

COUNTRY PROFILE

Sudan

UN HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE





Secondary school for girls in el-Fateh Karari locality - Khartoum State- SSB. Photo © UN-Habitat

FOREWORD

Sudan is a post-conflict country that aspires to forge and maintain a sustainable peace. According to different studies, the rapid urbanization process observed in Sudan has been determined by four main factors. These are the massive flows of rural-urban migration and displacement due to extended conflicts which afflicted certain parts of the country; the ensuing natural disasters, especially drought and its consequences; the complex pattern of the country's political development since independence and the inadequate state of rural development in the country resulting from territorial-imbalanced development.

While cities and towns in Sudan face many challenges, urbanization processes offer an opportunity to trigger sustainable processes of development, harnessing the capacity and aspirations of the people from urban areas. Achieving sustainable urbanization will therefore require attending, in a balanced manner, the needs of cities and towns as well as of those peri-urban and rural areas with which they have mutually dependent social, economic and environmental interactions.

In this context the Sudanese government will embark on the formulation and development of an integrated strategy for urbanization based on partnership with the private sector and community participation. Preliminary steps and actions has already been taken with respect to the preparation of the project document, initial funding was allocated by the government and a number of donors were approached for funding. The main objectives of the strategy are:

- a. Apply a more efficient strategy to the use of natural resources (particularly land) in order to reduce conflict and protect these resources for future generations.
- b. Ensure the settlement for the expected population increase until 2031 to reduce the informal and squatter growth and ultimately reduce poverty.

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URBAN ISSUES

Population (2014)	39.35 million ¹
GDP Growth (2014)	3,1% ²
Inequality Adjusted Human Development Index (2014)	167/187 ³
Urban Population of total population (2014)	34% ⁴
Population growth rate (2014)	2,1% ⁵
Urbanization growth rate	2,5% ⁶
Urban population living in poverty	27% ⁷
Access to improved drinking water	61% ⁸

Urban Statistics

Although the population of Sudan has been growing at high rates (about 2.8% per annum on average during the past 20 years), its urban population has been growing at much higher rates (about double the natural population growth rate). Therefore, the proportion of urban population of the total population has always been on the rise. While that proportion amounted to 18.5% at the dawn of independence in 1955-1956 (i.e., the time of the first population census), it reached 29.8% in 2008 (the last population census), i.e. an increase of more than three times. However, these figures do not accurately reflect the intensity of the urbanization process in Sudan, with smaller, formally rural, settlements functioning de facto as part of larger urban centres or coalescing in denser patterns with urban attributes. The number of settlements

that were classified as urban in the first census was 68. That number increased to 115 in 1983 (i.e., the third population census), and to 122 in 1993 (i.e., the fourth census). This also illustrates the high urbanization tendency in Sudan.

Key Issues

The uncontested urban primacy illustrates the imbalanced urban growth in Sudan, and the tendency of rural areas and small towns to lose their population, especially the youth, the educated and the entrepreneurial to large cities. The increasing rate of urbanization in those cities, and others, obliged people to live on river banks and on the flooding zones of annual water courses that carry rain water from the hinterlands to the major rivers, such as the Nile and its tributaries. Most of those settlements are informal ones resulting from subdivision of agricultural lands or illegal occupation of what seems to be vacant lands. Absence of national urban development strategies precluded coordination of state urban development plans, and resulted in a lack of a comprehensive vision for land use and natural resource utilization.

Managing the rapid pace of urbanization in Sudan, illustrated above, rests on the following six pillars:

- i. Negotiating a peaceful resolution of the armed conflicts that force IDPs to leave their homelands and to seek refuge in urban areas.
- ii. Establishing new towns and satellite

cities to absorb new migrants and additional urban growth in large urban centers. For instance, the recent Khartoum Structure Plan (KPP5 - 2008-2033), which has been approved by the federal Council of Ministers, recommended the establishment of nine such satellite cities and set forth planning guidelines and estimated budgets for that purpose.

- iii. Planning new housing areas as extensions to existing towns and cities and providing them with the necessary infrastructure and services to accommodate new urban growth.
- iv. Addressing the negative ramifications of rapid urbanization, such as the growth of squatter settlements and proliferation of slum areas as a result of over-crowding, through urban upgrading programs.
- v. Maximizing governmental efforts, supported by multi-lateral, Arab and Islamic donors, geared towards improving housing and life in rural areas through provision of water sources, and development of building materials, that rural areas become attractive to their residents and offer them decent living conditions.
- vi. Forging a balanced regional development so that each state provides its residents with all the services they need; and rejuvenating rural economies so as to reduce the attraction of large urban centers. All long-term strategies and short-to-medium term economic development plans that were formulated during

1 World Bank: <http://data.worldbank.org/country/sudan>

2 Ibid.

3 UNDP: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/IHDI>

4 World Bank: <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.URB.TOTL.IN.ZS>

5 World Bank: <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.GROW/countries/SD?display=graph>

6 UN Data: <http://data.un.org/CountryProfile.aspx?crName=Sudan>

7 Sudan-UN and Partners Work plan 2012 and Sudan-Humanitarian Dashboard

8 Ibid.



Example of newly-built multi-family, multi-story housing in Khartoum. Photo© UN-Habitat

the past years – at federal and state levels – have the objectives of achieving balanced regional development in all parts of Sudan.

UN-HABITAT PROGRAMME IN SUDAN

The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) has been working in Sudan since 2005, supporting the government of Sudan in developing and implementing sustainable urbanization strategies. A consistent programme has been developed to address urbanization trends, by promoting and enhancing urban-regional planning strategies, basic services delivery, housing development and livelihoods. The current country programme is tailored along the following UN-Habitat focus areas as well as promoting the Sustainable Development Goals

11 and 16 with respect to enhancing participatory urban planning and management, establishing access to affordable and safe housing using cost-effective, environmental friendly construction technology as well as contributing to durable and lasting solutions through early recovery and rehabilitation of areas that witnessed conflicts and instability in the Darfur region and Blue Nile state.

Urban Planning and Design

UN-Habitat has been supporting government authorities at national and state levels by providing technical assistance in the formulation of sustainable urbanization policies and strategies, including pro-poor and gender aspects. The country team is currently working on enhancing the institutional capacity and providing technical support with particular focus on urban and regional planning and land

management of the State Ministries of Planning and Urban Development (MPPPU). More specifically, UN-Habitat has been developing:

- » The Spatial Planning Strategy of Darfur intends to facilitate a smooth transition from humanitarian relief to early recovery, sustainable reconstruction and economic development in Darfur, by providing solutions from a spatial perspective, thus addressing the re-integration and return of IDPs in a holistic manner. It provides guidance to the government authorities and the local leaders of the five states of Darfur, in support of decision making and guiding investments as well as the implementation of the reconstruction process.
- » The Regional and Urban Planning Strategy for the Blue Nile State intends to improve the capacity of the government to plan and manage urban settlements for a better provision of services, integration of displaced people, as well as sustainable livelihood for displaced people and recipient communities.
- » Guiding principles were adopted to ensure the ownership of the concerned governmental institutions all along the process, to mainstream a participatory planning approach at the various levels to build consensus progressively and to apply conflict sensitive planning throughout the process (“Do-No-Harm” approach).
- » Finally, the Spatial Planning Strategy of Darfur proposed strategic planning

elements at three levels: regional, state and local. Development corridors at regional level are routes connecting different centres of economic activity (Economic Development Areas or Nodal Towns), adjoining countries, regions and states. They are built on already-existing multimodal transport and infrastructure networks. Economic Development Areas (EDAs) are priority areas of economic, social and infrastructure investments at the state level. Nodal Towns are centres of economic activity located strategically as border-crossings (international/national gateways) or nodes in between economic development areas (EDAs) to improve the socio-economic performance of the corridor.

- » Reinforcing the institutional capacity for land dispute resolutions and urban land/ rural management through on-the-job trainings, provision of technical assistance, development of tools and implementation of demonstration activities such as land surveying and registration;
- » Strengthening the Native Administration and Customary Law Offices to reintroduce customary laws and protect land resources, and support reconciliation committees at the local level to act as mediators to solve land conflicts.

affected areas suffer from the classical symptoms related to rapid urbanization, such as lack of livelihood opportunities, high prevalence of insecurity in the shanty settlements with high rates of dependency on relief assistance. Sustainable livelihood options were identified and implemented in the Blue Nile State in Sudan through delivery of vocational trainings on construction techniques and handicraft, establishment of small entrepreneurs and promotion of urban agriculture focusing on unemployed youth and women.

Urban Legislation, Land and Governance

In this context, UN-Habitat has been supporting government authorities at national and state levels by providing technical assistance in the formulation of land management policies and strategies, including pro-poor and gender aspects. UN-Habitat has been working on enhancing the institutional capacity of Darfur and Blue Nile states, with a particular focus on:

- » Assessing the different typologies of land conflict and disputes at the state level and identify suitable strategies to address them;
- » Promoting inter-sectoral coordination to deal with land issues;

Urban Economy

Most of the urban settlements in conflict-

Urban Basic Services

The HCPD provide capacity building and technical support to promote durable solutions for local service delivery and infrastructure development.



Woman farm. Photo© UN-Habitat

Capacities of state and local authorities were reinforced and gender-balanced stakeholders' participation promoted for regional and urban planning in Darfur's five states and Blue Nile state. Specifically human and technical capacity of local authorities was built in the fields of planning concepts, techniques and tools, as well as in using Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and conducting surveys. The skills acquired through training have facilitated a smooth and effective participation of the stakeholders in the formulation of the regional plan. Women participation has reached a 40% share in the training which is significant under a situation of cultural sensitivity

Housing and Slum Upgrading

UN-Habitat has identified stabilized soil block (SSB) technology as the most suitable to be used for the reconstruction of settlements for returnees (IDPs and Refugees) in Sudan. It is considered eco-friendly, socially inclusive and economically competitive. Community empowerment and training in addition to capacity development of government officials constitute the backbone of the strategy to be implemented in close collaboration with vocational training institutions and COBs.

As a result, more than 330 pilot demonstration buildings, including housing units, were built, and almost 3,000 individuals were trained on SSB production by using manual and motorized machines and through labor-intensive mechanisms. Former implementing partners, in particular international NGOs, are



Graduation of women vocational training for income generation. Photo© UN-Habitat

still constructing public facilities using the same SSB technology and are currently demanding more machines.

Risk Reduction and Rehabilitation

UN-Habitat has implemented Emergency Flood Response in Khartoum for Vulnerable Communities as part of its 2003-2016 CPD. The project was developed as a response to emergency situations that resulted from heavy rainfall and flooding in 2013 which led to tremendous losses and social disruption. The overall goal was to strengthen government and community capacities to conduct emergency construction of public facilities and necessary infrastructure through the adaptation and

implementation of flood resilient urban planning and building techniques. Over 170 thousand persons benefited from the project interventions in terms of accessibility, protection against flood, access to basic services and capacity building. Gender aspects were considered in planning and implementing improved accessibility mechanisms for facilities. Environmentally friendly construction technology was introduced, applied and disseminated among affected communities.

KEY PARTNERS

All of UN-Habitat Sudan's projects are developed, implemented and monitored in partnership with the relevant Sudanese ministries to ensure they are in line with the National Development



- ◆ Regional Spatial Planning and land management
- Urban Planning - City structure plans
- ★ Shelter and transfer of building technology
- H Basic service (Heath facilities)
- Peace Building (Livestock Migratory Route)
- ▲ Disaster risk reduction
- ~ Nile river
- State capital
- State Boundary
- International Boundaries

Plan and its priorities. To institutionalize the relation with the main government counterpart, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between UN-Habitat and the Federal Government of Sudan (GoS) in November 2010 and renewed in January 2015, with the main purpose of establishing a framework for collaborative efforts on national development programmes and activities related to sustainable urbanization and to harmonize physical planning in Sudan. It should enable both partners to identify common interest and priorities.

UN-Habitat has provided technical and financial assistance to the national government of Sudan and the National Habitat Committee for the formulation of the national report for the 3rd United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) based on the guidelines provided. The national report was prepared on a bottom-up participatory approach and brought together relevant Sudanese public officials from federal and state governments, representatives from civil society organizations, academia, research institutions, media, the United Nations and international donors, private sector and community groups. The national report was finally approved by the government of Sudan.

OUTLOOK

Sudan is a post-conflict country that aspires to forge and maintain a sustainable peace. The long conflict between northern and southern Sudan that continued for some 40 years, between 1954 and 2004, has been peacefully resolved

by the secession of South Sudan in 2011. The following will be at UN-Habitat's focus in Sudan in the near future:

- i. The mutinies and civil strife that broke out in the Blue Nile, South Kordofan and Darfur states are gradually coming to a peaceful end through negotiations, building trust and by investing in regional development in those states. Substantial amounts of funds are needed to rebuild destroyed towns, villages and means of livelihoods. Furthermore, careful planning of comprehensive regional development schemes is needed in order to achieve a balanced and equitable regional development.
- ii. As a result of prolonged periods of conflicts, hundreds of thousands of households were rendered homeless and living on the fringes of urban areas as IDPs. There is a moral obligation and a big challenge to assist those IDPs to return to their homelands by re-building their destructed village and livelihoods. Those who wish to live in urban areas should be assisted to gain the necessary skills and resources needed to integrate there.
- iii. Adoption of a new national strategy to deal with squatter settlements and establishment of effective and practical mechanisms to implement that strategy, so as to dispense with squatter settlements within the coming 20 years.
- iv. Dissemination of eco-friendly and affordable building materials and technologies is urgently needed. For example the use of stabilized soil blocks (SSBs) for walls, thin Ferrocement vaults for roofs, domes and vaults built

in bricks with minimum formwork (e.g. the Nubian vault) etc. are cases in point. Cross-country sharing of experiences is needed and national building research centers should take the lead in this regard.

v. Re-introduction of large and medium-size buses in urban areas in Sudan – especially in the national capital – is urgently needed as a means of affordable and sustainable transport. This will require re-aligning of streets, providing bus stops, dedicated bus lanes, etc. to facilitate their easy maneuvering within busy streets and dense down-town areas.

vi. Dissemination of the use of sustainable and eco-friendly energy sources – such as solar and wind energies – which have proven their efficiency in reconstruction projects orchestrated by UN-Habitat in some areas of Darfur. They are also in limited use currently for lighting in some cities in Sudan.

vii. Addressing the unplanned growth of new human settlements at the informal mining sites with planning, land readjustment and service provision. Advanced skeletal planning could be used as a form of predictive forward planning.

viii. Propagating the use of urban observatories in cities, states and nation-wide. Its regular assessment and follow-up of human settlements, their population, economy, services and housing is vital for achieving sustainable urban planning.

CURRENT PROJECTS

UN-Habitat is currently implementing or in the process of implementing the following projects while some of them are already incorporated into the 2013 – 2016 Country Programme Document (CPD).

Project Title	Donor	Duration	Objective
Peace Building in Darfur through Resource Management and Livelihood Support	Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund DSPCF	2013-2015	To improve environment for sustainable peace, through livelihood support and resource management.
Participatory and Gender-Balanced Urban and Regional Planning and Land Management in Blue Nile State	Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs	2013-2015	To improve the capacity of the government in order to better plan and manage urban settlements for better provision of services, integration of displaced people, improving access to basic services and sustainable livelihood for displaced people and recipient communities in Blue Nile State.
Institutional Capacity Development of Darfur on Urban and Regional Planning	USAID-OFDA	2011-2013	To develop the institutional capacity and expand the technical support provided to the State Ministries of Planning and Urban Development (MPUDs), with particular focus on urban and regional planning and land management. Preparation of a regional spatial strategy for reintegration of IDPs in Darfur providing guidance to the government authorities and the local leaders for supporting decision making on where to invest and carry out the reconstruction process.
Slum Upgrading and Sustainable Housing Development Project in Sakali Settlement, Nyala, South Darfur and Dorti Settlement, El Geneina, West Darfur	UNHCR	2010-2013	To improve land administration capacity by allocation of 2,000 for IDP families and empower communities to coordinate production of Stabilized Soil Blocks (SSB) and housing and public facilities construction. To improve housing for 150 vulnerable IDP households with secure land tenure built through self-help mechanisms using environmental friendly and low-cost construction technology.

PIPELINE PROJECTS

Project Title	Donor	Duration	Objective
Strengthening land Management for peaceful co-existence in Darfur In partnership with UNDP and FAO	UN Darfur Fund	2015 - 2017	Improve nomadic corridors management and related mechanisms for conflict resolution.
			Improve access to planned land resources in major human settlements of Darfur.
			Improve land use planning to foster peaceful co-existence in Darfur.
Improved construction of Public Administrative Buildings/Facilities and Housing for Vulnerable Families in Poor Urban Settings and Return Sites	UN Darfur Fund	2015 - 2017	Returnees and low-income families have access to improved building material technology and basic services facilities through community based Stabilized Soil Block productions, self-help housing construction
Upgrading and Rehabilitating Hospitals, Health Facilities and Basic Health Services in Return Sites	UN Darfur Fund	2015 - 2017	Increased access to and utilization of comprehensive health and nutrition services.
			Basic services are provided in return sites.
Promote Peace Building and Stability in the Blue Nile State	Government of Norway	2015 - 2017	The main purpose of this proposed project is to ensure that the targeted population of IDPs and vulnerable families and groups in the ad-Damazine locality are able to meet their essential needs in a sustainable manner.



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