

# **COUNTRY GENDER EQUALITY PROFILE: SUDAN**

## ***Prospects of change in a new era?***

African Development Bank and UN Women

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## ACRONYMS

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<b>AfDB</b>	African Development Bank
<b>BDS</b>	Business Development Services
<b>CEC</b>	Child Education Committee
<b>CEFM</b>	Child, Early and Forced Marriage <sup>1</sup>
<b>CHW</b>	Community health workers
<b>FHH</b>	Households headed by females <sup>2</sup>
<b>FGM/C</b>	Female Genital Mutilation (or Female Genital Cutting (FGC))
<b>GBV</b>	Gender based violence
<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communication Technology
<b>IDP</b>	Internally Displaced People
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organisations
<b>MFI</b>	Microfinance Institution
<b>MDG</b>	Millennium Development Goal
<b>MLSD</b>	Ministry of Labour and Social Development
<b>MoE</b>	Ministry of Education
<b>MoH</b>	Ministry of Health
<b>NGP</b>	National Gender Policy
<b>NRM</b>	Natural Resource Management
<b>PPDP</b>	Public Private Development Partnership
<b>PPP</b>	Public Private Partnership
<b>SGBV</b>	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
<b>SDG</b>	Sustainable Development Goal
<b>SHG</b>	Self Help Groups (group involved with savings and credit)
<b>TSF</b>	Transition Support Facility
<b>TVET</b>	Technical and Vocational Education Training
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations Agency for Refugees
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund
<b>UNSCR</b>	United Nations Security Council Resolution
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>VSLA</b>	Village or Group Savings and Loan Associations
<b>WASH</b>	Water Sanitation and Hygiene

### I Introduction

**1. Gender rights and equality represent fundamental areas for change in Sudan as the country emerges from three long decades of political oppression, in particular the suppression of women's rights. The context remains uncertain however, with the persistence of poor human development indicators, inequality and regional instability, and new threats posed by climate change.** There is also a growing economic crisis that is leading to 'worsening food insecurity, deteriorating healthcare, and other needs across Sudan' (OCHA, 2020). This is further exacerbated by the health crisis and socio-economic consequences of COVID-19. According to UNHCR (2020), there are an estimated 1.86 million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and over a million refugees.

**2. As a consequence of social and institutional oppression, Sudanese women and girls have suffered from various injustices at the family, community and broader public level.** Women have little access to resources, and limited decision-making power, with minimal participation in political forums, particularly in rural areas.

**3. This *Gender Equality Profile* is intended to inform development assistance policies, and strategies for promoting gender equality and poverty reduction in Sudan. Specifically, the report explores key gender inequalities that are continuing to constrain inclusive growth, identifies key gaps and challenges in current policies and programmes, and highlights best practices and strategies for action.** The value of the report is not in the provision of new statistical data, but instead, in a consolidation of information known, a distillation of emerging trends and perspectives, and institutional analysis. The report takes a predominant focus on the national level, but integrates progress and perspectives from three selected states, Gezira, Gadarif and North Darfur.

**4. The profile is based on a review of literature, recent field experiences and studies, and qualitative field research conducted in Khartoum, Gezira, Gadarif and North Darfur.** The practical research was conducted predominantly in urban areas, and did not include extensive community-level visits. Research tools included semi-structured key informant interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions and observations.

### II State-building and Legislative Architecture in Sudan, and Inclusion

**5. Gender and women's rights have been considered extremely sensitive topics in the context of Sudan, with their strong perceived links to Islam and the local culture.** Over the past decade, Sudan has re-articulated its national development policy framework in several national strategies and plans incorporating various gender goals, including the *Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper* (2012-2014), and *Twenty-Five Years National Strategy* (2007-2031). After months of popular protest, a new Transitional Government was formed in 2019. A new (draft) Interim Constitution has been developed that prioritizes women's rights with the inclusion of a special *Commission for Women and Equality*.

**6. Over the past decade, international and national legislation related to gender equality has been slowly improving, bolstered by gender rights articulated in the 2005 Interim Constitutional Framework.** Sudan now recognizes several international human rights frameworks including UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Efforts have been stepped up to ratify the *Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women*.

**7. Despite legislation and new policy frameworks, government action in gender goals has been insufficient, and tangible progress towards change in women and girls' rights has been slow and uneven, with continued restrictions on spaces for women's citizen participation, and limited resource allocation for women to realize civil society initiatives.** Indicating a strong signal of change, in November 2019, the much-detested Khartoum *Public Order Act* (1998) that controlled how women dressed and behaved was repealed. National gender policies in Sudan now require updating to reflect the SDGs and new priorities of the government.

**8. While political quotas for women were raised in 2008 and 2014, Sudanese women have faced persisting discrimination in politics.** The revolution in April 2019 marked a 'significant moment' for women's public participation, at both national and state level, with young women notably involved in the resistance movement. In the (draft) Interim Constitution (2019), the quota for women's political participation was raised (to 40 percent), and women now hold 20 percent of ministerial posts. In reality,

however, women tend to still have a ‘minor role’ in formal decision-making. A significant gap remains in women’s public participation between states, and between rural and urban areas.

**9. The inclusion of women, youth, the elderly, the disabled and rural/ethnic minorities in peace and reconciliation processes is viewed as critical for long-term peace and balanced country development.** UNSCR 1325 is considered to be a key vehicle for building sustainable peace and ensuring women’s meaningful participation in all stages of the national peace process. The recent approval of the national Action Plan for UNSCR 1325 provides a crucial framework for this process.

**10. Regime change has opened up a new potential democratic era and space for championing women’s rights and equality in Sudan.** Viewed positively, the Ministry of Labour and Social Development is the lead ministry for gender-related rights and legislation.

### III Sector-Based Gender Analysis: Justice and Social Affairs

**11. Gender Based Violence (GBV) remains a highly prevalent and persistent phenomenon facing women and girls in Sudan.** The most common forms of GBV include harmful traditional norms and practices related to female genital mutilation or cutting (FGM/C), early and forced marriage, and physical and sexual violence (including Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)). Yet there is significant variation between states, and between urban and rural areas. Rural and conflict-affected communities are the most vulnerable population groups, in particular nomads, pastoralists and IDPs.

**12. FGM/C is still highly prevalent, with an estimated 9 out of 10 women (aged 15-49 years) having undergone the procedure.** FGM/C in Sudan is driven and influenced by a mix of socio-cultural factors, gender norms and power relations (Population Council, 2018). Led by UNFPA and UNICEF, a nationwide advocacy strategy was launched in 2008 known as the ‘Saleema Initiative’. While the campaign was criticized as weak with ‘insufficient dialogue’, social attitudes are purportedly shifting in some regions, and there is diminishing support for FGM/C by women themselves, particularly in urban areas. The medicalization of the practice in urban centres represents a concerning trend however. In April 2020, Sudan finally passed a law outlawing any form of FGM/C in an amendment to Sudan’s Criminal Code.

**13. Early or underage marriage remains significant in Sudan, with over a third of young women (aged 20-24 years) married by 18 years of age.** Access to education, family poverty levels and family background may all influence the prevalence of early marriage. Early child marriage (under 15 years) is now on the decline, and teenage marriages are becoming less common in urban, educated and wealthier households. The Sharia-based *Personal Status Law* (1991) was introduced as a legal framework for family and marriage practices, but this still permits legal unions for girls as young as 10 years old. Since 2016, child marriage has been in the spotlight, following the urgent recommendation from the UN.

**14. Physical and sexual gender-based violence remain highly prevalent across the country, although data is limited.** In particular, domestic violence is considered to be ‘widespread, pervasive and remains largely invisible’ as a result of a lack of reporting mechanisms, data collection and policies and programmes (OCHR, 2016). Sexual violence and rape tend to be more pervasive in conflict areas (for example, parts of Darfur). While legislation remains weak, a number of policies and strategies on violence against women have been developed, including the *National Plan for Eradicating Violence Against Women* (2011-2016), and its successor (2015-2031), although the latter was not endorsed.

**15. In pursuing legal support for GBV, the current justice system is considered unclear and ‘ineffective’ (OHCHR, 2016), in particular in regions affected by conflict and instability, with access to justice inhibited by cultural norms, geographical distance and security concerns.**

### IV Sector-based Gender Analysis: Education, Maternal Health and WASH

**16. There have been concerted efforts in strategy and policy development, and service delivery in the education, health and WASH sectors over the past decade.**

**17. In 2019, almost a third of primary school-aged children still remain out of school (2.5 million children). School access and participation (including in pre-school) has improved markedly since 2009, but progress remains uneven and gender disparities are prevalent.** In 2016-17, the proportion of out-of-school girls was higher than boys at the basic level of education (the Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) was approximately 75 percent for boys, and 71 percent for girls). Gender gaps are also observed at secondary and tertiary levels, but at these levels, larger numbers of girls are enrolled than boys, indicating greater dropout by boys. Gender, geography and wealth are key determinants of access to, and participation in, quality education in Sudan. Non-participation of girls may be attributed to a mix of inter-related factors, including the persistence of negative community cultural attitudes

towards girl's education, early marriage, movement in nomadic families, domestic chores, and distance from home to school, especially in conflict-affected areas. Poor school facilities and learning environments, and a lack of female teachers also deter girls' participation.

**18. Over the last three decades, Sudan has made significant progress in improving maternal and child health outcomes. Maternal mortality rates remain high however (311/100,000 live births) and Sudan is still far from meeting the 2015 MDG target (134/100,000).** The utilization of skilled birth attendants (with midwifery skills) for delivery care has shown positive trends (77.5 percent of births are attended by skilled health personnel); however quality of care remains variable especially in rural areas. Sudan has still one the lowest rates of family planning use in sub-Saharan Africa and fertility rates remain significant (the Total Contraceptive Prevalence Rate is 12.2 percent and the Fertility Rate is 3.57 per woman). Key barriers to maternal healthcare include a lack of access to adequate facilities and trained staff, the high costs of services and medicines, and the persistence of local customs and beliefs that discourage the use of reproductive health services.

**19. While there are positive trends in WASH in Sudan, only two thirds of the population has access to improved drinking water and less than a third has access to improved sanitation, falling well below SDG targets of universal access. Yet access and services vary widely between the states and population groups.** Poor access to water and unhygienic conditions, and widespread open defecation are compounding health and nutrition vulnerabilities across all states (OCHA, 2020), especially risks during the global Covid-19 pandemic; and influencing women and girls' safety and access to basic services.

## **V Sector-based Gender Analysis: Participation in the Economy**

**20. The Sudanese population remains primarily engaged in the agricultural rural economy, particularly women.** There are major gender distortions in the labour market, as two thirds of women remain outside of the labour force altogether, and there are distinct geographic inequalities. Socio-cultural factors still play a major role in influencing women's access to, and participation in livelihoods, business, credit and services, and natural resources such as land and water. Women's rural livelihoods are further affected by environmental stresses, due to climate change and land degradation.

**21. Land ownership among women is uncommon, with a resulting lack of collateral for credit, and lack of access to membership in cooperatives and extension and production technology.** Women's access to banking is inhibited by the poor regulatory and business environment, as well as existing social and cultural practices. The Central Bank's 'Pro-Women' Micro Finance Policy (2008) has proved unsuccessful for women, especially in rural areas.

**22. The informal economy is growing, particularly in urban environments and there is an increasing participation of women.** Women's business activities often remain constrained however due to illiteracy, inexperience and limited access to markets, resources and services. In the absence of a strong TVET policy, women in vocational occupations still tend to be confined to traditionally defined roles, for example in food production, hair salons and garment businesses. Women entrepreneurs from all social classes encounter a number of socio-economic challenges that influence business participation and development arising from a lack of institutional support and protection, as well as social norms.

**23. Gender dynamics are observed in employment, with women less likely to earn a wage, or receive equal remuneration as men (ILO, 2014). Gender influences sector participation of workers, particularly in the rural areas.** While women are present in the public sector, including as professionals, there is significant discrimination against women in the formal private sector. Unemployment and vulnerability among youth, particularly young men, contributes significantly to regular and irregular migration.

**24. Tradeswomen's associations and unions have remained largely elusive in Sudan but new trends are emerging in urban and rural areas.** Supported by NGOs, the development of Village Savings and Lending Associations (VSLAs) in regions such as Darfur but also in Gadarif and Kassala have boosted women's micro-businesses, and generated both social and economic benefits

**25. The recent Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (I-PRSP) (2012-2016) includes a section dedicated to economic growth and employment creation and provides a platform for sector and crosscutting policies.** Sudan lacks a national employment policy however to accelerate economic diversification and promote economic participation. With the deteriorating economic situation, macro-economic policies are currently in the spotlight. UN Women is advocating for the introduction of gender sensitive policies related to public spending, budgeting, taxation and employment.

## VI Evaluating Gender Equality, and Inclusion in a Fragile Context

26. There have been tangible efforts in policy and strategy making in gender equality and development in Sudan over the past 10-15 years, yet repressive legislation and the slow implementation of new policies have held back grassroots change and equitable development. In order to overcome gender discrimination and foster women's participation, there is a need to draw on top down as well as bottom up approaches in promoting gender equality and inclusion.

27. **A strong and united women's movement with rural outreach is now perceived as vital to promoting gender equality in Sudan.** At an institutional level, there is a need for strategic government leadership to promote gender equality as a pathway to development, inclusion and prosperity, through national-level campaigns and media, improved service delivery, and civil society action.

## VII Recommendations

28. The report identifies **concrete sector recommendations** for accelerating the advancement of gender equality and building resilience through formal institutions and political participation, social affairs and justice, education and human capital development, health systems strengthening, WASH, economic growth and development (agribusiness, enterprise, and employment). Key recommendations include:

- **Promoting gender equality in institutional structures and legislation** by supporting the *National Commission on Women and Gender Equality*, and promoting women's political participation (at least 40 percent). Other key priorities include implementing the *Action Plan* for UNSCR 1325 for women's inclusion in peace processes, and conducting a rigorous review of the system for gender statistics (and the collection of data).
- **Promoting gender equality in social affairs and justice** through the enforcement, development and reform of relevant legislation related to GBV (including formulating a new inclusive Personal Status/Family Law); and supporting national and state-level advocacy.
- **Promoting gender equality in education, and human capital** by developing national strategies to boost girls' participation in basic and (lower) secondary education, improving quality of pre-school programmes, and facilitating investment in school resources and infrastructure (including girl-friendly environments).
- **Improving maternal health** by expanding access to and quality of maternal health services, facilitating investment in health sector infrastructure and resources, and rolling out a national campaign to promote use of reproductive health and family planning services.
- **Improving access to WASH** by strengthening service delivery in marginalized areas, facilitating a national campaign on hygiene promotion, and implementing improved monitoring and evaluation.
- **Supporting gender in the economy** by promoting gender-sensitivity in macro-economic policies; facilitating a *National Employment Policy* with support for women's employment; and increasing national level awareness raising of 'Women in the Economy'.
- **Promoting gender equality in infrastructure development (and renewable energies)** by facilitating women's inclusion in road/construction projects (through PPDP), and supporting women's professional training in renewable energies and access to emerging resources.
- **Promoting gender in the environment** through ensuring special attention to women's needs in the *National Land Commission*.

**Gender rights and equality represent fundamental areas for change in Sudan as the country emerges from three long decades of political oppression, in particular the suppression of women's rights. The context remains uncertain however, with the persistence of poor human development indicators, inequality and regional instability, and new threats posed by climate change.** Over a third of households in Sudan are estimated to be poor, with a quarter falling below the extreme poverty line (AfDB, 2018). Significant regional disparities exist in terms of the prevalence and scope of poverty, and the western, southern and Red Sea states are shown to be the most deprived regions. Following the secession of South Sudan in July 2011, Sudan has struggled with the loss of about three quarters of the country's oil revenues (World Bank, 2015). After years of poor investment, basic services are now strained and there is a growing economic crisis that is leading to 'worsening food insecurity, deteriorating healthcare, and other needs across Sudan' (OCHA, 2020). This is further exacerbated by the health crisis and socio-economic consequences of COVID-19. UN Women highlights violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) as prevalent and a 'critical hindering factor' for human development and peace building in Sudan.<sup>3</sup>

**In 2019, after months of popular protests, the former regime under military dictatorship was toppled and a new (draft) Interim Constitution was developed<sup>4</sup> by a transitional government. New administrative structures are now being set up, and international assistance and partnerships are being explored and re-defined to pave the way for a democratic government.<sup>5</sup> Gender goals stand high on the agenda among civil society activists.** The Transitional Government has indicated its commitment to building sustainable peace, addressing the economic crisis, instituting legal reforms and guaranteeing women's rights<sup>6</sup>, despite the challenging social, economic and physical environment. According to UNHCR (2020), there are an estimated 2.97 million 'people of concern' in Sudan, including 1.86 million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)<sup>7</sup> and over a million refugees. Protracted displacement remains a key concern with a need for 'durable solutions' that can ensure security in return areas, reduce gender-based vulnerabilities, and improve living conditions for displaced populations (World Bank, 2019). Forcibly displaced (IDPs and refugees) as well as host communities face high levels of poverty and food insecurity, and are 'in urgent need of income and livelihood opportunities'.

**This report presents a *Country Gender Equality Profile* for Sudan examining core trends in gender and inclusion, existing policies and legalisation, and institutional capacity to promote gender equality in a fragile context, with change and progress assessed since 2005.** In this introductory chapter, the report objective, approach and methods are elaborated. Towards understanding the scope of gender equality and development, the importance of appreciating institutions and cultural dynamics is emphasised. The patriarchal nature of Sudanese society is discussed, and the varying realities within the country. Finally, the report structure is outlined and the limitations described.

### 1.1 REPORT OBJECTIVE AND APPROACH

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**The *Gender Profile* is intended to inform development assistance policies, and support strategies for promoting gender equality and poverty reduction in Sudan. Specifically, the report explores key gender inequalities that are continuing to constrain inclusive growth, identifies key gaps and challenges in current policies and programmes, and highlights best practices and strategies for action.** In this approach, it is aligned with country reports related to equality and rights (ERT, 2014), and economic participation (ILO, 2014).

**The report takes a sectoral and institutional approach to assessing gender equality and inclusion across Sudan to examine trends on the ground, and progress within specific line ministries, legislation and services.** The value of the report is not in the provision of new statistical data<sup>8</sup>, but instead, in a consolidation of information known, a distillation of key trends (and attitudes / perspectives) and institutional progress, and in-depth analysis. The report takes a predominant focus on

the national level, but integrates progress in three states: Gezira, Gadarif and North Darfur<sup>9</sup>, and thus draws attention to regional perspectives and differences.

**The report also aligns with the strategies, policies and frameworks of AfDB and UN Women. This includes the AfDB Ten-Year Strategy (2013-2022), where gender is stated as an area of special emphasis, the High-5s (particularly 'Improving the Quality of Life for the People of Africa'), the Gender Strategy, and the Strategy for Addressing Fragility and Building Resilience in Africa, among several others. UN Women, as the lead UN agency for gender equality and empowerment, is guided by several international agreements, including UN Women's Strategic Plan (2018–2021), the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (PFA) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).**

**Box 1.1: AfDB's commitment to sustainable development, inclusion and resilience in Sudan**<sup>10</sup>

As per its institutional mandate, AfDB's projects contribute to fostering sustainable socio-economic development, inclusiveness and resilience in Sudan. To maximize positive development impacts and prevent/mitigate any negative repercussions, AfDB applies various lenses, such as the gender lens/gender marker system, the fragility lens (including addressing social, economic, political environmental/climate and regional drivers of fragility; providing support via the Transition Support Facility, TSF etc.), the climate and jobs lenses, the Bank's Integrated Safeguards Systems (ISS), the Additionality and Development Outcomes Assessment Framework (ADOA) for non-sovereign/private sector operations, among many others.

**The report elaborates initially on progress in institutional arrangements, policy making and women's political participation.** It then turns to progress and change related to specific sectors, including social affairs and justice, education and health, and the economy. It highlights institutional-level progress and strategies, and development initiatives led by different stakeholders. It discusses trends in women and girls' participation in social, economic and political spheres, and access to basic services and resources. From an economic perspective, the report includes key trends related to gender and participation in rural livelihoods, access to resources, enterprise and employment.

### **Methodology**

**The study is based on a review of literature, recent field experiences and studies, and qualitative field research conducted in Khartoum and at state level, in Gezira, Gadarif, and North Darfur.** These states were purposefully selected as contrasting regions, in terms of geography, conflict, services, agricultural development, and the numbers of refugees and IDPs.<sup>11</sup> Practical research tools included semi-structured key informant interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions and observation. *Phase 1* of the fieldwork included 34 KIIs and eight state-level focus group discussions with government, aid actors, donors, civil society and business representatives in Khartoum and across the three target states (see [Appendix 2](#)). In *Phase 2*, selected participants from *Phase 1* alongside other key actors were invited to participate in three national level focus groups/workshops in Khartoum. These meetings aimed to reflect on, and further interrogate key themes that had emerged in the first phase of the field research, and allow additional points of clarification to be included in the research findings. Details of participants are provided in [Appendix 3](#).

## **1.2 INSTITUTIONS, CULTURE AND GENDER IN SUDAN**

**This report places a strong emphasis on examining institutions and their dynamics towards appreciating gender and development, particularly in 'fragile environments' (Ritchie, 2016).** In Sudan, formal institutions are still being established in a challenging context, and informal institutions remain dominant in social, economic and political life, including norms, customs, and traditions. Social norms and relations shape evolving patterns of institutions, and are the roots of exclusion (World Bank, 2013a). Gender inequality and exclusion are linked to the persistence of discriminatory norms and relations, and the inequitable distribution of resources. Such gender-related discrimination is often the underlying cause of poverty and underdevelopment within less developed societies, particularly among women and girls. It is also a critical barrier to the attainment of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Given the link between gender inequality, poverty and development, an

institutional analysis can shed light on the dynamics of evolving norms and formal laws, and social, political and economic trends.

### ***Subordination, exclusion and conflict but diverse realities***

**In Sudanese society, strong patriarchal norms prevail, with men expected to be the decision-makers and protectors, and women, the homemakers and child carers. The patriarchal system in Sudan has been shaped by the interaction and (re)construction of culture, religion, tribal affiliation, geography and politics.** This has resulted in a male dominated hierarchy at the household, tribal and public levels, and socially excluded and subordinated women, especially in rural areas. Gender relations may be labelled as ‘complex’, with differences across age groups, social class and rural-urban locales. The imbalance in development, the unequal share of wealth and power, the neglect of social services, especially education and health, the imposition of discriminative laws and regulations, and the prevalence of insecurity and gender-based violence have all reinforced male domination.

**As a consequence of social and institutional oppression, women and girls in Sudan have suffered from various injustices at the family, community and broader public level.** Women have little access to resources, and limited decision-making power, with minimal participation in political forums. The rendering of women to be powerless has been used to justify women’s weakness and inequality, and to reinforce the status quo, with trickle down effects on future generations, and perpetuating, and if not increasing levels of injustices (Elkarib, 2016b). The long-term and on-going conflicts have significantly increased Sudanese women’s vulnerability to violence. This is reflected in high levels of sexual violence perpetrated by warring parties during conflicts. Displaced women and girls in particular are at a high risk of sexual abuse and rape. Such serious forms of violence against women are not adequately reported due to a lack of protection and justice mechanisms, social stigma and cultural impunity for the perpetrators.

*Appendix 4 provides an overview of Sudan, with basic development and gender indicators.*

## **1.3 REPORT STRUCTURE**

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The report is structured as follows: **Chapter II** discusses state building, institutions and legislative architecture in Sudan as a platform for country gender and development, and specifically focuses on gender frameworks, rights and policies, and women’s political participation. **Chapter III** examines gender-related progress in the sectors of justice and social affairs in Sudan. In particular, the chapter investigates trends related to gender-based violence (GBV) including female genital mutilation or cutting (FGM/C), early and forced marriage, and physical and sexual-based violence. It discusses institutional progress, and laws, policies, and strategic action. **Chapter IV** examines gender-related progress in access to basic services, particularly in education and maternal health. The chapter looks at institutional progress, and policies, plans and service delivery in the health and education sectors. **Chapter V** examines gender and the economy, and specifically discusses access to, and participation in livelihoods, enterprise and employment. Once again, it discussed relevant institutional progress; and policies, plans and affirmative action. Finally, **Chapter VI** summarizes, and reflects further on the study findings on gender equality, inclusion and development in Sudan. Finally, **Chapter VII** outlines key recommendations for promoting gender equality and inclusion in a fragile and complex environment.

## **1.4 REPORT LIMITATIONS**

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**The practical research was limited to the urban areas in each of the target locations, and did not include extensive community-level visits.** In view of regime change and new aspirations for gender recognition and (women’s) equitable participation, discussions were greatly dominated by legislative reform and political participation, particularly related to women. To explore thematic topics in more detail, the report endeavoured to draw on various field level studies and gender research across the region. It is important to note that the report is not a comprehensive reference document on all gender-related issues affecting the Sudanese population, or a full (formal) institutional level analysis. Rather, it aims to capture key characteristics of the country/regional situation in terms of gender equality and development, and highlight critical trends related to gender and change using available data and studies. The report does not look in detail at the situation of HIV/AIDS (with its low prevalence)<sup>12</sup>, or cross-

border migration, although such topics warrant future monitoring and investigation. Data was predominantly drawn from the most recent Multi Indicator Cluster Surveys led by national and regional authorities with UNICEF (CBS and UNICEF, 2016), ILO (2014), and World Bank (2015) (Economic Memorandum).

## II STATE-BUILDING AND LEGISLATIVE ARCHITECTURE, AND INCLUSION

In this chapter, the scope of state building, institutions and legislation in Sudan and progress towards inclusion over the past decade is discussed with a focus on gender frameworks, rights and policies, and women’s participation. In particular, the chapter discusses institutional arrangements and gender, including rights achievements (laws and policies), and the status of women’s political participation. The Reflections section discusses current trends and challenges in working towards gender equality and political inclusion.

### 2.1 INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND GENDER

**Gender and women’s rights have been considered extremely sensitive topics in the context of Sudan, with their strong perceived links to Islam and the local culture.** Yet, it is critical to appreciate and reflect on Sudan’s history to understand the uncertain pathway towards women’s formal rights, and the conflicting pressures of political Islam and war.

**The movement towards women’s legal rights in Sudan was in fact precipitated early within the region, galvanised by the establishment of the Sudanese Women’s Union in 1952.** Over the subsequent ‘modernisation period’ (1956-1983), the movement accelerated social and political mobilisation for women’s rights. During this time, the formalisation of many women’s rights was instituted, including laws on consensual marriage, divorce, child custody and allowance rights. Girls’ school enrolment also notably increased. Progress in the attainment of women’s rights was abruptly halted and suppressed however with the shift to political Islam and the adoption of Sharia Law between 1983-2005.

**In a return to more democratic structures, a new Interim National Constitution was finally instituted in 2005.** While the Constitution enshrined new rights for women, the oppressive political context enabled the persistence of a number of discriminatory laws and orders. In particular, this included the *Personal Status Law* (1991) that incorporated discriminatory provisions related to marriage, divorce, custody of children, and inheritance rights (discussed in Chapter 3 and 4), thus establishing a ‘strong patriarchal and male dominated system’ (Badawi and Folcio, 2016). In Khartoum state, it also included the *Public Order Act* (1996) extending section 152 of the *Criminal Law Act*, with the incorporation of a number of restrictions against women in the capital to ‘preserve’ public order and decency.<sup>13</sup> In 2006, a Presidential Decree abolished several categories of public order crimes. Two major legal reforms followed in 2010 and 2015, in particular addressing the issue of rape (Chapter 3).

**Towards a new era of democracy and rights, in 2019, after months of civil protest, the military regime of President Omar Al Bashir was toppled.** A transitional government was jointly formed in

**Figure 2.1: Women’s Rights in the Transitional Draft Constitution (2019)**

<p><b>Draft Constitution (2019)</b></p>	<p><b>Chapter 14: The document of Rights and Freedoms.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The state protects women’s rights as mentioned in the international and regional agreements signed by Sudan</li> <li>• The state provides equal rights for men and women in the political and civilian and social and cultural and economic areas, equal pay, equal work conditions and promotional conditions. The state should guarantee the rights of women in all fields and should work for prompting it.</li> <li>• The state should fight the bad practices, which undermine the women rights and dignity.</li> <li>• The state should provide free health care for mothers, children and pregnant women.</li> </ul>
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August 2019 by the Transitional Military Council and the Forces for Freedom and Change.<sup>14</sup> A new (draft) Interim Constitution has been developed with explicit references to women's rights and gender equality (see Figure 2.1), and the declaration calls for twelve independent commissions including the *Commission for Women and Equality*. While some progress has been made over recent months, including through ongoing peace talks, negotiations, and border security coordination with Ethiopia, there is a need to maintain momentum and accelerate the establishment of a comprehensive peace agreement in Sudan for country stability and prosperity, and strengthening women's inclusion.<sup>15</sup>

### 2.1.1 Government ministries and focal points

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**The Ministry of Labour and Social Development (previously the Ministry of Social Welfare, Women and Child Affairs) leads on gender rights and social issues in Sudan.** Under the previous regime, a number of institutional mechanisms were established to support the promotion and protection of women's human rights; but the roles and responsibilities of the various structures were reported to often overlap and were not coordinated, and now require review (OCHR, 2016). For example, women's directorates were set up in all states and gender focal points assigned within each ministry. A National Committee for the Advancement of Women was also established. Other structures include the *Child and Family Protection Unit* (under the Ministry of Interior), established in 2005, that incorporates a department for psychological and social support, a special child agency responsible for investigations, as well as a special children's court. Meanwhile, the *Unit for the Eradication of Violence against Women and Children* (now under Ministry of Labour and Social Development) was set up to combat violence against women and children; and state level units to Combat Violence against Women and Children were established in North, South and West Darfur, Khartoum, Al-Jazeera, and Kassala States. Finally, a Gender Desk has been established at major police stations.

## 2.2 PROGRESS IN GENDER, RIGHTS AND LEGISLATION SINCE 2005

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**Over the past decade, Sudan has re-articulated its national development policy framework in several national strategies and plans incorporating various gender goals, including the second Five Year National Development Plan (2012-2016), the Three-Year Salvation Economic Programme (2011-2013), the Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (2012-2014), and Twenty-Five Years National Strategy (2007-2031).** At an international level, the Ministry of Labour and Social Development highlighted the achievement of implementing the 'Beijing 2007 Roadmap', with global gender commitments. Further efforts have been demonstrated in the recognition of core global conventions related to gender. Meanwhile, at the country level, there has been progress in the formulation of new protective laws and policies for women and children.

**Despite policy and strategy reform, the major force engaged in the promotion of gender equality on the ground in Sudan has been the country's socio-political women's movement.** In the negotiation of women's rights with the Sudanese state, the movement has presented parallel but contrasting positions: with some female activists focusing on the 'emancipated' Muslim women, and the alignment of Sharia law with international women's human rights (Islamic feminism); while others have campaigned for the 'protected' Muslim woman, in a 'conservative, gender-segregated doctrine which refutes all non-Islamic laws (Salafism)'.<sup>16</sup> Meanwhile, there are also well-known academic institutions that seek to bolster women's development, status and contribution in society (for example, Ahfad University for Women).<sup>17</sup>

**In the absence of sufficient government action, tangible progress towards change in women and girls' rights has been slow and uneven, with continued restrictions on space for women's citizen participation and limited resource allocation for women to realize civil society initiatives.**<sup>18</sup> The lack of progress on social and economic rights for women remains problematic for equitable development. Concerns about the violation of women's rights in Sudan especially various forms of gender discrimination, and the lack of adequate protection against rape and other forms of sexual violence has been raised by both regional and international bodies (REDRESS and the Sudanese Human Rights Monitor, 2014). As summarized by SIDA, in Sudan, women's rights have been both 'politicised and sensitive', and the struggle for gender justice by Sudanese women has been 'fragmented and divided by region, ethnicity, religion and class' (SIDA, 2011). Due to the lack of gender analysis and understanding of gendered needs, appropriate gender interventions remain weak in development programming

(Elkarib, 2016a).

### 2.2.1 International instruments on gender and human rights

Sudan recognizes several international gender and human rights frameworks and is signatory to number of international conventions and treaties that provide guidance for the achievement of women's empowerment and gender equality (Box 2.1). Sudan is a Member State of the African Union (AU), the League of Arab States (Arab League) and of the United Nations (UN), and therefore has human rights obligations at both the regional and universal levels.<sup>19</sup> As a UN Member State, Sudan agrees to 'oversight of various UN human rights bodies, including the Human Rights Council and its Universal Periodic Review and thematic special procedures'.

As yet however, Sudan has not ratified the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in addition to the Africa Protocol on Women's Rights due to the 'potential clash with Sharia law'<sup>20</sup> and reservation/disagreement by some religious groups. In early 2020, women's civil society groups stepped up the pressure for the Transitional Government to sign and ratify the CEDAW convention.<sup>21</sup>

**Box 2.1: Key international instruments signed/recognized by Sudan<sup>22</sup>**

INTERNATIONAL TREATY OR CONVENTION	DATE SIGNED/ RECOGNISED
<i>International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)</i>	1986
<i>International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)</i>	1986
<i>Global Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (1990)</i>	1990
<i>UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR)</i>	2000
<i>Protocol on the Prevention and Suppression of Sexual Violence Against Women and Children</i>	2006
<i>United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)</i>	2009
<i>Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.</i>	2014
<i>The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (UNDP 2015)</i> 	2015
<i>Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa</i>	<i>Signed but not ratified</i>
<i>Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)</i>	

### UN Approach to Gender in Sudan

The UN Women is the UN body dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women that supports the recognition of gender rights and global obligations in Sudan, and coordinates and promotes activities related to advancing gender equality. The UN Women is also involved in all deliberations and agreements linked to the 2030 Agenda.<sup>23</sup>

### 2.2.2 National development of gender-related laws, policies and strategies

Complementing global frameworks, there has been further legislative efforts and progress at the national level over the past two decades, in the development of specific laws, policies and strategies related to gender rights and protection.

**There have been a number of laws formulated that aimed to support Sudanese women's development, protection and participation in public life (Badawi and Folcio, 2016).** Pro-women and girls' legal reforms include the *Civil Service Act* (2007), related to access to jobs and work and equal pay; the revised *Nationality Act* (2005), granting women the right to pass nationality to their children; the *Armed Forces Act* (2007), giving special protection of women during armed conflict; and the 2009 amendment of the *Criminal Code* (1991), covering war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity. Meanwhile, in steps towards women's political empowerment, the *Law on National Elections* (2008) stipulates that women have equal rights to men. This includes a quota system of a minimum of 25 percent of seats for women in political decision-making. This was amended to 30 percent in 2014. In the draft Interim Constitution (2019), the quota for women's participation has been further increased to at least 40 percent; however, enforceability of these rights has been limited.

National-level policies and strategies for women's development include the *National Plan for Advancement of Women* (1998-2003), the *National Policy for Women* (2005), and the *National Women's Empowerment Policy* (2007) under the Ministry of Social Welfare (Women & Child Affairs). The *National Action Plan for the Implementation of 1325* (Women, Peace & Security) aims to ensure women proportional and meaningful participation at all levels of conflict transformation and peace-building processes (endorsed in March 2020).<sup>24</sup>

Other specific legal mechanisms to ensure women's protection and promote women's empowerment across the Ministries of Justice, Social Welfare, Education and Health; and Central Bank of Sudan have included the following:

- *National Plan for Combating Gender-based Violence* (2005)
- *Establishment of a Family & Child Protection Unit* (2006)
- *National Girls' Education Policy* (2007)
- *Pro-women Microfinance Policy*<sup>25</sup> (2008)
- *National Strategy for Eradication of FGM/C* (2008)
- *National Health Policy* (2007/11)- and *Reproductive Health Strategy*

### ***A closer look at the gender policy***

**It is clear that existing national gender policies in Sudan require updating to reflect the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and new priorities of the government. The overall strategic objective of the *National Women's Empowerment Policy (WEP) (2007)* was to 'empower women, integrate them and deepen their participation in all aspects of sustainable development' in vein with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Beijing goals.** The policy's six priority areas were proposed by the representatives of Sudanese women at the Oslo donor conference in 2005; these include health and environment, education, economic empowerment, human rights and law, political participation and decision-making, peace and conflict resolution.<sup>26</sup> The policy aimed to complement and advance efforts to support women, for example in the *Comprehensive National Strategy* (1992-2002), national policies and plans related to women, and various sector plans. At the time, the Ministry of Social Welfare and Women and Child Affairs was elected as the core ministry for women's affairs at the national level, with support of coordinating women units at sector ministries of health, justice, foreign affairs, labour, education, agriculture, finance, industry and the national authority of statistics to ensure the incorporation of gender issues into sector-level plans.

**At a fundamental level, the WEP (2007) was viewed positively, and was perceived to contribute to gender-mainstreaming efforts.** But notably, it did not include an explicit reference to facilitating the implementation of Resolution 1325. As an action plan, monitoring frameworks and specific targets were lacking; it did not also enable the tracking of progress in gender equality. Further, Sudan has yet to adopt gender-sensitive budgeting processes to support gender-related action and initiatives. In 2016, the WEP was in fact revised and expanded to include 16 pillars, with a stronger emphasis on violence against women and the inclusion of gender dimensions in macro-economic policies but this was never formally shared or endorsed.<sup>27</sup> Under the new (draft) Interim Constitution, national gender policies will require revisiting to support key platforms and entry points for further promoting gender equality and action, particularly related to existing (and evolving) legislation, policies and strategies.

**The (draft) *Interim Constitution (2019)* provides a constitutional framework that both recognises gender equality, and prioritises gender as a national area for urgent attention.** In November 2019, the much-detested Khartoum *Public Order Act (1998)*<sup>28</sup> that controlled how women dressed and behaved was repealed.<sup>29</sup> Yet many repressive and inequitable laws still remain that require review or reform to reflect the new Interim Constitution, and these continue to hinder women's freedom and discriminate against them. For example, several infringements on women's rights remain in the *Personal Status Law* and *Penal Code* (discussed in Chapter 3), along with several other laws.

## 2.3 PROGRESS IN GENDER AND POLITICAL/PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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### 2.3.1 Sudanese women in politics

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**Women's political activism in Sudan can be traced back to the establishment of the Sudanese Communist Party in 1946 (with membership open to both sexes), and the promotion of the emancipation of women as one of its key goals (Badawi and Folcio, 2016).** The Sudanese Women's Union (SWU) that was subsequently formed played a major role in the achievement of universal suffrage in Sudan (1964). In the military regime of the 1970s, the SWU evolved into the Sudanese Democratic Women's Union (SDWU), and the organisation made a number of further gains in women's rights including, the right to enter all fields of work, equal pay for equal work, paid maternity leave and the right of girls to higher education. Further achievements included the enactment of the *Labour Law* (1973), and the *Pension Law* (1975) which secured pensions for disabled working women (ibid). Although not its central focus, the SDWU promoted civil rights including the protection against compulsory marriage, marriage of minors and polygamy, but was cautious not to directly criticize Sharia (Islamic law), the religious clergy (*ulema*) or other members of the religious establishment (Badawi and Folcio, 2016). Notably, while the Islamist Constitution in the 1980s and 1990s imposed restrictions on women's family rights and civil liberties, there were few limitations placed on women's education, work and political rights.

**Following the establishment of the Interim Constitution in 2005, renewed political progress was made in 2008 and again in 2014 in raising the quota for women's political participation. Even though women had the right to vote and to stand in elections, there were few women in public posts or in leadership positions in political parties.** Cultural, religious and political factors were cited to inhibit women's 'freedom of association, assembly and expression' (Badawi and Folcio, 2016). Female political activists also faced continued discrimination and harassment. Meanwhile, for women in public offices, the 'quality' of their political and public participation was cited to be poor. Under the previous regime, women in government tended to tow the party line and were criticized for not actually supporting the women's rights agenda, and even remaining passive as the old regime collapsed. Outside of government circles, women (and youth) in civil society have been described as 'vociferous' and standing up to injustices by engaging in public protests, particularly since 2011. As the economic situation deteriorated in 2013, women were frequently involved in street demonstrations, for example objecting to the hike in government prices of basic commodities such as bread and petrol, and this often resulted in police violence against women and women's imprisonment. Notably, men did not usually participate in these activities.

#### ***A historical political turning point for women: April 2019***

**The revolution in April 2019 marked a 'significant moment' for Sudanese women's public participation as urban women (young and old) joined the protest from 'all walks of life', together with young men.** Women who were unable to physically participate supported the resistance movement by opening up their houses and offering food and refreshments. It was the active participation of younger women that was perceived as particularly striking, and a departure from the norm. In the heat of the revolution, the protest space was the scene of impassioned political speeches, alongside hip-hop dancing.<sup>30</sup> For young women, this participation unleashed a new sense of confidence, empowerment and solidarity, pushed new boundaries around mobility, and invited public respect. Women felt emboldened to discuss and question taboo issues, for example related to women's societal roles and expectations and legal rights.

**At the state level, as indicated in Gezira and Gadarif, young women were also notably involved in the resistance movement, despite initial reservations by their parents. Later the reservations**

were replaced by feelings of pride in many families. Young women in Gezira described their experience of participating in the revolution as empowering and a turning point in their lives that gave them the 'right to dream'. In contrast, in the midst of this transformative time, there were also reports of sexual violence (including rapes) of young women, especially in Khartoum - as well as men, although these were significantly fewer in number - particularly by the army.<sup>31</sup> According to some women activists, Darfur was the only region that did not organize local protests for the revolution due to the heavy military presence.<sup>32</sup>

**The revolution came to an end in August 2019, following an escalation in regime-led hostilities<sup>33</sup>, and the new Transitional Government was established in Khartoum. In the (draft) Interim Constitution, the quota for women's political participation was raised to 40 percent.** During the revolution, the civil society movement *Women of Sudanese Civic and Political Groups* (MANSAM) had lobbied for equal participation. As part of their campaign and their push for new gender rights, the movement had drafted a document outlining their social, economic and political goals, *Women Declaration for Change*. Women activists felt that they had been central to the revolution and deserved new recognition in society and an equal standing at the table. Much to the activists' frustration, they were largely excluded from the talks<sup>34</sup> and in the formation of government. Only two out of 11 members of the Transitional Sovereign Council are female (18 percent). In the current cabinet of 20 ministries, 4 female ministers have been appointed (25 percent of cabinet) including the *Foreign Minister, Minister of Social Development and Labour, Minister for Youth and Sports, Minister of Higher Education*.

### **Insights into women's grassroots participation**

**At state level in Sudan, rural as well as urban women tend to still have a 'minor role' in community decision-making, political participation and civil service.** Outside of NGO operational areas and emerging trends in women's participation (Box 2.2), women tend to have a limited voice in 'popular dialogue' especially in the rural areas.<sup>35</sup> Indicating a hierarchy of 'clout', research in the rural areas of Greater Kordofan revealed that male voices were prioritized in community meetings, including those of farmers, pastoralists and nomads, and women had limited influence over local decision-making by governmental authorities.<sup>36</sup> Family men also dominate decision-making at the household level (i.e. father, husbands and brothers), particularly those related to assets, and major sales and purchases. A CARE study (2013) indicated that women often view their consultation in family decisions 'as either tokenistic or instrumentalist; to derive money, favours or buy-in'. When men are absent women or older boys (17 years plus) may make household decisions.

#### **2.3.2 Women in peace processes**

**The inclusion of women, as well as youth, the elderly, the disabled and rural/ethnic minorities in peace and reconciliation processes is viewed as critical for long-term peace and balanced country development.** Women's traditional role in peace initiatives was deemed instrumental in moving beyond conflict, particularly in regions such as Darfur. Women have been shown to play an active role in peace at various levels, yet this has often been overlooked or ignored during high level peace talks and negotiations (Badawi and Folcio, 2016). As a result, women's interests are often not reflected in negotiation outcomes. In the case of the 2005 *Comprehensive Peace Agreement* (CPA) and 2006 *Darfur Peace Agreement* (DPA), an equitable share of agreed power and resources was premised only around political forces and regional interests, with other constituencies or dimensions, such as gender, not taken into account.<sup>37</sup>

#### **Box 2.2: Promoting governance and peace building in Darfur**

In South Darfur (Belil and Kass), the NGO CARE takes an innovative approach to supporting community participation and local governance. Building on previous projects, a key aim of their current project is to strengthen the capacity of women and youth, and to promote inclusive community development. In so doing, the project aims to influence governance and decision-making processes at household, village and locality levels, and to ensure that the needs of vulnerable groups are reflected in the development priorities of the villages. The use of the 'Community Score Card' aims to support local bodies in their negotiations with government and service providers. This project is further boosted by activities funded under the *Darfur Conflict Peace and Stability Fund* (DCPSF).

Source: Ritchie (2018)

**While political parties in Sudan have become more involved in issues of gender justice, progress in women's participation in peace has remained stubbornly limited.** To date, the adoption of a gender perspective in addressing armed conflict, including measures to ensure the protection of and respect for human rights of women and girls, particularly as they relate to the constitution, the

electoral system, the police and the judiciary, has not been widely realized. Despite progress in quotas, the hegemony of the ruling party and the formal discrimination of women have ultimately constrained the women's agenda and participation. A persistent cause of concern is that women continue to be virtually absent from the peace table and are severely underrepresented as third-party mediators, as indicated both in past and current peace negotiations. Women's activism in civil society and at grassroots level rarely translates into their official recognition in peace processes, and women are seldom included in formal negotiations no matter how much women push and raise their voices.<sup>38</sup> There have been significant efforts to support women's participation in public private dialogue and peace-building processes in conflict-affected areas such as Darfur, resulting in 'moderate' levels of women's influence<sup>39</sup>. A recent evaluation of AfDB's project, 'Capacity Building for Enhanced Women Participation in Peace Building and Economic Activities' highlights the need to integrate broader empowerment processes into peace building projects, particularly related to women's livelihoods. Reports also draw attention to both the duplication of local peace initiatives and the lack of coordination between different development actors as inhibiting project efficiency (MBC, 2019).

**UNSCR 1325 is considered to be a key vehicle for building sustainable peace and ensuring women's meaningful participation in all stages of national peace processes.** Standing up for change, in October 2019, a representative from MANSAM in Sudan actively participated in the Annual UN Security Council debate on *Women, Peace and Security* emphasizing the importance of gender equality and women's rights in peace processes.<sup>40</sup> In this new political era, civil society in Khartoum has stressed that women's 'meaningful' participation was particularly crucial for the broader transformation of the country, including in establishing the transitional legislative council, in appointing civilian governors, in the peace process and in security sector reform.<sup>41</sup> MANSAM indicated that women's initial participation in the Juba peace talks was limited but they have since drafted a women's agenda for the talks, and elected a 15-member coordination committee.<sup>42</sup> At an institutional level, the critical role of women in peace has been bolstered by the recent endorsement of the UNSCR 1325 *National Action Plan*.

## 2.4 SUMMARY AND REFLECTIONS ON PERSISTING CHALLENGES

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**Over the past decade, international and national legislation related to gender equality and participation has been slowly improving, bolstered by gender rights articulated in the 2005 Interim Constitutional Framework.** Yet progress on the ground has been held back by the persistence of discriminatory laws and a context of institutional oppression that has continued to embrace religious conservatism, 'reinforcing discrimination against women'<sup>43</sup>. There was a sense that religious leaders that were pro-government (the old regime) were also 'anti-women'.<sup>44</sup>

**Following Sudan's revolution in 2019, a new hopeful democratic era has been ushered in, opening up new spaces and possibilities for women's inclusion, rights and development.** Respondents emphasized the active role that (urban) women played in the revolution, with the participation of younger women deemed particularly notable, including at state level. While there remains some dissatisfaction with women's subsequent inclusion in the transition process - including women's limited participation in talks and discussions - women's political quotas have been increased and 20 percent of cabinet ministers are now women, above countries such as Singapore.<sup>45</sup> Further efforts are now needed to boost the scope of women's participation and to improve the quality of that participation. The recent repeal of the *Public Order Act* is perceived as a strong signal of change in the new government's attitudes towards women. There is now cautious excitement in the potential for social, political and economic transformation in the country, especially for women and girls.

### *Sudan's revolution and women's rights - the 'revolution effect'*

**The 2019 revolution created a 'surge in public awareness of [women's] fundamental rights'<sup>46</sup> and a new sense of optimism, although this was arguably more confined to urban populations.** At state level, there were cases of young women feeling emboldened by the revolution to reclaim their own lives, move beyond unhappy marriages and re-pursue education and self-development ('*Tasgut Bas*' (Let it fall)).<sup>47</sup> The youth-led resistance committees demonstrated 'maturity and resilience'<sup>48</sup> and displayed the ability to play 'powerful roles'<sup>49</sup> in grassroots change. Their 'stubborn commitment' to the resistance movement is described as a radical new approach to civil action in Sudan.<sup>50</sup> In particular, the 'sit-in experience' in Khartoum was described as illustrating a 'real-life example' of gender equality by

showing a new respect for women and highlighting the importance of cooperation and solidarity. Women participated in the resistance ‘suffering torture’ alongside men. There is a strong sense that a new space has opened for youth expression and activism, and urban women are now anxious to sustain, build and strengthen the momentum to foster broader social change.<sup>51</sup> Women now report a greater freedom of movement, choice of dress and freedom of expression. However, discriminatory policies and laws still remain and especially affect the poor. The government emergency plan is also criticised as gender-blind.<sup>52</sup> Respondents indicated that new efforts should build on previous women’s rights initiatives, mobilize institutional support, engage more creatively with youth, women’s groups and civil society partners, and expand coverage to rural areas.<sup>53</sup> Women are keen to be represented and ‘raise their voice high’, especially on social media.<sup>54</sup>

### **Religion, culture and politics in a new era**

**Challenges in working towards gender equality are embedded in societal norms and formal institutional domains.** These include the ‘patriarchal mentality’ and culture, the education system and curriculum, the legal family status and discriminatory laws and policy (and a misunderstanding and misapplication of laws), and the use of women as ‘tools of war’ i.e. gender based violence in conflict areas.<sup>55</sup> In more turbulent and marginalized states such as North Darfur, cultural restrictions limit the spaces available for women’s participation.<sup>56</sup> Although traditional and religious leaders are being acquainted with women’s rights, their ‘fundamentalist’ discourse continues to encourage discrimination. As observed in the research, there are high levels of inequality between states, and between rural to urban areas. The root causes of discriminatory attitudes towards women are embedded in the local culture and have not been addressed. The persistence of the ‘deep state’ is indicated to be an additional barrier to change, presenting both security challenges and opposing narratives. Under the previous regime, SIHA (2017) indicated that ‘negative cultural and social perceptions’ of women promoted in official ideology led to a reinforcement of discrimination, harassment, and various forms of ill treatment of women activists. Women suffered oppression during these times as discriminatory beliefs and concepts were propagated through education and the media using the platform of religion.<sup>57</sup> Post-revolution, women respondents underscored the importance of women asserting their rights, supporting other women, and working alongside men to change patriarchal concepts. Future priorities should include the formulation of a new gender framework to guide the women’s movement within the context of Sudan’s ‘multi-cultural society’. At government level, the *Commission on Women and Equality* can lead the development of such a framework and provide a new approach to gender equality in national campaigns.

#### **Box 2.3: Views on gender rights/equality and political participation in Khartoum and at state level**

*“In April 2019, a momentous change took place in Sudan: People united around one goal and rejected sectarianism and social polarities, especially among the youth”* (representative, Ministry of Social Development and Labour, Khartoum)

*“The revolution created fertile soil to work on rights. There is optimism but challenges remain, including in uniting the various groups and learning how to work together to seek results - so we are not in competition”* (Development professional, Khartoum)

*“The revolution broke the sense of fear and we feel more free...young women participated in the revolution but despite this, [in general] women remain marginalised in decision-making at both formal and informal levels”* (Urban youth resistance focus group, El Fashir, North Darfur)

*“Before we felt like shadows but the revolution has opened up a new space for us and the ‘fear’ has gone...Our goal of gender equality is still far down the road and we are crawling but more women are joining the movement although rural women are yet to be seen”* (Urban female youth, Gadarif)

*“The old regime froze our minds and we now feel released from a box. We have energy, experience and dreams and while [restrictive] customs and traditions still remain, we will resist [suppression]”* (Urban female in youth resistance, El Fashir, North Darfur)

### **Key messages: Change (2005-20) in Gender, Institutions/Legislation and Political Participation**

- **There have been tangible efforts in gender commitments since 2005, in terms of new national gender policies (e.g. *Women's Empowerment Policy*) and various gender-related frameworks, policies and strategies in health, education, microfinance and protection.** Yet a complex institutional environment has led to slow and uneven change on the ground.
- Key international conventions and treaties signed or ratified include: *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*; *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*; *Global Convention on the Rights of the Child*; *UN Security Council Resolution 1325*, *UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* and the *UN Sustainable Development Goals*. Efforts have been stepped up to ratify the *Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women*.
- **Regime change in 2019 has opened up a new democratic era and space for championing women's rights and equality in Sudan.** Increased quotas for women's political participation have been introduced (40 percent) and women now hold 20 percent of ministerial posts.
- **UNSCR 1325 is considered to be a key vehicle for building sustainable peace.** The recent approval of the national Action Plan for UNSCR 1325 provides a crucial framework for this process.
- **Civil society and gender activists are now cautiously hopeful for nationwide change in women's rights and participation, although country instability, and pressures from the old regime and religious conservatives remain a threat to the new order.** A significant gap in gender equality persists between states, and between rural and urban areas.

### III SECTOR-BASED GENDER ANALYSIS: JUSTICE AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

This chapter examines gender-related progress in justice and social affairs in Sudan. In particular, it focuses on the scope and situation of gender-based violence (GBV), including female genital mutilation or cutting (FGM/C), early and forced marriage, and physical and sexual-based violence. These remain key areas of concern for human rights, security, and quality of life. In assessing institutional protection and response, progress in legislation and access to justice is discussed.

This chapter is related to [SDG 5: Gender Equality](#), [SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities](#), and [SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions](#).

#### 3.1 STATUS AND TRENDS RELATED TO GBV

**GBV remains a highly prevalent and persistent phenomenon facing women and girls in Sudan.**

The most common forms of GBV include harmful traditional norms and practices related to female genital mutilation or cutting (FGM/C), early and forced marriage, and physical and sexual violence (including Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)).

**According to the latest official data on the prevalence of GBV (CBS and UNICEF, 2016), it is clear that there is a slight reduction in the practices of FGM/C and early marriages among younger women.** There is significant variation in the prevalence of GBV between states, and between urban and rural areas (for marriage practices). Where data is available, attitudes indicate that there remains support for such practices by women themselves, but to a lesser extent in urban areas, and among women in wealthier and more educated households.

##### 3.1.1 FGM/C

**A traditional and deeply rooted custom in pastoralist communities in Northern and Eastern Africa, Female Genital Cutting (FGC) or Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is the cultural practice of removing all or parts of a girl's clitoris.** Variations of this invasive practice are carried out according to local customs and beliefs. In its simplest form, this refers to some level of excising of the clitoris of a girl or woman. In its more extreme form, this includes 'infibulation' (WHO Type III): the excising of the clitoris and labia, and the stitching together of the edges of the vulva (the external opening of the vagina). Until recent times, FGM/C has been a common, socially acceptable and condoned practice in agro-pastoralist communities across East Africa. From a rights perspective, the practice of FGM/C is argued to 'perpetuate gender inequality' and inhibit the participation and empowerment of women in society (Badawi and Folcio, 2016).

**In most states and households in Sudan, FGM/C has entailed the most severe form, WHO Type III (CBS & UNICEF, 2016), known locally as the 'Pharaonic' type.** Other types include WHO Type I or Type II, known locally as the *Sunna* and '*Sunna 2*', with the clitoris nicked or cut, some flesh removed; and in Type II, the orifice partially sewn closed. Customarily, Sudanese girls would be cut around 10-14 years of age, although it is now commonly carried out on younger girls between 5-10 years of age, often to avoid any objection by the girls themselves as they get older. Re-infibulation, or re-circumcision, is a traditional practice performed on circumcised women who have given birth. Traditionally, FGM/C is performed by the

**Figure 3.1: Key indicators related to GBV in Sudan**

INDICATORS RELATED TO GBV	NATIONAL (MICS, 2014)
<b>FGM/C</b>	
PREVALENCE OF FGM AMONG WOMEN (15-49 YRS)	86.6% (% those that been sewn closed 77%)
PREVALENCE OF FGM AMONG YOUNG WOMEN (15-19 YRS)	81.7% (% those that been sewn closed 70.8%)
PROPORTION OF WOMEN (15-49 YRS) THAT AGREE TO ONGOING FGM	40.9%
<b>EARLY MARRIAGE</b>	
WOMEN (20-49 YRS) THAT WERE MARRIED BEFORE 18 <sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY	38.0%
WOMEN (20-24 YRS) THAT WERE MARRIED BEFORE 18 <sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY	34.2%
WOMEN (20-24 YRS) THAT WERE MARRIED BEFORE 15 <sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY	11.9%
PROPORTION OF MARRIED WOMEN (20-24 YRS) WHOSE SPOUSES ARE 10 YEARS OR MORE OLDER	23.0%
<b>PHYSICAL AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE</b>	
PROPORTION OF WOMEN (15-49 YRS) THAT BELIEVE HUSBANDS ARE JUSTIFIED TO BEAT THEIR WIVES IN VARIOUS DISCIPLINARY RELATED CIRCUMSTANCES	34.0%

local village birthing attendants, who have 'little or no medical or surgical training' using non-sterilised razors and knives (CIS, 2013). A trend towards medicalization of the practice has been observed, particularly in the northern Sudanese states, according 'clinical' endorsement to the practice.

**FGM/C is still highly prevalent across Sudan as indicated by the latest Multi-Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS), with an estimated 86.6 percent of women (aged 15-49 years) having undergone the procedure (CBS AND UNICEF, 2016).** Notably, the prevalence of FGM/C was shown to be even higher among women from wealthy backgrounds and with higher levels of education. In general, there is little difference between rural and urban areas, but there is variation across the states. For example, an estimated 78.5 percent of women had undergone the procedure in Gadarif, in contrast to 86.9 percent of women in Gezira and 97.6 percent of women in North Darfur. Reduced prevalence among younger women (81.7 percent prevalence among women of 15-19 years) indicates a downward trend. In recent research by the Population Council (2018) in Khartoum and Gadarif states, 47 percent of young women and girls aged 0-19 years had been cut, and there were shifts in the intensity of the practice, with the Pharaonic type being replaced by the so-called 'Sunna' type. However, the increase in the medicalization of the practice, with 70 percent of young women circumcised by health care providers or trainer midwives, presents a disturbing paradox.

**Attitudes are indicated to be shifting and there is diminishing support for the practice by women themselves. In the MICS survey, only 40.9 percent of women aged 15-49 years were keen to pursue the practice, with higher levels of support in rural areas (CBS AND UNICEF, 2016).** There is notably little difference in attitudes between age groups, but there are now lower levels of support by urban women in wealthier households, and with higher levels of education. Female attitudes related to FGM/C varied across states: over half of women believe in the continuation of the practice in North Darfur in contrast to just 39.1 percent of women in Gadarif and 31.8 percent of women in Gezira.

**FGM/C in Sudan is driven and influenced by a mix of socio-cultural factors, gender norms and power relations (Population Council, 2018).** Led by UNFPA and UNICEF, a nation-wide advocacy strategy was launched in 2008 by the Sudan's National Council on Child Welfare (NCCW) and civil society partners known as the '*Saleema Initiative*' (Box 3.1). The campaign aimed to promote dialogue on FGM/C and to foster collective behavioural change within communities – celebrating 'Saleema' or uncut girls.<sup>58</sup> In Arabic, *saleema* means 'whole, healthy in body and mind, unharmed, intact, pristine, and untouched, in a God-given condition'.<sup>59</sup> Sudan is now participating in the *Global Joint Programme to Abandon FGM*, with five states currently targeted for advocacy and training events. In neighbouring Somalia, Newell-Jones (2016) drew attention to the diversity of potential stakeholders in the practice and their perspectives, knowledge and activism, ranging from community members (men and women), local leaders (traditional and religious) and local cutters, to medical practitioners, NGOs and CSOs, law enforcers and politicians. Notably, young men in Sudan may now hold contrasting positions: on the one hand, favouring FGM/C for their sisters to control excessive sexual desire and protect family honour; but on the other, preferring uncut girls for themselves for 'greater sexual responsiveness' (Population Council, 2018).

### **Box 3.1: The Saleema Initiative in Sudan**

Supported by UNICEF, the nation-wide 'Saleema Initiative' has aimed to foster 'positive communication tools' to change the way that people discuss and think about female genital cutting, and to promote new 'positive terminology' around the 'natural' (uncut) bodies of girls and women. In spearheading new narratives, Saleema aims to stimulate critical discussions about FGM/C at family and community levels through new 'talk pathways' and in new 'talk content'.

Source:

[https://www.unicef.org/sudan/pr otection\\_6092.html](https://www.unicef.org/sudan/pr otection_6092.html)

### **3.1.2 Early and forced marriage**

**In traditional communities in East Africa, marriage was viewed as the 'ultimate goal' for a girl and imperative to her livelihood security.** Early marriage (below 18 years) was common, and in particular, *child marriage*<sup>60</sup> among girls, with girls often married by the age of 12 or 13. In some rural communities, marriage typically followed the start of menstruation. By the age of 15, an unmarried girl would be considered 'flawed' and not playing her expected social role as a wife and mother. The family of the girl also customarily received a 'bride price', for example of cattle. 'Arranged' marriages describe situations wherein a man, or boy approaches a girl's family, and if approved, the parents of the girl proceed with the marital process with the corresponding family (although the mother and daughter have the right to refuse). A 'forced' marriage refers to marriages that are arranged and conducted

without the girl's consent; and may include 'compensation' marriages, where girls are offered in marriage to resolve community disputes and 'strengthen peace', or in the event of a murder. Child marriage is considered a human rights violation that affects both children's and women's rights to 'health, education, equality, non-discrimination, and freedom from violence and exploitation' (El Nagar, Eljack and Tonnessen, 2017).

**In Sudan, early or underage marriage remains significantly high, with an estimated 34.2 percent of young women aged 20-24 years married by 18 years (CBS AND UNICEF, 2016).** Child marriage (under 15 years) is still practiced but is now declining (11.9 percent of those aged 20-24 years). Teenage marriage is more common in rural areas and among the poorest households and among those with little or no education. There is significant regional variation however; just 12 percent of 15-19 year olds were married in Khartoum as compared to 16.6 percent in North Darfur, 21.1 percent in Gezira and 33.2 percent in Gadarif. Spousal age differences were also large; over a third of 15-19 year old females reported marrying a man more than 10 years older than them. Further, the continued practices of polygamy and dowries - that foster ideas of women as property - are common in Sudan. Over 20 percent of married women (aged 15-49 years) were in polygamous unions. Trends indicate social change however, as in the new generation, only 7.7 percent of married younger women (15-19 years) were in polygamous relationships.

**Access to education, family poverty levels, and family background may all influence the prevalence of early marriage in Sudan.** In urban areas in South Darfur, attitudes were changing with an emerging preference for brides to have completed secondary education (Ritchie, 2018). In progressive states such as Gezira, respondents indicate a resurgence of early marriage with the high cost of education.<sup>61</sup> In less educated areas, early marriage may be linked to family concerns about puberty and sexuality - 'i.e. the fear of shame or dishonour [of pre-marital relations and sex], poverty, and the perception that younger girls make obedient wives' (CIS, 2013). Among agro-pastoralist groups, economic factors may also influence early marriage, particularly with the continued payment of dowries, as well as the girls' own desire to leave home to gain independence and responsibility. If the girl is still in school, early marriage tends to lead to a drop out from education, with adverse impacts on the development of life skills and future livelihood options. In a recent study in rural Gadarif state, traditional attitudes prevailed and key drivers of child marriage included the 'control of girls' chastity, protection of girls from stigma of being unmarried/infertile and socialization of young girls into obedient wives' (El Nagar et al., 2017). A lack of access to sex education was cited as another factor influencing female child marriage. Such campaigning is notably low in Gadarif, with limited 'integrated' advocacy efforts related to women and girls' rights; instead advocacy is disjointed and focused on 'specific issues such as FGM/C or maternal health'.<sup>62</sup> Interestingly, attitudes were described to be changing towards those girls who decide to continue their education without getting married.

### 3.1.3 Physical and sexual violence

**Physical violence refers to Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) or domestic violence, as well as other forms of non-domestic violence. Sexual violence may include domestic sexual assault, or non-partner sexual assault.** The phenomenon of domestic violence such as wife battery (a traditional practice used to discipline and control women) is still socially accepted across communities in East Africa, including in Sudan. Associated with a patriarchal culture and low levels of education, gender-based violence has often been condoned in rural life in Sudan, and is frequently reported in the home, community and beyond. Rural women even define such practices to be an expression of their husband's 'care'. Regional studies highlight higher prevalence of violence against women in areas affected by war and disruption. Rural women may also suffer sexual violence, psychological abuse, and denial of opportunity as part of everyday life. Meanwhile, sexual violence, and particularly rape (non-partner), was traditionally viewed as highly taboo across the region.

**In Sudan, domestic violence is considered to be 'widespread, pervasive and remains largely invisible' as a result of a lack of reporting mechanisms, data collection, policies and programmes (OCHR, 2016).** In particular, wife beating may be carried out by husbands to teach women a lesson in what is sometimes called 'wife correction'. In the case of intimacy, women may also be considered the property of their husbands, and men may claim sex from their wives at any time. Displacement by conflict or natural disasters can add further pressure to gender relations. As men lose their traditional status and power with a loss of land and livestock, this can contribute to violence against women as a

means of regaining control or releasing frustration. Domestic violence was shown to be highly prevalent in regions such as eastern Sudan and is 'strongly associated' with educational status, polygamous marriage and husband's alcohol consumption (Ali et al., 2014).

**In Sudan, the phenomenon of sexual violence and rape tends to be more pervasive in conflict areas, although exact figures across the country are not known.** As shown during the 2004 Darfur crisis (see Box 3.2) and subsequent crises, sexual violence by local gangs and militia may be perpetrated against women and children as well as men, particularly minority groups. Physical and sexual violence against women in such situations needs to be viewed in the context of institutional-led violence (SIGI, 2019). Serious attacks have been committed by Government forces against civilians, including widespread killings and destruction of property as well as rape in conflicts in Darfur, South Kordofan, Blue Nile state and Nuba Mountains (Human Rights Watch, 2016 in SIGI, 2019). There are major reports of institutional-led violence in other states too.<sup>63</sup> Government security forces were reported to commit rape and sexual abuses against female activists with impunity.<sup>64</sup>

**During times of instability and civil war, gender norms within the community can also be strained, or even break down with stress, frustration and disorder, leading to GBV.** Physical and sexual-based violence in such situations includes incidences of rape, abduction, sexual slavery, and physical assault. The most commonly cited types of local violence in conflict-affected communities in Darfur included sexual violence (43 percent) and domestic violence (42.9 percent).<sup>65</sup> Younger men may feel frustrated during periods of conflict and instability and this can lead to an increase in a range of anti-social behaviour (including domestic violence, substance abuse and even criminal activities). Women may also be traded for food or used as sexual slaves and forced into prostitution. Despite the high risk of GBV in IDP and refugee camps, research in South Kordofan indicated that there were no concrete measures taken by the camp management for women's security and protection (Elkarib, 2016a).<sup>66</sup> In some parts of Sudan, human trafficking is also significant (*discussed further in Chapter 5*). Meanwhile, the decreasing access to natural resources such as wood has also exacerbated the risk of rape, assault and other forms of violence against women.

### **Box 3.2: Sexual violence in Darfur**

Women and girls were reported to be particularly vulnerable to rape when leaving their camps and going out to collect firewood and water. According to the United Nations, in Darfur girls were deliberately targeted in inter-ethnic conflicts, to both humiliate communities, and as a means of 'ethnic cleansing'. Victims have faced difficulties in reporting rape and seeking justice not only because of the fear of ostracization by their own communities, but also because the criminal law could potentially be used to charge the victims with adultery instead of investigating the rape charge.

*Sources: Women for Women International (2006), The UN Secretary's General's Report on Children and Armed Conflict (2006), Fayomi (2009) and Tønnessen (2012)*

## 3.2 LEGISLATION AND ACCESS TO JUSTICE

### 3.2.1 Institutional oversight and capacity

The Ministry of Justice, and the Ministry of Labour and Social Development are the lead ministries for gender-related rights legislation and the upholding of justice in Sudan. The *National Gender Policy (NGP)* (2007) drew attention to violence against women as a key potential priority area. A *National Strategy for Elimination of Violence against Women* has been drafted (2012), under the auspices of the Council of Ministers.<sup>67</sup> Earlier efforts included the *National Plan for Combating Gender-based Violence* by the Ministry of Justice (2005), and the establishment of a *Family & Child Protection Unit* in 2006 by the Ministry of Interior.

#### Legislation and policy related to FGM/C

Notably, in 1946, Sudan became the first African nation to develop FGM/C legislation, prohibiting Type 3 FGM/C or the pharaonic form of FGM/C (Badawi and Folcio, 2016). Attempts to enforce the law were ‘extremely rare’ however, and there was limited social support. Sharia law was then introduced in 1983 and the article was removed from the Criminal Act. In 2005, the Interim Constitution included an abolition of ‘harmful customs and traditions which undermine the dignity and status of women’ but no explicit reference to FGM/C. Meanwhile the *National Child Act* (2010) endeavoured to incorporate the criminalization of FGM/C (Article 14), but this was ultimately removed as a result of pressure from religious leaders calling for a distinction between pharaonic circumcision and the Sunna type.<sup>68</sup>

A new national law prohibiting all forms of FGM/C was finally passed in April 2020 in an amendment to the Criminal Code. This will reinforce various state-level laws that have sought to prohibit FGM/C (Badawi and Folcio, 2016). State level laws were developed in South Kordofan (FGM/C law), Gadarif state (Child Rights Act banning all forms of FGM) and West Darfur around 2008 but were not generally implemented. In 2011, South Darfur and Red Sea passed similar laws; and state parliaments in Khartoum, Blue Nile, Kassala and White Nile made early commitments to criminalise FGM/C. In states such as the Red Sea however,<sup>69</sup> the FGM/C law prohibited the *pharaonic* version only and had no penalty attached to it, thus rendering it ‘useless’.<sup>70</sup> At a local level, ‘Community Declarations’ to ban FGM/C were largely ineffective.

While legislation has been uneven (until 2020), there has been notable progress in the formulation of national-level policies, strategies and initiatives (Badawi and Folcio 2016). The 2007 *National Women’s Empowerment Policy* called for the eradication of FGM/C, and the Government developed the *National Strategy for the Abolition of Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (2008-2018)*.<sup>71</sup> Yet the national FGM/C strategy and the subsequent *Saleema initiative* (2008) have not been backed up by national health policies. For example, the reproductive health strategy, *Road Map to Reduce Maternal Mortality* and the *National Health Sector Strategy (2012-2016)* fails to address FGM/C.

#### Legislation and policy related to early marriage (and family practices)

The Muslim or Sharia-based *Personal Status Law* was introduced in 1991 as a legal framework for family and marriage practices, with marriages permitted for ‘mature’ consenting females. The law indicated that marriage is permissible from the age of ‘tamyeez’, related to ‘the ability to differentiate /discern between options, to distinguish between good and bad’. According to this law,

**Figure 3.2 Selected gender-related rights and strategies in social affairs and justice**

<p><b>Draft Constitution (2019)</b></p>	<p><b>(49) Women rights</b> 49.4 The state should fight the bad practices, which undermine the women rights and dignity. <sup>[1]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub></p> <p><b>(50) Child rights</b> <i>The state should protect the rights of children as in the regional and international agreements signed by Sudan</i></p> <p><b>(53) Right to litigation</b> <i>Every citizen has the right to go to courts and litigate. No one should be banned from this right and to resort to justice</i></p>
<p><b>National Gender Policy (2007)</b></p>	<p><b>The Human Rights &amp; Law area of concern</b> <i>(2) Establish legal and media mechanisms and institutions to combat all forms of violence against women and provide legal aid for victims. <sup>[1]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub></i></p>

tamyeez is ten years old. A guardian may give a 'mature' female (i.e. a girl that shows signs of puberty) in marriage if she consents to the husband and to the dowry.<sup>72</sup> The husband is obliged to give the bride a dowry and the law stipulates that the dowry is the property of the wife and her family (Articles 27-28).<sup>73</sup> Indicating subtle legal gender differences, a 10 year-old male may be permitted to marry if it is considered within his interest but a 10-year-old female would need the permission of a judge to approve the union i.e. that the husband is suitable and the dowry is fair. The law contradicted the *Sudan Code of Civil Proceedings (1984)* (Article 22.1), which indicated that marriage is a contractual act between those reaching the 'age of majority' (specified as 18 years). In addition to marriage, the *Personal Status Law* also guides cases of divorce (see Box 3.3).

**In parallel to the *Personal Status Law* in 1991, Sudan also ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) that clearly defined a child as 'every human being below the age of eighteen years' (Article 1).** This convention is argued to have been 'instrumental' in later advocating for subsequent child rights in Sudan (El Nagar, 2017). While the CRC does not specifically elaborate on child marriage, it provides a 'number of norms and protective measures for children that collectively provide an enabling framework for tackling child marriage' (ibid.).

**Since 2016, child marriage has been in the spotlight in Sudan, following the urgent recommendation for action from the UN in its Universal Periodic Report.**<sup>74</sup> This has prompted renewed attention on the *Personal Status Law* (1991), with the NGO Sudan Organisation for Research and Development (SORD) advocating for legal reform of the law's provisions on child marriage (El Nagar et al., 2017). In particular, the *National Child Act* (2010) has defined a 'child' as below 18 years of age, and includes provisions to protect children from all forms of discrimination. Women's groups have relentlessly fought to end child marriage at both state and national level. The SEEMA Center has provided support to victims of child marriage. Several new national initiatives have also been triggered, including the launch of the African Union campaign to end child marriage (African Union, 2015). Further, under the authority of the Ministry of Social Welfare, the National Council of Child Welfare (NCCW) formulated a strategy for abandoning the practice. However, resistance from religious conservative groups prevented its endorsement by the former regime (ibid.).

### **Box 3.3: Divorce in Sudan**

In traditional Islam, a husband has the right to divorce his wife 'unilaterally, without turning to the court, by saying 'I divorce you' (Tønnessen and Roald, 2007). Codified in 1991, the *Personal Status Law* in Sudan gives women the right to also seek divorce through the courts in certain circumstances, including: if the husband fails to financially support her; if her husband has more than one wife and does not treat all his wives equally; if the husband has a defect she did not know about before marriage; if the husband suffers from an incurable mental illness; if the husband is impotent; if he behaves cruelly; if he is abroad for more than one year; or if the husband is sentenced to prison for more than two years. Further, if a wife chooses to leave the marriage, she is no longer legally required to return under the principle of 'house of obedience'. In 1998, the *Personal Status Law* was amended to permit divorce by mutual consent, if the wife pays back the dowry. Under Islamic family law, young children usually remain with their mothers in cases of divorce, although fathers may attain custody when sons reach 7 years of age and daughters reach 9 years. Under customary law however, women have no custody rights of their children following divorce.

Source: Badawi and Folcio (2016)

### ***Legislation and policy related to physical and sexual violence***

**To understand legislation and restorative justice related to sexual or physical violence in Sudan, it is critical to appreciate social dynamics at the community and family level, as well as state-level mechanisms and structures, particularly with regard to local perceptions, actions and responses.** Under Sudan's *Personal Status Law* (1991), Article 52 states that women must obey their husbands<sup>75</sup>. Domestic violence is not considered a crime and there is no specific legal framework that deals with such matters. Incidents that occur in the home are viewed as private issues that should be resolved within the confines of the family (OCHA, 2016), and thus women tend not to seek legal redress. Marital rape is not recognised in the 2015 Amended Criminal Act (1991), but a removal of reference to adultery (*zina*) in the definition of the crime permits potential prosecution under Article 149.<sup>76</sup>, and removes the risk that rape complainants themselves may be prosecuted if they are not successful in proving a lack

of consent (African Center for Justice and Peace Studies, 2016 in SIGI 2019).

**Outside of the home, the amendment to Article 149 offers some new provisions for the prosecution of rape through the broader definition of rape, although this may not cover oral rape, or the circumstances of the offense, including the use of force, psychological coercion, or incapacity to consent (SIGI, 2019).** There remains a lack of clarity however on the definition of an adult, with vague references to ‘puberty’, in contrast to the definition of a child as ‘any person under the age of 18’ by the *Child Act* (2010). Further, the *Evidence Act* (1994) still stands that stipulates the need for four male witnesses to testify the offense (Article 62), and considers pregnancy as evidence for *zina*. Meanwhile, ‘gross indecency’ was added as another form of sexual harassment in the *Amended Criminal Act* (2015), with a revision to Article 151 (OCHR, 2016). The exact scope, meaning and description of the offence is unclear however, and thus it ‘[fails] to clearly prohibit acts, behaviour or speech that constitute seduction or temptation for another person to engage in illegal sex, or to commit indecent or inappropriate behaviour of a sexual nature’ (African Center for Justice and Peace Studies, 2016 in SIGI, 2019).

**A number of policies and strategies on violence against women have been developed, including the *National Plan for Eradicating Violence Against Women (2011-2016)*, and its successor (2015-2031), although the latter was not shared or endorsed (SIGI, 2019).** According to a report by the UN Special Rapporteur, Sudan has a ‘weak normative framework’ with respect to violence against women and girls (OCHA, 2016). While there are dedicated units that deal with violence against women at federal and state level, the institutional mechanisms have been described as inefficient and ineffective, hampered by a lack of systematic collection of data and definition of roles and competencies. Health and counselling units for female victims of violence are limited, and those that exist lack human and medical resources. Under the previous regime, there was even denial by senior officials of any violence against women except in Darfur, and a resistance to aid efforts. SIGI (2019) reported that a number of humanitarian organisations providing medical and psychosocial support to survivors of sexual violence were expelled from Sudan (The International Campaign to Stop Rape and Gender Violence in Conflict, 2013). To improve protection and response in conflict-ridden parts of Sudan, OCHA launched the *Call to Action on Protection from Gender Based Violence in Emergencies* (2013), a global multi-stakeholder initiative to fundamentally transform how GBV is addressed in humanitarian action.

### 3.2.2 Progress in access to justice

**As articulated in the Interim Constitution (2005), the (draft) Interim Constitutional Document of Sudan (2019) guarantees that women and men are equal before the law and have the right to legal protection without discrimination (Article 48).** Under the previous government, the application of traditional customs, together with a law based on religion, formed part of the legal framework for justice; and was applied in formal courts, with sentences not always in conformity with international human rights standards (OHCHR, 2016 in SIGI, 2019). Family matters are regulated by three types of religious courts that are covered by the state: the Shar’ia courts, the Christian/civil courts and the traditional courts (SIGI 2019). In the civil court, a law from 1926 in theory guides regulations for marriages for non-Muslims, but judges tend to be Muslim and draw on community regulations when cases are presented before them (Tønnessen and Roald, 2007), thus leading to inappropriate and unfair rulings.

**Major barriers to justice include a lack of awareness of legal rights at both community and institutional levels.** There is often little knowledge of legislation and policies related to children, marriage and sex either within local communities, or at local institutions such as the police and traditional courts. There have also been regressive trends in female participation in the justice sector as a result of the government’s bias towards hiring men. Few female judges are found in appeal courts except those that were appointed before the Islamization process started.<sup>77</sup> Civil society support provides legal aid to victims but cases are rarely brought before a court (SIGI 2019) due to factors relating to the nature of the justice system (OHCHR, 2016).

**Social stigma and cultural norms surrounding GBV in particular have led to significant underreporting of incidents, in particular cases of domestic violence (OHCHR, 2016).** From an institutional perspective, the development of legislation has provided impunity for local authorities for criminal acts (OHCHR, 2016). There has been some structural progress in police response (Gender Units) to support local justice and action related to GBV; however, there is a lack of information about assistance and other support for victims, such as shelters and counselling which hinders women seeking support, legal recourse and justice OCHR (2016). In the case of sexual offences, customary law also contradicts civil law; for example, unmarried girls and women who are raped are often forced to marry the perpetrator (with the rapist just charged with paying the bride price (SIGI, 2019)). Shame and stigmatization, and possible accusations of adultery prevent rape victims from reporting crimes to the police and pursuing justice.

**The current justice system remains unclear and ‘ineffective’ (OHCHR, 2016), in particular in regions affected by conflict and instability, as access is inhibited by geographical distance and security concerns.** The Sudanese Human Rights Initiative (SHRI, 2019) highlighted that a lack of access to justice and the right to a fair trial has effectively ‘denied’ the basic human rights of various vulnerable and marginalised groups, including women, IDPs, and those belonging to ethnic and religious minority groups.

### 3.3 SUMMARY AND REFLECTIONS ON PERSISTING CHALLENGES

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**GBV remains highly prevalent in Sudan, and embedded in complex social, cultural and political dynamics. In the past decade, there have been tangible efforts at an institutional level in the endorsement of international frameworks and rights on GBV (Chapter 2), and in the development of policies, strategies and initiatives.** There is limited rural outreach, and an absence of civic education on gender in schools. At a national level, a lack of recent data on GBV poses a constraint to policy making. In terms of access to justice, women struggle to gain appropriate assistance either at family, community or institutional level. A culture of impunity prevails, and victims are expected to remain silent (OCHR, 2016).

#### *Reflecting on current mixed trends in GBV*

**Both attitudes and practices related to FGM/C practices may be shifting, but there are uneven trends due to inconsistent advocacy and poor institutional support.** Civil society and youth focus groups in Khartoum highlighted the ‘lack of clarity’ of the messaging under the *Saleema Initiative*. Meanwhile at state level, the campaign was reported to have had limited reach due to ‘insufficient dialogue’, and in some areas, the campaign was not even known, including by government officials.<sup>78</sup> In South Darfur, successful NGO-led behaviour change approaches have included community drama and social dialogue; these are proved to be particularly effective if linked to local advocacy efforts with religious institutions (Ritchie, 2018). New national criminal legislation in April 2020 against FGM/C will add much-needed weight to policies, strategies and initiatives.

**Early marriages (15-18 years of age) of girls remain still socially acceptable, although this has become less common in urban, educated and wealthier households.** In Gezira, poverty may force girls to drop out of school and marry, ‘with the result that [some] mothers are more educated than their daughters’.<sup>79</sup> Access to single sex secondary education and boarding facilities may also influence early marriage. In the absence of nationwide campaigning, regional advocacy by CSOs has remained uncoordinated and fragmented, and held back by the *Personal Status Law*.<sup>80</sup> While religious leaders are speaking out, for example in Gadarif, their message remains weak without relevant legislation and government support.<sup>81</sup>

**Physical and sexual violence are common across Sudan, particularly in rural areas.** As highlighted by Elkarib (2016a), the lack of a national plan to implement resolution UNSCR 1325 (until now), and the limited knowledge about UNSCR 1820<sup>82</sup> have contributed to the vulnerability of women and girls to GBV in humanitarian contexts such as Darfur. There are insufficient prevention and protection mechanisms, except for the support provided by UN agencies and UNAMID. It is clear that strengthening GBV response and support, and increasing female participation in the justice sector should be high priorities for the new government.

### **Box 3.2: Views on GBV and justice**

*"Campaigns and initiatives need to go to the roots of the problem addressing economic, social and political factors that put women in situations of violence, oppression and displacement." (Ministry of Health, Khartoum)*

*"The traditional mechanism of justice (AJAWEED) is so discriminative...Women are not allowed to speak during the 'Ajaweed' sessions and they have no chance to explain or defend themselves." (Civil society focus group, El Fashir, North Darfur)*

*"Women's situation is not at all promising...they are caught in a circle of restrictive customs and traditions, insecurity, violence and poverty" Women's focus group, Kutum, North Darfur)*

*"There has been no change in the prevalence of GBV or the pursuit of justice. For example, if a girl is raped, her parents may prefer not to seek legal justice [favouring instead a traditional resolution] ...Meanwhile, domestic violence is still socially condoned." (Youth focus group, Gadarif)*

*"In Gezira [despite its 'modernizing' past], there is not a progressive decline in GBV such as FGM/C...instead progress is haphazard and campaigns have not been perceived as successful" (Civil society focus group, Gadarif)*

#### ***Key messages: Change (2011-20) in Gender, Social Affairs and Justice***

- **FGM/C** (86.6% prevalence) indicators point to general downward trends in urban areas among the young, linked to education, wealth and family preferences. Yet there are counter trends in the medicalization of the practice, and persisting support by family men related to family honour. Rural areas may have little change. New national level legislation was finally passed in April 2020 outlawing FGM/C.
- **Early marriage (under 18 years) is still common** (34.2% prevalence, aged 20-24 years). While this is still socially acceptable in all areas, it may be less common in urban areas. Drivers include access to education, family poverty and family background (education levels and social preferences). There is an absence of national legislation.
- **Physical or sexual violence** is highly prevalent (total figures are not known). Sexual assault and rape (mostly females) is common in conflict and IDP areas. National legislation remains inadequate.
- Rural, remote and conflict affected communities remain the most vulnerable groups, in particular nomads, pastoralist and IDPs.

In this chapter, the report focuses on gender-related progress in access to basic services, particularly in the education, health and WASH sectors. The chapter explores trends related to education and school participation; maternal health and access to water and sanitation (WASH). In assessing the scope of formal services, it discusses institutional progress, and policies, plans and service delivery. This chapter is closely aligned with Pillar 5 of the New Deal approach that emphasizes access to fair service delivery. It is also related to [SDG 3: Good Health and Wellbeing](#), [SDG 4: Quality Education](#), [SDG 5: Gender Equality](#), [SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation](#) and [SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities](#).

### 4.1 STATUS AND TRENDS RELATED TO GENDER AND EDUCATION

A fundamental ‘driver for sustainable development’ (UNESCO, 2019), literacy is considered a basic human right permitting individuals to lead better quality lives, achieve improved health, and pursue employment and work opportunities.

General literacy levels are estimated to be still relatively low in Sudan despite the existence of a highly educated elite. In 2018, only 60.7 percent of the population over the age of 15 was able to read and write (65.44 percent of men, and 56.06 percent of women).<sup>83</sup> Literacy is lowest among older groups; for example, of those over 65 years of age, less than 28.76 percent are literate. Among young women (aged 15-24 years), the MIC Survey (2014) indicated that 59.8 percent were literate. In a World Bank survey (2015), half of the population in Sudan had never attended a formal school and only a fraction had some post-secondary education. Positive trends indicate higher levels of education among the younger generation and reduced gender gaps.

#### 4.1.1 Trends in educational participation

Today there are an estimated 7.9 million school aged children in Sudan (aged 5-13 years);<sup>84</sup> and there is increasing participation in school, but progress remains uneven. In 2019, almost 30 percent of primary school-aged children remained out of school (2.5 million children). School access has improved markedly since 2009 but the MDG goal of universal basic education remains a ‘major challenge’ for Sudan, with basic level education as well as secondary level education exhibiting some of the lowest retention profiles in the region (MoE, 2019).<sup>85</sup> A total of 8 percent of the current school generation are unlikely to ever attend school.<sup>86</sup>

The proportion of out-of-school girls is higher than boys in basic level education. In 2016-17, at basic level (compulsory),<sup>87</sup> the Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) was approximately 73 percent (75 percent for boys, and 71 percent for girls). There is little change in GER since 2009 (72 percent) although there is considerable difference in GER between the states. The gender gap remains small in the majority of states (slightly higher levels of boys than girls). Exceptions include West Darfur and West Kordofan with a more marked gender gap.<sup>88</sup> In North Darfur and Gezira, boys’ enrolment was shown to be higher (92 percent in both states) than girls’ enrolment (89 percent and 84 percent respectively). In Gadarif, levels of primary-level GER are lower (70 percent of boys and 65 percent of girls). The age of enrolment is reducing, with the majority of children now attending school from 5 years of age. Interestingly, there is a growing participation in pre-school<sup>89</sup> across Sudan; with little disparity between boys and girls (although girls may have slightly higher rates of participation than boys) but still significant disparities between the states, and between rural and urban areas.<sup>90</sup> Excluding *khalwas*, the GER for pre-school (optional) stands at 42.8 percent (2015-16), putting Sudan ahead of countries such as Tunisia and Ethiopia (gender indicators are not given).

**Figure 4.1:**  
**Key Educational Indicators in Sudan**

PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION SERVICES	NATIONAL
GROSS ENROLMENT RATE (BASIC LEVEL)*	75 % male 71 % female
BASIC SCHOOL ATTENDANCE**	77.4 % male 75.5 % female
GROSS ENROLMENT RATE (SECONDARY LEVEL)*	35 % male 41 % female
SECONDARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE**	27.4 % male 29.4% female
EDUCATION GENDER PARITY**	0.98 (primary) 1.07 (secondary)

\* 2017 estimates (MoE 2019)

\*\* MICS 2014 (CBS and UNICEF, 2016)

**Gender gaps are also observed at secondary and tertiary levels, but in this case, there are higher numbers of girls than boys, indicating greater dropout among boys.** At the secondary level (including Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET))<sup>91</sup>, GER (2016-17) drops to 38 percent but with larger numbers of girls enrolling than boys (35 percent for boys, and 41 percent for girls). This has increased by 5 percentage points from 2009. Citing slightly out-dated figures, gross enrolment ratio in tertiary education was 17.2 percent (2013-14), increasing from 8.7 percent a decade earlier (2003/04). Female enrolment was equal to or slightly higher than male enrolment (16.2 percent for males, 18.1 percent for females). Gender parity index for tertiary education in Sudan is 1.12 in 2013/14, similar to other countries in the MENA region (MOE, 2019).

**Gender, geography and wealth are key determinants in access to, and participation in, quality education in Sudan.** Poverty and the inability to pay fees—despite the government policy for schools to be free<sup>92</sup>—remains a critical barrier for many poor families in sending children to school. Previously government schools were free; but today, fees are frequently imposed for registration, exams and books. Enrolment is often delayed at basic level. Retention remains one of the biggest challenges affecting the completion rate of basic education and the overall participation of girls (MoE, 2019). Rural children have lower levels of school access and attendance compared to those in urban areas, with both boys and girls from rural households five times less likely to complete secondary education compared to their urban peers (ibid). This has significant impacts on subsequent poverty levels, and the socio-economic gap between urban and rural areas.<sup>93</sup>

**Exclusion from school is particularly notable among rural disadvantaged groups, including poor households, nomads, war-affected populations and internally displaced persons (UNICEF 2014).** In high concentration refugee areas, the enrolment of refugees remains low (5 percent) (MOE 2019). Children from poor families and girls are particularly at risk of leaving school due to economic factors and social norms, and some ethnic and religious communities may hold negative views of formal education (UNICEF, 2014). According to UNICEF, the persistence of conflict, a lack of awareness about the importance of education and chronic under-development influence ‘poor schooling’ of girls and boys in Sudan.<sup>94</sup> Research in South Darfur indicates that family attitudes related to education are changing and are linked to household experience as IDPs and exposure to new ideas (Ritchie, 2018). For girls in particular, ‘cultural pressures and the traditional views of the role of women’ affect their participation and retention, with parents’ attitudes and support further shaping educational attainment (Badawi and Folcio, 2016). The Ministry of Education’s diagnosis indicates that girls still have a lower chance of accessing school compared to boys and are also less likely to remain in school (MoE, 2019). There may be a particular preference for boys’ education in the IDP camps, for example in North Darfur ‘where families pay for boys first and girls come second or fall out of schooling’ (Elkarib, 2016a). Overall poor rural girls are still least likely to access educational opportunities than their urban peers (World Bank, 2013b), with gender disparities observed across the different age groups.

**Non-participation of girls may be attributed to a mix of inter-related factors, including the persistence of negative community cultural attitudes and practices towards girl’s education; early marriage; movement in nomadic families (and a low value for education); domestic chores; and distance from home to school, especially in the war-affected areas.<sup>95</sup>** In more impoverished rural communities, girls may miss out on education due to ‘perceived and actual costs’ related to girls’ schooling. These costs may be both ‘direct’ costs (e.g. fees, books, stationary, clothes, transport), as well as ‘opportunity’ costs (for example, time spent on household chores or possible income generation), with such perceived costs considered higher for girls than boys (CIS, 2013). In less educated environments, the skills and capacity of women and girls are strongly linked to their future roles as wives and mothers, with education not viewed as a right or valued in these roles (Badawi and Folcio, 2016). Early marriage is a major constraint to rural girls’ participation/continuation in (secondary) education. In less secure regions, there are also family fears for girls’ physical safety, especially when distances between home and school are long.

#### **Box 4.1: State level educational perspectives: gender biases and poverty**

In Gezira, a state where basic services were introduced as early as 1925 (with the rollout of the 'Gezira scheme'), there has been mounting concern in the regression of educational participation since the 1980s and the lack of 'affirmative action' by the government. The high cost of education has led many rural poor to drop out.<sup>96</sup> In Gadarif, while educational awareness has improved, several key issues were raised including the persistence of early marriage, the lack of trained teachers, and rising levels of poverty leading to the engagement of children in child labour after school (constraining playtime and homework time).<sup>97</sup> Meanwhile, in North Darfur, in addition to cultural barriers, respondents indicated that there was a lack of rural schools for girls, and with rising living costs, still a preference for boys' education.<sup>98</sup>

**A World Bank report (2012) expanded on factors that influence girls school participation in Sudan related to puberty and sexuality, and school environments.** Many girls drop out when they reach adolescence unless there is a school for girls, a female teacher, adequate seating arrangements, or different schedules for boys and girls. The lack of single sex schools is a major complaint at secondary level as more than half of existing schools are reported to be co-educational. In addition, poor access to water supply and sanitary facilities (and sanitary pads) is a concern for both girls and their parents, with parents' anxious about girls' safety in school, particularly potential contact with boys and male teachers and physical abuse or harassment.

**The quality of learning and learning environments are poor and there is limited compliance with Child Friendly School (CFS) standards, for example, a lack of learning spaces (MoE, 2019).** The National Learning Assessment (NLA) highlights persisting challenges in the acquisition of knowledge in literacy and numeracy at the foundational stages. Many teachers are untrained<sup>99</sup> and under supervised, and there is an unequal distribution between rural and urban areas.<sup>100</sup> In rural schools, pedagogical approaches continue to be 'traditional', and teaching materials tend to be inappropriate and gender biased, outdated or non-existent.<sup>101</sup> Half of students are enrolled in schools that do not have access to any source of energy (MoE, 2019).

#### **4.1.2 Non-formal and adult education**

**Non-formal and adult education can provide opportunities to student dropouts to engage in basic skills development and needs remain high in Sudan (MoE, 2019).** The National Council for Literacy and Adult Education within the Federal Ministry of Education coordinates non-formal education but the implementation of its activities remains disconnected from the formal system inhibiting transition back to mainstream schooling (MoE, 2019). Existing accelerated programmes focus on 'age appropriate learning objectives – set against literacy levels'. According to the MoE (2019), such programmes are critical since almost third of children (5-13 years) have never attended school, while almost two thirds of adolescents (14-17 years) are out of secondary education (and have been out of school for at least one year). Participation in non-formal schooling (or re-joining mainstream education) may be difficult for rural adolescent girls after drop out. Major barriers include physical access, and increasing social pressures, such as early marriage.

**From a supply perspective, the majority of opportunities for alternative skills development such as TVET remain oriented towards men.** In an ILO survey of informal apprenticeship (ILO and UNDP, 2013), all trainees were found to be young men, although the survey looked predominantly at traditional male domains (for example, in auto mechanics, carpentry and car body repair, machining, electricity and motor rewinding). Participation in apprenticeships is described as a major pathway for skills training and employability for youth employed in the informal economy (ibid). Vocational jobs for women and girls are limited to dressmaking or other domestic skills that tend to reinforce dominant gender ideologies, and are not always marketable.<sup>102</sup>

## 4.2 STATUS AND TRENDS RELATED TO MATERNAL HEALTH

The provision of maternal health services is considered vital for the health and survival of mothers and children.<sup>103</sup> The availability of optimal maternal healthcare during pregnancy and childbirth not only reduces maternal and infant mortality and morbidity rates, but it also accrues long-term socio-economic benefits by empowering women to be productive members of the labour force and improving overall household incomes (and the economic well-being of families and communities).<sup>104</sup> While many factors may contribute to maternal mortality, access to primary health care, skilled attendance at birth and emergency obstetric care are associated with improved rates of survival and better health outcomes.<sup>105</sup> Family planning services also contribute to a lower risk of maternal deaths and morbidities by an estimated 30 percent.<sup>106</sup>

### 4.2.1 Trends in utilization of maternal health services

Over the last three decades, Sudan has actually made significant progress on the ground in terms of advancing some dimensions of maternal and child health.<sup>107</sup>

While Sudan did not meet its health-related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), several key health indicators have improved, including a decrease in Child Mortality, and an increase in delivery by a skilled birth attendant. Several challenges remain, including a lack of progress in neonatal mortality and child nutrition, an unmet need for contraceptives and a high fertility rate, low institutional delivery, and significant rates of maternal mortality (World Bank, WHO, UNICEF and JICA, 2018).

The Maternal Mortality Ratio remains high (311 per 100,000 live births<sup>108</sup>) despite progress, and Sudan is still far from meeting the 2015 MDG target of 134/100,000. Maternal under-nutrition is also very high in Sudan; and up to 62 percent of mothers are under-nourished, with the highest percentage observed in the eastern Red Sea state.<sup>109</sup> Maternal deaths disproportionally affect certain groups, including poor women, rural women and nomads (Badawi and Folcio, 2019). High numbers of maternal deaths in some parts of Sudan reflect various inequities in access to health services, socio-cultural barriers (inhibiting health-seeking behaviour), low levels of education,<sup>110</sup> and poverty. Maternal health is also linked to FGM/C and cultural practices that lead to early marriage and childbearing. The large proportion of deliveries still take place outside of health care facilities, and are conducted by traditional birth attendants who are not professionally trained. Other factors influencing maternal health include the prevalence of sexual-transmitted diseases, particularly as result of polygamy and migration.<sup>111</sup> In most cases, maternal deaths may be attributed to easily and treatable birth complications, and many women struggle to access adequate maternal care.

**A crucial intervention for safe motherhood is delivery by skilled birth attendants with midwifery training.** The MICS (2014) indicated that the percentage of pregnant women assisted by skilled birth attendants during delivery grew to 77.5 percent, however most deliveries are conducted at home. Health facility delivery remains critically low at 28 percent. Women with higher levels of educational attainment are more likely to deliver in a health facility than women with limited or no education (CBS and UNICEF, 2016). Antenatal Care (ANC) from a skilled provider has improved to 79.1 percent (CBS and UNICEF, 2016), although this varies according to geography, education and wealth. For example, the proportion of women who received ANC in urban areas reached 90.8 percent compared to 74.9 percent women in rural areas. Post-natal care in Sudan is still very low. Women die as a result of complications both during, and following pregnancy and childbirth.<sup>112</sup> Only 27.7 percent of all new-borns receive a post-natal health check, although this varies by state (it is just 12.2 percent in Central Darfur compared to 57.4 percent in Khartoum). Urban new-borns are more likely to receive a health check (39.3 percent) than their rural counterparts (22.6 percent).

Sudan has still one the lowest rates of family planning use in sub-Saharan Africa. The MICS (2014) indicates that the use of contraception is extremely limited; 88 percent of married women do not use any form of birth control (and up to 95 percent in South Darfur). The main

**Figure 4.2:**  
**Key Maternal Health indicators**

MATERNAL HEALTH AND WASH INDICATORS	NATIONAL (MICS, 2014)
BIRTHS ATTENDED BY SKILLED HEALTH PERSONNEL (WOMEN AGED 15-49 YRS)	77.5 %
ANTENATAL CARE (AT LEAST ONCE BY SKILLED HEALTH PERSONNEL)	79.1%
CONTRACEPTIVE PREVALENCE (MARRIED WOMEN AGED 15-49 YRS)	12.2%

constraints are related to the lack of trained health professionals, the cost and the limited availability of contraceptive methods combined with socio-cultural factors including illiteracy, lack of awareness and social stigma attached to the use of condoms (Badawi and Folcio, 2016). In particular, the persistence of cultural preferences for large families and taboos related to formal family planning have meant that contraception use is considered highly sensitive and not openly promoted at clinics or through the media, and thus has remains largely hidden. In Gadarif, UNFPA staff highlighted that they are now just starting to broach the topic of 'safe sex' after the revolution. The strong influence and control of the previous regime posed a significant barrier to expanding sexual and reproductive health education.<sup>113</sup> Further, to obtain family planning assistance, women still often have to prove that they are married and require the consent of their husbands. The preference of husbands and the fear around contradicting 'religious beliefs' are reported to be key reasons for low use of family planning in some states.<sup>114</sup>

**A further dimension linked to maternal health practices is the right to the civil registration of births (or deaths); this is shown to be gender-biased and has various socio-political implications.**

The health institution, midwife, mother or father of the child may legally register a birth within 15–30 days of delivery in Sudan.<sup>115</sup> The sex of the child can significantly influence registration. In a study of 94 countries, Sudan was shown to have the largest gap between the birth registration of girls and boys (3.4 percentage points lower among girls compared to boys) (Bhatia et al., 2017). The registration of births and deaths is not only a basic human right, but determines voter eligibility, citizenship and other rights. Birth registration data informs planning for the provision of public services including health and education, and serves as an important source of demographic information in-between census years.

**Overall key barriers to maternal healthcare and practices include a lack of access to adequate facilities and trained staff, the high costs of services and medicines, and the persistence of local customs and beliefs.** For women in rural areas, socio-cultural factors play a key role in access to services, and health-seeking behaviour, with decisions often residing with their husbands (World Bank, 2013b). In particular, the utilization of maternal health services by nomadic groups remains extremely low, and there is a need for 'evidence-based strategies to increase community demand for services or bring women closer to emergency obstetric services' (El Shiekh and Kwaak, 2015).

**Box 4.2: State level health perspectives: a lack access to family planning**

In Gezira, young educated women highlighted poor access to family planning as a major barrier to marriage: 'I need control over my own body'.<sup>116</sup> In Gadarif, focus groups emphasised the persisting gap between urban and rural areas, with rural areas constrained by a lack of family planning, trained midwives and the persistence of traditional attitudes and practices (such as certain prohibited foods for pregnant women<sup>117</sup>). Meanwhile, in North Darfur, family planning is described as 'taboo', and health and reproductive services were indicated to be deteriorating in the absence of peace, and as a result of poor infrastructure.<sup>118</sup>

**4.3 STATUS AND TRENDS RELATED TO WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)**

**WASH is recognized as playing a fundamental role in public health and hence sustainable development, and is highlighted as Sustainable Development Goal 6 (SDG 6).** Access to safe water and sanitation are considered basic human rights, as articulated in 2010 by the United Nations General Assembly. Poor WASH is the main cause of faecally-transmitted infections (FTIs), including cholera and diarrheal disease, cited as the second leading cause of morbidity and mortality among children under the age of five and the leading cause of death in sub-Saharan Africa (UNICEF, 2016).

**WASH remains a fundamental dimension of family health, and reproductive, maternal, neonatal and child health (RMNCH).** Access to WASH has significant socio-economic impacts, particularly for women and girls, as they may suffer the 'loss of productive and leisure time from the drudgery of water hauling and other WASH-related domestic labour; the exclusion from full participation in schools due to the lack of WASH facilities; urinary tract infections arising from delayed urination or reduced water intake to cope with a lack of access to sanitation facilities; and the loss of dignity and threat of sexual assault due to the lack of toilets, both in times of stability and crisis' (UNICEF, 2016)<sup>[SEP]</sup>. In particular in rural households, women and children (especially girls) are often responsible for domestic chores, including the daily fetching of water for household consumption. Meanwhile, Safe WASH in health

care facilities is critical for maternal and newborn health. The integration of WASH services and good practices into health facilities and improving access to WASH within communities has been shown to decrease both morbidity and mortality of women and children.<sup>119</sup> In realizing the right to WASH, the UN emphasizes the importance of ‘well resourced, capable institutions delivering services’ alongside healthy behaviour.<sup>120</sup>

### 4.3.1 Trends in access to WASH

**While there are positive trends in access to WASH in Sudan, the use of improved drinking water and sanitation facilities varies widely between the states and across population groups.** In the MICS survey (2014), just over two thirds of the household population had access to improved water, although there was significant variation across the states and between wealth groups (CBS and UNICEF, 2016). The highest proportion of the population with access to improved water was found in Northern state (93.8 percent) and the lowest proportion of the population with access to improved water was found in Gadarif (27.7 percent). Two-fifths of household members used drinking water that was piped into their dwelling or into their compound, yard or plot; or into a public tap/standpipe. Under a third of household members had access to improved sanitation, with variations across states and population groups (in particular influenced by higher levels of wealth and education). The percentage of the population using both improved drinking water sources and improved sanitation facilities was shown to be only 28.2 percent, with significant disparities between states; between urban-rural households; and between the richest and poorest groups. Notably, there is an increasing household usage of sanitation in educated households.

**Figure 4.3:**  
**Key WASH indicators**

WASH INDICATORS	NATIONAL (MICS, 2014)
ACCESS TO IMPROVED DRINKING WATER (HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS)	68%
ACCESS TO IMPROVED SANITATION	32.9%

**Poor access to water and unhygienic conditions, and widespread open defecation are compounding health and nutrition vulnerabilities across all states (OCHA, 2020), and influencing women and girls’ safety and access to basic services.** In marginalized, drought and IDP areas, a lack of water availability increases women’s vulnerability, as women reduce their own water intake to reserve it for the family. A lack of adequate water further compromises women’s personal hygiene and sanitation. The act of fetching water itself may further jeopardize the physical security of women (and children), as they may be forced to walk long distances in insecure areas. At school, a lack of gender segregated sanitation facilities (and ease of access for the physically disabled children) negatively impacts children’s attendance and enrollment, especially girls.<sup>121</sup>

## 4.4 INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS AND SERVICE DELIVERY

### 4.4.1 Education services

#### 4.4.1 (1) Institutional oversight and capacity

**The Ministry of Education (MoE) is the lead ministry for education. As indicated by MoE (2019), education development has been enshrined in Sudanese law with provisions to ‘facilitate investment in human capital at all levels of education and training’.**<sup>122</sup> In the recent (draft) Interim Constitution (2019), equal access to education is affirmed, and free provision by the State. Educational provision in Sudan is also guided by global instruments for example, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Education for All (EFA) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as well as national laws, policies and plans (UNICEF, 2014).

**Education management in Sudan is shared between the federal, state and locality levels of government (MoE 2019).** At the Federal level, the Ministry of Education is responsible for oversight in the sector, and for the development and maintenance of standards including curriculum development and mobilization of resources from internal and external sources. At the State level, educational boards are directly involved in educational activities, as parallel structures to the national councils. Non-Government partners contribute to the provision of education alongside the government.

## Strategic policies and plans

There have been significant efforts at education policy and strategy making in the past 10-15 years, including initiatives to close gender gaps. In 2007, the Sudanese government established the *National Girls' Education Policy* to promote and increase girls' school attendance. In 2012, Sudan's Interim Basic Education Strategy (IBES) was drafted by the Government, with the goal of achieving quality basic education in line with the MDG 2015 goals and a *five-year Education Sector Strategic Plan (2012-2016)*. The IBES is also closely linked to the Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (IPRSP), which prioritizes education as a key factor in addressing the root causes of poverty and tribal conflict (Badawi and Folcio, 2016).

In the MoE (2019) review of the IPRSP (2012-2016), it is clear that the education sector in Sudan has made some achievements in boosting school facilities and resource allocation. This has included a significant increase in the number of basic and secondary schools in non-governmental schools, and enrolment levels, and the improvement of Pupil/Classroom and Pupil/Teacher ratios.

The most recent *Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) (2018-2023)* outlines specific priorities around increasing access and participation in quality education, with a focus on inclusion. This includes increasing access to pre-school, enhancing quality of delivery of pre-school programmes, enhancing retention in basic education, improving quality of basic education, increasing access to and equity in formal basic education, increasing opportunity for basic literacy programmes, increasing access to and equity in secondary education, improving learning and skills development in secondary education, and strengthening the system for delivery of pre-school, basic and secondary education programmes (MoE, 2019). The policy prioritizes vulnerable groups, including refugees, returnees and IDPs. Gender-related indicators are applied on a limited basis except in access to basic education and Gross Intake Rates.

### 4.4.1 (2) Service delivery

UNICEF remains the international lead in education in Sudan, and has led several campaigns, including the recent *Middle East and North Africa Global Out-of-School Children Initiative (UNICEF, 2014)*. Other campaigns have been organized by Ahfad University for Women ('Education for Each Girl').<sup>123</sup> In recent years, the MoE has also sought to increase access to education for marginalized children including nomadic groups, girls, and children with disabilities (MoE, 2019).<sup>124</sup> The school age population is likely to increase, with a projected additional million children by 2028, representing a growth of 9 percent (ibid).

A national UNICEF and World Bank funded programme (2013-2019) aimed to support the development of Sudan's education sector and the implementation of the strategic plan.<sup>125</sup> The US\$76.5 million Global Partnership for Education programme focused on improving the learning environment, providing more textbooks, and strengthening the education system's planning and management mechanisms. The government has also integrated the 'Child Friendly School' concept to improve education quality and learning achievement. UNICEF's 'Whole Child Approach' (2018-2021) provides reinforcement to the current ESSP (2018-2023) through facilitating access to pre-school and quality basic level education, and safe and inclusive learning environments.<sup>126</sup>

Overall, the administration of the education sector remains weak however, affecting equitable service delivery across states, and support to vulnerable groups such as girls. Sudan has been moving towards a system of fiscal decentralization aimed at empowering sub-national governments, and thus fostering the appropriate and effective use of resources (UNICEF, 2014), but significant disparities in capacity persist across states. The Education Management Information System (EMIS) at the Ministry of Education is still not fully operational and needs to be upgraded to produce quality data (Badawi

**Figure 4.4: Selected gender-related goals in Education**

<b>Constitution (2019)</b>	<p>62. Education is the right of every citizen and the State should ensure that he receives it without <sup>[SEP]</sup>prejudice to his religion, gender, ethnicity or disability</p> <p>Education on the general level is compulsory and the State should provide it for free <sup>[SEP]</sup></p>
<b>ESSP BASIC EDUCATION 2018-2023</b>	<p><b>Increasing access to and equity in formal basic education:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Increased Gross Intake Rate to basic education;</li> <li>➤ Reduced disparity between rural/urban and boys/girls GER</li> </ul>

and Folcio, 2016), in particular, data on state-level education spending to improve the public financial management system, and relevant gender indicators.

#### 4.4.2 Maternal health services

##### 4.4.2 (1) Institutional oversight and capacity

The National Ministry of Health (MoH) is the lead ministry for health. Health services in Sudan are provided by the public sector, private sector and traditional sector<sup>127</sup>. The Interim National Constitution of the Republic of Sudan 2005 enshrined the right to maternal health services, including maternity and child-care, and free medical care for pregnant women. In the recent (draft) Interim Constitution (2019), the right to free primary health care and emergency services is reaffirmed, particularly for mothers, children and pregnant women. As with education, health provision in Sudan is guided by global instruments for example, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as well as national laws, policies and plans. Notably, Sudan has a *National Health Insurance* scheme (established in 1999), and each citizen is expected to contribute around 30 USD per annum into a national fund. This gives access to free consultations and maternal healthcare, and includes a 25 percent contribution towards medications.<sup>128</sup>

##### Strategic policies and plans

A number of recent policies and strategies have been put forth by the government for the improvement of the reproductive and maternal health status in Sudan. These include the *National Health Policy* (2017-2030), the *Strategy for Reproductive Health* (2017), the *Maternal, Neonatal, Child and Adolescents Health Strategy* (2016-2020), and the *Road Map to Reduce Maternal Mortality* (2010-2015). The Ministry of Health’s framework is based on a 25-year long-term strategic plan (2003-2027), as well as on the subsequent 5-year medium-term strategic plans.

Health reforms have been underway for a decade in Sudan, with a focus on strengthening strategic planning and coverage.<sup>129</sup> Major policies to reorient the health system emphasize the importance of family health and the inclusion of marginalized groups. Sudan’s *Global Health Strategy (2015-2019)* identifies Universal Health Coverage (UHC) as a central goal, and the (draft) *National Health Sector Strategic Plan (2017–2021)* puts universal health coverage and primary health care through a family health approach high on its agenda within the framework of a decentralized local health system.<sup>130</sup> It aims to improve the health status of the population, especially poor, underserved, disadvantaged and vulnerable groups.

The Road Map was viewed as a crucial platform for reducing maternal and newborn mortality and advocated for ‘four pillars of safe motherhood’ including family planning, antenatal care, skilled birth attendance, and emergency obstetric and neonatal care (WHO, 2013). Strategies in sexual and reproductive health have suffered inadequate integration and coordination across programme components; poor supply chain management of reproductive health commodities; stigma associated with HIV; and limited evidence on GBV.<sup>131</sup> UNFPA provides institutional support for the provision of quality family planning services in Sudan, and works with partners at national and state levels – including the Ministry of Health, Sudan Family Planning Association, and NGOs. Health projects funded by AfDB are improving access to maternal and child health care. The *Building Capacity for Inclusive Service Delivery Project* (2015-2020) is strengthening safety net programmes, building human resources capacities for health service delivery, and developing safety net platforms at the community level. The *Improving Health Access and Systems Strengthening Project* (2018-2022) aims to improve maternal health, child nutrition and control women’s cancers in four states of Sudan.<sup>132</sup>

**Figure 4.5: Selected gender-related goals in Health**

<b>Constitution (2019)</b>	65 The State commits to availability of primary health care and emergency services free to all citizens and the development of public health to build, rehabilitation of hospitals. 49.5 The state should provide free health care for mothers, children and pregnant women
<b>Road Map to Reduce Maternal Mortality (2010-2015)</b>	The road map advocates for the four pillars of safe motherhood: 1) Family planning 2) Focused antenatal care 3) Skilled birth attendance (skilled health professional – midwife – and commodities, drugs and equipment 4) Emergency obstetric and

#### 4.4.2 (2) Service delivery

**The Federal system in Sudan has led to the unequal coverage of health services at the state level, with fiscal allocation of resources still controlled by the central authorities.** Service delivery is organized at primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Primary care is provided through health facilities (public health centres (PHC) and public health units (PHU)) and by community health workers and village midwives at the community level).<sup>133</sup> There are insufficient services (1.5 Health Care Units and Centres per 10,000 population);<sup>134</sup> and the majority of the facilities suffer from critical shortage of adequate material and human resources. There are also an inadequate number of facilities for managing referrals of emergency cases. Only 66 percent of health facilities in Sudan can provide basic emergency obstetric and neonatal care (BEmONC) and only 46 percent can provide comprehensive EmONC.<sup>135</sup> In 2018, gaps in EmONC availability against recommended UN guidelines were shown to vary widely between states; Gadarif shows a 90 percent gap, North Darfur shows a 74 percent gap and Gezira shows a 64 percent gap.<sup>136</sup> Further, more than 50 percent of hospitals do not provide clinical management of rape or management of complications related to FGM/C, 48 percent of facilities do not provide treatment or diagnosis of STIs, and 38 percent do not offer family planning services.<sup>137</sup>

**While there has been some improvement in health service delivery in recent years, there remains inequality in access and uptake of services both between and within states (MoH, 2017).** Most PHCs cannot provide the five essential services (namely, reproductive health, immunization, nutrition, prevention and treatment of common diseases, and essential drugs), although there are significant differences between states. For example, while Gadarif is reported to have fully functioning PHUs, states such as north Darfur have less than 50 percent functional PHCs. The fragmentation of service delivery and training of local health promoters has continued despite the push for integration. Several new interventions for maternal and child health have been implemented in recent years, including voluntary midwife training, expanding maternal health service coverage, and prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV (WHO, 2013).

**The implementation of policies and guidelines has been especially limited at sub-national levels.** Lack of clarity and overlap in the roles and responsibilities between different tiers of the decentralized system, and weak ownership by stakeholders are among key barriers for effective implementation (MoH, 2017). The structure of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) at national, state and locality levels is very weak and there is limited evidence that M&E is being implemented 'beyond data and report submission' (MoH, 2017). According to OCHA (2020), there has been limited investment in health infrastructure in recent years, and systems are at 'breaking point'. Over 2012-2016, the majority of maternal health targets were not met (underachieved by more than 75 percent), including the percentage of facilities providing family planning services; and the demand for contraceptives by women for family planning (MoH, 2017).

**Sudan's current *National Health Policy (2017-2030)* outlines several additional reforms that can boost health systems and service delivery, and access to maternal healthcare.** This includes strengthening the management capacity of the decentralized health services; improving equity in coverage and quality of PHC package through health facility infrastructure investment; strengthening the quality, safety and efficiency of secondary and tertiary services; and strengthening efficient ambulatory systems and emergency medical care (MoH, 2017). The government has also launched the '*Maternal and Child Health Medicines Programme for All*', offering free access to medicines (UHCP, 2017).

**Access to basic maternal health services may be especially difficult during the current Covid-19 global pandemic, and women may face added health and safety risks, and family pressures (AfDB, 2020).**<sup>138</sup> The pandemic has highlighted again the need for enhanced capacities of the health system with regards to surveillance, prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and control. The Partnership to Accelerate COVID-19 Testing (PACT): Trace, Test & Track, launched by the African Union Commission in April 2020 aims to support the response to COVID-19 in Africa at a grassroots level, drawing on the vital role of community healthcare workers.<sup>139</sup>

4.4.3 (1) Institutional oversight and capacity

The WASH sector is led and coordinated by the Ministry of Water Resources, Irrigation and Electricity (MWRIE), represented by the Drinking Water and Sanitation Unit (DWSU/WES) in partnership with MoH that leads the sanitation and hygiene components of WASH. Other key partners that support the WASH sector include UNICEF, and all active WASH stakeholders in the government, UN and NGOs, CBOs and the private sector.<sup>140</sup>

In Sudan, the rights to water services and a ‘clean’ environment were articulated in the 2005 Interim Constitution. While WASH requires further elaboration in the 2019 (draft) Interim Constitution, there is a mention of the importance of social welfare and improving the environment. The rights to WASH in Sudan are also supported by global agreements such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as well as national laws, policies and plans.

**Strategic policies and plans**

Over the past decade, political commitment to WASH has been strong with the development of a WASH Policy (2010) and Strategic Plan (2012-2016), although there is an absence of gender-specific objectives or targets. The WASH Policy outlined the importance of water and environmental sanitation to the health and wellbeing of Sudan’s population, with specific objectives aligned with the MDGs, as well as longer-term objectives for Sudan’s 25-year Strategic Plan (2007-2031). The Policy and Plan emphasised vulnerable groups such as women, children and the elderly in accessing WASH services but failed to develop gender indicators.

The role of local communities, and especially women, is highlighted as critical to both service delivery and improved social behaviour in the WASH sector, especially in rural areas. The policy drew attention to the leadership of women in the planning, implementation, maintenance and management of rural water systems. Communities are also encouraged to play a central role in the scaling up of local sanitation through the adoption of community-led approaches to total sanitation, in line with SDG 6(B).

4.4.3 (2) Service delivery

Progress in access to WASH has been significant in recent years. Over the period of 2013-2018, over 2.3 million people gained access to safe water, and another 1.5 million gained access to basic sanitation facilities in rural areas, across both humanitarian and developmental contexts.<sup>141</sup> A total of 477 schools installed sanitation facilities, while children from 715 schools were provided with access to safe water.

Despite improvements, the actual provision of drinking-water supply and sanitation in many states still falls well below the MDG targets (and now SDG targets of universal access). Sanitation in schools and health facilities is deemed especially inadequate (WHO, 2015), influencing the participation of women and girls. As indicated by OCHA (2020), safe water services in Sudan are not sufficient to meet the growing demand, and many rural and semi-urban households use a ‘considerable’ part of their incomes for water. At the institutional level (schools and primary health centres), access

**Figure 4.6: Selected goals in WASH**  
(Including gender dimensions where existing)

<p><b>Constitution (2019)</b></p>	<p>8.14 Play an important part in the area of social welfare, to achieve social development through the provision of education, health, housing, social insurance, improve the environment, achieve biodiversity and to ensure the future of generations <sup>[1]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub></p>
<p><b>Water Supply and Environmental Sanitation Policy (2010)</b></p>	<p><b>Objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To increase the rates of access to safe water supply by 20 litres per capita per day (rural areas) and 90 litres per capita per day (urban areas) as well as increasing access to environmental sanitation services to 67% of Sudan’s population (2015 MDGs)</li> <li>• In line with the Strategic Plan (2007-2031), further increase the level of access to reach 50 litres per capita per day (rural areas) and 150 litres per capita per day (urban areas), in addition to full coverage of schools, public health facilities and</li> </ul>

to WASH in local institutions still remains limited. Two thirds of schools still do not have improved sanitation facilities and a quarter of them do not have access to clean water. Over 11 per cent of child deaths in Sudan may be caused by diarrhea, attributed mainly to poor sanitation, water and hygiene.<sup>142</sup> Two million children in Sudan suffer from acute malnutrition, 50 per cent of which is associated with repeated diarrhea or worm infections.

**Data on WASH is limited in terms of service coverage, management and impact (WHO, 2015), and there is a dearth in gender reporting.** WHO (2015) draws attention to the lack of institutional-led monitoring, and hence available and up-to-date data on the coverage of WASH. For example, there are no official figures that reflect the level of safe water supply per capita. There is also no quantitative data for human resources in the WASH sector. Further, while recognised by all government bodies, there is an absence of local, state and national targets for hygiene promotion.

**Services remain under resourced, poorly coordinated and underfunded by the state (WHO, 2015).** WHO (2015) maintains that there are insufficient human resources to operate and maintain sanitation and drinking water infrastructure. Across local, state and national levels, there is also an overlap in responsibilities of WASH activities. With limited state funds, there remains a reliance on external funding, particularly from UNICEF and NGOs; and in the absence of criteria for the allocation of financing, funds remains skewed towards the provision of drinking-water. There is an additional gap in funding for operations and maintenance. This has clear negative implications, i.e. it erodes prevention measures as part of the COVID-19 response, and increases risks in other public health emergencies.

#### 4.5 SUMMARY AND REFLECTIONS ON PERSISTING CHALLENGES

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**There have been concerted efforts in strategy and policy development in the education, health and WASH sectors over the past decade, with strong commitments from the Ministries of Health, Education and Water.** However, basic service provision remains weak and inequitable and has been 'dangerously degraded' by the economic crisis (OCHA, 2020). Sudan was reported to be on a 'trajectory' towards a further health and humanitarian crisis in early 2019.<sup>143</sup> The fallout of the global pandemic may compound this and exacerbate gender inequities and pressures.

##### *Reflecting on trends in education: service delivery and institutional capacity*

**'Remoteness, poverty and scarcity of resources' characterizes education in Sudan (World Bank 2017)<sup>144</sup>.** The government has a policy of free basic education; yet 'out of pocket' costs create barriers to entry, particularly for poor and marginalised rural families, and girls remain especially vulnerable. With rising levels of basic enrolment, there is a projected increase in demand for secondary education (World Bank, 2016). For the retention of adolescent girls, there is a need for more girl-friendly spaces (for example, separate washrooms), an increased supply of female teachers, and the provision of boarding facilities (in single-sex schools). Non-formal skills development in Sudan is 'alarmingly low' by regional and international standards, and technical and vocational education and training (TVET) plays only a 'marginal role' compared to general education. Vocational training in particular remains gender-biased, requiring major reform and development in the national TVET strategy (UNESCO, 2018).<sup>145</sup>

##### *Reflecting on trends in maternal health: service delivery and institutional capacity*

**As a result of commitments to decentralisation, state level spending in health has in fact risen since 2012 (World Bank, 2016); but similar to the education sector, there has been a lack of investment in facilities and resources.** It is argued that the WHO reproductive health strategy, *Road Map to Reduce Maternal Mortality*, has not been reinforced by supportive health policies and sufficient political will to address persisting barriers.<sup>146</sup> At a local level, it is clear that improving family planning requires better engaging men in family planning decisions, alongside enhancing access to (and quality of) family planning services.<sup>147</sup> A key lesson learnt by UNFPA (2018) is the effectiveness of community-based interventions in promoting awareness and creating demand for sexual and reproductive health services.<sup>148</sup>

##### *Reflecting on trends in WASH: service delivery and institutional capacity*

**It is evident that Sudan is lagging behind global goals related to universal access to water and**

**sanitation, although there are significant variations between states.** There has been limited attention paid to hygiene promotion and the important role of women, holding back broad household and community behaviour change. The World Bank (2016) indicates that greater efforts are now required to integrate WASH into local service provision related to health (and maternal health), nutrition and schools, with special attention placed on water quality.

#### **Box 4.3: Views on educational provision and participation**

*"If you want girls' education, you have to make it free, and provide subsidized boarding facilities" (Activist, MANSAM, Khartoum)*

*"There has been regional level progress particularly in some parts of eastern Sudan. Attitudes are changing and there is growing support for girls' education, particularly with help of interventions by NGOs and CSOs " (Focus Group, Government representatives, Khartoum)*

*"The curriculum needs to be revised to be relevant to the local culture and to be gender sensitive" (Ministry of Education, North Darfur)*

*"Despite a long history of girls' education, there has been an increase in the dropout of girls after Grade 6, reaching almost 40 percent in some areas...Poverty, domestic chores and child marriage remain key factors in girls dropping out. Female teachers also suffer from poor training and delayed salaries" (Ministry of Education, Gezira)*

#### ***Key messages: Change (2005-20) in Basic Education, Maternal Health and WASH***

- **The education, health and WASH sectors all suffer a lack of access and inequity. There are major differences across states, and between rural and urban areas. There are critical infrastructure challenges and a lack of resources influencing (quality) service delivery.**
- **Despite improvements in the education sector, there are still gender differences in GER at basic level (lower levels of girls than boys).** Gender gaps shift at secondary level, with lower levels of boys than girls. Factors influencing girls' participation include social norms (particularly early marriage), geography, wealth, and school environments.
- **Progress has been made in maternal health in the last three decades, although the MDGs were not met.** Skilled birth attendants now assist over three-quarters of pregnant women during delivery, but family planning use remains extremely low. Factors influencing the utilization of maternal health services include poverty, access constraints, low awareness, and social norms.
- **While WASH services have improved, less than a third of the population has access to both improved drinking water and sanitation.** Two thirds of schools do not have improved sanitation and a quarter of schools do not have access to clean water, inhibiting girls' participation.
- **Regional and urban-rural disparities exist.** Poor and less educated rural households, nomads, war-affected populations, IDPs and minority groups remain the most vulnerable.

The chapter specifically explores linkages between gender and access to, and participation in livelihoods, enterprise and employment. In examining government support towards inclusive economic development, it discusses institutional progress; and policies, plans and affirmative action. This chapter is related to [SDG 1: No Poverty](#), [SDG 5: Gender Equality](#), [SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth](#), [SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure](#), and [SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities](#).

### 5.1 STATUS AND TRENDS RELATED TO GENDER IN THE ECONOMY

Over 1999-2011, the Sudanese economy experienced incredible growth, with heavily oil-based revenues and exports (World Bank, 2015). Yet during this period, there was a neglect of agriculture and a lack of diversification, and an absence of policies to foster economic development and inclusion. This era came to an abrupt end in 2011, with the secession of South Sudan and the major loss of the oil revenue; resulting in consumer price inflation and increased fuel prices, and triggering subsequent political unrest in 2013. Civil war in South Sudan in 2013 further curtailed revenues and this was compounded by the global oil price slump in 2015/2016.<sup>149</sup> The economic crisis and continuation of food price hikes in Sudan led to major demonstrations in December 2018<sup>150</sup>, and ultimately regime change in 2019. Sudan has suffered from weak institutions, major economic imbalances and 'a geography of conflict', with the economy centred around Khartoum and the nearby riverine states. This has led to high levels of inequality and rural poverty; while the Gross National Income (GNI) per capita is US1693, Sudan's poverty rate is 46.5 percent (World Bank, 2015).

Sudan has a largely unregulated economy, and was ranked 171 out 190 countries in the 2020 *Doing Business Survey* (World Bank, 2019), falling from a rank of 149 out of 189 economies in 2014 (World Bank, 2015). In recent years, Sudan has experienced deterioration in the business environment including in accessing credit, and protecting investors. The time required to set up a business is just below the regional average (34 days for men, and 35 for women)<sup>151</sup>, but above countries such as Ethiopia. Corruption has driven fragility and conflict, reinforcing barriers to investment and equitable growth (World Bank, 2013b). Sudan is reported to have one of the most developed infrastructure and telecommunications in the region. If political stability can be maintained, there remain opportunities for both economic revival and more inclusive development, including through agriculture, as well as in expanding the tourism sector, the processing and export of gold, and the oil refinery sector (ILO, 2014).

#### 5.1.1 Labour and employment overview

The most recent national survey on the workforce indicated significant gender inequality in access to, and participation in the labour force and employment in Sudan (Sudan Labour Force Survey (SLFS), 2011). Women were reported to face high levels of exclusion and do not participate in the labour market on an equal basis to men. Women's labour force participation is characterized by sector bias and vulnerable employment. Yet variations exist among states, between rural to urban areas, and across age groups.

##### *Labour force participation*

Only half of the working aged population (15-64 years)<sup>152</sup> is economically active<sup>153</sup>, including less than a third of working-aged women. Drawing on the SLFS data (2011), ILO estimated that just over half of the population aged 15-64 years remains economically active (aged 15-64 years), including 70.8 percent of males and 28.9 percent of females (ILO, 2014). Notably female participation was reported to have increased from the 1990 survey (18 percent of females aged 10-64 years). There are slightly lower levels of participation of both men and women (10-64 years) in urban areas (56.9 percent of males and 22.6 percent of females). Labour force participation among men increases with age up to the age range of 45-49 years (91.8 percent), and then declines. Among females, the highest level of labour force participation is in the age group 35-39 years (28.7 percent).

The eastern states report extremely low labour force participation of women (15-64 years), in particular rural areas of the Red Sea (6.7 percent) and Kassala (2.7 percent) whereas men's participation in these areas is above the national average. Youth and young people (15-29 years old) make up 51 percent of the working age population (15-64 years). Over seven out of ten working age women, and just three out ten working age men (this rises to five out of ten men in rural areas) are economically inactive (not participating in the labour force). The majority of inactive people fall in the age range of 15-24 years, with the main reason cited to be full-time schooling for men and 'home-making' for women (ILO, 2014).

**Figure 5.1: Key Indicators for Gender in the Economy**

PARTICIPATION IN ECONOMY	NATIONAL (SLFS, 2011)
LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE (15-64+ YRS)	50.5 % 70.8 % male 28.9 % female
EMPLOYMENT RATE (15-64+ YRS)	41.1 % 61.4 % male 19.6 % female
EMPLOYMENT IN AGRICULTURE	47.0 % 41.4 % male 63.5 % female
EMPLOYMENT AS PROFESSIONALS, DIRECTORS OR TECHNICIANS	9.9 % 8.3 % male 14.7 % female
YOUTH EMPLOYMENT (15-24 YEARS)	20.4 % 28.9 % male 11.4 % female

**There are low levels of employment, particularly among young women (15-24 years).** The ILO estimated that 41.1 of the population aged 15-64 years are employed, including 61.4 percent of males and 19.6 percent of females, with higher levels in urban areas (ILO, 2014). Once again for males (10-64 years), employment increases with age, peaking at the age group of 45-49 years (96.9 percent). The highest level of participation among females occurs in the age group 24-30 years (38.6 percent). Unemployment among youth (15-24 years) is notably twice as high as that among the rest of the labour force, and is particularly high among young women (ILO, 2014).

### Gender and employment profile

#### Gender influences the choice of employment by sector, particularly in rural areas.

The ILO (2014) estimates that about 65 percent of 'prime age workers' (aged 25-54 years old) are engaged in the informal sector (including agricultures, mining, trades), and 20 percent of youth (15-24 years). The SLFS survey (2011) indicates that half of the labour force is engaged in agriculture (47 percent), including 41.4 percent of economically active men and 63.5 percent of economically active women (rising to 82.2 percent in rural areas). The service sector is the second largest employer, especially wholesale and retail trade (12.1 percent) and transportation and storage (7.7 percent).

#### There is a high relative proportion of female professionals as compared to men, but lower levels of female literacy in the overall workforce.

A high number of women participate in the education sector (10.3 percent of women, compared to 2.6 percent of men), and this increases to 23.8 percent in urban areas. Interestingly, there are a higher number of skilled females who work as 'Professionals, Directors or Technicians' than males (14.7 percent of women compared to 8.3 percent of men). Over a third of the labour force remains illiterate however, including almost half of the female workforce. Less than 11 percent of the labour force has tertiary education; including 16 percent of the female labour force. As highlighted by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (2015)<sup>154</sup>, despite women's professional participation and higher levels of tertiary education, the majority of women in Sudan remain uneducated and employed in low-skilled jobs in the informal economy; where labour, trade union and social security rights are not protected (Badawi and Folcio, 2016).

### 5.1.2 Livelihoods and agriculture

#### The Sudanese population remains predominantly rural and engaged in the agricultural economy, with over two-thirds of the population living in rural areas (ILO, 2014).

Although Sudan is a potential 'bread basket' for the region with its vast areas of cultivatable agricultural land and sufficient water resources (FAO, 2015), it has recently struggled with land disputes, land grabbing and corruption.<sup>155</sup> The World Bank (2015) projects the growing importance of the agricultural sector and its diversification, and a decline in reliance on extractives (such as oil). Agriculture makes up almost 40 percent<sup>156</sup> of GDP, increasing from 31.2 percent in 2010<sup>157</sup>. Across most of the country however, there has been extremely low productivity in agriculture (such as sorghum, millet, wheat and oil seeds), with the exception of the significant yields of gum Arabic<sup>158</sup> and cotton. Despite the high production of gum Arabic, there is little value-added processing (World Bank, 2015). Once the 'pride of Sudan' and the primary centre of Sudan's agriculture, the Gezira scheme is now teetering on collapse. Meanwhile, livestock production is 'strong and rising' but under pressure from a loss of pastoral land (livestock are concentrated in western Sudan, including Kordofan and Darfur states).

**The agricultural sector requires strategic development and significant investment, and has the potential to foster gender equality.** The sector incorporates almost two thirds of the female labour force. Women's engagement in the agricultural sector is often limited to the lower ends of the value chain, with limited participation in processing and marketing. Almost two thirds of the agricultural workforce is illiterate (SLFS, 2011), compared to just over a third across the other sectors. This indicates that the skills base in the rural economy is extremely limited and would require major capacity building to spur local economic innovation and transformation (ILO, 2014). The transformation from subsistence agriculture to a 'viable sector' will also require a major change in land rights, and access to services such as appropriate technology, extension, improved seeds, rural credit and infrastructure development (World Bank, 2016). While land reform is crucial for sustainable rain fed agriculture and increasing participation in marginalized areas, the revitalization of irrigated agriculture (located in the central and northern parts of Sudan) is regarded as a 'strategic choice' because of vulnerabilities associated with recurrent drought and economic volatility.

### *Environmental issues affecting rural livelihoods*

**Sudan is facing various environmental stresses, including land degradation, desertification and deforestation due to climate change and the over exploitation of resources, with a disproportionate effect on women and girls.**<sup>159</sup> In regions such as Darfur, this has been exacerbated by conflicts, insufficient regulation and the neglect of the environment by the government. Poor soil management, the misuse of pesticides<sup>160</sup> and genetically modified seeds have also contributed to environmental problems, especially in the absence of regulation. In addition to negatively influencing livelihoods, this has led to human health problems, particularly for women, including an increase in the levels of abortion and miscarriage.<sup>161</sup>

**Unregulated mining and infrastructure development have led to further environmental challenges for women and rural communities.**

It has also been indicated that the use of certain metals (such as mercury) in mining areas have led to increased health risks for children and pregnant women in surrounding communities (WHO, 2016). Meanwhile, the absence of long-term planning in dam construction has led to significant environmental shocks. Communities residing in areas close to the Merowe dam have been forced to leave their homes with little consideration given to either the social, economic or environmental impact of these forced migrations.<sup>162</sup>

### **5.1.3 Trends in gender and enterprise**

**The ILO estimated that there were approximately 600,000 registered micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs)<sup>163</sup>, employing less than 1.5 million workers (about 20 percent of total jobs) in Sudan (ILO, 2014).** The majority of the businesses (75 percent) are micro enterprises, and employ, on average just two workers. Most workers and MSMEs are in the informal economy, which accounts for a significant share of employment in Sudan (World Bank, 2016).

**As a result of rural to urban migration, the informal economy has experienced rapid growth, particularly in Khartoum, and is attracting greater participation of women.** Informal sector enterprises include both subsistence and unofficial enterprises (ILO, 2014). Subsistence activities are typically carried out by poor, unskilled and uneducated workers, and include petty trading, home-based activities and crafts, car repair, and traditional food making and beverages. Although less publicly visible than in other African countries, women tend to occupy designated areas within the open market place. Challenged by little experience and access to credit, women's petty trading ventures and businesses typically remain micro or small. They are also constrained by restricted mobility and a lack of networks. Unofficial enterprises may be owned by both poor or wealthy entrepreneurs, and can include activities such as carpentry, bakeries, garment making and pottery.

#### **Box 5.1: Gender roles in agriculture in Sudan**

In rural Sudan, men and women tend to jointly participate in land clearance and preparation, harvesting, transporting and marketing of cash crops, with women carrying out most of the planting and weeding. Women are also typically involved in post-harvest food processing activities such as grinding grain and processing and preserving vegetables, meats and fruits. They are also responsible for rearing small domestic animals, generating meat, milk and eggs. Women may also tend 'jubraka' (vegetable gardens), providing families with diversified food products such as beans, okra and green vegetables, as well as fruit from indigenous trees for household consumption or sell.

*Source: Ritchie (2018)*

**Women tend to remain in traditional female-dominated sectors, for example in small-scale retailing, services or home-based business.** As discussed in Chapter 4, there is limited participation of women in apprenticeships and a persistence of gender-segregated crafts (ILO, 2014). In Gadarif, GIZ emphasized the lack of advocacy on the diversification of women's roles and the promotion of women's engagement in vocational sectors, including in electrical work, mechanics as well as technology.<sup>164</sup> According to a study of more educated, middle-class Sudanese female entrepreneurs, female businesses in the SME sector may be concentrated in the small-scale retailing and services industries (Welsh, Memili, Kaziak, & Ahmed 2013). In the sample of 89 female-owned SMEs, retailing comprised 32 percent of women's businesses, followed by 19 percent in food-related activities, 10 percent in design businesses, and 10 percent in tailoring businesses. Female entrepreneurs in this study reported higher than average earnings (3,000 USD), with some earning four times the amount.

**Self-employed women from all social classes encounter a number of social and economic challenges that influence business participation and development.** As highlighted by SIHA (2012), these include social constraints relate to the family and/or religion; access to capital and credit, a lack of awareness of relevant laws and regulations (for example the obtainment of a licence or paying taxes); and harassment and abuse in the workplace. Women also struggle with weak procurement facilities and a lack of transport to move goods. Young women entrepreneurs in Khartoum elaborated on the various socio-cultural constraints including family pressures and obligations, gender discrimination in the marketplace, price inflation of goods and services (related to transport services and raw materials), and limited 'business' networks.<sup>165</sup>

### **Box 5.2: Female traders in Darfur: pushing tentative boundaries**

In South Darfur, livelihoods for women have been 'invigorated' by their increased participation in markets, and emerging perceptions that women are competent traders and negotiators. Yet prevailing norms limit their access to markets, which tends to require the support of a male guardian. On the one hand, economic participation is allowing women to gain 'new respect and admiration' from their community, improve their household situation, offer loans to family and friends and support community social functions. On the other hand, such women may also face abuse, and be labelled 'masculine', accused of loose behaviour, and be forced into marriage for their wealth.

*Source: Ritchie (2018)*

#### **5.1.4 Trends in gender and social organization**

**Tradeswomen's associations and unions have remained largely elusive in Sudan but new trends are emerging in urban and rural areas.** In 2014, with the support of the Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa (SIHA), the Women's Cooperative Union was established in Khartoum state (including 13 cooperatives with an estimated 1300 women). Women in the Union included tea and food sellers, domestic workers and petty traders from the capital city markets.<sup>166</sup> Meanwhile at a grassroots level, the engagement of women in savings groups - Self Help Groups (SHGs) or Village Savings and Lending Associations (VSLAs)<sup>167</sup> - has been a growing phenomenon in rural communities in Darfur, facilitated by NGOs such as CARE International. As in neighbouring countries such as Ethiopia and Kenya, women's social organization into VSLAs has boosted their skills and financial literacy, as well as enhanced their confidence and assertiveness. Participation in VSLAs has encouraged women's trading activities and new business initiatives, and this has triggered women's greater involvement in community decision-making.<sup>168</sup>

**Involvement in savings groups such as VSLAs is often described to be the 'largest driver of change' for rural women, transforming perceptions of women, and even fostering new community leadership aspirations.** Research in Darfur indicated that women's collaboration was spurring women's own dialogue, for example on the importance of education; and inspiring women's collective action (Ritchie, 2018). VSLAs were employing the help of strong women leaders such as the *hakamat* and *sheikat* (the male leaders' wives) to disseminate positive messages on women's rights and justice, and advocate against FGM/C and violence against women. The Gender Centre in Khartoum felt that such groups now required 'organisational' capacity building, and even legal awareness training if they are to promote socio-economic change at the community level.<sup>169</sup>

**Women are also participating in emerging NGO-led or government-supported farmers' associations in states such as Gadarif.** In the past 2-3 years, Zenab Organisation reports facilitating a total of 70 women's farmers' associations in East and West Qalabat, and Middle Gadarif (each with 50-100 women farmers). The Ministry of Agriculture's Extension Department also reported establishing more than 10 women farmers' associations (30-40 farmers per group) in Gadarif to facilitate extension advice and inputs.<sup>170</sup>

### 5.1.5 Trends in gender and access to resources and services

**Women's business activities often remain constrained due to illiteracy, inexperience and limited access to markets, resources and services.** This may be exacerbated by women's domestic responsibilities (including household expenditure), their restricted mobility, and their double time-burden (due to unpaid domestic work). As per customary norms, women's rights to property, productive assets and land inheritance are limited in Sudan. Traditionally, rural women did not own individual 'capital' assets, and land, goods, animals, crops and money was largely controlled and managed by men. Women were responsible for small ruminants such as sheep, goats and chickens, but they needed to consult their husbands or male relatives on their sale. As highlighted by a young male respondent in NGO research in Kass, 'the woman herself is the property of the man' (Ritchie, 2018). In general, women still face poor access to and control over agricultural resources and extension services.

**From a legal perspective, customary and Islamic (*Sharia*) Law does not actually prevent women from owning assets such as land in Sudan, yet discriminatory customary and statutory laws restrict their claim to land rights (World Bank, 2015).** Most subsistence farmers in Sudan operate under the system of customary land tenure, with land use coordinated by community leaders, who provide farmers with usufruct rights.<sup>171</sup> When women do inherit and own private land, the title of the deeds may often be transferred to male members of the household, since adult males tend to take responsibility for the extended family including unmarried and divorced female siblings. Government-owned land can be leased to both male and female farmers, although in practice, female farmers often lack the resources for leasing.<sup>172</sup>

**Land ownership and control among women is thus uncommon, resulting in a lack of collateral for credit, and limited access to membership in cooperatives and extension and production technology.** The existing land law and land policies remain key obstacles for agricultural development, including for accessing finance and ensuring sustainable land use. In particular, a lack of title deeds has prevented traditional farmers and pastoralists, especially women, from obtaining formal credit. The policies also marginalize small farmers in access to land as preference is given to investors with large holdings in semi-mechanized agriculture, which in turn, creates tensions between settled farmers and pastoralists, especially in regions such as Darfur.<sup>173</sup> Notably, the *Investment Encouragement Act* (1990), and the revised version in 2007, failed to address social and historical issues with regards to land.

### Women's access to banking

**Women's access to banking is inhibited by the lack of supportive policies, the poor regulatory and business environment, as well as existing social and cultural practices.** Despite a new 'Pro-Women' Micro Finance Policy by the Central Bank of Sudan in 2008, women struggle to access bank loans due to both a lack of assets (for collateral) as well as the limited provision of financial services, particularly in rural areas. Even when services are available, there is preferential access for men, and banks impose a limit to credit for women as they are perceived as a higher risk (SIHA, 2012). Financial institutions (and informal lenders) may require women to have male guarantors, or to pay higher interest rates, making them vulnerable to defaulting. In 2011, the World Bank cited that only 4 percent of women had bank accounts, less than half of that as men (9.4 percent had bank accounts). Almost equal numbers of women (1.8 percent) and men (1.7 percent) had received a loan from a formal financial institution, although there may be higher levels of unmet demand among women.

### 5.1.6 Trends in gender and wage employment

**Gender dynamics are implicated in women being less likely to earn a wage (in family work) or receive equal and fair remuneration (in formal employment).** The majority of employed workers are wage earners, representing 40.2 percent of the work force (44.1 percent for males, and 28.4 percent for females). Self-employment is the second most common type of work, incorporating 37.4 percent of

the workforce (40.2 percent for males, and 29.1 percent for females). Meanwhile, 15.7 percent of the work force is engaged in family work without a wage; this includes less than 10 percent of working men but over a third of working women. In terms of wage incomes, there is a gender pay gap of 47 percent in the 2011 SLFS survey; and this was fairly constant across rural and urban areas (World Bank, 2015). The wage gender gap is present in all sectors, but at varying degrees. An estimated 35 percent of women earn less than the monthly poverty line, compared to just 16.5 percent of men.

### *Gender and vulnerable employment*

**Over 50 percent of those employed in Sudan are in ‘vulnerable employment’<sup>174</sup>, with uncertain job security, remuneration and benefits; and this includes over 40 percent of workers, in particular those with low educational attainment (ILO, 2014). Women are indicated to be at greater risk than men (66 percent of the female labour force, compared to 48 percent of the male labour force).** Higher labour participation by men accounts for their over representation in vulnerable employment (male workers represent 70 percent of those in vulnerable employment, or almost 4 million workers). The less favourable treatment of women in employment, in terms of lower pay and benefits, remains a serious concern in Sudan (Badawi and Folcio, 2016). Harassment of females in the workplace is also significant leading to ‘mental and psychological distress’, with physical harassment of women particularly high in informal or casual jobs such as market trade and street vending (ERT, 2014). Focus groups in Khartoum highlighted that such urban harassment has been exacerbated by a lack of institutional protection and laws that support women workers.<sup>175</sup> Insecure employment is higher in the rural areas, and in the agricultural sector, which accounts for the highest incidence of unpaid work.

#### **5.1.7 Trends in gender and sector participation: infrastructure and services**

**The service sector (40 percent of workers) and industry (15 percent of workers) are the largest employers after agriculture,** accounting for almost 58 percent and 2.6 percent of the GDP respectively<sup>176</sup>. The industrial sector has decreased rapidly from 2010 levels due to the decline in oil production and related processing activities (ILO, 2014). While the service sector has a slight gender imbalance (44.5 percent of employed men compared to 35.5 percent of employed women), industry is almost completely dominated by men (15.7 employed men, and just 3.8 percent of employed women). In terms of extractives, gold is fast emerging as a leading export commodity, employing an estimated 1 million workers,<sup>177</sup> with the workforce composed primarily of younger men under the age of 45. Women (and children) are described as ‘visible minorities’ in gold-mining activities.<sup>178</sup> Manufacturing has notably increased from the expansion in sugar and cement processing; but this has not boosted sector employment with the lack of a skilled workforce preventing diversification into ‘new and value-added product areas’ (World Bank, 2015).

**Women face discrimination in certain lines of professional work but have been active in lobbying for change.** In particular, women have struggled to enter employment as land surveyors or oil engineers since many companies argue that they will not be able to protect them.<sup>179</sup> The less favourable treatment of women in careers, pay and benefits remains a serious concern in Sudan including discrimination in promotion, as male candidates are promoted ahead of more suitable female candidates (Badawi and Folcio, 2016; ERT, 2014). Active campaigning by women’s organisations has been successful in removing a number of barriers to female employment in certain sectors. Women now occupy professional positions both in politics and education (including as university professors or teachers in primary and secondary schools).<sup>180</sup> In contrast, there have been regressive trends in female employment in the judiciary. A bias towards hiring men exists and there are only a few female judges in appeal courts and they were notably employed before the Islamization process started.<sup>181</sup>

**As a result of commitments under the Doha peace agreements and efforts in reconstruction, the construction sector has continued to grow, and presents labour opportunities.** In road projects, petty trading tends to proliferate along the route leading to increased livelihood opportunities, often for women. Yet there remain heightened risks of sexual assault for women traders, without local protection measures and a structured environment. Internationally supported programmes on infrastructure can promote the development of Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) with the inclusion of female contractors.

**In recent years, there has been increasing attention to access to alternative energy (such as solar) to accelerate local development and gender empowerment in Sudan.**<sup>182</sup> This represents a potential sector for both women’s employment and enterprise. Yet due to women’s limited access to

assets and participation in household decision-making, women are often unable to access regular financing schemes for relevant equipment (ENERGIA, 2011), necessitating tailored micro-financing programmes. In regions such as Darfur, there have been several solar energy projects for example, the installation of Solar Photovoltaic (SPV) systems in community service centres to support schools, health clinics, streets, police stations, women centres and water pumping (UNDP, 2016). At a grassroots level, NGOs such as CARE have also sought to facilitate the dissemination of improved cook stoves and have trained women in innovative technologies such as the production of 'green' charcoal (Ritchie, 2018).

*Appendix 5 provides an expanded discussion on infrastructure and gender (in particular transport and energy).*

### 5.1.8 Situation of youth and minorities

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**Youth have lower rates of economic participation and employment, due to a lack of decent work, limited skills and cultural barriers (women).** In line with the global phenomenon in developing environments, young men are slightly more likely than older men to be neither in education nor in the labour force (World Bank, 2015). According to the World Bank (2015), most young workers in Sudan start in the informal sector; and as such, this represents a key domain for job creation that should be integrated into new labour policies. Young women remain disproportionately affected by employment challenges (ILO, 2014). In the recent labour market survey (SLFS, 2011), the economic participation of women rises only incrementally from 25-29 years up to 39 years, in contrast to much higher rates of participation by men, reflecting possible 'life cycle' trends as many young women are completing education but not transitioning into paid work (World Bank, 2015).

**Unemployment and vulnerability among youth contributes significantly to regular and irregular migration.** Economic migration (and 'forced migration') remains a critical issue, both regionally, and as migrants flee further afield to Europe. An IOM study indicated that there were between 880,000 and 1,338,000 economic migrants from Sudan, half of whom were in Saudi Arabia, the rest in other neighbouring countries, and a smaller proportion in Europe (IOM, 2011). The 2019 Annual Report on Trafficking in Persons of the US Department of State maintains that human traffickers exploit domestic and foreign victims in Sudan, and victims are trafficked from Sudan to other countries. In particular, criminal groups exploit women and girls – especially IDPs or those from rural areas – for domestic work, and many are trafficked for sex. The report highlighted that the Sudanese authorities failed to address sex trafficking, identify sex trafficking victims, or amend its 2014 anti-trafficking law.

## 5.2 INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK AND POLICIES

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### 5.2.1 Institutional oversight and capacity

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**The Ministry of Labour and Social Development, Ministry of Finance and Economy, Ministry of Industry and Trade are the lead ministries for labour related issues.** In the private sector, the two key representative bodies include the General Sudanese Workers Federation and the Business Owners' Union. Sudan is a member of the ILO and has ratified several conventions related to the rights of women including the 1951 *Equal Remuneration Convention* that guarantees 'equal pay' for equal work to men and women; and the 1958 *Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention* which ensures 'equality' in the work place. Until now, Sudan has not ratified two important ILO treaties, namely the 1981 *Workers with Family Responsibilities* and the 2000 *Maternity Protection Convention* (Badawi and Folcio, 2016).

**The private sector is regulated by the *Labour Act (1997)*, while the public sector falls under the *Public Service Act (2007)*.** The right to equal pay was enshrined in Article 32 (1) of the 2005 Interim National Constitution and is included in the (draft) Interim Constitutional Document (2019). Women have a legal right to paid maternity leave under the *Labour Act (1997)* (Section 46) (Badawi and Folcio, 2016).<sup>183</sup> The *Muslim Personal Status Law (1991)* and *Labour Act (1997)*, on the other hand, places various restrictions on women's right to work in terms of type of work and location.<sup>184</sup> Domestic and informal workers have been excluded from the scope of the *Labour Act (1997)* but a little known law governing informal and domestic workers exists in the *Domestic Servants Act (1955)* (SIHA, 2012).

## Strategic sector policies and plans

A national vision on the labour force and employment is articulated in recent strategies and frameworks, for example Sudan's *Twenty Five Year National Strategy (2007-2031)*<sup>185</sup>, and *Five Year Plans* and poverty reduction plans. These include upgrading the labour force and reducing unemployment; building capabilities and skills to meet the needs of the labour market (including labour in the informal sector); approving equitable labour standards; developing a labour market information base; and strengthening social dialogue between all those in the production process (ILO, 2014). The 2007 *National Policy on Women's Empowerment* acknowledged gender-related challenges including women's lack of access to assets and credit; low employment and poverty; and limited vocational and skills formation and the poor coverage of safety nets (ILO, 2014). The latest *Five Year Plan (2015-2019)* emphasises the importance of agricultural productivity in Sudan but is described as 'gender-blind', as it fails to mention women's role in agriculture or women's scope of employment.<sup>186</sup>

**The recent Interim PRSP (2012-2016) includes a section dedicated to economic growth and employment creation and provides a platform for sectoral and crosscutting policies.** There have been major commitments to support the

development of human resources, including the reduction of gender disparities through women's empowerment; and to provide social safety nets for the poor. The policy highlights the integration of gender perspectives and equality into reforms and macro-economic policy, gender-sensitive budgeting and facilitating opportunities for women in non-traditional sectors including through capacity building and skills development (ILO, 2014). To date however, there has been no implementation of the IPRSP. The new Administration is reported to be updating the strategy, and gender advocates are keen to strengthen critical gender dimensions.<sup>187</sup>

**Sudan still lacks a national employment policy that can accelerate economic diversification and promote economic participation.** In 2012, the African Economic Outlook indicated that youth employment promotion programmes remain uncoordinated and there was a lack of measures to address disparities in employment along urban/rural and gender divides (ILO, 2014). To provide a framework for structural change in the economy and labour market, the ILO and UNDP developed a '*Roadmap Toward a National Employment Policy*' in Sudan in 2014. The report acknowledged that existing policy statements recognized the need for economic diversification but indicated a major gap in the 'skills' base of the country. A national employment policy (and Action Plan) may assist the Government with promoting active, inclusive and quality employment (with a focus on young people); efficient institutions; and a necessary legal framework (ILO, 2014).

**The deteriorating economic situation puts macro-economic policies in the spotlight, and there is an increasing focus on gender by local experts.** According to the World Bank (2016), economic stability is critical for economic growth and a key factor in poverty reduction. The World Bank emphasizes the role of the international community in resolving debts, and increasing development funding. At an institutional level, UN Women is advocating for the introduction of gender-sensitive policies related to public spending, budgeting, taxation and employment.<sup>188</sup> As noted by the IMF (2013), a transparent public procurement still needs to be established, building on the Procurement Act (2010), and this requires a focus on gender equality.<sup>189</sup> Women-owned businesses that obtain government contracts are shown to usually grow, and contribute to increased GDP growth and improved female

**Figure 5.2: Selected Gender-related Goals in the Economy**

<p><b>Draft Constitution (2019)</b></p>	<p><b>Women Rights</b> 49.2 The state provides equal rights for men and women in the political and civilian and social and cultural and economic areas, equal pay, equal work conditions and promotional conditions [SEP]</p>
<p><b>Women's Empowerment Policy Sudan (2007)</b></p>	<p><b>Economic empowerment (Selected objectives)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Provide women, especially poor and rural women, with finance and marketing facilities. [SEP]</li> <li>➤ Create opportunities for developing administrative and developmental capabilities to eliminate restrictions women are subjected to. [SEP]</li> <li>➤ Incorporate gender issues into economic policies at all levels. [SEP]</li> <li>➤ Make arrangements and draft policies in the field of maternity and childcare.</li> </ul>

labour force participation.<sup>190</sup> In the rural sector, the World Bank (2016) draws attention to the role of education and financial inclusion in supporting gender equality. There is an urgent need to revisit micro-finance policies, in particular to support rural women who have been largely marginalized in access to finance. There is also emerging discussion on facilitating access to government land for female farmers, for example in states such as Gadarif, Blue Nile, Darfur and Kordofan.<sup>191</sup>

### 5.3 SUMMARY AND REFLECTIONS ON PERSISTING CHALLENGES

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**Sudan is in the midst of an economic crisis and the challenge for the country is now promoting diversification and inclusive economic development.** The Sudanese population remains primarily engaged in the agricultural rural economy, particularly women. Socio-cultural factors still play a major role in Sudan in influencing access to, and participation in livelihoods, business, credit and services, and natural resources such as land and water. Although women function as critical economic actors, their work is characterized by informality and precarity, thus limiting the scope for growth and development in the rural and micro-economy. Over two-thirds of women (and over 75 percent in urban areas) remain outside of the labour force altogether, with distinct geographic inequalities. Cultural factors and local security conditions influence women's labour force participation.<sup>192</sup> In more marginalized areas, the persistence of social and religious barriers discourages women and girls from pursuing careers and higher education.

#### *Trends in informal economy and enterprise*

**Poor women still struggle with a lack of access to resources and formal credit, due to the failure of the 'Pro-Women' Micro-Finance policy, as well as a lack of access to business services, networks and social support (and protection).** In the absence of a strong pro-female TVET policy and strategy, women in the vocational sector remain in traditionally female-dominated sectors and there is limited participation of women in emerging innovation (e.g. solar technology). Meanwhile, female entrepreneurs are constrained by both a lack of institutional support and protection, as well as persisting cultural norms and pressures, even in middle class households. There is now increasing interest among young educated women in entrepreneurship and 'male' business domains such as ICT.

#### *Reflecting on trends in women's organisation and networks*

**At a grassroots level, the development of rural women's savings groups (e.g. VSLAs) is an important trend in regions such as Darfur and Gadarif, precipitating women's micro trading activities and business ventures.** As highlighted in neighbouring countries, women's organisation into structures such as VSLAs (and cooperatives) can be an 'effective model to increase the productivity of business activities, facilitate access to loan schemes for business activities or emergencies, and provide a social support network' (NAGAAD, 2019). There may be a strategic role for governments in the promotion of VSLAs for financial inclusion (SEEP, 2018). The organization of women's farmers' associations represents another important trend in states such as Gadarif, facilitating women's access to inputs and services.

#### *Reflecting on trends in the wage economy, and sector participation*

**Women are present in the public sector, including as professionals, but there is significant discrimination of women in the formal private sector.** It is clear that the new regime will need to pursue affirmative action to promote women's equal employment and sector participation. A major potential growth area includes Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) and solar energy, particularly for skilled youth and university graduates, and women.

#### *Emerging policy, and gaps*

**An important step for promoting inclusive economic development will be the development of gender-sensitive macro-economic policies and a national employment policy, with the recognition of women, young, IDPs and minorities as vulnerable groups.** At present, there is an absence of adequate legal regulatory frameworks for the public and private sectors to support enabling environments for equality in employment, dignity and protection. Facilitating access to land will be imperative to ensure women's participation in evolving agricultural opportunities. Employment policies will also need to appreciate the situation of the rural displaced who relied predominantly on

agriculture for their livelihoods prior to displacement. The World Bank (2019b) argues that business skills development and improved access to employment opportunities must be part of the interventions for 'durable solutions' in Sudan.

### **Box 5.3: Views on gender and business**

*"We face a struggle to convince our families, in particular for business movement and travel (abroad to fairs)...And then in business, we struggle to obtain bank loans, both in terms of requirements to have guarantors, but also access to large sized loans (usually expected for men)"* (Independent business woman, Gezira)

*"The private sector is still perceived to be the domain of men and professional women are expected to find public sector jobs ... Many [unskilled] women work in the informal sector (self-employed or in agriculture) and face a lack of support and disrespect"* (NGO Focus Group, Khartoum)

*"Women face two major issues in economic participation, firstly the control by men, including their husbands, brothers and fathers; and secondly, access to finance,"* (Ministry of Social Welfare, Gadarif)

#### ***Key messages: Change (2005-20) in Gender, Livelihoods and Business***

- **National trends across the country indicate that half the population is economically active, but only a third for women, and only 20 percent of women are employed.** Gender gaps are observed through all age groups but with age, this increases.
- **Rural livelihoods (livestock, agriculture) are at risk with climate change, land degradation, population explosion and urbanisation.** Women remain at lower levels of the value chain, but there are opportunities in agricultural organization and modernization, with potential investment.
- **There is growing participation of women in the informal economy but women lack access to credit, BDS, and social protection and networks.** In Khartoum, there increasing interest by female graduates in entrepreneurship, including in non-traditional sectors such as ICTs.
- **Women are present in the public sector (including as professionals) but men dominate in the private sector.** Women suffer vulnerable employment with lower pay and benefits. Energy, ICTs represent potential areas for women's inclusion and development.
- **In terms of structures, a women's cooperative union has been established in Khartoum and there are new women's savings groups/VSLAs and farmers' associations in regions such as Darfur and Gadarif.**
- **While labour-related strategies and plans exist, there is a lack of a national employment policy. There is also a need for gender-sensitive macro-economic polices related to public spending, procurement, budgeting, taxation and employment.** 'Pro-Women' micro-finance policies require revision.

## VI EVALUATING GENDER EQUALITY, AND INCLUSION IN A FRAGILE CONTEXT

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This chapter further analyses report findings, and key barriers that underlie progress towards equality and inclusion.<sup>193</sup> The discussion looks closer at trends in women's agency and power through exploring changing levels and spaces of women's decision-making. It discusses top down approaches and the role of the women's movement in promoting bottom-up change, particularly in a fragmented context. Finally, the chapter reflects on opportunities for promoting gender equality and inclusion in Sudan.

### 6.1 TRENDS IN GENDER, POWER AND CHANGE IN SUDAN

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**There have been tangible efforts in policy and strategy making in gender equality and development in Sudan over the past 10-15 years, yet repressive legislation and a lack of 'institutional will' have held back grassroots change and equitable development.** In rural areas, Elkarib (2016b) argues that the combination of deteriorating economic conditions (and the demographic changes due to displacement in certain regions), the lack of rural development initiatives and the concentration of services in the capital, and high levels of migration have resulted in both shifting gender roles and responsibilities, and the increasing vulnerability of women. It is clear that major barriers to achieving gender equality and inclusion remain in Sudan, embedded in both formal and cultural institutions, although a new era of change may be on the horizon.

#### 6.1.1 Scope of changing agency and power

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**To better understand trends of change in gender equality, it is pertinent to examine Sudanese women's evolving participation in decision-making, and the scope of women's changing agency and power.** Focus groups looked at the various levels of women's decision-making and spaces of participation, and the role of actors in processes of change. The research indicated diverse realities in Sudan, between geographic regions and states, urban to rural areas, and across various social groups.

##### *Levels of decision-making*

**In urban areas, activist women are now participating in national level forums; while in conflict/humanitarian contexts, women are participating in community structures and regional peace talks, with the support of the aid community.** After several years of protests and women's prominent role in the revolution, urban educated women are demanding equal participation however in all political processes. There are indicators of change at leadership level, with women's appointment as ministers, and strikingly, as Chief Justice. It is clear that high levels of exclusion persist though, with activist women often sidelined from talks and negotiations. In rural areas, change in women's political participation is still limited outside of humanitarian and NGO operational areas. Conflict regions such as Darfur have experienced significant turbulence and physical displacement; while this has been traumatic for rural families and women, it has also led to exposure to new ideas beyond their communities. Women have pushed to be part of the peace talks, although peace resolutions have tended to still overlook gendered needs. With support of NGOs, women have also started to engage in community and sub regional decision-making.

##### *Space of change*

**Activist women are now entering into new political spheres in urban areas, emboldened by the revolution (and participation in the protests).** Through the resistance movement, critical new spaces have opened up for the urban female youth, with the establishment of resistance committees and university organized groups. A key challenge now is the potential transition of such groups into youth civil society action groups. Meanwhile, in rural areas, there is still varied participation of women in community structures such as popular committees. Yet where NGOs operate, there are increasing numbers of women and youth in various thematic groups, including in VSLAs. This has encouraged some women to engage in new spheres related to peace building and community services.

## 6.1.2 Need for top down and bottom up processes

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*“Women need to organise and have a voice, we cannot continue like this...we are half the population and ignoring us is not normal [acceptable]” (Youth resistance committee, El Fashir, North Darfur)*

**In order to overcome gender discrimination and foster women’s participation, there is a need to draw on top down as well as bottom up approaches in promoting gender equality and inclusion.** Under the previous regime, there was a lack of institutional-led support, with an absence of national advocacy campaigns and progressive narratives on gender equality, rights and women’s leadership. Mainstream media was cited to perpetuate traditional gender role models, i.e. the ‘ideal’ woman staying at home as a ‘dutiful’ and ‘obedient’ wife.<sup>194</sup> There was also a systematic campaign against non-Muslim women. Respondents in the research underscored the importance of adopting new ‘modern’ gender narratives, and mainstreaming gender equality, thus moving beyond gender as a ‘sector’ or ‘special group’.

### *Women’s organization and movement*

**In the last decade, women have ‘contributed to giving women a voice’ in campaigning for gender equality and change.** Yet as highlighted by the NGO SORD, there have in fact been many gender-related initiatives, but ‘results have been inconsistent’ and may be ‘swayed by personal interests’. Civil society groups are described to lack coordination and focus, and remain dependent on donors with short-term projects. In particular, women are ‘failing to speak with one voice’ and there are ‘generational conflicts’. Meanwhile, beyond the activists, there is still limited understanding of women’s issues among the general public, particularly less educated rural groups. A strong and united women’s movement with rural outreach is now perceived as a key to promoting gender equality in Sudan.

## 6.2 CONCLUDING REMARKS

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**The key findings and reflections in this report have provided critical insights into the current status quo in gender and development in Sudan, and highlighted the dominant regional trends, including at institutional and grassroots level.** In this new political era, there is a need for strategic institutional leadership to promote country gender equality as a pathway to development, inclusion and prosperity, including through national-level campaigns and media, improved service delivery, and civil society action. In developing new gender policies and frameworks, a key task will be to institute the collection of relevant gender data to work towards the achievement of the SDGs, as highlighted by UN Women.<sup>195</sup>

**In national and regional efforts to promote gender equality and development in Sudan, there is a need to factor in local complexities, multi-dimensionality, regional variances and the dynamic nature of fragility (including risks of physical violence against women; and insecurity that further erodes the social fabric and social cohesion).** In conflict regions such as Darfur, insecurity may influence general mobility, service delivery and government outreach, with particular effects on women and poorer groups. Meanwhile, environmental fragility is creating pressures on land, resources and livelihoods; and climate change is ‘challenging norms and shifting the traditional barriers to change in gender relations’. Both government and civil society support is now necessary to catalyse new opportunities for ‘linking adaptation with improved gender equality’ (Joto Africa, 2014), combined with support from the international donor community.

*Appendix 6 includes a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) summarizing the status quo in gender equality and inclusion (and institutional capacity) in Sudan.*

## VII RECOMMENDATIONS: PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

In this final chapter, the report identifies **concrete recommendations** for accelerating the advancement of gender equality and building resilience through various sectors, including through formal institutions and political participation, social affairs and justice, education and human capital development, health systems and WASH, and the economy (including agribusiness, enterprise, and employment). As a key area of interest for the African Development Bank, it also highlights recommendations related to infrastructure development (with focus on energy, transport, and water and sanitation).

### I Support to gender equality in institution-building and political participation

**Support gender equality in institutional structures and legislation by facilitating the *National Commission on Women and Gender Equality*, and realizing women's political participation (at least 40 percent).** Other priorities include supporting the *Action Plan* for UNSCR 1325 for women's inclusion in peace-building; developing an updated national gender policy; assessing systems of gender statistics and developing gender data, indicators and budgets; capacity building of government and strengthening gender units; and promoting public awareness on gender equality.

### II Support to gender and social affairs and justice

**Support gender equality and justice at a national level through the enforcement, development and reform of relevant legislation related to GBV (and developing a new inclusive Personal Status/Family Law); and national-led advocacy.** Other areas of support include reviewing and strengthening prevention and response systems, increasing the recruitment of women in the police and judiciary and strengthening police gender units. At a community level, recommendations include providing support to community level social dialogue (with elders and youth leaders), supporting the development of IDP camp protection measures, facilitating access to informal legal justice, and media messaging. The involvement of men and boys in community campaigns, and in the development of policies and legislation on gender rights and equality, is crucial. Regional lessons learnt on men's engagement should be integrated (Wallacher, 2012).

### III Support to gender and education and human capital development

**Support education and human capital development by developing national strategies to promote participation in pre-primary, basic and secondary education (for example, provision of subsidies, free primary education); improving quality of pre-school programmes; and facilitating investment in school infrastructure (and girl-friendly environments).** Other national priorities include supporting curriculum development, female teacher training, gender awareness in civic education, scholarships for tertiary education, and alternative education in TVET (and ICTs). At a community level, recommendations include support to parent-teacher associations and school improvement through *Child Education Committees*, and facilitating access to informal and vocational training through mobile units. To strengthen teaching approaches and foster quality education, the integration of creative initiatives for promoting 'cultural, sporting or artistic space' can be effective.

### IV Improve maternal health

**Improve maternal health by investing in health infrastructure, improving the quality of maternal health services; supporting health staff development; and developing a national reproductive health and family planning campaign.** Other priorities include supporting national and state-level monitoring and evaluation; facilitating rural access through mobile health units and communications campaigns; and promoting community-led advocacy and improved CHW services (through transport and health linkages).

## V Support to WASH

**Support access to WASH by improving water and sanitation services in marginalized areas; facilitating a national campaign on hygiene promotion; and develop a framework for WASH monitoring and evaluation.** In addition, community priorities include the development of WASH infrastructure using rainwater harvesting and solar technology, and supporting community-led total sanitation.

## VI Support women's economic empowerment: business, agribusiness, employment

**Support women's economic empowerment by promoting gender-sensitivity in macro-economic policies; facilitating a *National Employment Policy* to increase women's employment; and promoting national level awareness of 'Women in the Economy'.** Further priorities include developing a nation-wide strategy to establish women's Saving Groups such as Village Savings and Lending Associations (VSLAs) or Self Help Groups (SHGs)<sup>196</sup>; facilitating women farmers' associations and cooperatives; developing a new National Micro-Finance Policy; and drafting national strategies to support emerging new skills and sectors, and the participation of women. As highlighted by SEEP (2019), the establishment of savings groups such as VSLAs/SHGs can promote financial inclusion. Governments in Sub-Saharan Africa have now incorporated savings groups for women into their public policies and programming. In linking commercial micro finance facilities to individuals, businesses and groups, lending facilities should extend 'gender friendly rates' to encourage entrepreneurship among women. In addition, BDS can support efforts to build the capacity of women to run competitive businesses.

## VII Support to gender in infrastructure development (and renewable energies)

**Improve gender equality in infrastructure development by facilitating women's inclusion in road projects (through PDP) and supporting professional training in renewable energies.** In addition, priorities include supporting access to solar energy through micro finance schemes. Female owned initiatives and programmes should be supported financially and technically where possible.

## VIII Support to gender and social organisation

**Support capacity building of women's civil society organizations, and facilitating community level collective action through VSLAs and youth groups.** LAW (2014) emphasizes that gender-related advances in Africa have been attributable in large part to the 'strength and persuasive power of their women's organisations'. Furthermore, such movements are most effective when there is cooperation between women CSOs (civil society organisations) and the government.

## IX Support to gender and the environment

**Support gender in the environment through special attention to women's needs in the *National Land Commission*.** Further priorities include facilitating appropriate technologies to support fuel consumption (e.g. improved cook stoves), local strategy-making and rangeland management to support sustainable land use, and agricultural innovation.

*See Appendix 7 for detailed recommendations (including priorities and key actors for interventions).*

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## Appendix 1: Terms of Reference

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The African Development Bank and UN Women are hiring a senior gender expert to prepare Country Gender Profile for Sudan. The Country Gender Profiles are intended to inform development assistance policies and strategies for intensifying impact on gender equality and poverty reduction. The Country Gender Profiles will identify key gender inequalities that constrain inclusive growth, identifying key gaps and challenges in current policies and programs, provide an overview of best practices and recommend strategic actions for addressing gender inequalities. The consultant will undertake the following tasks to prepare the Country Gender Profile:

1. Conduct an in-depth analysis of the political, economic, social and cultural context that affect gender equality framed against national policies and international commitments;
2. Identify key issues affecting the status of women and those hindering their access to resources, opportunities and full participation in social, economic and political spheres;
3. Examine the impact of fragility on gender equality and propose measures for promoting women's rights and voice in conflict resolution and peace building;<sup>1</sup>
4. Assess the institutional capacity of sectorial ministries and other stakeholders to promote gender equality;
5. Evaluate sectoral policies and strategies from a gender perspective and identify gaps and best practices that can be scaled up;
6. Consolidate data on key gender indicators available from existing sources for various sectors;
7. Provide concrete recommendations for accelerating the advancement of gender equality through various sectors including infrastructure development (with focus on energy, transport, and water and sanitation), agribusiness, employment, and human capital development.

### Methodology

The methodology will include conducting a desk review, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with key informants in the countries including representatives from the state, academia and non-governmental organizations. The consultant will undertake a field mission to the country to collect data and hold consultations with the key informants. The consultant will be assisted by one local consultant.

### Deliverables

Country Gender Profile paper for Sudan

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<sup>1</sup> Note from UN Women, Jan 2019: National reconciliation framework process has started (supported by Finnish Embassy and Finn Church Aid, and useful to consult them)

## Appendix 2: Research Tools (Key Informant Interviews and Focus Groups)

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### (1) RESEARCH TOOL: KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS (KIIs)

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The KIIs intended to explore country/state and sectoral progress on gender equality and development, with a focus on identifying major achievements, key trends and perspectives, organisational experience, the role of different actors, persisting obstacles/bottlenecks, and emerging opportunities.

The research took a three-pronged approach to selecting target groups and individuals, including actors from the institutional/ government level, aid and civil society, and private sector:

#### 1. Institutional level: Key informant/semi-structured interviews

Respondents included government officials from key ministries (Social Development and Labour, Health, Education, Justice, Finance, Energy).

#### 2. Aid, Development Partners and Civil society level: Key informant/semi-structured interviews

Respondents included donors, development partners, NGOs, associations, gender activists

#### 3. Private sector: Key informant/semi-structured interviews

Respondents included female entrepreneurs and male businessmen particularly in energy/ infrastructure, and youth.

### Guiding Areas of discussion

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NOTE: The following questions were used as a loose guide / platform for discussion in the research interviews, and adapted refined / accordingly with different actors.

#### 1. From your perspective and experience, briefly describe the current country status in Sudan (country / or a regional level) in terms of **gender rights and equality, and access to services/resources** – is the situation getting better / worse, and why?

- Status of gender in Sudan: access to services / resources
- Vision of the country, particularly after April 2019
- National initiatives / notable campaigns
- Key partners and programmes

#### Elaborate on any major recent **CHANGE / PROGRESS** in gender rights and development in Sudan, following political events since April 2019 (country / or at regional level)?

- Women's political participation in uprising in 2019 and new administration
- Attitudes and perspectives on gender
- New upcoming legislation / policies
- Country/regional achievements
- National priority areas and gaps

#### 2. Let us discuss in particular your department or organisation, and gender / experiences

- Describe key policies/legislation/campaigns of your department (government)
- National programmes / initiatives / campaigns related to your department (government)
- Key partners and projects you are involved with
- Department / project related services (e.g. education, health, justice, other) and participation: outreach, quality (ANY NUMBERS / REPORTS???)
- Vulnerable groups
- Achievements (related to gender)

**(NOTE: Please kindly refer to check list for sector-specific prompts)**

**3. Elaborate on major BOTTLENECKS / CONSTRAINTS / OBSTACLES to realising gender equality and rights development in your programmes/projects, or more generally in Sudan**

From your point of view, what are the root-causes to these barriers? Are these changing?

What is the impact of fragility / insecurity / conservative attitudes?

**4. Describe and elaborate on key ACTOR / ORGANISATION influences on gender and women's development and participation.**

What role do the following groups play in promoting or stifling women's development and/or women's political participation in both nominated and elected positions? Can you highlight any strengths and weaknesses of these groups?

- **Government level (e.g. Ministry of women) – sectors/capacity/strategies?**
- **Aid / NGO level (and which NGOs/CSOs?)?**
- **Private sector?**
- **Civil society? And women's groups / movement?**
- **Traditional and religious leaders play**
- **Gender activists and women's groups?**

**5. What are your IDEAS / RECOMMENDATIONS on further promoting gender equality and inclusion in Sudan (or at regional level), and addressing gaps in gender equality?**

- Describe key areas of support / critical entry points for women and girls' development and empowerment – *for example in Justice, health, education / skills, infrastructure development, agribusiness, employment*
  - Training and skills provision
  - Services / resources
  - Support to young people
  - New projects that represent new opportunities
- Describe any gaps in current efforts and initiatives

**6. Wrapping up: Any FINAL COMMENTS, or topics that we have left out / areas for further research or attention...?**

**OVERALL CHECKLIST / SUMMARY FOR KII RESEARCH DISCUSSIONS**

TOPIC	GENDER DISCUSSION POINTS
<b>Q1. COUNTRY LEVEL SITUATION AND GENDER EQUALITY/INCLUSION</b>	
<b>OVERALL STATUS OF GENDER EQUALITY AND INCLUSION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current overall situation in gender</li> <li>• Government vision and strategies related to gender equality</li> <li>• Key policies/legislation</li> <li>• National initiatives / campaigns</li> <li>• Key partners and programmes</li> </ul>
<b>CHANGE SINCE APRIL 2019</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key recent achievements / participation</li> <li>• New legislation / polices</li> <li>• New attitudes on gender?</li> </ul>
<b>EMERGING NATIONAL PRIORITY AREAS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key priority sectors for gender</li> <li>• Target groups / regions</li> <li>• Gaps</li> </ul>
<b>Q2. EXPLORING DEPARTMENT / ORGANISATION OF INTERVIEWEE</b>	
<b>(A) GOVERNMENT OFFICES/DEPARTMENTS</b>	
<b>TARGET MINISTRY: JUSTICE AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key policies/legislation/campaigns</li> <li>• National programmes / initiatives / campaigns</li> <li>• Key partners and projects</li> <li>• Gender-related services e.g. in police, justice, or support</li> <li>• Vulnerable groups</li> <li>• Status and Achievements (REPORTS?)</li> <li>• Constraints (incl. conflict)/opportunities</li> </ul>
<b>TARGET MINISTRY: EDUCATION SECTOR (FORMAL AND INFORMAL)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key policies/legislation/campaigns</li> <li>• National programmes / initiatives / campaigns</li> <li>• Key partners and projects</li> <li>• Scope / quality of formal services (regions, staff, curriculum)</li> <li>• Vocational / other skills training services</li> <li>• Gaps in service provision</li> <li>• Participation in services</li> <li>• Vulnerable groups</li> <li>• Gender/social dynamics and CHANGE</li> <li>• Status and Achievements (REPORTS?)</li> <li>• Constraints (incl. conflict)/opportunities</li> </ul>
<b>TARGET MINISTRY: HEALTH SECTOR / MATERNAL HEALTH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key policies/legislation/campaigns</li> <li>• National programmes / initiatives / campaigns</li> <li>• Key partners and projects</li> <li>• Scope / quality (regions, staff, resources)</li> <li>• Gaps in service provision</li> <li>• Participation in services</li> <li>• Vulnerable groups</li> <li>• Gender/social dynamics and CHANGE</li> <li>• Status and Achievements (REPORTS?)</li> <li>• Constraints (incl. conflict)/opportunities</li> </ul>

TOPIC	GENDER DISCUSSION POINTS
<b>TARGET MINISTRY:</b> <b>ECONOMY AND LABOUR</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key policies/legislation/campaigns</li> <li>• National programmes / initiatives / campaigns</li> <li>• Nature of labour force participation</li> <li>• Gender/social dynamics and CHANGE</li> <li>• Constraints (incl. conflict)/opportunities</li> <li>• Key partners and projects</li> <li>• Target sectors / groups</li> <li>• Participation in Eco-industries (e.g. solar)</li> <li>• Gender/social dynamics and CHANGE</li> <li>• Status and Achievements (REPORTS?)</li> <li>• Constraints (incl. conflict)/opportunities</li> </ul>
<b>(B) DONORS, DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES AND CSOS</b>	
<b>ORGANISATIONAL ACTIVITIES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key projects / programmes related to gender</li> <li>• Key partners</li> <li>• Gender/social dynamics and CHANGE</li> <li>• Achievements related to gender (any REPORTS?)</li> <li>• Constraints (incl. conflict)/opportunities</li> </ul>
<b>C) PRIVATE SECTOR</b>	
<b>COMPANY ACTIVITIES / SERVICES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key activities of company: products / services</li> <li>• Staff composition</li> <li>• Gender/social dynamics and CHANGE</li> <li>• Achievements related to gender</li> <li>• Constraints (incl. conflict)/opportunities</li> </ul>
<b>Q3. ON-GOING OBSTACLES TO PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY AND INCLUSION IN SUDAN</b>	
<b>CONSTRAINTS / BOTTLENECKS TO GENDER EQUALITY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attitudes / practices?</li> <li>• Access to services</li> <li>• Access to resources?</li> <li>• Other?</li> </ul>
<b>Q4. KEY ACTORS / ORGANISATIONS INFLUENCING GENDER ISSUES</b>	
<b>KEY ACTORS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actors promoting gender equality</li> <li>• Actors blocking gender equality</li> </ul>
<b>Q5. RECOMMENDATIONS/IDEAS TO PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY AND INCLUSION IN SUDAN</b>	
<b>IDEAS / RECOMMENDATIONS / NEW OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training and skills development</li> <li>• Resources / services?</li> <li>• Access to credit</li> <li>• Upcoming programmes</li> <li>• Support to young people</li> </ul>

## (2) RESEARCH TOOL: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS (FGDs)

The FGDs intended to further explore country, state and sectoral progress on gender equality to gain consensus on areas of change/bottlenecks, as well as tentatively look at *changing power and perceptions*<sup>197</sup> related to emerging gender equality and participation (drawing on the 'Power Cube' methodology, and adapting it to the country context)<sup>198</sup>.

Target Groups for the FGDs included the following groups:

- Group 1: Institutions (Khartoum level only)
- Group 2: Aid partners, NGOs and CSOs (Khartoum and state level)
- Group 3: Informal business sector, or youth (including entrepreneurs) (Khartoum and state level)

### Note on participants:

In Group 1, representatives from key ministries including the Ministry of Labour and Social Development, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Agriculture (Gender Mainstreaming Unit) were invited to join the meeting.

In Group 2, local aid partners and CSOs that were active and well known in community development and gender empowerment were invited to join the meetings.

In Groups 3, local stakeholders were randomly selected and included regional representatives that were interested to participate in the research and share their views openly on gender equality and empowerment.

### **Guiding Areas of discussion**

NOTE: The following questions were used as a guide / platform for discussion in the focus groups.

#### **Question 1: (Topic introduction) General / open-ended - Gender equality in Sudan**

**1.1 Exploring general and sectoral level change (e.g. justice, education, health, economy) since 2005: What are the major achievements and challenges/barriers in gender equality and development?**

**1.2 Which gender issues are you/your organization currently engaging with and how? How has this CHANGED in the past decade and since April 2019?**

→ *In your work on these issues (e.g. political rights, human rights, economic rights, governance, etc.), what strategies do you use to help strengthen women/marginalized groups' participation?*

→ *How do you see your work helping strengthen the participation of poor and marginalized people /women in decisions that affect their lives? How do you see gender relations CHANGING?*

*Describe any URBAN vs. RURAL differences? State variations?*

#### **Question 2: PLACES/LEVELS FOR PROMOTING CHANGE IN WOMEN'S EQUALITY AND PARTICIPATION**

**2.1 What levels of power or decision-making is your work trying to affect for promoting change for women/marginalized groups - and indicate examples? Is this CHANGING?**

Level	Comments

Level	Comments
Family or household (e.g. empowerment of women, youth)	
Local institutions or civil society organizations (e.g. schools, hospitals)?	
Local government and municipalities	
National level (e.g. national law /policies)	
Global level (e.g. international peace, trade)	

**2.2 Why do you focus on these levels? How is your work affected by power and decisions at the other levels?**

**2.3 Do you have links with groups working at other levels? What kinds? Are there examples of alliances across the levels that strengthen each other? Tensions?**

### **Question 3: STRATEGIES AND SPACES FOR WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION**

**3.1 In this work, what kinds of 'spaces' or arenas for women's participation are you entering / or challenging / or trying to build? And how is this CHANGING after April 2019? For instance...**

#### **Closed spaces?**

- Does your work focus on trying to challenge or influence existing authorities and power holders about decisions they are making, e.g. through advocacy, campaigns or direct organizing work? Are you trying to challenge decisions that are normally taken behind 'closed doors', and how?

#### **Invited spaces?**

- Are you and the people you work being invited to participate in shared decision making spaces (e.g in consultations, joint decision making councils, multi-stakeholder forums?)

#### **New spaces?**

- Are you strengthening or creating new opportunities for people's participation? Helping build an independent social movement? Strengthening associations and community organizations?

**3.2 Which of these strategies are most effective for strengthening real participation and decision-making power? Why?**

### **Question 4: ACTORS' ENGAGEMENT IN WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION: INFLUENCE OF KNOWLEDGE, POWER, VIOLENCE**

**4.1 In the spaces that you are trying to build / or occupy related to local women/marginalized groups, which KEY ACTORS are involved? Whose participation does your work strengthen? What is your organizations' relationship to them (e.g. members, beneficiaries, clients)? What are their strategies? Is this CHANGING? Who's not participating? What are the barriers? What is keeping certain key issues, or problems from being raised publicly? (e.g. religious groups..)**

**4.2 What kinds of KNOWLEDGE do local women bring to the table when they participate?**

*Is it seen as legitimate by the experts and authorities? Do women have the awareness and confidence in their knowledge to participate in public arenas? How do issues of knowledge / awareness influence women in participating in decision-making that may affect them? How do they overcome this?*

**4.3 Is your work related to building local women's participation affected by problems of VIOLENCE or conflict? How? Is the CHANGING? Can peoples participation help to counter violence and conflict? How have you found it does so?**

*What do you find inspires and motivates people to want to claim or challenge power or participate more directly in decisions that affect them? Are they trying to win on a specific issue? Or are there some other values they are standing for – like respect, or justice? How do these differ from those in power?*

## **5. WRAPPING UP: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION IN GENDER EQUALITY**

*In this time of change, what do you see as priority areas for action in promoting gender equality and women's participation in Sudan? How best can they be approached at the local, regional and national level?*

### Appendix 3: Research Respondents/ Relevant Groups Met (Oct-Dec 2019)

	NAME /GROUP	DATE	LOCATION	ORGANISATION/POSITION
1	NAHLA NAGELDIN	08/10/2019	Khartoum	Business woman
2	MUNA ELTAHIR	13/10/2019	Khartoum	Practical Action
3	SANA MOHAMED	20/10/2019 2019	Khartoum	Ministry of Finance
4	HEAD OF REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH DEPARTMENT	22/10/2019	Gezira	Ministry of Health
5	HEAD OF PLANNING UNIT	23/10/2019	Gezira	Ministry of Agriculture
6	FGD FARMERS AND INFORMAL BUSINESS SECTOR (8-12 PARTICIPANTS)	11/11/2019	Gezira	/
7	FGD CIVIL SOCIETY AND URBAN BUSINESS SECTOR (8-12 PARTICIPANTS)	11/11/2019	Gezira	/
8	FGD YOUTH GROUP (8-12 PARTICIPANTS)	11/11/2019	Gezira	/
9	NAJWA HASSAN	24/10/2019	Khartoum	Ministry of Justice
10	A SENIOR GENERAL ATTORNEY	24/10/2019	Gezira	Ministry of Justice
11	A BUSINESS WOMAN	24/10/2019	Gezira	Private Sector
12	ILHAM OSMAN IBRAHIM	25/10/2019	Khartoum	Sudanese Organization for Research and Development (SORD)
13	<u>FATMA ABDELKARIM</u>	27/10/2019	Khartoum	UN Women
14	NAYLA ABUSHORA	28/10/2019	Khartoum	Plan International
15	AMINA MAHMOUD SHAIN	28/10/2019	Khartoum	Gender Center for Research and Training
16	FATMA ALGINAID	28/10/2019	Khartoum	Khartoum Technical Institute
17	ZAYNAB ELSAWI GENDER ANALYST	30/10/2019	Khartoum	UNDP
18	OUNISA MOHAMED MUSA	30/10/2019	Khartoum	Noon Youth Organization
19	SARAH ABDELASIM FIRST SECRETARY	31/10/2019	Khartoum	Ministry of Health
20	OMAIMA ELMARDI	03/11/2019	Khartoum	Niswa for women development organization
21	FARIDA KOKO	04/11/2019	Khartoum	Ministry of Labour and Social Development
22	KHADEGA ALDEWEEHI	04/11/2019	Khartoum	Young Political Activist

23	ASMA MUDATHIR	5/11/2019	Khartoum	Ministry of Agriculture
24	DALIA MOHAMED ADAM	10/11/2019	Elfashir	UNFPA
25	HEAD OF GIRLS EDUCATION	11/11/2019	Elfashir	Ministry of Education
26	MEMBER OF PRIMARY HEALTH CARE UNIT	11/11/2019	Elfashir	Ministry of Health
27	A PROGRAMMING OFFICER	12/11/2019	Elfashir	UNAIMID
28	FGD YOUTH RESISTANCE COMMITTEE	11/11/2019	Elfashir	/
29	FGD WOMEN FROM CIVIL SOCIETY (8-12 PARTICIPANTS)	11/11/2019	Elfashir	/
30	FGD WOMEN FROM CIVIL SOCIETY (8-12 PARTICIPANTS)	11/11/2019	Kutum	/
31	FGD/WORKSHOP WITH FEMALE GRADUATE ENTREPRENEURS (ORANGE CORNERS) (8-12 PARTICIPANTS)	09/11/2019	Khartoum	/
32	FGD WOMEN FROM CIVIL SOCIETY (8-12 PARTICIPANTS)	02/11/2019	Khartoum	/
33	FGD WOMEN FROM GOVERNMENT (4 PARTICIPANTS) <sup>2</sup>	08/11/2019	Khartoum	/
34	SJOERD SMIT EVELINE VAN DER ZWEEP	4/11/2019	Khartoum	Netherlands Embassy
35	HANAN ELHAJ MUSA	4/11/2019	Khartoum	CARE
36	FGD CIVIL SOCIETY (8-12 PARTICIPANTS)	05/11/2019	Gadarif	/
37	FGD MIXED STUDENT GROUP (8-12 PARTICIPANTS)	05/11/2019	Gadarif	/
38	IMAM AMAR	06/11/2019	Gadarif	Ministry of Social Welfare
39	JABRIL IBRAHIM	06/11/2019	Gadarif	Ministry of Health
40	KURASHI MUSAR	06/11/2019	Gadarif	UNFPA
41	NAILA SIDAHMED	06/11/2019	Gadarif	GIZ
42	MOHAMED DAWOUD	06/11/2019	Gadarif	Ministry of Education
43	HABIB ABDULLAH	06/11/2019	Gadarif	IOM
44	FEMALE AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION OFFICER	06/11/2019	Gadarif	Ministry of Agriculture
45	TAHAR IBRAHIM TINA HASAN IBRAHIM	06/11/2019	Gadarif	SORD

<sup>2</sup> Note: representatives from the Ministry of Social Development and Labour, Agriculture and Education joined the meeting.

With a lack of basic infrastructure, on-going regional conflict (including in Darfur, South Kordofan, and the Blue Nile states), and a rising economic crisis, Sudan struggles with uneven development and a poverty rate of 36.1 percent (AFDB, 2015), with major disparities between urban and rural areas (CIA, 2018).<sup>199</sup> As a background to this report, this Appendix provides a brief overview of key country human development indicators, and then looks more closely at further gender-specific indicators.

#### A4.1 Key human development indicators

Sudan is considered to be in the medium-low human development category, although there are strong state and regional-level differences, and high levels of inequality. Sudan has an overall population of 46 million, with over 60 percent of Sudan’s population younger than 25 years of age.<sup>200</sup> A total of 35 percent of the Sudanese population live in urban centres. National life expectancy remains low at 63.3 for males and 66.9 for females (UNDP, 2019). The Multi Indicator Cluster Survey (2014) highlights high levels of child (under 5) mortality (68 per 1000 live births), and child malnutrition (one-third of under-five children are underweight) (CBS and UNICEF, 2016). There are also new and challenging health issues in Sudan affecting certain regions and population groups, including the spread of yellow fever and tuberculosis.<sup>201</sup> As highlighted in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 2018 Report, Sudan has medium to low human development indicators, with improving poverty rates, but poor maternal and child health, social exclusion, and low access to basic services, as highlighted in Figure A4.1.<sup>202</sup> Yet the situation varies widely across the country, with strong regional/state-level differences.

In the *Human Development Report 2019*, Sudan’s Human Development Index (HDI) value was estimated to be 0.507, putting the country in this survey in the low human development category, and ranking it in 168<sup>th</sup> position out of the 189 countries (UNDP, 2019). Yet this HDI estimate has in fact improved dramatically since 1990, increasing by 53 percent. The Multi-dimensional Poverty Index<sup>203</sup> for Sudan was estimated to be 0.279, putting Sudan in 94<sup>th</sup> place out of 104 countries (as per 2014). The current SDG Report 2018 indicates that the national poverty rate is 17.8 percent, with similar levels of poverty to Ethiopia.<sup>204</sup> Yet the AFDB funded 2014-15 National Baseline Household Budget Survey (AFDB, 2018) indicated that 36.1 percent of people live below the ‘poverty line’<sup>3</sup> (slightly higher levels in urban areas). The highest levels of poverty were found in Central Darfur, South Kordofan and West Darfur, while the lowest levels were seen in Gezira and Northern state.

**Figure A4.1: Selected SDG Indicators in Sudan**

Sustainable Development Goals / Selected Indicators (where available)	NATIONAL UN SDG 2018
<b>SDG1 – END POVERTY</b>	
POVERTY HEADCOUNT RATIO AT \$1.9/DAY	17.8 %
<b>SDG3 – GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING</b>	
HEALTHY LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH (YEARS) <sup>[1]</sup> <sub>SEP</sub>	64.1 yrs
MORTALITY RATE, UNDER-5 (PER 1,000 LIVE BIRTHS)	65.1%
<b>SDG4 – QUALITY EDUCATION</b>	
NET PRIMARY ENROLMENT RATE (%) <sup>[1]</sup> <sub>SEP</sub>	55.4%*
<b>SDG5 – GENDER EQUALITY</b>	
UNMET DEMAND FOR CONTRACEPTION, ESTIMATED (% WOMEN MARRIED OR IN UNION, AGES 15-49)	64.1%
<b>SDG6 – CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION</b>	
POPULATION USING AT LEAST BASIC DRINKING WATER SERVICES (PERCENT)	58.9%

Source: National data: SDG Country Report Edition 2018

<sup>3</sup> The poverty line in the survey was measured on the minimum level of consumption that qualifies as a decent standard of living (AFDB 2018).

## A4.2 Further gender-specific indicators

Sudan has a gender inequality index value of 0.560, ranking it in 139<sup>th</sup> place of 162 countries in the 2018 index (UNDP, 2019). The GII reflects gender-based inequalities in three dimensions: reproductive health, empowerment, and economic activity. An estimated 15.3 percent of adult women had attained at least a secondary level of education compared to 19.6 percent of their male counterparts. For every 100,000 live births, 311 women die from pregnancy related causes<sup>205</sup>. Fertility rates are medium (3.57 children per woman). Literacy rates remain low, particularly among females, and just over half of adult women are able to read and write.<sup>206</sup> Harmful traditional practices persist such as early child marriage (11.9 percent) and FGM/C (86.6 percent). Labour market participation for women remains very low (28.9 percent compared to 70.8 for men) (ILO, 2014).

**Figure A4.2: Key Gender-related Indicators in Sudan**

SELECTED GENDER INDICATORS	NATIONAL
GENDER INEQUALITY (OUT OF 1)	0.560
MATERNAL MORTALITY RATE (PER 100,000 LIVE BIRTHS)	311
FERTILITY RATE (PER WOMAN)	3.57
ADULT LITERACY RATE (MALE)	65.44%
ADULT LITERACY RATE (FEMALE)	56.06%
CHILD MARRIAGE RATE (UNDER 15 YEARS)	11.9% <i>(Of females aged 20-24 yrs)</i>
FGM/C RATE (AGED 15-49 YRS)	86.6%
LABOUR MARKET PARTICIPATION (AGED 15+ YEARS)	28.9% (F) 70.8% (M)

SOURCES: UNDP, 2019; WHO, 2018; CBS & UNICEF, 2016; ILO, 2014

### *Humanitarian challenges: A special look at the region of Darfur*

**With persisting conflict, disruption and protracted displacement are critical issues in turbulent contexts such as Darfur.**<sup>207</sup> UN OCHA emphasizes two major humanitarian challenges in such regions: the first related to conflict, with wide-scale population displacement; and the second related to climatic and socio-cultural conditions exacerbating crisis levels of food insecurity and malnutrition (OCHA, 2017). An estimated 1.6 million displaced people are registered as living in camps in Darfur, with a further 0.5 million unregistered, residing in host communities and settlements. With a high dependency on aid and donor fatigue, there is now a gradual push away from emergency programming towards 'development' thinking and 'resilience' projects. In April 2013, the Darfur Development Strategy (DDS) was endorsed. While peace has now generally returned to Darfur, renewed conflict and hostilities broke out in Jebel Marra on the west side of South Darfur in 2016 (between SLA/AW and SAF), displacing further families and communities (OCHA, 2017).

**From a humanitarian perspective, displacement affects access to basic services, and hinders livelihood activities, impacting food security and community resilience.** With increasing pressures on resources, in many parts of Darfur, local tribal conflict has generated further insecurity and displacement, often between sedentary-farming and nomadic-pastoral communities. Women and children remain particularly vulnerable, with heightened risk of gender-based violence during movements to markets, for water and wood collection, and in farming. Many displaced choose to remain in camps or in settlements and urban areas, 'seeking opportunities for a safer future', with some commuting seasonally to check on the land and farm (OCHA, 2017).

**This Appendix looks closer at gender and infrastructure in Sudan, in particular women's participation in the transport and energy sector.** According to AFDB (2016), Sudan has in fact invested significantly in major infrastructure projects in recent years in particular in ICT (mobile penetration) and energy (hydropower). To strengthen infrastructure in the medium term, there is an emphasis on improving the quality of services, particularly in water and transport, and in mobilising significant funding for expansion and upgrading. Required investment in infrastructure is estimated to be in the region of USD 4.2 million per year for a decade (Ranganathan and Briceno-Garmendia, 2011 in AFFB, 2016).

### A5.1 Transport sector

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**The primary mode of transport in Sudan is road transport, providing 90 percent of inland transport, although a lack of attention to alternative transport has led to the 'virtual collapse' of rail and river connections (AFDB, 2016).** The road network has benefited significantly from the oil boom, reportedly now covering routes of 32,000 km. Compared to other African countries, Sudan is described to have a 'low density' of transport infrastructure, and there is limited connectivity with neighbouring countries, with a lack of regional integration. At the state level, the road network is described to be inadequate, inhibiting agricultural production and private sector business with poor access to markets. Outside of the main national highways, states are responsible for local roads that connect state capitals; yet they have limited road management capacity and roads remain either gravel or earth roads. The National Transport Master Plan (2010) highlighted the need for the road sector to improve 'management, performance and sustenance'. In the long term, the previous government planned to expand and upgrade almost 3,000 km of the existing national road network and construct over 7,000 km of new road. Average road construction projects in Sudan are assumed to be in the region of 600,000 USD (ibid).

#### *Gender in road development*

**Key gender factors for consideration in new road projects include social protection, displacement and the environment, particularly in more remote and marginalized areas.<sup>208</sup>** Notably, in recovery efforts in conflict-affected areas, labour-intensive methods of road rehabilitation are often given consideration to 'boost local people's involvement, while ensuring good quality works through proper supervision and monitoring'<sup>209</sup> although such informal labour work is usually done by men. In road projects, petty trading tends to proliferate along the route leading to increased livelihood opportunities, often for women. Yet there remain heightened risks of sexual assault for women traders, without local protection measures and a structured environment. Internationally supported programmes on infrastructure can promote the development of Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) with the inclusion of female contractors.

### A5.2 Energy sector

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**With the loss of the majority of its oil resources in 2011, Sudan was forced to start to realize the significance of renewable energy (Khayal, 2019).** Today energy consumption in Sudan is cited to include both 'conventional' energy sources, including electricity, biomass and petroleum products (98 percent); and renewable energy sources (2 percent), including hydro (UNESCO, 2017). At present, energy demand in the country is dominated by five sectors, including residential (40 percent), transportation (31.4 percent), services and commerce (16.1 percent), industrial (11.6 percent), and finally agriculture (0.9 percent). Energy demands are expected to grow particularly from the residential and agricultural sectors. There is currently little competition in the electricity sector with the five state-owned entities holding a monopoly on the services, curtailing the development of efficiency (43 percent of energy is lost) and infrastructure investment (UNESCO, 2017).

**According to the World Bank, in 2017, 56.5 percent of the population has access to electricity (82.5 percent in urban areas, 42.8 percent in rural areas).<sup>210</sup>** Hydropower dominates the country power supply sector contributing 70 percent share of the power, while the contribution of solar energy is still limited at less than 0.1 percent share (Rabah, A.A., et al., 2016 in Khayal 2019). Despite the huge potential of solar, wind, and geothermal energy, at present they are not part of the country's primary

energy composition. In particular, the potential for solar, as a widely available resource, is cited to be high especially through off-grid systems and stand-alone PV systems (Khayal, 2019). Yet the sector is challenged by a lack of incentives and relevant policies (Khayal, 2019). At present, rural areas remain heavily 'biomass dependent' for their cooking, heating, and lighting needs with high levels of energy inefficiency. In addition to alternative energy sources, there is a significant potential for the introduction of energy-efficient cooking stoves and the promotion of energy efficiency way of conversion.

**In the development of the renewables sector, priorities of the Sudanese government include reducing unsustainable biomass use, increasing wind energy use for rural on- and off-grid electrification, as well as in water pumping and agriculture, increasing the dissemination of community-scale PV projects, exploring and identifying areas for geothermal and small-hydro projects (UNESCO, 2017).** At an institutional level, the Ministry of Energy and Mining (MEM) is responsible for the development of energy policies in the country, including the promotion of renewable energy technologies, and conducting energy and environmental studies (UNESCO, 2017). The Ministry of Electricity and Dams (MED) within the MEM is responsible for the management of the electricity sector, with state-owned companies reporting directly to the MED. Under the previous regime, the government planned to increase the country's electrification coverage from an estimated 30 percent to about 90 percent of the population. In 2005, the *Sudan Renewable Energy Master Plan* was drafted to promote the use of renewable energy sources, including priority projects such as PV installations and biomass co-generation, and to move beyond a dependence on oil. Funding allocations for the programme was cited to be approximately US\$ 9.1 million, half-funded by bilateral/multilateral donors through grants or soft loans (UNESCO, 2017).

### **Gender and renewable energy development**

**In recent years, there has been increasing attention to access to alternative energy to accelerate local development in Sudan, in particular through solar.**<sup>211</sup> Access to energy is cited to be a 'critical enabler for economic and social development' supporting poverty reduction as well as progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, including ensuring environmental sustainability and promoting gender equality (UNDP, 2016). Women play a 'pivotal role in energy production, distribution and utilization', especially in poor communities (UNDP, 2012). As a result of the 'gendered nature of energy poverty', access to improved energy can contribute significantly to women and girls' empowerment through reducing women and girls' time and labour burdens, improving women and girls' health, and providing women with opportunities for enterprise and capacity building (ibid). It also reduces the security risk for women and girls through reducing the need for collection of firewood, particularly in regions affected by conflict and insecurity. Access to clean, affordable, and sustainable energy can further boost indoor air quality and family health, and increase income-generating opportunities.

**Energy policies and programmes that appreciate and build on women's domestic roles and needs in energy interventions can maximize the impact on households and community poverty and on gender equality (ENERGIA, 2007).** Energy-based technologies can also boost labour productivity, and permit lighting for income generating activities. Yet due to women's limited access to assets and participation in household decision-making, women are often unable to access regular financing schemes for relevant equipment (ENERGIA, 2011), necessitating tailored micro-financing programmes.

**In regions such as Darfur, there have been several solar energy projects including the 'Solar Electrification Project', a development and peace-building initiative of the 2011 Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (DDPD) (UNDP, 2016).** The main output of the project was to install Solar Photovoltaic (SPV) systems in community service centres to support schools, health clinics, streets, police stations, women centres and water pumping. At a grassroots level, NGOs such as CARE have also sought to facilitate the dissemination of improved cook stoves and have trained women on innovative technologies such as the production of 'green' charcoal (the usage of organic waste to make 'charcoal' for fuel) (Ritchie, 2018). Yet there is not yet a policy for women's inclusion in solar energy in Sudan, or a national level strategy or programme.

## Appendix 6: Gender Equality and Inclusion in Sudan – A SWOT analysis

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<p><u>General</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>New Transitional Government, with commitments on gender equality, and increasing energy around women's movement, including young urban women</b></li> <li>• <b>New government gender champions, including female Chief of Justice</b></li> <li>• <b>Increasing donor interest</b></li> <li>• <b>Diaspora interest to support regional development (e.g. in Darfur)</b></li> </ul> <p><u>Gender, political power and peace</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>40% women's quota in (draft) Interim Constitutional Document</b></li> <li>• <b>UNSCR 1325 Action Plan</b> (endorsed in March 2020)</li> </ul> <p><u>Gender and justice</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New FGM/C criminalisation (April 2020)</li> <li>• Various structures in ministries for GBV</li> <li>• Gender Units at police stations</li> <li>• UNSCR 1325 Action Plan</li> </ul> <p><u>Gender and education</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educational Strategy (ESSP)</li> <li>• Increasing participation in primary school by girls</li> </ul> <p><u>Maternal health</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health Policy (all regions)</li> <li>• 'Maternal and Child Medicines for All' (UHCP, 2017)</li> </ul> <p><u>WASH</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Water Supply and Environmental Sanitation Policy' (2010)</li> </ul> <p><u>Gender and work</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women participating in informal economy</li> <li>• Increasing number of women savings groups (VSLAs)</li> <li>• Increasing participation by graduate females in entrepreneurship</li> <li>• Women in public sectors (and professional/senior positions)</li> </ul> <p><u>Gender and networks</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growing women's movement, including networks such as MANSAM</li> <li>• Advocacy organizations</li> </ul>	<p><u>General</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Lack of updated National Gender Policy, and Strategic Plan</b></li> <li>• <b>Lack of gender measurement frameworks and indicators and budgeting.</b></li> <li>• <b>General lack of awareness raising / low strategic use of media for gender equality</b></li> <li>• <i>Lack of technical and financial resources</i></li> <li>• <i>Lack of comprehensive updated nation-wide data, with disaggregation by region, gender, social group</i></li> <li>• <i>Lack of affirmative action to support IDPs and excluded groups including disabled, minority clans</i></li> </ul> <p><u>Gender, political power and peace</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Lack of institutional support for women in politics, particularly at state level</i></li> </ul> <p><u>Gender and justice</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Lack of trained Gender Units in police stations</i></li> <li>• <i>Lack of legal knowledge at community level, and (informal) legal support</i></li> </ul> <p><u>Gender and education</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Lack of investment in facilities and lack of national campaigning / Low quality of rural schools</i></li> <li>• <i>Lack of rigorous education campaign across the regions, and lack of incentives / subsidies for vulnerable groups</i></li> <li>• <i>Low value for education among some rural groups</i></li> <li>• <i>Lack of civic education and rights</i></li> </ul> <p><u>Maternal health</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Lack of investment in facilities and lack of national campaigning for use</i></li> <li>• <i>Lack of awareness on importance of maternal health, and communications</i></li> </ul> <p><u>WASH</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Lack of equitable access to services</i></li> <li>• <i>Poor investment in sanitation</i></li> </ul> <p><u>Gender and work</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Gender-blind macro-economic policies and 5 Year Plans</b></li> <li>• <i>General lack of awareness raising campaigning on importance of gender equality in economy</i></li> <li>• <i>Lack of women farmers' associations</i></li> <li>• <i>Lack of access to micro finance</i></li> <li>• <i>Lack of access to land</i></li> </ul> <p><u>Gender and networks</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Lack of coordination between women's groups and regional/urban-centric</i></li> </ul>

OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<p><u>General</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Commission on Women and Equality, new National Gender Policy</b></li> <li>• <b>Conduct review of system for gender statistics and new national data on gender (with support of UN Women)</b></li> <li>• Internal government capacity building on gender equality and inclusion and empowerment of Gender Units</li> <li>• Raising funds from diaspora to support empowerment programmes</li> <li>• Support for long-term support gender and development and shift away from short term funding cycles and low impact</li> <li>• Recording of regional and national best practices, role models and story-telling in gender equality for across Sudan</li> <li>• Introduction of new green technologies e.g. solar</li> </ul> <p><u>Gender, political power and peace</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Develop affirmative action strategies to support realisation of women’s quota (40%)</b></li> <li>• <b>Nation-wide awareness raising campaigning on importance of gender equality for state building and peace</b></li> </ul> <p><u>Gender and justice</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>New GBV criminal legislation (child marriage, and domestic and sexual violence). Reform of Personal Status Act.</b></li> <li>• <b>FGM/C criminalisation following new legislation</b></li> <li>• <b>Integrated National-led Awareness campaign on GBV with media</b></li> <li>• Improved Protection and Response -GBV Working Group</li> <li>• Support training and inclusion of female lawyers, and judges</li> <li>• Support training of female religious judges in Islamic courts</li> <li>• Support civic education – at community and school level</li> <li>• Functional Gender Units in key police stations</li> <li>• Training of community members as paralegals</li> <li>• Social dialogue, and camp protection measures (IDP areas)</li> </ul> <p><u>Gender and education</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Free primary education in all regions, compulsory participation with involvement of community leaders</b> (lessons from Kenya)</li> <li>• <b>Nation-wide ‘Education for All’ campaign – including promotion of pre-primary level</b></li> <li>• Improve quality of pre-primary education</li> <li>• Parent- Teacher associations, and CECs</li> <li>• Education infrastructure investment.</li> <li>• Progressive curriculum development and female teacher training</li> <li>• Civic education (with gender awareness)</li> <li>• Support subsidies / incentives for agro-pastoralists and IDPs</li> </ul> <p><u>Maternal health</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Support major investment in maternal health and child care services through health structures with minimum standards</b></li> <li>• National Strategic Action Plan linked to Health Policy and Road Map – inclusion of response to FGM/C, and support for HIV/AIDS</li> <li>• <b>National-led Reproductive Health and Family Planning Campaign</b></li> <li>• National and state frameworks for monitoring and evaluation</li> <li>• With UNFPA/UNICEF, develop radio/media material for maternal health promotion, and promote community service participation with CHWs.</li> </ul>	<p><u>General</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Patriarchal system where power, control and resource distribution is determined by men</b></li> <li>• <b>Economic crisis, and high levels of poverty</b></li> <li>• <b>Environmental degradation and climate change – increasing frequency of drought with major rural displacement, threats of famine, lack of access to water/fuel – impact on women/girls</b></li> <li>• <b>Conservative members of old regime</b></li> <li>• <b>Insecurity in conflict areas</b></li> <li>• <b>High levels of IDPs and refugees in regions such as eastern Sudan</b></li> <li>• <b>Lack of social protection for poorest</b></li> </ul> <p><u>Gender, political power and peace</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Dominance by men – exclusion of women</b></li> <li>• <b>Discriminatory laws such as Personal Status Act</b></li> </ul> <p><u>Gender and justice</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Discriminatory laws such as Personal Status Act and Criminal Act</b></li> <li>• <b>Traditional system for GBV resolution</b></li> <li>• <b>Intimidation of victim/victim’s family</b></li> </ul> <p><u>Gender and education</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>‘Out of pocket’ education costs and rising levels of poverty</b></li> <li>• <b>Low value for girls’ education (rural areas)</b></li> <li>• <b>Lack of female friendly environment and lack of boarding facilities (secondary)</b></li> <li>• <b>Lack of family resources inhibiting participation IDPs, minority groups</b></li> </ul> <p><u>Maternal health and WASH</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Poor access to services (and poor quality) outside of cities</b></li> <li>• <b>Low levels of sanitation</b></li> <li>• <b>Social norms related to maternal health (decision-making with husbands)</b></li> </ul> <p><u>Gender and work</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Private sector dominated by men</b></li> <li>• <b>Traditional attitudes and norms in regions such as Eastern states</b></li> <li>• <b>Traditional customs and norms inhibiting women’s access to land</b></li> </ul> <p><u>General and networks</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Lack of united women’s movement</b></li> <li>• <b>Lack of access to resources</b></li> </ul>

#### WASH

- **Support WASH infrastructure in marginalised areas**
- **National *Hygiene Promotion Campaign* with involvement of communities in total sanitation**
- Improved WASH in schools and clinics
- National and state frameworks for monitoring and evaluation

#### Gender and work

- **Development of gender-sensitive macro-economic policies in public spending, budgeting, taxation and employment**
- **National Employment Policy**
- **Revised 'Pro-Women' Micro Finance Policy**
- **Pro-Women TVET strategy**
- **Land reform, or access to government land for women**
- Nation-wide '*Women in Work*' Campaign
- Support vocational training centres
- National strategy for VSLAs in rural areas, and cooperatives
- Support to Women's Farmers' Associations
- Women and Youth Enterprise Fund for SMEs, and support to BDS
- Support linkage between recruitment agencies and employers
- Affirmative action for hiring of women
- Support women's skills development in ICTs, renewable energies
- Support establishment of PPDPs with women's businesses

#### Gender and networks

- **Support development of women's organisations in civil society, and women's union**
- Support development of women's business associations, and participation in a Chamber of Commerce

## Appendix 7: Recommendations for Promoting Gender Equality and Inclusion in Sudan<sup>4</sup>

### I Support to gender equality in institution-building and political participation

<b>RECOMMENDATIONS TO SUPPORT GENDER EQUALITY IN FORMAL INSTITUTIONS AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION</b>	<b>PRIORITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE ACTORS</b>
<b>1.1 National Commission on Women and Gender Equality</b> Facilitate the implementation of the Commission with inclusion of diverse groups, and special attention to marginalized regions and states	HIGH	GOVT
<b>1.2 40% minimum quota for women's political participation</b> Through affirmative action, support at least 40 percent participation of women in politics. Consider training for younger women, and potential political internships, to ensure quality participation.	HIGH	GOVT
<b>1.3 Action Plan UNSCR 1325: Women in peace building</b> Support women's meaningful participation in all stages of peace building through the implementation of the new Action Plan of UNSCR 1325.	HIGH	GOVT WITH SUPPORT OF UN WOMEN
<b>1.4 National Gender Policy</b> Facilitate the development of a new <i>National Gender Policy</i> and <i>Action Plans</i> to support the implementation at a state level. Develop strategic affirmative government action with relevant line ministries, and include target groups such as urban women, rural women, and minority groups (including the disabled).	HIGH	GOVT
<b>1.5 National gender data, budgeting, and M/E</b> Conduct a formal assessment of the national gender statistics system. In line UN Women's global recommendations, facilitate national data collection on key gender indicators. Support gender budgeting in different line ministries through the development of guidelines. Ministry budgets should be externally assessed for their responsiveness to gender issues. <sup>5</sup>	HIGH	GOVT WITH SUPPORT OF UN WOMEN
<b>1.6 Gender rights training across government structures</b> Support institutional capacity building on gender, rights and development as fundamental pillars to state building, peace and inclusion	HIGH	GOVT
<b>1.7 Gender mainstreaming in government ministries: Gender Units</b> Facilitate the strategic development of Gender Units, and/or technical focal points in key line ministries	HIGH	GOVT
<b>1.8 National-led awareness raising on gender equality and rights</b> Support national, and state level awareness raising related to gender equality in the Constitution and evolving gender policies with NGO and CSO partners	MEDIUM-HIGH	GOVT NGOS / CSOS

### II Support to gender and social affairs and justice

<b>RECOMMENDATIONS TO SUPPORT GENDER EQUALITY IN SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND JUSTICE</b>	<b>PRIORITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE ACTORS (FGS)</b>
<b>2.1 NATIONAL LEVEL</b>		
<b>2.1.1 GBV legislation, and national advocacy</b>	HIGH	MLSD
(i) Ensure legal enforcement of new national legislation of <i>FGM/C through prosecutions</i>		
(ii) Support the reform of the <i>Personal Status Act/Family Law</i> into a nonreligious based law, with the inclusion of a minimum age of marriage (18), and clear joint consent.	HIGH	MLSD
(iii) Support the development of national criminal legislation on domestic and sexual violence	HIGH	MLSD
(iv) At an international level, proceed with the ratification of CEDAW	HIGH	MLSD
(v) Building on the <i>Saleema</i> Initiative, facilitate an <b>'integrated' national-led campaign on GBV</b> through schools, religious institutions and communities, using media and community outreach	HIGH	MLSD

<sup>4</sup> UN institutions with a mandate and comparative advantage in any of the below might support the delivery directly and/or indirectly following guidance and request from the Government in coordination with the UN Resident Coordinator and UN Country Team.

<sup>5</sup> Countries that engage in the assessment of the budgets of all departments for their responsiveness to gender issues, such as Rwanda, are progressing faster than countries that do not do this in practice, such as South Africa (LAW 2014)

<b>RECOMMENDATIONS TO SUPPORT GENDER EQUALITY IN SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND JUSTICE</b>	<b>PRIORITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE ACTORS (FGS)</b>
<b>2.1.2 Review and improve GBV prevention and response</b> Conduct a review of existing structures, mechanisms and strategies in GBV prevention and response through government institutions, police stations, local health services and psychosocial support; and streamline and coordinate new strategic approach to prevention and response	HIGH-MEDIUM	MLSD
<b>2.1.3 Recruitment of women in justice, and police sector</b> Support affirmative action for the recruitment of female lawyers and judges, and police officers – with possibilities for internships and mentorship programmes	MEDIUM	GOVT
<b>2.1.4 Establishment and training of Gender Units at police stations</b> Support the training of police Gender Units and cross-unit exchange and best practices, with model police stations highlighted. Consider national award scheme.	MEDIUM	GOVT
<b>2.2 COMMUNITY LEVEL</b>		
<b>2.2.1 Local social dialogue and advocacy on GBV with women, youth, community/religious leaders</b> Encourage NGOs to work local charismatic leaders (men, women and YOUTH leaders), and religious clerics that can slowly champion and promote new community attitudes and beliefs regarding GBV and harmful traditional practices and the importance of a safe community environment through social dialogue (e.g. CARE NGO), drawing on notions of shame and/or verses from the Koran, and a more holistic perspective of family well-being	HIGH	NGOS
<b>2.2.2 IDP Camp GBV protection measures</b> With camp authorities, develop GBV protection measures for women and girls especially related to access to WASH	HIGH	GOV/NGOS
<b>2.2.3 Community case studies for national promotion</b> Where communities have indicated progressive change, document process and use video and radio material nationally for learning, debate and dialogue.	MEDIUM	GOV/NGOS
<b>2.2.4 Access to informal legal justice points at community level</b> Encourage NGOs to support the development of paralegals at community level through training of strong women (on legal processes related to family, inheritance, rights)	MEDIUM	NGOS
<b>2.2.5 National/regional radio messaging and dramas</b> Identify local radio stations, and support GBV and rights messaging. Consider the development of radio shows that integrate key social messages into a rural oriented drama. Promote the show through local community mobilization.	MEDIUM	GOV/NGOS

### III Support to education and human capital development

<b>RECOMMENDATIONS TO SUPPORT EDUCATION AND HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>PRIORITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE ACTORS</b>
<b>3.1 NATIONAL LEVEL</b>		
<b>3.1.1 Participation in pre-primary, primary and secondary education</b> Develop major NATIONAL-LEVEL campaign to promote 'education for all', with encouragement of children's pre-school enrolment and retention at other levels. Work towards free primary school, through government grants if needed to private actors. Consider subsidies for pastoralist and IDP girls (school books and sanitary pads), and family incentives (e.g. food items) for very poor families (e.g. through donors UNICEF). Consider scholarships for secondary level. Lobby for urban boarding facilities for secondary.	HIGH	MOE NGOS
<b>3.1.2 National gender targets in MoE Plans, and monitoring &amp; evaluation (M/E)</b> Further develop national targets, and M/E with gender dimensions (adding to targets highlighted in MoE, 2019)	HIGH	MOE
<b>3.1.3 Quality of delivery in Pre-school Programmes and Basic Education</b> In line with MoE (2019), improve child friendly and stimulating learning environments with inclusion of girls and boys.	HIGH	MOE NGOS
<b>3.1.4 Rehabilitating and improving rural school infrastructure</b> Invest in school infrastructure to ensure that they meet the 'special needs' of girls', particularly at secondary level – with WASH facilities and girl friendly spaces. Consider single sex secondary schools for girls with boarding facilities in rural and marginalised areas.	HIGH	MOE
<b>3.1.5 Curriculum development, teaching approach and training of female</b>	HIGH	MOE

<b>RECOMMENDATIONS TO SUPPORT EDUCATION AND HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>PRIORITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE ACTORS</b>
<b>staff</b> Support the review and development of new curriculums that include progressive female role models. Support additional training of female teachers to strengthen teaching capacity and creative approaches.		
<b>3.1.6 Civic education and gender</b> Develop civic education in schools to support learning on gender rights and protection.	HIGH	MOE
<b>3.1.7 Women's access to tertiary education and career support</b> Support access to and participation in tertiary education for rural and marginalised female students through scholarship schemes, particularly in legal training or STEM subjects. Support links to employers in internship and exchange programmes, and facilitate complementary language/ICT training.	MEDIUM	MOE NGOS
<b>3.1.8 Female training in TVET and ICTs, and employment links</b> Support vocational training (including in non-traditional courses such as mechanics, electrician and solar energy), and advanced skills related to ICTs for female students through dedicated urban facilities, and links to employers (and apprenticeships).	MEDIUM	MOE
<b>3.2 COMMUNITY LEVEL</b>		
<b>3.2.1 Parent-teacher associations, and CECs</b> Support Parent-Teacher associations through training. Support school improvement plans through community-led school assessment for example through <i>Child Education Committees</i> (CECs) such as those facilitated by the NGO CARE, and the development of girl friendly and creative spaces. Consider government grants for gender-sensitive school improvement projects, or drawing on diaspora links.	MEDIUM	GOV/NGOS
<b>3.2.2 Rural women's access to informal adult education and vocational education</b> Support local access to and participation in non-formal education and vocational training for rural women, possibly through mobile units (and ensure inclusion of non-traditional courses, for example solar and ICTs). For (early) dropout girls, facilitate access to basic literacy/numeracy courses, alongside vocational training.	MEDIUM	NGOS

#### IV Support to maternal health

<b>RECOMMENDATIONS TO SUPPORT MATERNAL HEALTH</b>	<b>PRIORITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE ACTORS</b>
<b>4.1 NATIONAL LEVEL</b>		
<b>4.1.1 Develop national strategic action plans for promoting maternal health, and family planning</b> In coordination with key donors (e.g. UNICEF), develop <i>Strategic Action Plans</i> to support the development and promotion of maternal health (linked to the <i>Health Policy</i> ). Incorporate explicit support to FGM/C and HIV/AIDS in sexual and reproductive health strategies in new Health Policies and Plans.	HIGH	MOH
<b>4.1.2 Rehabilitating and improving health sector infrastructure</b> Develop minimum standards and support local infrastructure development to strengthen local health facilities, and hospitals to ensure that they meet the 'special needs of women and girls'.	HIGH	MOH DONORS
<b>4.1.3 National training programme for human resource capacity and development</b> Support the continuous training, mentoring and supportive supervision of doctors, nurses, midwives and CHWs to improve their knowledge, competency and motivation for reproductive health service delivery (ADF, 2017).	HIGH	MOH DONORS
<b>4.1.4 National-led Reproductive Health and Family Planning Campaign</b> In coordination with key donors (e.g. UNFPA), support a national campaign for reproductive health and family planning (knowledge and utilization) targeting community and state institutions, with the inclusion of national and local media. Support knowledge and utilisation of a comprehensive package of reproductive health care including family planning counselling and service delivery, pre and postnatal care, skilled birth attendance (with strong referral linkages to health facilities for emergency obstetric care (ADF, 2017)).	HIGH	MOH DONORS
<b>4.1.5 National and state frameworks for monitoring and evaluation</b> Support the scope and quality of maternal health service delivery through the development and implementation of rigorous monitoring and evaluation of services	HIGH	MOH DONORS

<b>4.1.6 Rural access to, and use of health services and information (maternal health and family planning)</b>	HIGH	MOH NGOS
Support rural access to maternal and child health through mobile health units in rural areas, and knowledge campaigns through local media with community outreach. As highlighted by UNICEF (2018), the use of maternal and child services can be particularly boosted by community-based communication approaches, coupled with <u>radio and mass media campaigns</u> have been successful in influencing behaviour.		
<b>4.2 COMMUNITY LEVEL</b>		
<b>4.2.1 Community-led advocacy on maternal health</b>	MEDIUM	NGOS
Support community-led action in maternal health and family planning through CHWs and women's groups		
<b>4.2.2 Services by CHWs: community-led strategy development</b>	MEDIUM	NGOS
Support community strategy development for CHWs to ensure reliable access to transport and link to health facilities for facilitating referral provision for complications and follow up care (ADF, 2017)		

## V Support to WASH

<b>RECOMMENDATIONS TO SUPPORT WASH</b>	<b>PRIORITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE ACTORS</b>
<b>5.1 NATIONAL AND STATE LEVEL</b>		
<b>5.1.1 WASH infrastructure projects in marginalised areas</b>	HIGH	GOV
Support improved access to water supply and sanitation in marginalised areas through infrastructure development and the development of minimum standards, with gender indicators		
<b>5.1.2 National-led hygiene promotion</b>	HIGH	GOV WITH AID PARTNERS
Support national-led campaign for hygiene promotion through communities, schools and health facilities, drawing on local media		
<b>5.1.3 National framework for monitoring and evaluation</b>	HIGH	GOV WITH AID PARTNERS
Support the development of rigorous standards for monitoring and evaluation of WASH service delivery. Publish annual state reports.		
<b>5.2 COMMUNITY LEVEL</b>		
<b>5.2.1 Access to WASH in communities, clinics and schools</b>	MEDIUM	NGOS
Support the development of community and school water storage tanks and rainwater harvesting with solar technology, through community and school plan schemes		
<b>5.2.2 Support community-led approaches in total sanitation and hygiene</b>	HIGH	GOV WITH AID PARTNERS
Support community engagement in hygiene and total sanitation with the participation of local schools and clinics, and women leaders.		

## VI Support to gender in the economy: business, agribusiness, employment

<b>RECOMMENDATIONS TO SUPPORT GENDER IN THE ECONOMY</b>	<b>PRIORITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE ACTORS</b>
<b>6.1 Gender and macro-economic policies</b>	HGH	GOV
Support the development of gender sensitive macro-economic policies in public spending, budgeting, taxation and employment		
<b>6.2 National Employment Policy (NEP) and Gender Action Plan</b>	HGH	GOV
Support the development of a <i>National Employment Policy</i> and <i>Action Plan</i> to promote women's employment, entrepreneurship and business engagement		
<b>6.3 National level awareness raising 'Women in the economy', and quotas</b>	HIGH	GOV
Support national and state level awareness raising related to women in the economy, and inclusion in diverse professions through potential quotas in civil service		
<b>6.4 National strategy for Women's VSLAs</b>	MEDIUM	GOV
Support a <b>nation-wide strategy for the development of rural VSLAs/SHGs</b> as innovative micro savings and lending bodies and platforms for enterprise at the community/location level. Draw on lessons learnt from CARE and in the region (SEEP, 2018)		

<b>RECOMMENDATIONS TO SUPPORT GENDER IN THE ECONOMY</b>	<b>PRIORITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE ACTORS</b>
<p><b>6.5 National strategy for women's farmers' associations/cooperatives and agricultural extension in agro-pastoralist areas</b></p> <p>With potential links to VSLAs and savings groups, support the development of women's farmers' associations/cooperatives with access to key extension services. Through associations/cooperatives, support the joint ownership of agricultural assets, facilitate access to input purchases, and encourage the joint marketing of premium produce. To strengthen the cooperative, agencies should facilitate training on organizational management, and the development of systems for joint input supply and marketing. Draw on lessons learnt in Sub Saharan Africa (SEEP, 2018)</p>	MEDIUM	GOV
<p><b>6.6 National Micro-Finance Policy</b></p> <p>Review and revise the National Micro-Finance policy to support women's access to finance, particularly in rural areas. Support women's access to individual and group loan packages (e.g. through VSLAs). Support clear policy and regulatory mechanism for micro-finance institutions to 'enable and promote women's access to and benefit from microfinance'. Support complementary BDS to strengthen women's businesses.</p>	MEDIUM	MINISTRY OF FINANCE
<p><b>6.7 Women and Youth Enterprise Fund</b></p> <p>Consider the development of a national Women and Youth Enterprise Fund through the Central Bank of Sudan, with support to small, medium and larger loans, and supportive loan terms.</p>	MEDIUM	GOV WITH POSSIBLE AID PARTNERS
<p><b>6.8 Strategies in emerging new skills and sectors</b></p> <p>Support the development of national strategies in renewable energies, ICTs, through dedicated institutes and outreach mobile training units – with clear gender targets</p>	MEDIUM	GOV WITH ILO

## VII Support to gender in infrastructure development (energy, transport)

<b>RECOMMENDATIONS TO SUPPORT GENDER IN INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>PRIORITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE ACTORS</b>
<b>7.1 NATIONAL LEVEL</b>		
<p><b>7.1.1 Infrastructure projects (including roads)</b></p> <p>Support PPDP for infrastructure projects, with inclusion of daily labour for women through VSLAs/SHGs (where available), establishment of women's markets, and prioritise contracts with female owned companies with technical support. Support the development of standards for road projects, with protection and inclusion of female labourers.</p>	HIGH	GOV
<b>7.2 COMMUNITY LEVEL</b>		
<p><b>7.2.1 Grassroots use of renewable energies</b></p> <p>Drawing on Kenyan scheme (m-kopa<sup>6</sup>), support access to solar energy products through savings groups and links to micro finance groups (Micro Dahab)</p>	MEDIUM	GOV NGOS MFIS

## VIII Support to gender and social organisation

<b>RECOMMENDATIONS TO SUPPORT GENDER AND SOCIAL ORGANISATION</b>	<b>PRIORITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE ACTORS</b>
<b>8.1 NATIONAL LEVEL</b>		
<p><b>8.1.1 Women's civil society organisations, rights and peace and dialogue</b></p> <p>Support the capacity building of women's organisations and civil society - including for peace, human rights violations and development - with diaspora funding and donor support, and facilitate national dialogue with the government. Facilitate <u>regional research</u> on women's organisations and civil society to better understand achievements and constraints.</p>	HIGH	GOV NGOS
<b>8.2 COMMUNITY LEVEL</b>		
<p><b>8.2.1 Women's peace building and community action through VSLAs</b></p> <p>As recommended by the Gender Centre in Khartoum, support the further development of VSLAs/SHGs as crucial women's empowerment and community development platforms. Facilitate leadership and peace training, foster ties between groups for higher-level</p>	MEDIUM	GOV NGOS

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.m-kopa.com>

<b>RECOMMENDATIONS TO SUPPORT GENDER AND SOCIAL ORGANISATION</b>	<b>PRIORITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE ACTORS</b>
collective action, and facilitate links to external services (legal and financial).		
<b>8.2.2 Insecurity in the environment – Community action</b> In fragile/conflict areas such as Darfur, support communal initiatives such as civil involvement in peace and conflict resolution to minimize insecurity and the impact on women's mobility	MEDIUM	NGOS
<b>8.2.3 Youth groups - community level savings and collective action</b> Support the development of youth savings groups (under 20 years) as youth women's empowerment bodies that can start saving, but also engage in social dialogue and action, affiliated to schools. They can also initiate productive, voluntary and self-help tasks.	MEDIUM	NGOS

## **IX Support to gender and the environment**

<b>RECOMMENDATIONS TO SUPPORT GENDER AND THE ENVIRONMENT</b>	<b>PRIORITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE ACTORS</b>
<b>9.1 NATIONAL LEVEL</b>		
<b>9.1.1 National Land Commission for Land</b> Support the <i>National Land Commission</i> , with inclusion of women and vulnerable groups, and ensure special attention paid to climate and environmental issues	HIGH	GOV
<b>9.2 COMMUNITY LEVEL</b>		
<b>9.2.1 Introduction to appropriate technologies to support fuel consumption</b> Consider the extensive promotion of improved cook stoves that reduce fuel needs. Formulate a strategy for their production and distribution using market mechanisms (i.e. working with local town craftsmen).	MEDIUM	GOV NGOS
<b>9.2.2 Local strategy-making and rangeland management for pastoralist groups</b> At a local level, strengthen pastoralist rangeland management bodies, and the development of viable migration strategies with local men and women involving the local government where relevant (draw on regional lessons learnt e.g. pastoralists in Kenya/Isiolo).	MEDIUM	GOV NGOS
<b>9.2.3 Innovations in agriculture, including irrigation, and mechanisation</b> At a local level, facilitate the introduction of agricultural technologies, including irrigation schemes, and access to mechanisation and storage (draw on regional lessons from Ethiopia and Kenya).	MEDIUM	GOV NGOS

## Endnotes

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- <sup>1</sup> Child marriage or early marriage is any marriage where at least one of the parties is under 18 years of age. Forced marriages are marriages in which one and/or both parties have not personally expressed their full and free consent to the union. A child marriage is considered to be a form of forced marriage, given that one and/or both parties have not expressed full, free and informed consent.
- <sup>2</sup> (<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Women/WRGS/Pages/ChildMarriage.aspx>)
- <sup>3</sup> The head of the household is one of the members of the household recognized as the head of the unit by the other members of the household unit or by himself (or herself) if living alone (<https://stats.oecd.org/glossary/detail.asp?ID=1210>)
- <sup>4</sup> <https://africa.unwomen.org/en/where-we-are/eastern-and-southern-africa/sudan>
- <sup>5</sup> This is officially known as the 'Interim Constitutional Document for the Period 2019'.
- <sup>6</sup> For example, a conference was convened at Chatham House, London UK in October 2019. <https://www.chathamhouse.org/event/towards-inclusive-economic-growth-sudan-stabilization-and-recovery>
- <sup>7</sup> Draft Constitutional Declaration August 17 2019
- <sup>8</sup> [http://reporting.unhcr.org/node/2535#\\_ga=2.3976752.1850069894.1578561172-241550130.1578561172](http://reporting.unhcr.org/node/2535#_ga=2.3976752.1850069894.1578561172-241550130.1578561172)
- <sup>9</sup> The study did not aim to collect new in-depth sectoral information, which was beyond the scope of this study.
- <sup>10</sup> Gezira state is also known as El Gezira, while Gadarif state is also known as El Gadarif. This report uses the short versions of their names, in vein with Sudan's Central Bureau of Statistics and UNICEF (2014).
- <sup>11</sup> Current AfDB projects in Sudan include support to macroeconomic management, drought resilience and livelihoods, legal structures, health service delivery, education and skills development, water sector reform, youth empowerment, and WASH.
- <sup>12</sup> The research team and UN Women jointly selected these states. Darfur in located in western Sudan and has been marginalized and has experienced intense conflict since 2004, with women subjected to violence. Gezira is perceived to be a more wealthy state located in the central part of Sudan, and has a history of agricultural schemes and service development. Gadarif is situated in eastern Sudan. It has high levels of IDPs and refugees, and has been the focus of agricultural initiatives but often excluding small-scale farmers.
- <sup>13</sup> HIV AIDS prevalence is estimated to be fairly low in Sudan, at 0.2% of adults aged 15-49 years, (<https://www.unaids.org/en/regionscountries/countries/sudan>)
- <sup>14</sup> This included various gender control measures and restrictions. For example, section 7 prohibited men and women from dancing together and women dancing in front of men. Section 9 stated that there must be one door and ten seats for women in public transport. Section 16 stated that a woman managing a hair salon must be at least 35 years old and section 18 prohibited men from providing tailoring work for women unless they had obtained approval from the local authorities. Finally, the Police of Social Security (Public Order Police) and the Public Order Courts that were responsible for the implementation of the Public Order Act were particularly problematic since the Public Order Courts did not allow the accused to prepare a defence and to seek legal advice or consult a lawyer (Badawi and Folcio 2016)
- <sup>15</sup> A Prime Minister will lead the government during a transition period of 39 months before planned democratic elections (<https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/sudan-humanitarian-needs-overview-2020>)
- <sup>16</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/sudan-peace-talks-extended-sine-die>
- <sup>17</sup> This was highlighted by CARE Switzerland in a gender profile for Sudan in 2013, and reiterated in this research.
- <sup>18</sup> Ahfad University for Women (AUW) was established in 1966 with the aim to train and equip women to become active change agents in the development of Sudan.
- <sup>19</sup> This was highlighted by CARE Switzerland in a gender profile for Sudan in 2013, and reiterated in this research.
- <sup>20</sup> <https://ijrcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Sudan.pdf>
- <sup>21</sup> Interview with UN Women, Khartoum, 7 May 2018 under CARE gender research (Ritchie 2018).
- <sup>22</sup> <https://sihanet.org/a-joint-letter-on-sudans-ratification-of-the-convention-of-elimination-of-all-forms-of-discrimination-against-women-cedaw/>
- <sup>23</sup> <https://fanack.com/sudan/human-rights/> and <http://hrlibrary.umn.edu/research/ratification-sudan.html>
- <sup>24</sup> <http://africa.unwomen.org/en/about-us/about-un-women>
- <sup>25</sup> The Council of Ministers in Khartoum endorsed the *Action Plan* on 8 March 2020. As of May 2020, the *Action Plan* remained in Arabic, and had not yet been translated into English.
- <sup>26</sup> This allocates 30 percent of available funds for women.
- <sup>27</sup> The policy specifically outlined several areas of attention including (although not limited to), support to access to healthcare including mother and child's health; <sup>[SEP]</sup>enabling full access to education for all women of all age groups and in rural and urban areas; supporting the development of women 'intellectual character'; improving conditions of poor women and empower them within the framework of comprehensive, sustainable development; <sup>[SEP]</sup>developing and promoting women's capacity; <sup>[SEP]</sup>developing media performance and the way it tackles women <sup>[SEP]</sup>issues; enforcing all civil rights granted to women as per the Constitution and the provisions guaranteed in regional and international conventions; facilitating access by women to structures of power and decision making; activating the role of civil society institutions towards providing <sup>[SEP]</sup>for women participation and advancement; <sup>[SEP]</sup>and enhancing an effective role for women in conflict resolution, <sup>[SEP]</sup>establishing peace and spreading a culture of peace.
- <sup>28</sup> Follow up interview with UN Women - Economic Advisor, Khartoum (online), April 2020
- <sup>29</sup> The Khartoum Public Order Act (KPOA) regulated social activities such as festivities and social gatherings. For example, it criminalised dancing between women and men, women dancing in front of men, the singing of trivial songs at parties and prohibited begging. It also regulated the nature of queues in public places (separation of men and women) and employment in private businesses (e.g. hairdressing salons were not permitted to employ any women unless they were deemed to be of good character) (Khartoum Public Order Act 1998 in SIHA 2017).
- <sup>30</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-50596805>
- <sup>31</sup> <https://www.middleeasteye.net/opinion/sudan-revolution-how-womens-participation-reveals-societal-fissures>
- <sup>32</sup> <https://www.middleeasteye.net/opinion/sudan-revolution-how-womens-participation-reveals-societal-fissures>
- <sup>33</sup> Instead activists traveled to Khartoum to engage in the national protests.
- <sup>34</sup> This was precipitated by a scaling up of aggression in June 2019 including the massacre of young men and women that took place as the military tried to disperse the protestors.
- <sup>35</sup> This includes participation in the investigation committee into the 'June 3<sup>rd</sup>' 2019 massacre that occurred during the revolution.
- <sup>36</sup> Key informant interview, UNFPA, North Darfur, Nov 2019
- <sup>37</sup> Harizi, E., Zaki, S., Prato, B., Shields, G. (2007) 'Understanding Policy Volatility in Sudan.'. *IFPRI Discussion Paper 00721*, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI).
- <sup>38</sup> Itto, A. (2006) *Guests at the table? The role of women in peace processes*
- <sup>39</sup> Albatahani, A. (2015) *Protracted Conflicts and Multiple Transitions: Women Negotiating and Driving Change*, Khartoum, Sudan
- <sup>40</sup> <https://www.inclusivepeace.org/sites/default/files/IPTI-Case-Study-Sudan-Darfur-2009-2017.pdf>
- <sup>41</sup> Alaa Salah from EQSAM highlighted five key recommendations, including urging the Security Council and the international community to ensure the full, equal and meaningful participation of women; implementing all women, peace and security obligations; supporting

accountability and end impunity; supporting civil society organizations and women human rights defenders and ending the use of force against protestors; and stop the export of weapons to Sudan. <https://www.peacewomen.org/node/103697>

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.norway.no/en/sudan/norway-sudan/news-events/news2/wps/>

<sup>42</sup> <https://allafrica.com/stories/202004200393.html>

<sup>43</sup> Focus Group Discussion, Youth of the Resistance Committees, El Fashir, North Darfur, Nov 2019

<sup>44</sup> Key informant interview with gender representative at Ministry of Justice, Gezira, Nov 2019

<sup>45</sup> <https://www.iknowpolitics.org/en/learn/knowledge-resources/data-and-statistics/gender-parity-cabinets-are-rise>

<sup>46</sup> Key informant interview with Deputy Minister of Health, Nov 2019

<sup>47</sup> In civil society focus groups, there were two cited cases of young women in Gezira state that were seeking divorce and a return to education, galvanized by the 'revolution effect'.

<sup>48</sup> Key informant interview with Executive Director, SORD, Nov 2019

<sup>49</sup> Key informant interview with Deputy Minister of Health, Nov 2019

<sup>50</sup> Key informant interview with Deputy Minister of Health, Nov 2019

<sup>51</sup> Key informant interview with UNDP analyst and gender activist, Nov 2019

<sup>52</sup> Key informant interview with staff at UN Women, Nov 2019

<sup>53</sup> Key informant interview with Executive Director, SORD, Nov 2019

<sup>54</sup> Key informant interview with Executive Director, SORD, Nov 2019

<sup>55</sup> Key informant interview with UNDP analyst and gender activist, Nov 2019

<sup>56</sup> Focus Group Discussion, Youth, El Fashir, North Darfur, Nov 2019

<sup>57</sup> Key informant interview with female business representative, Nov 2019

<sup>58</sup> [https://www.unicef.org/sudan/protection\\_6092.html](https://www.unicef.org/sudan/protection_6092.html)

<sup>59</sup> A key slogan of the campaign was: 'Every Girl is Born Saleema...Let Every Girl Grow Saleema'.

<sup>60</sup> Early marriage puts girls at risk of domestic violence, forced sexual relations, reduced levels of sexual and reproductive health, and lower levels of education (Save the Children, 2004). Children born to teenage mothers are more likely to be premature, have a low birth weight and are 50 percent more likely to die in the first year as compared to children born to women in their twenties.

<sup>61</sup> Focus Group Discussion, Civil society, Gezira, Nov 2019

<sup>62</sup> Focus Group Discussion, Civil society, Gadarif, Nov 2019

<sup>63</sup> In 2012, the Sudanese police and security forces frequently beat and harassed female demonstrators, who played a major role in mobilising the population, and sexual and verbal abuses were reported (East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders, Oral intervention on the report of the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders in Africa, 13 October 2012 in Badawi and Folcio 2016)

<sup>64</sup> For instance, many women human rights defenders, activists and protesters who were arrested and detained in various contexts have reported being victims of sexual assault or threatened to be raped during arrest and interrogations by police officers (Human Rights Watch, Good Girls don't protest, 2016 in Badawi and Folcio 2016)

<sup>65</sup> Rahma, E. (2009) *Reproductive Health KAP Survey among Communities Affected by Conflict in Darfur*. UNFPA, Sudan Country Office<sup>[11]</sup>

<sup>66</sup> For example, there was an absence of appropriate lighting in areas frequently used by women and girls, or patrols on water fetching routes (Elkarib, 2019).

<sup>67</sup> African Women's Rights Observatory. *Country-specific Information: Sudan*.

<http://new.uneca.org/awro/CountrySpecificInformationSudan.aspx><sup>[12]</sup>

<sup>68</sup> <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/north-africa-west-asia/paper-tiger-law-forbidding-fgm-in-sudan/>

<sup>69</sup> With funding provided by UNFPA and UNICEF <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/north-africa-west-asia/paper-tiger-law-forbidding-fgm-in-sudan/>

<sup>70</sup> <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/north-africa-west-asia/paper-tiger-law-forbidding-fgm-in-sudan/>

<sup>71</sup> The Strategy indicates entry points to address FGM/C, including: the formulation of legislation that criminalises the practice; the promotion of child protection and child rights at the state level; raising awareness of the issue among health professionals and at the community level (Badawi and Folcio 2016).

<sup>72</sup> Personal Status of Muslims Act (1991). Article 34 cited in CIS (2013).

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> United Nations (2016a, 2016b)

<sup>75</sup> Tønnessen and Roald (2007), p.22

<sup>76</sup> The 1991 law on rape known as 'Article 149', originally confused rape and adultery (*zina*) and was updated in 2015. While the amendment expanded the definition of rape and separated it from *zina*, according to legal advisors, there still remained a problem of evidence.

<sup>77</sup> Equal Rights Trust and SORD, In Search of Confluence. Addressing Discrimination and Inequality in Sudan, 2014.

<sup>78</sup> Key informant interview, UNFPA, North Darfur, Nov 2019

<sup>79</sup> Focus group, youth, Gezira, Nov 2019. This is an anecdotal observation among certain rural/agricultural families and it is uncertain how widespread this phenomenon may be.

<sup>80</sup> Focus group, civil society, Khartoum, Nov 2019

<sup>81</sup> Key informant interview with Ministry of Social Welfare, Gadarif, Nov 2019

<sup>82</sup> <https://www.unwomen.org/en/docs/2008/6/un-security-council-resolution-1820>. The UNSCR 1820 condemns sexual violence as a weapon of war.

<sup>83</sup> <http://uis.unesco.org/en/country/sd>

<sup>84</sup> <http://uis.unesco.org/en/country/sd>

<sup>85</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/sudan/education> In 2014, UNICEF indicated that Sudan had one of the lowest levels of school attendance of primary aged children in the Middle East and North Africa Region (MENA). This included 490,6735-year-olds that should have been in pre-primary (50%), 1,965,068 primary school-aged children (37% of total population of primary school-aged children) and 641,587 lower secondary school-aged children (40% of secondary school-aged children) (UNICEF, 2014).

<sup>86</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/sudan/education>

<sup>87</sup> Basic education lasts eight years and targets children between the ages 5-13 years. Providers include the Government and private entities (MoE 2019).

<sup>88</sup> For example, in West Darfur, there is a 22 percentage point gap between boys and girls (86 percent and 64 percent),

<sup>89</sup> This level covers two years and targets children aged 4-5 years. The pre-primary programmes are provided by Government and private institutions with 'significant effort' also contributed by the community (MoE 2019).

<sup>90</sup> Excluding *khalwas* (religious schools), it is indicated that almost half of children (aged 4-5 years) in rural areas had some experience in pre-school (49 percent of boys and 53 percent of girls), while over 80 percent of children (aged 4-5 years) in urban areas had experience in pre-school (80 percent of boys and 83 percent of girls).

<sup>91</sup> This level lasts three years and targets children between the ages 14-17 years. It has two possible pathways (i) academic and technical and (ii) vocational Education and Training (TVET) (MoE 2019).

- <sup>92</sup> According to UNICEF and CBS (2016), the Sudanese government is ‘committed to free and compulsory basic education for all’ as indicated in various laws and policies: the Interim National Constitution (2005), the Five Year Education Sector Strategic Plan (2007-2011); The Sudan Education Status Report (2011); and the Medium-Term Education Sector Strategy (2012-2016). However, they cite that in practice, according to the IPRSP (2011), households may be expected to contribute to a ‘large share’ of school running costs.
- <sup>93</sup> In 2012, poverty rates were shown to be highest among those in the population with no education (59.5 percent); followed by those with just *Khalwa* schooling (Islamic school) as their highest level of education (50.6 percent), and those with partial primary education (44 percent). Poverty rates were lowest among those with some secondary education (30 percent), and particularly those with post secondary education (8.9 percent) (Government of Sudan, Sudan Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, September 2011, DRAFT No5, February 7, 2012) .
- <sup>94</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/sudan/education>
- <sup>95</sup> Dr. Omkalthom. (2011) *Out-of-School Girls in Sudan 2011*, Department of Girls’ Education in Badawi and Folcio (2016)
- <sup>96</sup> Focus Group Discussion, CSOs, Gezira capital, Nov 2019
- <sup>97</sup> Focus Group Discussion, NGOs and Youth, Gadarif capital, Nov 2019
- <sup>98</sup> Key informant interview with Department for Education, North Darfur, Nov 2019
- <sup>99</sup> For example, a total of 3,692 unqualified teachers were identified in South and East Darfur out of 7,315 employed teachers <https://www.unicef.org/sudan/education>
- <sup>100</sup> For example, a total of 3,692 unqualified teachers were identified in South and East Darfur out of 7,315 employed teachers <https://www.unicef.org/sudan/education>
- <sup>101</sup> In general, the educational curriculum (basic and secondary) is perceived to be heavily ‘patriarchal’, and the content and images remain gender biased.
- <sup>102</sup> Plan (2008). *Because I am a Girl: the State of the World’s Girls. Special Focus: In the Shadow of War*.<sup>11</sup><sub>SEP</sub>
- <sup>103</sup> Girls aged 15-19 are twice as likely to die from childbirth as women in their twenties; those below the age of 15 are five times as likely [http://web.worldbank.org/archive/website01213/WEB/0\\_CO-53.HTM](http://web.worldbank.org/archive/website01213/WEB/0_CO-53.HTM)
- <sup>104</sup> Girls aged 15-19 are twice as likely to die from childbirth as women in their twenties; those below the age of 15 are five times as likely [http://web.worldbank.org/archive/website01213/WEB/0\\_CO-53.HTM](http://web.worldbank.org/archive/website01213/WEB/0_CO-53.HTM)
- <sup>105</sup> Girls aged 15-19 are twice as likely to die from childbirth as women in their twenties; those below the age of 15 are five times as likely [http://web.worldbank.org/archive/website01213/WEB/0\\_CO-53.HTM](http://web.worldbank.org/archive/website01213/WEB/0_CO-53.HTM)
- <sup>106</sup> [http://web.worldbank.org/archive/website01213/WEB/0\\_CO-53.HTM](http://web.worldbank.org/archive/website01213/WEB/0_CO-53.HTM)
- <sup>107</sup> <http://www.emro.who.int/sdn/sudan-events/all-eyes-on-maternal-health.html> Accessed 22 Sept 2018
- <sup>108</sup> [http://www.who.int/gho/maternal\\_health/countries/sdn.pdf?ua=1](http://www.who.int/gho/maternal_health/countries/sdn.pdf?ua=1) Accessed 22 Sept 2018.
- <sup>109</sup> Federal Ministry of Health, Sudan National S3M, 2013 in Badawi and Folcio (2016)
- <sup>110</sup> <http://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/maternal-mortality>
- <sup>111</sup> <https://www.unhcr.org/protection/health/43293e0b2/sudan-trying-stem-spread-hiv-aids.html>
- <sup>112</sup> <https://www.fmreview.org/sites/fmr/files/textOnlyContent/FMR/24/28.htm>
- <sup>113</sup> These include severe bleeding (mostly bleeding after childbirth), infections (usually after childbirth), high blood pressure during pregnancy (pre-eclampsia and eclampsia), complications from delivery, unsafe abortion. Other complications may be caused by or associated with diseases such as malaria, and AIDS during pregnancy <http://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/maternal-mortality> Maternal health and newborn health are closely linked. Adolescent girls may face a higher risk of complications and death as a result of pregnancy than older women.
- <sup>114</sup> Key informant interview with UNFPA, Gadarif, Nov 2019
- <sup>115</sup> AA Abdel Aziem, DA Rayis, M Mamoun, I Adam (2011). Use of family planning methods in Kassala, Eastern Sudan. BMC Research Notes, 4:43 doi:10.1186/1756-0500-4-43<sup>11</sup><sub>SEP</sub> cited in CIS (2013)
- <sup>116</sup> <https://data.unicef.org/crvs/sudan/>
- <sup>117</sup> Focus Group Discussion, Youth, Gezira capital, Nov 2019
- <sup>118</sup> This includes healthy foods such as eggs.
- <sup>119</sup> Focus Group Discussion, Youth, El Fasher, North Darfur, Nov 2019
- <sup>120</sup> The Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (2014)
- <sup>121</sup> <https://www.unwater.org/water-facts/water-sanitation-and-hygiene/>
- <sup>122</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/sudan/water-sanitation-hygiene/>
- <sup>123</sup> The 2001 General Education Act stipulates that every Sudanese child has the right to basic education. Specific laws and acts have been developed to regulate and promote basic education in Sudan, including the Basic Education School Regulation of 1992, the National Centre for Curricula and Educational Research Act of 1996, the General Education Planning Act of 2000, and the Parent-Teacher Associations Regulation of 1992 (Badawi and Folcio 2016). The Council of Ministers Resolution No. 1799 of 1990, pre-school has become an integral part of the formal education system.
- <sup>124</sup> Interview with Technical Secretariat, UNDP, Khartoum, 11 July 2018.
- <sup>125</sup> According to MoE (2019), there are 1.7 million children and adolescents who are in need of basic education services, including 56 percent are IDPs, 7 percent refugees, 5 percent returnees and 32 percent vulnerable residents.
- <sup>126</sup> <https://projects.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/project-detail/P128644?lang=ar>
- <sup>127</sup> For the 2018-2021 country programme, UNICEF’s will support children to have access to early stimulation and quality basic education and learning in inclusive and safe school environments. The ‘whole child approach,’ which integrates all phases of the child’s life cycle, will be central to the programme. (<https://www.unicef.org/sudan/education>). Plan International and Save the Children are two key international NGOs supporting education in Sudan.
- <sup>128</sup> [http://applications.emro.who.int/docs/High\\_Level\\_Exp\\_Meet\\_Rep\\_2013\\_EN\\_14800.pdf?ua=1](http://applications.emro.who.int/docs/High_Level_Exp_Meet_Rep_2013_EN_14800.pdf?ua=1)
- <sup>129</sup> Yet in the IDP camps, fees were originally waived for people. As such, IDPs have become ‘dependent’ on free services and ‘refuse to pay’ (interview with Health and Nutrition Advisor CIS, Khartoum, 7 May 2018) in Ritchie (2018)
- <sup>130</sup> <https://uhcpartnership.net/country-profile/sudan/>
- <sup>131</sup> Universal Health Coverage Partnership (2017)
- <sup>132</sup> <https://sudan.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/CPAP%20between%20the%20Government%20of%20Sudan%20%26%20UNFPA%20-%20Seventh%20Programme%20Cycle%202018-%202021-1.pdf>
- <sup>133</sup> This four year AFDB project aims to increase the demand for health care and improve the supply of health services to reduce the high rates of mortality and morbidity among women and children in four states of Sudan, namely El Gezira, Khartoum, Northern State and River Nile.
- <sup>134</sup> [http://applications.emro.who.int/docs/High\\_Level\\_Exp\\_Meet\\_Rep\\_2013\\_EN\\_14800.pdf?ua=1](http://applications.emro.who.int/docs/High_Level_Exp_Meet_Rep_2013_EN_14800.pdf?ua=1)
- <sup>135</sup> [http://applications.emro.who.int/docs/EMROPUB\\_2018\\_EN\\_20620.pdf](http://applications.emro.who.int/docs/EMROPUB_2018_EN_20620.pdf)
- <sup>136</sup> Federal Ministry of Health (2010) in [https://sudan.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/resource-pdf/maternal\\_health.pdf](https://sudan.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/resource-pdf/maternal_health.pdf)
- <sup>137</sup> Federal Ministry of Health (2018)
- <sup>138</sup> Federal Ministry of Health (2018)

- <sup>138</sup> At the time of this report, there were an estimated 4,000 cases of Covid-19 in Sudan (<https://covid19.who.int/region/emro/country/sd>).
- <sup>139</sup> <https://africacdc.org/news-item/africa50-supports-covid-19-response-with-us300000-grant-to-africa-cdc/>
- <sup>140</sup> <http://sanitationandwaterforall.org/wp-content/uploads/download-manager-files/Sudan%20Country%20Brief.pdf>. The government has established a monthly WASH coordination meeting between relevant actors, including government and NGO representatives (WHO, 2015).
- <sup>141</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/sudan/water-sanitation-hygiene>
- <sup>142</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/sudan/water-sanitation-hygiene>
- <sup>143</sup> <https://www.thelancet.com/action/showPdf?pii=S0140-6736%2819%2930074-1>
- <sup>144</sup> <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/video/2017/01/09/sudans-out-of-school-children>
- <sup>145</sup> <https://en.unesco.org/news/tvet-strategy-workshop-khartoum>
- <sup>146</sup> [https://medium.com/@Asaad\\_Taha/reducing-maternal-mortality-in-sudan-a-hybrid-framework-208d88b90d72](https://medium.com/@Asaad_Taha/reducing-maternal-mortality-in-sudan-a-hybrid-framework-208d88b90d72)
- <sup>147</sup> AFDB (2017)
- <sup>148</sup> <https://sudan.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/CPAP%20between%20the%20Government%20of%20Sudan%20%26%20UNFPA%20%20Seventh%20Programme%20Cycle%20%202018-%202021-1.pdf>
- <sup>149</sup> <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/sudan/overview>
- <sup>150</sup> <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/sudan/overview>
- <sup>151</sup> Women were required to obtain the husband's permission to leave the house (Personal Status Act 1991).
- <sup>152</sup> According to the standards of the Sudanese Central Bureau of Statistics, the labour force in Sudan actually includes the population 10 years old or more, and is estimated at 9.3 million (age 10-64 years and over). The ILO re-calculated the rate for the population aged 15-64 years.
- <sup>153</sup> Labour force: refers to the economically active population who participates, or want to participate, in the production of goods and services during the reference period. It includes both the employed and the unemployed (SLFS 2011)
- <sup>154</sup> Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Concluding observations on the second periodic report of the Sudan, October 2015
- <sup>155</sup> <https://www.bloomberg.com/features/2019-sudan-nile-land-farming/>
- <sup>156</sup> <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/su.html>
- <sup>157</sup> ILO (2014)
- <sup>158</sup> Sudan is the largest producer of gum arabic in the world (World Bank, 2015)
- <sup>159</sup> Women and girls are responsible for domestic chores such as collecting water and firewood, and are thus significantly affected by the decreasing availability of resources (as a result of deforestation as well as climate change) both in terms of time spent and vulnerability to GBV (Ritchie 2018).
- <sup>160</sup> The incidence of cancer is rising especially among women and is suspected to be linked to pesticide use although studies are lacking.
- <sup>161</sup> A study is ongoing to investigate this phenomenon (discussions with c-author and agriculturalist Dr Asha Elkarib).
- <sup>162</sup> <https://www.fmreview.org/return-reintegration/askouri>
- <sup>163</sup> Ahmed Abou El-Yazeid, Sudan's Small and Medium Enterprises, Thematic Paper prepared for the ILO/UNDP project "Sudan: Support to the development of a National Employment Framework", September 2013
- <sup>164</sup> Key informant interview with GLZ, Gadarif, Nov 2019
- <sup>165</sup> Workshop with women entrepreneurs at Orange Corners Programme, Khartoum, Nov 2019
- <sup>166</sup> <https://sihanet.org/first-womens-cooperative-union-formed-in-sudan-a-much-needed-effort/>
- <sup>167</sup> An hugely successful micro-finance approach that was conceived in India, SHGs and VSLAs are community-based savings and credit groups that typically organise 20-25 women per group, and engage in individual savings and group lending.
- <sup>168</sup> Forcier Consulting (2017) Final Evaluation of the Resilience in the Horn Programme (CARE).
- <sup>169</sup> Interview with the Gender Centre for Research, Khartoum, 10<sup>th</sup> May 2017 in Ritchie (2018)
- <sup>170</sup> Key informant interview with Ministry of Agriculture, Extension Department, Gadarif, Nov 2019
- <sup>171</sup> Government of Sudan, Sudan Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, September 2011, DRAFT No5, February 7, 2012 cited in CIS (2013).
- <sup>172</sup> FAO, Women, Agriculture and Rural Development. Fact Sheet: Sudan. 1/9/2012. <http://www.fao.org/docrep/V9105E/V9105E00.htm> cited in CIS (2013).
- <sup>173</sup> In the complex conflict-stricken context of Darfur, there were reported to be major shocks to assets and livelihoods over the 'crisis' time, with the 'systematic' stripping of assets, as well as climate induced crop failures (Ritchie, 2018).
- <sup>174</sup> Vulnerable employment is the share of self-employed (without employees) and contributing family members in total employment (ILO, 2014). See also, [http://ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---stat/documents/publication/wcms\\_631497.pdf](http://ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---stat/documents/publication/wcms_631497.pdf)
- <sup>175</sup> Focus Group Discussion, Government representatives, Khartoum, Nov 2019
- <sup>176</sup> <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/su.html>
- <sup>177</sup> <https://unctad.org/meetings/en/Presentation/17OILGASMINE%20Mohamed%20Sulaiman%20Ibrahim%20S4.pdf>
- <sup>178</sup> <https://unctad.org/meetings/en/Presentation/17OILGASMINE%20Mohamed%20Sulaiman%20Ibrahim%20S4.pdf>
- <sup>179</sup> Equal Rights Trust and SORD, In Search of Confluence. Addressing Discrimination and Inequality in Sudan, 2014.
- <sup>180</sup> Equal Rights Trust and SORD, In Search of Confluence. Addressing Discrimination and Inequality in Sudan, 2014.
- <sup>181</sup> Equal Rights Trust and SORD, In Search of Confluence. Addressing Discrimination and Inequality in Sudan, 2014.
- <sup>182</sup> [https://www.sd.undp.org/content/sudan/en/home/ourwork/environmentandenergy/successstories/Solar\\_Energy\\_in\\_Sudan.html](https://www.sd.undp.org/content/sudan/en/home/ourwork/environmentandenergy/successstories/Solar_Energy_in_Sudan.html)
- <sup>183</sup> The maternity leave entitlement is to a period of 8 weeks' leave. Female workers are further entitled to receive full pay for the period of maternity leave taken. While no specific guarantees on continued employment are provided, employers are prohibited from dismissing the employee without a valid reason during the worker's pregnancy or confinement period.
- <sup>184</sup> For example, there are restrictions on women's working hours in specific sectors according to the Labour Act (1997) Articles 20(1) and (2).<sup>184</sup> Meanwhile, married Muslim women may be denied the right to work outside of the home by their husbands in the 1991 Personal Status Law (Article 91 to Article 95).
- <sup>185</sup> The Twenty Five Year National Strategy, 2007-2031, National Council for Strategic Planning
- <sup>186</sup> Follow up interview with UN Women - Economic Advisor, Khartoum (online), April 2020
- <sup>187</sup> Follow up interview with UN Women - Economic Advisor, Khartoum (online), April 2020
- <sup>188</sup> Follow up interview with UN Women - Economic Advisor, Khartoum (online), April 2020
- <sup>189</sup> <https://www.hrprocurementlab.org/blog/why-does-gender-equality-matter-to-public-procurement-an-african-perspective/>
- <sup>190</sup> <http://www.intracen.org/news/Public-Procurement-a-Tool-to-Boost-Womens-Economic-Empowerment/>
- <sup>191</sup> Gender experts from the Ministry of Agriculture have now explicitly articulated the importance of the provision of government lands to women farmers on the basis of partnership or rent in the draft strategy on Gender and Agriculture (2020). (Follow up interview with UN Women - Economic Advisor, Khartoum (online), April 2020).
- <sup>192</sup> This was highlighted in a report in Afghanistan. <https://www.rvo.nl/sites/default/files/2016/12/Gender-and-SMEs-Afghanistan.pdf>
- <sup>193</sup> Whilst this Country Gender Profile is undertaken separately from the Bank's Country Resilience and Fragility Assessment (CRFA), i.e. it has a special, in-depth focus on gender mainstreaming, inclusion and empowerment, its analyses are complementary and mutually reinforcing. The

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CRFA tool is a continuous process of enhanced data collection and quantification, and hence iterated over time to reflect the latest developments. The initial findings across the 7 dimensions of Pressures and Capacities showcase the interlinkages of economic, social, political, environmental/climate change and regional drivers of fragility more broadly. The CRFA highlights the capacities and pressures across the following 7 dimensions: Inclusive Politics, Security, Justice, Economic and Social Inclusiveness, Social Cohesion, Regional Spillover Effects and Climate/Environmental Impacts.

<sup>194</sup> Focus Group Discussion, Civil society, Khartoum, Nov 2019

<sup>195</sup> <https://data.unwomen.org/women-count>

<sup>196</sup> Also known as Village Savings and Lending Associations (VSLAs)

<sup>197</sup> In future research, this methodology requires more time to really engage with respondents and unpack women's changing participation in different levels and spaces.

<sup>198</sup> [https://www.participatorymethods.org/sites/participatorymethods.org/files/reflections\\_on\\_uses\\_powercube.pdf](https://www.participatorymethods.org/sites/participatorymethods.org/files/reflections_on_uses_powercube.pdf) (APPENDIX II: Brainstorm of Questions relating to the dimensions of the power cube for use in fieldwork)

<sup>199</sup> <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/su.html>

<sup>200</sup> <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/su.html>

<sup>201</sup> A spread of some high risk diseases such as yellow fever due to the unregulated immigration of foreigners into the country where no health examination is been performed is also starting to be problematic. There is also a spread of TB in El-Gadarif which has led to an increase in poverty rate in the areas

<sup>202</sup> Sachs, J., Schmidt-Traub, G., Kroll, C., Lafortune, G., Fuller, G. (2018)

<sup>203</sup> MPI captures both the incidence of poverty and the average intensity of deprivation

<sup>204</sup> Sachs, J., Schmidt-Traub, G., Kroll, C., Lafortune, G., Fuller, G. (2018)

<sup>205</sup> [http://www.who.int/gho/maternal\\_health/countries/sdn.pdf?ua=1](http://www.who.int/gho/maternal_health/countries/sdn.pdf?ua=1) Accessed 22 Sept 2018.

<sup>206</sup> <http://uis.unesco.org/en/country/sd>

<sup>207</sup> In particular, this includes major conflict and displacement in 2003-4, and 2007-2008.

<sup>208</sup> This was cited by similar projects in the region (Federal Government of Somalia and UN OCHA, 2018)

<sup>209</sup> This was cited by similar projects in the region (Federal Government of Somalia and UN OCHA, 2018)

<sup>210</sup> <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/EG.ELC.FOSL.ZS?locations=SD>

<sup>211</sup> [https://www.sd.undp.org/content/sudan/en/home/ourwork/environmentandenergy/successstories/Solar\\_Energy\\_in\\_Sudan.html](https://www.sd.undp.org/content/sudan/en/home/ourwork/environmentandenergy/successstories/Solar_Energy_in_Sudan.html)