Beyond Child Welfare:
From Protection to Well-Being

Childhood Policy Gaps in Sudan: *An Analysis* (2010—2018)

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Efforts to strengthen childhood protection and development systems in Sudan have intensified over the past decade, with the adoption of multiple legislative frameworks and national strategies aligned with international child rights commitments. During the period under review (2010–2018), Sudan undertook a range of policy initiatives addressing violence against children, parental care, and the protection of children in vulnerable situations, including those living on the streets or affected by displacement.

While these efforts reflect an expanding normative commitment to the protection and development of children, they also highlight a persistent challenge observed across decentralized governance environments: the existence of formal policy frameworks does not necessarily translate into effective operationalization at sub-national and community levels. In several instances, policy adoption has outpaced the institutional, financial, and coordination capacities required for consistent service delivery, resulting in implementation gaps that affect the accessibility, quality, and sustainability of child-related interventions.

This Policy Gap Analysis examines the extent to which childhood protection and development commitments adopted between 2010 and 2018 have been integrated into governance systems and translated into operational practice across federal, state, and locality levels. Rather than focusing solely on the presence of legislative and strategic instruments, the analysis considers the broader structural conditions that shape implementation feasibility, including demographic pressures, fiscal constraints, institutional coordination, and exposure to socio-economic risk factors such as poverty, conflict, and displacement.

The study further explores the relationship between policy coherence and implementation capacity, with particular attention to the ways in which decentralized administrative arrangements, limited monitoring mechanisms, and fragmented service delivery pathways may affect the realization of child rights commitments. Special consideration is given to protection risks associated with harmful practices such as female genital mutilation and child marriage, as well as the structural determinants that contribute to their persistence in specific socio-economic and geographic contexts.

By situating childhood policy commitments within the institutional and operational environments in which they are implemented, this study seeks to identify areas of divergence between policy intent and service delivery outcomes. The findings aim to inform future policy reform efforts by supporting a transition from welfare-oriented service provision toward a more coherent, rights-based governance framework capable of addressing the interconnected protection, development, and participation needs of children.

It is our expectation that the evidence and analysis presented in this study will contribute to ongoing national dialogue on childhood policy reform and strengthen the alignment between legal frameworks, institutional mandates, and implementation practices across Sudan's governance levels.

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1. Introduction

Childhood policy constitutes a foundational pillar for social development, human capital formation, and long-term societal resilience. The early years of life, as well as the transitional phases that follow, are particularly sensitive to the quality, coherence, and inclusiveness of policy frameworks governing care, protection, health, and education. Where such frameworks are fragmented or inconsistently implemented, the consequences extend beyond individual children to affect broader patterns of inequality, social cohesion, and economic potential.

In Sudan, the period between 2010 and 2018 was marked by enduring structural challenges that shaped governance systems and public service delivery. These challenges were reflected in the childhood sector, where multiple laws, strategies, and institutional arrangements existed, yet often operated in isolation from one another. While formal policy commitments to child welfare and protection were present, their translation into effective, coordinated, and equitable practice remained uneven across regions and levels of governance. This disjunction between policy intent and lived reality underscores the need for a systematic examination of childhood policy gaps within their broader institutional and societal context.

Childhood-related policies during this period were embedded within a multi-layered governance environment. At the national level, legislative and policy instruments addressed various aspects of childhood, including education, health, protection, and social welfare. At sub-national and community levels, however, implementation was shaped by institutional capacity, local governance arrangements, traditional practices, and social norms. Community-based mechanisms often played a decisive role in mediating access to services and interpreting policy provisions, particularly in areas where state presence was limited or uneven.

A recurring challenge within this policy landscape was the absence of a comprehensive and integrated approach to childhood development. Policy frameworks tended to address discrete sectors rather than childhood as a continuous and interconnected process. Transitional stages, especially the period between early childhood care and entry into formal education. were insufficiently covered by universal policy mechanisms. As a result, children's access to care, protection, and developmental support varied significantly depending on geographic location, socio-economic status, and the availability of informal or community-based arrangements.

Compounding these structural gaps was a lack of clarity regarding policy interfaces and stakeholder roles. Overlapping mandates, fragmented coordination mechanisms, and differing interpretations of policy objectives contributed to delays in consensus building and weakened accountability. In many instances, stakeholders operating at different levels of the system did not share a common understanding of the scope, priorities, or operational pathways of childhood

policies. These dynamics limited the effectiveness of existing frameworks and constrained opportunities for meaningful reform.

Against this backdrop, this study undertakes a policy gap analysis of childhood-related policies and practices in Sudan during the period 2010–2018. The purpose of the study is to identify and analyze structural, institutional, and regulatory gaps that may have impeded the realization of child rights and increased childhood vulnerability. By examining both governmental policy frameworks and community-level practices, the study seeks to clarify how policies functioned in practice, where disconnects emerged, and why certain policy objectives remained unmet.

The study does not aim to evaluate individual programs or measure outcomes quantitatively. Rather, it focuses on the coherence, alignment, and governance logic of childhood policy systems. In doing so, it contributes to a deeper understanding of how policy design, institutional arrangements, and stakeholder interactions shape childhood outcomes in complex and transitional contexts.

2.   Methodological Framework: Policy Gap Analysis

This research adopts a qualitative policy gap analysis framework to examine childhood policy systems in Sudan between 2010 and 2018. Policy gaps are conceptualized broadly to include not only the absence of formal policies, but also inconsistencies between policy intent and implementation, ambiguities in institutional mandates, weak coordination mechanisms, and regulatory provisions that inadequately address critical stages of childhood development.

The analysis proceeds through a structured review of national laws, policy documents, strategic frameworks, and institutional guidelines relevant to childhood. These materials are examined to map policy objectives, delineate responsibilities, and identify intended coordination mechanisms across sectors such as education, health, child protection, and social welfare. Particular attention is given to how policies addressed continuity across childhood stages and how responsibilities were distributed between national and sub-national levels.

In parallel, the analysis considers how policies were operationalized in practice. Rather than treating policy implementation as a purely technical process, the study examines governance dynamics, institutional capacity, and contextual factors that shaped policy outcomes. This includes assessing how formal frameworks interacted with community-level practices and informal arrangements, especially in contexts where state provision was limited.

3.   Stakeholder Perspective within the Policy Gap Analysis

As an integral component of the policy gap analysis framework, the study incorporates a stakeholder perspective to contextualize policy design and implementation. Childhood policy operates within a complex ecosystem involving multiple actors whose roles, expectations, and interactions influence policy effectiveness.

Stakeholders considered in the analysis include governmental institutions responsible for policy formulation and oversight, sub-national authorities involved in implementation, community structures and traditional mechanisms of care, civil society organizations engaged in child-related

sectors, and families as primary caregivers. These actors represent both duty bearers and rights holders whose engagement is essential to the functioning of childhood policy systems.

The stakeholder perspective adopted in this study is analytical and retrospective, drawing on documented institutional mandates, policy texts, and secondary literature. It examines how stakeholder roles were defined, how coordination was intended to occur, and where gaps or ambiguities emerged. Differences in stakeholder understanding of policy objectives and interfaces are analyzed as contributing factors to fragmented implementation and weak policy coherence.

By integrating stakeholder analysis into the policy gap framework, the study highlights governance challenges that extend beyond technical policy design. It underscores how power relations, communication channels, and institutional hierarchies shaped childhood policy outcomes during the study period. This approach enables a more nuanced identification of policy gaps as governance and coordination challenges, rather than solely as regulatory deficiencies.

4. Data Sources and Analytical Process

The study draws on a range of qualitative data sources, including national policy documents, legal texts, strategic plans, institutional guidelines, and secondary academic and policy literature related to childhood in Sudan. These sources are triangulated to enhance analytical rigor and to capture both formal policy intent and observed patterns of implementation.

The analytical process involves mapping existing childhood policy frameworks, identifying areas of overlap or omission, and assessing how policies addressed key developmental stages and transitions. The study also examines the clarity of policy interfaces, the distribution of responsibilities among stakeholders, and the institutional mechanisms available for coordination and accountability.

Rather than producing prescriptive recommendations, the analysis seeks to generate insights into the structural and governance dynamics that shaped childhood policy outcomes during the study period. This reflective approach aligns with the study's objective of informing evidence-based dialogue on policy reform and institutional alignment.

By combining a qualitative policy gap analysis framework with a stakeholder-informed perspective, this study offers a comprehensive examination of childhood policy systems in Sudan between 2010 and 2018. The integrated approach situates policy gaps within their broader institutional, social, and governance contexts, providing a nuanced understanding of why certain policy objectives remained unrealized.

The findings are intended to support informed discussion among researchers, policymakers, and practitioners concerned with childhood development and protection. By illuminating the structural and coordination challenges embedded within childhood policy systems, the study contributes to ongoing efforts to strengthen policy coherence, governance, and accountability in contexts facing complex developmental challenges.

Part Two: Public Policies Trends

1. Conceptual Looks

The field of studies of public policies has witnessed marked developments during the last quarter of the past century. These developments have manifested in the emergence and formation of modern trends in studying the modern systems of public policies. These developments have oscillated around several of the main theoretical and systematic concepts and frameworks including political pluralism, democratic transformation, civil society and its relationship with the State, the political economics, politics and public policies, the world order and international transformations.

The definition and study of the general problem are addressed in sociology, politics and history, all of which are related to the basis and criteria of making choices which are subjects discussed by philosophy, economics and the theories of politics. The models and patterns of research in the casual connections or the link between public policies and the effects that result on their execution are wide-interest concern subjects concerning natural and social sciences. Likewise, the models and approaches of decision-making, system analysis, system engineering and the political and economic feasibility studies of specific public policy are researched by the political sciences, public administration, sociology and humanities. Moreover, theology and ethical sciences have a significant role in that field[1].

Public policy analysis gains significance as a subjective scientific approach that facilitates the study and understanding of the general problems and the alternative policies to solve such problems and in deciding on those alternatives that achieve maximum benefits for society. The public policy analysis means adhering to a structured subjective scientific approach that relies on the use of logic, argument and evidence to settle on a public policy that is likely to achieve the maximum degree possible of success in solving the public problem. The analysis is a tool that provides the decision-maker with a set of ideas and principles that facilitate making intelligible decisions that preserve values and ethics. It could be inferred from the definition that public policy analysis is a science and an approach or a scientific introduction with certain features. It is an applied sociological science i.e. it is partially a sociological science that relies on the disciplines of sociological sciences and quotes a lot from the ideas, approaches and procedures of research and analysis that pertain thereto. It relates to political and sociological sciences, public administration and ethics in addition to system analysis and applied mathematics[2].

Much like the traditional sociological sciences, public policy analysis builds on the using the descriptive study. However, although they are similar in several features, differences exist between the public policy analysis from one side, and the sociological sciences from another. Sociological sciences are usually content with trying to produce and test broad theories, which explain certain sociological phenomenon that are in turn verifiable by scientific evidence. They rely on measurable information and facts; and either exclude or prove the variables that could not be

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[1] Muna Jalal Awad. (2009). Vocabulary of the Public Policies: A New Methodology in the Study of Political Systems. Political Sciences Journal, (20), No. 38/39(s), pp. 390–393

[2] Weimer, D. L., & Vining, A. R. (2017). Policy Analysis: Concepts and Practice (6th ed.). Routledge, pp. 23–28.

evaluated. Consequently, they exclude the values that could not be estimated or counted for. On the other hand, the public policy analysis reconnects the facts with the values in research and studies. It is also used in preparing the recommendations that assist the officials in making the proper decisions by choosing certain public policies for solving the general problems that face them. The objective of the public policy analysis is not to formulate a broad theory that explains social phenomenon. Rather, it is to suggest scientific solutions for real problems if such solutions are politically acceptable by those in charge of formulating public policy as well as being socially acceptable to the success of the respective policies in solving the problem and creating widespread satisfaction. Both objectives necessitate that the suggested solutions should agree with the values and traditions of the society[3].

By its definition, the public policy is a government attempt to solve only the tertiary level of the problems, i.e. the general problems. It does not describe public policies for solving special and social problems. This is so even if solving such problems requires governmental intervention taking into consideration the fact that its importance and effects are limited to those groups targeted by public policy. Hence, the public policy is a remedy taken by the government or intends to take with the objective of solving general problems that affect society.

However, the extent, quality and depth of these developments are ever increasing. The increase is directly proportional to the populations and ambitions of the political State. The development that covers all aspects of life reached a significant level, especially in the second half of the 20th century, the matter which created many problems for international societies. These problems impose themselves and require the government to solve them[4].

A key cause of this deficiency is the ever-increasing sophistication of human societies that results due to multiple elements. Probably the most important of these are four types of interconnected and interdependent increasing pressures. These are:

1) Demographic pressures resulting from the ongoing increase of population

2) Ambition pressures demonstrated in the ongoing increase in the demands of individuals and groups

3) Economic pressures resulting from the limitations of the resources of the international societies

4) Political and military pressures that seek to achieve the ambitions of their people

All this represents a significant feature enjoyed with varying degrees by different countries. The large expansion in government activities in the modern era results from problems that confront the society and require a government intervention to solve them. These problems could be in one of the following forms:

1) Conflict of interests

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  United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), West Asia Office. (1999). Al-Kashif on Gender and Development, A.H. (2000). Empowering employees: An introduction to continuous improvement and development, Arab Organization for Administrative Development, pp. 10.

2) Economic exploitation

3) Misappropriation of resources

4) Lack of equity

5) The rights to education, health, housing and protection both internally and externally in society and within the family.[5]

The approach we observe for these demands and solving of these problems is by issuing decisions of public policies. This shows that the public policies deal with all spheres of life such as defence, international relations, health and social welfare. Each of these spheres represents a problem that the members of the society could not solve.

2. Characteristics of the Research Concerns in Childhood Issues in Sudan

Based on the materials accessible to the researcher, the available body of literature on childhood and youth issues in Sudan since the early 1990s reflects sustained but uneven academic engagement. Childhood has attracted notable scholarly attention, particularly within academic conferences and research forums, suggesting recognition of its social and developmental importance. However, this engagement appears to have fluctuated over time, with periods of heightened interest rather than steady accumulation. The accessible literature remains dispersed across conference papers, individual academic studies, and institutional reports, indicating a fragmented research landscape shaped by availability and access rather than by a unified research agenda.

A thematic review of the accessible studies reveals clear patterns in research focus. An estimated half of the reviewed literature addresses childhood within broader discussions of economy, poverty, and social structures, adopting a holistic perspective that links children's conditions to wider societal dynamics. Studies focusing on health and child poverty each represent a significant but smaller share of the available research, estimated at around one-seventh of the reviewed studies. Research on protection mechanisms accounts for a more limited portion, estimated at less than one-tenth, while studies explicitly addressing rural childhood, urban childhood, education, and social welfare appear sporadically, each constituting only a small fraction of the accessible literature. Development-oriented perspectives are the least represented, indicating limited attention to long-term childhood development within the reviewed sources. These percentages should be understood as indicative estimates derived from accessible materials rather than precise measurements of the full research field.

Methodologically, the literature available to the researcher is dominated by qualitative studies, emphasizing descriptive, analytical, and interpretive approaches to childhood conditions, policies, and social practices. Such studies often explore institutional frameworks, community contexts, normative dimensions of childhood, and the social meanings attached to protection, welfare, and care. Much of this body of work prioritizes narrative analysis, policy review, and contextual interpretation over systematic measurement.

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[5] Awad, Vocabulary of the Public Policies, pp. 392.

By contrast, quantitative and empirically driven studies,those relying on large-scale surveys, longitudinal data, statistical modeling, or structured fieldwork, appear less frequently within the accessible body of literature. Where quantitative data are present, they are often used illustratively rather than as the primary basis for analysis or theory building. This imbalance suggests that while childhood issues in Sudan have been widely discussed at a conceptual and analytical level, they have been less consistently examined through rigorous empirical measurement and comparative assessment.

Moreover, limited integration between qualitative insights and quantitative evidence constrains the ability to assess policy effectiveness, track changes over time, or evaluate outcomes across different regions and population groups. As a result, important questions related to policy implementation, institutional capacity, and lived outcomes for children remain insufficiently addressed.

Overall, the reviewed literature provides valuable insights into childhood issues in Sudan, while simultaneously revealing significant thematic and methodological gaps that warrant further, more balanced, and interdisciplinary research. This assessment remains bounded by what was accessible to the researcher and does not claim to represent the entirety of existing studies, particularly those unpublished, locally produced, or institutionally restricted.

Part Three: Country Characteristic and Features

1. Country Profile

As part of the structured approach to policy gap analysis, a range of case studies were used to identify key characteristics or attributes of interest for policy formulation, with an emphasis on how those features could be of interest in the case of the Sudan. It is important to note that the case study contexts are not in any way considered to be analogous to the situation in the Sudan. Rather, the case studies are analyzed to extract technical building blocks that can then be used to configure options more suited to the Sudanese context.

Sudan has a total area of 1882,000 km 2 with 18 states, which is the third largest country in Africa and the 20 largest countries in the world. Sudan is located in the north-eastern part of the African continent between the widths of 845 ° C to 22.8 ° north of the equator and the longitude of 21.49 ° to 38.34 ° east, and its maritime border on the Red Sea coast 853 km and Sudan, bordered by seven countries are Egypt and Libya to the north, In the east and south-east are Eritrea, Ethiopia, southern Sudan and the west and south-west Chad and Central Africa.

By virtue of its position as a trade and cultural hub between North and South Africa until the middle of the last century, Sudan served as an important conduit for pilgrims and commerce from West Africa to the Holy Land and East Africa. According to Worldometer's historical demographic data for Sudan, based on estimations from the United Nations Population Division, Sudan's total population in 2018 was approximately 44.23 million, and the gender distribution was nearly balanced between women and men.[6]

Figure 1 Total population
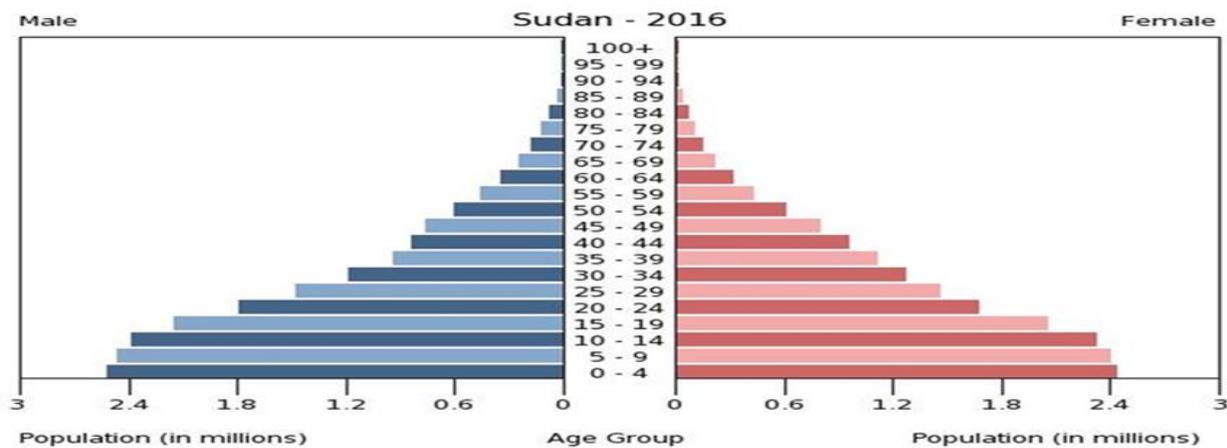
[6] Worldometer. (2018). Sudan historical population. Retrieved from https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/sudan-population/?utm_source=chatgpt.com

Figure 2 Population growth

Legend: ■ Population, total ■ Urban population ■ Rural population
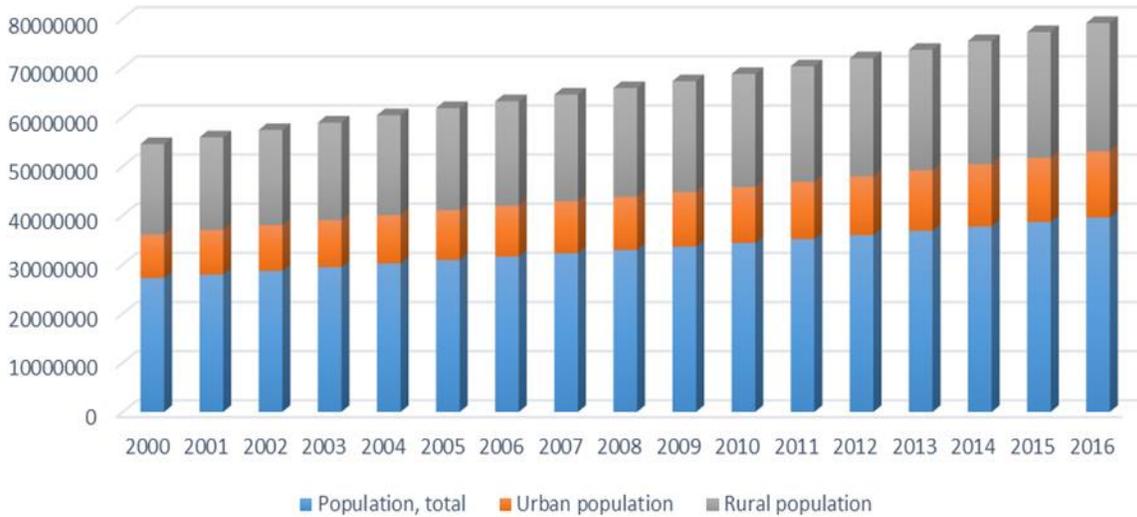
Source: World Bank

The Sudan is a country of significant geographical, cultural, and ethnic diversity. While diversity is not inherently negative – and can be positive – problems can emerge when political interests arising from this diversity are not accommodated. Decentralization in Sudan during the 1990s in a federal government system with three tiers: federal, state and locality levels. The election processed for leaders, greater in policies formulation and programs at the local level and the local government level. Successive Sudanese governments have failed to effectively design and implement governance arrangements that can manage the country's diversity through accommodating political interests and perspectives or through other means. Communities in all parts of the Sudan have at different times called for changes to governance arrangements to better account for the country's diversity. At the time of writing, governance reform to better reflect diversity is at the heart of the demands made by opposition movements and groups in the south and western Sudan. For example, some communities in Southern Kordofan have persistently called for governance arrangements that ensure respect for their cultural and linguistic rights.

Figure 3: States characteristic features
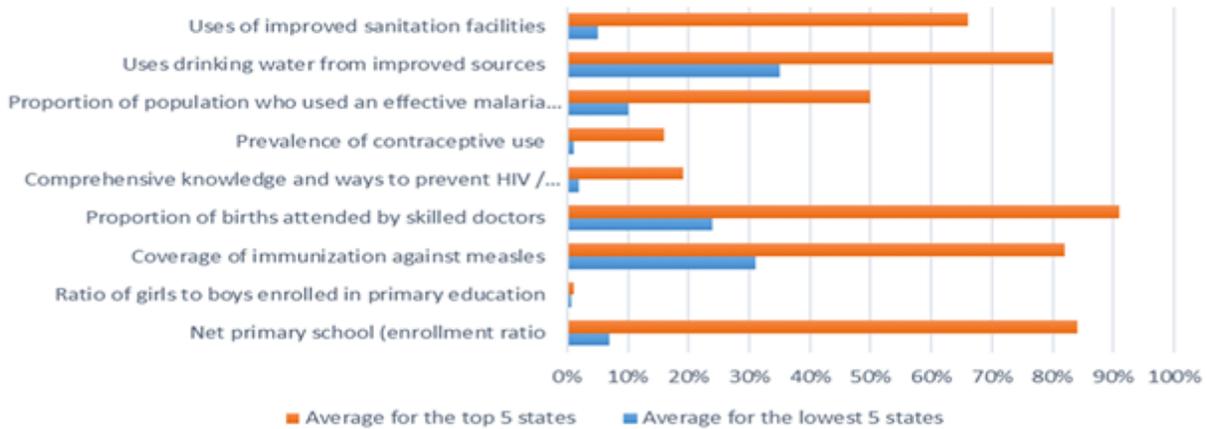
Source: Central Bank of Sudan

During the period 2008-2010, real GDP growth averaged 5.4%, compared with a growth rate of 2.8% in 2011. Real GDP was projected to contract by 7.35% in 2012. The falling oil revenue also contributed to a slight deterioration in the fiscal deficit of 3.1% of GDP in 2010, to 4.3% in 2011, and was projected to decline further to 8.6% of GDP in 2012. Similarly, the current account deficit of 7.5% of GDP in 2011 was projected to deteriorate further, with a deficit of 8.6% of GDP projected for 2012[7].

Table 1: indicators of the Sudanese economy (2012 - 2016)

	Monetary unit or ratio	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016 estimated
Gross domestic product at current prices	Billion pounds	243.4	294.6	471	583	698
Growth rate of GDP	percent	1.4	3.6	2.7	4.9	4.9
Average inflation rate	percent	35.1	37.1	25.7	17.6	15.7
Money supply growth rate	percent	38	21	17	20.5	20.1
Total public expenditure	Billion pounds	29.8	40.7	51.9	61.5	69.1
Ratio of public expenditure to GDP	percent	12.2	13.8	11	10.5	10
Total Budget Deficit	Billion pounds	-7.6	-6.5	-4.4	-6.9	-13.6
Trade Balance	Billion Dollars	-4	-1.6	-3.6	-6.2	-4.2
Export	Billion Dollars	4	7.1	4.5	3.2	2.9
Import	Billion Dollars	8	8.7	8.1	9.4	7.1

Source: Reports of the Ministry of Finance and the Central Bank of Sudan

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[7] World Bank. (2015). Sudan: Country brief. World Bank Group

Following the collapse of the negotiations over the post-CPA arrangements for oil transit, South Sudan's government announced the shutdown of its oil production on January 20, 2012. The situation has afterwards further escalated both politically and militarily, and is seriously affecting economic activities in both countries, which are heavily relying on oil revenues. While the dialogue between the two sides resumed shortly after the oil production shutdown, the prospects of the long-protracted negotiation are highly uncertain considering the wide disagreement over oil between two sides: Sudan reportedly demanded US$ 36 per barrel for a mix of fees over the use of pipeline, the port and other services while South Sudan's offer remained under one dollar per barrel along with around US$ 5 third-party fees. Furthermore, rising military tensions surrounding border states, in particular the recent conflict surrounding the oil-rich town of Heglig, South Kordofan State, is adding to the uncertainty over the prospect of oil production and economic stability of the two neighboring countries[8].

Figure 4 Economic indicators 2010-2016
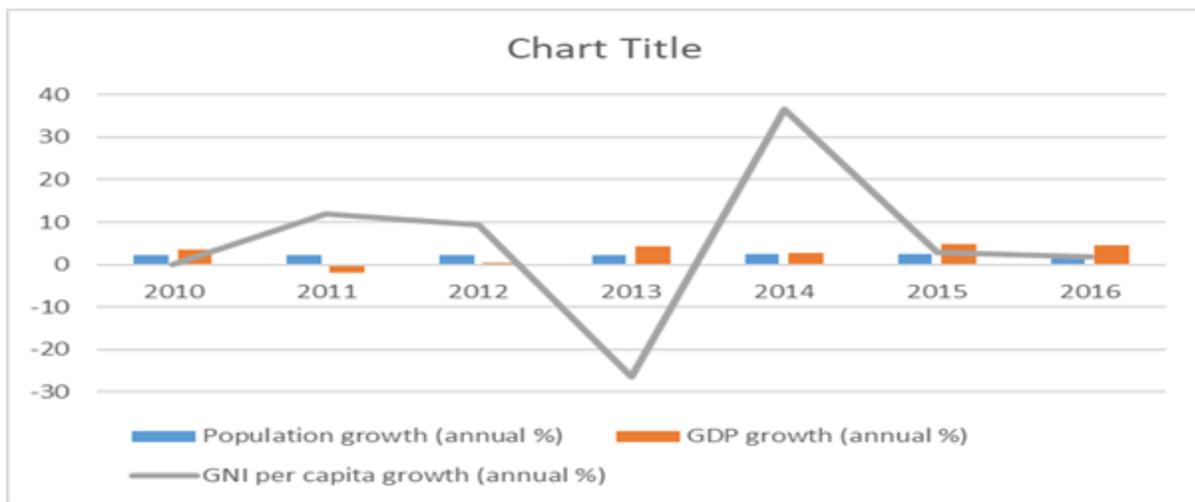
Source: World Bank

With the federal and sub-national revenue system of tax administrative revenue collection and coordination Sudan's pro-poor spending is 5.4 % of the GDP and just 1.3 % of its GDP on education (2016) and 9 % on health (2016).

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[8] World Bank. (2012). Sudan Country Economic Brief (Issue No. 2012). World Bank Group

Figure 5: Economic indicators 2016

Poverty in Sudan is widespread and varies significantly across states, with 46.5 percent of the population living below the poverty line. Poverty rates are substantially lower in urban centers (26–32 percent) compared to rural and remote areas, where they range between 58 and 69 percent [9].The Global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) is an international measure of acute poverty covering more than 100 developing countries. It complements income-based poverty measures by capturing multiple deprivations experienced simultaneously at the household level across health, education, and living standards. The MPI employs ten indicators across three dimensions and allows for cross-country comparison, including Sudan's ranking among Sub-Saharan African countries (IDB & OPHI, 2016) [10].

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[9] World Bank. (2014). Sudan poverty profile: Synthesis report. World Bank Group

[10] Islamic Development Bank Group & Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI). (2016). Multidimensional poverty assessment in IDB Sub-Saharan African member countries. Group Chief Economist Complex, Islamic Development Bank, pp. 15–18.

Figure 6: Proportion of Multidimensionally Poor Population (H) in Selected OIC Countries (2016)
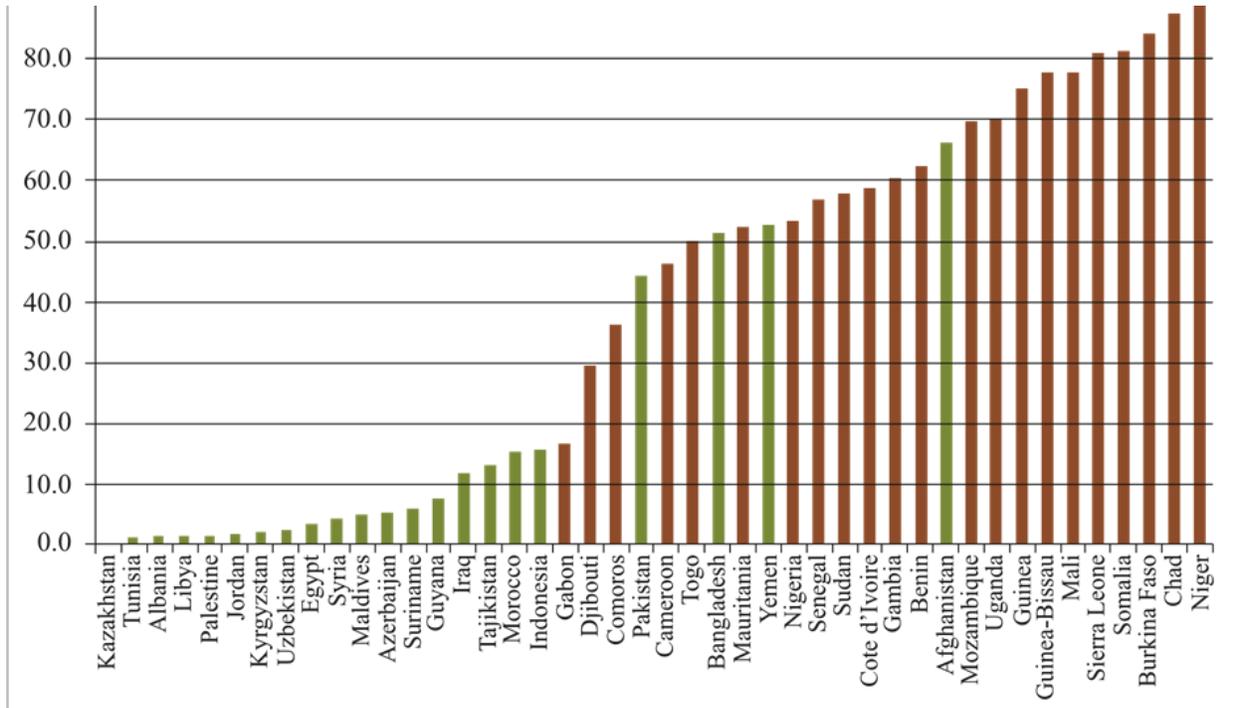
Source: Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI)

2. Public framework

For many years, Sudan has sought to establish national development programs with the objective of achieving the well-being of all demographic groups and hence, to focus all government-supervised sector developmental and policy plans on the most vulnerable groups especially women, the disabled and children.

In this context, several activities that aim at ensuring the well-being of children particularly in the domains of health; educational and growth, have been implemented. However, the various implemented programs so far have not been executed on a sector basis whereas the issues of development, welfare and integrated child protection issues necessitate putting in place a holistic approach that respond to the physical, psychological, social and cognitive needs of children.

This makes it necessary for the intervention to focus primarily on the children themselves not and on the social activity, methods of welfare or the established educational system that. At a second level, the intervention should focus on the parents who shape the primary circle of the child's care and protection. This means that growth and development should be viewed as a chain of processes of learning and activity that enables the children to become aware of their surroundings and

themselves, and make the parents realize the integral value of the approach for the development of the child.

According to this approach, the systematic connection of the public policies in the development of children would make it possible to achieve harmonized child growth. Therefore, this systematic connection is an effective tool to encircle the children' problems and consequently the problems of the future populations as the children of today are the forefront of tomorrow. Moreover, it participates in executing the State's quarterly plan and the national policy of sustained development –that is based on this approach- in achieving the developmental objectives of the millennium.

In other words, the justifications for unifying the vision of the children' public policies are several and varied including the following:

1) *Demographic*: this is because the age group 0-14 represents almost one third of the population and hence any investment supportive of this group would be a direct intervention in their favor. As well, it would be a long-term intervention in favor of the adults too.

2) *Scientific*: 80% of the child brain development occurs in the first years. Consequently, the child is in dire need of the maximum amount of psychological and social stimulants to ensure his/her psychological, social, physical and cognitive growth. This stress the vital role played by the parents and families in this regard.

3) *Educational*: this is because the studies have indicated that giving proper pre-school care to children and orderly enrolment in the basic schools are the best means for their growth. This would have a positive role that reflects in decreased costs in the basic education and limiting significantly the sneaking out of school.

4) *Political*: only the adequacies of a certain country would allow them to catch up with the developed countries. Early acquisition of these adequacies is an additional guarantee for success.

5) *Economic*: investing in childhood is a means for improving productivity in the key sectors. It is also an effective tool to limit the cost of living at a later stage. Furthermore, it contributes significantly in fighting family poverty.

6) *Social*: intervening early as such leads to abolishing the differences between the various groups of the populations and as a result, participates in achieving more equity and justice in tomorrow's society.

In addition, the strong will of the government should form an encouraging element in the preparation and execution of a national policy that works in favour of the child. Among the opportunities availed to the development of children in Sudan.

3. Child situations in Sudan

Half of Sudan's population is made up of children; approximately 15 million Sudanese are under the age of 18. However, mortality claims one child in every 30 during the first 28 days of life;

more than one child in every 13 dies before his or her fifth birthday. Not all children will live a normal peaceful life; in some states, many children are likely to suffer from a shortage of food, the effects of armed conflict and drought, and limited access to basic services, such as schools. Their future is shaped by factors beyond their control: rising food prices, increasing urbanization, climate change and physical and emotional traumas caused by conflict and malnutrition.

Children in Sudan come from a wide range of tribal, religious, climatic, and socio-economic backgrounds. Whether they live in rural areas or urban centres, children face similar daily struggles to survive let alone thrive amid challenges that are both natural and human-made.[11]

Figure 7: the projections of the Central Statistical Organization for the period (2012 - 2016)
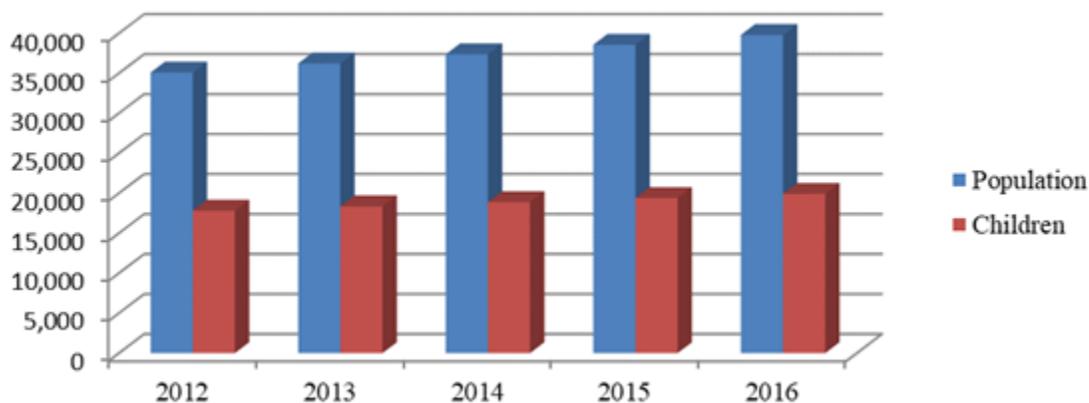
Source: Reports of the Central Bureau of Statistic

ranked 167th out of 188 countries and territories in the 2015 Human Development Index. Approximately 46.6 percent of the population lives below the poverty line, with rural areas being the most affected. Children are disproportionately impacted by poverty, as 74.7 percent of children aged 5 to 17 experience multidimensional child poverty.[12], Historically, studies on violence against children in Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries have emphasized individual psychological factors as key explanatory variables (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2009; UNICEF, 2016; UNDP, 2015) [13]. The pendulum swung in the1960s to highlight structural forces contributing to the abuse and neglect of children, in particular poverty and unemployment. In Sudan, the high child malnutrition is a key development challenge for Sudan: malnourished children are at a risk of life-long physical and cognitive impairment, resulting in poor educational outcomes and girls run the risk.

The Sudan multiple indicator cluster survey 2014 (MICS) indicates that children experience widespread violence, with 64 percent of children aged 1-14 years being victims of violent discipline, equally divided between psychological and physical violence which cuts across socio-

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[11] United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). (2013). Progress for children. UNICEF
[12] United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). (2015). Human development report 2015: Work for human development. UNDP
[13] Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS). (2009). National baseline household survey. Government of Sudan.

economic status, gender and geographical areas. These are not, therefore, residual, small-scale problems that can be dealt with by national child protection systems (formal and informal) alone. It is also likely that these systems underestimate the scale of the problem. The sensitivity of these issues, and the fact that many of them have unarticulated and felt coordination structures, that means they are highly likely to be underreported[14].

Figure 8: MICS 2014
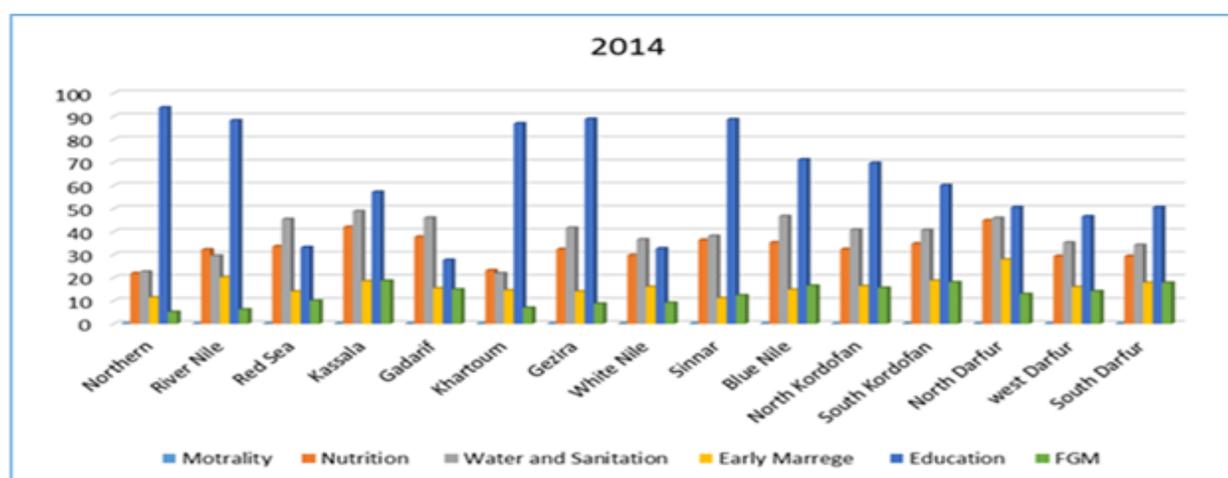
Source: Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) [Sudan] & United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

Sudan's pro-poor spending has increased from 4.6 percent of the GDP in 2012 to 5.4 percent in 2014, and from 32 percent of the public expenditure to over 45 percent during the same period. In spite of this increase, the quality of such spending has been poor, with the budget allocated predominantly on recurrent costs. For example, 94 percent of government expenditure on basic education is spent on salaries. Sudan spends just 1.3 percent of its GDP on education (2016) and 1.8 percent on health (2014). The launch of the Sudan Nutrition Investment Case as well as the National Reproductive, Neonatal, Maternal and Child Health Strategy in 2016 are important opportunities for strengthening national investment in the social sectors[15].

Table 2: The total expenditure on the social welfare, health and education sector (2012-2016)

	2012	2013	2014	2015
health sector	239.7	374	536	1,190
Education Sector	111	140	227	244
Welfare and social security	3,344.70	4,281.60	5,618.40	6,425
total	3,695.40	4,795.60	6,381.40	7,859

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[14] Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) [Sudan] & United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). (2016). Sudan Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2014: Final report. CBS and UNICEF

[15] World Bank: (May 2014) "Sudan, State-level Public Expenditure Review, Meeting the Challenges of Poverty Reduction and Basic Service Delivery", Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Unit Africa Region, the World Bank, Report No. ACS880, 3.

expenditure Total public budget	29,800	40,700	51,900	61,500
of the mentioned Percentage of disbursement sectors to total budget disbursement	12.40%	11.90%	12.20%	12.80%

Source: Federal Ministry of Finance

Figure 9: The comparison of the three sectors 2012-2016
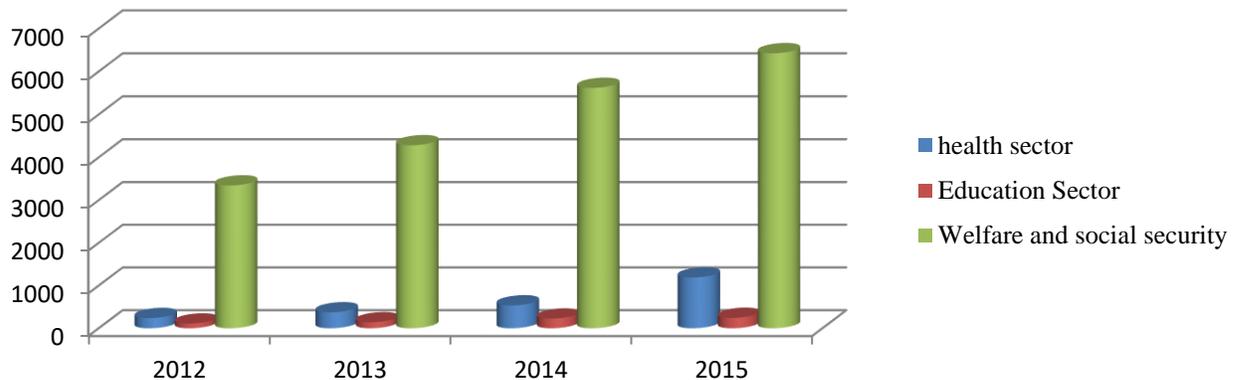
Source: Preparation of the researcher based on the annual reports of the ministries

Sudan faces key humanitarian challenges triggered by armed conflicts, including inter-tribal conflicts as well as climatic conditions, and chronic underdevelopment. Children are affected by cyclical floods, droughts, epidemic outbreaks and crisis levels of food insecurity and malnutrition. Six years since the secession of South Sudan in July 2011, there are still the unresolved situation in Abyei, and the on-going conflict in Blue Nile, South Kordofan, and Jebel Marra. In 2016 about 97,000 people were displaced from Jabal Marra area of Darfur. The 1.1. million internally displaced children in Sudan continue to live in a largely protracted context and are deprived of opportunities to thrive and reach their full potential. In addition to the displaced, the ongoing conflict in South Sudan and the famine declared in February 2017 have led to an estimated 379,692 refugee's influx in Sudan, 85 per cent of whom are women and children. Sudan also continues to be a host, origin and transit country for refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, including unaccompanied and separated children. [16]

Table 3: The expenditure on Children Education (Amounts in millions of pounds)

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Total expenditure	250	338	662	642	1,036
Spending on children	50	68	132	128	207

[16] Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) [Sudan] & Central Population Directorate (CPD). (2016). Population and displacement statistics. Government of Sudan

Around 3.1 million children aged 5-13 years are out of school, of whom 52% are girls and only 57% of Sudan's children aged 6-16 are attending school.

Only a third of the population have access to basic improved sanitation ,5.8 million people are still drinking from unimproved water sources 38,8 % in 2014, while the levels of acute malnutrition remain above threshold in 11 out of the 18 states. 15.1 % of children 6-23 months receive a minimum acceptable diet, 70 per 1,000 live births and neonatal mortality only 30 per 1,000 live[17].

Figure 10: Actual expenditure of the Ministry of Health (2012-2016) shows the amounts in millions of pounds
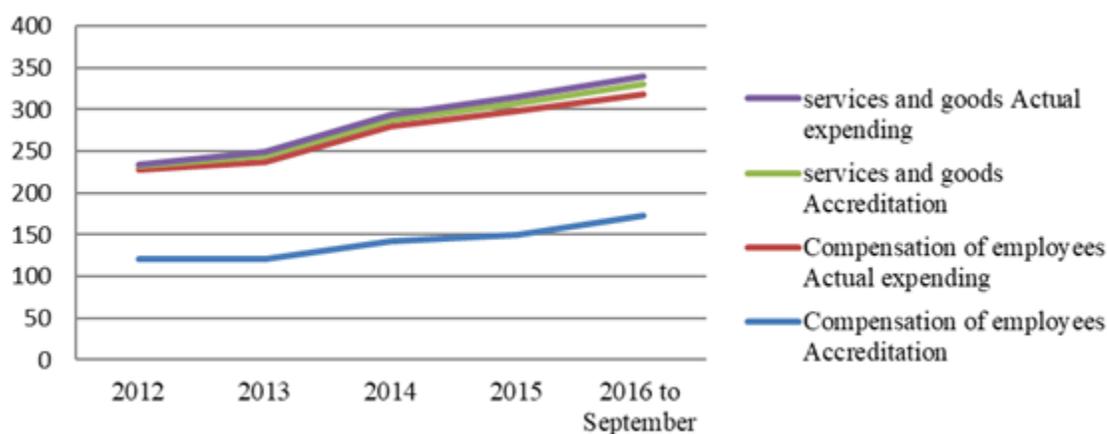
Only three out of four primary school age children are receiving a formal education (with almost two million children not attending class). Attendance is lowest in the East, where it ranges between 55 and 69 per cent for primary school. Despite laws requiring universal access to free education, costs associated with uniforms, school supplies, extracurricular lessons, informal compensation for teachers, and school maintenance prevent many children from attending school. Inadequate school facilities such as a lack of clean water latrines, a shortage of trained teachers and child-cantered methodology; and overcrowded classrooms, lack of parent's involvement in school governance and lacking sufficient seating, are among the factors standing in the way of education.

Retention also remains a major challenge. Data from the Second Sudan Household Survey (SHHS2) indicate that once children are enrolled in Grade 1, they have an 82 percent probability of reaching Grade 8, with substantial variation across income groups ranging from 65 percent among children in the poorest quintile to 94 percent among those in the wealthiest. Similarly, census data show that school attendance peaks at age 11 and then declines during adolescence, particularly among girls, as children are increasingly required to contribute to household

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[17] CPD, 2016

responsibilities. Completion rates are even lower according to other sources: only about 50 percent of children who enroll in Grade 1 successfully complete Grade 8 on time[18].

Figure 11: Actual disbursement Ministry of Education Federal (2012 - 2016 amounts in millions of pounds
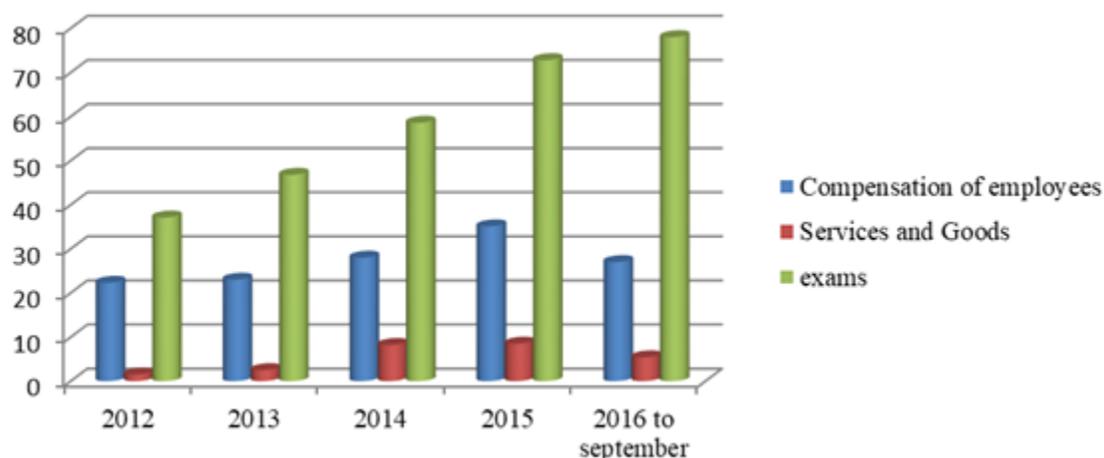
Source: Ministry of Education annual reports.

The loss of oil revenue coupled with rising prices of food and imports. Additional oil production, from Sudan's oil fields could help reduce the economic burden and revenues from gold mining are expected to help bridge the gap of the lost oil revenues.

The irregular agricultural production and the unstable economic situation are closely correlated with increasing poverty rates, as illustrated by the fact that the Darfur and Kordofan regions have the highest concentration of poverty, with 63 and 59 per cent of the population (close to five million and 2.6 million people respectively) living below the poverty line.

Children experience widespread violence, with 64 percent of children aged 1-14 years being victims of violent discipline, equally divided between psychological and physical violence which cuts across socio-economic status, gender and geographical areas. Girls in Sudan are at particular risk of gender-based violence, including traditional harmful practices such as child marriage and Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C). The existence of social norms that condone the continuation of harmful practices and violence against children are a key challenge for the protection and fulfilment of their rights. FGM/C remains highly prevalent, with 88 percent of women aged 15-49-year-old having undergone some form of FGM. Child marriage remains widely accepted and common, with 38 per cent of girls aged 20 to 49 married before age 18, while 12 percent were married before the age of 15[19].

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[18]World Bank. (2012). The status of the education sector in Sudan. World Bank, Washington, DC. The completion rate is lower according to other sources: only 50% of the children enrolled in grade 1 actually finish grade 8 successfully and on time, according "

[19] Sudan Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2014: Final report. CBS and UNICEF

Figure 12: The prevalence of violence against children per state 2016

Comparing Male To Female Victims

State	Female Witness (0-18)	Male Wintness (0-18)
Blue Nile	~15	~55
Central Darfur	~10	~30
East Darfur		
Gadarif	~10	~20
Gazira	~40	~85
Kassala		
Khartoum	~550	~500
North Darfur	~30	~65
North Kordofan		
Northern State	~30	~90
Red Sea	~10	~5
River Nile	~10	~20
Sennar		
South Darfur	~5	~10
South Kordofan	~2	~10
West Darfur	~10	~55
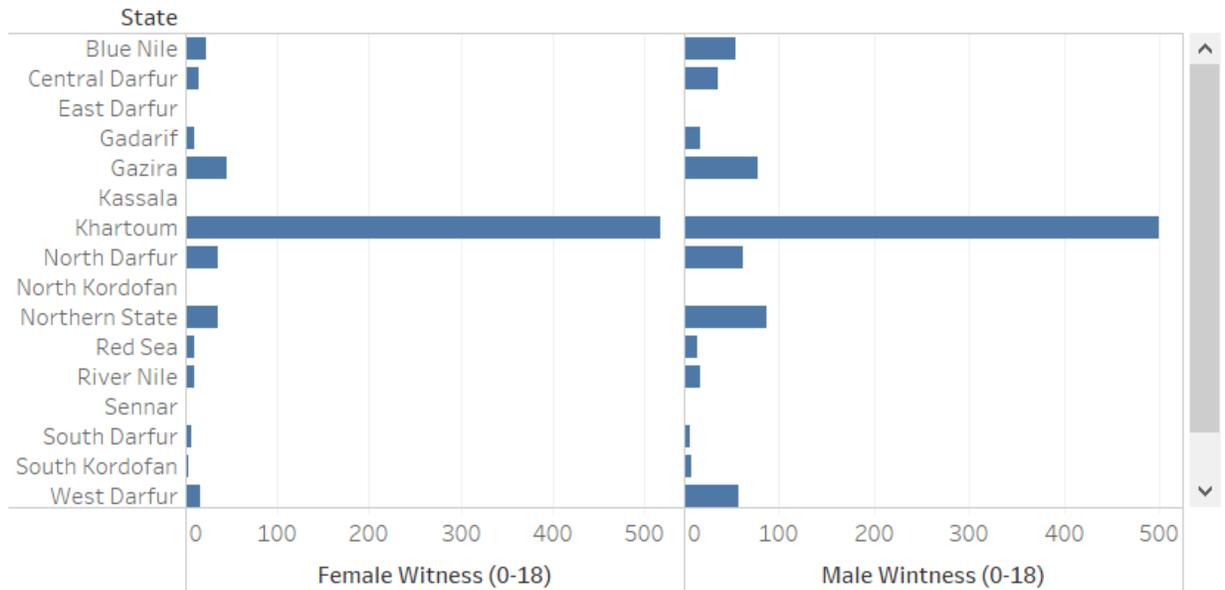
Source: Sudan, Family and Child Protection Unit (FCPU) 2016

Sudan, together with Sierra Leone, ranks seventh among countries worldwide in the practice of female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C). The national prevalence rate among women aged 15 to 49 is estimated at 88 percent. Within the country, prevalence varies considerably across regions and is closely linked to the customs of local ethnic groups. Data from the 2010 Sudan Household Health Survey (SHHS) reveal significant regional disparities, ranging from a prevalence rate of 99.4 percent in Northern State to 68.4 percent in Western Darfur[20].

Sudan is one of four focus countries of the joint programme with no national law prohibiting the three types of FGM/C or regulating medical and surgical procedures. Participants in the joint programme agreed from its inception that all forms of FGM/C should be banned by law. In Sudan, a national law existed since 1946 that criminalized the most severe type III (locally known as "pharaonic") form of FGM/C ("infibulation", or the removal of all external genitalia preceding the stitching or narrowing of the vaginal opening) but permitted type I (partial or total removal of the clitoris), locally known as the "Sunna" type. Attempts to enforce the 1946 law were extremely rare; and it was considered ineffective since it did not ban all forms of the practice, it was unenforceable and was not widely supported socially. In 1983, when Sharia law was introduced, the article prohibiting FGM/C was removed from the penal code[21].

Since then, there have been several attempts to criminalize all forms of FGM/C but none have been successful. The most significant recent setback occurred in 2009, when the Council of Ministers

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[20] United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) & United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). (2013). Evaluation of the joint UNFPA/UNICEF programme on female genital mutilation/cutting: Sudan country report. UNFPA and UNICEF

[21] UNFPA & UNICEF, 2013

decided to remove Article 13 of the 2009 Child Act, which would have prohibited FGM/C as a harmful practice and tradition affecting the health of children.

Despite the many community-level achievements of preventing the FGM recorded in joint programme and other INGOs including Plan International Sudan reports for Sudan focus on completed activities, evidence shows that FGM/C has remained established in Sudan. In the period 2004 – 2015, 87% of all girls and women aged 15 – 49 years had undergone FGM/C, for girls aged 0 to 14 years the Percentage is 32%, 2010–2015. More than 90% of girls in Northern Sudan are subjected to the most severe form of female genital mutilation. Furthermore, the Prevalence of (FGM/C) among women in 2014 is 97% for Northern, River Nile, North Darfur, and Central Darfur state as figure 12 shows[22].

Figure 13: Prevalence of FGMC among women and girls - Percent, 2014 by State
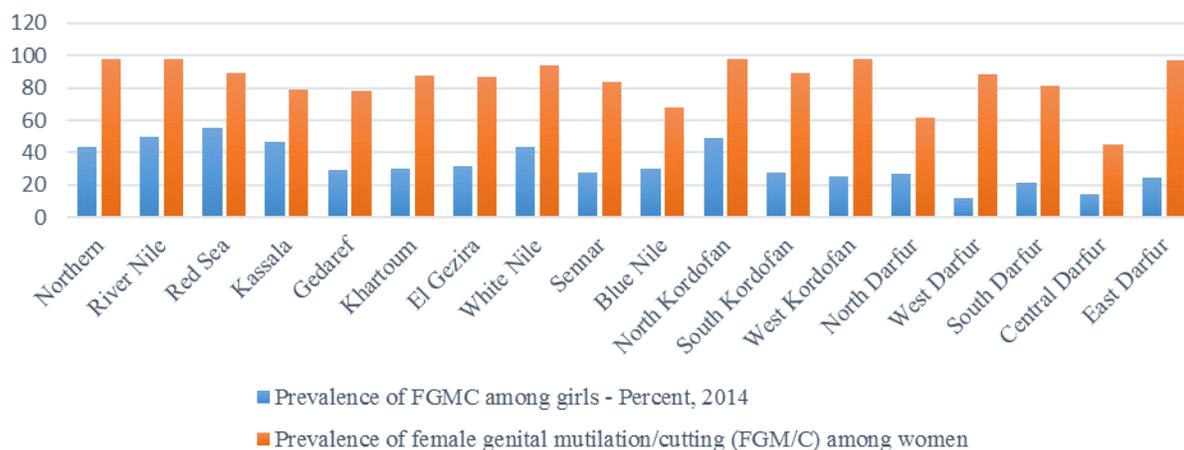
According to the Sudan Household Health Survey 2010, 65.5% of girls and women had had FGM/C (any form of it) and in the MICS Survey of 2014, 86.6% of women aged 15-49 reported to have undergone any form of FGM/C. Girls from age five to nine are considered at risk with 34.6% of this age group having undergone FGM/C. This figure rises to 72.2% for ten- to fourteen-year-old. And more than half (55%) of cases of FGM/C in Sudan are undertaken by medical professionals.

Child marriage prevalence is the percentage of women 20-24 years old who were married or in union before they were 18 years old". According to UNICEF's approximately 1 in 3 girls in Sudan are married before their 18th birthday. In other word, the marriage rate by age of 15 was 12% and by age of 18 is 35% in 2016.

In Sudan, where the Personal Status of Muslims Act of 1991 allows children - boys or girls - as young as 10 to marry, 37.6% and 38% of young women were married before the age of 18, according to a 2010 household survey and MICS survey respectively. Blue Nile, and South, East,

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[22] Sudan, MICS,2014

and Central Darfur states had the highest rate of child marriage, with 50%, 55.7%, 54.6% and 57.4% respectively of girls marrying before they turned 18[23].

Figure 14: Marriage before age 18 (women age 20-49 years) - Percent
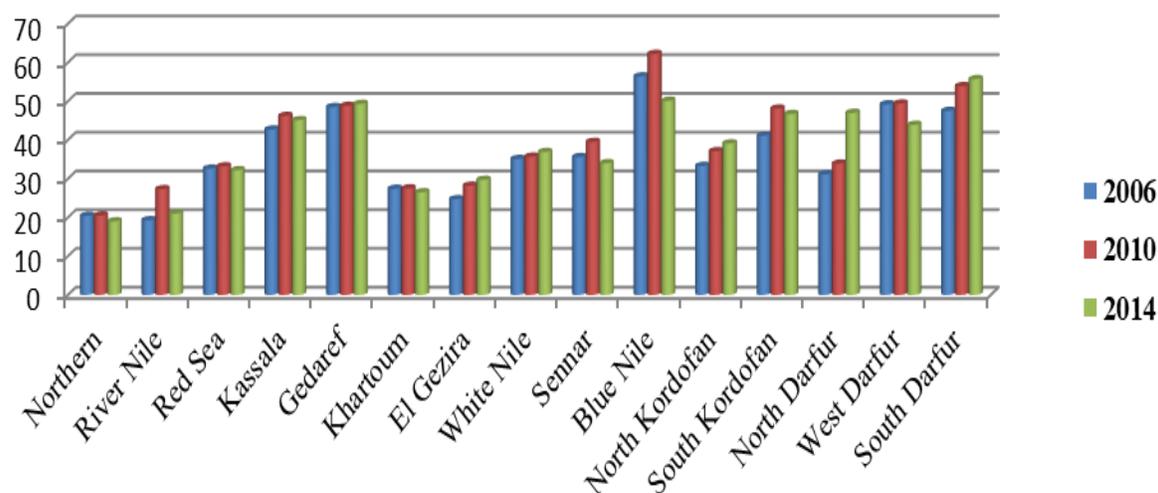
The study in 1700 ever married women aged ≤ 35 year were approached over six months (1 December 2012 – 30 May 2013) duration to investigate the socio-demographic factors affecting child marriage in eastern, northern and western Sudan[24].

Table 4: Factors associated with child marriage in Sudan, 2013

variables	Women who experienced child marriage (N=781)	Women who didn't experience child marriage (N==919)	p
Age, years	25.9 (2.3)	27.6 (5)	0.435
Age at marriage, years	15.4 (1.4)	23.3 (4.7)	0
Husband age, years	36 (12.5)	39.7 (12.7)	0
Rural residence	513 (65.7%)	510 (55.6)	0
Educational level,<secondary	554 (71%)	502 (54.6%)	0

[23] Abbas, A. (2017). Childhood policy: Country case—Sudan. Plan International
[24] I. A., Abdelgbar, S. A., & Elgessim, M. E. (2014). Socio-demographic factors affecting child marriage in Sudan. Journal of Women's Health Care, 3, 163 https://doi.org/10.4172/2167-0420.1000163

Husband education, <secondary	490 (62.7%)	500 (54.4%)	0.002
Father education, <secondary	655 (83.9%)	735 (79.9%)	0.022
Mother education, <secondary	624 (79.9%)	674 (73.4%)	0.001
Father occupation, non-skill worker	518 (66.3%)	555 (60.4%)	0.007
Family size, >5	527 (67.7%)	537 (58.4)	0.001
Parents living together	523 (67%)	615 (66.9%)	0.565

Data was shown in mean (SD) and number (%) as applicable.

The variation among states for is Marriage before age 15 (women age 15-49 years) - 36.4% and for Marriage before age 18 (women age 20-49 years) is 28.93%

Prat Four: Child Right`s Goes Beyond Protection and Welfare

Advocates of human rights often argue that the public and private provision of services improves when the State in a politically place more weight on equal public services delivery than does the central public policy. Studies of human rights and public policy in Sudan found limited significant changes in investment patterns in social services and human rights that reflected reallocations of devolved funds by poor municipalities to their highest local priorities. Because of the decentralization of responsibilities, local officials in these municipalities were not more sensitive to the needs of the local population. However, the results were not the same throughout the country. In some municipalities decentralization merely strengthened the power of local elites, solidified client-patron relationships, and increased corruption.

Hypothetically, equal services delivery can either increase if the local governments place public policy provision at the top of their economic development agendas and if it is cost effective, or it can decrease if human rights and human development is of low priority and less cost-effective.

1. The National Efforts to Protect Child and Girls Rights

There is no responsibility on the shoulders of the world holier than the children. There is no duty above respect for children. The protection of children is the protection of the future of mankind. Although the world community is not ignoring childcare, unfortunately the scenes of child rights violations in many places in the world are very saddening.

Contrary to all the directives of international sovereignty, the declarations of UN General Assembly and the international charters of child protection, nevertheless the children are suffering according to most of the international reports. Children are suffering from violations, violence and negative social, economic, cultural, humanitarian and legal discrimination, though there are some positive international movements recently aimed at maintaining and consolidating child rights. This in our view will have wide effects in boosting awareness about those rights among the communities and creating positive environment for child welfare.

In 1990 Sudan participated in the biggest assembly of world leaders in the UN history in New York. The participants agreed upon an unprecedented historic and humanitarian initiative aimed at the protection and development of children from the world. Sudan endorsed the international child rights agreement, and then it endorsed most of the child rights documents on the international and regional levels, especially the two optional protocols dealing with the rights of children during armed conflicts and the child trafficking for prostitution and pornographic purposes. Sudan also endorsed the African and Arab conventions that aim at the welfare of the children. In pursuit to those efforts Sudan has designed a legal and establishment-like framework for child protection. Efforts were exerted to match the local legislatures with their international counterparts. The Sudanese child legislatures are now part of the Sudanese constitution. Sudan has endorsed a lot of procedures and mechanisms to implement those child laws and cement the legal framework and make the policies, strategies and plans that maintain the child rights. In spite of those pro child efforts exerted by the UN agencies, the International Non-Governmental Organizations (INNGOs) and the National Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), yet there are still a lot of challenges facing the child protection in Sudan, especially the means of implementing these childcare and rights

policies on the ground. Those challenges however have put additional commitments on the shoulders of the state to make more steps to deal with the child rights as humanitarian and obligation affair, with its all-developmental dimensions and the necessity of paying more awareness to children and provide them with all the services that can secure bright future for them in Sudan.

2. National Mechanism

The National Council for Child Welfare (NCCW) was established as per a decree in 1991 as a national governmental mechanism to take the responsibilities of planning, coordination and follow-up concerning all the childcare issues and the follow-up of the implementation of Sudan commitments towards these issues. The council's 2008 law which abolished the 1991 law explained the mandates of the council and its general secretariat. The law also stated that childhood affairs are joint responsibility between the center and states. The law detailed the mandate of the council in six items as follows:

First: making comprehensive strategies, policies and plans of child rights, welfare and protection.

Second: coordination with the various levels of governance and participation in the establishment of the mechanisms and units to verify the protection and welfare services for children.

Third: the spread of awareness and support for child causes.

Fourth: the representation of Sudan in the international conferences with the coordination of the concerned parties.

Fifth: the supervision on the implementation of the international and regional child agreements that were endorsed by Sudan and respond to the international and regional mechanisms reporting process.

Sixth: suggesting the legislation necessary for child protection.

Thus, the work of the national council for child welfare is basically built on the commitments of Sudan towards the international and regional agreements concerning childhood that Sudan has endorsed thereof, in addition to the developmental purposes. It is also based on the national references and laws particularly like:

1) The Sudan transitional constitution for 2005.
2) The current 2010 Child Act
3) The circulars issued by the Chief Judge that are dealing with child rights arrangements
4) The strategic guidelines
5) National policies, strategies and plans dealing with child issues.

3. The features of the strategies, policies and plans

The activation of the systems and mechanisms of child protection aims at creating an environment that verifies the child right in growth and protect the child against all kinds of assaults, violence and negligence and the child right to availing the psychological and body wellbeing and the right to be integrated socially, in addition to preventing any kind of violation to the child basic rights. It is necessary, however, that those efforts should be reflected in the protection of children and offering services for them and in the quick reaction towards any kind of violations against their

rights. Those mechanisms are advised to work in coordination and harmony among themselves to secure comprehensive protection for children. In Sudan, we find so many national child protection mechanisms that are concerned with child protection responsibilities, each in its field. Some of those mechanisms are dealing with the issues of the legislation and endorsing the regional and international agreements and their compliance with the national laws. Some of them are supervising the right implementation of the child laws and others are concerned with the quick interference whenever and\or any violations are noticed against children. It is worth mentioning here that so many resolutions and laws to organize the establishment of child protection mechanisms and defining their responsibilities were issued, in addition to the issuance of the child law for 2010, which specifies clearly the roles and mandates of several childcare mechanisms.

A. National Plan to Combat Violence against Children:

It was prepared by the national council for child welfare in 2008. The plan aims at the establishment and promotion of a comprehensive system for child protection against all kinds of violence. The plan is characterized by harmony and completion between the agencies working in the field of child protection as per the policies pertaining to the child protection endorsed by the Sudanese government. The plan also meets the comprehensive recommendations of the study of the UN secretary general on violence against children which was issued in October 2006 and which urged upon all nations to put a multi facial framework to react to any kinds of anti-child violence and that the said framework should be induced and fully integrated in the national planning operations and that all nations should design plans, strategies and policies that deal with anti-child violence.

B. The national policy for children in street situations:

The policy was issued in 2009 by the social defense administration of the ministry of social welfare and woman and child. The strategy included an analysis for the present situation and the policies and priorities to achieve the strategic goal which is the protection, welfare and development of children in street situations, through the reform of their health, economic, psychological and social situations, all that is to reach the state of safe childhood with the coordination of all relevant parties.

C. The national policy of parent care 2011:

It was issued by the national council for child welfare in June 2011. It stated clearly that the strategic goal of this policy is the welfare and protection of parentless children and the decrease of the impact of the problem.

D. The national strategy of the elimination of Female Genital Mutilation. (2008-2018):

This strategy was issued in 2008, and it was based on the international and regional charters that were endorsed by Sudan and the national references, including the 2005 transitional constitution (Article 32) which stated that the government (should fight the harmful habits and traditions that lessen the dignity of the female and her integrity). The formation of this strategy was based on the culminating experiments of all the parties that were working in the field of fighting the female circumcision, which necessitated the coordination with those parties and the governmental agencies aiming at attracting the technical and material backup from the international community.

The program had endorsed the principle of partnership and the analysis of the vision for a better future for children in Sudan.

4. The analysis for the policies and the strategies of child rights in Sudan

One of the challenges facing the child causes in Sudan is how to activate and develop the strategies, the policies and the plans and accompany the social, the economic and the cultural changes to design a clear road map in the framework of a comprehensive vision for the child rights as human rights cause which leads to a good situation for children and creates a world they are worthy of, a world that helps to maintain a permanent development to meet their rights in all fields and to help in crystallizing a concept that is built on the principle of right and not only on the need: the main pillar of it is the child as a (human being). Despite all the great efforts exerted in the child field, nevertheless all those efforts are built on the necessary materialistic needs, more than concentrating on the righteous concept that is necessary for permanent development. That situation created a gap between what is stated in the international and national charters and the real implementation. That implementation was built on the idea of meeting the basic needs of children. It was acknowledged later that that implementation didn't achieve substantial effects on decreasing the suffering of children, particularly girls. The studies showed the deficiency of the concept of the basic needs in various fields, as follows:

(*) the basic needs method wasn't accompanied with compulsory and obligatory commitments to the government agencies towards the children.

(*) the estimation of basic needs was subjected to the sovereignty of the government and its agencies, without the participation of other concerned parties.

(*) in most cases those estimations were affected by the idea of decreasing costs.

The realization of this deficiency and the feeling of discontent about the method of the basic needs of children have led to the adoption of a developmental method based on the principles of the international criterion which were adopted by the international human rights and child rights instruments, something which led to the integration of all the protection programs. The adoption of this method, together with the regional and international exerted efforts has resulted in the implementation of the child right convention agreement for 1989. Thus, it was natural that there were different points of views about nature and requirements of the legal method. Some went to say that the terms of the international agreement about child rights and the adoption of the legal method didn't come up with something new, except the need to remind and pay more attention to the deprived slices. Another group went to the need to start designing and issuing new national legislatures about child rights or the amendment of the current ones, to cope with the international agreement. International efforts, however, were affected by this direction and there prevailed the notion that the implementation of the agreement means nothing but issuing national legislature. Consequently, some counties included the general principles of the agreement into their constitutions. Other countries included the principles of the agreement in their current laws. A third group of countries issued special child laws. All these efforts ignored the fact that the international child agreement came with modern philosophy, principles and vision that necessitated a different understanding and a method completely contrary to what was prevailing

before in the sphere of making the plans and policies of as per the method of securing the basic needs for childhood.

5. The practical experiments and multi-facial deficiency

So many countries came to believe that the inclusion of the general principles of the agreement into national law would be sufficient to implement the philosophy and the vision of the agreement. The legal method for human rights which dominated the efforts of the countries didn't have the required effect on their current policies and things remained almost unchanged. A gap appeared between the laws and the implementation nation wise

Based on what has just been said and with reference to the situation of the child rights in Sudan and due to the analysis of a careful supervisor, we say that there are certain processes that help to deprive some individuals and groups from their due rights. These factors can be found on Macro level and micro represented by the household and community based on negative social norms, attitudes and behavior (formal and non-formal level). They might be included in legislative or political provision. Deprivation can occur on the Micro Level, where some mechanisms can interfere to deprive some groups of their rights. The children can be excluded if they were subjected to some hazards, like lacking the environment that can protect them against violence, assaults or exploitation, or they have no access to the places of the necessary services and commodities. This will damage their potential ability to participate in their society in future. By making follow up of the child deprivation, it was clear that the deprivation was in most cases due to deficiency in policy making or in the implementation of those policies. Comparative studies showed that the biggest kind of deficiency is attributed to problematic of a systematic nature, like:

- The explicit or the implicit exclusion:

Some operations and mechanisms participate in the deprivation of some individuals or some social slices of availing their basic rights. This exclusion could be some sort of economic exploitation, like employing children and at the same time deprive them of the labor laws protection.

- Technical Shortcomings in Policy Formulation:

The denial of rights is, in many instances, due to shortcomings in the methods used in the preparation & formulation of policies. This is a well-known tradition in the social policy outlining. In fact, social variables and people consultation/inputs are not taken into consideration in many policies and strategies aiming at a sustained method for the protection of child rights.

Thus, methods of social policy formulation, including childhood policies, are still utilizing the basic-needs approach. No connection made between goals and activities. Such approach would, no doubt, result in partial output that fails to fulfil the vision and mission of the International Convention on Child Rights.

- Lack of Comprehensive System for Protection of the Child:

In such cases, many relevant issues are left without proper coordination and integration. Various intuitions must work in harmony and engage themselves with the changes happening and the tracking of that at the grassroots and communities' level.

Of course, this process is obliged to work in accordance with the child protection policies agreed upon by the Sudan Government.

- Weak Media Effort:

Child causes' support is undermined if not enough attention given by the media institutions and platforms. Focus is needed on topical issues such as child marriage, female genital mutilation/cutting, parental care, and homelessness. An effective and well-planned media message will make a difference in such urgent social issues, benefiting the children's and girl's values, behavior and overall development.

6. The Future Vision

Violence is a problem that children face in various countries worldwide. It has been generating tremendous attention nowadays. Efforts are needed to bring up children in a safe family environment and to protect them against all forms of violence. Under no circumstances, any child is left to face family, sexual and psychological violence. Children are entitled to live in peaceful social situations, away from any type of exploitation and carelessness.

Violence is an old behavior, practiced by many cultural human settlements and communities. It is an aggressive form of behavior and, therefore, should be classified as abnormal and harmful act.

In the final analysis, violence is bound to cause damage to individuals as well as to communities. Such unlawful utilization of force, makes no doubt about it, does result in mental and psychical injury and punishment. It could imply degradation of human decency, verbal abuse and preach of privacy. Practiced by organized criminal groups, an overdose of violence can lead to rape and murder.

The National Plan to address violence against children was launched in 2008 with the aim of developing a comprehensive system to protect children from all forms of violence. The plan responds to the comprehensive recommendations of the United Nations Secretary-General's study on violence against children in the world, published in October 2006. When viewed, we have seen the need to incorporate social and economic variables and the evolution of violence against children, with a view to achieving a scientific and practical vision.

The practical vision is to be effective, accompanied by variables and focused on coordination mechanisms for monitoring and follow-up, at the center/national and regional levels. There is a need to review legislation relating to violence against children, particularly the file of violence directed at children in schools, with the need to add a legal offence, read in conjunction with article 29 of the Children's Act 2010.

Regarding the national policy to address the problem of child homelessness, the Sudanese legislator has endeavored to promote the consideration of displaced and homeless children as victims of conditions beyond their own ability. Thus, under article 23 of the Act, it is strongly stated that the displacement and homelessness of children is not an offence punishable by law. Article 24 of the Act provides for the care of homeless children when found. They must be provided with the appropriate guarantees, care and attention. This shall be done in accordance with the following order: put in care of both parents and either of them, member of family or relatives, a member, or an official institution responsible for the care of the children.

To further operationalize the protection of displaced people, we call for attention given to studies on the causes of the phenomenon. We must bear in mind that homelessness is a changing phenomenon, and we must link it to poverty, armed conflict and displacement. We also must focus on preventive policies to reduce the exacerbation of homelessness.

The national plan has also given concern to children without parental care. A child without parental care has been identified as a child abandoned by his or her parents for fear of stigmatization, destitution or any other reason, and has not been cared for by a relative. Details of children without parental care are to be found in the plan itself.

Regarding FGM, the Interim Constitution of 2005 regulated and developed health care in accordance with chapter II of part one, entitled Ordinary principles and waves. Article 14 (1) provides that "the State shall establish policies and provide the means to care for the young, to ensure that they are brought up on the basis of health and morals and protect them from exploitation and physical & moral negligence." In Article 15, paragraph (2), the state has decided to protect motherhood. The clause refers to the protection of women against injustice, the promotion of gender equality, and the role of women in the family and their empowerment in public life.

Title II of the Constitution, entitled The Bill of Rights, article 27 of which reads as follows: "The document of rights shall be a contact among all people of the Sudan and between them and their Governments at every level. They all have the commitment to respect the human rights & fundamental freedoms enshrined in the Constitution and to act for social justice, equality & democracy in the Sudan. The Constitution also stipulates in article 32, section 3, that, "the State is working to combat harmful customs and traditions that diminish the dignity and status of women".

Despite all these constitutional provisions, the legislator has remained silent and without the promulgation of federal legislation that would normally prohibit female circumcision. With this knowledge, regional laws have been enacted in southern Kordofan, the Red Sea and the Gedaref. The legislator in female circumcision, from colonization to the present day, has been hesitant and apprehensive about the social backlash. The laws that have been promulgated are theoretical and far from being applied. Despite the serious and extremely damaging effects on the human person and society, strong texts are issued.

There is a sound initiative called Salima, an experience that has been very successful. It is focusing on the positive aspect, namely that the girl is born with complete organs and therefore we should let her grow like that. That is a distinguished Sudanese experience that has moved from the Sudan to several other countries

At the forefront of this initiative is the target that (Sudan is free of female circumcision during a generation). The aims of the initiative are to enact legislation and laws that prohibit and criminalize those who practice female circumcision in all its forms. No clear federal law has yet been enacted regarding female circumcision. However, one of the positive results of this initiative is its frank statement regarding threats and obstacles. Those working in favor of female circumcision identified, the absence of an explicit law prohibiting & criminalizing the act raised, and the involvement of certain health and medical cadres in the practice referred to.

According to some specialists, FGM is a practice that is addressed through awareness-raising, and there is no reason for the law to intervene in this matter. This view, however, is not valid for several reasons:

- FGM is a practice of serious and fatal harm. Thus, it is not society's tradition that we can wait for it to gradually end. Every injury to the human body is considered a crime under all laws and must be punished immediately. Can we tolerate similar crimes such as murder and looting?
- Persuasion concerning female circumcision is not enough to eliminate the practice. There are a lot of people who practice it in response to the pressure of society, not out of their own conviction. Societies force people to obey cruel habits. This trend must be resisted by effective counter measures. Those who submit to the authority of society would, then, be protected.

If we look at the previous laws, we find that they failed in the application phase for several reasons, the most important of which are:

- The concern of decision-makers to confront a society that is believed to be dissatisfied with the prevention of female circumcision.
- The decision-maker does not prepare these laws for practical application. The laws were enacted under the Criminal Code of 1991. The problem is that the victims are children who have no power. The offence is done by a person who is supposed to protect them from the act, not commit it. Legislators put circumcision as so-called special crimes in which law officers cannot intervene unless they receive a complaint.

To be effective in preventing female circumcision, the laws of the Sudan should consider four important points:

- Study the different Sudanese communities that practice female circumcision to see how they perceive the practice. To examine the means of coercion that such communities exert against the individual in the event of failure to practice. The information provided by such studies makes the features of the proposed law more explicit. Knowing the exact details of the problem makes it possible to develop appropriate legal solutions.
- The aim of the law is not only to prevent the act, but to establish clear and effective mechanisms for the development of plans and programs by following up on the implementation of texts or by designing awareness-raising programs & studies.
- The law must be constantly reviewed to avoid any flaws or loopholes revealed by practical application.
- prevention should be included in the sphere of absolute crimes to which any person may report.
- Convincing decision-makers of the need to enact a federal law to prevent female circumcision

At the outset, the steps and studies that we have referred to above are carried out. The following steps are therefore taken to persuade decision-makers of the need for the promulgation of the law:

- Make it clear that the practice of female circumcision is in violation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It also contravenes existing Sudanese laws, such as the Criminal Code of 1991 and the Public Health Act.
- Presentation of studies and statistics proving that the prevention of female circumcision will have positive effects on human development. Prevention creates a healthy generation that is psychologically and physically able to contribute to development. It also reduces the

costs of the economy in treating the practice diseases that continue with the girl child to the last stages of her life.

- The provision of surveys that demonstrate the tendency of public opinion, represented in the enlightened segments of cities and rural areas, for the promulgation of that law.
- Provide studies that can be considered in possible negative reactions from certain sectors of society and how to deal with them.
- Identify financial resources required for the application of that law, and whether they are available to the law enforcement agencies or not. What are alternative sources for funding if funds are not provided by the State.

The promulgation of the law is not the goal. The law must be followed up for its implementation and for educating people about it & its objectives. Consideration should be given to the possibility of creating formal or voluntary mechanisms to:

- Report on cases of the practice action against the perpetrators taken
- Lodge appeals or complains against cases of misapplication or misinterpretation of the law to ensure the success of the experiment
- Use propaganda for teaching society about the provisions of the law and the legal procedures that protect the rights provided for.
- Conduct legal and social research suggesting amendments and additions to the law

It is clear from the above that federal law in the Sudan has explicitly and implicitly addressed prohibition of female circumcision. However, it failed in its objective because of the over apprehension that decision-makers continued to suffer from. There are fears of negative reactions. There is a lack of willingness to use female circumcision as part of a tool for social change through the law.

The key to the success of any law in this matter is to provide the decision-maker with a clear scientific plan to avoid negative reactions from certain sectors of society. The application of the law and the accompanying costs must also be clarified. Thus, the positive results of application to development are generally explained.

This is accompanied by the establishment of the law on scientific justifications derived from the study of the communities to which it applies. Finally, follow-up on the implementation of the law to avoid defects and loopholes that result from the application.

7. Policy analysis settlement

The beginnings of the 1960s until 1973 have witnessed a larger role of the government in the affairs of the economy. Sudan obtained several developmental grants during that period. The economic policies of the State changed from the socialist trends to an open-door policy in cooperating with the western economies, which, started in 1974. With the implementation of that economy, the Sudan economy became dependent on other sources during the 1970s and the 1980s for funding its developmental programs. Most funds were from external sources with tiny participation from the local sources most of which were unstable sources (rentier income).

Sudan's macro-economy witnessed sustainable stability after the 1990s period of fluctuations and disorder. Sudan was then able to achieve satisfactory performance within the framework of the program, which, experts from International Monetary Fund supervised. The economic growth rate reached 6% during the period 2000-2004, it even exceeded 10% in 2006; one among the highest

in Africa. Following the decline in the oil revenues with the separation of South Sudan, there was an increase in the total financial deficit in the 2013 budget from 2.8% of the Gross Domestic Product GDP in 2012 to 3.3% in 2013.

Developmental expenditures decreased from 1.8% of the Gross Domestic Product GDP in 2012 to 1.4% the hardest hit item of the federal government expenditure. The share of the federal developmental expenditure of the total expenditure decreased significantly from 15% against 25% and 21% in 2011 and 2012 respectively.

The ratio of children under 18 years of old to the total population is 45%. The developmental challenge reflects negatively on this large group. As a result, the public policies of the children sector were affected by the weak and varied developmental indicators resulting from:

1) There were hindrances of the limited estimations of the costs, prioritizing the sector policies during the preparation of the budget in addition to the fluctuations of the implementation process.
2) The developmental funding as an essential component in implementing childhood policies and plans was complementary in very few large-scale activities. The primary component of among these policies and plans was limiting the poverty line.
3) The public policies' management systems at the national and state levels were weak.
4) The level and quality of expenditure on children that is related to planning and analytical basis of the budget preparation process, reinforcing the authenticity of the balance and reallocating the resources from other areas of the government expenditure.
5) Limitedness of information and the tracking and evaluation mechanisms hindered the effectiveness of planning and management of the public policies.

8. Important remarks

The remarks are:

1) There was continued decrease of the technical views' participation in the policies, decisions and procedures (technical content). In this respect, it is important to avoid transitional planning in managing the economy by imposing macro policies and transitional procedures that match the reality of domestic and foreign circumstances.
2) The State's balance sheet does not reflect the entire economic performance due to scarcity of data especially data of the traditional sector that represents the robustness and flexibility of the society, sector and economy. In the absence of accurate data, proper planning could not be achieved hence, the economy would be susceptible to consecutive shocks and crises. The balance sheet is based on future forecasts that lack digital statistics. The economic administrative board (multi-party and extended into the states and the federal government bodies; in addition to the ministries of finance, economy, trade, production, Central Bureau of Statistics with its various sectors, Bank of Sudan, banks, private sector etc) may resort to providing inaccurate statistics. This fact contributed to the collapse of the Soviet Union when the Soviet State resorted to falsify the statistics and information, so the planners lacked proper knowledge of the problems and blocked the appropriate correct information for the preparation of the proper plans and programs.

Hence, we should put in consideration three levels in remedying the public policies in the children sector:

- Macro Politics:

It is useful to mention that the macro planning of the policies stands out among other policies in that it expresses the public interests. The issues put forward by the government should gain priority over other issues as a public directive of the public policies.

- Micro politics:

Micro politics make a response to an issue or a phenomenon related to a specific group or region such as delinquent children or female circumcision. As such, they are specific issues or demands of specific group or region. In this case, the public policies are drawn in favour of one body or a few persons. No matter how much benefit is extracted, the persons affected are few in comparison with those unaffected. Hence, macro politics should be integrated within the macro politics.

The more the State's programs are integrated, and the activities expanded, the more ae the anticipated effects and benefits for all persons and groups. This increases the volume and number of the micro public policies. The micro public policies related to solving the sector issues such as education, health and others could be considered one type of these policies.

- Local politics:

Local politics mean the policies that deal with the issues and problems of the administrative units, local regions or states of the federal government. An example is the displacement and reception of refuges. It is obvious that such issue or problems are specific to the citizens of one province or several states (region); they do not concern the citizens in other states because the problems do not affect them. Issues of this type do not attract the attention of most citizens who are outside the circle of effects. Hence, meeting the demands and solving the local or regional problems are usually entrusted to the local governments or the governments of the regions. Each of these local governments or the governments of the regions has its respective autonomy and authorities in collecting and analysing the information, determining the priorities, formulating the necessary relevant public policies considering the authorities and responsibilities assigned to them in coordination with the competent central government apparatuses.

Part five: Stakeholder engagement

1. Stakeholder engagement process

The stakeholder engagement process is ongoing throughout the life of the policy formulation, implementation and interventions include formal consultations and analysis. Information will also be disseminated as needed to address significant changes in methods or other important policy developments. The stakeholder engagement process includes two key aspects:

1) Early and ongoing outreach to key stakeholders to provide information on policy framework.
2) A grievance redress process to address public complaints during implementation of the policy.

Stakeholder engagement as an inclusive process conducted throughout this policy gap analysis cycle. Stakeholder engagement is most effective when initiated at an early stage of the policy development process and is an integral part of early policy decisions and the assessment, management and monitoring of the policy's environmental and social risks and impacts.

The PGA stakeholder engagement has been done free of manipulation, interference, and intimidation, and conducted based on timely, relevant, understandable and accessible information, in a culturally appropriate format. It involved interactions between identified groups of people and provided stakeholders with an opportunity to raise their concerns and opinions and ensure that this information was taken into consideration when making project decisions.

The first step in the stakeholder engagement process was to identify the key stakeholders to be consulted and involved. Stakeholders are individuals or groups who are affected or likely to be affected by future interventions and who may have an interest in policy change and reform.

Table 5: Stakeholder consultation and role

Stakeholder	Point of Consultation	Role in policy making process
Ministers		
1. The National Council for Child Welfare 2. Federal Ministry of Education 3. Federal Ministry of Health 4. Federal Ministry of Youth 5. Central Bureau of statistics	1. The National Stratgic Plan 2. The sub-sector strategies, action plans and policies	Cross-sectoral policy design, implementation and monitoring
Legislative institutions		

the National Council	The National Strategic Plan The sub-sector strategies, action plans and policies The National legislation on FGM and child marriage	Policy formulation, reform and development at National level National Law reform National budgeting formulation and monitoring Country Policy monitoring.
State Legislative councils	The National Strategic Plan The sub-sector strategies, action plans and policies at stat level The National legislation on FGM and child marriage at stat level	On-going throughout project planning
Non-Governmental Organizations/Community Groups		
INGOs	International and regional conventions	Supporting the Government to harmonize the national policies and national legislation in line with the State obligation at the International and regional
NNGOs	International and regional conventions are the national policies and national legislation on human rights and child rights. The National legislation on FGM and child marriage at stat level	Advocacy, community mobilization, awareness and monitoring to ensure the mainstreaming of rights approaches in all country polices and legislation

2. Stakeholder consultation process

The stakeholder consultation is a final way of diagnosing why policy problems persist and to examine how simple or complex they are and what causes any complexity. It is helpful to do this as different types and degrees of complexity give rise to markedly different solutions and different approaches to achieving these solutions. Complex policy problems require a more iterative approach.

In case of the decentralized system, it is critical to plan each consultation process, consult inclusively, document the process, and communicate follow-up. The timing of stakeholder engagement is broken down by stakeholder and process phase. The timing and methods of engagement with stakeholders are provided below in. Engagement and consultation will be carried out on an ongoing basis as the nature of issues, impacts, and opportunities evolves.

The method that has been used in this process was particularly to avoid the complexity of policy problems in the issues of human rights, child rights and mainstreaming of the rights approach in public services delivery specifically health, education and protection. The engagement was the collaborative approach to be clear about why the changes you are proposing are important, who

they affect, what needs to be done about it and where you stand in relation to others who are also trying to bring about change. In the spirit of doing no harm, it is useful to insert a final check to identify types of action that would be unhelpful in resolving the problem, and to consider possible incoherence and conflicting aims across the whole range of work you might be involved in.

Stakeholder engagement process was started by identifying the stakeholder groups that are likely to affect or be affected by a proposed action and sorting them according to their impact on the action and the impact the action will have on them. The preliminary stakeholder analysis identified the various interests of stakeholder groups and the influence these groups may have on the policy change and reform. The analysis also was shaped into the design of stakeholder consultation events and which stakeholders to engage in and when.

There were three different things that have been considered in the process of identifying the power and capacity are needed for policy engagement: the power structures in place, the approaches in how collaborate and capacity of change.

In practice, there is no firm distinction between simple and complex policy problems – it is more of a spectrum – the PGA clarified some of the distinguishing characteristics:

- Capacities for change: where policy issues are simple, decision-making structures are well defined and probably quite hierarchical. This means a decision taken higher up will filter through to the lower levels without much distortion, ensuring everyone is pulling in the same direction. In complex problems, decisions are not fully controlled by one actor but instead influenced by several different players with different opinions at different stages in the policy process. The responsibilities, skills and resources needed to make change happen are spread between different agencies or organizations.
- Goals: simple policy issues have goals that are widely agreed upon, so there is little conflict or controversy. Where policy issues are complex, different groups will want to pursue divergent goals and will pull in different directions, proposing or even pursuing vastly different courses of action.
- Change pathways: simple policy-making processes have regular rhythms, following set routines with foreseeable opportunities for engaging with them. Complex policy-making processes are much less predictable. It is difficult to understand what influences decisions until after the fact, and opportunities for making input into those decisions arise quite unexpectedly.

3. Stakeholder consultation findings

Gauging complexity will constitute one of the main challenges we will face when diagnosing the policy problem. Each potential aspect of complexity the PGA applied different approaches to analyze the policy gap as core method for policy influencing and managing policy change model. Table summarizes these approaches, which are described in more detail in the text that follows.

Table 6: Stakeholder Analysis

Stakeholder	Potential Role in Policy change	Interest	Influence
Ministries			
1. The National Council for Child Welfare 2. Federal Ministry of Education 3. Federal Ministry of Health 4. Federal Ministry of Youth 5. Central Bureau of statistics	Provide specific information and technical role on planning, resources and implementation	High	Moderate
Legislative institutions			
the National Council	Policy change Partner: identify issues and opportunists on sustainable policy development; assist in arranging policy and law reform	High	High
	Identify issues and opportunities for political, economic and social development	Moderate	Moderate
	Identify issues and opportunities for public services infrastructure development	Moderate	High
State Legislative councils	Evaluate and harmonize the national policy consistency	High	Moderate

	with state physical planning requirements services delivery at state level.		
	Identify issues and potential opportunities for national and state development	High	Moderate
	Identify issues related to the improvement of public services and public	High	Moderate
Non-Governmental Organizations/Community Groups			
	Outreach and communication with the community about the development gaps, needs and concerns	High	High
	Define issues and opportunities for development within the specific area of intervention	High	High
	Provide information on sustainable use and development and rights approaches in the specific area of intervention	Moderate	High
	Provide information on significant policy gaps in line with cultural and social context and significance policy reform in the specific services area	High	High
	Provide evidence-based information about the contextual development process and policy change	High	Low

The stakeholders near the potential policy change and reform areas are likely to have a high interest in policy development and specifically child rights and youth. Government and policy makers or planning producers in the public policy area have a very high interest in the improvement of the public services and specifically health, education, protection and participation. The requirements for economic, social and sustainable development at national and state level for children, girls, youth and people with disabilities are included as a mitigation measure in the stakeholder's engagement course and are addressed in the consultation process. Stakeholder concerns from the initial scoping and consultation meetings are summarized in Table below.

Table 7: Summary of Scoping Comments

Resource Topic	Stakeholder Concerns Addressed in the ESIA
Public Policy	▪ Strengthen the systems that provide for welfare, care, development and protection of children, girls and youth. Institutional structures must be improved at national and state levels, and coordination and cooperation between all partners must be enhanced. ▪ The policy influence engagement and approaches must serve as a practical tool for state and federal governments, civil society, academia, INGOs and the UN alike in identifying the critical issues related to children and youth that require a concerted response. ▪ Equitable development for children at both state and federal levels. Identifying sectors that require the most attention and increasing financial allocations is necessary to sustain achievements and continue making progress. Strong legislation that is properly enforced is needed to identify vulnerable children and protect their rights.
Socio-economics	▪ Every effort must be made to preserve programmes that help Sudan's children and youth so that progress made over the past several years is not lost. Government safety nets, such as conditional cash transfers and education programmes, make it possible for people to keep their children in school, ensure that their children are healthy and fed, and protect them against exploitative situations. These are counter-recurring measures that will protect the vulnerable population in times of economic crisis or recession. ▪ Sudan's most recent SDGs progress report identifies conflict as one of the biggest impediments to progress, responsible for diverting resources, impeding development projects, and increasing the need for assistance among women and children.
Health	▪ Increase use of high impact quality health and nutrition services and increasingly focus in supporting the states and localities registering high levels of inequities in child mortality and stunting to strengthen planning, integration and delivery of quality health, nutrition and WASH services including provision of essential commodities and service delivery in humanitarian response. ▪ THAT government, the public and private sectors consider the 'cost effect' of age and gender in health policies and programs, especially with

	respect to the compounded disadvantage experienced by girls and women.
Education	ensure that education services for children are improved. These should include: • The provision of safe education in emergencies. • Release and reintegration of children associated with armed groups and forces. • Identification and reunification of children separated from their families during conflict situations. • Provision of safe access for humanitarian workers to conflict-affected areas. • Ensuring the continuity of health, education, water and sanitation and other basic services as displaced people return home to their communities.
Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Discharge of geothermal fluid and impact on water quality	• Ensure the availability of surface water resources and drying up of reservoirs; access to water was a key concern for all communities. • The quality improvement of WASH service delivery e through the provision of WASH services, and hygiene • increase children's access to equitable and sustainable basic improved WASH services for all as essential human rights, with focus on scaling up children's access to basic improved sanitation services. also focus on the integration of WASH services in schools, nutrition and health institutions.
Child Protection	▪ Children's rights must be recognized in the eyes of the state and rigorously protected and enforced by concrete laws. At national and state levels, much progress has already been made in introducing and passing legislation that establishes social protection and safety nets for children. ▪ Government will need to ensure that care and protection services are extended to all children under its jurisdiction, regardless of their nationality or immigration status. In the resent context of the country, a significant number of migrants' children residing and have been left without citizenship. ▪ Special efforts are required to combat discrimination against these children and to ensure their rights are guaranteed.
FGM/C	• The programme effectiveness component covers activities relating to the prevention and responding to the FGM/C, including technical and strategic assistance aimed at ensuring programming meets quality, effectiveness and accountability benchmarks of girls and women rights. It also covers the cost of programme and national coordination, including dedicated leadership for the child protection sector, and the management of cross-cutting issues for high-quality country programming and reporting. These include policy, guidance technical support for performance monitoring, evaluation, external relations, public advocacy, emergency preparedness and response, resilience, accountability to affected populations, field services, the harmonized approach to cash transfers, gender mainstreaming, supply and information technology as well as office compliance with carbon off-setting standards.
child marriage	▪ Support the law reform on child marriage and development and implementation of policies and strategies that address the structural

	causes of child marriage, inequities to promote awareness and the progressive realization of children's rights. • Support the strengthening of government capacity at national and sub-national levels to develop sound evidence-based and equity-focused policy and plans, and strengthen data collection to inform law reform, policy development and programming on child marriage.
Youth Praticipation and engagement	• The importance of the youth bulge has not been adequately reflected in government policies and programming, which will be important to harness the potential for inclusive economic growth resulting from the demographic dividend. • Ensure the youth rights principles contained in the National Framework and be integrated in policies and programs of public and private sector organizations. • All levels of government evaluate laws, policies and programs to ensure that they do not contain age-based assumptions and stereotypes and that they reflect the needs of youth. • The Ministry of Education and Higher Education, school and universities and develop programs and activities that will encourage a better understanding and a more positive perception of youth. Intergenerational programming between students and their communities is an integral part of such education. • Social service providers receive training to enable youth to access the market and employment, and the Ministry of Labour extend new Employment Standards to increase the youth employment and development participation.
Person with disability	• The provincial government enact legislation that will set minimum standards for accessibility for persons with disabilities, including children, youth and women. • Government, the public and private sectors consider the 'intersectional effect' of age and disability in policies and programs, especially with respect to the compounded disadvantage experienced by persons with disabilities.

Part Six: Conclusions and Policy Recommendations

Although human rights defenders and development workers alike recognize that rights play an essential role in combating human rights violations, and while they generally agree that there are synergies between human rights and development programmes, there is still a long way to go in constructing strategies that will serve as a bridge between these two paradigms.

In recent decades, governments have paid increasing lip service to rights in their development strategies, as well as in their social protection policies and programmes. Unfortunately, despite the achievements, it seems clear that we are still at the early stages of the policy change in terms of putting rights rhetoric into practice.

To continue along this policy influences and change process, this PGA has attempted, on one hand, to advance the conceptual development of the rights-based approach in National social protection policies and programmes and, on the other hand, by examining selected policies cases, to analyze the degree to which human rights rhetoric is reflected in the actual design, implementation and evaluation of National social protection policies.

Throughout this paper we have seen that, despite the progress that Sudan has made in social protection, some enormous challenges still lie ahead. Every social policy area has its own specific characteristics, but beyond this the country faces the pressing need to reinforce its focus on rights to satisfy demands from a population that is increasingly eager to participate in the formulation and implementation of policies, and ever more demanding in terms of transparency, access to information and accountability.

A greater effort to put into practice the rights proclaimed in many development plans and in government rhetoric would go a long way to overcoming the poverty and social exclusion that persist in many countries of the region.

A rights-based perspective can contribute to sustainable development in at least two ways. First, it reduces social and political risks by enhancing social justice and insisting on an inclusive and nondiscriminatory approach. Second, it creates stronger and more equitable governmental, civil and community institutions.

The promotion and observance of human rights can also be considered a central element in efforts to strengthen democracy and governance. This is particularly important in Sudan, where economic and social rights have not kept pace with civil and political rights, a situation that poses challenges for the country development.

1. Making the leap from rhetoric to practice

To develop a policy centered on rights, it is not enough that its text should incorporate the language of rights, it must also translate into concrete measures for the full and effective exercise and enjoyment of those rights. In practice, a rights-based approach to social protection presupposes not only that social programmes will be shielded from electoral cycles and political vicissitudes but also that all members of society will be assured access to the minimum conditions for a decent life.

To make the leap from rhetoric to practice will require, above all, political will on the part of public decision-makers, especially the members of the legislative branch and of the key ministries such

as those responsible for the economy and finance and for planning and development. A commitment to a right focus that goes beyond words will in many cases require legal and administrative reforms, as well as budget appropriations commensurate with the proposed objectives. Putting in place social protection policies and programmes that respect the standards and principles of human rights both in their implementation and in their outcomes is a long-term task, and one that demands a state policy that transcends political cycles.

In many cases, policy makers and government institutions will have to change their traditional approach to designing, implementing and evaluating social policies. To do so they will need special training as an essential tool for making them aware of how they can contribute through their work to achieving more inclusive societies with full respect for the dignity and rights of all citizens. Civil society also has a crucial role in promoting the rights perspective by sensitizing public opinion, preparing methodologies and tools for analysis, lobbying politicians, and monitoring the impact and evaluation of public policies.

More work is also needed to develop a solid conceptual and methodological framework to guide the technical and political translation into social protection policies and programmes. While the State level exhibits a variety of models, in general we may say that, to make the leap from rhetoric to practice, the normative National frameworks of Sudan should give specific recognition to the right to social security (social protection) and specify those who will be responsible for its implementation. Also, the mechanisms for accountability and recourse for the infringement need to be institutionalized and strengthened, for without such mechanisms these rights cannot be enforced in practice.

2. Establishing social protection systems

Despite the obvious differences in the design, components and coverage of social protection programmes around Sudan, one characteristic that many states have in common would seem to be fragmentation. The fragmentation of social protection programmes limits their potential effectiveness, their synergy and their impact on poverty, inequality and exclusion. It is essential, then, for states to make a determined effort to build "social protection systems" that will guarantee the enjoyment of ESCR for the entire population.

One criterion, based on human rights, holds that those responsible for formulating policies should ensure that all people are protected in an equitable and non-discriminatory manner. Bearing in mind the high levels of informality in the states, the principles of equality and non-discrimination demand special attention to the non-contributory pillar of social protection as a way of reaching the most disadvantaged groups that are left out of the contributory system.

To this end social protection systems must be enriched with initiatives that will ensure coordination of multiple programmes, and of the State institutions responsible for their design, financing, implementation, regulation, monitoring and evaluation, to have a positive impact on people's living conditions.

This means going beyond the design of systems or networks: the achievement of cross-programme synergy will depend largely on human resources, which will have to be properly trained at all levels, and on the adequacy of financial resources. A rights-based social protection model must guarantee universal access, with priority for the most disadvantaged and excluded groups.

3. Structural changes to achieve equality

A human rights focus demands a frontal assault on the social exclusion and glaring inequalities that persist in the country. Social protection systems must expand their objectives to strive for a direct impact on inequality. For example, governmental programmes must be strengthened in their coverage and financing, recognizing that with their current limited funding they fail to reach important segments of the population who remain excluded from formal social protection systems.

Without denying the fundamental role of social protection, it will never be effective in reducing inequality and guaranteeing the essential minimum levels of welfare unless it is part of a comprehensive strategy designed to reduce or eliminate the conditions that cause or help to perpetuate discrimination against certain segments of the population in such important spheres as employment, housing, food, social security, health, education, culture, and participation in public life.

This will require action on many fronts. From the normative viewpoint, it means adopting legal standards that guarantee the enjoyment of rights and access to services without discrimination of any kind. States must take positive measures to facilitate access for those who suffer structural discrimination, such as children, girls, women, persons with disabilities, minorities, and young people.

From the rights perspective, the principle of fairness demands special attention to the most disadvantaged and excluded social groups, to recognize their needs and ensure their inclusion. This means not only identifying these groups but also establishing specific strategies for their inclusion. Of particular concern is that segment of the population that is still not covered either by contributory or non-contributory systems. In the less developed state, this group comprises those people who are clearly marginalized and who systematically fall outside the scope of cash transfer policies.

The task of reducing inequality, as required by a rights-based approach, cannot be shouldered solely by social protection. While it is not the purpose of this PGA to analyze in detail the other actions that are needed, we must stress that the indivisibility and interdependence of all rights demand an integral focus and public policies that will respect, protect and comply with the entire spectrum such as the right to health and education, labour rights etc. This implies the need to (i) improve the quality, adequacy and accessibility of public services, (ii) move toward quality education, and (iii) enhance labour rights.

4. Improving the quality, adequacy and accessibility of public services

There must be assurance that facilities, goods and services in such areas as health, sanitation, water and transportation on which the most disadvantaged individuals and groups are particularly dependent are of the maximum possible quality, and the quality of the providers of those services must be supervised. Even when facilities, goods and services involve participation by the private sector or civil society, governments are responsible for guaranteeing their quality, accessibility and coverage, and they have the duty of protecting people against abuses by private service providers.

5. Moving toward quality education

Further investment in education is needed to promote structural change toward more egalitarian societies. The right to education is a right, but it is also a tool for ensuring the enjoyment of other rights, such as the right to work and to a decent standard of living.

Despite the progress made, including the increase of education accessibility, Sudan has not succeeded in narrowing educational attainment gaps between different social groups, nor has it achieved clear improvements in the quality of education, measured as relevant learning throughout the formal education cycle.

Human rights standards are explicit as to the obligations of States in relation to the right to education, which includes the elements of availability, accessibility, acceptability and adaptability that are common to instruction in all its forms and at all levels.

6. Enhancing employment accessibility

To have a positive impact on poverty and inequality, there will also have to be greater protection, guarantees and employment accessibility. Evidence from around the Sudan shows that markets have not served as the gateway to social protection, and that fewer than half of persons working are affiliated with social security and less employment accessibility for youth and women.

This situation requires forward movement in the normative protection of these rights. Human rights standards demand that States must guarantee just and favorable working conditions, a safe and healthy workplace, reasonable limitation of working hours, and periodic holidays with pay. They must ensure the right of everyone to form and join trade unions and to engage in collective bargaining. To guarantee observance of these obligations, States must regulate employment accessibility, markets facilities and establish mechanisms to strengthen the accountability of private agents. States can also enhance their capacity to meet their human rights obligations by establishing more channels for dialogue between employers and youth and women workers and giving workers the opportunity to participate in the design and application of employment policies.

The obligations of non-discrimination and equality require States to ensure that employment creation policies benefit all sectors of society equally. Policies that enhance employment opportunities (for example through specialized training and professional development on request) for groups that face special obstacles in access to employment, such as women, persons with disabilities, young persons and indigenous people, will help States meet their human rights obligations. To eliminate obstacles to youths and women's employment, States must make care services available (provided by the State, the community or the market), redistribute paid and unpaid work from a gender perspective, and eliminate all forms of discrimination by reason of gender. States are not only obliged to adopt effective laws to this end, but also to take measures to modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women.

National and state levels must also devote their efforts to generating opportunities for sustainable, productive and decent work in which individuals can exercise and realize their human rights. Employment policies must respect the framework of human rights, which has broad implications,

from protecting workers" rights to adopting policies that will guarantee equitable access to employment for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups of society.

7. Gender equity and care policies

It is important to recognize that social protection policies and programmes are not gender-neutral, and consequently they must be designed, implemented and evaluated considering the many forms of discrimination that women and girls face, while guaranteeing that they address girl`s and women's specific needs throughout their lifecycle (childhood, adolescence, adulthood).

While gender equality must be an objective of all social policies, with the resources needed to achieve it, when it comes to social protection programmes it is essential to recognize the role that women play as care providers, without reinforcing patterns of discrimination and negative stereotypes.

Steps must be taken to promote the value of unpaid care work and to distribute it more equitably, for example by encouraging men to take a more active part in caring for family members. The State must play a more proactive role in providing care services, from daycare facilities and kindergartens to services that provide care and personal support at home for seniors and people with disabilities who cannot look after themselves.

8. Harmonizing tax policies with economic, social and cultural rights

To achieve the effective enjoyment of rights, it is not enough to have protection mechanisms in place. There must be adequate funding available, it must be allocated to policies in accordance with a rights-based approach, and it must be sustainable. Tax systems need to be made more progressive, and tax evasion combated, to launch a frontal assault against the region's great inequalities.

It is a complex matter to determine what resources are available in the country, one that requires analyzing the prevailing economic and social model and a country's macroeconomic policies (monetary, exchange, fiscal and tax policies). States parties are obliged to promote rights "to the maximum of available resources". This inevitably brings us to the issue of available fiscal revenues for ensuring adequate and sustainable public funding, and the need to boost tax receipts.

Low levels of tax collection leave the poorest sectors of the population at a disproportionate disadvantage and pose a considerable obstacle to the State's capacity to guarantee social programmes and public services in support the rights of children, girls, and women, persons with disabilities, minorities, and young people. The overall tax base needs to be broadened, therefore, to maintain adequate levels of public social spending, and this will require appropriate planning by policymakers.

9. Overcoming capacity limitations and institutional barriers

To consolidate a rights-based approach in the national and states social protection systems, there are several institutional barriers or constraints that must be overcome. This will require a long-term strategy whereby countries can reinforce the capacities of national and states institutions and ensure the sustainability of resources, without being constrained by short-term partisan politics.

One of the most glaring institutional shortcomings in the national and states level is the lack of reliable and detailed statistical data. This is a great obstacle from the rights perspective, for without

adequate information it is impossible to give priority to the human rights of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, whose needs must be identified and evaluated more accurately and efficiently.

The lack of disaggregated data renders essentially invisible certain sectors of the population, such as children, youth, women and persons with disabilities. The lack of data also means that public policies will not be effective in reaching those who need them most. Data must be disaggregated in various dimensions, such as gender, age, geographic situation, ethnic origin, and health status.

If the rights-based approach to social protection is to be taken seriously, indicators will have to be developed for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of policies. From a right perspective, indicators must be sufficiently disaggregated to make visible the most disadvantaged groups, so that their situation can be properly monitored.

Despite the complexity of defining indicators and developing measurement systems and monitoring mechanisms, this challenge should provide an incentive for strengthening the linkages between social policies and rights.

To give effect to the rights-based approach will require institutional strengthening of national statistics offices and systems, in ways that will guarantee the quality and credibility of official statistics and allow the mainstreaming of the gender focus in statistical output.

The agencies responsible for social protection policies and programmes also need to be strengthened to give them the political clout, the budgetary resources and the technical capacity they need. This is particularly important for ensuring that their objectives can be applied in a cross-cutting manner. Managing policies with a human rights focus will also demand sufficient numbers of highly qualified personnel for implementing policies.

Also, steps must be taken to ensure that officials in key government departments are trained and have the analytical capacity to evaluate the human rights repercussions of their decisions. States should also establish coordination mechanisms to ensure communication and the sharing of information among government departments on human rights issues.

Lastly, it would be useful to consider introducing human rights impact assessments as a practice that has great potential for making explicit the conceptual linkages between the social, economic, environmental and development impacts of public policies. These assessments can do much to strengthen existing practices with respect to participation and equality, by ensuring that those concerns are addressed more consistently and in full observance of international human rights standards.

10. Respecting the essential freedoms and rights or social participation

A rights-based approach requires active participation by multiple stakeholders in the design, implementation and evaluation of social protection policies.

All these rights are necessary prerequisites for participation: to participate effectively, all members of society must be able to organize, meet and express their views without intimidation or censorship, understand the pertinent facts and arguments, be aware of their rights, and have the necessary skills and capacity.

In terms of the right to information, States must do everything possible, including enacting the necessary procedures, to ensure easy, prompt, effective and practical access to information that may be of public interest. As well, States must ensure that the groups at greatest risk of falling into poverty, such as those exposed to discrimination by reason of race, colour, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status, are not only duly represented in all decision-making processes that affect them but have the standing and support to express their opinions.

States must ensure that indigenous peoples, who are particularly vulnerable to poverty, enjoy the right to free, prior and informed consent through their own representative institutions with respect to any decisions that concern the use of their land, territory and resources by government and non-government agents.

States must also afford active protection for individuals, community organizations, social movements, groups and other nongovernmental organizations that support and defend the rights of the poor. The principles of equality and non-discrimination require affirmative action to ensure that all people have the same opportunities for participation. To this end, States must identify the obstacles that prevent participation by vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, and introduce means for eliminating those obstacles, with a view to achieving substantive equality.

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