilities, NGOs and other civil society organizations. These consultations took place during February-April 2022.

Suspension of activities in Sudan by the development partners as a result of the military decisions of the 25th of October 2021 impacted the direct contribution of the UN agencies in the preparation of the 2022 VNR. There were no consultations carried out with the development partners including UN agencies.

The report was validated by a one-day workshop attended by the Technical Committee members (undersecretaries), technical groups for the preparation of the selected SDGs reports, subnational governments representatives, CBS, NAC and academia.

Figure 1: Sudan VNR for 2022 preparation process



A major constraint that hindered adequate assessment of progress towards achieving SDGs is the data limitations. Monitoring SDGs progress is data demanding. Inadequate funding for statistical work and limited technical capacity has gravely restricted the production of timely and reliable data

for the SDGs. The existing censuses and surveys are outdated: The last population census was carried in 2008, agriculture and livestock census was carried out in 1964, the last household budget and poverty survey was conducted in 2014/15; the MICS was done in 2014, the last labor survey was in 2011, and the last Industrial Survey was carried out in 2003. Administrative data to be used in determining progress toward SDGs is poor. Multiple sources exist for the same indicator, the indicator coverage is partial, with difference in the definition and methodology of calculation, data production is untimely, and coordination with the line agencies producing the data is weak. Spatial data, gender data, disability statistics and other disaggregated statistics are lacking although they are important in understanding the inequities dimension and hence designing policies and programs to address them so as to leave no one behind. Despite these weaknesses, VNR 2022 benefited from the administrative data of some ministries like education, health, energy, transport, NCEHR and data provided by the Central Bank of Sudan and MoFEP. It has also benefited from data of the UN agencies, and the intensive work done by relief originations on food security. In the absence of quantitative data, qualitative assessment has been used.

3. Policy and enabling environment

A. Ensuring ownership of the Sustainable Development Goals and the VNRs.

Background

Consultations for 2022 VNR were designed by the Poverty Reduction and SDGs Unit, and were conducted with officials in government at the federal, state, and locality levels, civil society and community-based organizations, youth, women, persons with disabilities groups, labor unions. Sudanese Business, Federation, media and academia. The Sudanese Business Federation and the NAC have both prepared reports on their SDGs activities for 2022 VNR.

The consultations were conducted in the format of face-to-face workshops, meetings, reports, contributions prepared by SDGs focal points, and focus group discussions. They provided national visibility for 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, and improved understanding of the 2022 VNR process, which is open for all stakeholders to participate and share their views, opinions and lessons of experience. The common objectives of the consultation workshops were to: (1) Understand the extent of knowledge and awareness of 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. (2) Gage the extent of integrating the principles and dimensions of sustainable development in plans and strategies. (3) Discuss the linkages between various communities on SDGs matters and concerns. (4) Discuss and provide information and recommendations for reporting on all SDGs but specifically for the priority SDGs targets for 2022 VNR. The brief analyses below cover the consultations with stakeholders, the challenges and issues discussed, and main recommendations and outcomes of the consultations (more details in annex 1)

Consultations with subnational level (states and localities)

Five rounds of intensive consultations were held covering all the 18 states. The consultations were very well attended (173 females; 162 males) with official high-level participants representing the State Government, Non-Government Organizations, ministries and government departments, localities, labor unions, farmers and pastoralists, youth and women organizations, academia, resistance committees, and CBS, in addition to officials from the MoFEP.

There are several common challenges and issues that all states have faced (See annex 1), most obvious among which is lack of knowledge and information on Agenda 2030 and the SDGs. Much of the information on sustainable development is confined to Khartoum State, the seat of the federal

government, mainly because of the concentration of media, government offices and ministries, national and international NGOs and human capital. Close proximity facilitates sharing and interactions between the federal ministries and Khartoum State ministries also helped in SDGs knowledge dissemination. Another salient feature is the weak coordination between the federal level and the subnational level in SDGs. States, localities and community-based organizations, with few exceptions, are at disadvantage on this matter. The knowledge-and information- gap on sustainable development in the states is more evident among farmers, pastoralists, community-based organizations and localities. One of the best practices noted during the consultations is that North Darfur State has raised the knowledge and awareness of officials in the public and private sector.

Development plans and projects at the state level are almost void of the principles and integrated dimensions of the SDGs. There are very rare cases of integrating the SDGs in the states plans. For example, the SDGs were integrated in Khartoum State Plan for 2017-2030. The Ministry of Urban Planning of the State of Khartoum has integrated SDGs 1, 2, 3,4,6, 11, 15 and 17, in its plans and development activities. Such cases provide lessons of experience that should be documented, developed and shared with other states.

Implementation of development activities at the states level lack funding, and human and physical capital. Therefore, many of the development projects were discontinued. Coupled with political instability due to conflict and poor governance, the implementation of many development projects has been discontinued particularity water (SDG 6), school environment (SDG 4) and health services (SDG 3).

Population displacement affects many states. The volatile nature of the population situation, makes inclusivity and leaving no one behind an extremely difficult task for the states. This is further complicated by high and increasing prevalence of crimes and instability in several areas, which have overwhelmed the security systems.

Recommendations for improving progress towards SDGs are: (1) disseminating knowledge and information on 2030 Agenda and the SDGs through well designed simple and targeted media programs and platforms to reach out to different communities and population groups, (2) developing institutional capacities at the state level for both state and non-state organizations, through supporting the states to establish empowered SDGs units within their planning departments and MoFEP will develop a document to translate these recommendations to actions, (3) integrating the principles and dimensions of sustainable development into states' plans and projects, to accommodate the needs of communities and population groups, such youth and women, into the design and implementation of the plans, and to promote public-private partnerships, and (4) providing accurate and timely data for evidence-based analyses and research by providing. comprehensive data base at the state level requiring collaboration between the MoFEP and the CBS.

Consultations with Youth Organizations

As part of its efforts to compile a detailed and all-inclusive report on the progress of SDGs, government of Sudan has held a consultation meeting with youth groups in national and state levels. The engagement was to solicit input into the final 2022 VNR on the SDGs ahead of the country's 2nd presentation in July,2022. The consultations covered 36 youth representing 22 youth organizations such as Youth Training and Employment Organization, Youth Peer Network, Youth Forum Organization, Sudanese Society for Youth Development, and International Youth Society. The Federal Ministry of Youth and Sports, CBS, and the MoFEP have all participated in the consultations with youth organizations. Therefore, the consultation created an effective venue for interaction and discussion on the 2022 VNR.

Though youth represent the future human resource potential in the Sudan, their level of knowledge and awareness of 2030 Agenda and SDGs is scanty and their linkages and sharing of information and knowledge with government official is weak. They expressed dissatisfaction with the extent of their participation in planning and decision-making at national and sectoral levels, though they are innovative and are highly successful in social networking. Youth face the greatest challenges of lack of access to health (SDG3), and education services (SDG4), and high unemployment(SDG8). In addition, youth are very much affected by the deteriorating living conditions and increasing poverty, food insecurity, and by the impacts of COVID-19. They mainly call for human rights, peace and stability, and participation in development, democracy and civilian rule in the country

The consultations with youth organizations came up with some recommendations most important among which is to bridge their knowledge and awareness gaps on 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, and on data and statistics. The recommendations include building trust and confidence between youth and the public sector through social networks, face-to-face meetings and workshops[3].

Consultations with Women

Women in the Sudan significantly contributed to the popular uprising, regime change and institutional establishment of the transitional period. This high visibility and the challenges that women face on their human rights, access to leadership and key decision-making positions, and to work and employment, education, health, and capital resources for production, deserve commensurate attention in the preparation of the 2022 VNR.

The transitional government have made some progress on women's human rights and on commitments to gender rights, but a lot more needs to be achieved. Results of consultations referred to women in disadvantaged and marginalized population groups, such IDPs, nomadic populations, persons with disabilities, destitute and poor families, and there should be priorities for health, education, food security and energy interventions. The recommendations also call for empowering of women through eliminating the impacts of traditional practices on their welfare, and promoting their access to productive resources and assets.

The consultations show the need to further support and build the institutional capacity of women organizations and institutions. Especially, their capacity to undertake gender analyses and to monitor progress on gender across all SDGs, in particular SDG 5.

Consultations with the NGOs and Community-based Organizations

According to the Humanitarian Assistance Commission registered NGOs up until December 31, 2020 were numbered over 2000. Most of them became dormant due to the popular uprising in December 2018 and regime change. The consulted NGOs lack knowledge and information on 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. This limitation is due, in part, to shortage in media coverage as the Sudan has not yet developed a media coverage strategy for popularity and public awareness of the sustainable development agenda. Additionally, their working relations with government are limited and marred with mistrust due to lack of experience and to their high dependence on foreign funding, which exposes the NGOs to high financial risks. They are weak on documenting their achievements, and preparing reports on their outputs and impact on the communities they serve. They operate at high

[3] These consultations for 2022 VNR largely conform with the results and recommendations of a field survey of youth organizations undertaken in March and April 2021 by The Carter Center (The Carter Center, 2021, Sudan's Youth and the Transition: Priorities, Perceptions and Attitudes) identifying youth challenges as high cost of living, lack of employment, access to education and health, corruption, climate change and environmental degradation, lack of freedom of expression, and lack of citizen participation and accountability

staff turnover and high administrative cost due to inflation and the declining value of the national currency.

Notwithstanding these challenges and limitations, the NGOs provide windows of opportunities for 2030 Agenda and the SDGs in the country. In this context, the consultations came up with some recommendations, namely to: (a) improve their knowledge and understanding of sustainable development agenda and framework, (b) increase their technical capacity to participate in the implementation of the SDGs, and to improve their performance to deliver, monitor and report on achievement of results, and (c) develop a strategy for fund raising from domestic and foreign sources, and for building and retaining human capital.

Sudanese Business Federation

The Sudanese Business Federation (SBF) prepared a report in 2022 on the role of the private sector on achievement of the SDGs as contribution to the 2022 VNR process. It consists of activities, workshops and conferences, forums, meetings with development partners and with stakeholders undertaken in years 2019, 2020 and 2021. Structured around the 17 SDGs, the report provides snapshots of activities and brief analyses of the private sector's contribution to addressing the impacts of COVID-19. Furthermore, the report covers the bilateral and multilateral foreign relations and partnerships with other countries, regional and international organizations.

The SBF encourages the private sector to contribute to economic stability (SDG8, SDG16), to promote effective development performance of the sectors of the economy (SDG8), and to balance economic and social development to achieve the 17 SDGs by 2030. In this context the SBF held activities with all stakeholders, including ministries and official departments, universities, NGOs and community-based organizations. It organized a rapid training plan so as to build awareness, knowledge and capacity on 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. The training included how to integrate the dimensions of the SDGs in private business, and how to achieve sustainable development growth.

The SBF contributed to the organization of forums and meetings on financing social development and fighting poverty, preparation of the tripartite program for stability and economic development, program for supporting youth leadership in agriculture activities, public private partnerships for addressing the challenges and issues of agriculture in the Sudan, partnership with the ministry of education (SDG4) for supporting child health (SDG3) and addressing hunger (SDG2) through school feeding so as to reduce children's drop out from schools due to hunger, and partnership with ministry of Higher Education on agriculture and industrial research for development. The SBF supports the Sudanese business women through their membership in addressing GBV (SDG 5).

Consultations with Academia and Research institutions

Consultations have been conducted with 25 participants representing universities (University of Khartoum, Ahfad University for Women, International University of Africa, The National Rabat University, Sudan University of Science and Technology) and research institutions of excellence on energy and food, and Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research.

The institutions of higher education play a major role in human resources development, and in science and technology research for the development of all sectors that contribute to the SDGs. The public and private universities and colleges (55 in total) are spread throughout the country, but the great majority of them are located in Khartoum state. Invariably, academia and research institutions are underfunded and understaffed. Their operational activities have been severely impacted by frequent closures due to public riots and demonstrations, and lock down due to COVID-19. Many of their staff and students' pursued different opportunities.

The 2022 VNR consultations indicate that the institutions of higher education began to incorporate sustainable development into their curricula and research for training at undergraduate, graduate and post graduate levels. However, research and training on sustainable development are both weak and lack resources (finance, qualified staff, literature, and data). Additionally, knowledge on 2030 Agenda and the SDGs among them is scanty.

The consultations revealed the need to undertake comprehensive assessment of the situation of the SDGs at the institutions of higher education and research in the country, to illuminate the concepts of sustainability and inclusivity in higher education, and highlight their role in development and in addressing poverty. Such an assessment, when undertaken, will furnish the information base for preparing a master plan for integrating sustainable development in the higher education system, which the participants called for during the consultations.

Also, the assessment will help to identify the means of implementation of 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, and to develop strategies to overcome the challenges and constraints, and to harness scanty resources through, for example, public-private partnerships in education. As a follow-up to the outcomes of this consultation, the MoFEP will target this community through media, workshops, group discussions, etc. to promote knowledge and awareness on 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. It will support teaching and training on sustainable development through acquisition of relevant textbooks and software. It will encourage their partnerships with the CBS to access and use data for research on 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

National Audit Chamber (NAC)

NAC is very active in the implementation of 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, and on applying the SDGs principles and dimensions in all of its audit operations. It submitted a report on its role in the implementation of the SDGs in the Sudan. NAC focuses on SDGs audit following four approaches: The first approach: assessing the preparedness of national governments to implement the SDGs, monitoring and reporting on the progress made, and verifying the reliability of the data they audit. The second approach: conducting performance to evaluates the level of organization, efficiency and effectiveness of programs that contribute to certain aspects of the SDGs. The third approach: assessing and supporting the implementation of SDG16 by building accountable, transparent and effective institutions. Fourth Approach: Transparency and accountability of oversight bodies including oversight tasks and preparing audit reports.

B. Integration of the Sustainable Development Goals in national frameworks.

Integration of SDGs into the government structures is mixed. The SDGs were integrated in the PRSP 2021-2023. Pursuing inclusive economic growth, a major pillar in the PRSP, was a basic policy that responds to the 2030 Agenda pledge to leave no one behind. The PRSP pillar of service delivery directly responded to achievement of health and wellbeing (SDG 3), inclusive and quality education (SDG 4), and safe drinking water and sanitation (SDG 6). The government environment strategy in the PRSP accommodated the SDGs goals related to environment (SDGs 13,14 and 15). The PRSP is also built on peace; realizing its importance for sustainable development as indicated in SDG 16.

NAC being part of the budget cycle (accounting and reporting) has established a separate SDGs Auditing Department within the chamber. A large number of NAC staff were trained in SDGs auditing. The SDGs auditing was streamlined in the NAC strategic plans for 2019-2023. NAC has conducted many audits related to SDGs auditing during 2017-2022. NAC implemented the first and second approaches, and prepared a report on the third approach. With regard to the first approach

NAC undertook in 2017 an assessment of the preparedness of national government institutions to implement the SDGs. Through this assessment NAC identified the weaknesses and strengths of the institutions, and their needs for capacity development and for accurate and timely data to report and measure progress on achievements. Based on the results of the preparedness report, NAC moved one step forward on preparing a second report using the second approach on performance of the SDGs, it has conducted 2018 audit report. The third report on SDG16 is under preparation in 2022, focusing primarily on building effective institutions and applying accountability. `

The Ministry of Education has established an Oversight Committee for overseeing the progress towards achieving SDG4. It has formed four specialized sub committees working under the Oversight Committee to follow up, monitor and coordinate SDG 4. The four sub committees are: the committee for indicators recording and reporting, the committee for strategies and polices, the committee for awareness and advocacy, and the committee for finance. SDG4 is integrated in the Ministry of Education advocacy program for education.

The health sector has integrated SDGs in the health sector plans and polices. The Ministry of Health integrated health SDG 3 and health related SDGs in its National Health Sector Strategic Plan (NHSSP) II 2017-2020. The National Health Policy 2017- 2030 was also in line with the 2030 Agenda to achieve health and health related goals. The focus of both the strategic plan and health policy is to reform the health system by re-orienting it towards universal health coverage with focus on promotion of health and wellbeing of Sudanese in line with the SDGs, and achieve equity in the health system to respond to the needs of the poor, under served and disadvantaged populations within the theme of "Leaving No One Behind"[4].

The General Directorate of Women in the Ministry of Social Development, has a national coordination mechanism that includes several bodies working on issues related to women, including the National Council for Child Welfare (NCCW), Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, as well as focal points in the states and the civil society organizations. The mandate of the national mechanism is to coordinate strategies, plans, and polices, for women empowerment at national and state levels and integrating SDGs in those strategies and plans, as well as recording and monitoring progress toward achieving SDG 5.

The institutions of higher education began to incorporate sustainable development into their curricula and research for training at undergraduate, graduate and post graduate levels.

The High Council for Environment and Natural Resources (HCFNR) is integrating the environmental aspects of SDGs in its plans and activities (SDGs 13, 14, and 15) in addition to the related SDGs 6 and SDG 7. One of the objectives of The Sudan First State of the Environment and Outlook 2020 Report issued by HCENR and United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP), is to take stock of the condition of the country's environment and the trends affecting it and the outlook of how will Sudan meet its national and international commitments in the realm of the SDGs. The scenarios for a future Sudan developed by the report considered assumptions related to the SDGs.

CBS has established within its organizational structure, a special unit for SDGs. The objective of the unit is to prepare the required data for monitoring progress towards achieving SDGs. The data includes the surveys as well as assisting government departments in improving their administrative data.

[4] WHO-Sudan-Health and SDGs Brief

However, SDGs are not integrated yet in the budget. Considerable effort is needed prior to integrating SDGs into the budge. MoFEP budget system is based solely on economic classification as conformed by the Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA) for Sudan in 2020. MoFEP does not compile execution of public federal expenditure data and report on the budget by administrative or functional classification, which is essential for sectoral analysis and SDGs analysis. Budget reporting which is part of the budget cycle does not include reporting on SDGs. Integration of SDGs is also made difficult by the fragmentation of the expenditures in different budgets. MoFEP does not have a comprehensive budget. The federal government has its own budget cycle. States have their own separate budgets which are not integrated in the federal budget. It has to be noted that states and localities are assigned important responsibilities that are related to SDGs like basic education, basic health services, water and sanitation, local environmental issues, urban development etc. Public corporations and government companies have their own separate budgets, unrelated to the federal budget. These corporations and companies are also working on sectors related to SDGs like food security, power, transport, technology and communications etc. However, reforms are envisaged in the government programs with the IMF and World Bank. Budget classification and budget comprehensiveness including integrating federal and states budgets will be addressed as reflected in the 39-month Enhanced Credit Facility -June 2021. This reform will pave the way for integrating the SDGs into the government general budget.

Financing of the SDGs is also fragmented and has not yet been integrated. Sudan did not develop an Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF) yet, although it has conducted a Preliminary Development Finance Assessment as a step towards the INFF[5]. The study provided a preliminary baseline analysis for the establishment of an INFF for Sudan. Several financing sources were identified including: domestic revenues, Zakat fund, contributory funds (pension and social security), domestic credit, Corporate Social Responsibility, Public Private Partnership (PPP), Official Development Assistance (ODA) flows, Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs), and remittances. The activities of these funding sources are not coordinated for financing SDGs. It was recommended that Sudan should be moving towards an INFF by establishing a coordination mechanism to ensure efficient use of resources available, even before looking for mobilizing additional resources.

C. Leave no one behind.

Failure to manage diversity and legacy of decade of non-inclusive governance and economic growth resulted in a long-standing socio-economic imbalance between the center and the peripheries. Some regions are left behind in economic development. Also some of the groups like women, children, youth, IDPs, refugee, nomad and persons with disabilities were left behind for different economic, social, and cultural reasons. Unfortunately, the administrative data sources lack necessary disaggregation to look beyond population averages to identify who is left behind, and where they are located and their specific needs. The surveys which could reveal such information are outdated. The following disaggregated groups represent those who are mainly left behind and an indication of where they are. With improved disaggregated statistics more detailed mapping will be possible.

[5] UNDP: Sudan, Preliminary Development Finance Assessment -2018

States with the highest poverty incidence

There are 8 states out of the 18 states with the highest poverty in Sudan, and they are conflict states with the lowest social indicators.

Where: The five states of Darfur, Blue Nile, South Kordofan, and Red Sea are all above the average poverty rate of 61.6 percent. Their poverty rate ranges from 86.5 percent (South Kordofan) to 68.9 percent (Blue Nile).

People in extreme poverty

Based on international poverty line of $1.90 per capita per day (2011 PPP) forecasted extremely poor persons are 16.9 percent of population; or about 7 million persons

Where: In all states. Use of the Family Support Program data can help in identifying them further

Youth and children

62 per cent of the population under age of 25. Children (below 18 years) are 48.5 percent of the population

Where? All are affected but especially children in camps, school drop outs, girls in rural and nomadic areas, unemployed youth,

Women

21 million (49 percent of the population)

Where? All women but Specifically rural women, and women in urban peripheries and IDPs camps, and victims of FGM, early marriage and GBV

IDPs

2.5 million or 6 Percent of the population

Where?

North Darfur	31%
South Darfur	26%
Central Darfur	14%
West Darfur	11%
South Kordofan	9%
others	9%

Refugees

1.1 million. About 60 per cent of refugees live outside of camps.

Where?

White Nile (10 camps)	24%
East Darfur (2 camps)	6%
East Central (Kassala, Gadrief, Gazira)(8 camps)	11%
Outside the camps(mainly in Khartoum and Easter Sudan)	59%

Nomads

2.7 million (8.7 per cent of the population)

Where?

Camel herders in N. Darfur, N. Kordofan and Butana, East Sudan. Cattle herders in S. Darfur, Kordofan, White Nile, Blue Nile and Sennar.

Persons with disabilities

About 2.1 million (5 percent of the population).

Where?

the starting point for locations and engagement will be the Sudanese Union for Persons with Disabilities and other unions and civil society organizations

Causes and actions to address the marginalized groups

States with the highest poverty rates

Economic growth was centered in specific geographical areas resulting in marked disparities between different regions of Sudan, leaving some of them behind. This inequality and marginalization have led to increased poverty and decades of conflict and civil wars across many parts of Sudan. States like Blue Nile, South Kordofan, and the states of Darfur Region were devastated by conflicts. Their poverty rates and social indicators are the worst in the country.

Reaching peace is a necessary condition for reaching equality among the different states in Sudan. The government has started this process by signing JPA. The regional disparities can best be addressed by inclusive growth. Realizing that economic growth was not inclusive, the government will base its future economic growth on agriculture and livestock in order to improve livelihood and reduce poverty in the poor states that depend on agriculture and livestock.[6] Return of IDPs and rehabilitation of the war affected areas, which is embedded in JPA agreement, will largely contribute to addressing the marginalization in these areas

People who live in extreme poverty

Poverty in Sudan is multi-dimensional and has left many people behind. The underlying causes of poverty in Sudan include political and economic instability, prolonged conflicts, neglecting agriculture development (from which most people derive their livelihood), adverse environmental

[6] Sudan: PRSP 2021-2023

conditions, unequal access to basic services, and weak governance. The government has started addressing poverty by developing the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP 2021-2023). The PRSP is anchored around five pillars: promoting macroeconomic stability, fostering inclusive and sustainable economic growth, boosting human and social development, promoting peace and providing equal opportunities for all Sudanese, and strengthening governance and institutional capacity. Gender and other kinds of social equity is a cross-cutting imperative that is integrated across the pillars of the PRSP. The social safety net programs of the government will also provide mitigation for those in extreme poverty.

Youth and children

In Sudan, approximately 2.7 million children under five suffer from malnutrition annually, about 36.6 of children suffer stunning, 2.3 million children, are not in the classroom. About 38.5 percent of student of grade three learners could not read simple familiar words. The measures proposed in the sectoral plans like education, health address the situation of children. Youth are underrepresented in the political and economic decision making. They face the highest rate of unemployment particularly in urban areas.

Youth in Sudan account for over 65 percent of the population. They were the backbone of the revolution that led to the fall of the previous 30-years regime in 2019. The government have addressed the youth employment in the PRSP 2021-2023. Economic growth and employment creation is one of the five pillars of the PRSP. Developing agriculture, increasing financial inclusion to increase opportunities for youth to access finance, and promoting a robust private sector to generate more employment, are measures to be implemented by the government to improve the livelihood of the youth.

Women and girls

Women in Sudan are still facing harmful practices. FGM prevalence and child marriage remains high. Both child marriage and FGM are influenced by deeply rooted social norms, cultural belief, and religious misconceptions as well as inadequate legal framework. Domestic violence and child marriage also increased due to the COVID-19 pandemic. GBV is a serious challenge facing women. Girls are dropping out of school, partly due to poverty, but also due to lack of toilets and fencing in schools, and in some areas due to social norms against girl's education. Another challenge faced by women in Sudan is the inequality in access to land and labor and in misrepresentation in the legal and political processes. The government is exerting efforts to focus on political, economic, social, information and technological developments to achieve gender equality and empower women and girls. Targeted interventions for women include combating GBV, access to education, health nutrition, participation, access to land and labor especially in rural areas, and to comply with Sudan's commitments in regional and international agreements. Approach to addressing gender equality is based on reforms in legislations, polices, programs, mechanisms, community participation, raising of awareness and media. Enhancing women participation in the peace process is a vital accelerator in achieving SDGs 4. Special consideration is given to women in vulnerable situations like women in IDPs camps, prisoners, women with disabilities, girls out of schools, and homeless women.

IDPS

The armed conflict has left about 2.5 million persons in protracted displacement and unknown number of unregistered IDPs located in host communities. IDPs face many challenges. About 61 percent of IDPs households are food insecure. They lack access to land for agriculture and other livelihood opportunities. They also lack adequate water and sanitation which has led to outbreaks of disease in the camps. Displaced children, who account for 50 per cent of displaced persons are particularly vulnerable. Many drop out of school, and their learning environment is poor. Considerable humanitarian assistance was delivered to the IDPs by the international community

since 2003. However, the solution for the IDPs is by achieving a lasting peace. JPA sets durable solution for IDPs and returnees, to put an end to their protracted displacement by returning voluntary to their area of origin or integrate locally or relocated in other areas of their choice. They will be compensated for the loss of their assets if these assets cannot be redeemed and will be provided with livelihood, basic services, infrastructure, and microfinance in the areas of return and in areas of relocation. Significant amount of external resources from the international community will be required for the implementation of JPA.

Persons with Disabilities

About 2.1 million or 5 percent of the population are disabled. Challenges facing disabilities include; legislative reform processes ensuring equality before the law, equal access to basic services, equal access to economic opportunities, adequate standards of living, and equal opportunities for participation in the public life. Sudan has revised the 2009 National Disability Act and promulgated a new one: the 2017 Persons with Disabilities Act. The new law was enacted after extensive consultation with organizations of persons with disabilities, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders. The change in the law was to make it consistent with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). A report on the Status of the Rights of People with Disabilities after Ten Years of Sudan's joining the CRPD is already validated and ready to be published. The objective of this report is to evaluate lessons learned and produce new recommendations to be incorporated into a new strategy. The National Council of Persons with Disabilities is under formulation. The Ministry of Social welfare in collaboration with ESCWA has started formulating a strategy for persons with disabilities, which began with a workshop attended by all stakeholders.

Nomadic population

Nomadic population is 2.7 million (population census in 2008) which is 8.7 per cent of the total Sudanese population. Their mobile way of life makes it difficult to provide them with services. Education is a challenge for nomadic population. There are more than 200,000 nomadic children enrolled in some 1,500 government nomadic schools. Close to 21 percent of the total out-of-school children in Sudan aged 6-11 years old are nomadic children[7]. Their stock routes are not demarcated, often leading to conflicts with farmers, and they lack veterinary and water supply and other essential services along these routes.

To address the challenges of the nomadic population, the Ministry of Education established directorates for nomad's education in all states. A partnership, was set up between the government, UNICEF and the nomadic communities, aims to ensure that nomadic youth received the same educational opportunities as other citizens. Considerable awareness is being undertaken to change some of the nomad's social values related to early marriage and girl's education. Efforts are being made to demarcate the stock routes, provide them services. These efforts will continue in the future.

Refugees

Sudan is recognized by the international community as having long tradition of hosting refugees and asylum seekers. It hosts 1.1 million refugees. About 60 per cent of refugees live outside of camps, making it difficult to be reached by humanitarian assistance. Committed to Djibouti Declaration on Refugee Education (2017), Sudan has formed a committee for refugee's education in collaboration with UNHCR, IGAD, UNICEF, and Sudan Refugees Commission. Sudan has prepared Refugees

[7] UNOCHA; Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022, UNHCR Africa and UNESCO, Education for mobile population including-UNHCR country refugee response Plan 2021-

Education Strategy 2020/21-2022/23, and a work plan, based on extensive survey of need assessment, to respond to the educational needs of the refugee's children.

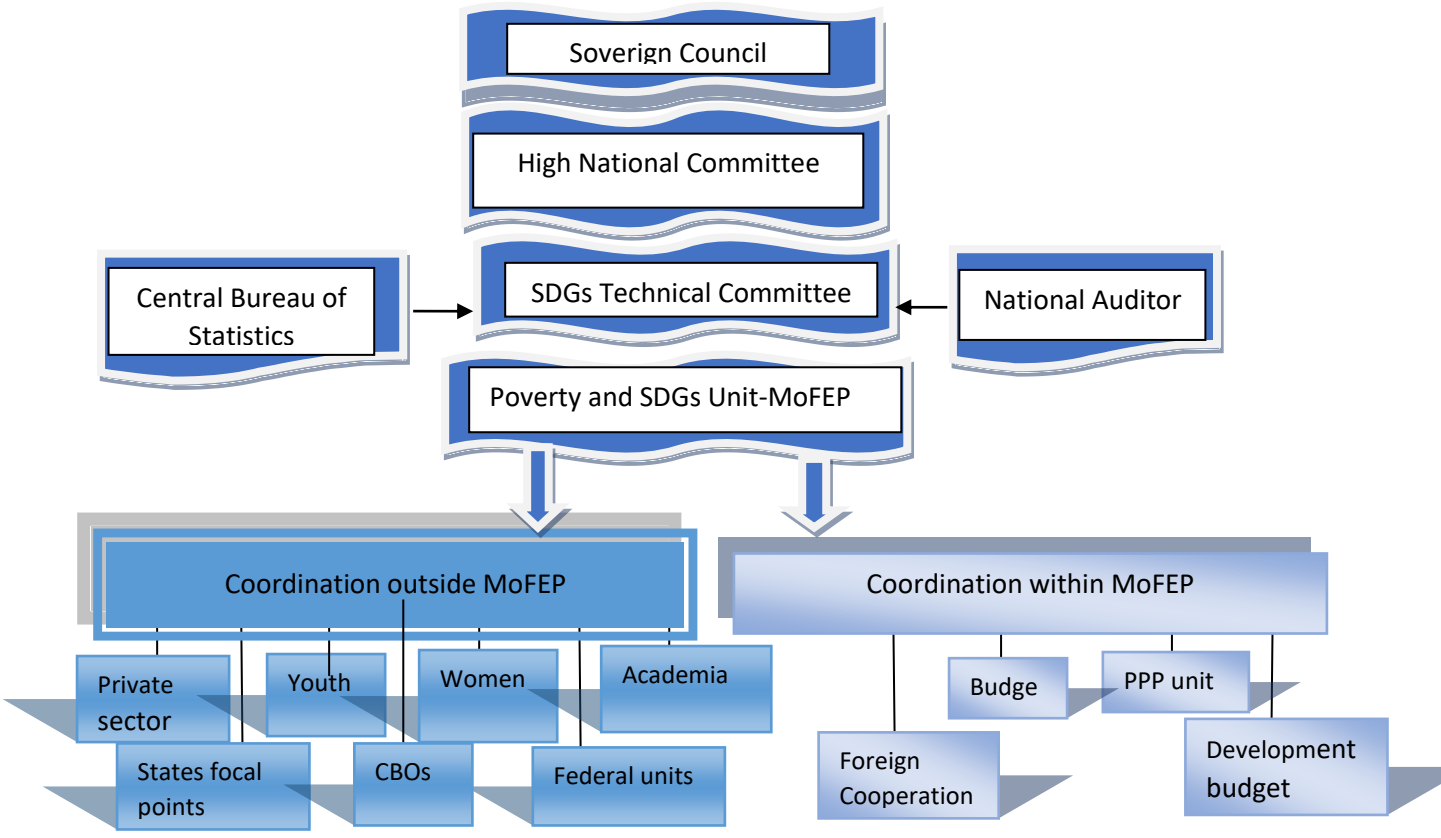
D. Institutional mechanisms

The SDGs institutional framework in the Sudan covers leadership, coordination, oversight bodies and implementation structures was presented in the VNR 2018. Since then, the SDGs coordination was refined to ensure better coordination.

The Sovereignty Council, whose members are collectively the head of state, is at the top of the hierarchy for the SDGs, replacing the Vice President in the previous arrangement as reflected by the VNR for 2018. Its role is mainly to give political support to the SDGs process. A High National Committee chaired by Minister of Finance and Economic Planning (previously headed by Minster of Social Development) is created, to ensure the integration of the SDGs into the government plans and budgets. A technical committee headed by the Undersecretary of Planning in MoFEP, and composed of head executives of the concerned ministries and the general Director of CBOS falls under the High National Committee. The Understory of Planning is also the rapporteur of the High National Committee, to ensure linkages between the two committees.

The Poverty Reduction and SDGs Unit is assigned in 2019 the task of coordinating the SDGs, replacing the National Population Council. The Poverty Reduction and SDGs Unit is part of the General Directorate of Planning and Economic Policies which falls under the Understory of Planning in the MoFEP. The main functions of the unit are: (i) Coordinating the SDGs. (ii) Ensuring the streamlining of the SDGs in government strategies, plans, and the PRSP, in the plans and budgets, and day to day coordination of SDGs activities within MoFEP. (iii) Raising awareness for the SDGs and PRSP. (iv) Reporting on progress made.

Figure 2: SDGs coordination structure



The Unit has created a wide network of focal persons in line ministries, states, SBF, universities, and civil societies

4. Progress on Goals and targets

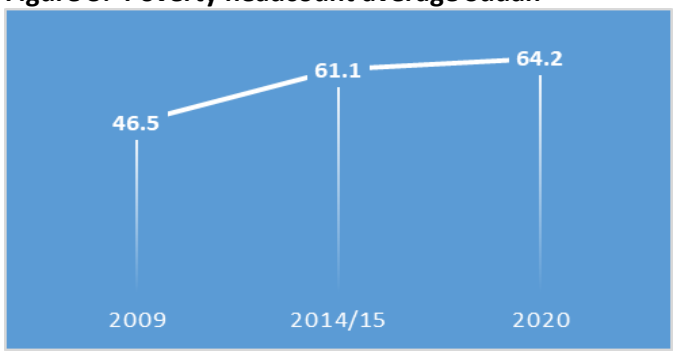


Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere

Situation and challenges

There is no current poverty estimate for Sudan, indicating an urgent need to fill the data gap with a new household and poverty survey. The 2009 National Household Baseline Survey and the 2014/15 National Household Budget and Poverty Survey are the only source of poverty data. The government has prepared a PRSP (2021-2023) based on 2014/15 poverty survey with projection until 2020 in light of the drastic changes since the last poverty survey, including a protracted economic crisis with triple digit inflation, exchange rate distortions, negative economic growth, conflicts, and the recent COVID-19 pandemic and flooding.

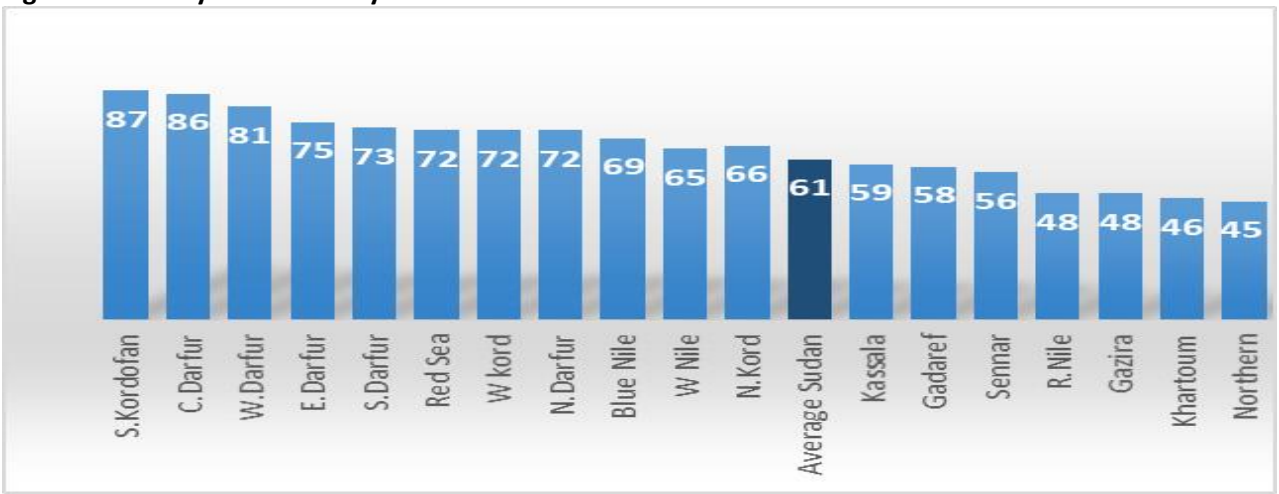
Figure 3: Poverty headcount average Sudan



Source: Sudan, MoFEP, PRSP 2021-2023

Poverty trend indicates that the rate of poverty has increased from 46.5 percent in 2009 to 61.1 percent in 2014. Poverty is estimated to have increased to 64.2 percent in 2020. Poverty rates in Sudan vary significantly across states, with the highest rates of 86.5 percent observed in South Kordofan and the lowest is 44.9 percent in Northern state.

Figure 4: Poverty headcount by state

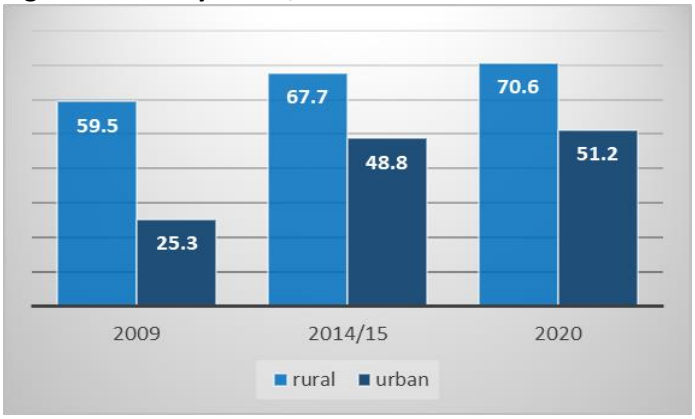


Source: Sudan, PRSP 2021-2023

Poverty is highest in conflict states. Poverty is highest in rural areas, with 67.7 percent of the population are below the poverty line in 2014/15, compared to 48.8 percent in urban areas. However, poverty is urbanizing. During 2009-2014/15 poverty increased by 23.5 percentage points in urban areas compared to 8 percentage points in rural areas.

Poverty is high among IDPs. The PRSP indicated that, four out of five IDPs and three out of five hosts were found to live on less than $1.90 per person per day (extreme poverty line). Poverty and education are linked. Regression analysis using the 2014/15 National Household Budget and Poverty Survey and 2014 MICS[8] suggest that poverty is a major determinant of school attendance for children.

Figure 5: Poverty urban/rural



Source: Sudan, MoFEP PRSP 2021-2023

Poverty in Sudan is complex and multidimensional. Drivers of poverty, include poor performance of agriculture the main source of livelihood; economic instability, conflict, internal displacement; low access to basic services; shocks, including climate, economic shocks, and recently the COVID-19 pandemic.

Social protection is important in reducing poverty and vulnerability. The government has a fairly extensive social protection system which was developed through time comprising: Zakat Fund, which is a compulsory religious tax and organized by law, to be spent mainly on the poor and needy; government waiver of medical expenses (emergency, life savings drugs, free medical treatment for children under five and free medical care for certain diseases); supporting the poor through the National Health Insurance Fund; and support delivered by the National Pension and Social Insurance Fund.

Table 1: Public expenditure on social safety nets in SDG million

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
cash transfers	900	1,080	1,260	1,350	0	3,240
free medical care	334	556	1,396	982	7,244	11,591
support to health insurance	340	505	1,080	5,528	3,235	14,666
support to pension and social security	2,890	3,223	2,255	2,742	2,029	2,671
others	402	499	1,155	1,120	198	5,074
Zakat expenditure for poor and needy	1,889	2,308	3,232	5,867	7,100	17,129
total social safety net expenditure	6,755	8,171	10,378	17,589	19,806	54,371
Total in percent of GDP	1.2%	1.2%	1.3%	1.3%	1.0%	1.4%

Source: Ministry of Social Development and Welfare and MoFEP-Budget General Directorate

Total safety nets spending by the government has increased from 1.2 percent of GDP in 2015 to 1.4 percent of GDP in 2020. Cash transfers to poor family, covers around 800,000 families or about 9 percent of the population. Health insurance covers 83.3 percent of the population in 2020 compared to 37.8 percent in 2015, with wide geographical variations.

[8] Some of the barriers identified to explain the high out of school rates are inability to pay fees, early marriage, and child labor (MICS 2014).

Way forward

Sudan PRSP for 2021-2023, which was built on a participatory approach, presents a comprehensive strategy to reduce poverty in the country. PRSP is organized around five pillars, namely: (i) promoting macroeconomic stability; (ii) fostering inclusive and sustainable economic growth; (iii) boosting human and social development; (iv) promoting peace and providing equal opportunities for all Sudanese; and (v) strengthening governance and institutional capacity. The implementation of PRSP 2021-2023 for at least one year, is part of the conditions for the debt relief under the HIPCS.

In addition to the existing safety net programs, the government has launched Sudan Family Support Program; a cash transfer program, funded by the development partner, aims at mitigating the adverse effects of economic reform measures for the most vulnerable families in Sudan. They will receive monthly US$ 5 per family member (up to 5 members per family) over a period of 18 months with the end goal of reaching 80% of the population – about 32 million citizens. (this program was suspended after the 25th of October 2021)



Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

Situation and challenges

An estimated 9.6 million, representing 21 percent of the population are facing high acute food insecurity situation (IPC3 and above) as shown below[9]. Sudan food insecurity remains high driven by climate change, increased and protracted displacement due to conflict, pests and diseases, economic decline, the triple digit inflation, and soaring food prices, compounded by the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 6: Food Security situation

People facing high acute food insecurity 9,600,000 (21%)	**IPC Phase 5**	**0,000,000 People in catastrophe**
	IPC Phase 4	2,200,000 (5%) People in emergency
	IPC Phase 3	7,400,000 (16%) People in crises
	IPC Phase 2	15,900,000 (35%) People in stress
	IPC Phase 1	19,700,000 (44%) People in food security

Source: Sudan Food Security cluster June September 2021

The most affected groups by food insecurity are: IDPs, returnees, refugees; poor groups from agro pastoral and pastoral communities in rural areas of Western, Eastern and Northern Sudan, whose livelihoods are directly affected by the impact of COVID-19, and poor groups in urban and semi-urban centers, including Khartoum, Jazeera, White Nile and Red Sea state.

In Sudan, approximately 2.7 million children under five suffer from malnutrition, out of whom 522,000 suffer from severe acute malnutrition. Sudan has more under five malnourished girls and boys than 30 years ago due to an increase in prevalence of malnutrition in the past two decades[10].

[9] Sudan: Food Security Cluster: June-September situation of 2021

[10] UNICEF Sudan

About 36.6 percent of children suffer stunning,14.1 percent of children under five are malnourished and 128 of Sudan's 188 localities have a stunting rate above 30 per cent[11]. Malnutrition is largely caused by poor water and sanitation conditions, high disease prevalence, increased food costs, poverty, and negative feeding practices and habits such as lack of food variety and essential nutrients. Efforts of humanitarian agencies are directed towards treating and preventing malnutrition by providing nutrition specific interventions such as the treatment of severely malnourished children, micronutrient supplementation, counselling on good feeding and care practices for infant and young child as well as nutrition sensitive interventions including vaccinations.

Agriculture is the most important sector in the economy of Sudan and the main source for food security in the country. It accounts for about 30 percent of GDP, employs an estimated 43 percent of labor force, constitutes the foundation for many small and medium enterprises SMEs, and it is also an engine of growth for other economic sectors such as trade, industry and transport. Sudan agriculture productivity is low and lying below peers in the Africa as indicated below.

Table 2: Yield comparison with main producers in Africa for sorghum and sesame kg/hectare (2018)

	Sorghum	Sesame
Ethiopia	2698	726
Nigeria	1120	1062
Tanzania	1023	701
Sudan	697	282

Source: FAOSTAT

Research and technology transfer for agriculture is underfunded. The low use of inputs particularly fertilizers, pesticides improved seed varieties, and financing are major factor explaining low agricultural productivity. Poor infrastructure particularly feeder roads, undeveloped markets affects agriculture production access to markets.

Way forward

Efforts by the transitional government which led to the signature of JPA, will hopefully end the conflict in Sudan, a major driver of food insecurity. The government macroeconomic reforms targeting economic stability, as agreed with the IMF, (after addressing the political reconciliation and lifting the suspension of cooperation with the international community), will help in increasing growth and reducing inflation, improving access to food.

The PRSP 2021-2023 sets the path for agriculture development mainly by increasing productivity in agriculture and livestock to promote food security, by undertaking complementary investments and reforms in transport infrastructure and energy, financial services, production and marketing systems, agriculture extension services, adaptation to climate change, animal health treatment, water, and forestry. These interventions are expected to result in improved productivity and incomes, with positive impacts on food security.

Sudan has presented to the UN Food Systems Summit, held during the UN General Assembly in New York on September 23, 2021, a pathway for its food system with the objective of transforming food system to an equitable, sustainable and resilient system to achieve the SDGs, with main emphasis on

[11] Sudan: Ministry of Health- Simple Spatial Surveying method II (M3SII)

supporting small scale producers. The pathway contained a detailed matrix of tracks of food and nutrition issues, challenges, priorities, way forward, and synergies between tracks and alignment with SDGs[12].



Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

Progress

Sudan has made some progress in advancing maternal and child health. The trend of maternal mortality ratio is on the decline from 509 per 100,000 live birth (L.B) in 2000 to 295 per 100,000 LB in 2020, despite the remarkable increase on the year 2006. Nevertheless, a considerable decline occurred at 2010, where the rate dropped to 216 per 100,000 LB.

There are no recent figures for child mortality, however the trends for Under Five, Infant and Neonatal Mortality rates are declining as the child mortality fell from 113 per 1000 LB in 2000 to 68 per 1000 LB in 2015. The infant and neonatal rates dropped from 72 and 36 to 52 and 33 per 1000 LB respectively.

The worst health indicators are the nutrition indicators; The percentage of children under five who were severely underweight (weight for age, -3SD) was 9.4% in 2006; it increased to 12.6% in 2010. Then it dropped slightly to 12% in 2014 before it increased again to 14.10 in 2018. While the percentage of moderate stunting (height for-2SD) among children under five was 32.5% in 2006, it has increased to 35% in 2010, and continued increasing to become 38% in 2014, before it dropped slightly to 36% on 2018 (2010 SHHS, 2014 MICS, 2018 S3M).

The immunization program in Sudan is the most successful primary health care intervention in the country. The year 2017 witnessed great improvement in measles vaccination that was stagnant for several years, where MCV1 reached 90% for the first time and MCV2 reached 72% at national level[13]. Over thirteen million boys and girls are now protected against measles, resulting in a nine-fold decline in measles cases compared to before the immunization campaign[14].

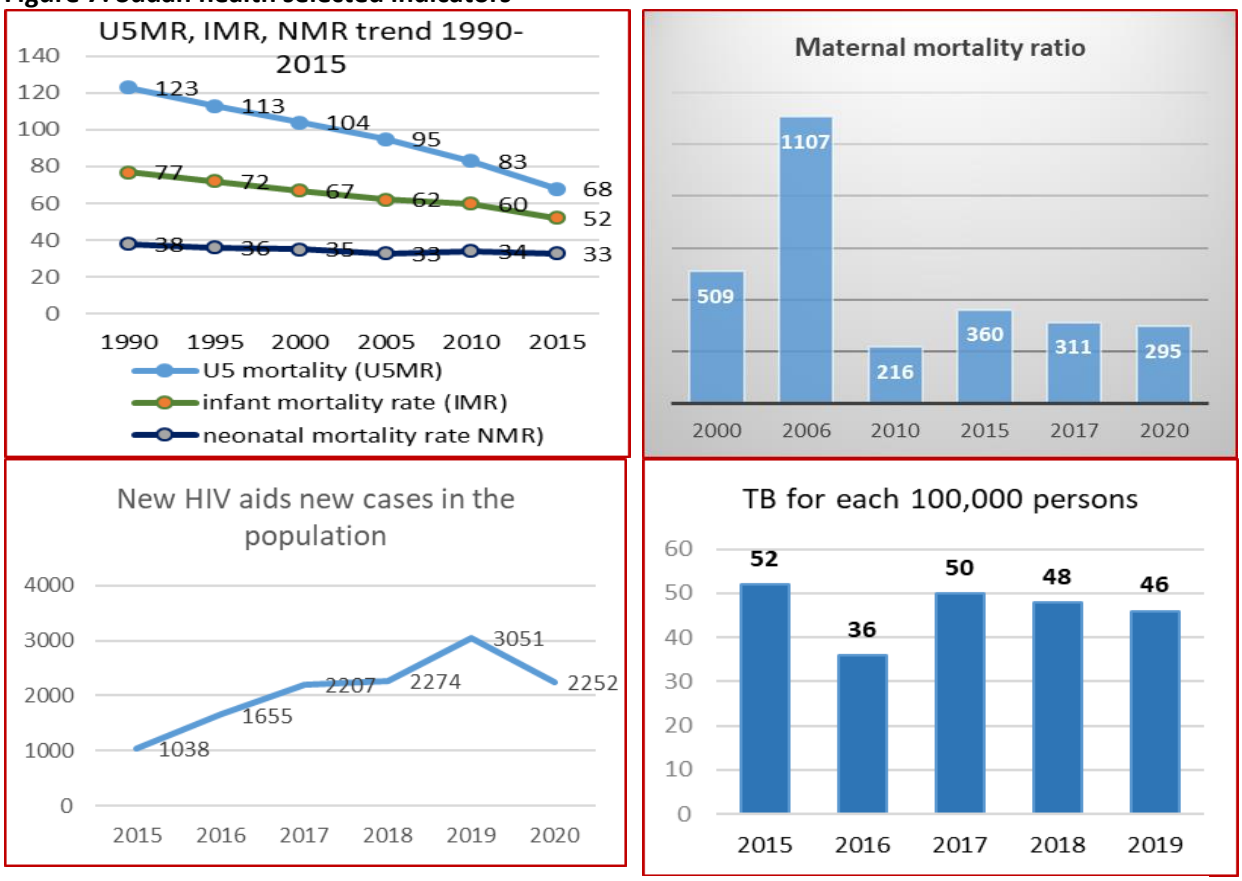
Regarding infectious diseases TB prevalence is low and declining while HIV is low and started to decline in 2020 as shown below. Nevertheless, there is an increase in the new cases of malaria. The incidence of malaria cases increased from 13.7 per 1000 population in 2016 to 17.8 in 2017 to 40.9 cases per 1000 population in 2019 according to Malaria Program report.

[12] Details are in the 12-page document "Sudan Pathway: Food Systems Summit 23 September 2021"in www.summitdialogue.org>country>sudan

[13] Suleiman Abaker -Review of Expanding Program on Immunization (EPI) in Sudan 2018 in ACTA SCIENTIFIC MICROBIOLOGY (ISSN: 2581-3226) March 2020

[14] UNICEF Sudan Health 2019

Figure 7: Sudan health selected indicators



Source: VNR Goal 3 health working group and Maternal mortality from Progress UN Trends in MR 2000-2017 and *inter agency child and MMR estimates.

Challenges

- Sudan has witnessed repeated outbreaks of cholera, hemorrhagic fevers in East and West States, Hepatitis B, in addition to Malaria, cholera, and the six childhood infectious diseases. The protracted civil conflicts, humanitarian emergency situation in the country, poor water, sanitation and hygiene infrastructure among other factors, are the main drivers of the repeated outbreaks. Lack of integrated diseases surveillance system makes preparedness and response to epidemic and pandemic-prone diseases difficult.
- There are shortages in health infrastructure. About 40% of existing PHC facilities are not functioning according to the recent mapping survey conducted in ten states by the federal Ministry of Health.
- Low public expenditure on health results in high out-of-pocket expenditure reaching 67 percent. With a poverty incidence above 60 percent on average in the country, many people cannot afford these payments
- The 2.5 million IDPs, 1.1 million refugees, frequent conflicts, natural disasters like floods and heavy rains, have put extreme pressure on the health system in the country. Many are being left behind by the health services. The situation was further compounded by COVID-19.
- Since 2017, Sudan has struggled to sustain adequate supply of medicines and medical items due to the economic crisis, hard currency shortages, and many challenges in the pharmaceutical and health technologies sector.
- The health indicators profile is outdated and at least a decade old in many areas of intervention. Data quality assurance is limited. Systems for data management and analysis are largely manual and focus on the public sector. Data on availability of services and health

human resources is not systematically collected.[15] The subnational level provides most of the health services, however, due to lack of trained staff at this level there is a constraint in providing accurate and regular data to the national level for better planning[16].

Way forward

The National Health Sector Recovery and Reform Policy 2021-2024 was formulated with the vision of health and well-being for all the people in Sudan. The goals are to achieve Universal Health Care, addressing social determinants of health, and implementing the health in all policies' approach. The National Health Sector Recovery and Reform strategic plan 2021-2024 was formulated based on National Health Policy. The strategic plan is being built on a Primary Health Care (PHC) model and it is based on six crucial projects, the first three are about the service delivery, while the rest are about strengthening the health system capacities for aiding delivering of the health services:

A. *Primary health care and essential health care services for all:* For achieving universal coverage by equitable integrated, people centered primary health care services guaranteed through adoption of Health Benefit Package, and ensuring financial risk protection

B. *Health security, preparedness, response and resilience against all hazards with focus on COVID-19:* Ensure *that* the health system is prepared and resilient to prevent and respond to health emergences and disasters' risks at all levels; with adherence to the International Health Regulations

C. *Hospital Sector reform with focus on emergency and critical care:* Hospital services including emergency and critical care are available, accessible, affordable, and of good quality, including through implementation of an appropriate referral and ambulance system, implementation of infection prevention control and rehabilitation of infrastructure.

D. *Access to Medicines:* The project will assist the population to receive medicines. Medicines became unaffordable for many segments of the population due to the high prices influenced by the soaring inflation rates. The difficulties encountered by the National Medical Supplies Fund in providing medicines at affordable prices will be resolved.

E. *Governance and leadership of the health system:* The project will address the many bottlenecks affecting the health system as a whole, especially revising and updating the public health laws, structures, roles and responsibilities of all levels of the health system, and involvement and empowerment of the community. An important aspect of this project is also the coordination with other related sectors to ensure that all aspects of health social, economic and environmental determinants of health are addressed.

F. *Capacities enhancement*: Special emphasis will be on the health information system, health research, human resources for health, health finance, etc.



Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

[15] Health Cluster for Sudan-2020 report.
[16] World Bank- Sudan: Moving Towards UHC-2016

Progress

Sudan has made significant improvements in basic education during 2015-2019. The total number of basic education schools increased by 3,259 schools in 2019 allowing over one million students to attend school. Number of secondary education schools increased by about 19 percent between 2015 and 2019, allowing more students to proceed to secondary education. Completion rate for primary education increased from 56.1 percent in 2015 to 61.6 percent in 2019, and for secondary education from 39.3 percent in 2015 to 42.1 in 2019. The policy of the Ministry of Education to encourage pre-school education in public and private schools was successful. Participation rate in organized learning (one year before the official primary entry) was 48.7 percent in 2019, an increase from 46.1 percent in 2015, well above the 32 percent average for Sub- Saharan Africa[17]. Almost as many girls as boys are enrolled in basic education, with a Gender Parity Index (GPI) of 0.95 for basic education in favor of boys, while it is 1.1 for secondary education in favor of girls.

Table 3: Education indicators 2015-2019

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Number of schools primary education	17,173	17,950	18,706	19,644	20,432
Number of schools secondary education	3,769	3,953	4,267	4,489	4,493
Completion rate primary education	56.1	56.6	55.1	58.4	61.6
Completion rate secondary education	39.3	38.4	38.5	39.1	42.1
Participation rate in organized learning (one year before the official primary entry)	46.1	45.6	46.5	46.8	48.7
Percent of trained teachers in primary education	64.5	60.4	67.1	63.9	58.5
Percent of trained teachers in secondary education	66.2	63.5	64.7	65.8	62.8
Gender parity index primary education	0.93	0.90	0.90	0.88	0.95
Gender parity index secondary education	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.10	1.10

Source: Ministry of Education; National Report for SDG Goal 4: education in 2030, May 2022 (in Arabic)

Challenges

Despite progress; major challenges are facing the education sector in Sudan. These include poor access and retention, low quality in education and disparities

Access and retention: Despite increase in gross enrollment rate in basic education, it is still below the rate of universal education. The enrollment rate stands at about 73.6 percent for basic education age 5-13 years, and 40.1 percent for secondary education age 14-16 years. Sudan has large number of out-of-school children; about 26.4 percent of children aged 5-13 years or 2.3 million children. The challenges of access and retention in schools are caused by several factors namely:

a) Low level of pubic investments on education (1.2 percent of GDP) resulting in high out- of- pocket expenses for parents. The inability to pay fees prevents many poor families from sending children to school especially in rural and remote areas in Sudan.
b) Poor school infrastructure. In basic education, only 63.6 per cent of the available classrooms in government schools are permanent with an average classroom pupil ratio of 1:76, seating is available for 75.1 percent of students, textbooks availability is 65.2 percent, and toilets availability is 69.4 percent. In secondary education schools 78.6 percent of the available classrooms in government schools are permanent, seating is available for 88.1 percent of students, textbooks availability is 61.7 percent, and toilets availability is 57.7 percent.
c) Conflicts which create displacement and migration.
d) High poverty and scarcity of food.

[17] UNIUCEF –Sudan: Education Annual Report 2022aaa

e) Social-cultural beliefs related to child marriage and girls' education significantly contribute to high drop-out rates.
f) Climate factors like heavy rains and floods that destroy schools.
g) The recent COVID-19 pandemic

Quality education: A survey conducted by the Ministry of Education in 2015 indicated that more than 40.1 percent of grade three learners could not read simple familiar words. This rate is higher than Sudan's peers. Only 36 percent of the children could comprehend what they read; with wide variation among rural, urban, nomadic and IDPs schools and between states. Although another study in 2017, showed some improvement, as the percentage of those who could not read simple familiar words fell to 38.5 percent, however the rate is still high. Education quality is affected by shortages of trained teachers. About 41 percent of teachers in basic education are untrained in 2019, and the trend is increasing in the last three years. The ratio of trained teachers in secondary education also declined from 66.2 percent in 2015 to 62.8 percent in 2019 due to increase the number of teachers who retired and left schools without being replaced by new teachers. Other factors affecting education quality are the school environment, curriculum, and low teacher's morals as a result of low salaries.

Unequal access: There are high disparities in education between the eighteen states in Sudan. Education is not inclusive. Disproportionate deprivations affect education of IDPs, refugee's and returnees, children with disabilities, and nomadic children. Displaced children, who account for 50 percent of the IDPs are vulnerable. IDPs schools are built on temporary buildings, most of the teachers are volunteers, and approximately half have not been trained as teachers[18]. Children with disabilities suffer from shortages of trained teachers, lack of teaching aids, lack of psychological and specialized social workers in schools, and absence of special curricula for disabled. The nomadic population has the lowest rates of school enrolment and completion rates. Close to 21 per cent of the total out-of-school children in Sudan aged 6-11 years old are nomadic children. Education for nomadic children is constrained by conflicts, nomads' social values towards education particularly for girls, early marriage, and shortages of teachers due to the mobile environment of the nomadic population. Schools in refugees' areas suffer from lack of proper school environment, poor infrastructure, and shortages of textbooks and teachers, although the national policy treats them as Sudanese student.

Actions taken to address challenges

During 2012-2019 a project for supporting the school's environment was implemented by earmarking two percent of government transfers to subnational government for education, mainly to be spent on construction of classrooms, seating, provision of textbooks, teachers training, and electronic equipment. The Ministry of Education in partnership with UNICEF has provided children aged 7 to 14 years of age who never attended school or dropped out, with the chance of linking them to formal school though The Alternative Learning Program (ALP). In addition, programs of school feeding and food for education were expanded to increase access and reduce drop outs. In 2016 the school grants project was implemented with assistance from development partners. It provides support to disadvantaged schools to reduce out-of-pocket expenses borne by parents, allowing them to pay for uniforms, textbooks and bags, thereby reducing the risk of schools dropping out, especially for girls.

The government is addressing quality of education issues. The relatively new General Directorate of General Education Quality Assurance in the Ministry of Education in coordination with other units in the ministry is exerting efforts to improve the quality of education. It has managed to distribute

[18] Sudan: UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2019.

more textbooks to schools, prepared the educational contents of improving reading and writing in the first grades, and is planning to issue a manual for improving quality of education. The government is currently working in reforming the education curriculum. New preschool curriculum was implemented in 2021. in-service teachers training is being implemented and more efforts were exerted by the National Institute for Teachers Training to train more teachers.

The Ministry of Education is working with many development partners like UNICEF, World Bank, Global Partnership for Education, European Union, African Development Bank, UNESCO, British council, and WFP in promoting education. Education partners are assisting in construction of schools, implementation of Strengthening of Basic Education Project, school grants, food for education, school feeding, Alternative Learning Program, improved school environment project, Education COVID-19 Response project, implementation of Capacity Building Project, provision of education to the most vulnerable segments of the population like IDPs, nomads, children with disabilities, and refugees, in service teachers training, reforming of curriculum, and education information management system. This partnership is well coordinated at the national and subnational levels.

Way forward

The General Education Sector Strategic Plan 2018-2023 has set the direction towards progressing toward meeting education goals of SDG 4. The main objectives of the plan are:

Increase public spending on education

(i) Increase resources to education at the national level. (ii) Direct more public financial resources at the subnational government level to education. (iii) Encourage more private investment in education.

Improve education quality

*(i)*Increase proportion of children and young people achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in reading and mathematics. (ii) Implement curriculum reforms including early grade learning interventions. (iii) Invest in teachers training. (iv) Improve the learning environment. Provide teaching and learning materials in government basic schools

Improve access and retention

(i) Increase completion rate in basic and secondary education by implementing free education policy. (ii) Reduce school drop outs. (iii) Support children with vulnerable backgrounds including refugees. (iv) Scale-up access to innovative e-learning opportunities and use renewable energy technology like solar energy to expand e-learning.

Reduce School drop outs

(i) Increase food for education and schools grants. (ii) Expand Alternative Learning Programs. (iii) Expand vocational education

Increase teachers training

(i)Meet the training needs for the 41.5 percent of untrained teachers in basic education. (ii) Utilize the education collages in universities, and the recently established National Center for Teachers Training to increase training opportunities for teachers and increase in-service training. (iii) Establish Education Profession Boards in all states.



Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Progress

Achievements in women equality were detailed in Sudan VNR 2018. Since then, several developments have taken place in progress towards achieving gender equality and women empowerment, particularly on the constitutional and legislative side. The Constitutional Document (CD) signed in August 2019, which repealed the 2005 constitution, has demonstrated the transitional government commitment to gender equality and empowerment of all women. The CD granted and promoted women's rights in Sudan in all social, political, and economic fields, with preferential measures in both war and peace circumstances. A major function stipulated in the CD, related to women is to repeal laws and provisions that discriminate between citizens on the basis of gender. The CD grantees equal rights for men and women in employment and the right to equal pay for equal work and other professional benefits, and freely provides for maternity and child care. The CD stipulated the establishment of Women and Gender Equity Commission. The CD also specifically stated that the state protects women's rights as committed in international and regional agreements ratified by Sudan, and these agreements are considered as part of the CD.

The above-mentioned constitutional rights for women were followed in April 2020, by a landmark legislation to criminalize FGM in Sudan. This was done by amending the Criminal Law Article 141, after years of persistent and forceful advocacy by all stakeholders led by the NCCW, Sudanese civil societies, NGOs, UNICEF, UNFPA, UN Women and other stockholders. The government, with assistance from development partners, is undertaking capacity building for judges, prosecutors, and lawyers, police, community and religious leaders, health workers youth and media personnel to mainstream Article 141 in the existing judiciary training manuals. In November 2019, the Public Order Law-1996, which disproportionately affected women, was repealed. Article 12-3 (f)-of the passport and immigration law 2015 was also amended in July 2020 to allow women to travel abroad with their children without the guardian's permission. A new article: 47-B-(1) was added to criminal law of 1991 amended 2020, stipulating that "except for crimes punishable by death penalty and crimes punishable by at least five years' imprisonment, the court may apply the community service measures to pregnant and breastfeeding women and women accompanied by children under five years of age". The Combating of Human Trafficking Act 2014, amended 2020, brought considerable gains to women. The act, which represents Sudan's commitment to comply with regional and international obligations; imposed penalties on human trafficking, with heavier punishment in Article 9 -(2. b), if the victim is female or a child under 18 years, or disabled. Social Insurance and Pensions Law equates between men and women in the age and rights of retirements. The Act of Combating of Violence against Women 2021, the first national act on combatting violence against women and girls, is drafted and in the process of approval. A ministerial committee was established to review the Personal Status Law.

Sudan, in 2018, ratified the Convention Against Discrimination in Education (1960). In April 2021, the Council of Ministers approved United Nations' 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), though with reservations to Articles 2 and 16 and 29-1 of the convention. The Council of Ministers has approved in April 2021 the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on Women in Africa known as Maputo Protocol, which prohibits child marriage (Article 6.b) and calls States to prohibit all forms of harmful practices and requires them to put in place necessary measures to eliminate them. The Protocol was approved

with reservation on article 21. In August 2021, Sudan has ratified the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (UNCAT) of 1984.

Child Marriage Action Plan (2021-2030) is in the process of being operationalized by the NCCW, with support from UNICEF. The child marriage national communication strategy is also under development. The government, implemented serious measures to eliminate all harmful practices of FGM. The government in collaboration with the civil society and the development partners, conducted extensive awareness campaigns against FGM. Saleema initiative was the major campaign. Awareness raising efforts on the harmful consequences on FGM contributed to less women aged 20-24 years being cut before the age of 14 down from 31 to 28 per cent[19] . (see box 1 below)

Box 1: Saleema initiative: a good practice to abandon FGM

Saleema is a word that means whole, healthy in body and mind, unharmed, intact, pristine, and untouched, in a God-given condition. Saleema initiative was launched in 2008 by the NCCW and UNICEF Sudan, to support the protection of girls from FGM, and promote a positive reframing of the discourse over uncut girls. The 'Saleema Renewed' campaign was launched in 2021 by the NCCW and UNICEF. Rather than trying to discredit a long-held tradition, Saleema strategy aims at allowing new social norm to take its place based on the word Saleema[20]. The aim is to reach collective abandonment of the practice at community level. This was basically due to the understanding that the FGM is motivated by cultural and religious misconceptions that are best be addressed by community awareness. As indicated by UNICEF "The broad objective of Saleema is to change the way that people talk about female genital cutting by promoting, at the community level, wide usage of new positive terminology to describe the natural bodies of girls and women." The campaign was carried out all over the country by religious leaders, community and tribal leaders, civil society organizations, NGOs, mothers, youth, health care providers, media, and UN agencies. It was using different communication tools including song, poetry, radio scripts and TV animations.

Positive steps were taken to reduce GBV. The national standard operating procedures on gender-based violence (GBV) prevention and response was launched on the 17th of February 2020. The collaborative process led by the Directorate of Combating of Violence Against Women (CVAW) in the Ministry of Social Development, engaging UN agencies, as well as government, non-government, and community-based organizations in the process. The procedures ensure the delivery of an integrated and high-quality system of services for survivors of GBV. They adhere to the international best practice of preventing and responding to GBV to ensure the protection of women, girls, and children and safeguard their rights. The government is also currently working on updating the GBV strategy.

Women are facing problems in land rights. At the regional level, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) has endorsed the Regional Women's Land Rights Agenda in a bid to support the member countries in implementation of the AU Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges in Africa. In Sudan, the agenda for women rights in land was drafted in March 2021; approved by the Minister of Social Development in July 2021 and subsequently an action program for implementation was drafted in August 2021, to remove obstacles facing women in their rights to land ownership, inheritance, and effective participation in the management of land institutions. The Ministry of Agriculture, as a focal point for the Ministry of Social Development in gender issues and in collaboration with the development partners, are working on the implementing the action program.

[19] UNICEF Sudan Gender 2021-Gender annual report.

[20] UNFPA; In Sudan: Changing Labels, Changing Lives, June 15-2012.

Sudan adopted of a National Action Plan (2020-2022 extended to 2024) for the Implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women peace and security (1325) on June 10, 2020 after wide consultations with all stakeholders. National committees to implement the plan were formed at national and states levels. Reports on the status of women peace and security were submitted to UNSC and the African Union AU.

Challenges

Data on gender issues is scanty and there is no gender responsive budget.
Despite efforts exerted in fighting harmful practices of FGM prevalence and child mirage, these practices are still prevailing as a result of misconceptions and social norms. The government is working to end GBV. A recent study - Voices from Sudan- was conducted in 2021. Women are also suffering from high maternal and infant mortality rates in rural and conflict areas.

Other challenges faced by women in Sudan are the inequality in access to land and labor and in representation in the legal and political processes. There is lack of a legal system that properly addresses women rights in land and representation in women in land institutional settings. In addition, women awareness regarding their land rights is weak. Poor data base for labor legislations fall short of addressing the role of women in the labor market. Despite, the legal stipulation in the informal sector law in Khartoum state, but women in the informal sector are deprived of certain rights like health insurance and social security. Inequality of representation of women in the decision making process is apparent. In addition, there are clear weaknesses in women participation in economic activities. Despite strong participation of rural women in agriculture however their benefits are limited due to gender inequalities across the value chain of agriculture commodities. Women are also misrepresented in peace negotiations and conflict resolution mechanisms.

Way forward

Due to interlinkages of gender inequality with other issues, several strategies will be aligned including the National Health Sector Strategy, the National Girls Education Sector Strategy, the National Social Protection Strategy and the GBV Strategy.

the government will continue its strategy of awareness campaign. The strategy on the long run will be based on strengthened commitment from all actors including ministries; community leaders; religious leaders, journalists; media, NGOs; UN agencies; and mothers to increase awareness about the harmful consequences of FGM. Efforts will also be exerted to integrate FGM into national plans and policies. The government will take into account the interlinkages of FGM to education, health, etc. Increasing education and addressing the gender gaps in education will be given priority in the government plans. Increased education will also contribute to the reduction of child marriage.

Land reform, including reforming land legislations, a long and complex exercise, is inevitable to address women rights in land. The planned agriculture census will take into account the gender aspects.

Considerable efforts are expected to be played by the civil society organizations to raise awareness at the community level and influence the social values, attitudes and perceptions around issues related to status and rights of women including land rights. The Women General Directorate in the Ministry of Social Development will scale up its cooperation with the civil society organizations.



Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all policy

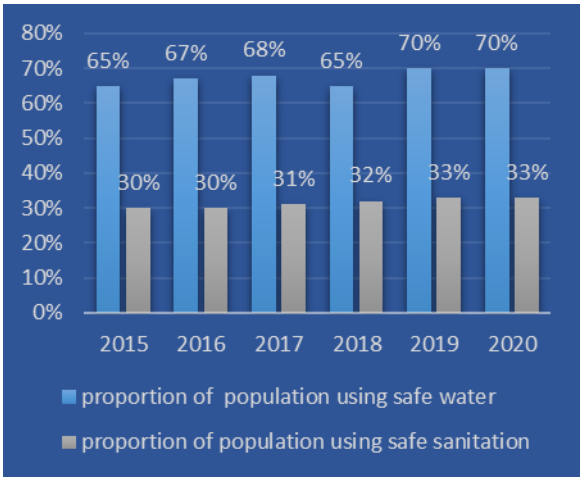
Situation and challenges

About 70 percent of households (2020) have access to improved drinking water sources, an increase from 65 percent in 2015. Access to proper sanitation stagnated at about 32 percent. Despite this progress, Sudan is still far from meeting SDG 6 for availability of sustainable management of water and sanitation for all for by 2030. About 12 million people still have no access to safely managed drinking water source. About 68 per cent of the population, representing almost 30 million people, are still without access to basic sanitation facilities. With nearly a third of households practicing open defecation, Sudan has the highest prevalence of open defecation in the MENA region, creating a great health hazard for public health by transmission of diseases and exposing girls and women in certain areas to more risks of becoming the victim of harassment, violence, and sexual abuse. Only 13.4 per cent of Sudanese have access to basic hand-washing facilities, and only 10 percent of schools have hand-washing facilities mostly due to lack of running water or sustainable supply of soap[21].

However, these percentages mask considerable variations between states and between urban and rural population. Use of improved water source ranges from 97.3 % in Northern state to 56 % in Gadrief state, and use of improved toilet facilities ranges from 85 percent in Northern state to 18.9 in South Kordofan.

Considerable efforts were exerted in WASH by the government in collaboration with development partners like UNICEF. These efforts resulted in: more people gaining access to water supply especially in vulnerable communities; achievement of open defecation free environments in many communities across Sudan; provision of more WASH supplies, promotion of hygiene practices, equipping many schools with WASH facilities.

Figure 8: Access to safe water and safe sanitation



Source: VNR Environment working group paper for VNR 2022-HCENR

However still many challenges are facing the water and sanitation sector, mainly (i) Lack of updated national integrated water resources management strategies and polices to guide the sector. (ii) Inadequate access to water supply for both basic and safely managed water facilities, which include water harvesting, extraction, storage, treatment, and transmission of water, due to inadequate investment and maintenance. (iii) Limited focus on the sustainability of service delivery with priority given for new investments rather than the rehabilitation and optimization of existing services. (iv) Impact of climate change and climate variability; erratic distribution and intensity of rainfall, droughts and extreme foods which are impacting the amount of surface and groundwater available. (v) Water quality and pollution and

[21] UNICEF: Sudan, Water Sanitation and Hygiene Annual Report: 2020).

contamination. (vi) Access to water and sanitation in institutions (schools and primary health centers) is limited, with no gender and disabled related facilities negatively impacting children's attendance and enrollment, especially girls. (vii) Weak staff capacity in the water sector.

Way forward

The Government has developed a Water Sector Strategy 2021 – 2031 to address the water sector challenges in an integrated approach included an institutional and legal reform that is centered on:

- Implementing holistic sector reform in the management of the water sector. The reform includes legal and institutional reforms to establish a strong federal entity with clear and well define mandate.
- Defining a clear role, and responsibilities and vertical regulatory relationship for the sector actors federal, state, localities and community levels
- Creating and operationalizing regular national and state water sector coordination platforms to orient and coordinate developmental and humanitarian activities
- Establishing mechanisms to facilitate and scale up private sector participation in the development of water supply infrastructure, management of water supply services and operation and maintenance.
- Developing water and sanitation capacities and ensure water quality and water safety monitoring, surveillance.
- Attracting and retaining skilled staff in the water sector.

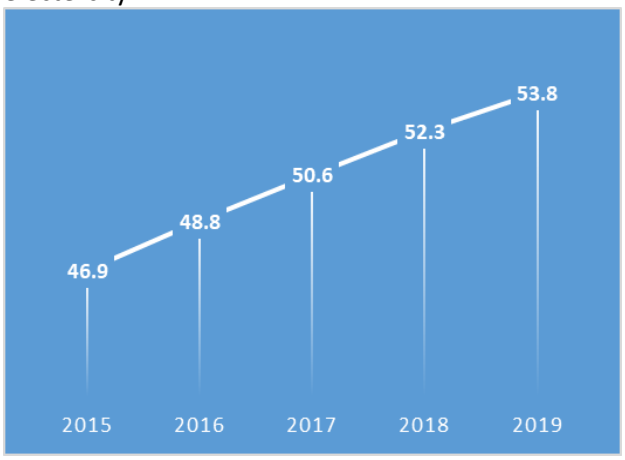


Goal 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

Situation and challenges

Sudan has a high annual demand for electricity averaging about 8.6 percent per year during 2015-2020, despite its decline in the last two years 2019-2020 to about 3.5 percent on average[22]. In an attempt to keep up with rising demand, the government invested in large-scale thermal and hydro generation. These investments were guided by the Power Sector Framework 2015-2020. The installed electricity generation capacity in June 2019 stood at 3,608 MW making the Sudanese power generation capacity as one of the largest in Sub-Saharan Africa. Yet, about 1,500 MW additional capacity, is needed in the immediate to medium term to meet current and meet increasing demand. About 53.8 percent of the population have access to electricity in 2019, an increase from 46.9 percent in 2015. In summer seasons, electricity generated capacity is insufficient to meet the

Figure 9: Proportion of population with access to electercity



Source: World Bank; access to electricity in percent

[22] Ministry of Water Resources and Electricity in the Annual Reports of the CBoS

electricity demand suggesting a significant access deficit in the country. Furthermore, electricity supply coverage is unevenly distributed across the country. In five states in the North and Central Sudan (Khartoum, White Nile, Northern, Gazira and River Nile) about 60 to 70 percent of the population have access to electricity, whereas in western Sudan (Darfur and Kordofan) only 2 to 10 percent have access to electricity. Discrepancies in access to electricity is also between populations in urban areas, standing at 81.4 per cent in urban areas compared to 39 per cent in rural locations in 2019[23].

The electricity sector has not received adequate investment recently, resulting in serious energy shortfalls, load shedding and a low rate of access. The shortage of foreign exchange affected fuel and spare parts availability and consequently electricity supply. The inadequate supply of electricity in turn has pervasive impacts on the private sector especially the SMEs.

Sudan heavily subsidized electricity through its subsidy to fuel. The subsidy only minimally benefits the poor, who largely lack access to electricity. The government started in 2021 to gradually remove these subsidies.

Solar energy is very high throughout the year and across the entire country. Sudan, with a mean wind speed of 4.5 meters per second (m/s) across 50 percent of the country, is also rich with wind for energy purposes[24]. However, Sudan did not benefit from the renewable energy source despite its large potential. Efforts are confined mainly to government and UNDP partnership for replacing diesel pumps in irrigated schemes in Northern Sudan with solar pumps and Mini-grid and Solar Home System in different areas, as well as consultations with the Ministry of Energy (the Directorate of Renewable Energy).

Way forward

The government is working on reforming the electricity sector. The national grid extends in central, eastern and northern Sudan, while it has not yet reached the poorest states of Kordofan and Darfur (supplied by off-grid connections). Expansion of the transmission network to the west is under way but progressing slowly.

Sudan is currently importing electricity from two neighboring countries Ethiopia and Egypt. The government will expand its import of electricity from the two countries to bridge the gap in electricity supply. Private Turkish companies are also supply some of the towns with electricity.

The PRSP 2021-2023 strategic direction in the renewable energy sector indicated that wind energy will increase from zero in 2020 to 200 MW by 2023 covering mainly areas in the states of the Red Sea, South Darfur and Northern. The government will also encourage roofs PV systems. Renewable Energy Act, policies and master plan, will be formulated to strengthen enabling policy environment for renewable energy investments. The government will create more conducive environment to engage the private sector in the supply, maintenance and distribution of electricity and in particular to implement renewable energy plan as a fast track to reach those without access electricity.

[23] World bank Data: Access to electricity (% Rural and % Urban-Sudan)

[24] UNDP; Empowering Sudan: Renewable Energy: Addressing Poverty and Development; September 2020

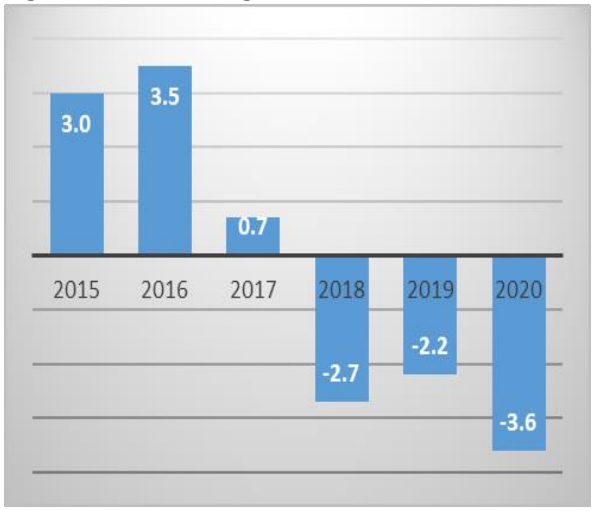
Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

Situation and challenges

The economy was shrinking during 2015-2020 as real GDP slowed from 3 percent in 2015 to -3.6 percent in 2020. Neglecting of agriculture, the main source of growth and income, poor business environment, and political instability, compounded by COVID-19, have led to the contraction of economic growth.

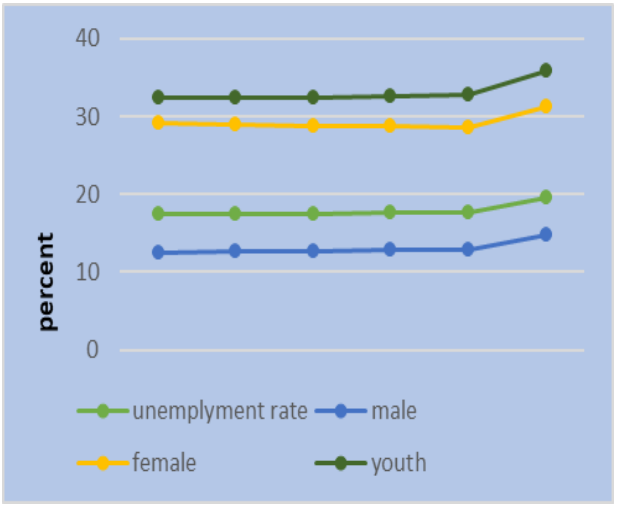
The labour market in Sudan is characterized by low overall labour force participation standing at only half of 15–64 year working age, below many neighboring countries. Women's participation in the labor force was 33% in 2014, compared to 76% of men. Unemployment rate is high reaching about 20 percent in 2020. Unemployment rates for women were over twice those of men during 2015-2020. Women who do work earn less than men. Youth unemployment has increased from 32.5 percent in 2015 to 35.8 in 2020. Suffering from oppression and facing high unemployment situation, youth were the major force behind the social uprising which resulted in the regime change in Sudan in December 2019.

Figure 10: GDP real growth rate



Source: IMF Sudan Article IV consultations

Figure 11: Employment rate

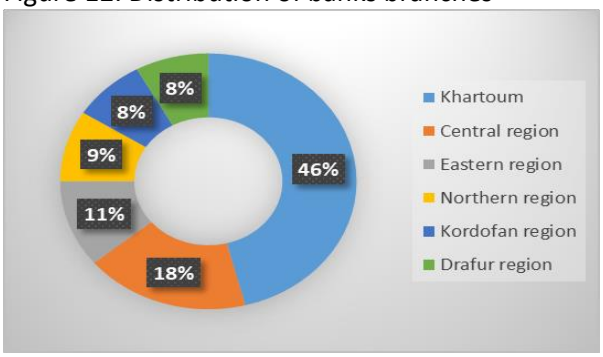


World bank Data : Sudan

The International Labor Organization (ILO) Protocol of 2014 of the Forced Labor Convention -1930, was ratified on 17 March 2021, together with the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize Convention, 1948 (No. 87) and the Tripartite Consultation (International Labor Standards) Convention, 1976 (No. 144).

Sudan has one of the lowest levels of financial inclusion and access of SMEs to finance in Sub-Saharan Africa. According to Findex 2015, only 15.3 percent of Sudanese adults had a financial account in 2015, with women and the poor particularly underserved. Similarly, only 4.6 percent of all Sudanese firms and 2.7 percent of small firms had access to a loan or line of credit from a bank, a level below Sudan's peers and Sub-Saharan Africa's average[25]. Banks are highly concentrated in the capital with 46 percent of the total branches of the banks.

Figure 12: Distribution of banks branches



Source: Central Bank of Sudan annual report 2020

Way forward

The PRSP 2021-2023 strategic direction is to increase growth in agriculture and livestock, and revitalize the role of the private sector by creating an enabling environment for private investments and strengthening of energy, transport, and infrastructure services. Unlocking Sudan's private sector potential is key to robust and inclusive growth and employment. New Investment and Public-Private Partnership (PPP) laws have recently been enacted to improve investment climate, and supporting MSEs development.

The Central Bank of Sudan is undertaking banking sector reforms. The revised Banking Regulation Act which includes a comprehensive resolution regime for the banking sector, in line with international best practice will allow for restructuring the banking sector through bank resolution, liquidation and/or merger & acquisition. These reforms are expected to improve financing and financial inclusion. The government banking system was based on Islamic banking only. A dual banking system was introduced in 2021, though not yet implemented, is expected to help attract both foreign and domestic investment in the banking sector to improve financial inclusion, and enhance growth and employment[26]. The World Bank is assisting the government in developing a National Financial Inclusion Strategy. (This activity is currently suspended).



Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

Situation and challenges

Transport in Sudan is dominated by road transport, moving over 90 percent of the freight and passenger's volume. Sudan added about 2,078 km of paved road between 2015-2020 to the existing road network of 9,222 km in 2014 (22 percent). Despite increase in the road network, sizable parts of its economically productive areas are isolated from the markets, affecting trade, growth, and food security. Sudan's paved road density is only 0.56 km which is much lower than the average African countries of about 5 km per 100 square km[27]. The challenges facing the roads are: limited roads connectivity especially feeder roads given the vastness of the country as a result of low investments;

[25] World Bank-Sudan note of engagement 2020.

[26] Sudan- Letter of intend to IMF 10 June 2021 on memorandum of economic and financial polices to be pursued by the government in the medium term 2021-2023)

[27] Sudan: PRSP 2021-2023

poor roads maintenance as a result of poor funding and the lack of cost recovery; and inadequate enforcement of restrictions on axle loads which is causing considerable damage to the road network.

Table 4: Freight (000 tons) and passengers (000 persons) transported

	2016		2017		2018		2019		2020	
	freight	passengers	freight	passengers	freight	passengers	freight	passengers	freight	passengers
Road	5,629	8,061	6,806	7,021	6,163	9,054	6,374	7,540	5,854	2,460
Rail	618	211	636	184	431	486	545	283	332	196
Air	37	4,163	612	191	62	27	35	14	237	39
total	6,284	12,435	8,054	7,396	6,656	9,567	6,954	7,837	6,423	2,695

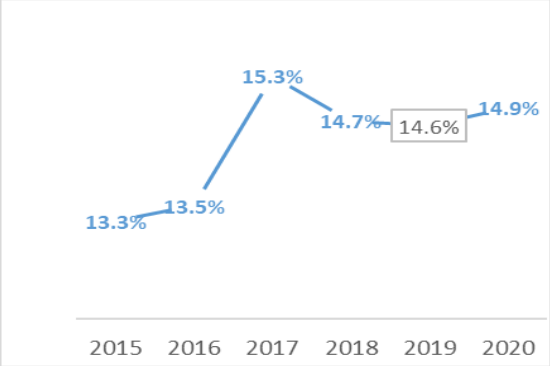
Source: Central Bank of Sudan annual reports

Regional road connectivity from neighboring landlocked countries (South Sudan, Ethiopia, Central Africa, and Chad) to Khartoum and with the coastal gateway of Port Sudan has expanded, and it is receiving considerable attention for serving regional integration.

The share of manufacturing sector is low and was stagnant since 2018. Diversification in Sudan will be central to economic growth. Moving up the value chain into manufacturing for key commodities is important. The government is giving priority to agro-industries and food processing. However, challenges of power, infrastructure, skilled labor and competition from imported commodities remains a constraint for the manufacturing sector.

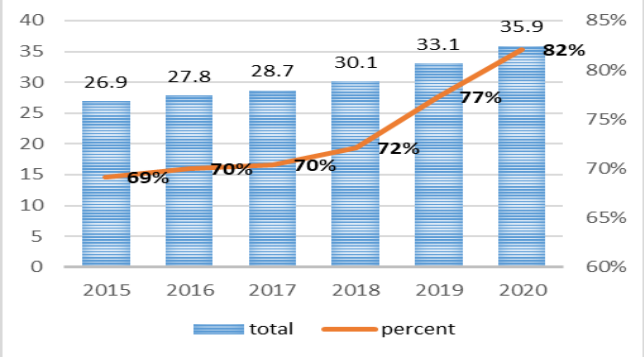
Access to information technology has increased significantly in Sudan during 2015-2020. Proportion of population covered by mobile network increased from 69 percent in 2015 to 82 percent in 2020 and the mobile coverage amounted to 85 percent of populated area. Out of mobile subscribers about 45 percent have smartphones while 55 have traditional mobile phones.

Figure 13: Manufacturing value added as percent GDP



Source : Central Bank of Sudan annual reports

Figure 14: Mobile subscribers: their percent of total population



Sudan Telecommunication Corporation

Way forward

Engagement of the private sector in roads construction and maintenance will expand and improve the road network. The Government has thus given urgency to rebuilding the road infrastructure through PPPs, partnering with the private sector.

The road network will be expanded with priority given to agriculture feeder roads linking production areas to markets. The government plans to reconstruct 7,007 km of paved roads, 2,705 km of agriculture feeder roads, during the next three years and conducting studies and engineering design for 33 roads

Rehabilitating and maintaining the existing road network will receive top priority. The government plans to rehabilitate ad maintain 1,530 km of paved roads during the medium-term period. Road tolls rates will be increased to cover the cost of maintenance. All exemptions in the payment of road tolls will be eliminated. Electronic gates for road toll collection will be installed to increase efficiency of collection. A Fund for Roads Maintenance managed by the Roads and Bridges Corporation will be established.

To reduce travel time and transport cost, the numerous federal and local governments checking points along the roads will be abolished. Tax or fees collection along the roads, except road tolls will also be abolished

Most of the industries in Sudan are SMEs. They require support in many areas to become competitive in domestic and export markets. The government policy will facilitate their access to markets, technology, finance, knowledge, skills, management, strategic partnerships, shared infrastructure and linkages to export value chains. A coordinated and unified approach will also be needed to address the challenges of informality, with informal sector accounting for the majority of jobs in Sudan.



Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries

Situation and challenges

Income inequality the country has remained relatively low. According to Gini index, inequality declined from 35.4 percent in 2009 to 28.7 percent in 2014/15—a level relatively low compared to other countries in the region like, neighboring Egypt and Ethiopia have higher Gini indexes at 31.8 percent (in 2015) and 33.2 percent (in 2010), respectively[28]. Inequality is particularly high in Khartoum and West Darfur states. In 2014, only Khartoum (31.2 percent) and West Darfur (32.3 percent) had levels of inequality higher than the national average. Inequality seems slightly higher in urban areas than in rural areas and is decreasing at a much faster pace in rural areas. [29]

However, inequalities exist between geographical regions, between rural and urban population, and between men and women. Certain groups also face inequality including IDPs, persons with disabilities, nomadic population. Social, economic and political inclusion is yet to be achieved. Sudan's economy is disproportionately based in Khartoum. The economic growth is not inclusive, leading to marginalization of certain areas, and conflicts. Disadvantaged populations from conflict zones and other peripheral areas of the country are not properly included in the political, economic and social system. Sudan's younger generations suffering from exclusion, have also been calling for greater representation, improved education and enhanced employment opportunities. Considerable reforms are needed to ensure that women are not excluded. Findings from the World Bank's Risk and Resilience Assessment for Sudan: FCV Drivers and Factors of Resilience found that regional imbalances and patterns of social exclusion have created multiple grievances based on marginalization, skewed service delivery, and disenfranchisement of women and youth[30].

[28] Sudan: PRSP 2021-2023
[29] Sudan PRSP 2021-2023
[30] Word Bank Sudan: Country Engagement Note 2020

Despite the comprehensive bill of rights in the Constitutional Document of the transitional government that ensures equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, several legislative reforms are needed to achieve those rights.

Way forward

There are several interventions advocated by the government in the PRSP and measures agreed upon JPA and other agreements with the IMF and World Bank, that address spatial inequalities. These include, inclusive growth advocated, rehabilitation of the agriculture sector to increase rural incomes, extending the national electricity grid to western Sudan, equitable access to basic services, affirmative actions for conflict –ridden regions in education and civil service employment, and rehabilitating war affected areas. Sectoral strategic plan in education, health and other sectors contain polices to address inequalities among certain groups.



Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Situation and challenges

The urban population constituted about 29.8% of the total 2008 population (2008 Census), up from 20.5% (1983). Although the population of Sudan has been growing at high rates of about 2.8% per annum, urban population has been growing at about double the natural population growth rate. Metropolitan Khartoum is one of the most populated cities on the African continent. Khartoum houses about 20 percent of the total population of Sudan. The main reasons behind the urban growth are: neglecting development in rural areas leading rural population to migrate to cities in search for employment and social services; conflict particularly in Darfur region, Blue Nile and South Kordofan; and climatic conditions, as large parts of the country are considered drought prone, with devastating humanitarian consequences on rural population who are largely dependent on rain-fed subsistence agriculture and animal husbandry for their livelihoods.

Infrastructure in Khartoum is poor. Some of the neighborhoods in Khartoum are still without water service and others are facing serious shortages. Sewerage systems covers a small limited area in the center of the city. There is no proper drainage system. The increasing rate of urbanization in the cities, obliged people to live on river banks and on the flooding zones. Many are devastated by the destruction caused by the heavy rains and floods, in the absence of proper drainage system and poor preparedness for disaster assistance.

Millions of people who migrated from rural areas live in the fringes of towns and cities, mostly live as squatters. Sudan has taken great strides towards achieving the Habitat Agenda that resulted from Istanbul 1996 international conference goal of reducing the number of urban dwellers living in slums substantially. In Greater Khartoum, for example, the percentage of slumps dropped from about 60% in 1990 to less than 20% in 2014.[31]

[31] Ministry of Environment Forests and Urban Development- Habitat III) and UN Habitat Sudan: report for the third conference on housing and sustainable urban development (2016)

The economic crisis - high inflation and soaring food and non-food prices - continued to erode people's ability to buy food and other basic necessities Khartoum state has the largest percentage of food insecure IPC3+ (2021) compared to other states[32].

Way forward

UN Habitat indicated that managing the rapid pace of urbanization in Sudan requires, ending of the conflict in Sudan, adopting a balanced economic growth and service delivery development, address slums and squatters, develop new housing areas supported by services, establishing new towns and satellite cities, improve life in rural areas.



Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

In Sudan, smallholder farmers lose up to a third of the food they produce because of inadequate storage systems. Post-harvest losses reduce incomes for farmers, exacerbate food insecurity, and have negative impacts on the environment. Land, water, farm inputs and energy are all used to produce food that is not consumed[33].

Sudan is also facing a problem with solid waste, especially municipal solid waste. Solid waste management practices throughout Sudan are uniformly poor. In 2016 Khartoum generated about 6,600 tons of waste per day, though the city only has a capacity to collect 4,200 tons per day[34]. Waste management in Sudan is limited to organized collection from the more affluent urban areas and dumping in open landfills or open ground. Most of the industrial facilities dispose of their wastes without any treatment. In many places garbage of all types accumulates is burnt in residence areas. Sudan has a large volume of obsolete pesticides which creates environmental hazards due to storage and dumping. Khartoum also has the challenge of dealing with toxic materials. Management of medical waste in Sudan is inefficient as a result of infrastructure for the treatment and lack of awareness. Its disposal is very limited and much of it ends up in landfill site.



Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

Situation and challenges

Sudan has been affected by climate change. The First and Second National Communication to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) identified the impact of climate change on Sudan as follow:

1. Increase of temperature
2. Variability of rain fall:
3. Increase of drought frequency and flood
4. Increase of Sea level

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[32] UNOCHA0 Humanitarian needs overview Sudan-2022.

[33] Relief Web. WFP and Sudan Second Forum to Curb Harvest Loss 2020.

[34] UNEP and HCENR: Sudan First State of the Environment 2020)

The main sectors effected by climate change are Agriculture, Water, Health and Coastal Zone.

The decrease in rainfall and higher temperatures and evaporation rates will have a negative impact on Sudan's water resources. Soil moisture is likely to decline too. Combined with an increase in water consumption due to population growth, and greater rainfall variability, these changes could result in a serious water crisis. Climate change pose a direct threat to public health. Studies in Kordofan state have shown that the risk of malaria transmission could increase substantially by 2060 because of the higher temperatures[35]. Data from Permanent Service for Mean Sea Level (PSMSL) for the Port Sudan area confirms that there has been a gradual increase in sea level of about 10-20 cm during the past century[36]. The impacts of climate change are likely to cause more conflicts and displacement due to competition over natural resources.

Way forward

Sudan has been actively engaged in climate change activities and negotiations. The country is party to UNFCCC, Kyoto Protocol and recently in Paris Agreement. Sudan is leading the biggest negotiating group, the group of 77 and China (2009) and African group (2014 – 2015) in the climate change negotiations to formulate new commitments post Kyoto Protocol. Sudan has succeeded to meeting all its commitments under the UNFCCC, and has submitted the following reports:

- First National Communication (INC) 2003
- National Adaptation Program of Action (NAPA) 2007
- Second National Communication (SNC) 2013
- National Adaptation Plan (NAP) July 2016
- Sudan's National Climate Change Policy and Measures
- Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS)
- First Update Nationally Determined Contribution NDC 2015 and updating it in May 2021.
- Third National Communication and First Biennial Update Report (BUR) in May 2022 (preparation)

The High Council for Environment and Natural Resources (HCENR), the government coordinating body for UNFCCC implementation, has exerted considerable effort to engage with the local institutions at both national and state levels and the international partners in climate change issues. It has involved many institutions in the national reporting, preparation of national environmental plans, programs, and projects, e.g. more than 50 institutions and 300 national experts were involved in the preparation of the national communications, and over more than 400 were involved in the NAPA and NAP preparations.

During the preparation of the First and Second National Communication, the institutional arrangements related to effective measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) of emissions and emissions reductions were established. The third TNC and the first BUR have been prepared with a key objective to formalize institutional arrangements with relevant institutions in support of MRV activities. These arrangements have been codified in memorandum of understanding established between the HCENR and 10 federal entities and 18 state-level related ministries. The memorandums of understanding are designed to clarify institutional responsibilities and improve institutional capacity to meet Sudan's MRV and transparency obligations.

[35] Sudan: UNEP and HCENR-First State of the Environment and Outlook Report 2020.
[36] Second National Communication under the United Nations Framework Conversion on Climate Change -- January 2013.

Technical and institutional capacity building support has been provided to the relevant institutions with a primary focus on improving the accuracy and transparency of their sectoral contributions to the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) inventory, as well as mitigation analysis, adaptation assessment, and NDC formulation. Long-term commitment was secured with relevant institutions to ensure the sustainability of data flows pertinent to future GHG inventory, mitigation, adaptation, and NDC development processes within an agreed organizational structure.

Way forward

Sudan has developed a National Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) strategy for 2016- 2030. States, being vulnerable to natural disasters, especially drought, flash floods, floods, torrential rains, dust storms, and other environmental hazards have also developed their National Disaster Risk Reduction Action Plan 2019-2023. These plans are in response to Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 at the local level.

The diagnostic report on Emergency Preparedness and Response Capacities in Sudan (2021) which aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the capacity gaps in legal and institutional frameworks, information networks, equipment, and personnel, will guide the work of disasters response management.

Research on climate change is suffering from poor data, and all the research efforts and studies are based on estimated data. The related institutions, universities and research centres need technical support to develop specialized laboratories oriented to measure the factors relevant to the environmental hazards and climate changes. Concluding cooperation agreements with specialized research institutions to link their research work by the climate change impacts is a priority

Sudan is committed to meet its future obligations under UNFCCC, and all other commitments related to climate change. Sudan will continue its cooperation with development partners in climate change activities.



Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

Situation and challenges

Sudan coastline extends for 853 km, including embayment and inlets. Sudan has 9,800 km2 of continental shelf in the Red Sea. The Red Sea houses tremendous and diverse living and non-living resources. The marine and coastal ecosystems have more than 1,200 species of fish. The marine resource has great potential for tourism; fishing and other economic activities which could significantly contribute to poverty reduction, food, promote inclusive growth, increase employment, promote trade, and contribute to regional equality by developing the Red Sea state, one of the poorest states in the country. However, this resource is not yet not properly exploited.

The Sudanese marine fishery is largely coastal in nature and employs mainly traditional gear, traditional craft such as papyrus rafts and dugout canoes, and traditional harvesting techniques, whereas the marine commercial fishers use purse seiners and small- and medium-size trawlers to exploit the resources within and beyond the continental shelf area. Artisanal fishers are the poorest among the Sudanese and most of them lack alternative sources of livelihood Women and girls also active in the fisheries industry, but constrained by access to financing and capacities and exclusion

from the fish value chain for social reasons. Fishery exploitation is increasing as evidenced by the increasing number of fishing vessels, of greater deadweight tonnage, that have been registered to operate on the Red Sea territory of Sudan.

The Sudanese Red Sea has not been, to some extent, impacted by the widespread degradation that is evident in many other large areas of reef within the Red Sea and globally. However, this situation is changing rapidly. The Red Sea is facing the following challenges:

- Unsustainably management of resources in the Red Sea originating from different activities such as increase in off-shore oil and gas exploration, mining, and increased ship traffic and the petrol terminal activities associated with risks of pollution.
- Unsustainable fishing activities, both artisanal and industrial-scale fisheries.
- Inadequate devices for follow up and monitoring of marine and maritime affairs especially for pollution from different sources including oil and plastic pollution.
- Rapid coastal population growth and urbanization which does not follow environmentally sustainable practices leading to negative effects on Red Sea coasts.
- lack of comprehensive data coverage due to poor facilities for data collection.
- limited financial resources to support the marine environment
- Weak capacities in terms of human resource skills and poor infrastructure

Efforts to address the challenges

Efforts by the government and the international partners resulted in protecting two marine areas, Sanganeb Marine National Park and Dungonab Bay and Mukkawar Island Marine National Park. Both were declared world heritage sites in 2016. Three of the protected areas are part of the UNESCO World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

Several efforts are being undertaken to ensure sustainability of fishing in the Red Sea, in collaboration with international partners. These efforts include: GEF Protected areas project (2020-2024) in 3 protected areas including Dungonab marine protected area, GEF Capacity Building project (Rio Convections)2020-2022, GEF Readiness' for CC projections (adaptation)2021-2022, and PERSGA Monitoring of Red Sea water and sea level 2021-2023.

Way forward

The government solution to face Red Sea environmental challenges includes: -

- Mapping and demarcation of coastal hazard lines subjected to sea level rise and over flooding adjacent to Red Sea Coasts.
- Developing marine information systems in the region, awareness programs, improve climate monitoring and early warning systems.
- Collaborating in the field of marine biotechnology, bio-prospecting and renewable marine energy and supporting studies, research and knowledge sharing in marine resources.
- Promoting operational capacity of the ports to reduce pollution.
- Developing integrated coastal management plan, increase adaptation, and reduce vulnerability to the impacts of climate change on coastal local community's livelihood, through capacity building and livelihood support activities, including for artisanal fishing, commercial fisheries, mangroves management and aquaculture, especially for women and youth.
- Developing suitable policies and regulatory frameworks for sustainable fishing.



Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

Situation and challenges

Forests are covering 12 per cent from the total country area. The main challenge of land use had been the conversion of natural forests to cropland and pasture. Some 17 million hectares have been converted into mechanized and traditional rain fed and irrigated agriculture during the period 1940-2012, though in the last decade conversion rates were much lower[37]. The major drivers of forest degradation are:

- Cutting wood for energy: 70 to 81 per cent of Sudan's primary energy needs come from firewood[38]
- Fires: During the 2014/15 fire season, more than 1 million hectares of forest were burned.
- Mechanized farming: An agriculture mode of production that is practiced in about 7-8 million hectares. Its massive expansion has been accompanied by the large-scale destruction of natural forests and habitats. The government decision of Planting 10% of the mechanized area with forests is not enforced
- Oil and gold mining: The petroleum industry and gold mining are responsible for large-scale clearance of forests during exploration and for the construction of infrastructure such as pipelines, roads and settlement camps.

Land is under increasing pressure resulting in severe land degradation. An estimated 50 to 200 km southward shift of the boundary between semi-desert and desert has occurred since rainfall and vegetation records were first held in the 1930s. About half of Sudan's population lives in areas affected by desertification. The land degradation in Sudan is caused by several factors, mainly; climate change, growing population; intensive mechanized farming; overgrazing caused by increasing numbers of livestock where Sudan is home to one of the largest concentrations of traditional pastoralists in sub-Saharan Africa; deforestation, and droughts. Land degradation has a negative impact on food security and the incomes of the rural population and often leads to conflicts.

Sudan is home to a variety of ecosystems and habitats. Sudan's biodiversity is threatened by various factors, including loss of habitat through deforestation and mechanized farming, fires especially on gum Arabic trees. Biodiversity loss could be avoided through protected areas.

Competition over natural resources represents a serious problem for Sudan. Agricultural expansion on the clay plains has reduced grazing areas, disrupted pastoral routes and blocked access to watering points, while on the other hand livestock substantially increased and frequently enters into farming areas. This has resulted in competition over land and water and resulted in conflicts. This situation takes place in the absence of suitable governance framework guiding the use of natural resources. Dichotomy between customary laws and statutory law in land is not helpful in natural resource governance. In addition, there is a lack of political will and commitment to enforce the existing environmental laws. Fragmented polices of natural resource management across different sector – agriculture, forestry, animal resources, water, oil, and mining represent another constraint.

[37] About REDD+ in www.reddplussd.org

[38] Sudan: UNEP and HCENR-Sudan; First State of the Environment and Outlook report 2020

Sudan is facing several emerging environmental issues. The fast expanding artisanal gold mining spreading over most of the states in Sudan, uses mercury, which is damaging to the environment. The country is also grappling with new forms of waste, including electronic; it is estimated that Sudan produces 3-6 kg per person per year of electronic waste. The growing demand for low-cost transport and the absence of reliable and stable electricity supplies have encouraged the use of rickshaws and diesel/petrol electric generators, both of which cause significant noise and air pollution.

Efforts to address challenges

Sudan boosted its forest conservation efforts by initiating the United Nations Collaborative Program on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, known as REDD+ as well as reducing carbon emissions from forests. The program is aimed at improving conservation and the sustainable management of forests. Progress was made in developing new working plans in the riverine forests. Programs for rehabilitation and afforestation and re-afforestation were carried out. Sudan prepared a national strategy and action plan for biodiversity for the years 2015-2020, in which 12 national biodiversity goals were adopted in line with the strategic plan for biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi objectives.

The Range Inventory of Sudan was completed by supporting the Range and Pasture General Directorate with survey work in the 5 Darfur States, resulting in a series of maps including landscapes, vegetation and livestock routes. This contributes to improved resource management and conflict mitigation between farmers and pastoralists.

Sudan managed to establish national parks and other protected areas covering 8.1 per cent (150,963 km^2) of the country, however this area is very small.[39] Some of the protected areas were specifically designated for the protection of threatened animals. For example, Al Sabaloga, Arkawit and Sinkat game reserves were established to protect the Barbary sheep. Others provide protection for water catchment areas of Sudan and its neighboring countries. These include Dinder National Park on the Sudan-Ethiopian border, which covers the Blue Nile River catchment, and Radom National Park on the border with the Central African Republic, which covers Bahar Al Arab River catchment area. In addition, trade in wildlife, is regulated. Sudan has been attempting to boost wildlife populations through the establishment of wild animal farms. These farms are largely owned by the private sector.

The transitional government managed to unify the different institutions related to environment in one body through the Miscellaneous Amendments Law for 2020. According to the law, all councils related to environment were unified in one council, the High Council for Environment and Natural Resources HCENR, which was given the exclusive mandate to coordinate environment and natural resources issues. Assigning the leadership of the HCENR to the Prime Ministers, gave it more power and effectiveness to implement its role and responsibilities.

Way forward

- Forest development: The government will implement the plan of: Forest National Conservation which was put forward in 2017 to reduce the pressure on forests from agriculture and industry, slow the rate of deforestation, protect forest ecosystems while also protecting rural livelihoods. Also, it aims at reducing the threat of climate change by monitoring the state forests, reserving at least 20 per cent of Sudan's forest area; encouraging communities and the private sector to produce non-wood forest products and expanding the production of gum Arabic; promoting scientific and technical research;

[39] Sudan: First State of the Environment and Outlook Report 2020

promoting sustainable fuel wood production, and promoting alternative sources of energy such as LPG, solar and wind.

- Reform national policies of land tenure and land rights.
- Prepare natural land use plan to guide the natural resource development.
- Enforce national policies to insure mainstreaming of biodiversity in different development planning activities
- Provide support to national Institutions responsible for environmental issues
- Put in place well-equipped institutions with the capacity to enforce laws and policies relating to oil and gold mining companies and stop using mercury and other hazardous materials in artisanal gold mining.
- Sudan, as a party to the Convention on Biological Diversity, and is committed to undertake the work of the national biodiversity strategy and action plan (for after 2020), after the adoption of the global framework for biodiversity at the fifteenth Conference of Parties.



Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

Peace

Sudan was in conflict for most of its past history since independence. Fragility, conflict, and violence are driven by long-standing socio-economic imbalance between the center and the peripheries, weak institutional capacities to mitigate and regulate conflicts resulting in intra- and intercommunal struggles over land, water, natural exacerbated by climatic change and population growth[40]. Sudan was unable to address these factors in the past. This explains why all previous peace agreement did not succeed.

In October 2020, the JPA in Sudan was signed by Sudan's transitional government and by country's main peace partners to end the conflict in Darfur, Blue Nile and South Kordofan. However, still two main factions are yet to join the peace process. JPA addresses the root causes of the conflict in Sudan, standing a better chance of finding a lasting solution to the conflict in Sudan. However, critical aspects of the JPA remain unimplemented, notably security arrangements and IDPs return.

Deadly clashes between heavily armed tribes continued to be a major source of insecurity in the Sudan, especially in Darfur region, South Kordofan and sometimes in Eastern Sudan. Deadly conflicts continue to escalate. Intercommunal clashes emanate from disputes over land ownership, access to resources and criminality, as well as long-standing farmer-herder conflict.

Sudan commitments to protect civilians as enshrined in the ambitious National Plan for the Protection of Civilians (NPPOC) is to be implemented by the National Mechanism for the Protection of Civilians, however it is not yet operationalized. The government is also speeding the process of forming the Joint Security Keeping Force between the government security forces and the forces of the parties to the peace process in JPA to end intertribal conflicts and disarm the militias.

[40]World Bank: Sudan-A Risk and Resilience Assessment (RRA) August 2019.

A United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS), was established by the Security Council in June 2020 as a special political mission, to provide support to Sudan through a range of political, peacebuilding and development initiatives, and assist the country to carrying out its National Plan for Civilian Protection.

It is clear that there are serious gaps in the government's capacity to protect civilians. In terms of location, Darfur region is the most affected, while women and children are the most vulnerable in the escalation of the conflict.

Trafficking

Sudan is the primary transit destination for irregular migrants and refugees from the Horn of Africa seeking to reach Europe.

Sudan has taken steps to counter human trafficking. In 2014, the Parliament passed the Combating of Human Trafficking Act, the country's first law specifically addressing human trafficking, and the law was amended in 2021 with further definition of exploitation and stringent penalties for violators. The National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking was formed. The transitional government launched a new national action plan in August 2021: The National Action Plan for Combating Human Trafficking 2021-2023. The new action plan aims at combating and preventing human trafficking and exploitative smuggling, especially trafficking of women and children. It is based on four core aspects of combating human trafficking: prevention, protection, prosecution and coordination and partnership. The government also increased its overall law enforcement efforts to combat trafficking.

Better Migration Management program funded by the European Union and Germany has been supporting the Government in countering human trafficking and improving the protection of victims of trafficking and vulnerable migrants.

Anti-Corruption

Sudan ranks 164 out of 180 countries in the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) for 2021, which is almost similar to its rank of 165 in 2015. Anti-corruption efforts during the previous regime have been lax, with existing laws being inadequately implemented. The transition government approach to fighting corruption focuses on the whole cycle of fighting corruption namely addressing: prevention, detection, and deterrence measures. The CD stated that there will be no statute of limitations for corruption crimes. It has also stipulated the establishment of an Anti-Corruption Commission. However, this commission is not being formed yet.

The Procurement Law and the Financial and Administrative Procedures Law will be reformed with the view of fighting corruption. NAC of Sudan will receive technical assistance for capacity strengthening from the development partners, however, the funding was suspended as a result of the political development on the 25th of October. Strengthening the role of journalism, civil society, and the private sector is an essential element of the government anti-corruption strategy as called for by the PRSP 2021-2023.

Illicit trade

Considerable smuggling including national commodities, agricultural products, gold results in tax evasion, depriving the country from important revenue source, and draining badly needed foreign currency. Sudan has long borders with seven countries totaling 6,751 km. Most of these borders are porous, remote, and difficult to police. Militias freely cross between the neighboring countries.

Anti-Money Laundering and Combating Finance of Terrorism (AML/CFT) was enacted in 2014. A National committee for anti-money laundering and combating the financing of terrorism was established since 2014. A Financial Information Unit (FIU) was established in the Bank of Sudan as intelligence unit for anti-money laundry and anti-terrorism financial activities. There is specialized public prosecution for money laundry and terrorism financing. According to the IMF, progress has been made on AML/CFT and inspections of banks in this area.

There is strong coordination and cooperation with the international community in fighting money laundry and terrorism. Cooperation is carried through the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), Middle East & North Africa Financial Action Task Force (MENAFATF) and the IMF. Recent reforms agreed with the IMF in 2021 in the area of combating terrorism and money laundry includes completion of a National Risk Assessment and the development of a strategy to mitigate and eliminate the identified risks issuance of comprehensive guidelines to supervised entities.



Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

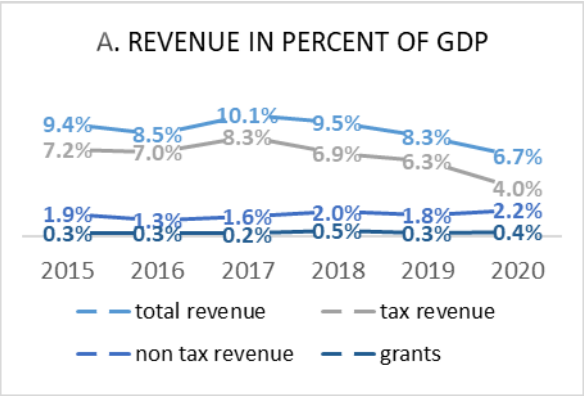
Finance

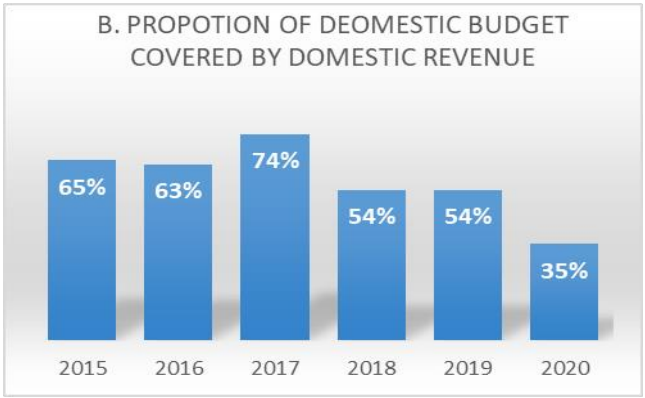
Government revenues

Trend and challenges

The current weak revenue effort in Sudan represent one of the biggest challenges to SDGs implementation. Revenue in Sudan is low and declining, driven mainly by weak tax performance. With an average tax-to-GDP of 6.6 percent during 2015-2020, Sudan is at the bottom of countries with similar characteristics and per capita GDP. The tax ratio to GDP also declined from 9.4 percent in 2015 to 6.7 percent in 2020.

Figure 15: Revenue in percent of GDP (a) and the portion of budget it covers (b)





Source: MoFEP; General Directorate of Finance and Budget Coordination

Poor tax effort, resulted in less proportion of domestic expenditures being funded by domestic taxes; declining from 85 percent in 2015 to 54 percent in 2018 and further to only 35 percent in 2020. The public expenditure gap was mainly financed by bank borrowing, leading to higher inflation rates.

The weak tax performance is attributed to use of overvalued official exchange rate for tax assessments; generous tax exemptions, fragmented rates of corporates tax, limited capacity of the revenue collection agency, and recently compounded by the impact of Covid-19.

Way forward

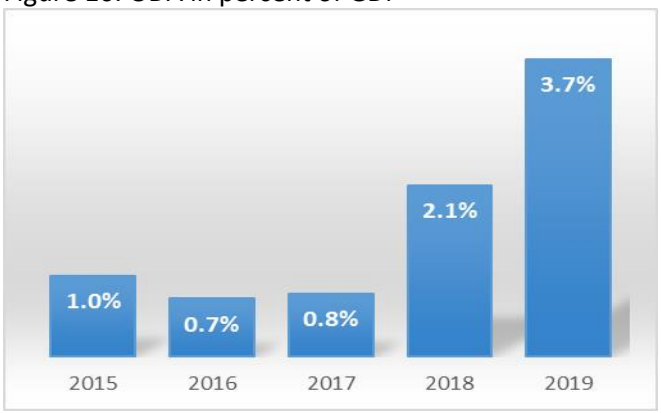
The Government in collaboration with the IMF and the World Bank has planned for significant tax reforms during 2022-2024 to reduce tax distortions by eliminating exemptions, unifying the customs exchange rate with the market rate, broadening the very narrow tax base, strengthening the Large Taxpayer Office, and upgrading the capacities of the Chamber of Taxation. These reforms will enable Sudan to create fiscal space to speed up progress in implementing the SDGs.

Official Development Assistance ODA

Trend and challenges

Sudan, being under sanctions during the previous regime, due to sponsorship of terrorism, gross human rights violations, external debt arrears, has been isolated from a meaningful engagement with the international community. ODA was mostly humanitarian driven by conflicts and displacement particularly in Darfur region and exacerbated by environmental factors, mainly floods and drought. In addition, the humanitarian assistance was meeting the needs of the continuous flow of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants from neighboring countries. ODA increased from about 1 percent of GDP in 2015 to 3.7 percent in 2019 mainly pushed by more humanitarian needs.

Figure 16: ODA in percent of GDP



Source: Central bank of Sudan annual reports

Way forward

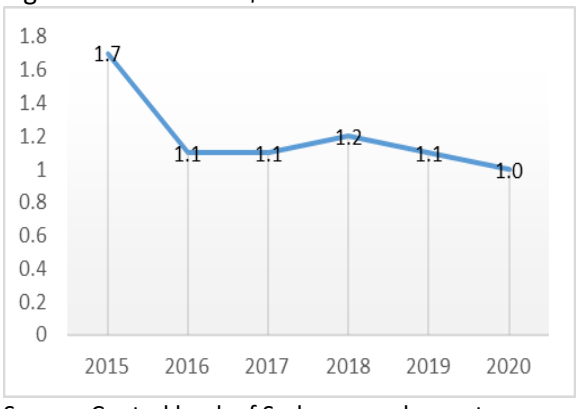
With the signing of JPA, and reengaging with the international community, and the starting of the debt relief process through the HIPCs, a shift in the composition of the ODA towards development needs is perceived. Lifting of current suspension by the development partners, when political reconciliation is reached, and the transitional government pursue its path towards establishing democratic rule, will result in substantial development assistance flows, and more financial resources available to SDGs.

Foreign Direct Investment FDI

Trend and challenges

FDIs declined from US$ 1.7 billion in 2015 to US$ 1.1 billion in 2016 and remained stagnant thereafter. Business environment in Sudan is not conducive to enabling growth of FDIs. In the World Bank Ease of Doing Business, Sudan ranked 160 out 189 countries in 2015 and deteriorated to 171 out of 190 countries in 2020. Political and economic instability, combined with the undeveloped nature of physical infrastructure deter investments.

Figure 17: FDIs in US$ billion



Source: Central bank of Sudan annual reports

Way forward

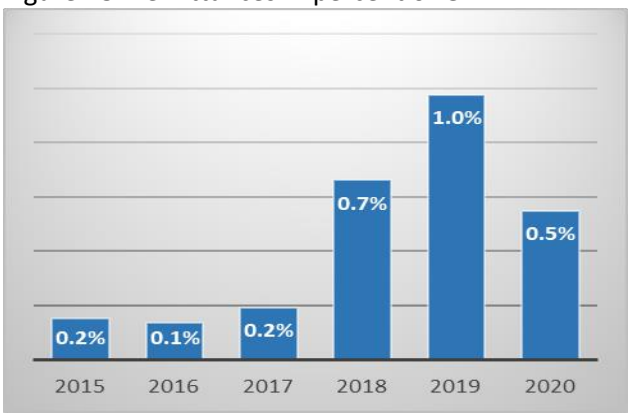
The government is undertaking several reforms to attract FDIs. The Investment Encouragement Act, which was issued on 11 April 2021, seeks to improve on the 2013 Investment Act to create a more predictable and transparent regime that facilitates investment. The government created the Investment and Private Sector Development Agency (IPSDA) in December 2019 as a one-stop government institution to promote the private sector. The package of reforms in the PRSP 2012 for the private sector including stable macroeconomic environment and external debt reduction will mobilize more resources from FDIs.

Remittances

Trend and challenges

The number of Sudanese living outside the country is estimated at four to five million. Their remittances and skills are important for SDGs implementation. Total remittances (through formal and informal channels) were estimated at $2.9 billion for 2017 and 2018, which amount to more than half of the Sudanese exports[41]. Remittances are mainly sent to families of the Sudanese working abroad to meet current consumption needs and health and education. Most of remittances are channeled through the black market mainly due to foreign exchange spread, and to a lesser extent on the economic sanctions against Sudan which affected the transfers through the banking sector. In 2020 the flow of remittances declined, and may be falling by as much as $500 million as a result of COVID -19 related recession.

Figure 18: Remittances in percent of GDP



Source: Central Bank of Sudan annual reports

Way forward

The government policy in early 2021 of liberalization of the exchange rate and the removal of Sudan from the States Sponsors of Terrorism List SSTL is expected to result in more remittances transferred through the official channels.

Debt Service

Trend and challenges

Sudan was designated as a state sponsor of terrorism in 1993 for supporting international terrorist groups, and in October 1997, US imposed comprehensive economic, trade, and financial sanctions against the Sudan. The three decades of international sanctions and disengagement from the international community resulted in Sudan's debt to go further into arrears.

Sudan stock of external debt increased from about US$ 13 billion in 1990 to US$ 50 billion in 2015 to reach US$ 57 billion in 2020; debt sustainability analysis (DSA) confirms that Sudan continues to be in debt distress as debt at end 2019 reached 99 percent of GDP more than fivefold the 30 percent threshold, and debt-to-exports is about 1,028 percent, well above the respective threshold.

The Executive Boards of the World Bank and the IMF approved Sudan's eligibility for debt relief under the Enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPCs) Initiative on June 29, 2021. Arrears to

[41] UNDP: Khartoum-The potential of Sudan Diaspora Remittances; September 2020

multilateral institutions; IMF International Development Association (IDA), African Development Bank Group were cleared through bridge financing by development partners. On July 16th 2021, Paris Club Creditors cancelled $14 billion owed by Sudan and restructure the rest of the more than $23 billion it owes. To reach the completion point fort full debt relief, the government was engaged in a 39-month IMF financial arrangement to anchor medium-term policies in the period between HIPCs Decision Point and Completion Point, where Sudan's debt will be irrevocably reduced from about US$ 56 billion to only US$ 6 billion in about three years' time in 2024. However, this process is currently suspended by the international partners.

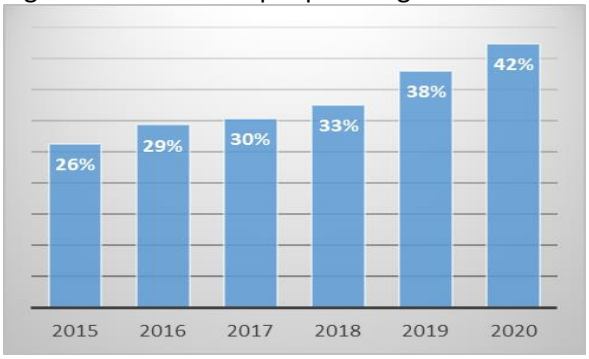
Way forward

After political reconciliation in Sudan, the government will continue its implementation of the 39-month program of ECF with the IMF, and will re-engage with the international community for completing the debt relief process and reaching the HIPCs completion point.

Technology

The mobile service covers 85% of the populated areas. The percent of individuals using the internet is increasing fast reaching 42 percent between in 2020 compared to 26 percent in 2015. However, Sudan has the lowest financial inclusion in Sub-Saharan Africa, with only 15.3 percent of adults (aged 15+) having a financial account. Sudan joined the Better Than Cash UN alliance in 2020, signaling a clear move towards adopting digital banking infrastructure. SMS-based banking due to the high mobile penetration in Sudan. UNDP has started this process in introducing the use of M-banking technology in microfinance to ensures that no one is left behind

Figure 19: Percent of people using the internet



Source: Calculated from Telecommunications Corporation number of persons using the internet

5. New and emerging challenges-COVID-19 pandemic

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic, which has spread world-wide, has impacted severely on the Sudanese economy and society to develop[42]. It has reduced production and economic growth. The lockdown of markets and the disruption of internal and external routes of transportation have severely disrupted trade and travel, and the sources of living for people, and reduced income levels. It impact was obvious in the social delivery systems, especially, health, education, employment and labor markets, and social protection. Indeed, the pandemic has worsened the already deteriorating economic situation in the country, and have made the expected outcomes of economic and social reforms and policies introduced by the transitional government rather difficult to achieve. While the pandemic has quickly spread in the country, Khartoum States was the hardest hit.

[42] The analyses are based on secondary sources of data and information obtained from consultations with stakeholders, especially the report prepared for the VNR 2022 by the Sudanese Business Federation and from World Bank and ILO studies as indicated in footnote 6.

The Federal Ministry of Health is the national source of data and information on COVID-19. It has provided information on the confirmed incidence, prevalence and fatality of the disease, and on the mitigation, institutional and policy measures undertaken to contain its spread in the country and on vaccination. However, lack of accurate and timely data and statistics, and the paucity of research are major constraints for comprehensive understanding of the impacts of COVID-19 on the SDGs in the Sudan.

Impacts on Health System (SDG3)

The COVID-19 pandemic severely impacted on people's health and on the delivery of health services to the people in Sudan. The first Corona case was discovered in Khartoum in March 2020 and the virus continued to spread unabatedly. According to the Corona Tracker, the confirmed cases to-date (13 May 2022) have reached 62,161, three quarters of which are hosted by Khartoum State. With a total number of 4,936 confirmed deaths, this gives a total fatality rate of 7.9%, which indicates the virus has emerged as a major cause of death. However, with mortality statistics weaknesses there seems to be underestimation, not only in Sudan but in many other countries. IT is estimated by some sources that there is an excess of mortality rate of 108.5 per 100,000 in Sudan compared the reported figure of 4.3 which is 25 times the officially reported figure [43]

Like many developing countries, the rapid virulence and severity of the virus have taken the health system in the Sudan by surprise. With a fragile and fragmented health system, COVID-19 has exposed the transitional government in the Sudan to tremendous health services pressures. The fragility of the health system is reflected in its low capacity to meet the population need for health services[44], and the high concentration of the healthcare providers and services in Khartoum State. Access to health services has been hampered by the lockdown of health facilities during the pandemic, and to the high cost of emergency health care for COVID-19 patients. Indeed, COVID-19 have made the attainment of universal health care a very difficult task for the health system to achieve.

The Federal Ministry of Health carried an assessment of the essential health services during the lockdown using WHO assessment tool. The results show that the health system suffers from "critical gaps in service availability, shortage of supplies and inadequate of IPC measures. Substantial reductions in healthcare utilization were reported during the first half of 2020. Examples include over 8% reduction in DPT coverage, 20% reduction in tuberculosis detection rate and 25% reduction in Antenatal care."[45]

Undoubtedly, the health system faced complex difficulties, especially shortage of medical equipment and essential life-saving medicines, heavy load of COVID-19 patients, and high risks to the medical staff and health workers. In order to address the pandemic and its repercussions and impacts on the health system, the government established COVID-19 Health Emergency Committee. The committee declared a state of health emergency and introduced measures to close all airports, ports and land crossing, and to prepare places to spend quarantine period of two weeks. Other measures introduced by the Committee include banning of public gatherings and social events, reducing the

[43] Lancer 2022, Study on: Estimating excess mortality due to the COVID-19 pandemic: a systematic analysis of COVID-19-related mortality, 2020–21. The study estimate excess mortality from the COVID-19 pandemic for selected countries, from Jan 1, 2020, to Dec 31, 2021.

[44] For example, there is one health worker per 1000 persons in the Sudan, compared to the WHO standard of 5 health workers.

[45] Federal Ministry of Health (2020) National Deployment and Vaccination Plan for COVID-19 Vaccines. Republic of Sudan

number of employees on work sites, using masks, washing hands, and suspension of studies in schools and universities. Inter-state public transportation has been halted in March 30, 2020 and curfew between 18:00 and 6:00 have been imposed country-wide. The mitigation and prevention measures were met with public contempt and denial, which indicate behavior and culture constraints to addressing health emergencies.

Impacts on Education System (SDG4)

The spread of COVID-19 has impacted on the provision and accessibility of education and learning due to school closure. The Federal Ministry of Education have closed all schools on 15th of March 2020. This closure, which continued for a year until March 2021, have affected about 8.4 million learners.

The school closures due to the pandemic have exacerbated the existing problems and challenges of the general education system. Access to education has become more difficult for children in States affected by conflict, and children in poor and internally displaced families, and in vulnerable population groups. Consequently, the rights of children, especially girls, to access primary and secondary education have severely reduced by the pandemic.

The impacts of the pandemic have pressurized schools to adopt some innovative approaches to learning. These innovations, supported by GPE include e-learning through the internet, learning through TV and Radio broadcasts, and home-based learning benefiting 5.4 million school children, and to facilitate training of 33 thousand teachers on distance learning methods.

The Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, has adopted the same measures, like home-based and online learning, but these innovative learning techniques are constrained by frequent cut-off of electricity and internet. Also, universities have taken measures to reduce on campus workforce by 50% through implementing a rotational system.

Impacts on Gender (SDG5)

There is paucity of data and research on the impacts of COVID-19 on gender. However, a recent study[46] indicated that most significant impacts have been on "Income and livelihood" and "food and nutrition" but with insignificant difference between women and men. While earnings from employment and paid work have declined significantly for men and youth males, domestic and unpaid family work have increased for women. The burden of domestic work on women have increased as a result of the lockdown, and social networking, especially with neighbors, have shrunk due to social distancing. Clearly, the pandemic has impacted on the work environment and the decent work which Agenda 2030 called for. The study also shows that school closure has increased the unpaid work of women and have augmented the burden of domestic activities. On the other hand, school closure and increased unemployment among youth males caused by the pandemic have increased their participation in household tasks compared to before the pandemic. Youth males and females both have become very active in organizing and undertaking community activities during the pandemic than before it.

With-regard to health (SDG3), the pandemic combined with the decline of family earnings and increasing food insecurity, and increasing poverty, have increased the psychological and mental pressures on people and families. There has been a surge in domestic violence caused by the loss of relatives and love ones. The psychological impacts of the pandemic are of high concern especially in view of lack of mental health and psychological support services. Health providers have suffered

[46] The Impacts of Covid-19 on Gender Equality and Food Security in the Arab region with focus on the Sudan and Iraq by FAO and WFP - 2022.

from violence associated with the pandemic. Also, domestic violence against women have increased. That is in addition to the impacts of the pandemic on delivery antenatal and reproductive health care services to women.

Impacts on the Social Protection System (SDG1, SDG3, SDG8)

The overall coverage of the social protection system is low and the pressure on its operations have escalated due to the pandemic (and economic crises). The COVID-19 pandemic have put more pressure on health financing and on health insurance to pay for testing, medicine and quarantine services. During the first wave of the pandemic the Federal Ministry of Health have established isolation centers in Khartoum and 12 States. When the second wave started in October 2020 the ministry worked on raising community awareness and adopting prevention measures, especially vaccination.

The Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning administers the government contribution to COVID-19 response program, has increased health spending and made budget adjustments to meet the need for funds and services for COVID-19. However, during 2020 the government budget experienced reduction in tax revenue due to the lockdown and expenditures were hence impacted.

Impacts on Business Enterprises (SDG8)

The lockdown due to COVID-19 have impacted negatively on all business enterprises operations, especially enterprise closing, loss of sales and earnings, retrenchment of workers, decreased access to funds and difficulties in obtaining raw materials, etc.[47] The small, micro and medium enterprises (SMMEs) have been the hardest hit by the pandemic. However, private business enterprises in the Sudan are already faced with tremendous challenges and constraints, such as high inflation, weak financial institutions, high taxes and poor infrastructure, especially water, electricity, internet and transportation. That is to say that the impacts of COVID-19 happened at the time when the business environment is weak.

The impacts of COVID-19 have been reflected in closure of business enterprises. The impact is higher in small business enterprises. Half of the small enterprises (5-19 employees) have closed, compared to one third of the medium (20-99. Employees) and large (100+ employees) enterprises, and one quarter of the micro (<5 employees) enterprises. Closure of business enterprises is higher in Khartoum State compared Kordofan and Darfur, mainly because of high prevalence, high enforcement and monitoring of the COVID-19 measures.

The lockdown affected have affected business enterprises in various ways: reduction in business operations, falling demand for goods and services, disruption of supply chain of business inputs and materials, disruption of cash flow, reduction in the hours of work and retrenchment of staff, decrease in profit, liquidity issues, etc. For example, COVID-19 has caused a decline in sales by an average of 54%, especially in the manufacturing and services sectors of business. Wages have been reduced and workers have been laid-off due to the impact of the pandemic. Moreover, almost all enterprises have decreased hours of work, 87% of the enterprises have experienced decrease in demand, 72% have faced difficulties in finding inputs, and 50% reported cash flow problems. These operational issues affected mostly by the medium followed by the small and micro enterprises.

[47] The evidence on the impacts of COVID-19 on business enterprises comes from two sources: The "Sudan High Frequency Survey on COVID-19" undertaken in August 2020 by the Central Bureau of Statistics[47] in collaboration with the World Bank and the "Rapid assessment of the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic"[47] conducted by the ILO in 2021.

Evidence from the surveys indicate that the private sector has struggled to reduce the impacts of COVID-19. Government support to business enterprises has been limited, especially in States other than Khartoum. Few of the enterprises have adopted innovative techniques, such as working from home, operate business on line, use social media network for advertisement and sales, use carrier services to deliver products and services to customers. The innovative methods of operation are more successful in Khartoum because of availability of infrastructure (internet, electricity, roads, proximity to consumers, etc.).

Partnerships and the Impacts of COVID-19 (SDG17)

Building back from Covid-19 is crucial. Undoubtedly recovery from the impacts of COVID-19 is costly. It is contingent upon implementation of policies and actions that would directly address the disease and improve health. Equally important for quick recovery from the pandemic is to take actions that would lead to good governance and political stability, and would pave the road to bring the friends and development partners of the Sudan back to its support to development and transition to democracy, and to support development partnerships for implementation of the SDGs in the country. The impacts of the pandemic and the road to recovery from the disease, to implement the SDGs, and to transition to democracy in the Sudan are intertwined.

Sudan is not well prepared to respond to COVID-19 emergency, and the pandemic have revealed the need to support the capacity of the systems, especially the health system. In order to address the negative impacts of COVID-19, the HCT/UNCT in the Sudan prepared *Corona Virus -COVID-19 Country Preparedness and Response Plan* - (CPRP). The main purpose of the CPRP is to support the government's response to prevent and contain the spread of COVID-19, and to lessen its impacts on vulnerable people. A total of about US$ 87.3 million has been identified as partner's contribution to support the government through targeted and well-planned activities focused on preparedness and response to community transmission scenario which calls for adoption of test, trace and quarantine.

In June 2021 the Transitional Government signed an agreement with the World Bank for a grant of US$ 100 million to support COVID-19 response and expand vaccination coverage. This grant came as additional financing following the US$ 21.99 million grant provided by donors in September 2020. With these grants COVID-19 vaccination campaign kicked-off in March 2021 in Khartoum under COVAX facility. It started with health workers and persons aged 45 years and above. To-date about 8.3% of the population are fully vaccinated, which falls under the first request of COVAX patch of covering 20% of the population without cost sharing. According to the National Deployment and Vaccination Plan for COVID-19 Vaccines[48]. Through COVAX, the US Government has donated 1.2 million doses of vaccine. The USAID has also provided US$ 98 million to support vaccine delivery to reduce the transmission of the disease

6. Means of implementation

Financing

Revenue mobilization to create more fiscal space was part of a major Public Financial Management (PFM) reform, reflected in an elaborated PFM Roadmap by MoFEP as part of the program with IMF and based on the recent Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA) 2020[49]. Sudan has one of the lowest tax ratio to GDP. Specific measures are proposed to broaden the very narrow tax

[48] Federal Ministry of Health (2020) National Deployment and Vaccination Plan for COVID-19 Vaccines. Republic of Sudan

[49] Sudan: Memorandum of Economic and Financial Polices – Request for 39-month arrangement Under the Extended Credit Facility-June 2021.

base and reduce distortions, such as the widespread use of exemptions and increase government fees and charges to cost recovery levels. The policy of unification of customs exchange rate to market determined exchange rate will increase indirect taxes. Actions will be taken to raise the limited capacity of revenue collection and strengthen the Large Taxpayer Office (LTO) of the Chamber of Taxation.

Meanwhile consolidating expenditures, as incorporated in the PFM Roadmap will release substantial resources for spending on social services and poverty reduction related expenditures. This will mainly take place by reforms in the energy sector to reduce the fuel subsidies. Targeted subsidies like cash transfer scheme for the poor and vulnerable will replace the existing expensive general fuel subsidy scheme which is proportionally benefiting the rich quantiles of the population.

States which are responsible for substantial spending on SDGs have low tax capacity, and the federal transfers are inadequate. Reforms will be undertaken to give more fiscal space to the states. JPA stipulated the establishment of a National Revenue Fund to be established by law as the sole institution in which all government national revenues will be deposited. The fund is a pool from which resources will be distributed between the federal governments and the regions. A National Commission for Dividing, Allocating and Monitoring Financial Resources and Revenues will be established by law. These institutions will ensure transparency and remedy the drawbacks in the allocation of national revenues between the federal government and the regions and within the states, giving due consideration to conflict affected areas, and addressing the historical grievances in resource allocations. Reconstruction funds for war affected areas are established.

Other sources of finance will be mobilized. With exchange rate reforms policy that will be based on a market determined rate, additional resources are expected to be attracted from remittances. Also the reforms for creating an enabling environment from the private sector as specified in the PRSP 2021-2023 will attract more FDIs. PPP can contribute to financing SDGs. Sudan and the World Bank Group launched Sudan's first PPP initiative in 2017, and since then the government has started to strengthen this initiative. A Public Private Partnership Law was enacted in 2021. The PPP unit in the MoFEP is working with the private sector on list of priority investments in the field of infrastructure (SDG 9), and health (SDG 3).

Resolving the external debt will provide access to concessional financing. External flows will increase substantially after normalization of relations with the international community. Currently all activities from development partners are suspended. However, hopefully the current efforts to resolve the political crises in the country will result in resumption of relations with the donor's community. Aware of the need for a better aid coordination, which will benefit SDGs implementation, in September 2021, the government and the development partners have, created a national mechanism for the coordination of development assistance under the leadership and ownership of the government: The Sudan Partnership Forum (SPF). Political, technical and thematic groups levels were created to coordinate aid to increase its effectiveness.

Technology

The decades long sanctions against Sudan has weakened the country's ability to use technology efficiently. Recent removal of sanctions creates an opportunity for the country to make use of technology to advance progress on SDGs. By joining the United Nations-based Better Than Cash Alliance, the government commits to increasing financial inclusion. The World Bank will assist the government with advisory services for a cohesive and strategic approach for financial inclusion anchored in a National Financial Inclusion Strategy. Microfinance is one way of fighting poverty in Sudan by enabling the poor to access financing. The government intends to use M-banking

technology in microfinance. A pioneer project funded by UNDP is supporting the use of mobile phones in microfinance services in Darfur Microfinance Company.

Data and statistics

CBS is the agency mandated with the production and dissemination of national statistics and the coordination of statistical work across government agencies in accordance with the Statistics Act of 2003. Inadequate funding and limited capacity has restricted the production and availability of timely and reliable statistics.

Serious efforts are being taken to improve the statistics situation. CBS has produced its Five Year National Strategy for Promoting Statistics -2021-2025. CBS plan for 2020 has identified the following priorities: The fifth population census 2002, the comprehensive agriculture and livestock census 2023, foreign investments survey, financial inclusion survey, the comprehensive industrial survey, MICS, national household budget and poverty survey, labor market survey, and the impact of COVID-19 on households, small and medium industries and IDPs, Refugees and disasters surveys. This is in addition to what the CBS already produce including GDP, consumer price index and inflation, foreign trade statistics, and economic indicators forecasting. CBS has also identified measure to improve administrative data in its strategy. The CBS has over 65 focal points producing data for the SDGs indicators from administrative data.

To assist CBS, the World Bank has approved "Data and Statistics Strengthening Investment Project" in the amount of US$50 million, financed by a grant from the International Development Association (IDA) –currently suspended for political reasons as alluded to before. The aim is to enhance the capacity of CBS to produce and disseminate data on poverty and key social indicators (population and household surveys); improve the availability and quality of administrative data in selected sectors like education and health sectors; and strengthen Sudan's national statistical system to produce and utilize data for evidence-based policy-making including capacity building for CBS. The project will contribute to improving the availability and reliability of critical statistics for tracking progress towards the achievement of the SDGs. Additional funding is required to fully implement CBS plan.

Capacity building

Implementation capacity in Sudan is weak and made weaker by the prolonged instability and legacy of non-transparent institutions and decades of disengagement from international community. Capacity building are needed in several area including statistics, auditing, education, health, gender, PFM, poverty issues, energy, water and sanitation, urban development, food security etc. More efforts will be required from the UN agencies to scale up their capacity building activities.

7. Conclusion and way forward

Upon reaching a consensus on resolving the current political crises in Sudan, and re-engagement with the international community, priority will be given to resume the debt relief process under the HIPCs, continue with the economic reforms based on agreement with the IMF on the 39-month ECF program, and speed implementation of JPA (brining the two factions who did not sign into the peace process). This will achieve economic stabilization, inclusive growth and equity among states and population groups, and poverty reduction, so as not to leave no one behind. Ending inter-tribal conflicts is a priority.

Awareness about SDGs is still weak, with varying degrees. The Poverty Reduction and SDGs Unit will lead a wide awareness campaign with all stakeholders. Particular emphasis will be on sub national

level and the groups with poor knowledge of SDGs as revealed by the consultations during the VNR 2022.

More efforts are required to integrate SDGs into the government system especially at subnational level, and in the budget. Benefiting from the budget reforms as part of the PFM reforms in the IMF ECF program, SDGs will be integrated in the general budget.

A key element in achieving SDGs is providing adequate financial resources. The government top priory is to pursue the tax reforms, being among the lowest in the world in terms of tax to GDP, to create fiscal space to finance SDGs. It will also improve the fiscal transfer system to subnational level of government. The government will develop an Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF) to coordinate financing for SDGs from all sources. However, it will be difficult for Sudan to shoulder all this responsibility. Funding from the international community will also be needed to assist in financing JPA, particularly IDPs return and rehabilitation of war affected areas, infrastructure which is vital for the private sector investments to achieve inclusive growth and employment, and basic services.

Sudan did not include many SDGs indicators due to the weakness of the statistical system. Implementation and funding of the CBS Five Year National Strategy for Promoting Statistics -2021-2025 will provide the government with necessary statistics to monitor and improve implementation of SDGs.

Capacity building is an indispensable component in the achievement of SDGs in the remaining period. Strong capacity building is required across many sectors including civil servants at federal and subnational levels and also for the civil society.

ANNEX 1: SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS WITH STAKEHOLDERS FOR VNR 2022

STAKEHOLDER'S CATEGORY	Participants and institutions engaged in the consultations
ACADEMIA AND RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS	25 participants (10f;15m) representing universities, research and scientific institutions, ministries (MoFEP, MHESR) and the Central Bureau of Statistics
	Challenges and Issues Discussed During the Consultations
	1- Agenda 2030, SDGs targets and indicators, and their linkages to the objectives of economic growth; 2- Role of universities and high education institution (SDG4) in human resources development and economic growth (SDG8, SDG17), in addressing poverty (SDG1) and in the achievement of health and education targets (SDG3 and SDG4). 3- Sustainable development not yet well integrated in high education 4- Scientific research on renewable energy and alternative energy sources; 5- Gaps in data and statistics and how they impact on the quality of research 6- Need to promote research and share information
	Main Recommendations and Outcomes of the Consultations
	1- Integrate Agenda 2030 and the SDGs into the high education curricula 2- Support research and high academic degrees on sustainable development 3- Prepare a joint plan for universities on the SDGs and to monitor implementation of the SDGs at 4- Build the technical capacity of institutions on sustainable development 5- Promote the role of media and strengthen the linkages of high education to the communities

YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS	**Participants and institutions engaged in the consultations**
	36 participants (12f; 24m) representing 22 youth organizations, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Central Bureau of Statistics, and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning
	Main Agenda and Issues Discussed During the Consultations
	1- Extent of awareness of the SDGs: Weak knowledge and awareness of the SDGs due to lack of information 2- Know the priority SDGs targets and means of implementation: all SDGs are important for youth, especially health (SDG3) education (SDG4) and decent work and employment (SDDG8) 3- Achievements that were made: Youth initiatives cover all sectors, especially ICT, mining and small-scale industries, environment protection, drought and desertification 4- Challenges and issues that face the implementation of the SDGs: No national SDGs strategy, unclear policies and lack of accurate and timely data, weak implementation of the SDGs at the level of ministries, political instability in the country, weak coordination and sharing of data and information
	Main Recommendations and Outcomes of the Consultations
	1. Increase youth's knowledge and awareness of the SDGs 2. Establish a national committee that includes government and all stakeholders 3. Build trust and confidence between the public sector and youth through a social network and face-to-face meetings and workshops to share information, views, youth projects and initiative on the SDGs 4. Improve the quality of government policies and decisions on the SDGs 5. Make maximum and efficient use of available means of implementation, taking into consideration the needs of future generations
	Participants and institutions engaged in the consultations
	Two rounds of consultations were held with women. Participants (22f; 4m), representing gender and women empowerment units at the

WOMEN	ministries and government departments; Community-based Organizations concerned with gender issues; UNESCO Chair in Women, Science and Technology, Sudan University for Science and Technology; Development Studies and Research Institute University of Khartoum; National Council for Persons with Disabilities; Sudanese Business Women in COMESA Countries; Energy Research Center; Central Bureau of Statistics; Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning; Ministry of Social Development; Ministry of Education; Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
	Challenges and Issues Discussed During the Consultations
	1- Understanding Agenda 2030 and the SDGs with focus on SDG target 5 and related indicators 2- Arrangements and plans for preparing VNR 2022 and the deadlines to be met 3- Gender issues in the country, especially making the national budget gender sensitive. The national budget for 2022 is gender sensitive 4- Alternative sources of energy are missing in SDG5. Women are most affected by the traditional sources of energy, such as wood and animal dung 5- Though women play an important role in informal mining this remain neglected 6- Labor laws require more tripartite consultations between the laborers, labor unions, and employers. A large number of women are engaged in informal sector activities and are exposed to health problem hazards and COVID-19 7- Despite the achievements and progress made, girls' education (SDG4) still remains a gender issue (SDG5). Girls' right to education is supported by laws and acts, but needs enforcement and support through providing social protection to girls (Salema Campaign) 8- Internally displaced women, women with disabilities, and nomadic women are the most vulnerable and marginalized 9- Weak monitoring and follow up systems in health, education labor and employment, and social protection (Thamart program) 10- High need for coordination and complementarity of roles and sharing of information among gender units 11- Need for data to be more gender sensitive and more disaggregated

	Main Recommendations and Outcomes of the Consultations
	1- Provide institutional and financial support to gender units 2- Support women's rights to education, science and technology, especially in the areas of agriculture, health, education and industries 3- Increase community awareness of women's human rights, especially girls' rights to education and their protection from harmful traditional practices such as FGM/C and early marriage 4- Support women's access to productive resources and assets, and facilitate their access to finance, technology and equipment. 5- Provide gender sensitive data and support scientific research on gender issues
NGOS AND COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS	**Participants and institutions engaged in the consultations**
	Two rounds of consultations were held with participants (32f; 39m) representing the Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) and the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), such as the International Charity Organization for Water, Al-Furgan Charity Organization, and Tekamul Organization
	Challenges and Issues Discussed During the Consultations
	1- Acquainting the participants with Agenda 2030 and the SDGs targets and indicators, and Sudan's commitments to implement them 2- Arrangements and plans for preparing VNR 2022 and the deadlines to be met 3- Lack of knowledge and information on Agenda 2030 and the SDGs due to shortage of media coverage 4- The NGOs and CBOs work in isolation from each other. They lack coordination and information sharing, therefore they work in silos 5- Work relations with government are limited, therefore the organizations lack experience on mobilization of domestic resources 6- Vulnerability to foreign finance. Dependence on foreign funding is highly risky, due to changes in politics and COVID-19 7- NGOs suffer from weak organizational management, and are usually short of funding and trained staff, they suffer from high staff turnover.

	8- They are weak on documenting their achievements and preparing reports on their outputs and their impacts on the communities they serve 9- Administrative cost is high due to inflation and the declining value of the national currency
	Main Recommendations and Outcomes of the Consultations
	1- Provide technical and financial support to enable the NGOs organize workshops and meetings on Agenda 2030 and the SDGs 2- Organize training for the NGOs so as to improve their performance and to disseminate Agenda 2030 and the SDGs at the community level 3- Develop a strategy for fund raising from domestic and foreign sources, and for building and retaining human capital
STATES, LOCALITIES LOCAL COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS, AND MEDIA	**Participants and institutions engaged in the consultations**
	The consultations were conducted at the governmental and non-governmental levels, and were well attended (173f; 162m). Participation included a wide range of government and non-government communities, high level ministers of finance and labor, agriculture, infrastructure and urban development, water, education; representative of the women, academia, forestry, radio and TV, representatives of localities, Labor unions of farmers and pastoralists, NGOs and cooperative societies.
	Main Challenges and Issues Discussed During the Consultations
	The consultations with the government and non-government communities and organizations identified the following challenges and issues that face implementation of the SDGs at State level: 1- Weak and scanty knowledge on Agenda 2030 and the SDGs, due to lack of trained staff, and weak communication and sharing of information among stakeholders. Media coverage is short of programs on sustainable development. Information on sustainable development is mostly confined to government and NGOs officials in Khartoum State. 2- In some state, such as the Blue Nile, Kassala, Blue Nile, Darfur and Gedarif, interstate communication and transportation is weak,. Some areas are unreachable, such as in Southern Kordofan and the Blue Nile States. 3- Agenda 2030 and the SDGs not integrated in State plans and projects

4- Implementation of development activities at State level lack funding, and human and physical capital: Therefore, many of the development projects were discontinued

5- Political instability due to conflict and poor governance. Some States are currently at post conflict stage, while some other ones are suffering from high crime rates.

6- Administrative reform

7- All States are hard-hit by the negative impacts of economic reform, food insecurity and high consumer prices.

8- The States lack infrastructure, especially the Blue Nile State lacks paved asphalt roads and transportation.

9- Population displacement affects almost all States. For example, about 40% of the population of the Blue Nile State are displaced persons and refugees. Khartoum Sate accommodate at its urban peripheries almost half of the internally displaced persons in the country, who are estimated at about 5 million

10- Income levels are low and poverty is widespread in all states.

11- COVID-19 and its impacts on business, enterprises, labor markets and delivery of social services, especially health and education. The impact of COVID-19 is most felt in Khartoum State, where lock down of offices, markets and shops was enforced with effective measures

12- No budgetary allocations for the SDGs. Much of the available funds have been diverted from development projects to addressing COVID-19 and its impacts

13- Low levels of education and high illiteracy rates

14- Weak follow-up and monitoring of the development projects and activities

15- Shortage of adequate and timely data, and lack of scientific research

Main Recommendations and Outcomes of the Consultations

Meeting with high-level officials preceded the consultations came with the following outcomes:

1- Confirm the importance of consultation for the preparation of VNR 2022

2- The States are endowed with diverse productive resources, agriculture and animal husbandry, mining, forests and waters resources, but all of them need to harness the means of implementation and to monitor and report on progress and achievements, and to improve the living conditions of their inhabitants

3- Ensure that stakeholders at the State level collaborate with each other, especially academia and NGOs work very closely with the State' Government

4- Harness implementation through encouraging and supporting local partnerships between stakeholders

The consultations with State government and non-government organizations came up with the following recommendations and outcomes:

1- Establish SDGs Units within the development planning departments, with focal points and representation from all ministries

2- Raise the level of knowledge and awareness of the SDGs through expanding the radio and TV coverage and using simple and local languages in some of the States. Develop media programs on the SDGs and with simple and understandable language.

3- Train and increase the capacity of participants and organizations on the SDGs, so as to become agents of change and knowledge at the local community level

4- Give health and education priority at the State level so as to improve the quality of life of people

5- Revise the education curricula, integrate the SDGs into the education system, and match the outcomes of education with the labor market skills' requirements

6- Engage local communities in the design and implementation of SDGs projects, so as to ensure their participation and accommodate their needs

7- Provide alternative renewable energy sources so as reduce the use of wood and sustain the forests and reduce the environmental mpacts of deforestation

8- Provide road and transportation equipment, train human resources on infrastructure development, engineering and technology

9- Strengthen partnerships and support coordination and sharing between organizations

10- Heighten concerns with vulnerable population groups, especially refugees, displaced persons, and persons with disabilities

11- Prepare comprehensive data base at the State level, and support scientific research and its use for the preparation of development ects and for monitoring and follow up of theirimplementation