

Sudan

Part 1: Situation update in the country

In 2018 Sudan continued to face protracted, complex and overlapping humanitarian challenges, driven by internal and external conflicts and large-scale displacement, as well as climatic and socio-economic conditions leading to natural disasters, epidemics, food insecurity and malnutrition. The challenges were compounded by a severe economic deterioration triggered by a balance of payments crisis and an exchange rate devaluation that had an immediate impact on the cost of living and household purchasing power. The situation was further aggravated by shortages of fuel, wheat flour, medicines and cash, doubly impacting vulnerable children and families – especially the 36 percent already living in poverty – and slowing humanitarian and development operations by all partners, including the Government, NGOs, and development partners.

Prior to the deterioration in the economic situation, past studies and surveys have indicated that Sudanese children experience a wide range of vulnerabilities:

- One of the highest rates of stunting in the region, with around 1 million (16 percent of children under five) suffering from global acute malnutrition (Multi Indicator Cluster Survey MICS 2014)
- 3.1 million children (39 percent of school-age children) out of school (Out of School Children Report 2014);
- Inadequate immunization coverage, with measles vaccination coverage at 61 percent and DPT3 coverage at 65 percent (MICS 2014)
- About 12 million people (31 percent of the population) without access to safe water and over 11 million people (28 percent of the population) practicing open defecation (MICS 2014)
- 36 percent of the population living in poverty (25 percent in extreme poverty) (2014 Sudan Household Budget and Poverty Survey), children experience higher rates of poverty compared with other groups, and are thus the most affected by the situation.

Preliminary results of a 2018 rapid assessment conducted by UNICEF, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and World Food Programme (WFP) and the African Development Bank in Khartoum State, revealed deepening poverty and deprivation among the urban population. High levels of negative coping strategies were reported, including reduced food consumption and health expenditure and withdrawal of children from schools.

Preliminary results also showed that 75 per cent of households were unable to meet their basic needs, up from 52 per cent prior to January. Limited support was available to those impacted by the economic situation; only 9 per cent of sampled households reported receiving any support (formal or non-formal), and cash transfers payments were delayed due to the liquidity shortage. As children typically experience higher incidence of poverty compared with other groups, they were disproportionately affected by the economic situation.

Up-to-date, high-frequency data on the situation of children and families, especially girls,

women, and other vulnerable groups represents a major gap. Nonetheless, with regard to gender equality, while the gender parity index (GPI) in primary school, as per Ministry of Education (MoE) data, improved from 0.94 in 2015 to 0.97 in 2017, indicating that more girls are enrolling in school, a gender gap remains in enrolment and completion rates between boys and girls. Moreover, the economic situation has increased school drop-out rates and led some segments of the population to pursue adverse coping mechanisms, including child labour and child marriage. Most recent data available on child marriage from 2014 indicated that marriage before 18 years occurred among 38 per cent of women aged 20 to 49 surveyed, while 12 per cent were married before age 15.

According to the humanitarian needs overview, the population in need of humanitarian assistance in Sudan rose from 4.8 million in 2017 to 5.5 million in 2018, 2.6 million of whom are children. The population of internally displaced people was approximately 2 million, including 960,000 children and more than 300,000 returnees, as well as an undefined number of residents made vulnerable by economic deterioration.

Sudan continued to receive a regular flow of refugees each month from South Sudan; nearly 30,000 arrived in 2018. As of end-October, 764,400 South Sudanese refugees, including approximately 466,284 children (49 per cent female) were living in Sudan. About 78 per cent of all South Sudanese refugees in Sudan live in out-of-camp settlements and have dire needs, particularly for education, nutrition and protection. Overall Sudan hosts more than 1.2 million refugees, including approximately 800,000 children. This situation increased the number of children on the move, who were frequently unaccompanied or separated from their family and exposed to violence and exploitation. In 2018, the number of children in contact with the law as alleged offenders, victims and witnesses reached more than 31,000 children across Sudan's 18 states.

In 2018 heavy rains and consequent flash flooding also shaped the humanitarian scene in the country and affected more than 195,000 people, damaging households and livelihoods in 15 states. A subsequent outbreak of chikungunya fever was reported in July in eastern Sudan and later reached southern and western states, affecting an overall population of 20,230 (52 per cent of cases among females) by November. The acute watery diarrhoea (AWD) outbreak that first hit Sudan in 2016 and spread across all states in 2017 was somewhat contained in 2018. A total of 134 cases of AWD were reported (nearly 54 per cent among females), all of which were admitted and treated, with only one reported death in Central Darfur. A measles outbreak was also reported; Kassala, Gedaref and northern states were the most affected. The nutrition situation among vulnerable groups in Sudan remained critical, with a large number of reported cases of acute malnutrition among South Sudanese refugees in White Nile and of acute malnutrition among the population in newly accessible areas in Jebel Marra and Blue Nile.

Overall, the security situation in Darfur remained relatively stable in 2018. Areas held by opposition groups in Jebel Marra in Darfur, the Nuba mountains in South/West Kordofan, and in some parts of Blue Nile remained inaccessible, but some improvements occurred for accessing hard-to-reach localities closer to the front lines in government-held areas. Inter-agency mission assessments conducted in areas such as Mistariha, Otash and Hissahissa camps, Rokero, Thur, East Jebel Marra and Golo uncovered severe humanitarian need for health; nutrition; education; shelter; food; protection; and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH). Insufficient funding for humanitarian needs, requirements for visa and travel permit issuance for humanitarian actors and rapid processing of technical agreements were some of the factors affecting UNICEF's ability to respond efficiently to humanitarian needs. Sporadic

fighting during 2018 also meant that the number of displaced populations continued to generate vulnerability, mostly among children and women.

On the political level Sudan is still characterized by the existence of unresolved internal conflicts and an unstable political situation. Although the security situation in areas affected by armed conflict was somewhat improved, it remained volatile. During 2018 comprehensive implementation of the roadmap developed by the high-level African Union implementation panel remained as the basis for efforts to attain sustainable peace and end long-standing armed conflicts.

However the economic situation, reaching the point of “instability and dysfunction” according to the World Bank, gave rise to public protests in many parts of the country. In September, the Sudanese government adopted a series of austerity measures, including an additional exchange rate devaluation and imposition of further restrictions on bank withdrawals, as well as a major cabinet reshuffle. But these measures failed to stabilize the situation, and long queues continued at automated teller machines, fuel stations and bakeries across Sudan.

In December, following public demonstrations and protests, a state of emergency and school closures were imposed in several cities and towns, causing major disruptions to children’s access to basic services, especially education and health care. Economic insecurity was also an important driver of government restructuring and reorganization of presidential, executive, and national state governance bodies in terms of objectives, ranking and mandates. The Ministry of Federal Government Chamber also initiated structural governance changes at the state level. The election law was endorsed by the national parliament in 2018.

In July the United Nations Security Council approved a new mandate for its hybrid operation in Darfur (UNAMID), under which the troop ceiling would be reduced to 4,050 personnel and police forces were not to exceed 2,500 personnel, including individual police officers and police unit members essential for the implementation of UNAMID’s mandate. Given a planned withdrawal in 2020, governmental and humanitarian actors deliberated on UNAMID’s exit strategy during 2018. In collaboration with the UNCT, UNAMID and relevant UN agencies were requested to identify ways to address gaps in capabilities, including a resource mobilization plan to transition mission responsibilities, in preparation for the mission’s exit. UNICEF played an active role in the state liaison function transition plan and agreed to implement activities in three major areas: rule of law, human rights and durable solutions.

The current context in Sudan is one of protracted and multi-faceted needs, with significant numbers of internally displaced people and displacement-affected communities, refugees and vulnerable communities, including children, in need of assistance, combined with underdevelopment and a need to address the root causes of vulnerability, including conflict and climate change. In such a context, multiple activities need to run concurrently across the humanitarian/development/peace (HDPN) nexus, sometimes in the same geographical area, to adequately address those needs in a way that achieves a sustainable impact. This includes: response to emergencies and life-saving needs; investment in preparedness and resilience; seeking durable solutions for displaced people; supporting conflict prevention, social cohesion and peacebuilding; planning for longer-term development; and building and working with national capacities. UNICEF actively participated in the process of operationalizing HDPN and the ‘new way of working, together with the European Union, as co-leads for the basic services area.

Part 2: Major results, including in humanitarian action and gender, against the results in the Country Programme Document

Goal area 1: Every child survives and thrives

In 2018 service delivery, gauged by the access of girls and boys under five to high-impact, quality health and nutrition services, showed an improvement, particularly for South Sudanese refugees, internally displaced populations (IDPs) and vulnerable host populations. For primary health care levels services were delivered to ensure provision of water, latrines, soap and promotion of handwashing. At the community level nutrition volunteers, including mother support groups, delivered hygiene promotion messages as part of infant and young child feeding counselling.

UNICEF supported the vaccination of 1,241,577 children under five against measles, including 454,119 internally displaced persons and 8,800 South Sudanese refugees living both in camps and host communities in five states (Darfur, West and South Kordofan, White Nile and Blue Nile). As part of efforts to sustain polio-free Sudan, UNICEF conducted two rounds of sub-national polio vaccinations in 2018, reaching 3,016,657 children under five (98 per cent of the planned target, half girls) in round one and 4,477,692 (100 per cent of the planned target, half girls) in round two. The polio campaign was integrated with vitamin A supplementation, reaching 2.4 million children of whom 50 per cent were girls in round one and 3.7 million children of whom 50 per cent were girls in round two. The integrated polio campaigns prioritized localities hosting internally displaced persons and refugees, as well as newly accessible localities in conflict-affected states, to ensure that no child was left behind. For these campaigns, UNICEF procured 7.2 million doses of measles vaccines, 9.8 million doses of oral polio vaccine, and essential vaccines for routine immunizations for all of 2018. UNICEF also procured about 3.5 million long-lasting insecticidal nets, malaria drugs, integrated management of childhood diseases (IMCI) kits, reproductive health commodities and medical equipment for both emergency and development programmes.

UNICEF support for maternal and newborn care resulted in increased access and utilization. A total of 214,512 live births (77.5 per cent) from UNICEF-supported localities were attended by skilled health personnel and 61 per cent of newborns received postnatal care within two days of birth. UNICEF support included training of 459 health staff (76 per cent female, including midwives, community midwives, nurses, medical assistants and doctors); provision of medical equipment and supplies; and supportive supervision. UNICEF also procured tetanus toxoid vaccines and provided operational cost and technical assistance for two rounds of campaigns in 78 high-risk localities hosting refugees and those internally displaced, reaching 1,177,714 women of childbearing age for the first dose (90 per cent of the planned target) and 1,416,649 for the third dose (86 per cent of the planned target). Some 423,955 women who were pregnant (100 per cent of the planned target) also received iron and folic acid supplementation during the first antenatal care visit.

UNICEF Sudan sustained efforts to prevent children from dying of malnutrition in 2018. By end-November, 215,556 children (51 per cent girls) suffering from severe acute malnutrition (SAM) had been treated in 1,447 outpatient therapeutic programmes (OTPs) and 139 stabilization centres. More than 90 per cent of children admitted were treated and cured. More than 70 per cent of children treated were refugees, internally displaced or from vulnerable host populations from Darfur, West Kordofan, South Kordofan, Blue Nile and White Niles states. As part of integrating WASH services into the management of acute malnutrition, 655 OTPs (47 per cent)

were provided with improved water, sanitation, and handwashing facilities.

Following a nutrition survey by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) that reported high levels of malnutrition among South Sudanese refugees in White Nile, South and West Kordofan states, UNICEF launched a large-scale surge response dubbed the 'Find and Treat Campaign'. The campaign mobilized the Ministry of Health, NGO partners and communities, and built their capacity to screen a total of 22,057 children under five for malnutrition, of whom 656 were identified with severe acute malnutrition and 2,500 with moderate acute malnutrition. These children were admitted for treatment through OTPs run by UNICEF and the supplementary feeding programme run by the United Nations World Food Programme. During the campaign, measles vaccinations, treatment for childhood illness, antenatal care and hygiene promotion services were also delivered, reaching children and women who would have otherwise been missed.

The year also marked significantly improved coordination for multi-sector action on scaling-up nutrition. UNICEF chaired the first round of the UN network for Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) from July 2017 to June 2018. Six UN network and two heads of agency meetings were held in the first half of 2018. UNICEF recruited an international consultant and a national facilitator to provide the SUN movement with technical support, including finalizing the roadmap for developing a costed, multi-sector nutrition action plan. These efforts contributed to leveraging US\$5 million from the Government for procurement of ready-to-use therapeutic food. In addition, UNICEF played a key role in supporting the development of national food fortification and maternity protection policies and strategies, which were awaiting final signature at end-2018.

After three years of continuous advocacy, UNICEF finally had a breakthrough with the Government and launched the standard spatial survey method (S3M), an innovative sub-locality-level multi-sectoral survey to generate national evidence on nutrition, health, WASH, education and protection. The data will be used to inform multi-sectoral policies and plans to holistically address critical health and nutrition needs of women and children. UNICEF also supported a comprehensive emergency obstetric and new-born care assessment and a qualitative study on barriers to immunization in low-performing localities. Additionally, UNICEF supported the Ministry of Health to respond to different epidemics through the provision of technical assistance to update the national AWD preparedness and response plan, the chikungunya virus outbreak response plan, training of health care providers on AWD standard case management, operation of oral rehydration therapy corners and essential supplies needed for case management. Through UNICEF's communication for development (C4D) approach was integrated into the service delivery. Engagement with influential community figures led to greater social mobilization and increased community participation. More than 3,000 cadres (65 per cent female) from government counterparts, international non-governmental organizations and community volunteers were trained in outbreak response. For the first time, mobile text messages were used to increase outreach and personalize messages to the target/risk group.

Goal area 2: Every child learns

Sudan remains far from attaining Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, on quality education. A large proportion of school-age children are not in school due to both supply and demand factors. Key barriers continued to be out-of-pocket expenses, social norms, long distances to schools, lack of qualified teachers, poor school environment (particularly for girls),

lack of or overcrowded classrooms and insufficient Government allocations to education. UNICEF technical and financial support significantly contributed to increasing children's access to quality basic education. In 2018 a total of 192,398 previously out-of-school children (49.5 per cent female) from rural, nomadic, internally displaced, refugee and emergency-affected communities accessed formal and non-formal education with UNICEF's direct support, against an annual target of 194,816 children (half girls). This result was achieved through the establishment of adequate gender-responsive learning spaces, provision of learning supplies, school enrolment campaigns supported by C4D and teacher training. Of the total number of children, 59,392 (43 per cent female) previously out-of-school children were supported to enrol in alternative learning programme (ALP) centres that were established. UNICEF, in partnership with UNESCO, supported the Ministry of Education (MoE) to revise the ALP curriculum for cycle 1 (grades 1 to 3), aligning it with recently revised basic education curricula for grades 1 to 3.

UNICEF in partnership with MoE and implementing partners conducted two rounds of community-driven 'come to school' campaigns in localities with low enrolment in 12 states. Some 432,151 children were reached with teaching and learning materials and/or other supplies supporting their school enrolment, such as uniforms and dignity kits. Of the total number of children reached, 128,150 vulnerable girls received full social assistance packages, including school uniforms and/or dignity kits. Since a key barrier to education is families' out-of-pocket costs, educational materials and social assistance helped to offset poor families' schooling costs and encouraged enrolment and retention, especially among girls.

In response to emergencies in Sudan, UNICEF, in partnership with more than 30 local and international CSOs and in collaboration with MoE at the federal and state levels, supported 99,080 children (52 per cent female) in humanitarian situations to access formal and non-formal education in child-friendly learning environments. UNICEF constructed and rehabilitated 725 temporary and semi-permanent classrooms, including teacher's offices and gender-sensitive toilets, using a multi-sectoral approach involving WASH, child protection and C4D. Teaching, learning, and recreational materials were provided to 195,162 emergency-affected children (52 per cent female). Further, 4,565 conflict-affected children (40 per cent female) were supported to take grade 8 examinations to complete basic education. Although it was not possible to verify the impact of the current economic crisis in Sudan on children by year's end, it is likely that the number of at-risk vulnerable children will increase. To address the effects of the current economic situation on education UNICEF will adjust its programme to scale-up school improvement plans with school grants to reduce the burden of direct and indirect costs on parents. The most vulnerable families will be supported with cash-based assistance, in collaboration with social protection and child protection sections. As coordinating agency for both humanitarian and development assistance to the education sector, UNICEF will provide technical leadership to advance an integrated approach and link humanitarian with development aid.

Learning environments were improved in 147 schools through the construction and rehabilitation of 493 classrooms and construction of 117 latrines. Availability of gender-sensitive WASH packages in schools contributed to the retention of adolescent girls. With UNICEF support, 280 schools were assisted to develop school improvement plans through the establishment of committees and training of 432 committee members (41 per cent female). The plans aimed to address quality learning and equity issues, and schools were provided with grants to implement their plans. Improvement plans and school grants increased local ownership and empowered the community to take an active part in their schools.

To improve learning outcomes, UNICEF supported capacity building for teachers by providing in-service teacher training for 11,446 primary school teachers (55 per cent females) to enhance skills in using learner-centred teaching approaches. The 2018 UNICEF target was 6,000 teachers to be trained; thus achieving over 190 per cent against the target, and 63.6 per cent of the 2018–2021 CP target of 18,000 teachers. The target was exceeded thanks to additional teacher training funds received from KFW, the EU, emergency resources and the Thematic Fund, and the focus on short, cost-effective courses. With UNICEF support, the MoE revised the learner-centred training manual and equipped 30 trainers to deliver training using the revised manual. In 2018 UNICEF continued to support inclusive education by providing educational materials for children with disabilities and supporting capacity building of teachers to meet their needs. Some 1,000 sign-language dictionaries for children with hearing-impairment were printed, and 30 master trainers were taught how to use the dictionary to make teaching and learning inclusive of children with disabilities.

More than 23,309 adolescents (51 per cent female) were equipped with life skills through the establishment of 800 child clubs. The life-skills manual was revised with UNICEF's technical and financial support. Implementing the UPSHIFT programme, a social enterprise model to support marginalized and out-of-school adolescents (15–17 years of age) in the use of human-centred design methodologies, was an example of UNICEF's integrated approach to addressing adolescent education and child protection issues. The focus was on experiential learning and developing skills such as creativity, communication, critical thinking and collaboration. Some 700 adolescents (50 per cent girls) – 400 in Red Sea and 300 in Khartoum, including refugee children – were reached through UPSHIFT.

UNICEF continued to coordinate the development of the 2018/19–2020/23 education sector strategic plan (ESSP) and provided technical and financial support for the independent appraisal of the draft version. UNICEF coordinated five education partners group meetings during which partners discussed policy reforms, including mainstreaming refugee education into the national system and holding the Government accountable for key commitments, especially implementation of the Global Partnership for Education-funded basic education recovery program. One of key 2018 achievements from these meetings was the integration of refugee education into the 2018/19–2022/23 ESSP.

One of the major challenges affecting education in Sudan is low public expenditure on education. In 2017 the Government of Sudan spent 1.2 per cent of GDP on education; about 11.2 per cent of public expenditure. These low levels placed a heavy burden on families, who contributed twice as much (an average of 65 per cent of the cost of education). UNICEF provided technical support to the technical council of undersecretaries to discuss and approve a costing and financing study that was finalized in 2018, contributing to raising awareness among senior government officials of the need for increased budgetary allocations to education.

UNICEF leveraged its role as coordinating agency for the education sector for both humanitarian and development contexts to engage in policy dialogue and reform, including discussions on the HDPN.

Strategic partnerships with both financial and non-financial partners (i.e. the EU, Germany's KFW, the Government of Japan, UK Department for International Development, the Global Partnership for Education, Qatar Foundation, UNESCO, UNHCR, WFP and other UN agencies,

as well as CSOs and NGOs contributed to the achievement of results. In 2018, UNICEF partnered with more than 30 local and international CSOs, in collaboration with the MoE at the federal and state levels, to increase access to quality education for school-aged children.

Goal area 3: Every child is protected from violence and exploitation

UNICEF contributed to goal area 3 by placing a priority on addressing violence against children. Approximately 628,700 child victims of violence were supported by different government interventions to improve the provision of specialized child protection services for legal, social, medical and psychosocial support (PSS). In 2018, a total of 31,251 children (8,050 girls, 23,201 boys) at risk or victims of violence, abuse and exploitation benefited from preventative and responsive justice services, in compliance with SDG 16.

The de-listing of Sudan from the UN Secretary General's Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict, adoption of standard operating procedures for the release of children from armed groups and the complaint mechanism represented notable progress in strengthening the enabling environment for children in humanitarian settings.

With the influx of South Sudanese refugees and emergencies in different states of Sudan, 131,707 children (62,945 girls, 68,762 boys) benefited from integrated PSS in child-friendly education settings.

A total of 1,200 adolescents (50 per cent children on the move, 50 per cent host community children) were trained and provided with cash-based assistance as a result of UPSHIFT. In partnership with CSOs, UNICEF adolescent programming was shaped through an integrated approach with education. In 2018, some 9,159 adolescents (51.8 per cent girls) were equipped with knowledge and life skills to reduce vulnerability and protect them from violence.

Addressing a child protection priority disproportionately affecting boys in Sudan, in partnership with the Government and CSOs UNICEF supported a social change campaign to support alternative family arrangements for 408 abandoned children (20 girls, 388 boys), moving to the family-based alternative care *kafala* system (Islamic adoption). This partnership helped to leverage resources, conveying a single message and ensuring a complementarity of roles.

Focusing on the unique needs of girls affected by emergencies, UNICEF Sudan supported 41 per cent of unaccompanied and separated girls (of a total of 6,351 children; 2,607 girls, 3,744 boys), reunifying them with their families or placing them in alternative family care system.

UNICEF and its partners, with support from the UNICEF ESARO, undertook a social workforce assessment using alternative care as an entry point, which resulted in mapping social networks in different states.

Through strong partnerships with the National Council for Child Welfare (NCCW), the national mechanism for family and child protection units (FCPUs) and others, the system for protecting child victims of trafficking and children on the move was improved through finalization and roll-out of the system in three affected states in East Sudan, establishing five one-stop centres offering a package of services.

The protection of children on the move was a priority for UNICEF Sudan in 2018. Encouraged by the national outlawing of the detention of migrant children, UNICEF supported 3,443

children (2,758 boys, 685 girls) to access multiple protective services in safe places, PSS and legal aid. A total of 88 children on the move were registered as unaccompanied and separated children and received reintegration services. Best interest assessments and best interest determinations were carried out by trained professionals.

Through collaboration with the NCCW, FCPUs, Ministry of Social Welfare, Sudan's judiciary and general prosecution and CSOs, UNICEF provided financial and technical support for an evaluation of the child justice system with a focus on FCPUs. The study was finalized in 2018 and will inform future interventions and evidence-based planning to enhance the quality of services.

Children in conflict with the law continue to undergo from pre-trial detention. Some 2,607 of 6,634 child offenders (41.3 per cent) were diverted outside the judicial system thanks to UNICEF's two years of work in strengthening alternative measures to detention. Four boys associated with armed forces were reunified with their families after well-structured PSS and coordination among institutions at the federal and state levels.

With UNICEF's technical and financial support and in partnership with the State Council for Child Welfare and the Ministry of Security and Social Development, in northern states and North Kordofan, legislative councils adopted state laws criminalizing female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C), a major achievement that will contribute to reducing the practice and protecting girls from violence. Community dialogues and engagement continued, resulting in 1,085 community declarations as FGM/C free, with a significant decrease in the practice of this harmful social norm, as captured by efficient monitoring systems. In 2018, some 53,570 (24,015 girls, 18,646 boys) participated in FGM/C abandonment discussions.

More than 8,383 community dialogues continued in Gezira, Gadarif, Khartoum and North Kordofan states during the first quarter of 2018, scaling-up adolescent engagement through the establishment of 124 girls' clubs and 250 trained teachers, reaching 62,700 girls at 124 schools in Gezira through the innovative, integrated approach made possible by UNICEF's financial and technical support.

The 2018 celebration of the 10-year anniversary of the 2008–2018 national strategy for FGM/C abandonment showed strong political commitment. The Minister of Security and Social Development confirmed that girls' rights are a national government priority and that operationalizing the childhood strategy and the FGM/C abandonment law were of great importance to achieving SDG 5, relating to gender equality and empowerment and the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls in the public and private spheres.

Thirty-eight per cent of women aged 20-to-49 were married before reaching the age of 18 and 12 per cent were married before reaching 15, according to the 2014 multiple indicator cluster survey (MICS). This evidence encouraged UNICEF and partners to exert efforts to reduce child marriage through community engagement in support of sustainable and positive behaviour change. During 2018, some 64,861 girls (aged 10-to-19) actively participated in UNICEF-supported interventions addressing child marriage, resulting in their empowerment and capacity to publicly address and question child marriage. With UNICEF's support, a Sudanese alliance to end child marriage was formed composed of 39 international and national NGOs, academic institutions and relevant government institutions. The alliance undertook a rigorous analysis of the causes and impact of child marriage on children, families and society. In partnership with the NCCW, Ministry of Security and Social Development, University of

Khartoum and University of Sudan, UNICEF also finalized an analysis of the status of child marriage in Sudan, which was approved by the national task force. A compilation of judicial precedents related to child marriage showed an increased trend among judges to annul such marriages.

The Government made significant investments in strengthening the statutory role of the ministries of social welfare during this year, increasing the number of social workers and their distribution in different localities, part of a UNICEF ESARO initiative assessing the social service workforce that began with mapping the number of social workers and their distribution in relation to different child protection issues.

Goal area 4: Every child lives in a safe and clean environment

UNICEF's WASH programme contributed to Goal Area 4 by implementing programmes in development and humanitarian settings to increase equitable access to sustainable drinking water services and reduce open defecation in vulnerable communities. This effort was backed by a strong enabling environment component that put in place systems, structures, strategies and plans and invested in capacities and community ownership. In line with the SDG agenda of "reaching everyone everywhere", water and sanitation facilities were extended to schools and health/nutrition centres, and school sanitation facilities ensured access for children with a disability.

UNICEF Sudan influenced sector thinking by co-leading the national and subnational WASH sector coordination forums, where it advanced the HDPN agenda. UNICEF supported Sudan's sanitation and water for all commitments, WASH sector reform, SDG 6 planning and the national open defecation-free (ODF) roadmap, in addition to a comprehensive web-based WASH information management system (IMS) to better target inequities. Initial efforts to set up a common WASH coordination forum bringing together development and humanitarian actors were ongoing, with UNICEF's active engagement.

By prioritizing the rehabilitation of water facilities, some 737,000 vulnerable rural and emergency-affected people (358,000 males and 379,000 females, of whom 368,000 were children) gained access to improved water sources with UNICEF support, representing 184 per cent of the planned target. UNICEF achieved substantial progress with 226 ODF-certified communities representing 150 per cent of the planned target, and creatively adapted the community-led total sanitation (CLTS) approach to conflict-affected communities and returnee areas. UNICEF's contributions to ODF-certified communities represent 84 per cent of WASH sector (humanitarian) results and 73 per cent of sanitation results for the WASH sector (humanitarian). UNICEF's contributions in water represented 46 per cent of WASH sector achievements (humanitarian). Hygiene promotion interventions reached nearly 3.7 million people (1.8 million males, 1.9 million females) across Sudan (319 per cent of the targeted 1.16 million). In close collaboration with the education sector, 90,000 school children (43,900 boys, 46,760 girls) benefited from water and sanitation interventions. Fifty-eight health and nutrition centres benefited from water and another 47 from sanitation facilities, in close collaboration with the health/nutrition section.

Sudan is far from reaching SDG 6.1 and 6.2 targets of "safely managed water" and "safely managed sanitation" for all by 2030. While UNICEF's direct support added about 1.8 per cent and 1.1 per cent to the national basic water and sanitation coverage, respectively, in 2018, the totals are insufficient to achieve SDG 6 targets. UNICEF's persistent advocacy efforts and

extensive consultations with a wide range of stakeholders, led to the development of SDG 6 plans and budgets for all 18 states— a major milestone for Sudan, as WASH was the first sector to develop a SDG plan. About US\$20 billion is required to achieve and sustain basic water and basic sanitation for all Sudanese, including WASH facilities in all schools and health centres by 2030. UNICEF actively contributed to ongoing WASH sector reform comprised of: the 2018–2021 WASH strategic plan, monitoring and evaluation framework and water tariff setting, funded by the African Development Bank.

Sanitation got a major boost in 2018 through the high-level launch of the national roadmap for making Sudan open defecation free (ODF) by 2022, attended by nine ministers (five federal, four state) and widely covered in the media. Similar roadmaps were developed for 10 of 18 states. Community-led total sanitation gained momentum, delivering three times as many ODF-certified communities in 2018 as the previous year (226, compared to 77 in 2017), largely driven by C4D strategy/interventions. Nearly 400 (395) communities were declared ODF and awaited formal verification and certification. Through UNICEF's support, Rosaries locality in Blue Nile state is on the verge of becoming the first ODF locality in Sudan. Partnerships were forged with media and learning institutions to scale up sanitation. Sixteen universities committed to supporting the ODF roadmap and ensuring basic sanitation for all at their campuses and affiliated institutes. UNICEF's engagement with the media on sanitation yielded positive results; 12 media outlets covered sanitation and social media posts, reaching over 27,000 people since October 2018.

UNICEF supported sanitation marketing and financing initiatives to help households move up the sanitation ladder. Some 140 adolescents and youth in 16 communities in Kassala and Gedaref were engaged in sanitation marketing. Twelve "SANIMARTS"/production centres (six in each of two states) were established as small-scale businesses with support from microfinance institutions in Kassala and Gedaref.

UNICEF addressed data challenges in the WASH sector by supporting a web-based national WASH IMS covering water, sanitation and hygiene indicators at the community, locality, state and national levels in both developmental and humanitarian contexts. Roll-out in states is set to start in early 2019. UNICEF Sudan, in collaboration with the MoE and other relevant line ministries, initiated a first-ever national WASH-in-schools' assessment to generate an SDG baseline for WASH in schools. WASH aspects were also included in the 2018 simple spatial sampling methodology national nutrition survey.

The WASH programme ensured that gender issues were duly incorporated across all domains of the programme – policy/strategies, capacity building and service delivery. Gender aspects were incorporated in policy and strategic documents, such as the SDG 6 plans, national- and state-level ODF roadmaps and the 2017–2021 WASH sector investment plan. UNICEF supported the development of a training programme on mainstreaming gender in WASH and trained master trainers to support regular delivery of training. The generation of gender-disaggregated data is part of the WASH IMS and all assessments in humanitarian and development settings. Gender was a key consideration in the planning and siting of WASH facilities in communities, schools, and health centres. Menstrual hygiene management (MHM) issues were addressed, though at a slow pace. With UNICEF support, 18,314 girls and women had access to MHM services in humanitarian situations, along with girls in four schools. UNICEF capacity-building initiatives in 2018 witnessed an increase in women's participation in WASH sectoral trainings (235 females, 207 males) and among community members (4,611 females, 4,578 males). Women and girls played an increasingly active role in WASH

community platforms, including as mechanics for maintaining water services.

WASH contributed significantly to resource mobilization for 2019 and beyond, increasingly adopting the whole-community approach of “reaching everyone everywhere”. UNICEF Sudan’s multi-sectoral approach involved four elements: community sanitation as the entry point for multi-sectoral interventions including health, nutrition, and education; schools as an entry point for WASH, health, and nutrition; migration as an entry point for WASH, health, nutrition, education, and child protection; and all sectors for humanitarian response.

UNICEF contributed to climate-resilient development and integrated water resources management (IWRM) approaches in Darfur, in partnership with the United Nations Environment Programme, and increasingly moved toward the development side of the HDPN spectrum by mainstreaming internally displaced persons in long-term planning (e.g. sanitation and hygiene master plans for Zalingei and El Fasher towns), considering durable solutions and putting in place systems and structures for long-term sustainability. UNICEF creatively adapted the community-led total sanitation approach in conflict-affected communities and settlements to drive sustainable behaviour change instead of ad-hoc latrine provision, resulting in 165 ODF communities benefiting nearly 226,000 people, including host families, those internally displaced and refugees in Darfur and West and South Kordofan states.

UNICEF actively engaged with UN agencies in ongoing WASH projects and in the development of funding proposals. With UNDP, UNEP, and the United Nations Organization on Migration and World Health Organization, UNICEF provided a complete WASH package in 45 communities and 50 schools as part of the larger UN-supported Darfur Recovery and Development Fund in five Darfur states. UNICEF coordinated the Urban Water for Darfur project with the United Nations Office for Project Services, which implemented the water component while UNICEF handled the sanitation component. To address climate change in Sudan, UNICEF collaborated with UNEP, UNHCR, WFP, and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to plan and implement the ‘Adaptation to climate change in sub-Saharan African humanitarian situations’ project. UNICEF worked closely with WHO on water quality surveillance and AWD preparedness and response, and with UNHCR on addressing WASH challenges for refugees. UNICEF Sudan is also part of planned projects with the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations and the European Commission’s International Cooperation and Development unit that include food security (with WFP), livelihoods (with FAO), WASH, education, health and nutrition.

UNICEF complemented the Government’s ‘zero thirst’ programme through its support for system strengthening, community engagement and capacity building. In 2018, UNICEF commenced a multi-dimensional study on the situation of *hafirs* (water harvesting bodies) to devise a national strategy for sustainable management of *hafirs*, duly considering IWRM principles. Similar efforts to develop a national strategy for scaling-up community management of operation and maintenance (CMOM) and management of faecal sludge also began, with CMOM instituted in 124 communities. At end-2018 UNICEF Sudan was in the process of piloting an innovative, low-cost hybrid water supply system powered by solar to provide greater water security for rural inhabitants.

WASH supplies worth US\$2.56 million were procured by UNICEF, which also leveraged nearly US\$3 million (about 30 per cent of UNICEF WASH expenditure in 2018) from federal and state governments for the WASH programme. Community contributions, through investment in latrines, represented another US\$2.3 million. Private-sector engagement was in the areas of

construction, strategic studies (CMOM, IWRM, geophysical studies and faecal sludge management) and securing free air time from radio stations, print and TV to promote sanitation.

Goal Area 5: Every child has an equitable chance in life

In 2018 UNICEF launched a social policy and inclusion programme as part of its four-year country programme. The overall objective was to support the development and implementation of policies and programmes that address structural causes of child multi-dimensional poverty and inequities in Sudan, reflecting two goals of the 2030 global Sustainable Development Agenda: SDG 1 (ending poverty) and SDG 10 (reducing inequality).

The launch took place at a time when Sudan faced one of the most serious economic challenges since 2011. The situation was triggered by a balance-of-payments crisis, which prompted the Government to adopt a series of austerity measures, including the devaluation of the exchange rate, customs tax increases, import bans and a reduction of energy and wheat subsidies. This led to a sharp increase in the cost of living and household purchasing power; the annual inflation rate had reached almost 70 per cent by August. The situation was aggravated by shortages of fuel, bread and other essential commodities, causing major disruptions in the delivery of basic services including electricity, education, health and WASH. Restrictions on bank withdrawals also led to an acute liquidity shortage, causing a significant slowdown in humanitarian and development operations by the Government, international and national NGOs and development partners.

The economic situation led segments of the population to pursue adverse coping mechanisms such as skipping meals and child labour. If it continues, it will pose a multi-dimensional challenge to development and SDG achievement. Sudan did not fully achieve any of the Millennium Development Goals, although progress occurred in some areas.

UNICEF's efforts focused on three areas: enhancing partnership with key actors in social policy; generating evidence on the situation of children and families, especially the most vulnerable groups through data disaggregation; and capacity building for strengthening child and gender-sensitive social protection systems.

UNICEF support for evidence generation included support to the Commission on Social Safety Nets and Poverty Reduction (CSSPR)– recently elevated to a supra-ministerial body from a unit within the Ministry of Security and Social Development (MoSSD)– to produce data on children and families affected by the economic situation. Specifically, UNICEF, jointly with UNDP, WFP and the African Development Bank, provided technical and financial support to the CSSPR for a rapid assessment of the impact of the economic crisis on the urban population, with an initial focus on Khartoum state. The assessment provided an empirical investigation into the channels of transmission of the economic crisis, households' coping mechanisms and impacts of the crisis on the vulnerable population. The study will inform policy advocacy, interventions, and resource mobilization by the Government and the international community.

UNICEF continued to provide capacity building support to the Central Bureau of Statistics and the Ministry of Health to produce up-to-date, high-quality data on the situation of children and families. Specifically, financial and technical support was provided for two household-based surveys: the simple spatial survey method and the MICS, which will serve as baseline data for measuring progress toward the SDGs. UNICEF also provided, through partnership with RedR-

UK, capacity building on results-based management for 49 staff (22 NGOs and 27 state-level government director generals).

To support capacity building for social protection, UNICEF partnered with the World Bank to facilitate Sudan's first participation in an annual face-to-face meeting of the community of practice on cash transfers in Africa held in Kampala, Uganda in July. In October, UNICEF, with support from UNICEF ESARO, partnered with the International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth (a think-tank affiliated with the Government of Brazil and UNDP in Brasilia), to conduct a capacity-building workshop where staff from the MoSSD learned about social protection concepts and approaches, particularly the life-cycle approach – in which age and gender-specific risks and vulnerabilities are considered throughout the lifecycle including childhood, adolescence, working age and old age. Furthermore, with UNICEF's facilitation, government partners from different line ministries benefited from a country exchange visit to Rwanda, gaining knowledge on good practices in decentralized strategic planning and coordination of economic and social development at both national and sub-national levels.

In the area of child poverty, UNICEF used the mission by UNICEF ESARO's social policy advisor to sensitize senior officials in the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MoFEP) to new evidence on child poverty generated by the League of Arab States, UN ESCWA, UNICEF and Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiatives. This prompted MoFEP to request UNICEF's support for conducting a workshop on child poverty to build capacity in the measurement and analysis and monitoring of child poverty in Sudan. UNICEF also initiated discussions with MoFEP regarding its support for the development of Sudan's first full poverty reduction strategy paper, to ensure that it is child-sensitive, gender-responsive and equity focused.

The presence of a large number of government, international partner and civil society actors in social protection, as well as the divide between humanitarian and development actors, posed a significant challenge to sectoral coordination. The challenge was further compounded by overlapping roles and responsibilities of government ministries and other bodies. Moreover, the lack of up-to-date, disaggregated data on the impact of the economic crisis and social protection coverage was a major constraint to evidence-based policy and programme formulation in support of children. Lastly, the current economic situation presented a significant challenge for the social protection sector, as it meant more children and families to reach with fewer resources.

UNICEF sought and harnessed opportunities to partner with key actors in social protection, including the MoSSD, CSSPR, MoFP, World Bank, African Development Bank, UNDP, WFP, OCHA, and ILO. Partnerships with the MoSSD and CSSPR are formalized included in the rolling work plan, which was undergoing final review by the MoSSD. Signing of the plan was expected to take place in early 2019.

Part 3: Lessons learned and constraints

In a protracted humanitarian context with the onset of additional economic, social and climate-related emergencies, UNICEF Sudan took concrete steps to mitigate and overcome programme challenges and advance the humanitarian, development and peace nexus (HDPN) in 2018. While emergency incidents required immediate response with service delivery to meet the urgent needs of affected populations, UNICEF Sudan strengthened its efforts on resilience-

building at all levels to mitigate risks in a preventive and sustainable manner.

UNICEF demonstrated its comparative advantage for influencing upstream engagement by providing technical expertise and convening a wide range of partners across all states in a series of consultations leading to successful ownership and high-level commitment to the SDG agenda at sub-national and national levels, and to the development of SDG 6 plans and budgets for all 18 states in Sudan.

Despite these positive results, UNICEF Sudan faced a number of challenges in programme implementation. The economic crisis adversely impacted UNICEF Sudan's programme delivery. Fuel shortages and an increase in overall operational costs caused delays in procurement and service delivery. The weakening currency caused significant delays in procurement in local markets, as imported materials became scarce, affecting emergency supplies and construction materials. Rapid inflation raised the cost of spare parts, such as for water facilities and public health centres, requiring significant budgetary adjustments to programmes. Negotiations with suppliers took longer than usual, since they were reluctant to commit to specific rates due to unpredictability, resulting in implementation delays and posing difficulties for communities and government partners to meet financial requirements for constructing and maintaining facilities.

UNICEF Sudan, particularly its field offices, coped with the lack of fuel and currency through advocacy with government counterparts. The needs of UNICEF's partners were outlined to state line ministries so that they were prioritized within state allocations and measures could be taken to reduce shortage complications. For example, in Nyala and Demazine, field offices took direct action to urge the state governor, which resulted in making the required supply of fuel and cash available for lifesaving interventions through associated state government ministries. The Kadugli field office reported similar outcomes through advocacy with various government institutions. Unfortunately, this prioritization did not extend to non-government implementing partners, which continued to face challenges that required alternative solutions, such as: sector-level coordination to implement joint field missions, utilizing solar power systems rather than fuel to run water supply systems, using checks as an alternative to cash payments and activating previously negotiated supply agreements with other UN agencies to tap into parallel supplies.

The continued rise in inflation also caused challenges to UNICEF staff retention, particularly among field monitors in field offices who were contracted as UN Volunteers. The real value of incentives decreased, resulting in high staff turnover— especially during the local harvest season – leading to significantly higher operational costs and weakened implementation. Staff resignations were exacerbated by lengthy recruitment times, the loss of project knowledge and substantial gaps in monitoring activities. As a mitigation measure, UNICEF Sudan agreed with the UNV Office to augment lists of potential future hires by recommending more than one person to ensure fall-back candidates should the first recommended decline or a staff member resign. The existing talent pool was also used to speed up the recruitment process.

In addition to inflation and lack of supplies, the restructuring of government ministries and reorganization of intrastate boundaries created uncertainty, with implications for programme implementation. Ministerial decision-making required for programme implementation had a gap in officially appointed nodal ministry. Concerns arose that combining localities could raise tensions as previously separated tribal structures were adjusted to new compositions, often by downsizing. The new government structure will become more visible as official decisions are

made by state governments during the course of 2019. UNICEF Sudan has been mitigating risks by using previously established working relationships with specific line ministries, at both the organizational and personal levels, during structural transitions to monitor the situation and strengthen the pre-positioning of life-saving supplies.

Fifty-nine per cent of UNICEF Sudan's 'other resources' allotment was emergency funding (US\$ 58 million) in 2018, and 41 per cent was for development funding (US\$40 million), at a time when the office was trying to move to longer-term policy development work. Of the emergency funding, a significant part came with strict conditionality and some US\$9 million provided less than six months' for implementation, posing additional constraints on quality implementation, especially as partners concurrently struggled with lack of cash and inflation. A new trend over 2017 and 2018 were so called "nexus projects" – funding from donors (e.g. EU, Germany, the Netherlands) shifting from one year to multi-year initiatives and clearly directed at activities related to the humanitarian-development-peace nexus (HDPN) with a strong focus on resilience and durable, sustainable solutions. Such initiatives have been discussed for Eastern Sudan, West Kordofan and North Darfur as examples. These funding streams were often linked to migration or refugees.

UNICEF Sudan applied C4D, including community engagement, widely as a key strategy in all programmes. This led to an understanding that a comprehensive, integrated C4D strategy is instrumental to ensuring a holistic, life-cycle approach to programming. Thus UNICEF began developing a multi-year, integrated C4D strategy to be rolled out during the rest of the country programme cycle.

Lack of up-to-date data posed a serious challenge to programming, and monitoring systems in different sectors are not always adequate, accurate or accessible, particularly for child protection. Hence the baseline for the majority of indicators was the MICS 2014, and measuring progress since that time is not possible, as no population-based survey has taken place in the interim. UNICEF did complete data collection for S3M, which will provide a robust set of new data encompassing most sectors in 2019.

The main lesson learned in Sudan during 2018 was that the international community has embraced the humanitarian-development peace nexus (HDPN) approach, and agreed to adopt it as the default approach from now on as an international community. Within UNICEF, HDPN coordination was explored and discussed specifically for the education, nutrition and WASH sectors, including with NGO partners from each sector. As an overall outcome and lesson from 2018: HDPN coordination for education seems to be feasible; nutrition will be more complex, but feasible, in 2019; and for WASH the main lesson is that the overall HDPN coordination requires rapprochement among partners working on water with those working on sanitation and hygiene.

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