For the first nine months of 2021 Sudan’s political transition was ongoing as the interim government moved forward with the implementation of the Juba Peace Agreement and social and economic reforms that prompted the international community to lift decades-old embargoes, end sanctions and grant Sudan access to international development funding. A reconfiguration of UN activities in the country created opportunities for engagement with the government to fulfil the objectives of the transitional period, including implementation of the Constitutional Declaration, and the Juba Peace Agreement. The United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan was given the mandate to support the mobilization of economic and development assistance and the United Nations Secretary-General’s Peacebuilding Fund started implementing a series of projects.

In 2021, the Government of Sudan reached major milestones in its economic reform agenda including the unification of multiple exchange rates, removal of fuel subsidies and tightening of monetary policy. In June, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank approved the formal start of a debt relief process for Sudan under the enhanced Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative, a joint IMF-World Bank comprehensive approach to debt reduction for the world’s poorest and mostly heavily indebted countries. Before the completion of the three-year process, Sudan was expected to benefit from debt reduction. In the immediate term, the clearance of long-standing arrears, which was made possible by financial assistance from the international community, allowed Sudan to gain access to additional financial resources from the World Bank’s International Development Association (IDA-19) and IMF Extended Credit Facility (ECF) arrangement. Consequently, exchange and inflation rates began to stabilize following a rapid increase.

On October 25, 2021, the political and economic gains made after the revolution have been threatened by the military coup. The civilian transitional cabinet was dissolved, its leader was detained, and a state of emergency was declared. The Prime Minister was later reinstated on 21 November but has since resigned, leaving the country in an ongoing political crisis. In the aftermath of the coup, the breakdown of national governance systems, ongoing human and child rights violations and a pause on official development assistance risk rolling back the hard-won achievements of the past two years. Protests and civil disobedience efforts by civilians against the military takeover have been met with violence and numerous casualties, including children. Humanitarian activities are ongoing, although some humanitarian services provided through government mechanisms, such as health-related services, are disrupted. The Family Support Programme, which was expected to provide cash transfers to 32 million vulnerable Sudanese, has been paused.

Despite some progress made on economic reforms, millions of children and families in Sudan continued to suffer from financial hardship, the health and socio-economic implications of COVID-19, ongoing hazards such as flooding, drought, conflict, and displacement, as well as the effects of lifting subsidies from essential commodities in 2021. The removal of fuel subsidies increased diesel prices by 128 percent, with spillover effects in transport and food prices. Household purchasing power was decimated by skyrocketing inflation, which reached an annualized rate of 433 percent in July. Shortages of essential commodities and daily electricity supply interruptions prompted peaceful protests and marches in major cities across Sudan.

During the post-revolution period, there has been a steep rise in armed clashes and intercommunal violence in Darfur, Kordofan and the Eastern states. Political disagreements in the East resulted in the closure of Port Sudan, disrupting the supply of various goods into the country for a few months in 2021, including humanitarian supplies. Ongoing crises in neighboring countries, primarily South
Sudan and Ethiopia, continue to displace women, men and children, adding to the 1.1 million refugees already hosted in Sudan. These events have increased humanitarian needs and hampered humanitarian access in some areas.

According to the 2022 Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO), 14.3 million people need humanitarian assistance—of whom 8.1 million are women and girls, and 7.8 million are children. This is an increase from 13.4 million in need identified in the 2021 HNO. The overview also indicates that food insecurity reached an all-time high with 9.8 million people (22 percent of the population) facing an acute level of Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) Phase 3 and above. An extrapolatory analysis using the 2014 household poverty survey – the most recent in Sudan – shows that even prior to the economic crisis Sudanese children already suffered from acute levels of poverty and deprivation, with an abject poverty rate of 46 percent and an extreme poverty rate of 71 percent in 2018. Current data on poverty is limited, but UNICEF has estimated that abject poverty and extreme poverty increased into 2020.

Children of Sudan are among the most affected by political instability and turmoil in the country. The under-5 mortality declined modestly in Sudan from 68/1000 live births in 2014 to a still high 56.6/1000 live births in 2020. Water, sanitation and hygiene associated diseases, mainly diarrhea, cholera and stunting pose high morbidity and mortality risks as 63 and 27 percent of Sudanese children don’t have access to improved sanitation and basic water services respectively. While Sudan has seen improvements in WASH access over the past decade, climate change poses substantial risks to the provision of services. The number of schools and enrolled students had both increased in the decade prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, although 36.5 percent of children remained out of school[1]. Political instability and the pandemic have resulted in extended school closures that have disrupted the education of over 8 million Sudanese children since 2019, decimating much of this progress. Conflict and insecurity increased recruitment and association with armed groups, creating physical and mental distress for all gender and age groups. The legal framework protecting women and children has improved since the revolution, especially the outlawing of female genital mutilation (FGM). However, the ongoing crises leave women more vulnerable to gender-based violence and harmful traditional practices like FGM and restrictions on access to education.

[1] 2022 HNO

**Major contributions and drivers of results**

2021 was a challenging year for children in Sudan with the continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic, political and economic instability, and the military coup in October followed by the civil unrest. These crises significantly affected programme implementation during the second half of the year.

The Sudan Country Office (CO) Annual Management Plan (AMP) for 2021 was developed to operationalise the fourth year of the Country Programme Management Plan. The AMP built on the Mid Term Review (MTR) to ensure that the necessary skills and capacities were mobilized to deliver on the results set out for the remainder of the country programme. The rapidly changing programme environment necessitated changes in the mode of conducting business. The humanitarian crisis exacerbated by political instability, the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, anticipated changes in aid structure and modalities, and new partnerships required UNICEF to adapt in order to deliver results for children.

The AMP was developed within the framework of the Sudan Country Programme 2018-2021, UNICEF’s Strategic Plan 2018-2021, the MENA areas of acceleration, the MTR consultations, and the UN’s Sudan Peacemaking, Peacebuilding and Stabilization Programme (SPPSP). The final document identified areas of action reflecting UNICEF’s comparative advantages. The Country Management Team (CMT) agreed on five programmatic priorities, under the overarching goals of the Country Programme Document (CPD): revitalizing primary health care; improved access and learning for out of school children; evidence generation for organizational learning; peacebuilding; and COVID-19
vaccine procurement and equitable delivery. The Country Management Team also agreed on two management priorities: creating an accountability framework between the Country Office and field offices; and risk management.

For AMP priority one and outcome one of the CPD to revitalize primary health care (PHC), the quality and sustainability of health services for children and mothers across Sudan was one of the main focuses for UNICEF during 2021. Despite the complex situation, Sudan’s health systems, particularly the immunization system, were strengthened to ensure the continuity of lifesaving services for 18 million girls, boys and women. A total of 1,298,916 (81%) infants received three doses of pentavalent vaccine protecting them from killer diseases such as diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, pneumonia and Hepatitis B. 1,289,285 (80%) infants received at least one dose of the measles vaccine. The polio outbreak that was reported in over 10 states was successfully contained with thanks to two successful polio vaccination campaigns that benefitted over 8.2 million under-five children and led to the country being declared Polio free. UNICEF supported the establishment of cold chain maintenance and decommissioning systems to protect the continuity of key medical supplies.

In 2021 UNICEF reached some of the most remote areas not accessed with humanitarian assistance for more than 10 years. In both the ‘Two Areas’ and Jebel Marra, health workers, often travelling by donkeys and camels, delivered polio and measles vaccines to children that in many cases had had no access to health services since 2009.

To address the high rate of malnutrition 260,376 severely malnourished children were identified and treated out of 5.8 million screened, with a cure rate of 92% and zero Ready to Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF) stockouts. This was possible with UNICEF’s support maintaining pipelines for lifesaving commodities, including RUTFs and vaccines.

For AMP priority two and outcome three of the CPD to improve access and learning for out of school children, innovative tools and thoughtful emergency response were adopted to provide accessible and quality education to Sudanese children in 2021. More than 1,215,454 children were afforded their right to education through flexible and open learning systems, with UNICEF supporting the overall governance of the Education sector and the Ministry of Education.

Significantly, on 20 October 2021, Sudan became the fourteenth country to contextualize and launch the Learning Passport. The e-learning platform was adapted to Sudanese Arabic and houses the pdf versions of government textbooks; more than 1,000 audio-visual modules; more than 250 interactive learning activities; and assessments to measure learning progress. Given the subsequent political unrest, this platform became essential to ensuring continuity of education as the operation of schools became disrupted. Approximately 20 touchscreens were procured and installed throughout Khartoum in various locations, such as mosques, souqs, and outdoor spaces to reach children and youth. The Learning Passport builds on e-learning systems already established in three other states that enabled more than 5,000 students to access education in 2021.

In addition to e-learning, over 189,000 out-of-school children benefited from the Alternative Learning Programme (ALP) implemented by UNICEF and the Ministry of Education. Given continuous school closures in the formal education system due to COVID-19 and political unrest, this intervention was critical to providing education opportunities for affected populations in Sudan.

In 2021 UNICEF leveraged its role as a technical convener to strengthen education quality and ultimately improve student learning outcomes. The agency developed competency frameworks for teachers, head teachers, and supervisors to provide an improved enabling environment for learning. UNICEF also trained more than 13,400 teachers, focusing on phasing out cascade-level training and moving to a more systematic and supportive training environment with mentoring, supervision, and monitoring.

The education emergency response remained consistent in addressing various humanitarian situations
throughout 2021, most significantly with refugees and with the conflict in West Darfur. The education emergency team is laying the groundwork for systematic support in the Two Areas for 2022, having gained key trust, access, and partners in 2021. Innovative responses, including the use of e-learning in emergency response, are currently in development with pilots planned to begin in 2022.

For AMP priority three and outcome five of the CPD to provide evidence generation for organizational learning, UNICEF Sudan prioritized the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS), a Country Programme Evaluation (CPE) and a Child Centred Risk Analysis to inform the consultations and prioritization for the new country programme. UNICEF also co-chaired the UN People Working Group to support the creation of the Common Country Analysis (CCA) to inform consultations and prioritization for the UN’s strategic planning in Sudan.

The previous CPD for Sudan 2018-2021 was extended for one year (2022) to align with the transition period in Sudan. Bottom-up consultations to develop a new country programme started in the field offices and were planned to be concluded at the national level. The consultations were interrupted by the military takeover in October 2021, and a collective decision was made by the Resident Coordinator’s office and the UN agencies to extend the current United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and CPDs to 2023, until the situation is more conducive to meaningful consultations with partners. Although various preparations are still in place, the MICS, CPE and Risk Analysis have been postponed.

The CO conducted a comprehensive vulnerability mapping exercise to identify the most deprived localities based on multi-sectoral deprivations affecting child survival. Ninety-six vulnerable localities were identified out of 189, including inaccessible localities. Another 22 localities were identified as hazard prone through the analysis.

For AMP priority four on peacebuilding, UNICEF worked alongside partners to finalize the Sudan Peacemaking, Peacebuilding and Stabilization Plan, as well as the Government Social Peace Plan. UNICEF was a key partner for the creation of the National Plan for the Protection of Civilians and is a member of the committee overseeing its implementation. Meanwhile at the State level, UNICEF supported initiatives, including with the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), to strengthen the resilience of communities in conflict and climate change impacted communities. For example, 436 Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) committees, PTA’s and youth groups engaged in activities to improve social cohesion and promote peace.

For AMP priority five addressing the COVID-19 pandemic, UNICEF enabled the COVID-19 vaccine rollout by establishing an ultra-low freezing cold chain system. The procurement, delivery and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines through the COVAX facility, including for refugees and migrants, was led by UNICEF alongside partners, with 4.4 million doses of COVID vaccines delivered and 2.5 million doses in the pipeline to cover 15% of the population by March 2022. This effort has vaccinated 6% of the population with at least one dose, and 3% of the population fully. UNICEF also supported the provision of 378,030 individuals (189,015 children) with WASH/ Infection Prevention and Control supplies.

The first management priority to create an accountability framework between the CO and Field Offices was actualized in 2021. A draft accountability framework was drafted, reviewed by the CMT, and ultimately adopted.

For the second management priority on risk management, the office updated the national Emergency Preparedness Plan (EPP), security plan, Business Continuity Plan (BCP), Disaster Recovery Plan (DRP) and the risk register. This was also coupled with the Annual Risk Assessment (ARA) exercise to improve governance and risk compliance. These steps were critical for programme continuity in the constantly changing programme environment.

For the second CPD Outcome to have more children and their families living in an open defecation
free environment, using improved drinking water sources and adopting improved hygiene practices, UNICEF worked closely with the Federal Ministry of Irrigation and Water Resources (MoIWR) and other partners to provide access and systematic improvements to Sudan’s WASH services. With high quality technical assistance and significant advocacy, the government undertook major strategic initiatives including the launch of the National Water Supply Transformational Plan for 2021-2031. A comprehensive assessment of WASH services in schools across the country was conducted, the findings of the assessment will continue to positively influence and inform future WASH investment in schools. As part of the Reimagining WASH: Water Security for All initiative, a climate resilient WASH study in water scarce localities of Central Darfur was commissioned. The study will produce a water supply improvement and augmentation plan that will serve as an example for similar climate informed assessments across the country. Besides, a climate rationale was developed for the Sudanese government that will lay the foundations for future climate adaptation and climate-sensitive funding proposals.

16 out of 18 states in Sudan updated and implemented their open defecation-free (ODF) roadmaps, with UNICEF support, resulting in 355 newly certified ODF communities in addition to the 453 communities certified in 2020, representing 90% of WASH sector achievements. Over 489,000 vulnerable children and family members gained some form of sanitation facility, with 179,000 people from this group gaining access to basic sanitation services. Over 1.76 million people in Sudan were reached with behaviour change campaigns delivering key messages on handwashing, water-handling, and disease prevention, compared with 2.1 million in 2020. Also, in 2021, Sudan initiated the development of a national roadmap for the Hand Hygiene for All Initiative that is jointly led by UNICEF and World Health Organization. Over 739,000 unserved rural and emergency affected people gained access to sustainable durable basic drinking water sources in the reporting period (compared with 862,000 in 2020) representing 48% of WASH sector achievements. Achievements in 2021 were slightly lower than in 2020 due to the political disruptions and continued economic and pandemic related issues.

CPD Outcome four, to ensure more girls and boys are protected from violence, abuse and exploitation and benefit from improved response and prevention systems, improving the legal frameworks, social norms, and the provision of critical child protection services throughout the country was done through partnership with the Ministries of Social Welfare, Justice, and others. 811,903 vulnerable children received specialized child protection services in Sudan in 2021. Mental health and parenting support services reached 135,510 IDPs, refugees, returnees, and host communities in protracted and new emergency settings, bringing the total children benefited to 460,838 during the current Country Programme. A total of 3,706 unaccompanied and separated children benefited from family tracing and reunification with their families, communities, and caregivers in 2021, bringing the total achievement to 30,674 since 2018. Also in 2021, 23,677 children benefited from Family and Child Protection Units.

Institutions serving children without parental care saw a decrease in the number of children they supported from 1996 in 2020 to 533 in 2021 as children were reunified with their families or moved into adoptive family care. The adoption system, known as kafala now provides safe family environments for 6,141 Sudanese children thanks to UNICEF support. The number of children in detention per 100,000 also decreased during the reporting period from 164 to 122 thanks to capacity building and collaboration with justice sector partners.

More families, children and adolescents are prepared to address and respond to gender inequality and violence against children as a result of UNICEF support for community dialogues, information campaigns, youth forums, Girls’ school clubs, trainings, and the Saleema Initiative. These efforts led 57 communities to participate in public declarations of their abandonment of FGM in 2021. The Girls’ clubs in particular were able to provide 29,733 adolescent girls with prevention and care interventions to address issues of child marriage. Reported cases of FGM and child marriage increased in 2021,
which could be a result of information campaigns and increased community engagement.

The legal framework for children has improved through both the drafting of an updated and comprehensive Child Act that is closely aligned with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and planning for additional reforms to protect children affected by armed conflict and at risk of or exposed to violence, exploitation, and abuse. Sudan’s Child Care Act 1971 is currently under review as part of this effort. To enhance the quality and sustainability of child protection services UNICEF and partners finalized two costed action plans for FGM and child marriage and discussed them at the Technical Committee for the Council of Ministers.

For the CPD Outcome five on ensuring more disadvantaged and excluded children are benefiting from an improved policy environment and strengthened social protection system, UNICEF has been tackling a variety of issues. Amidst increasing and deepening vulnerability and deprivation faced by Sudanese families and children, the Government of Sudan demonstrated its commitment to strengthen social protection through the development of its first National Social Protection Strategy as well as the launch of a new innovative cash plus programme. The government-led “Mother and Child Cash Transfers Plus (MCCT+)” was launched with UNICEF support, targeting pregnant women and children under two years of age in the eastern states of Kassala and Red Sea. The programme uses a novel cash plus approach where regular cash payments are combined with social and behaviour change communication and complementary support services for the first 1,000 days of life. The programme emphasizes strengthening system tools and capacities to allow for effective and flexible scale-up in times of future crises. On the International Day of the Eradication of Poverty on 17 October, UNICEF and MOSD signed a Letter of Intent to expand the MCCT+ in 7 additional states including the Darfur, South Kordofan and Blue Nile.

In order to improve public finance for children, UNICEF supported the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning to expand the child-focused public expenditure review conducted in Khartoum, Kassala and North Kordofan in 2019/2020 to North Darfur, Blue Nile and Gedaref. UNICEF also closely engaged in the budget process to improve the capacity of state and local governments in sectoral budgeting.

**UN Collaboration and Other Partnerships**

During 2021, UNICEF maintained strong relationships with the Transitional Government at the national, state, and locality levels. These partnerships delivered both at upstream levels to enhance the legislative and policy environment for children, as well as downstream levels to increase access to quality lifesaving and life-sustaining services.

UNICEF collaborated through the UN Country Team and joint programming in the spirit of One UN. The Sudan Free from FGM Joint Programme continued to deliver results for girls and women. Collaboration with WFP and WHO continued in support of a package of health and nutrition interventions. Partners are taking steps to reinvigorate the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement. Together with UNHCR, ILO the IFC and the World Bank, UNICEF continued implementation of the Prospects Partnership which helps refugees and forcibly displaced individuals with sustainable solutions to support better integration and inclusion. The UN Peacebuilding Fund continued to drive collaborative action in Darfur. A four-year UNICEF-WFP Joint Proposal on Social Cohesion and Resilience in Darfur was submitted to and approved by the German government that will start in 2022.

UNICEF actively participated in the Humanitarian Partnership Team and continued its role as cluster lead for the WASH, Nutrition and Education sectors, as well as the Child Protection sub-sector to steer greater coordination and collaboration between humanitarian actors. UNHCR was a key partner for the South Sudanese and Ethiopian refugee responses, while close cooperation with IOM and WHO was maintained across emergency responses.
UNICEF is grateful for its advocacy, programmatic and financial partnerships with the development partners community that enabled the achievement of results, mainly the governments of Germany; USA; Canada; China; Sweden; UK; Netherlands; Japan; Republic of Korea; Norway; and the European Union as well as the Education Above All Foundation; ECW; GFATM; GAVI; UN CERF; Sudan Humanitarian Fund; PBF; and UNICEF National Committees. Technical partners included the World Bank, GPE, SOFRECO, the British Council, and Expertise France.

In 2021, the CO spearheaded the “Champions for Children in Sudan” platform catalyzing development partner leaders for joint-advocacy and action on issues hurting children amidst Sudan’s crises.

UNICEF’s partnership with the Sanitation and Water for All global platform contributed to elevating the WASH agenda, especially sanitation, at the ministerial level in Sudan.

Partnerships with civil society organizations, and international and national NGOs have been key to achieving results for children even in some of the hardest to reach parts of Sudan including through advocacy and resource mobilization.

UNICEF Sudan launched the Business for Results journey in 2021. Several telecom companies supported the roll-out of the Learning Passport and UNICEF leveraged a partnership with the CTC Group to address malnutrition and support health system resiliency in North and East Darfur. UNICEF strengthened and scaled-up the established partnership with Samil Industrial Co. regarding cost-effective local production of RUTF. UNICEF worked with private companies to develop products such as UNISAFE kits for community water quality monitoring and localized family hygiene kits for mothers with severe acute malnourished children in Outpatient Therapeutic Feeding centers.

Lessons Learned and Innovations

Sudan is a complex programme environment with overlapping humanitarian crises, conflicts, political uncertainty, public health challenges, and environmental hazards. To achieve results, the agency relies on its comparative advantage as an advocate for children, convener, and provider of technical support. As a result, UNICEF can utilize its platform to develop and implement innovative programming for children.

UNICEF’s intersectoral programming was key to implementation in 2021, particularly for the successful reopening of schools in January 2021 after a prolonged closure due to COVID-19. Technical support to school reopening and coordination of the intersectoral response resulted in strengthened WASH programming at the school-level; availability of vaccines for teachers; and cross-sectoral behaviour change messaging and awareness raising through social media and other fora that informed the public about vaccine availability and other critical information.

On 20 October 2021, Sudan became the fourteenth country to contextualize and launch the Learning Passport globally. The e-learning platform was adapted to Sudanese Arabic and houses online versions of government textbooks; more than 1,000 audio-visual modules; more than 250 interactive learning activities; and assessments to measure learning progress. Interactive smartboards were distributed at 20 strategic locations, including markets and mosques, in Khartoum to reach children that may not have access at home. In three other states 78 centres were established, reaching a total of 24,500 students nationwide, in addition to the more than 5,000 students who were able to access the Learning Passport online in 2021.

UNICEF’s consistent focus on systems has contributed to maintaining its provision of lifesaving services in the face of crises. Leveraging COVID-19 vaccine cold chain systems put in place through COVAX enabled the delivery of vital health services, and Vitamin A supplementation was delivered to over 7 million children using the platform created to deliver Polio vaccines. This has improved efficiency while ensuring the maximum reach of health services through a house-to-house strategy.
In 2021, the WASH programme implemented two peacebuilding projects that involved significant trial and learning. Since the projects are implemented in conflict-prone areas of Darfur and Kordofan where implementation through government agencies was not viable, CSO partners were engaged. Implementing has been slow, particularly following the resurgence of tribal conflicts. Adapting to the changing context allowed more responsive and targeted programming as needs arose. Going forward, country programmes will need to build on the experiences of these ongoing projects and develop a clear strategy to incorporate peacebuilding and social cohesion systematically.

Disruptions to the MoIWR during the political transition and current crisis caused delays to implementation. Diversifying partnership agreements could mitigate these risks in the future, and multimedia advocacy and communication campaigns should be employed to elevate sanitation higher on the national development agenda.

The agency’s Child Protection programme found success by focusing its system strengthening on social workers. The Ministry of Social Welfare received 100 social workers into the civil service following a commitment from the Ministry of Finance to pay for these employees when resources are no longer provided by UNICEF. The long-term inclusion of these social workers will provide a sustainable improvement to the government’s child protection efforts.

Linking youth forums and informal community committees, which have high levels of legitimacy among the population, to the formal protection system enhanced reporting of FGM and child marriage. This resulted in a more robust monitoring system and improved public knowledge of existing protection and complaint mechanisms including, but not limited to, Family and Child Protection Units and Child Prosecutors.

The success and subsequent expansion of the Mother and Child Cash Transfer Plus (MCCT+) programme in 2021 demonstrates the utility of social policy as a valuable tool for addressing the needs of children, and that UNICEF is well positioned to support the government in building an Integrated Social Protection System. This position derives from UNICEF’s programmatic principles for social protection system building: national systems and leadership, (progressive realization of) universal coverage, protection throughout the life course, and inclusive social protection, which align well with national priorities.

UNICEF seeks to operationalize these principles through two key strategic and catalytic investments: 1) the development and implementation of a National Social Protection Strategy and Action Plan; and 2) the roll-out and scale up of a government-led MCCT+ Programme. UNICEF leverages these investments to build the foundations of the Integrated Social Protection System at four levels: 1) evidence; 2) policy, coordination and financing; 3) social protection programmes; and 4) administration and an integrated service delivery system.

The MCCT+ Programme is an operationalization of UNICEF’s programmatic principles which are now adopted in the draft National Social Protection Strategy. The MCCT+ programme also aligns with UNICEF’s mandate and comparative advantage. The MCCT+ programme is anchored in the whole child approach and has a well-defined Plus component. This makes the programme especially catalytic and integrative when compared with other cash programmes which have a narrower focus on cash as well as a poverty-based targeting approach.

Particularly in the last quarter of 2021 following the military coup, staff were under increased stress as work and daily life were disrupted by political unrest and uncertainty. Staff remain the most important asset for program delivery, emergency response and operations for children. Through close collaboration with the Staff Association and actions such as visits from the regional staff counselor, UNICEF Sudan experienced one of the agency’s greatest six-month improvements in workplace culture globally based on the results of the most recent Pulse Check.

The CO will utilize lessons learned during the reporting year to inform annual workplanning in 2022.
Responding to increasing needs in sectors impacted by the pandemic, including using the learning passport to improve access to education, and strengthening the PHC system to continue to reduce child mortality and malnutrition will be essential. Especially given the countries increasing political fragility nationally and locally, the CO will integrate peacebuilding across focus areas. To respond to the increase in multidimensional poverty, scaling up cash programmes and other forms of social protection will help us to safeguard Sudan’s children during this challenging period.