



TESTIMONIES

"Back in South Sudan, I was taking care of my family's cattle. We didn't have enough food and I was not able to attend school because of the conflict. The 'maos' and 'khaltos' (uncles and aunts) are very nice and friendly. They encourage me especially when I remember my parents back in South Sudan and I am sad."

Regina Mnal, 14, Khor Omer camp, East Darfur



South Sudanese Refugees

A year ago, 14-year-old Regina Mnal made a journey similar to Jonk and Lowal's, leaving her home town of Wan Jok in South Sudan for Khor Omer camp in East Darfur, where she was registered as a separated child.

Today, Regina lives with a foster family and is enrolled in school. She goes to a UNICEF-supported Child Friendly Space, where plays and makes friends, while also receiving psychosocial, life skills and recreational support.



BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

MAIN HUMANITARIAN CRISES

Sudan is one of the largest countries in Africa with a population of 39.5 million, of which 51% are children. Although Sudan is a Lower Middle-Income Country, vast regional disparities exist. Sudan faces a national debt of US\$45 billion, 33% inflation, and US economic sanctions in place since 1997. The country remains in a protracted emergency: the long-term conflict in Darfur, the armed conflict in Blue Nile and South Kordofan and tribal conflicts affect at least 2.3 million children.

Sudan also faces emergencies related to the influx of more than 470,000 South Sudanese Refugees, 28,456 suspected cases of Acute Watery Diarrhoea (and 605 reported deaths in 16 of 18 states) and severe rates of malnutrition in conflict-affected Central Darfur and increasing rates throughout the Darfur states. Cyclical natural disasters, economic underdevelopment, high household poverty, persistent and chronic malnutrition affecting at least 2 million children, and disease outbreaks exacerbate the situation. Two thirds of the population live in rural areas, where the poverty rate is 58% (versus 47% nationally). The agricultural sector contributes a third of GDP and employs 80% of the labor force.

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

Sudan is one of the few countries that has developed a multi-year humanitarian strategy (HRP 2017-2019) linked to the UNDAF 2018-2021 and the SDGs with the purpose of bridging the humanitarian, development and peace agendas. The annual humanitarian response plan (HRP) budget of about US\$1 billion is currently 80.2% under-funded.

THE NATIONAL SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEM IN SUDAN

The Government of Sudan established a multi-purpose social protection system, led by the Ministry of Security and Social Development (MoSSD). Programs include the Zakat Fund (education fee waivers, student support grants, and unconditional cash-transfers); National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF); and a government cash transfer program that targets chronically vulnerable households through unrestricted cash transfers that promote self-reliance and stimulate the local economy. Public investment in has increased considerably since 2012.

However, the social protection system faces challenges, including weak targeting methods and limited monitoring and evaluation capacity. Social Protection (SP) and humanitarian cash transfer working groups are active, the latter of which is led by the World bank (WB), WFP and OCHA with active government participation. Since 2014, UNICEF has provided technical and financial support to the MoSSD to develop the first Sudan **Social Policy Document**, an overarching SP coordination framework to be launched in September 2017. Going forward, UNICEF will prioritize upstream policy advocacy for increased public financing to social sectors, enhanced legal reforms and strengthened social protection systems. Concurrently, WFP is working with the government and the WB to strengthen social protection targeting, transfers and systems, including Productive Safety Net pilots in 2 states.

PROMISING PRACTICES FROM PAST EXPERIENCES

SP RESPONSES TO HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN JEBAL MARRA, DARFUR

For the past 7 years, parts of the Jebel Marra region remained inaccessible due to insecurity and restrictions by authorities. In the past 4 months, responders gained access to restricted areas including Golo, Guildo and Nertiti in Central and West Darfur States. UNICEF supported federal and state



Ministries of Health to mobilize a door-to-door, 4-round 'Find and Treat' campaign to reach some 200,000 displaced or newly returned people, including an estimated 120,000 children with much needed water, sanitation, health, nutrition, protection and food security services. So far, around 75,396 children were reached during the 1st and 2nd rounds, including over 42,000 children screened and 782 children treated for severe acute malnutrition in the 1st round alone.

PRODUCTIVE SAFETY NETS (PSN) PROGRAM – RED SEA STATE + NORTH KORDOFAN

To address chronic poverty and food insecurity, WFP along with the MoSSD and WB are piloting PSNs using conditional cash transfers linked to community asset and livelihoods programs. Two pilots in 3 localities in Red Sea and North Kordofan States currently target some 7,000 households, and the partnership aims to build a model for expanding PSNs to other states in Sudan through better alignment of transfers, targeting and community work norms.

CASH ASSISTANCE TO SEPARATED CHILDREN IN JEBEL MARRA

UNICEF developed a cash-based social protection program for foster families caring for separated and vulnerable children. The grant of 300 SDG (approx. USD\$45) per child covers the referral cost of key protection issues including sexual and gender-based violence, medical, legal and psychological services and will target some 5,268 children.

MAIN CHALLENGE(S) AHEAD AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTION

CRITICAL CHALLENGES FACING SOCIAL PROTECTION IN SUDAN INCLUDE:

- Absence of updated data on poverty in Sudan;
- Weak targeting and inclusion systems;
- Absence of proper monitoring and evaluation system to track effectiveness, efficiency and impact; and
- Limited partners and capacities working in the area of social protection.

USEFUL RESOURCES

[Social Protection and Safety Nets in Sudan, IDS, 2015](#)

[Implementation Status & Results Report: Sudan Social Safety Net Project, WB, 2016](#)

[Sudan Social Safety Net Assessment, WB, 2014](#)

[Implementation Status & Results Report: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FUND PROJECT, WB, 2014](#)

[Zakat for Poverty Alleviation: Evidence from Sudan, International Research Journal of Finance and Economics, 2016](#)

[Sudan National Baseline Household Survey 2009, Central Bureau of Statistics Sudan, 2009.](#)

[Sudan Social Safety Net Assessment, WB, 2014](#)