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The background features a stylized illustration of a city skyline with several buildings that appear to be in various stages of destruction or reconstruction. The buildings are rendered in shades of blue and grey, with some showing cracks and missing windows. The scene is overlaid on a large, dark blue curved shape that dominates the lower half of the page. The overall aesthetic is clean and modern, with a focus on the theme of reconstruction.

Planning post-conflict reconstruction and development in the Sudan: framework and lessons from international experiences

December 2024



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Executive summary

The present report contains a detailed assessment of the post-conflict recovery needs in the Sudan and presents a structured strategy to guide the country's journey towards rehabilitation, the rebuilding of institutions, economic revitalization, reconstruction and sustainable peace. Using a multifaceted approach comprising stakeholder interviews, field assessments, aerial photography and satellite imagery, and a thorough review of international best practices, the primary challenges and opportunities in the Sudan across institutional, economic and gender social dimensions have been identified, making it possible to craft a tailored framework for sustainable growth and long-term stability. The critical importance of integrating gender-sensitive approaches into all aspects of post-conflict reconstruction and development, ensuring that women's voices and needs are prioritized, is highlighted in the report.

The Sudan remains in the midst of a severe humanitarian crisis, which continues to have a profound impact on the country's recovery and development trajectory. While the present report serves as a framework for medium-term planning, it is crucial to recognize that the recovery process will likely extend beyond the 10-year timeline referenced therein. The challenges of rebuilding infrastructure, restoring livelihoods and fostering social cohesion require sustained, long-term efforts.

The recommendations and strategies outlined in the report are aimed at addressing medium-term priorities while acknowledging the need for adaptability. Immediate humanitarian responses must remain a priority to address the urgent needs of displaced populations and vulnerable communities. These efforts must complement recovery initiatives to ensure a comprehensive approach.

By balancing immediate and long-term priorities, stakeholders can create a flexible and scalable recovery road map. This approach is centred on the importance of sustained investment, adaptive strategies and effective coordination among all stakeholders to achieve meaningful and lasting progress.

Main findings

Several critical areas are highlighted in the present report. These require focused intervention to stabilize the Sudan and to lay the groundwork for sustainable development:

- **Institutional weakness and governance challenges.** The public institutions of the Sudan face significant constraints on their capacity, impeding the effective management of recovery initiatives. Building a transparent, inclusive, accountable and resilient governance structure through targeted reforms is crucial for establishing public trust and fostering effective service delivery. Gender-responsive governance must be prioritized in these reforms, ensuring that women are represented at all decision-making levels and that institutional policies address the specific needs of women and girls.
- **Severe gaps in access to basic services.** Conflict has left directly affected regions with minimal or non-existent access to such essential services as healthcare, education and clean water, exacerbating humanitarian needs. Addressing these service gaps is vital for restoring human dignity and ensuring equitable development. Efforts to restore services must integrate gender-sensitive approaches, such as by expanding access to maternal healthcare, ensuring safe sanitation facilities for women and girls, and addressing barriers to girls' education.
- **Economic instability and infrastructure deficits.** The economy of the Sudan suffers from high unemployment, inflation and a heavy reliance on limited sectors, such as agriculture and extractive industries. In addition, the country's infrastructure remains underdeveloped, restricting connectivity and economic growth. A comprehensive approach to economic revitalization, with

investments in diverse sectors and infrastructure, will drive job creation, facilitate trade and attract investments. Special attention must be given to empowering women economically through skill-building initiatives, access to credit and support for female entrepreneurs in such sectors as agriculture and small businesses.

- **Socioeconomic fragmentation and unemployment.** Fragmented and uncoordinated economic development efforts perpetuate regional disparities and economic inequality, limiting sustainable growth. Promoting an inclusive economic recovery strategy that is focused on addressing these disparities and creating jobs is essential for long-term stability.
- **Social cohesion and reconciliation needs.** Decades of conflict have eroded social bonds, creating divisions that hinder unity. Promoting community-led reconciliation and addressing historical grievances are essential steps towards restoring trust and achieving lasting peace. Reconciliation processes must include women's participation and leadership and must address gender-based violence and its lasting impact on communities.
- **Environmental degradation and climate vulnerabilities.** Environmental sustainability is integral to the country's resilience, as climate change, desertification and resource mismanagement pose risks to livelihoods and heighten social tensions. Integrating climate adaptation, sustainable resource management and conservation efforts into reconstruction in the Sudan will be vital to the creation of a stable future.

Strategic framework

A structured post-conflict needs assessment framework and national strategy for rehabilitation and reconstruction are outlined in the present report, including both immediate and long-term goals to foster inclusive, resilient growth. This comprehensive strategy consists of the following pillars:

- **Security and stability.** The Sudan needs to establish a foundation for peace through disarmament, law enforcement reform and community safety initiatives, allowing for safe and stable recovery environments.
- **Economic revitalization.** With a focus on agriculture, small businesses and local job creation, economic recovery will reduce poverty and bolster economic stability, empowering communities to move beyond subsistence.
- **Social cohesion and reconciliation.** Inclusive community dialogue, mental health support, inclusivity and attention to marginalized groups will help to heal divisions, allowing the people of the Sudan to forge a cohesive social fabric.
- **Institutional strengthening and governance.** Targeted reforms in governance will improve institutional capacity, ensuring effective service delivery and fostering a transparent and accountable administration.
- **Environmental sustainability.** Policies for sustainable land use management, reforestation and climate resilience are incorporated into the strategy to protect the country's resources and bolster its response to environmental challenges.

Recommended actions for stakeholders

In order to achieve these goals, a coordinated commitment is needed from the Government of the Sudan, local authorities, civil society, international partners and the country's diaspora. The main recommendations in this regard include the following:

- **Government initiatives.** Strengthen institutional frameworks through transparency and governance reforms, prioritize equitable service delivery, and implement policies that protect the environment and promote resilience.
- **Civil society contributions.** Support community-based reconciliation, advocate transparent resource use, and engage in livelihood programmes to build local capacities and address socioeconomic challenges.
- **International partnerships.** Encourage targeted funding and technical support to facilitate governance reform, infrastructure reconstruction, urban development and sustainable economic recovery, aligning humanitarian aid with long-term development goals.
- **Diaspora engagement.** Promote investment, knowledge-sharing and technical assistance to aid in the reconstruction of the Sudan, fostering a shared vision of a resilient and prosperous future.

Through the combined efforts of these stakeholders, the Sudan can pursue a sustainable path to peace, recovery and development, overcoming historical challenges and ensuring that future generations inherit a country founded on resilience, equality, opportunity and unity.

Abbreviations and acronyms

ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
GDP	gross domestic product
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IMF	International Monetary Fund
NGO	non-governmental organization
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

1. Introduction and methodology

1.1 Background and context of the study

The Sudan, a country marked by a long history of civil wars and conflict, is once again grappling with the devastating effects of an ongoing civil war between the Rapid Support Forces and the Sudanese Armed Forces. Since 1955, the Sudan has experienced intermittent wars, and the latest conflict has inflicted severe damage on the country's institutions, human capital, infrastructure and social fabric. The situation has resulted in widespread displacement, the collapse of basic services and the fragmentation of livelihoods, leaving the country in dire need of rehabilitation and reconstruction.

Despite these challenges, there are emerging opportunities for peace, with neighbouring countries and the international community playing pivotal roles in mediating the conflict. The failure of numerous peace agreements in the past underscores the need for a new approach to peacebuilding – one that integrates reconstruction and development in a sustainable way.

Recognizing the urgent need for a comprehensive post-conflict recovery strategy, ECA commissioned the present study with a view to designing a framework that could guide the Sudan through a complex recovery process. This framework will not only address the immediate rehabilitation needs in the country but will also lay the foundation for long-term development, focusing on rebuilding institutions, restoring infrastructure, and promoting peace and reconciliation.

1.2 Objectives and scope of the study

The primary objectives of the present study are twofold – to conduct a comprehensive assessment of post-conflict needs in the Sudan and to develop a national strategy for post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction. International best practices are drawn from and adapted to the context in the Sudan, ensuring that the recovery process is locally driven and sustainable.

Main objectives include:

- Conducting a thorough literature review to identify successful post-conflict recovery frameworks and methodologies that can be adapted for use in the Sudan
- Engaging with important stakeholders across the Government, civil society, academia, international organizations and the private sector to gather insights and validate the findings
- Developing a customized post-conflict needs assessment framework to address the unique challenges the Sudan faces in the aftermath of the current conflict
- Formulating a national strategy for rehabilitation and reconstruction that is aligned with the broader development goals of the Sudan and with international frameworks, such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, of the African Union

The scope of the present study encompasses both immediate and long-term needs in the Sudan, with a focus on such vital sectors as governance, security, infrastructure, the economy and social services. It also incorporates cross-cutting issues, such as gender equity, human rights and environmental sustainability.

1.3 Importance of post-conflict reconstruction for the Sudan

Post-conflict reconstruction is not only a necessity for recovery in the Sudan but is also a cornerstone for the achievement of sustainable peace and development. The failure to rebuild and to address the underlying causes of conflict has been a recurring issue in the Sudan, leading to cycles of violence and instability. Effective reconstruction goes beyond the physical rebuilding of infrastructure – it requires addressing governance challenges, fostering social cohesion and creating inclusive economic opportunities that can prevent a relapse into conflict.

The reconstruction process also represents an opportunity to address historical grievances in the Sudan, including the marginalization of certain regions and groups. The recovery strategy is aimed at creating a more inclusive and stable country by promoting decentralization, strengthening local governance and ensuring the equitable distribution of resources.

In addition, post-conflict reconstruction is critical for the realization of the country's development potential. With vast natural resources and a young population, the Sudan has the capacity to build a resilient economy that can drive sustainable development. However, this potential can be realized only if the country addresses its governance challenges and fosters an environment of peace and stability.

In summary, post-conflict reconstruction in the Sudan does not only involve repairing the damage caused by war; it also involves rebuilding a country on a foundation of justice, inclusivity and sustainable development. The framework and strategy set out in the present study will provide a road map for the Sudan to move beyond the conflict and towards a future of peace, prosperity and unity.

1.4 Methodology

1.4.1 Approach to data collection

The methodology employed in this study follows a multifaceted approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods to ensure a comprehensive understanding of post-conflict needs in the Sudan.

The main components of the data collection process include the following:

- Literature review. A thorough literature review was conducted to gather insights from previous studies on post-conflict recovery frameworks, focusing on regional and international experiences from such countries as Angola, Liberia, Mozambique and Sierra Leone. This helped to identify best practices and lessons learned, which were adapted to the context in the Sudan.
- Stakeholder consultations. Engaging with stakeholders across multiple sectors was central to the data collection process. These stakeholders included government officials, civil society organizations, international organizations, academics and members of the private sector. The consultations were carried out through structured interviews aimed at capturing diverse perspectives on the reconstruction challenges and opportunities in the Sudan. The interviews enabled a comprehensive understanding of the critical areas that must be addressed in order to achieve long-term recovery, as well as the identification of gaps in current efforts.

1.4.2 Framework development process

A systematic process was followed to develop the post-conflict needs assessment framework for the Sudan, involving the following:

- **Literature review insights.** On the basis of the literature review, relevant frameworks from international experiences were examined and adapted. Notably, community-based reintegration programmes carried out in Sierra Leone, governance and decentralization models used in Liberia and natural resource management approaches followed in Angola informed the foundation of the framework.
- **Stakeholder input.** The input provided by stakeholders during interviews was essential in tailoring the framework to the local context. Stakeholder feedback helped to prioritize areas for immediate intervention, such as infrastructure, governance and livelihoods, thereby ensuring that the framework addressed the specific challenges faced in the Sudan.
- **Customization.** The framework was customized to align with the context in the Sudan and with the country's national development goals and regional initiatives, drawing in particular on the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. By doing so, it was ensured that the framework not only addressed immediate post-conflict needs but also contributed to long-term sustainable development.

1.4.3 Analytical tools and techniques

Several analytical tools and techniques were employed to process and analyse the data collected during the study:

- **Thematic analysis.** Qualitative data from stakeholder consultations and interviews were analysed using thematic analysis. This technique helped to identify recurring themes and patterns in the responses, which were then used to inform the prioritization of post-conflict interventions.
- **Comparative analysis.** A comparative analysis of regional and international post-conflict frameworks was conducted to identify practices that could be effectively adapted to the context in the Sudan. This approach provided valuable insights into how other countries had managed similar challenges and helped to avoid common pitfalls.
- **Gap analysis.** A gap analysis was employed to identify areas where current reconstruction efforts in the Sudan fell short, on the basis of the feedback from stakeholders and the literature review. The urgent needs and opportunities for targeted interventions were highlighted.
- **Stakeholder validation.** To ensure accuracy and relevance, the draft framework and initial findings were presented to important stakeholders for validation. Their feedback was integrated into the final framework to ensure that it reflected the real needs and expectations of communities in the Sudan.

1.4.4 Limitations and challenges

Several limitations and challenges were encountered during the study:

- **Access to up-to-date data.** The ongoing conflict in the Sudan posed significant challenges with regard to obtaining recent and accurate data, in particular data on the extent of damage inflicted on infrastructure and institutions. Reliance on secondary data from existing reports and studies was necessary in some cases.

- **Stakeholder engagement.** While efforts were made to consult with a wide range of stakeholders, logistical challenges due to the conflict and security concerns restricted the ability to engage with some groups, in particular those in remote or conflict-affected areas.
- **Customization challenges.** Adapting international best practices to the unique political, social and economic context of the Sudan proved to be challenging. While valuable lessons were learned from other countries, some aspects of those models were not fully applicable to the context in the Sudan and required significant adjustments.
- **Time constraints.** The limited time frame for conducting the study, combined with the complex nature of post-conflict needs assessment, placed constraints on the depth of data collection in certain areas. Further fieldwork may be required to refine and update the framework as the situation in the Sudan evolves.

2. Contextual analysis of the conflict in the Sudan

2.1 Introduction

The multifaceted history of conflicts in the Sudan is outlined in the present section of the report, which contains an analysis of the sociopolitical, economic and environmental factors that have contributed to decades of instability. The section is aimed at providing a comprehensive understanding of the ongoing conflicts in the Sudan, including the deep-seated historical grievances, resource competition and regional influences that shape the current landscape. By examining the various types of conflict – political, ethnic and economic – alongside the impacts on human, social and economic structures, the complex and interconnected challenges faced by the Sudan in its path towards sustainable peace and recovery are brought to light. This contextual analysis establishes a foundation for the framework and recommendations that follow, supporting the design of strategies that address both immediate humanitarian needs and the long-term root causes of conflict in the Sudan.

2.2 Historical overview of conflicts in the Sudan

2.2.1 Overview of major conflicts throughout the history of the Sudan

The history of conflict in the Sudan is deeply rooted in the country's diverse ethnic, cultural and religious landscape. Since gaining independence from Anglo-Egyptian rule in 1956, the country has experienced a series of violent upheavals that have shaped its current sociopolitical environment.

2.2.2 First Sudanese Civil War (1955–1972)

The First Sudanese Civil War began even before the country had gained its independence, with tensions primarily between the northern Arab-dominated Government and the southern regions, which were largely non-Arab and Christian. This conflict was characterized by grievances over political marginalization and economic neglect of the south. The war ended with the Addis Ababa Agreement in 1972, which granted the south significant autonomy. Underlying tensions remained unresolved, however, setting the stage for future conflicts.

2.2.3 Second Sudanese Civil War (1983–2005)

The Second Sudanese Civil War erupted in 1983, primarily fuelled by the imposition of sharia law by the northern government, which led to widespread discontent in the south. The Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army, led by John Garang, emerged in response to these policies, seeking autonomy and rights for the southern population. This conflict was characterized by extreme violence and human rights abuses, resulting in a humanitarian crisis that claimed the lives of approximately 2.5 million

people and displaced millions more (de Waal, 2016). The Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the Government of the Republic of the Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Sudan People's Liberation Army, signed in 2005, marked a turning point, ultimately leading to the secession of South Sudan in 2011.

2.2.4 Darfur conflict (2003–present)

The Darfur conflict began in 2003 when rebel groups took up arms against the Government of the Sudan, citing neglect and discrimination against the region. The Government responded by unleashing the Janjaweed militias, leading to widespread atrocities and accusations of genocide (Mamdani, 2009). The conflict has led to the deaths of hundreds of thousands and displaced millions, prompting international intervention and the establishment of the African Union–United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur to address the humanitarian crisis.

2.3 Ongoing conflict

The current conflict between the Rapid Support Forces and the Sudanese Armed Forces is a continuation of the turbulent political history of the Sudan, stemming from the fallout of the 2019 revolution that ousted longtime dictator Omar al-Bashir.

2.3.1 Emergence of the Rapid Support Forces

The Rapid Support Forces were initially formed from the Janjaweed militias, notorious for their role in the Darfur conflict. Under the leadership of First Lieutenant General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, known as Hemedti, the Rapid Support Forces have evolved into a powerful paramilitary force that has engaged in various activities, including border control and involvement in gold mining. This has provided the Forces with significant economic resources and political leverage.

2.3.2 Power struggles post-Bashir

The political transformation of the Sudan was catalysed by a wave of civil unrest that began in December 2018. Triggered by economic hardships, rising food prices and widespread corruption, the protests rapidly escalated into a nationwide movement demanding political reform. Led by grass-roots organizations, civil society groups, and such professional associations as the Sudanese Professionals Association, the demonstrations maintained remarkable resilience despite violent crackdowns by security forces.

The sustained protests culminated in the ousting of Omar al-Bashir in April 2019, ending his 30-year rule. This pivotal moment marked a shift towards a transitional Government comprising both military and civilian leaders. Tensions soon emerged within this hybrid Government, however. First Lieutenant General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan (commander of the Sudanese Armed Forces) and First Lieutenant General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo (leader of the Rapid Support Forces) initially cooperated to control the transition. Over time, however, tensions escalated, in particular after the military coup d'état in October 2021, which sidelined civilian rule and exacerbated rivalries between the two factions. These internal divisions have significantly hindered progress towards a democratic and stable country.

2.3.3 Outbreak of conflict in 2023

The conflict officially erupted in April 2023, leading to significant urban warfare in Khartoum and other major areas. The fighting has caused widespread destruction, with reports of thousands of civilian casualties and the displacement of millions of people, and with large parts of the country also now heavily contaminated by explosive hazards. Humanitarian access has been severely hindered, exacerbating an already dire situation for many citizens of the Sudan (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2023).

2.3.4 Regional and international dimensions

The conflict has also attracted the attention of regional and international players, further complicating the dynamics. Neighbouring countries have expressed concern over the potential spillover effects, while international organizations have called for ceasefires and peace talks. Ongoing hostilities have made diplomatic efforts challenging, however.

2.4 Types of conflicts in the Sudan

The conflict landscape in the Sudan is characterized by a complex interplay of political, ethnic, economic and social factors. The various types of conflicts are outlined below, with a specific focus on the current conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces and its broader implications.

2.4.1 Political conflicts

The political conflict in the Sudan intensified following the military coup d'état on 25 October 2021, which disrupted the civilian-led transitional government. Over the subsequent year, widespread protests faced a brutal crackdown by security forces, resulting in significant human rights violations, including over 100 protester deaths. The escalating power struggle between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces, which had erupted into open conflict by 2022, further destabilized the political landscape. As both factions vie for control, this crisis has profound implications for governance and stability. The absence of a functioning political framework has deepened societal divisions and worsened humanitarian conditions (United Nations, 2022).

2.4.2 Ethnic conflicts

The country's ethnic diversity often leads to tensions, in particular in such regions as Darfur. The conflict there, which began in 2003, stems from historical grievances and competition for land and natural resources. The ongoing political instability has allowed these ethnic tensions to resurface, leading to violent confrontations and further displacement of populations (Human Rights Watch, 2022).

2.4.3 Intercommunal violence

Increasing intercommunal clashes in the Sudan, in particular in the Darfur region, continue to be driven by competition for scarce resources, especially land and water, between Arab and non-Arab communities. Since the escalation of the conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces in April 2023, resource-based violence has intensified, exacerbating ethnic tensions rooted in historical grievances. From December 2023 to December 2024, the internally displaced population of the Sudan

grew by 27 per cent, reaching 11.53 million by the end of 2024, with significant displacement in North, South and West Darfur owing to ongoing clashes. (International Organization for Migration, 2025).

2.4.4 Conflicts over natural resources

Disputes over natural resources continue to be a significant source of conflict in the Sudan. In such regions as Darfur and Kordofan, competition for land and water has led to violent confrontations, in particular as armed groups seek to control these vital resources (International Crisis Group, 2023a).

2.4.5 Socioeconomic conflicts

The economic challenges in the Sudan, marked by high inflation and unemployment, contribute to social unrest. The economic decline has disproportionately affected marginalized communities, leading to protests and further conflict as citizens demand better living conditions.

2.5 Impacts of the conflicts

The ongoing conflicts in the Sudan have profound and far-reaching impacts on various aspects of life, significantly affecting human, social and economic dimensions.

2.5.1 Human impact

The human toll of the conflicts in the Sudan is staggering. Millions of lives have been lost since the onset of the Second Sudanese Civil War and the Darfur conflict. It has been estimated that over 2 million people were killed during the Second Sudanese Civil War, while the Darfur conflict has resulted in hundreds of thousands of deaths owing to violence, famine and disease (Global Conflict Tracker, 2024).

2.5.1.1 Displacement

The conflict in the Sudan has caused widespread displacement, with millions of people forced to flee their homes. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (2024) has reported significant internal displacement owing to the ongoing violence, in particular in Darfur and as a result of the clashes between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces. As of the end of June 2024, the total number of internally displaced persons in the Sudan had reached 12.8 million. These individuals often live in precarious conditions, lacking access to such basic necessities as food, clean water and healthcare. Refugee flows into neighbouring countries, in particular the Central African Republic, Chad and South Sudan, have further strained regional resources and created humanitarian challenges.

2.5.1.2 Humanitarian crises

The humanitarian crises in the Sudan are exacerbated by ongoing violence and instability. Humanitarian access is often restricted, making it difficult for aid organizations to deliver essential services. As a result, millions of people face food insecurity, with WFP estimates indicating that about 24 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance (WFP, 2024). The lack of healthcare infrastructure, coupled with ongoing violence, has led to outbreaks of such diseases as cholera and malaria, further complicating the humanitarian situation.

2.5.1.3 Explosive hazard contamination

Past conflicts left a legacy of explosive hazard contamination that, following decades of effort, had been contained to a few states, mostly in rural areas. The ongoing conflict is characterized by indiscriminate use of explosive weapons, including in high population urban centres and in rural areas previously unaffected by these threats. Owing to the indiscriminate use of explosive weapons, explosive hazards are found within residential areas; along logistical supply routes, such as roads and airstrips; around critical infrastructure, such as schools, medical facilities, water and electricity stations and markets; and across wide areas of agricultural land. These hazards present a direct threat to the lives of civilians and of aid and development workers. They restrict safe movement (including safe return) and access to services and are a major risk factor in the successful implementation of humanitarian, recovery, reconstruction and development projects.

2.5.2 Social impact

The conflicts in the Sudan have deeply affected social structures and community dynamics.

2.5.2.1 Community fragmentation

The ongoing conflict in the Sudan, in particular in such regions as Darfur, has significantly exacerbated ethnic tensions and led to the fragmentation of communities. Violence and displacement have uprooted families and disrupted traditional social structures, creating deep-seated distrust among various ethnic groups that have historically been competing for resources and power. This breakdown of social cohesion not only fuels cycles of violence and retaliation but also complicates efforts to achieve peace and reconciliation, leaving a lasting impact on the social fabric of the affected regions (Mamdani, 2009).

2.5.2.2 Loss of cultural heritage

The conflicts have also had a detrimental impact on cultural heritage. Many communities have been uprooted from their ancestral lands, leading to the loss of traditional practices and cultural identities. The destruction of historical sites and cultural institutions during conflicts has further diminished the rich cultural tapestry of the Sudan.

2.5.2.3 Social services and education

Access to social services, including education, has been severely disrupted. Schools have been destroyed or repurposed for military use, and the safety of children has become a significant concern. As a result, educational attainment has plummeted, with millions of children out of school – a situation that could have long-term implications for the country's future.

2.5.3 Economic impact

The economic impacts of the conflicts have been equally devastating, leading to a cycle of poverty and instability.

2.5.3.1 Disruption of livelihoods

This ongoing violence has disrupted lives, damaged critical infrastructure and strained the economy, resulting in the largest displacement crisis in the world. As of October 2024, nearly 11 million individuals had been displaced, either within the Sudan or to neighbouring countries. The impacts on food security are dire, with approximately 26 million people – over 50 per cent of the population – facing acute

hunger. Without immediate intervention, 9 million people could experience catastrophic hunger (World Bank, 2024).

2.5.3.2 Economic decline

The economy of the Sudan has experienced a significant decline owing to a combination of prolonged conflicts, the loss of oil revenue and soaring inflation rates. Following the secession of South Sudan in 2011, the Sudan lost a substantial portion of its oil revenues, which had previously accounted for over half of the Government's revenue and 95 per cent of its exports. This loss has severely affected economic growth and stability (World Bank, 2024).

2.5.3.3 Resource allocation

The ongoing conflict in the Sudan has significantly affected fiscal resource allocation, with a substantial portion of government funds being redirected towards military expenditures. This shift has led to severe underfunding of essential social services, including healthcare, education and infrastructure development, resulting in inadequate public services and deteriorating facilities. The imbalance in resource distribution has exacerbated poverty and socioeconomic instability, further hindering the country's long-term development prospects (Siddig, 2024).

2.6 Socioeconomic conditions in the Sudan before the April 2023 war

The Sudan faced significant development challenges even before the outbreak of the April 2023 war between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces. The country's economy and development trajectory were hampered by long-standing structural issues, political instability, weak governance and persistent socioeconomic disparities. A detailed examination of the pre-war development context reveals several main areas of concern, as outlined below.

2.6.1 Agricultural sector stagnation

The country's economy had traditionally been reliant on agriculture, but the sector remained underdeveloped and faced numerous challenges. The lack of modern agricultural techniques, insufficient government support and climate change had severely affected productivity. In addition, the country's agricultural policy failed to identify strategic crops for production, despite the Sudan having a comparative advantage in such crops as sesame, peanuts and gum arabic.

One of the main constraints facing the sector is the weak agricultural infrastructure. This is caused by limited investment in such infrastructure as irrigation systems, roads and storage facilities; increased production costs; and the limited ability of the Sudan to compete in international markets.

In addition, the migration of labour from agriculture to the more lucrative gold mining industry further depleted the agricultural workforce, reducing output and contributing to food insecurity.

2.6.2 Weak infrastructure and economic linkages

The poor infrastructure of the Sudan severely limited economic development. The lack of investment in transportation, energy and water systems increased production costs, in particular in agriculture and industry. Increases in energy costs, primarily driven by the reliance on gasoline rather than renewable

sources, significantly raised the cost of agricultural production. Moreover, there was little integration between the agricultural and industrial sectors, with no strong forward or backward linkages. The absence of a comprehensive infrastructure development plan to support agriculture and other productive sectors further constrained economic growth in the Sudan.

2.6.3 Institutional weaknesses and governance failures

The institutional framework of the Sudan was severely weakened during the Al-Ingaz regime headed by Omar al-Bashir (1989–2019), which led to widespread corruption, nepotism and the erosion of the civil service. Efforts by the transitional Government to reform public institutions were met with resistance from entrenched interests, and the lack of institutional capacity hindered the effective implementation of economic and governance reforms.

Corruption remained rampant in both the public and private sectors, and there was no effective oversight mechanism to ensure transparency in the management of public resources. Despite the transitional Government's commitment to establish an anti-corruption commission, the lack of political will and capacity made significant progress difficult.

The civil service was dysfunctional, with low levels of efficiency and accountability. There was a critical need to reform the civil service to ensure the effective delivery of public services and the implementation of development policies.

2.6.4 Inflation, taxation and public debt

The Sudan struggled to control hyperinflation, which had escalated owing to economic mismanagement, excessive borrowing from the Central Bank and unsustainable subsidies, in particular subsidies of fuel and electricity. In 2022, the country's inflation rate remained among the highest in the world, peaking at over 300 per cent, causing severe hardships for the population. The transitional Government had initiated an exchange rate unification policy, moving towards a floating exchange rate, but the policy was undermined by political instability and the lack of a comprehensive macroeconomic strategy.

The country's fiscal policy faced significant challenges, in particular with regard to expanding the tax base and curbing tax evasion. While efforts were made to reform the tax system, the collection of taxes remained inefficient, and the country's reliance on indirect taxes disproportionately affected lower-income groups. Despite these challenges, the Ministry of Finance sought to create a more progressive tax system and to reduce corruption in tax collection.

Public debt in the Sudan had reached unsustainable levels, and, despite efforts to seek debt relief through the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative, progress was slow owing to delays in implementing the necessary reforms. The country's external debt, estimated at over \$60 billion, continued to constrain its fiscal space, limiting its ability to invest in social services, infrastructure and economic development.

2.6.5 Socioeconomic disparities and service provision

The Sudan struggled with extreme inequality, poverty and inadequate access to basic services. Over 11 million people were in need of food security assistance, with much of the population facing chronic hunger and malnutrition. Despite its vast agricultural lands and natural resources, the agricultural sector in the Sudan could not meet the domestic demand for food owing to policy failures and infrastructural shortcomings.

The country also faced severe deficiencies in social services. Spending on education and health was far below the necessary levels, leaving many areas without access to quality education or healthcare. The service sector, while accounting for a large portion of the country's GDP, was dominated by informal activities and contributed little to meaningful economic growth.

2.6.6 Incomplete economic reforms

Before the April 2023 conflict, the Sudan was in the midst of incomplete economic reforms aimed at addressing decades of structural weaknesses. Under the transitional Government of Prime Minister Abdullah Hamdok, these reforms had been implemented in collaboration with IMF and the World Bank to stabilize the economy, tackle hyperinflation, reduce fuel subsidies and manage public debt. The reforms also included unifying the exchange rate to eliminate economic distortions.

However, progress was hindered by the following factors:

- Political instability, including military coups d'état and factional clashes, disrupted reform efforts, in particular after the October 2021 coup d'état, which led to the suspension of international assistance..
- Social unrest resulted from such unpopular measures as the removal of subsidies, leading to protests from a population already grappling with poverty and inflation..
- Resistance by vested interests, in particular those benefiting from economic distortions, further complicated the Government's efforts to implement comprehensive reforms (Elbadawi and Fiuratti, 2024).

These challenges prevented the transitional Government from fully carrying out its reform agenda, leaving the country's economic issues unresolved as the 2023 conflict erupted.

2.6.7 Underdeveloped service sector

The service sector in the Sudan, which accounts for approximately 50 per cent of the country's GDP, remained underdeveloped and largely dominated by informal activities before the April 2023 war. The formal service sector struggled with poor regulation, inefficiency and a lack of integration with productive sectors, such as agriculture and manufacturing. This underdevelopment limited its ability to contribute meaningfully to economic growth.

The informal economy, which included the vast majority of businesses and workers, played a dominant role in the economic landscape of the Sudan. However, because informal businesses typically operated outside the formal regulatory and tax structures, they contributed little to government revenues and received limited support in terms of infrastructure or services. The lack of formalization also hindered access to finance, business development services and opportunities for growth, keeping the sector largely stagnant.

Poor integration between the informal economy and formal sectors limited opportunities for value addition and innovation, while weak infrastructure – in particular in telecommunications, banking and logistics – further constrained the service sector's growth potential. This left the sector underutilized and unable to support broader economic diversification, making the Sudan heavily reliant on agriculture and extractive industries.

2.6.8 Limited role of the private sector

The private sector in the Sudan faced numerous constraints that hindered its growth and development. Economic instability due to ongoing conflict and political uncertainty had created a volatile environment, discouraging both local and foreign investment. This instability was further exacerbated by limited access to finance, as small and medium-sized enterprises struggled to secure credit and financial services. The underdeveloped banking system, high-interest rates and risk aversion among financial institutions prevented businesses from expanding and investing in new opportunities.

In addition, infrastructure challenges, such as poor transportation networks and inadequate energy supply, increased operational costs for businesses, reducing their efficiency. Complex and inconsistent regulatory frameworks created further hurdles for entrepreneurs, making it difficult to navigate legal requirements and secure the necessary permits. Security concerns, driven by ongoing violence and civil unrest, disrupted supply chains and posed significant risks to employee safety. On a broader scale, limited market access due to sanctions and trade restrictions prevented businesses from reaching international markets, stifling growth and export potential.

2.6.9 Social services and human development

Social services in the Sudan were severely underfunded, and the country faced significant challenges in providing basic healthcare, education and sanitation services. Public spending on social services was disproportionately low, in particular in rural and conflict-affected regions.

Access to quality healthcare and education was limited, with large parts of the population lacking access to essential services. The country's health indicators, such as infant mortality and maternal mortality, remained among the worst globally. Similarly, the education system was underfunded, with many schools in rural areas lacking basic infrastructure.

2.7 Impact of conflict on State fragility

According to the Fragile States Index, the Sudan has consistently ranked among the most fragile States globally owing to long-standing political, economic and social challenges. The 2023 war between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces has had a devastating impact on the country's fragility, significantly worsening its situation and pushing it higher in the index rankings. In 2024, the Sudan ranked as the second most fragile State in the world, just behind Somalia, with an overall fragility score of 109.3, reflecting the severe deterioration of State functions (Fund for Peace, 2024).

2.7.1 Fragility indicators for the Sudan (2024)

The main indicators from the Fragile States Index that illustrate the country's current state of fragility include the following:

- **Security apparatus (9.30).** The recent war has severely compromised the ability of the Sudan to maintain security and to control its territory. Both the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces have engaged in destructive violence, leading to a loss of physical control over large parts of the country and widespread insecurity.

- **Factionalized elites (9.6).** The conflict has deepened divisions among political and military elites in the Sudan. Power struggles between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces leadership have intensified, further fragmenting State institutions and weakening governance.
- **Group grievance (9.6).** The 2023 conflict has exacerbated historical grievances, in particular ethnic and regional tensions in the Darfur Region and in Gezira, Blue Nile and South Kordofan States, contributing to a further deterioration of social cohesion.
- **Economy (9.4).** The economy of the Sudan has been devastated by war, leading to sharp economic decline, hyperinflation and a collapse in public services. The conflict has disrupted agriculture, trade and industrial production, worsening an already fragile economic situation.
- **Human flight and brain drain (8).** The ongoing conflict has led to the displacement of millions of people and the emigration of skilled workers, further weakening the country's ability to recover and rebuild.
- **State legitimacy (9.5).** Citizens' confidence in the Government has plummeted, as the State has failed to protect the population or maintain essential services, with its legitimacy severely undermined by the ongoing power struggles between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces.
- **Public services (9).** Public services, including healthcare, education and infrastructure, have collapsed in many regions, in particular those heavily affected by the conflict.
- **Refugees and internally displaced persons (9.69).** The Sudan faces one of the largest displacement crises in the world, with millions of people displaced internally and as refugees in neighbouring countries.

2.7.2 Impact of the 2023 war on the country's fragility

The 2023 war has had a profound effect on the fragility of the Sudan, reflected in the sharp year-on-year deterioration of its Fragile States Index score. From 2023 to 2024, the country's fragility index showed a 3.09-point increase, one of the most significant increases globally (Fund for Peace, 2024). This escalation in fragility is driven by the following factors:

- **Loss of territorial control.** The Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces control different parts of the country, leading to the collapse of central authority and the State's monopoly on the legitimate use of force.
- **Widespread displacement.** The war has caused large-scale population movements, with millions fleeing violence or facing forced displacement within the Sudan.
- **Economic collapse.** The conflict has further damaged an already struggling economy, leading to food insecurity, unemployment and poverty across vast regions of the country.
- **Breakdown of governance.** The inability of State institutions to function has deepened, as factionalized elites and competing militias have taken control of critical areas, undermining governance and the provision of services.

2.7.3 Position of the Sudan in the global fragility context

The country's 2024 ranking as the second most fragile State in the world demonstrates the severity of its current crisis. The State exhibits many of the core attributes of fragility, including the loss of territorial control, the inability to provide basic services and deep societal divisions.

These issues, compounded by the ongoing war, make it one of the most unstable and vulnerable countries globally.

2.8 Main drivers of conflict and instability

The conflicts in the Sudan are driven by a complex interplay of underlying causes and triggers that have evolved over decades. Understanding these drivers is essential for addressing the root issues and promoting sustainable peace.

2.8.1 Underlying causes and triggers of conflict

2.8.1.1 Historical grievances

One of the most significant underlying causes of conflict in the Sudan are the historical grievances stemming from colonial rule and subsequent governance. British colonial policies favoured certain groups over others, in particular in the northern regions, leading to feelings of marginalization among southern and peripheral populations. This historical context has fuelled resentment and mistrust among different ethnic and regional groups, setting the stage for conflict.

2.8.1.2 Political marginalization

Political marginalization has been a critical trigger of conflict. Successive Governments in the Sudan have been dominated by northern elites, often neglecting the needs and aspirations of the diverse populations in the south and the peripheries. This lack of representation has led to widespread frustration and rebellion against the central authority. For example, the imposition of sharia law in 1983 by President Jaafar Nimeiri ignited the Second Sudanese Civil War, as it was perceived as a direct assault on non-Muslim populations in the south (Mamdani, 2009).

2.8.1.3 Competition for resources

Competition for resources, in particular land and water, has also been a significant driver of conflict. In such regions as Darfur, where environmental factors, such as drought and desertification, have intensified, competition among different ethnic groups for arable land has often resulted in violent clashes. These struggles for resources are exacerbated by population displacement, which further strains access to already limited resources (United Nations Environment Programme, 2007).

Another critical factor fuelling resource-based conflicts is competition over gold mining. The gold mining sector in the Sudan, dominated by artisanal and small-scale operations, has become a source of tension as communities, private companies and armed groups vie for control over lucrative mining areas. The involvement of armed factions, including the Rapid Support Forces, in gold mining has not only fuelled local grievances but also financed ongoing conflicts, complicating efforts to achieve stability.

2.8.1.4 External interference

Foreign powers, including neighbouring countries and States further afield, have sought to influence the conflict in the Sudan to further their own geopolitical and economic interests. Regional dynamics and external involvement, often driven by strategic priorities, have complicated peace efforts and prolonged instability. Such influences, which include both economic partnerships and diplomatic commitments, have exacerbated the conflict, heightening the need for coordinated international efforts to support peacebuilding (International Crisis Group, 2023a).

2.8.2 Analysis of ethnic, political and economic factors contributing to instability

2.8.2.1 Ethnic factors

The Sudan is home to a myriad of ethnic groups, each with its own cultural identity and historical grievances. Ethnic divisions have often been manipulated by political leaders to consolidate power or justify violence. The Government's reliance on militia groups, such as the Janjaweed and now the Rapid Support Forces, has further entrenched ethnic divisions, leading to cycles of violence and retribution. The Darfur conflict is a prime example, in which the Government's support for Arab militia groups acting against non-Arab populations has created deep-seated animosities (Human Rights Watch, 2004).

2.8.2.2 Political factors

The political landscape in the Sudan has been marked by instability, coups d'état, authoritarian rule and a lack of democratic governance. The military has historically played a dominant role in politics, often sidelining civilian voices. The 2019 revolution that ousted Omar al-Bashir was driven by widespread demands for democracy and accountability. However, the subsequent military coup d'état in 2021 illustrated the fragility of political transitions in the Sudan. The ongoing power struggle between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces reflects deeper issues of governance and the challenge of establishing a stable political order (International Crisis Group, 2023b).

2.8.2.3 Economic factors

Economic instability is both a cause and consequence of conflict in the Sudan. The country has faced significant economic challenges, including high inflation, unemployment and a lack of foreign investment. The loss of oil revenue following the secession of South Sudan in 2011 severely affected the economy, leading to increased poverty and social unrest. Economic disparities between the north and south and between urban and rural areas have fuelled grievances and contributed to instability.

Moreover, the allocation of resources has often favoured military expenditures over social services, exacerbating public discontent. The failure to address economic grievances can lead to increased support for armed groups and perpetuate cycles of violence.

2.9 Roles of regional and international stakeholders

The role of regional and international stakeholders in the ongoing conflict in the Sudan and post-conflict reconstruction is complex, with various countries and organizations having deep-rooted interests in and influences on the internal dynamics of the Sudan. Their involvement is shaped by geopolitical, economic and security considerations, which often affect both the progression of the conflict and the prospects for peacebuilding and reconstruction. Below is an examination of the involvement of neighbouring countries and regional organizations, followed by an analysis of the role played by international stakeholders and how they influence the conflict dynamics in the Sudan.

2.9.1 Involvement of neighbouring countries and regional and subregional organizations

2.9.1.1 Neighbouring countries' influence on conflict and peace

The geographical position of the Sudan places it at the intersection of several regional powers, all of whom have interests in the country's political and economic future. Neighbouring countries, including the Central African Republic, Chad, Egypt, Ethiopia and South Sudan, play important roles, either as mediators or stakeholders with vested interests in the outcomes of internal conflicts in the Sudan. Each of these countries has been affected by the instability in the Sudan and, in turn, exerts an influence on politics in the country.

2.9.1.2 Role of regional and subregional organizations

Regional and subregional organizations, such as the African Union and IGAD, play pivotal roles in mediating the conflict in the Sudan and in supporting post-conflict recovery efforts. These organizations bring African-led solutions to the forefront and work to reduce external interventions that may not align with regional or subregional interests.

African Union. The African Union has been instrumental in mediating peace efforts in the Sudan, in particular through its African Union High-level Implementation Panel, which has been involved in negotiations in the country for several years. The African Union Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development Framework provides a road map for peacebuilding and recovery, and it has been instrumental in advancing African-led solutions to the conflicts in the Sudan. However, the effectiveness of the Union is often hindered by the complexity of the internal divisions in the Sudan and the competing interests of external stakeholders.

Intergovernmental Authority on Development. IGAD, a subregional bloc in East Africa, has also been involved in mediating peace in the Sudan, especially in relation to the independence of South Sudan. IGAD works to bring together stakeholders from the Sudan and neighbouring countries to foster dialogue and prevent further subregional destabilization. Although the influence of IGAD has been limited by the complex political landscape in the Sudan, it remains an important platform for subregional diplomacy.

2.9.2 Analysis of the role of the United Nations and its influence on conflict dynamics

The United Nations has played a major role in the peace processes in the Sudan, in particular through its peacekeeping missions and humanitarian agencies. The United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan was established to assist the country during its transitional period and has been actively involved in facilitating peace talks among various factions. Entities of the United Nations system, such as WFP and UNICEF, have provided critical humanitarian assistance to populations affected by the conflict.

However, the capacity of the United Nations to influence the conflict is often limited by the need to balance humanitarian aid with respect for the sovereignty of the Sudan. The Security Council's divided stance on how to approach the situation in the Sudan further complicates the role of the United Nations in resolving the conflict.

2.10 Governance dilemma under conflict

The crisis of the absence of executive authority in the Sudan began after the coup d'état led by the army commander, First Lieutenant General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, and the commander of the Rapid Support Forces, First Lieutenant General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo (also known as Hemedti). As a result of that coup d'état, the transitional Government was overthrown on 25 October 2021, Prime Minister Abdullah Hamdok and his cabinet were arrested, and the most important provisions of the transitional Constitution were suspended. In addition, all the transitional measures taken by the transitional institutions were rescinded.

The war that broke out in Khartoum on 15 April 2023 pitted the ruling partners against each other: General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, President of the Sovereignty Council and commander-in-chief of the Sudanese Armed Forces, and his deputy, General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, commander of the Rapid Support Forces.

The intertwining of institutional relations between the Sudanese Armed Forces, the Rapid Support Forces and the transitional Government during the transitional period and during the period before the outbreak of hostilities had a major impact on the performance and effectiveness of the executive authority that existed at the time the war broke out.

The group that carried out the coup d'état on 25 October 2021 was unable to form an interim government during the period following the coup d'état and until the outbreak of the war on 15 April 2023. This is one indicator of the fractured alliances within the ruling class during the post-coup period. The ruling class was divided in terms of loyalty and affiliations among three main factions: those loyal to First Lieutenant General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, those loyal to First Lieutenant General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, and members of the armed movements that had signed the Juba peace agreement, with the latter holding 25 per cent of the main positions in the transitional institutions.

The third faction (the armed movements that had signed the Juba agreement) that participated in the Government that was put in place following the coup d'état against the transitional Government led by Abdullah Hamdok continued to participate in government institutions at the level of the executive authority and the Sovereign Council and continued to occupy positions within the government institutions, despite the collapse of the transitional Government and the freezing of the most important provisions of the transitional Constitution. This issue arises from the vertical division of the transitional government institutions and, more precisely, the division and paralysis that affected the executive authority, necessitating the urgent filling of the vacuum left within that authority.

From 25 October 2021, the date of the military coup d'état, to 15 April 2023, the date of the outbreak of the war, the State was under the complete control of the army. After the suspension of the most important provisions of the Constitution, the State continued to exist under martial law declared from time to time by the army commander, and the situation remained unchanged after the outbreak of the war. With the division of the ruling power, the Government lost its ability to perform its functions. This situation was one of the causes of suffering among citizens even in remote regions that had not yet been affected by the war.

In the current state of war, there is no functioning State or State institutions, owing to the absence of administrative functioning resulting from the division of control. The type of military government currently in power, which is concerned with preparing the State in case of war, is characterized by horizontal rather than vertical relations, as the hierarchy is formed at the local level. This is because the

central State cannot provide security for the entire country alone, so it relies on other aspects outside the system for its survival.

Current state of federal governance

Darfur Region

- **Four states under Rapid Support Forces administration.** The Rapid Support Forces currently control four states within the Darfur Region: West Darfur, South Darfur, Central Darfur and East Darfur.
- **North Darfur.** This state is under siege, with restricted access and limited movement.

Kordofan Region

North Kordofan. This state has been under siege for the past eight months and is experiencing significant restrictions and isolation.

West Kordofan. This state is controlled by the Rapid Support Forces, while the entire Kordofan Region is under their administration and influence.

Central Sudan

- **Gezira State.** This state is administered by the Rapid Support Forces, which control local governance and security.
- **Sennar State.** This state is under siege and is experiencing restricted access and significant limitations on movement and resources.
- **White Nile State.** This state is also under siege and is facing similar constraints and challenges owing to the ongoing conflict.

Eastern Sudan

- **Kassala State.** This state is under the administration of the Sudanese Armed Forces. Although markets are sometimes closed in anticipation of a possible attack, Kassala is not considered to be under siege.
- **Red Sea State.** This state is also under the administration of the Sudanese Armed Forces, with the military presence controlling security and administrative affairs.

Southern Sudan

- **Blue Nile State.** This state is operating under joint administration, with control and security shared among different factions.
- **South Kordofan.** Control of this state has recently been contested by the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army, the Rapid Support Forces and the Sudanese Armed Forces.

Northern Sudan

- **River Nile and Northern States.** Both of these states are under the administration of the Sudanese Armed Forces, with the military presence securing and controlling the area.

It is evident from the above that there is a clear administrative division in the country. Although the Rapid Support Forces have not officially announced that they will form a government, despite threatening to do so in September 2023, they are conducting operations in the states that they control. In West Darfur, they are exercising direct administrative rule, including the appointment of a governor.

According to various sources, the direct impacts of this situation are as follows:

- The central Government, currently based in Port Sudan, cannot publish a State budget, because it does not have control over all states. This situation will have a negative effect on State revenues.
- The operation of the central bank cannot be guaranteed in the cities controlled by the Rapid Support Forces owing to the centralization of the bank's operations. This will affect the banking sector as a whole and may herald the establishment of another central bank in the future.
- Owing to the refusal by the states controlled by the Rapid Support Forces to submit to the central authority, that authority will lose direct revenues (taxes, fees, etc.) from those states.
- The return of state employees to work will have an impact on the legitimacy of employment contracts and will potentially affect future salaries of workers in those states. In this situation, the Government, which is currently based in Port Sudan, will be obliged to pay the salaries of civil servants in states that it does not control.
- There is no export process in the states under the administration of the Rapid Support Forces, and this is even more pronounced in states under siege, where all roads have been closed and airports are non-operational, as is the case in North Kordofan. This situation significantly affects the Government currently based in Port Sudan, which relies on managing the economic affairs of the State, including obtaining export proceeds and stabilizing the currency. Instead, the Government has increasingly used export earnings, in particular from gold, to finance the ongoing war effort, further straining the country's economic stability.

2.11 Conclusion

The analysis set out in the present section of the report underscores the complexity of the conflict dynamics in the Sudan and the far-reaching impacts of the ongoing instability on human life, social cohesion and economic viability. The historical and recent drivers of conflict reveal the need for a multidimensional approach to reconstruction, with particular attention paid to political inclusivity, resource equity and community-level peacebuilding. The findings suggest that only by addressing these root causes – and fostering collaboration with both regional and international stakeholders – can the Sudan hope to establish a durable path to stability. A holistic, integrated approach is essential – one that rebuilds not only infrastructure but also trust among the diverse communities in the Sudan, laying the groundwork for a peaceful, resilient and prosperous future.

3. Assessment of post-conflict reconstruction needs in the Sudan

The critical needs in the Sudan with regard to recovery following prolonged conflict will be examined in the present section of the report, drawing on stakeholder insights and lessons learned from international post-conflict contexts. The ongoing challenges have led to substantial humanitarian crises, infrastructure collapse, economic instability and significant social disruption. Addressing these needs requires a multifaceted approach that includes immediate humanitarian assistance, long-term development strategies and cohesive national policies aimed at fostering stability and social cohesion.

3.1 Humanitarian costs

The conflict in the Sudan has led to a severe humanitarian crisis, affecting millions of people across the country. With widespread displacement, the destruction of essential infrastructure, a public health emergency and food insecurity, the immediate and long-term effects of the crisis on civilians in the Sudan are profound. Those primary humanitarian impacts will be examined in the present section, drawing from the latest data available and reports from international organizations.

3.1.1 Displacement and living conditions

As of October 2024, the Sudan was experiencing the largest displacement crisis globally, with approximately 11.5 million internally displaced persons. Notably, 8.2 million individuals had been displaced since the conflict's onset in April 2023. In addition, 3.3 million people had sought refuge in neighbouring countries, including the Central African Republic, Chad, Egypt, Ethiopia, Libya and South Sudan. Chad had received the highest number of arrivals, followed by Egypt and South Sudan. That mass displacement had led to a severe humanitarian crisis, with 24.7 million people – half of the population of the Sudan – in urgent need of aid and protection (International Organization for Migration, 2024). These displaced populations face extreme challenges, including inadequate shelter, limited access to clean water and overcrowded living conditions in temporary camps and host communities.

The severe lack of such basic needs as sanitation and healthcare in displacement camps, along with the associated health risks from waterborne diseases, is supported by reports from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. In its 2024 Global Humanitarian Overview, the Office emphasizes that the deterioration of water and sanitation systems, in particular in conflict-affected areas, has led to significant public health risks. Limited access to safe drinking water and sanitation facilities has resulted in outbreaks of such diseases as cholera, which pose serious health threats to displaced populations (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2024). The situation is especially dire for vulnerable groups, such as children, the elderly and persons with disabilities, who are disproportionately affected by these living conditions.

3.1.2 Destruction of civilian infrastructure

The conflict has caused widespread destruction of civilian infrastructure, further exacerbating humanitarian needs. Schools, hospitals, water facilities and homes have been severely damaged or

repurposed for military use. This destruction disrupts daily life for millions and severely restricts access to such essential services as healthcare, education and utilities. According to recent estimates by WHO, 70 per cent of healthcare facilities in conflict-affected areas are either damaged or non-functional, limiting access to emergency care and essential services (United Nations, 2024b).

The conflict in the Sudan has had a devastating impact on both education and water infrastructure. Recent reports indicate that approximately 19 million children are currently out of school owing to the ongoing violence, with about 6.5 million losing access to education because of insecurity and the closure of about 10,400 schools in conflict-affected areas (Sudan Times, 2023; UNICEF, 2024). This interruption in education not only limits immediate learning opportunities but also poses long-term risks to human capital development in the Sudan, as children and young people are deprived of foundational skills and knowledge. These damaged or destroyed health and education facilities (along with all other conflict-affected infrastructure) are also likely to be heavily contaminated with explosive remnants of war, further impeding their safe use and safe rehabilitation or reconstruction.

3.1.3 Public health crisis

The breakdown of the healthcare system in the Sudan owing to the conflict has resulted in an escalating public health crisis. The number of outbreaks of communicable diseases, including cholera, malaria and measles, has risen substantially, in particular in overcrowded displacement camps and areas lacking basic sanitation (WHO, 2024). The surge in disease outbreaks is compounded by a shortage of medical professionals and supplies, which hampers effective disease prevention and treatment.

Maternal and child healthcare is especially affected, with access to emergency obstetric care drastically reduced. The closure of health facilities, coupled with the scarcity of essential medicines, has led to increased maternal and child mortality rates in conflict zones. Maternal mortality rates have risen significantly in areas hardest hit by the conflict, as pregnant women struggle to gain access to safe delivery services (WHO, 2024).

3.1.4 Food insecurity and malnutrition

Food insecurity has reached critical levels in the Sudan, affecting nearly half of the population. WFP reports that 24 million people in the Sudan are currently experiencing food insecurity, with 638,000 at a severe level of hunger (WFP, 2024). The ongoing conflict has disrupted agricultural production, limited access to markets and driven up food prices, making it increasingly difficult for families to access sufficient and nutritious food.

Children are particularly vulnerable to malnutrition, with rates of acute malnutrition among young children reaching emergency levels in some conflict-affected regions. Malnutrition poses long-term health risks, leading to stunted growth, weakened immune systems and developmental challenges. In its findings, WFP emphasizes that, without immediate interventions, malnutrition could have lasting impacts on children in the Sudan, impeding their cognitive and physical development and increasing the risk of long-term health complications.

3.2 Institutional damage

The ongoing conflict in the Sudan has had devastating effects on both central and local governance structures, severely weakening the country's ability to maintain public order, provide essential services

and promote social cohesion. This institutional breakdown has created a vacuum in governance, eroding public trust and complicating any efforts for effective post-conflict recovery. The damage to the country's central and local governance structures, the loss of skilled professionals critical to institutional functions and the resulting challenges for future governance and public administration will be addressed in the present section of the report.

3.2.1 Collapse of central and local governance structures

The conflict has fundamentally destabilized the central Government of the Sudan, leaving crucial State institutions unable to perform basic functions. National institutions, including the ministries of health, education, finance and justice, have been paralysed by the crisis, with infrastructure damaged or repurposed and personnel displaced or removed from their posts. This paralysis in central governance has drastically reduced the Government's capacity to coordinate emergency relief, enforce law and order, and administer essential services, effectively stalling public administration across the Sudan (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2024).

The ongoing conflict in the Sudan has severely disrupted local governance structures, in particular in urban areas. In a joint study, the International Food Policy Research Institute and UNDP highlight that 31 per cent of urban households have experienced displacement and that full-time employment has decreased by half. In addition, in more than 70 per cent of urban households, some or all school-age children have stopped attending school, and only one in seven urban households has access to full health services (International Food Policy Research Institute and UNDP, 2024).

These challenges have significantly hindered the capacity of local governance bodies, such as town councils and municipal authorities, to maintain law and order and deliver essential services. The displacement of staff and lack of resources have rendered many local administrative offices non-functional, leading to a breakdown in social services, waste management, sanitation and local justice systems.

3.2.2 Breakdown of the judicial system and the rule of law

The ongoing conflict in the Sudan has had a devastating impact on the country's already fragile judicial system. As detailed in a report by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (A/HRC/55/29), the fighting has resulted in the destruction and abandonment of numerous judicial and law enforcement facilities, severely disrupting judicial processes and undermining the rule of law. This collapse of the formal justice system has drastically limited access to justice, in particular for vulnerable groups, including women and marginalized communities, who often rely on the system for protection against violence and discrimination. The Office highlights the urgent need to address this breakdown and to ensure accountability for human rights violations.

In addition, law enforcement agencies face a significant loss of personnel, with many officers either displaced or having abandoned their posts owing to security threats. This void in law enforcement capacity has contributed to increased crime, including theft, assault and gender-based violence, further undermining community safety and stability. The inability to enforce laws has also emboldened armed groups and militias, who capitalize on the lack of central authority to expand their influence, deepening the security crisis.

3.2.3 Loss of skilled professionals and its implications

The ongoing conflict in the Sudan has led to a severe exodus of skilled professionals, exacerbating an already fragile labour market and significantly affecting crucial productive sectors. The reduction in employment across aggregate sectors owing to declining output is particularly alarming. Compared to 2021 levels, half of all workers – approximately 5.2 million people – are expected to lose their jobs. The service sector, which is the largest employer in the Sudan, is projected to suffer the most, with 2.7 million jobs lost, representing a 47.9 per cent decline. The agricultural sector is expected to contract by 20.4 per cent, resulting in a loss of 0.4 million jobs, while the industrial sector faces the most devastating impact, with 2 million jobs lost, equivalent to 81.3 per cent of sectoral employment (Ahmed, Raouf and Siddig, 2024).

The shortage of skilled professionals directly affects the Government's ability to implement recovery initiatives and public service programmes, hindering any efforts to rebuild and restore institutional strength. This professional deficit is particularly pronounced in the healthcare and education sectors, where the scarcity of trained doctors, nurses, teachers and school administrators limits the availability of essential services to the population. Furthermore, without skilled civil servants, the administration of justice, social services and economic planning cannot proceed effectively, jeopardizing long-term development goals.

3.2.4 Challenges to future governance and public administration

The cumulative effects of the collapse in governance, judicial breakdown and loss of skilled personnel create formidable obstacles to re-establishing functional governance structures. These challenges include:

- **Lack of institutional knowledge.** With experienced professionals leaving the Sudan or being displaced within the country, there is a significant gap in institutional knowledge that is crucial for efficient governance and administration. This gap hinders continuity in policymaking, planning and the implementation of critical programmes.
- **Erosion of public trust.** The inability of government institutions to provide security, justice and essential services has led to an erosion of public trust. Communities affected by the conflict may view these institutions with scepticism, complicating future peacebuilding and governance initiatives.
- **Complexities of rebuilding local governance.** Re-establishing local governance will require rebuilding physical infrastructure, restoring community trust and training personnel to meet local administrative needs. In the interim, local populations remain vulnerable to exploitation by non-State actors and armed groups who capitalize on the governance vacuum.
- **Need for institutional reform and capacity-building.** Rebuilding effective governance in the Sudan will require extensive institutional reform and capacity-building initiatives. This includes training new civil servants, establishing accountability mechanisms and possibly introducing decentralization policies that empower local authorities to address region-specific needs more effectively.

3.3 Assessment of damage to basic services in the Sudan

The ongoing conflict in the Sudan has led to widespread destruction and severe disruption of basic services essential to daily life, such as water, sanitation, healthcare, food and electricity. The cumulative damage to infrastructure and forced displacement of millions of people have created a humanitarian emergency, leaving vulnerable populations without consistent access to essential resources. Each of these critical services is examined in the present section of the report, identifying the main issues and their impact on affected communities. One common issue across all infrastructure damaged or destroyed by conflict is the presence of explosive hazards in and around the infrastructure. This threat limits the capacity for safe use or safe rehabilitation or reconstruction of such infrastructure.

3.3.1 Water and sanitation

Water supply disruption. Regarding water infrastructure, the war has severely compromised access to safe drinking water. UNICEF reports that, since the conflict began, it has provided 10.9 million children and their families with safe drinking water, highlighting the extensive need caused by damaged water systems (UNICEF, 2024). Rural areas, which are similarly affected, face a critical lack of access to clean water, which heightens the risk of disease outbreaks. Currently, an estimated 4 million people in the Sudan are vulnerable to waterborne diseases, including cholera, which has been reported across 11 states, with over 11,000 suspected cases (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2024).

Sanitation system breakdown. Conflict-related damage has also decimated sanitation systems, leading to unsanitary conditions, in particular in overcrowded displacement camps. UNICEF has reported the widespread breakdown of basic sanitation services, increasing the likelihood of disease transmission in both urban and rural areas. These conditions have contributed to ongoing outbreaks of such diseases as measles and malaria, further straining an already fragile healthcare system (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2024).

3.3.2 Healthcare services

Collapse of healthcare infrastructure. The ongoing conflict in the Sudan has severely degraded healthcare infrastructure across affected regions. WHO reports that less than 25 per cent of health facilities are functional in the states hardest hit by the war, while only 45 per cent of such facilities are fully functional in other states. In conflict-affected areas, up to 80 per cent of health facilities have been forced to shut down owing to armed conflict, insecurity, attacks on healthcare infrastructure and shortages of health workers and supplies. Major hospitals in such places as Khartoum, Darfur and Kordofan have suffered looting or bombing or have been abandoned, leading to severe shortages of essential medicines and medical supplies (United Nations, 2024b).

3.3.3 Disease outbreaks and the mental health crisis

The breakdown of public health services in the Sudan has led to a surge in disease outbreaks, including over 11,000 suspected cholera cases and 4,000 measles cases, as reported by WHO. The spread of malaria and dengue fever is also escalating owing to inadequate sanitation and a lack of vector control. In addition, the prolonged exposure to violence and displacement has triggered a severe mental health

crisis, with an estimated 3 million people suffering from such psychological conditions as post-traumatic stress disorder (WHO, 2024).

3.4 Food security and nutrition

3.4.1 Food insecurity and famine risk

The disruption of agricultural production and supply chains has caused food insecurity to reach critical levels, affecting approximately 24 million people in the Sudan. Among these, 8 million are at high risk of malnutrition, with children being particularly vulnerable. Food shortages have resulted from conflict-driven displacement of farming communities, loss of livestock and limited access to markets, which has increased food prices and rendered basic staples unaffordable (WFP, 2024).

3.4.2 Malnutrition crisis among children

Rates of acute malnutrition in children are at emergency levels in some areas, with 700,000 children expected to suffer from severe acute malnutrition in 2024. Malnutrition has both immediate and long-term health impacts, leading to stunted growth, weakened immune systems and developmental challenges, with potentially lifelong repercussions for the country's younger population (UNICEF, 2024; WFP, 2024).

3.5 Electricity and power supply

Electricity reliability has significantly deteriorated for nearly 90 per cent of households that had access to power before the conflict, with prolonged blackouts and infrastructure damage severely limiting supply (International Food Policy Research Institute and UNDP, 2024). Many areas experience frequent and extended power outages, disrupting daily life and hindering such essential activities as food storage, healthcare provision and communication. These disruptions exacerbate the vulnerabilities faced by urban populations, in particular those who rely on stable electricity for medical equipment, business and basic living conditions. Prolonged blackouts across major urban centres are affecting essential services, including healthcare facilities, schools and businesses. The lack of consistent power supply has hindered economic activities, exacerbating unemployment and increasing hardship for families already affected by conflict (World Bank, 2024).

3.6 Educational disruption and long-term impact

The ongoing conflict has disrupted the education system across the Sudan, significantly affecting children's access to learning opportunities. Approximately 500 schools and 15 universities have either been destroyed or are being used for alternative purposes, such as housing for displaced families or as temporary bases for armed groups (UNICEF, 2024). This has led to the suspension of formal education for approximately 19 million school-age children, exacerbating what is now one of the largest child displacement crises in the world.

The closure of educational facilities in the Sudan has severely limited children's access to learning, with 19 million children currently out of school owing to ongoing conflict. This disruption not only limits immediate educational opportunities but also threatens long-term human capital development,

depriving millions of the foundational skills necessary for future employment, economic stability and social participation. Furthermore, schools have become targets of violence, placing children in conflict zones at constant risk and worsening the humanitarian crisis. The lack of access to education exacerbates trauma, insecurity and social instability, further endangering future economic growth and overall stability in the Sudan (UNICEF, 2023).

3.7 Protection risks and vulnerable populations

The conflict in the Sudan has created significant protection challenges for civilians, exposing millions of people to various forms of violence, abuse and exploitation. Vulnerable groups, in particular women and children, bear the heaviest burden of these risks, as limited law enforcement and a lack of safe shelters exacerbate the threats they face. The primary protection concerns affecting these groups are examined in the present section of the report, including the impacts of physical harm, gender-based violence, explosive hazard contamination and recruitment into armed groups, as well as the psychosocial trauma endured by those displaced by conflict.

3.7.1 Protection risks for civilians

With the breakdown of governance and the weakening of legal protections, civilians, especially in conflict zones, are at heightened risk of physical harm. Reports indicate widespread incidents of exploitation, forced labour and harassment. The absence of adequate law enforcement leaves many communities without protection from armed groups, exposing them to recurrent attacks and forced recruitment.

3.7.2 Gender-based violence and exploitation of women and girls

The ongoing conflict in the Sudan continues to devastate the lives of its people, especially women and girls. As the situation marks its one-year point, the humanitarian crisis is worsening, reversing previous gains in democracy and stability. Women and girls are disproportionately affected, making up 53 per cent of those internally displaced. The risks of gender-based violence are escalating, with over 6.7 million individuals at risk, alongside increasing reports of intimate partner violence, sexual exploitation and trafficking. Access to support services remains limited for survivors, exacerbating their plight. The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) emphasizes the need for international attention to prevent this crisis from being overlooked and calls for immediate action to protect and empower women and girls while ensuring their participation in peace processes and decision-making (United Nations, 2024a).

3.7.3 Explosive hazards

The conflict has led to a massive increase in explosive hazards across the Sudan, including in major population centres. Given the indiscriminate nature of the conflict, these hazards are prevalent across civilian infrastructure, including in and around residential areas, medical and education facilities, markets, water and electricity infrastructure, and roads and airstrips, as well as within agricultural areas. Children and displaced persons are at higher risk of accidents owing to their activity patterns. Beyond the immediate threat to life these threats pose to civilians, they also impede safe access to services and physical reconstruction and recovery efforts in conflict-affected areas. The presence of explosive hazards also prevents the safe return of displaced persons to areas of conflict.

3.8 Impacts on children

3.8.1 Recruitment into armed groups and forced labour

Children are at increased risk of recruitment by armed groups, who capitalize on the absence of stable educational and social structures. Vulnerable children, in particular those separated from their families, are often coerced into joining armed groups or forced into labour. This exploitation not only endangers their physical safety but also deprives them of opportunities for education and healthy development, perpetuating cycles of poverty and violence.

3.8.2 Psychological trauma and social displacement

The conflict has caused severe psychological trauma among children, who experience loss, displacement and exposure to violence. Children in conflict zones or displacement camps are at high risk of post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety and depression, with little access to mental health support. The disruption of family structures exacerbates these challenges, as children lose the protective environment that families typically provide. Without adequate intervention, the ongoing trauma could have long-term impacts on their mental well-being and their ability to reintegrate into society.

3.8.3 Mental health crisis and limited support services

The ongoing violence and instability have given rise to a widespread mental health crisis, affecting not only survivors of physical violence but also those dealing with the constant stress of displacement and insecurity. An estimated 3 million people in the Sudan are currently suffering from severe mental health issues, including post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and anxiety, with children and the elderly being particularly vulnerable. Unfortunately, mental health services are scarce, especially in rural areas and displacement camps, leaving millions without access to essential care and support (WHO, 2024).

The limited availability of mental health services is further compounded by a shortage of trained professionals, as many healthcare workers have fled or been displaced. The need for trauma-informed care and support networks is urgent, as untreated mental health issues threaten long-term community resilience and hinder the overall post-conflict recovery process. Addressing these mental health needs will require a robust, community-based response supported by international and local organizations.

3.9 Economic costs of the conflict in the Sudan

The conflict in the Sudan has imposed devastating economic costs, exacerbating pre-existing challenges and creating new barriers to recovery and growth. Such economic impacts can be seen through both direct destruction of infrastructure and services and indirect effects on broader economic stability, livelihoods and poverty levels. These economic challenges are outlined in the present section of the report, detailing the immediate and long-term consequences on the economy of the Sudan.

3.9.1 Immediate financial toll on infrastructure and services

The ongoing conflict in the Sudan has severely affected critical infrastructure, leading to widespread destruction of transportation networks, healthcare facilities, schools and water systems. The escalation of violence since April 2023 has disrupted everyday life and significantly strained the economy, contributing to what has become the largest displacement crisis in the world

(World Bank, 2024). Rebuilding these services will require substantial investment and resources, putting additional strain on the country's limited budget.

The disruption to such basic services as water, electricity and sanitation has further worsened living conditions for millions. Many areas, especially in urban centres, now experience frequent power outages, which affect not only households but also hospitals, businesses and schools. This situation has created a humanitarian crisis requiring extensive international aid to meet the basic needs of displaced populations.

3.9.2 Loss of livelihoods and economic activities

The conflict has devastated vital economic sectors, in particular agriculture, in which over 60 per cent of the country's workforce is employed. Displacements, destruction of farmland and restricted access to markets have significantly decreased agricultural productivity, reducing both income and food availability. In addition, losses in livestock – an essential source of food and income for many rural families – further undermine food security and economic resilience.

The closure of small businesses, combined with the destruction of marketplaces and limited access to financial services, has led to widespread unemployment. Informal sector workers, who make up a significant portion of the urban economy, have been particularly affected by these disruptions.

3.9.3 Long-term impacts on economic stability and growth

The ongoing conflict in the Sudan, starting in April 2023, has devastated the country's economy. Reports indicate a sharp decline in GDP, with the World Bank estimating a 20 per cent contraction in 2023 and 15 per cent in 2024, while the African Development Bank forecasts a 5.9 per cent drop in 2024 and a \$125 billion output loss in the first year of the conflict. Other analyses suggest an even steeper fall, potentially exceeding 40 per cent in 2023. Living costs have soared, with the Central Bureau of Statistics of the Sudan reporting a rise in inflation from 67 per cent in 2023 to 137 per cent by mid-2024. The World Bank estimates inflation at 66 per cent for 2023 and 180 per cent for 2024, while IMF estimates 171 per cent and 145 per cent for those years, respectively. The Sudanese pound had lost over 300 per cent of its value by August 2024, and poverty has deepened, with an additional 1.8 million people in the Sudan falling into poverty in 2023 (International Food Policy Research Institute and UNDP, 2024).

Trade disruptions, both domestic and cross border, have further weakened economic stability in the Sudan. Vital trade routes have been compromised, preventing the flow of goods and reducing export revenue. The agriculture sector, historically a major contributor to the country's exports, has suffered, as conflict has forced farmers to abandon crops and livestock. This has resulted in a decline in foreign exchange earnings, exacerbating the trade deficit of the Sudan and limiting its ability to import essential goods, including food and medicine.

3.9.4 Poverty and the unemployment crisis

The ongoing economic decline has led to rising poverty and unemployment rates across the Sudan. Since the conflict began, the country's poverty rate has risen by 40 per cent, pushing many families below the poverty line (World Bank, 2024). With widespread job losses across such vital sectors as agriculture, trade and manufacturing, unemployment has surged, in particular among young people and rural populations, who have been disproportionately affected by displacement and economic instability.

Inflation has also driven up the prices of essential goods, making food, fuel and other necessities unaffordable for much of the population. Approximately 24 million people in the Sudan now face food insecurity owing to declining purchasing power and disrupted agricultural production (WFP, 2024). This situation threatens both immediate livelihoods and long-term economic resilience, as families lack the resources to invest in productive activities or in education for their children.

3.10 Economic decline in the Sudan

The conflict in the Sudan has led to an acute economic decline, exacerbating an already fragile economy and disrupting vital economic sectors. The direct and indirect impacts of the war have resulted in a significant contraction of the country's GDP, reduced investor confidence and left local businesses struggling to survive in an unstable environment. These factors collectively present formidable challenges to economic recovery and long-term growth prospects for the Sudan.

3.10.1 Gross domestic product contraction and economic instability

The country's GDP has contracted by over 25 per cent since the conflict began in April 2023, reflecting the severe disruption of economic activities across the country (IMF, 2024). This sharp contraction is primarily due to widespread damage to infrastructure, reduced productivity in major sectors and the displacement of millions of people, which has significantly decreased labour force participation.

Economic instability is further compounded by surging inflation rates, which have eroded the purchasing power of households in the country. The inflation rate in the Sudan had spiked to over 400 per cent as of late 2023, making essential goods unaffordable for large segments of the population (World Bank, 2024). This hyperinflation has not only affected food and fuel prices but has also increased the cost of critical inputs for businesses, causing a chain reaction of rising prices across the economy. In addition, the Sudanese pound has experienced significant depreciation, further destabilizing the economy and reducing import affordability.

This period of economic instability has severely restricted the Government's ability to fund essential services and recovery initiatives, leading to increased reliance on international aid and humanitarian assistance. Moreover, limited access to conflict zones has made it challenging for external assistance to effectively mitigate these economic impacts.

3.10.2 Effects on trade, investment and local businesses

3.10.2.1 Trade disruptions

The conflict has disrupted both domestic and international trade, affecting crucial export sectors in the Sudan, including agriculture, livestock and minerals. The major trade routes that connect the Sudan to neighbouring countries, such as Chad, Egypt and South Sudan, have been compromised by ongoing hostilities, impeding the flow of goods and reducing export revenues. Agriculture, which accounts for a significant portion of exports from the Sudan, has been particularly hard-hit, as conflict has forced farmers to abandon crops and livestock. Consequently, export volumes of major commodities have declined, leading to reduced foreign exchange earnings and a widening trade deficit.

The loss of trade revenues has also limited the country's ability to import essential goods, including food, medicine and fuel, creating shortages that further exacerbate the humanitarian crisis. Border closures and restrictions on transport in conflict areas have disrupted the supply chains necessary for both domestic and international trade, amplifying the economic impact on businesses in the Sudan that rely on imported inputs.

3.10.2.2 Decline in investment and investor confidence

Investment in the Sudan, both foreign and domestic, has plummeted as a result of the conflict. The uncertainty surrounding the political and security environment in the Sudan has deterred potential investors, as the risks associated with operating in a conflict zone outweigh the potential returns. Major foreign investors, in particular those involved in agriculture, mining and infrastructure, have left the country or suspended operations owing to the security risks and unpredictability of the situation.

The conflict has also delayed or halted numerous development projects funded by international organizations and foreign Governments, thereby reducing the inflow of capital, which is necessary for economic growth. With investor confidence at an all-time low, the Sudan faces a significant challenge in attracting the investments needed to rebuild its economy once the conflict subsides. In addition, the country's downgraded credit ratings and rising national debt, which now exceeds \$60 billion, have further limited its access to external financing (World Bank, 2024).

3.10.2.3 Impact on local businesses and small enterprises

Local businesses, especially small and medium-sized enterprises, have been devastated by the conflict. Small and medium-sized businesses in such sectors as agriculture, retail and manufacturing have faced operational disruptions, losses of assets and decreased demand as the economy contracts. Many businesses have been forced to close, owing to the destruction of premises, loss of inventory and restricted access to markets. According to recent estimates, 40 per cent of businesses in the Sudan have closed since the conflict began, leaving thousands of people unemployed and contributing to the country's rising poverty levels (IMF, 2024).

Those businesses that continue to operate face significant challenges, including supply chain disruptions, inflation-driven input costs and reduced consumer spending power. In conflict-affected regions, businesses often do not have access to financial services, limiting their ability to rebuild or expand operations. The lack of credit and financing options also stifles entrepreneurship, as aspiring business owners face barriers to entry into an already struggling economy. In addition, the ongoing conflict has increased risks of theft and asset damage, with limited law enforcement capacity to protect businesses and ensure property rights.

3.11 Stakeholder perspectives on post-conflict recovery needs

Important insights gathered from a diverse range of stakeholders regarding the post-conflict recovery needs in the Sudan are presented in the present section. Data collection was conducted through structured interviews with representatives of government institutions, civil society organizations, international agencies, academia and the private sector. These interviews were aimed at achieving a comprehensive understanding of the critical challenges and priorities for reconstruction and development.

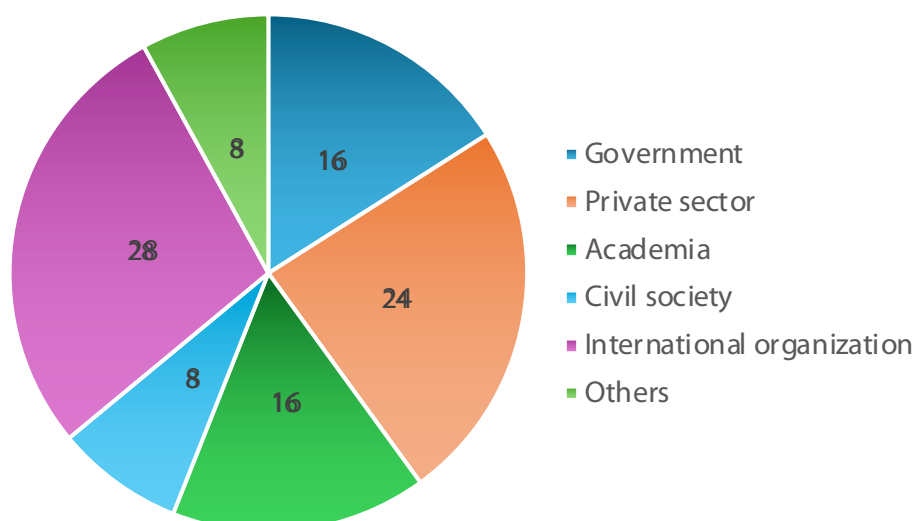
The consultations involved in-depth, qualitative interviews with important stakeholders, allowing for detailed discussions on governance, economic revitalization, security and social cohesion. The structured approach to these interviews ensured that diverse perspectives were represented, providing a balanced and well-rounded assessment of the country's post-conflict recovery needs.

3.11.1 Participant information

3.11.1.1 Institutional affiliation

The institutional affiliation of respondents is shown in figure I, illustrating the diversity of perspectives that contributed to the present study. This information helps to contextualize the responses by showcasing representation from government agencies, civil society organizations, academia and international institutions.

Figure I: Respondents' type of institutional affiliation (Percentage)



Source: Author.

The respondents come from a diverse mix of sectors that are critical for reconstruction in the Sudan, including the Government (15 per cent), the private sector (24 per cent), academia (16 per cent), civil society (8 per cent), international organizations (28 per cent) and other entities (8 per cent). This variety in institutional affiliation provides a broad spectrum of insights, combining local, national and international perspectives that are essential for a well-rounded approach to post-conflict recovery.

Strong representation of international organizations and the private sector. The significant involvement of international organizations (28 per cent) indicates strong external expertise in shaping the reconstruction efforts in the Sudan. Their expertise in peacebuilding and humanitarian response adds a global perspective to local needs. Meanwhile, the notable representation of the private sector (24 per cent) underscores the importance of incorporating business views into economic revitalization efforts. The private sector is expected to be instrumental in job creation, investment and infrastructure development, all of which are critical for stability.

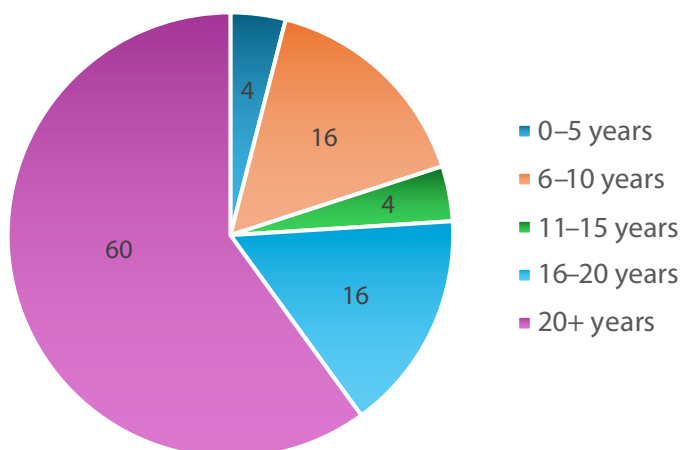
Government and academic input. The 15 per cent of respondents coming from government institutions and 16 per cent from academia provide insights that are grounded in policy, research and public sector experience. Their contributions help to ensure that reconstruction efforts are both evidence-based and aligned with the policy landscape in the Sudan. Academic representation also points to the importance of research-backed solutions and informed frameworks that can help to address complex recovery challenges.

This diversity reflects a comprehensive pool of knowledge and expertise that is likely to enhance the relevance of the strategy for rehabilitation and reconstruction in the Sudan, ensuring that it is balanced, inclusive and practical across multiple dimensions.

3.11.1.2 Years of experience

Respondents' number of years of experience working in conflict-affected regions or post-conflict recovery is presented in figure II. This information provides insights into respondents' level of expertise and the depth of knowledge they bring to the discussion on recovery efforts in the Sudan.

Figure II: Respondents' number of years of experience in conflict-affected areas or post-conflict recovery (Percentage)



Source: Author.

The respondents bring substantial experience to the table, with 60 per cent possessing over 20 years of experience in conflict-affected areas or post-conflict settings. This high level of expertise provides a depth of understanding that is crucial for addressing the country's specific needs in the recovery process.

Expert insights. The fact that a significant majority of respondents have over 20 years of experience suggests that their insights are shaped by extensive, firsthand experience with various phases of conflict

recovery, from immediate crisis response to long-term development. Such veteran insights ensure that the recommended strategies are grounded in practical knowledge and lessons learned, potentially avoiding common pitfalls and promoting more resilient solutions.

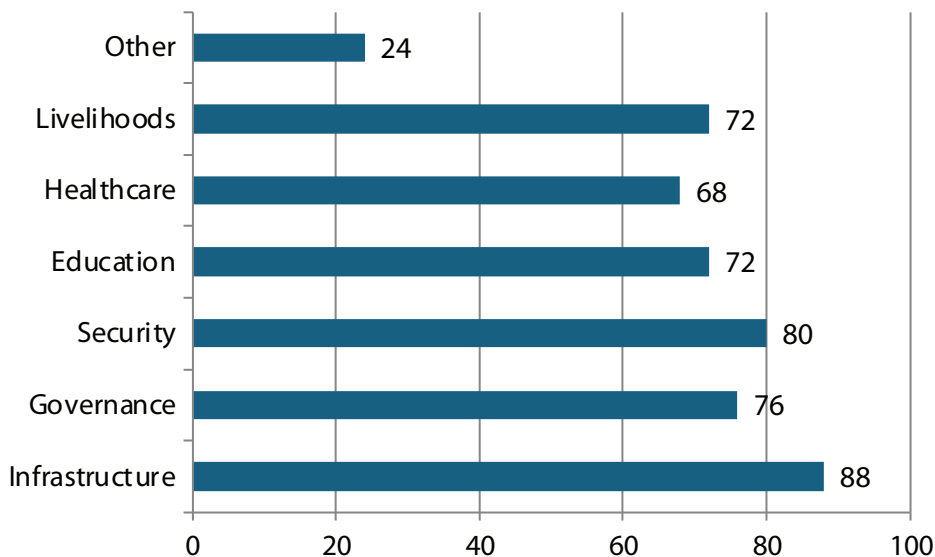
Diverse experience levels. Respondents with 6–10 years (16 per cent) and 16–20 years (16 per cent) of experience complement the perspective of expert participants, providing a more recent outlook on conflict dynamics and newer recovery methodologies. Their input offers a balance between traditional approaches and innovative, adaptive practices that are increasingly relevant in modern post-conflict settings.

Together, this range of experience levels provides a comprehensive viewpoint that can guide both short-term recovery and long-term peacebuilding efforts, ensuring that the country’s recovery process is informed by a wide spectrum of conflict recovery experience.

3.11.2 Views on major development priorities

Figure III is focused on sector-specific concerns raised by stakeholders, in particular in such areas as healthcare, education and infrastructure. The figure illustrates which of these critical components of the recovery process were most frequently mentioned by respondents.

Figure III: Areas identified as being the most critical for immediate post-war development in the Sudan (Percentage)



Source: Author.

Respondents highlighted several priority areas for immediate post-war development in the Sudan, with infrastructure (88 per cent), security (80 per cent) and governance (76 per cent) emerging as top concerns. The identification of these areas reflects an understanding that stability, institutional strength and essential services are foundational for any effective recovery effort.

Infrastructure development. Infrastructure was nearly universally cited as the most critical need, reflecting the widespread damage the conflict has inflicted on bridges, roads, power stations, utilities, healthcare facilities and schools in the Sudan. Rebuilding infrastructure is seen as being essential for reviving economic activities, enabling access to basic services and connecting communities. Respondents emphasized that a robust infrastructure base was necessary for supporting all other recovery efforts, from healthcare delivery to business development.

Security and governance. Security (80 per cent) and governance (76 per cent) were also identified as urgent priorities, as they were fundamental to establishing a safe and stable environment for reconstruction. Respondents underscored the need for comprehensive security reforms to protect civilians, prevent further violence and create a secure environment for reconstruction activities. Effective governance was equally important, as strong institutions were necessary to manage resources, enforce laws and foster public trust in the recovery process.

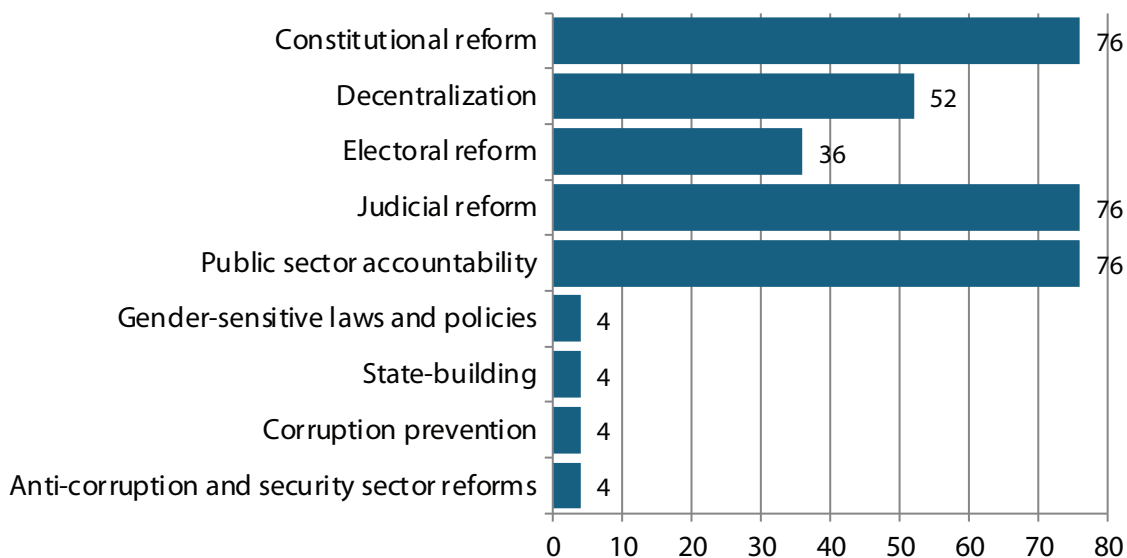
Social and economic priorities. Education (72 per cent), healthcare (68 per cent) and livelihoods (72 per cent) were also seen as being critical. Those elements addressed the immediate needs of conflict-affected populations, including access to medical care, learning opportunities and income-generating activities. Respondents noted that improving livelihoods was essential for stabilizing households, reducing poverty and mitigating potential conflict triggers, while education and healthcare were vital for restoring human capital and ensuring community well-being.

In the “other” category, respondents identified transitional justice, rule of law and institutional capacity-building as additional priorities, underscoring the need for comprehensive reforms that addressed both structural and social dimensions of recovery. That mix of critical areas reflected the desire for a holistic approach that balanced physical reconstruction with institutional reform and human development, providing a well-rounded foundation for sustainable post-conflict recovery in the Sudan.

3.11.3 Views on institutional and governance structures

Figure IV highlights governance and institutional reforms that are considered to be essential for reconstruction in the Sudan. It presents stakeholder perceptions of such priorities as constitutional reforms, judicial reforms and improvements in public sector accountability.

Figure IV: Governance and institutional reforms viewed as being essential for reconstruction in the Sudan (Percentage)



Source: Author.

Respondents identified critical areas for governance and institutional reforms, highlighting constitutional reform (76 per cent), judicial reform (76 per cent) and public sector accountability (76 per cent) as top priorities. This strong alignment across responses underscores a shared understanding that sustainable peace and effective reconstruction hinge on a robust, transparent governance structure.

Constitutional reform. Respondents emphasized that constitutional reform was foundational for establishing the rule of law and ensuring that governance was representative, inclusive and just. Given the country's history of centralized power and exclusion, constitutional reform was seen as being essential for creating a governance model that reflected the diverse identities and interests of all regions of the country, thus reducing political grievances and fostering unity.

Judicial reform. Strong support for judicial reform suggests that respondents viewed an impartial and effective judiciary as being critical for rebuilding public trust. Strengthening the judiciary is essential to uphold human rights, combat corruption and ensure accountability. In the post-conflict context in the Sudan, a reformed judiciary could also facilitate transitional justice, helping communities to reconcile and hold perpetrators of past abuses accountable.

Public sector accountability. Respondents underscored public sector accountability as being central to effective governance, emphasizing that reforms must address corruption and inefficiencies in public administration. Accountability mechanisms could prevent the misuse of reconstruction resources, increase transparency and promote public trust in government efforts. A responsive, accountable public sector could better implement policies and deliver services critical to recovery, thus contributing to overall stability.

Additional responses in the "other" category, including anti-corruption measures, State-building and gender-sensitive laws, reflect a nuanced understanding of the unique governance needs of the Sudan. Those responses underscored that, in order for reforms to be effective, they must also address underlying societal inequities and ensure equitable representation of all communities. Together, the responses point to the need for a comprehensive reform agenda to foster inclusive governance, restore citizen trust and support sustainable development.

3.11.4 Role of local governance and decentralization in the recovery process

Respondents widely supported local governance and decentralization as vital elements in the recovery of the Sudan, stressing the need for empowered, locally based decision-making to address community-specific needs and promote equitable development.

Empowering local authorities. Respondents emphasized that granting genuine authority to local governance structures was essential. Decentralization would allow local governments to implement regionally tailored policies, allocate resources effectively and oversee local development. By empowering local authorities, the strategy could also mitigate the long-standing governance issues plaguing the Sudan, whereby centralized control had historically marginalized regions outside Khartoum, creating resentment and contributing to conflict.

Inclusive community engagement. The responses indicate that local governance should be a tool for community-driven recovery, emphasizing that communities should have a voice in decision-making processes. Respondents underscored that local engagement was crucial for effective recovery planning, as communities best understood their unique needs and priorities. Inclusive planning could enhance social cohesion, foster a sense of ownership of recovery efforts and create lasting peace at the grass-roots level.

Improved service delivery and accountability. Decentralization was also seen as being essential for improving service delivery. Respondents noted that local governance structures could facilitate better allocation and management of resources, thus enabling the efficient delivery of such essential services

as healthcare, education and infrastructure. A decentralized governance model was expected to reduce bureaucracy, increase transparency and ensure that resources reached areas most affected by conflict, fostering equitable recovery across all regions of the country.

These responses reflect a recognition that effective decentralization not only promotes political stability but also has the potential to build resilience by addressing regional disparities. Local governance reforms would address historical grievances, promote equitable development and support post-conflict recovery in the Sudan through a more balanced, community-centred approach.

3.11.5 Adaptable models from various post-conflict countries

Respondents identified several post-conflict recovery models from other countries that could serve as inspiration when creating a strategy for the unique context in the Sudan. Rwanda emerged as a frequently cited model owing to its focus on community-based reconciliation and economic reforms.

Rwanda as a model. Respondents praised the gacaca courts of Rwanda, which had provided a community-centred approach to justice and reconciliation. That model was seen as a potential fit for the Sudan, where community-based reconciliation could help to address local grievances and foster healing. In addition, the economic prioritization of health, education and grassroots engagement in Rwanda aligned with the need for a recovery model for the Sudan that promoted both social and economic resilience.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa and the peace agreement in Colombia. Both models were noted for their role in transitional justice and restorative peacebuilding. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa was viewed as a valuable example of how the Sudan could address past grievances while promoting national unity through restorative justice. Similarly, the peace process in Colombia, with its focus on negotiated settlement and reintegration, offered lessons on inclusive peacebuilding that could help the Sudan to navigate its complex social dynamics.

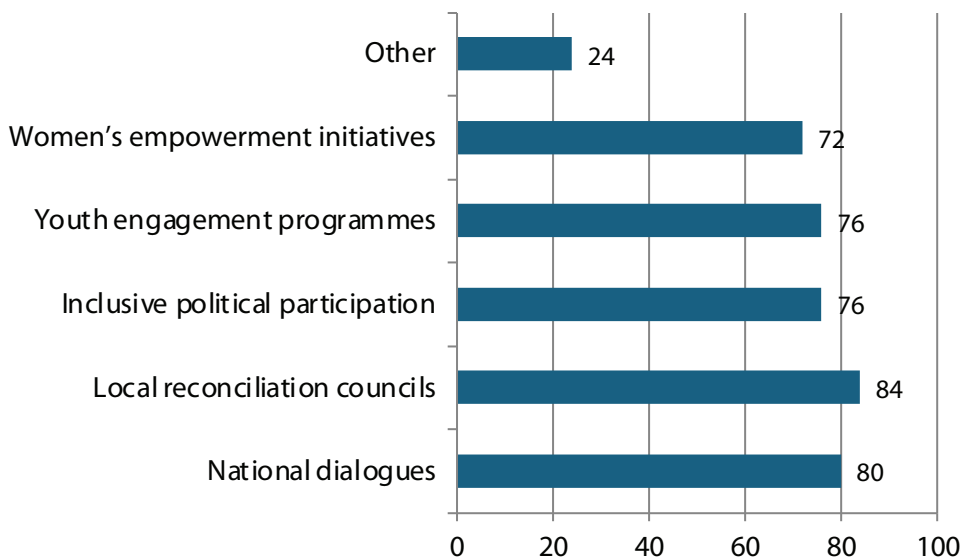
Hybrid model tailored to the context in the Sudan. Some responses highlighted the need for a hybrid model that drew on both punitive and restorative justice. Respondents suggested combining the approach to community justice followed in Rwanda with the framework for restorative justice developed in South Africa, so as to address the unique sociopolitical landscape in the Sudan. Such a hybrid approach would enable the Sudan to develop a tailored model that respected local contexts while benefiting from the experiences of successful international frameworks.

Overall, these responses suggest a strong awareness that, while other post-conflict recovery models offer valuable lessons, the recovery process for the Sudan must be flexible and adaptable. Drawing from these models, the Sudan can implement a hybrid, community-oriented approach that addresses both justice and social cohesion, building a foundation for sustainable peace and inclusive development.

3.11.6 Views on social cohesion and reconciliation

Figure V presents proposed strategies to promote peacebuilding and social cohesion in the Sudan. Stakeholders emphasized the importance of such strategies as reconciliation programmes, national dialogue and inclusive political participation.

Figure V: roposed strategies to promote peacebuilding and social cohesion (Percentage)



Source: Author.

Respondents emphasized national dialogues (80 per cent) and local reconciliation councils (84 per cent) as important strategies for fostering peace and cohesion, highlighting a significant need for inclusive, grass-roots processes. These responses underscored that, in order for peacebuilding to succeed, it must be inclusive, represent marginalized voices and be accessible at both the national and local levels.

Local reconciliation councils. The strong support for local reconciliation councils suggests that respondents see value in community-based approaches to healing societal divisions. These councils provide platforms for open dialogue, allowing community members to address grievances and find common ground. This grass-roots approach also mitigates the risk of conflicts re-emerging by addressing the root causes of local disputes and promoting shared identity and mutual respect.

National dialogues. National dialogues were seen as being essential for consolidating the peace process and building consensus on the country's future. Respondents highlighted that engaging in a broad national conversation could create unity by including diverse political, social and ethnic groups. Such an approach aligned with the need for the Sudan to foster cohesion at the national level, bridging gaps between various groups and addressing long-standing grievances that had fuelled instability.

Programmes to engage young people and women. Many respondents (76 per cent) advocated engaging young people in peacebuilding, acknowledging the pivotal role they played in shaping a stable future. Programmes targeting young people and women offered a means to empower those groups as active contributors to peace and development. By involving young people and women in dialogues, decision-making and community initiatives, the Sudan could tap into their potential as agents of change, while also addressing social inequities that could otherwise hinder sustainable peace.

Additional suggestions in the "other" category, such as policies for refugees and displaced persons, transitional justice and awareness programmes, demonstrate an awareness of the multifaceted needs of the post-conflict society in the Sudan. This array of responses highlights that, while structural reforms are essential, lasting peace also requires targeted interventions to address the needs of vulnerable groups and promote inclusivity.

3.11.7 Involving marginalized groups in the recovery process

Respondents underscored the importance of economic empowerment, training and representation for marginalized groups, advocating their direct involvement in the recovery process to ensure inclusivity and address historical marginalization. The main strategies proposed included the following:

- **Economic empowerment and livelihood support.** Respondents broadly suggested that providing economic opportunities was foundational for meaningful inclusion. Programmes that supported small business initiatives, provided vocational training and facilitated access to resources were viewed as being critical in giving marginalized groups the means to participate in recovery efforts. Economic empowerment helped those groups to achieve self-reliance, reducing dependency on aid and enhancing their role in rebuilding the country's economy.
- **Representation in decision-making.** There was a strong emphasis on including representatives of marginalized groups in recovery planning and implementation. By recognizing such entities as women's associations, youth groups and community organizations, it could be ensured that those groups' specific needs were met in the recovery process. Such an approach would also foster trust, as communities would feel that their concerns were heard and addressed, potentially reducing the risk of marginalization-driven conflicts.
- **Education and skill-building initiatives.** Respondents noted that providing educational and training programmes tailored to marginalized populations could greatly improve the latter's engagement in the recovery process. Education was particularly crucial for young people and women, as it equipped them with the knowledge and skills needed for meaningful participation and economic inclusion.

The emphasis on bottom-up approaches reflects a recognition of the sociopolitical complexities that have historically marginalized certain groups in the Sudan. By prioritizing their inclusion, the recovery process can promote a more cohesive, equitable and resilient society that is capable of sustaining peace and development.

3.11.8 Role of civil society organizations in supporting reconciliation efforts

Respondents identified a range of essential roles for civil society organizations to play in the provision of support for reconciliation, with the promotion of advocacy, awareness-raising and community engagement being central to their contributions.

- **Advocacy and awareness-raising campaigns.** Civil society organizations were viewed as being vital in raising awareness on peacebuilding and reconciliation, using campaigns to promote such values as tolerance, coexistence and unity. By educating communities on the importance of peace, civil society organizations could shift attitudes away from divisive narratives and create a culture that was supportive of reconciliation. That advocacy role extended to combating misinformation, ensuring that communities were accurately informed and empowered to make decisions that aligned with national peace efforts.
- **Community mobilization and engagement.** Many respondents highlighted that civil society organizations had a unique capacity to mobilize communities, bridging divides at the grass-roots level. By organizing events, workshops and dialogues, civil society organizations provided platforms through which people could express grievances, build trust and foster mutual understanding. That community-level engagement addressed societal divisions, promoting the reintegration of diverse groups and helping to rebuild the social fabric that had been torn by conflict.

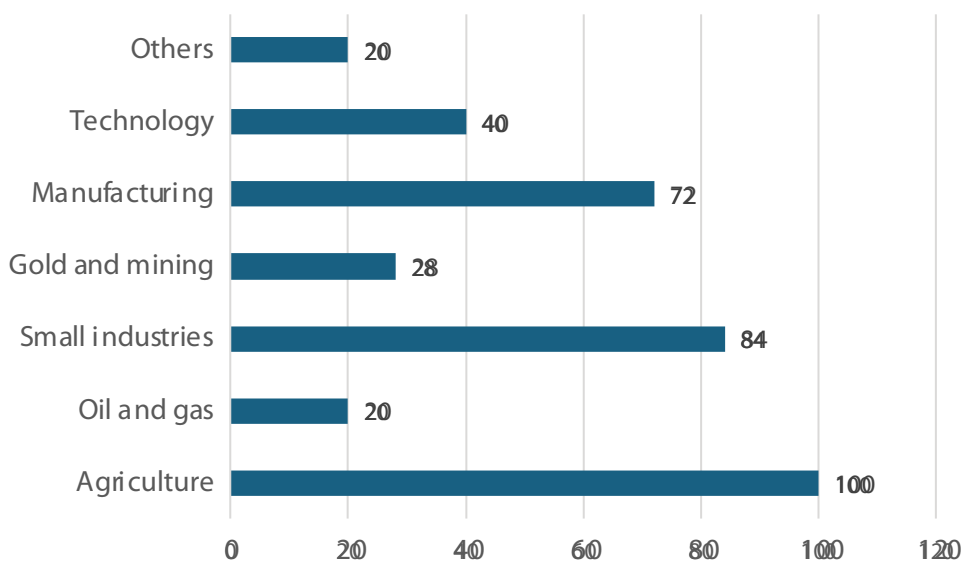
- **Mediation and early warning systems.** Some responses pointed to the roles of civil society organizations in mediation and conflict prevention, in particular through early warning systems. By monitoring local tensions and addressing grievances early, civil society organizations could prevent escalation and contribute to a more peaceful recovery. That role was especially important in a fragile post-conflict context where the risk of relapsing into conflict remained high.

The responses indicate that civil society organizations are viewed not only as peacebuilders but also as advocates of community needs, helping to ensure that recovery and reconciliation processes remain transparent, inclusive and aligned with the aspirations of the population. Importantly, some respondents stressed that civil society organizations must be independent of political influences to maintain neutrality, thereby preserving public trust and ensuring that their efforts effectively promoted unity.

3.11.9 Economic recovery and development as viewed by survey respondents

Figure VI illustrates the sectors that stakeholders identified as being critical for economic recovery. Such priority areas as agriculture, small industries and manufacturing are highlighted, which are seen as critical drivers for rebuilding the economy and creating employment opportunities in the Sudan after the conflict.

Figure VI: Prioritized sectors for economic recovery (Percentage)



Source: Author.

Respondents emphasized agriculture (100 per cent), small industries (84 per cent) and manufacturing (72 per cent) as priority sectors for economic recovery, underscoring the need for economic diversification and the revival of local industries.

Agriculture as the foundation. Agriculture was universally highlighted as being the most critical sector for post-conflict economic recovery in the Sudan. Respondents noted that agriculture was closely linked to the economy, culture and employment base of the Sudan, in particular in rural areas. Prioritizing agriculture could foster food security, stabilize rural communities and create job opportunities, which were essential for mitigating poverty and preventing conflicts over resources. Revitalizing the sector

involved not only improving crop and livestock production but also investing in sustainable practices and technology to enhance productivity.

Support for small industries and manufacturing. Respondents identified small industries and manufacturing as being pivotal for economic growth and diversification. Small industries, in particular those rooted in local resources and crafts, provided accessible employment opportunities, helping to stimulate economic activity at the grass-roots level. Manufacturing was also highlighted as being vital for creating value added products and reducing the country's dependence on imports. By strengthening small industries and manufacturing, the Sudan could create a more resilient economy capable of weathering external economic fluctuations.

Inclusion of technology and renewable energy. Several respondents (40 per cent) indicated the importance of investing in technology, highlighting its potential to modernize agriculture, enhance productivity and foster innovation. In addition, sustainable energy sources, such as solar power, were noted under the "other" category, reflecting a growing recognition of the need to move away from traditional energy sources and harness the country's potential in renewable energy sources. This transition could help to reduce environmental impact and support rural electrification, which was crucial for developing small-scale industries and improving quality of life.

The emphasis on these sectors reflects a strategic approach to building an economy that not only meets immediate recovery needs but also establishes a foundation for sustainable, long-term growth. Respondents' focus on agriculture, small industries and sustainable energy underscores a vision of a diversified economy that supports rural development, reduces inequality and fosters resilience against future shocks.

3.11.10 Leveraging natural resources for equitable economic development

Respondents strongly advocated good governance, transparency and anti-corruption measures as being crucial to managing the natural resources of the Sudan effectively. This emphasis indicates an understanding of the resource curse – whereby resource-rich countries often face economic stagnation or conflict owing to mismanagement and corruption.

Good governance and transparency. Respondents emphasized that transparency and accountability were essential to preventing corruption and ensuring that resource revenue benefited all people in the Sudan. Implementing anti-corruption laws, establishing independent oversight bodies and promoting transparency in resource extraction processes were considered to be crucial steps. Those measures could foster public trust, ensure the fair distribution of wealth and reduce conflict over resource ownership, all of which were necessary for stable, equitable development.

Diversifying and adding value to exports. Several respondents suggested diversifying the country's economy by expanding beyond raw resource exports, focusing instead on adding value through local processing industries. By developing value added industries in agriculture, mining and manufacturing, the Sudan could retain more wealth within its borders, support job creation and reduce reliance on imports. That approach was in alignment with the goal of creating a sustainable economy that benefited local communities and reduced dependency on volatile international markets.

Community involvement and equitable revenue distribution. Respondents emphasized the importance of involving local communities in resource management and ensuring that a portion of resource revenue was allocated to regional development. Such an equitable distribution model was

aimed at reducing regional disparities, building local capacities and creating a sense of ownership of resource management. By directing resources towards local infrastructure, education and healthcare, the Sudan could address historical grievances related to uneven development and promote social stability.

In summary, respondents advocate a resource management approach that emphasizes governance, transparency, local ownership and economic diversification. This approach is intended to prevent the resource curse, support inclusive growth and ensure that resource wealth contributes to sustainable development and national unity.

3.11.11 Approaches to job creation, especially for young people and ex-combatants

Respondents identified vocational training, entrepreneurship support and public-private partnerships as being essential strategies for creating jobs and reintegrating ex-combatants, reflecting an understanding of the socioeconomic challenges faced by young people and former fighters in the Sudan.

Vocational training and skills development. Respondents highlighted vocational training as a practical approach to equip young people and ex-combatants with marketable skills in such trades as construction, agriculture, mechanics and information technology. Those skills were essential for self-employment and small business development, offering a pathway to economic independence and long-term stability. Training programmes tailored to local market needs could empower young people and ex-combatants, reducing their vulnerability to being drawn into engagement in conflict or illicit activities.

Entrepreneurship and small business support. Many respondents indicated that supporting small businesses and entrepreneurship was crucial for job creation, especially in areas with limited formal employment opportunities. They advocated access to microloans, training in business management and the establishment of cooperatives as effective means of fostering entrepreneurship. Those approaches not only created income-generating opportunities but also encouraged economic resilience and community engagement, reducing dependency on aid and building local economies.

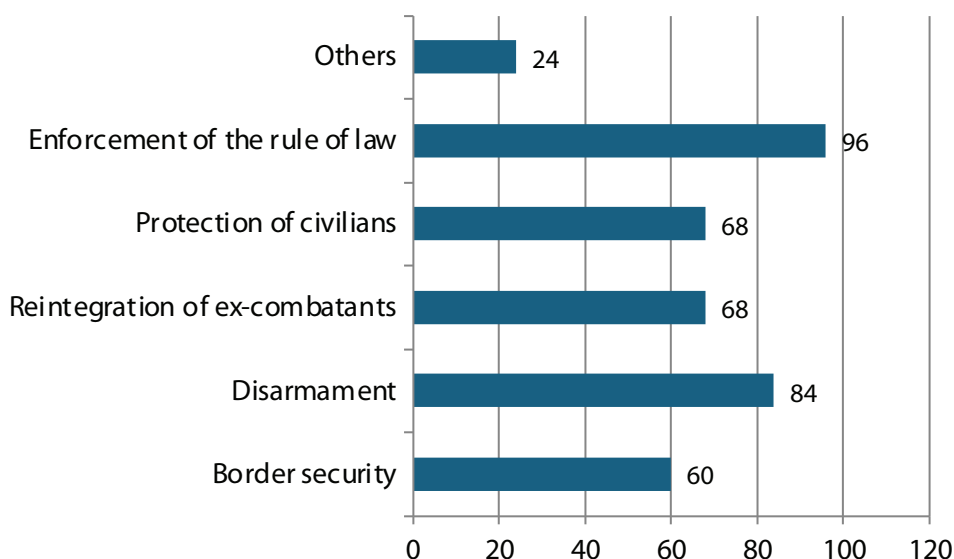
Public-private partnerships and foreign direct investment. Respondents also suggested that partnering with private sector businesses and attracting foreign direct investment could help to create employment opportunities. Those partnerships could facilitate internships, apprenticeships and job placements, providing young people and ex-combatants with hands-on experience in various industries. By offering incentives for businesses that hired members of those groups, the Sudan could encourage more private sector involvement in job creation. Furthermore, public-private partnerships could support infrastructure development, improve service delivery and provide a stable environment for business growth.

Respondents recognize that job creation for young people and ex-combatants is critical for social stability and economic recovery. Their proposed strategies – vocational training, entrepreneurship and public-private partnerships – represent a holistic approach to building a skilled, employed workforce capable of contributing to the country's long-term development. Addressing unemployment among young people and ex-combatants not only reduces the risk of renewed conflict but also fosters resilience by promoting self-reliance and community cohesion.

3.11.12 Views on major security and stability challenges

Figure VII highlights the main security challenges that must be addressed to ensure sustainable peace in the Sudan. These challenges include border security, enforcement of the rule of law, disarmament and the reintegration of ex-combatants.

Figure VII: Major security challenges that need to be addressed to ensure sustainable peace (Percentage)



Source: Author.

Respondents identified the enforcement of the rule of law (96 per cent), disarmament (84 per cent) and the reintegration of ex-combatants (68 per cent) as primary security challenges, reflecting the urgent need for foundational security measures that established safety, stability and social cohesion.

Enforcement of the rule of law. Nearly all respondents emphasized enforcement of the rule of law as being essential for achieving sustainable peace. Strong legal institutions were critical for maintaining order, protecting citizens and rebuilding trust in public institutions. Respondents saw the enforcement of the rule of law as a way to curb violence, prevent impunity and ensure that individuals and groups were held accountable for actions that threatened peace. Restoring the rule of law was also essential for creating a safe environment for rebuilding efforts, attracting investment and fostering public confidence in government institutions.

Disarmament. Disarmament was identified as another high-priority area, underscoring the importance of reducing the prevalence of weapons in the Sudan. Respondents highlighted that, without comprehensive disarmament, the risk of renewed conflict remained high. Effective disarmament would require structured programmes to collect and safely dispose of weapons, coupled with measures to address the root causes that drove people to arm themselves, such as insecurity, lack of economic opportunities and political marginalization. Successful disarmament was seen as being a foundational step towards reducing violence and creating an environment that was conducive to sustainable peace.

Reintegration of ex-combatants. Reintegration was highlighted as a major challenge, with respondents emphasizing that ex-combatants must be offered viable alternatives to conflict involvement. Without effective reintegration programmes, ex-combatants might struggle to adapt to civilian life, making them vulnerable to recruitment by armed groups or criminal networks. Respondents indicated that reintegration programmes should provide not only vocational training and employment opportunities

but also psychological support to help ex-combatants to transition. Reintegration was thus viewed as being crucial for creating social cohesion and preventing the re-emergence of conflict.

Additional responses provided in the “other” category, including human security, justice reform and military sector reform, further illustrate the complex security landscape in the Sudan. Together, these responses reflect a comprehensive approach to security that addresses immediate threats while laying the groundwork for long-term peace through robust institutions and reintegration efforts.

3.11.13 Structuring disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes for success in the Sudan

Respondents proposed a range of strategies for structuring disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes, with a strong emphasis on community-centred approaches, security measures and coordination with international stakeholders.

Community-centred approach and psychosocial support. Respondents emphasized that disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes must adopt a community-centred approach to foster reintegration at the local level. Such an approach involved actively engaging communities in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process, allowing ex-combatants to reintegrate in a socially supportive environment. Psychosocial support was also viewed as being essential, as many ex-combatants required assistance in managing trauma and adapting to civilian life. A community-centred approach, combined with mental health support, could prevent the social rejection of ex-combatants and build local capacities for reintegration.

Economic reintegration and skill development. Economic reintegration was widely noted as being essential, with respondents advocating skills training that aligned with local market needs. Offering ex-combatants training in such trades as agriculture, construction and small business management could help them to transition into productive civilian roles. Respondents suggested that such training programmes should include job placement services, microfinance opportunities and mentorship to increase their impact. Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes could reduce the likelihood of ex-combatants returning to armed conflict by promoting economic reintegration, as the ex-combatants would gain the skills needed for long-term self-sufficiency.

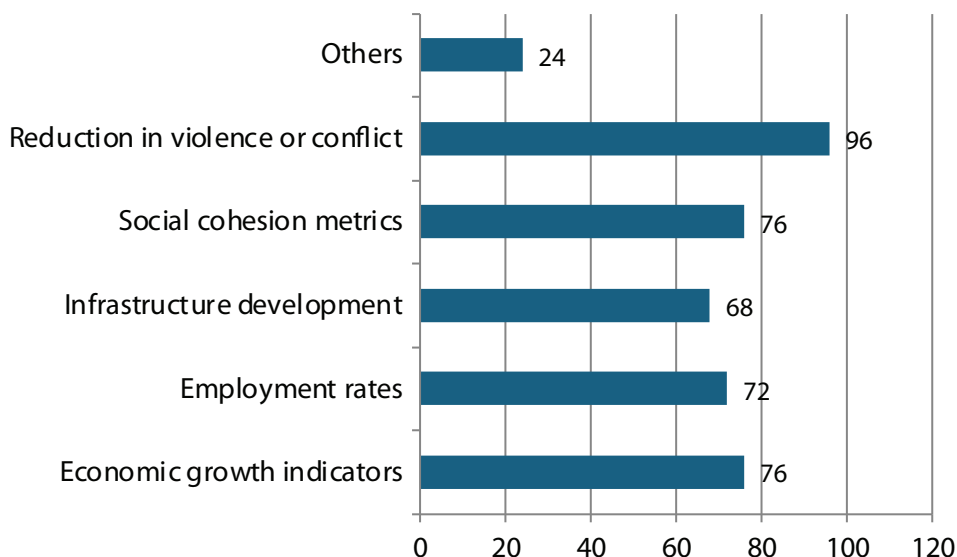
Coordination with international organizations and comprehensive monitoring. Respondents recommended that disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes should involve international organizations to enhance resources, expertise and impartial oversight. Such partnerships could help to ensure that the programmes were transparent, well-resourced and effectively monitored. In addition, respondents advocated robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to track the progress of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration initiatives and to make adjustments as needed. International collaboration and ongoing monitoring were essential for maintaining accountability, addressing challenges early and building a stable foundation for peace.

These responses indicate a broad consensus on the need for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes to be holistic, context-specific and well coordinated. By focusing on community engagement, economic support and international partnerships, the Sudan can structure disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes that not only address immediate security concerns but also foster long-term stability and social cohesion.

3.11.14 Humanitarian and emergency support needs

Figure VIII outlines the immediate humanitarian needs that must be addressed in the short term. Stakeholders emphasized the urgency of food security, access to healthcare and emergency shelter as critical interventions required to alleviate suffering and stabilize affected populations.

Figure VIII: Immediate humanitarian needs that must be addressed in the short term (Percentage)



Source: Author.

Respondents emphasized food security (96 per cent), healthcare (92 per cent), and water and sanitation (88 per cent) as being the most critical immediate humanitarian needs, reflecting the severe impacts of conflict on basic services and resources in the Sudan.

Food security. Almost all respondents identified food security as a top priority, underscoring the dire need to address hunger and malnutrition among conflict-affected populations in the Sudan. Ensuring adequate food supplies and distribution was seen as being essential for stabilizing communities, reducing malnutrition rates and preventing the humanitarian situation from deteriorating further. Many respondents suggested that food security interventions should include support for local agriculture and food production to promote self-reliance and sustainability, reducing dependency on external aid.

Healthcare. Respondents emphasized healthcare as a critical area, reflecting the urgent need for medical services to address injuries, disease outbreaks and mental health concerns. Conflict had significantly disrupted healthcare infrastructure in the Sudan, leaving many communities without access to essential medical services. Restoring healthcare systems, training medical personnel and providing mental health support were viewed as being necessary immediate steps to ensure the well-being of affected populations and support long-term recovery.

Water and sanitation. Access to clean water and sanitation was another urgent need identified, with respondents noting that lack of clean water exacerbated health issues and hampered community recovery. Ensuring access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation facilities was critical to preventing disease outbreaks, in particular among crowded or displaced populations. Respondents suggested that water and sanitation programmes should focus on sustainable solutions, such as building local water infrastructure and implementing hygiene education programmes to improve community resilience.

The strong prioritization of these humanitarian needs reflects an understanding that meeting basic needs is essential for creating a stable environment conducive to broader recovery efforts. By addressing food security, healthcare, and water and sanitation in the short term, the Sudan can provide a foundation for stability, prevent further displacement and create the conditions necessary for communities to participate in longer-term reconstruction efforts.

3.11.15 Transition from emergency humanitarian assistance to long-term development

Respondents identified carrying out strategic planning, building local capacities and strengthening governance as being central to facilitating the country's transition from emergency aid to sustainable development. These responses underscore the importance of establishing a strong foundation that integrates short-term relief with long-term recovery strategies.

Integrated planning and coordination. Many respondents advocated a cohesive framework that connected humanitarian assistance with development goals, known as the humanitarian-development nexus. Such an approach required coordination between national and international organizations, allowing emergency relief to lay the groundwork for sustainable development. Respondents suggested that short-term, medium-term and long-term plans should be developed to gradually shift from immediate assistance to self-reliant growth. By aligning humanitarian aid with development priorities, the Sudan could ensure that relief efforts contributed to long-term stability.

Building local capacities and community engagement. Respondents emphasized that empowering local institutions and communities was crucial for sustainable development. Investing in local governance, training officials and involving women-led and community-based stakeholders in planning and implementation could foster a sense of ownership and enable communities to take charge of their own recovery. Local capacity-building was particularly crucial in health, education and infrastructure development, as it reduced dependency on foreign aid and created more resilient systems that could withstand future shocks.

Good governance and transparency. Strong governance was widely seen as being foundational to a successful transition. Respondents highlighted the need for transparent policies, anti-corruption measures and accountability mechanisms to ensure that resources were allocated efficiently and equitably. Establishing such systems not only built public trust but also strengthened institutions that could support long-term development. By adopting best practices in governance, the Sudan could create a stable environment that attracted investment, fostered economic growth and supported social cohesion.

These responses reflect a consensus on the need for a structured, transparent and locally driven approach to the transition, allowing humanitarian aid to evolve into long-term development that addresses the country's socioeconomic needs and builds resilience across sectors.

3.11.16 International or regional post-conflict recovery experiences relevant to the Sudan

Respondents frequently mentioned Liberia, Rwanda and South Africa as being valuable examples, suggesting that those countries' recovery models offered applicable lessons for Sudan in such areas as reconciliation, governance and economic recovery.

Rwanda. Respondents highlighted the post-genocide recovery in Rwanda as being a notable example, in particular its emphasis on community-based reconciliation and socioeconomic reforms. The approach followed by Rwanda, which included the gacaca court system for dispensing community justice and significant investments in health and education, was praised for promoting grass-roots engagement and building trust within communities. Respondents noted that the experience in Rwanda showed the potential of community-driven processes and economic reforms to foster social cohesion and sustainable development, which were essential for recovery in the Sudan.

Liberia and Sierra Leone. These countries' successful disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes and approaches to post-conflict governance were frequently mentioned as potential models for the Sudan. Respondents noted that disarmament, demobilization and reintegration efforts in Liberia and Sierra Leone, which included vocational training, psychosocial support and economic reintegration for ex-combatants, offered valuable insights into reintegration strategies that prevented conflict recurrence. In addition, the anti-corruption and governance reforms carried out in Liberia were recognized as being a crucial factor in stabilizing public institutions and promoting transparency – an approach that could help the Sudan to build trust in its own governance structures.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was cited as an effective model for transitional justice, with respondents suggesting that a similar commission could help the Sudan to address grievances and foster national healing. The Commission's focus on acknowledging past abuses and promoting restorative justice was seen as being relevant to the context in the Sudan, where reconciliation was needed to bridge divides and build a united society. By providing a platform for truth-telling and reconciliation, the Sudan could create a foundation for long-term peace and social cohesion.

These responses underscore the importance of a customized approach that draws on relevant elements from successful post-conflict recovery experiences. Respondents recognized that, while no single model could be replicated, the aforementioned international examples provided valuable lessons in governance, reconciliation and economic recovery that the Sudan could adapt to its unique context.

3.11.17 Adapting lessons from relevant country experiences to the context in the Sudan

Respondents emphasized the importance of customization, local relevance and phased implementation when adapting lessons from other countries. This suggests that, while the Sudan can draw from international experiences, a tailored approach is essential, given the country's unique sociopolitical landscape.

Tailoring of approaches to local realities. Respondents widely agreed that the recovery model for the Sudan must be adapted to its social, ethnic and regional diversity. Lessons from other countries should be adjusted to reflect the historical grievances, geographical diversity and political landscape of the Sudan. For instance, the gacaca court system in Rwanda and the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes carried out in Liberia could be modified to incorporate local dispute resolution practices and community engagement models in the Sudan. Such adaptation would ensure that recovery efforts resonated with local populations and addressed the specific drivers of the conflicts in the Sudan.

Engagement of local experts and institutions. Several respondents suggested that local experts and institutions should lead the adaptation process, thereby ensuring that international lessons were contextualized effectively. Respondents recommended that academic institutions, community

organizations and local leaders should be actively involved in designing post-conflict programmes in the Sudan, as those stakeholders possessed deep knowledge of the country’s unique needs and challenges. By involving local institutions, the Sudan could ensure that recovery strategies were culturally relevant, practical and rooted in local realities.

Phased and measured implementation. Respondents also advocated a phased approach to implementation, starting with foundational measures that could pave the way for more comprehensive reforms. Such an approach would allow for flexibility, ensuring that programmes were responsive to changing conditions on the ground. For example, initial efforts might focus on establishing the rule of law and securing livelihoods, with more complex reforms in governance and economic development being rolled out gradually as stability increased. Phased implementation could prevent the overwhelm of local systems and provide time for communities to adjust to changes, promoting sustainable recovery.

These responses reflect a consensus that, while learning from post-conflict countries is valuable, the recovery strategy for the Sudan must be shaped by local needs and implemented gradually. Respondents recognize the complexity of the context in the country and the need for a flexible, inclusive approach that leverages international best practices while respecting the unique social and cultural fabric of the Sudan.

3.11.18 Proposed monitoring and evaluation indicators

Figure IX presents the suggested best indicators for successful reconstruction efforts in the Sudan. These measures are focused on the reduction of violent conflict, economic growth, employment, infrastructure development and the building of social cohesion.

Figure IX: Suggested best indicators for successful reconstruction efforts (Percentage)



Source: Author.

Respondents emphasized reduction in violence or conflict (96 per cent), social cohesion metrics (76 per cent) and economic growth indicators (76 per cent) as the most important metrics for evaluating the success of reconstruction in the Sudan, highlighting a comprehensive approach that integrated peace, social unity and economic stability.

Reduction in violence or conflict. Nearly all respondents identified a decrease in violence as the primary indicator of successful reconstruction, reflecting the understanding that peace was fundamental

to all other recovery goals. That metric directly gauged the effectiveness of peacebuilding efforts and the strength of security measures in the Sudan. A sustained reduction in conflict would signify progress towards stability, enabling other development initiatives to take root and gain momentum.

Social cohesion and community resilience. Respondents highlighted social cohesion metrics, recognizing that a peaceful society required more than just an absence of conflict – it necessitated unity and mutual trust among diverse communities. Such indicators as increased community participation, intergroup collaboration and trust in institutions were seen as being valuable for assessing social cohesion. Those metrics underscored the importance of building a society where people felt connected and invested in a shared future, fostering long-term stability and resilience.

Economic growth and employment rates. Economic growth indicators were widely noted as being critical for assessing the recovery process. Respondents indicated that GDP growth, employment rates and income distribution were important measures of economic resilience and inclusivity. By tracking those indicators, the Sudan could assess whether reconstruction efforts were creating a diversified and robust economy that benefited all regions of the country. Respondents noted that successful economic recovery could also be viewed as a peace dividend, demonstrating tangible benefits from peace and encouraging ongoing stability.

Additional responses highlighted education, human development, and robust monitoring and evaluation systems as supplementary metrics for successful reconstruction. Collectively, these indicators reflect a holistic view of recovery that incorporates security, social well-being and economic progress, aiming to create a resilient and unified country.

3.11.19 Monitoring and accountability mechanisms

Respondents referred to the establishment of independent monitoring bodies, community involvement and public reporting as being the main mechanisms for ensuring the transparency and effectiveness of the recovery in the Sudan, emphasizing the importance of accountability to build public trust and enhance recovery outcomes.

Independent monitoring and accountability institutions. Many respondents proposed forming independent oversight bodies tasked with tracking the progress of recovery initiatives, investigating potential mismanagement and publicly reporting findings. Those institutions could function as watchdogs to hold government entities and implementers accountable, ensuring that funds were used as intended and that programmes were effective. By operating independently of political influence, those bodies could enhance transparency, prevent corruption and ensure fair resource allocation, ultimately boosting public confidence in the recovery process.

Community involvement in monitoring. Respondents highlighted the importance of involving communities directly in monitoring efforts, as community members were well positioned to assess the impact of recovery programmes on the ground. Local participation not only increased transparency but also ensured that recovery initiatives aligned with community needs. By engaging civil society organizations, religious groups and local leaders, monitoring processes could be more inclusive and could reflect a broader range of perspectives, making them more responsive to local realities.

Public reporting and open data access. Publicly available data and regular reports were seen as being essential for transparency and accountability. Respondents suggested that the Government and implementing agencies should openly publish progress reports and budget allocations to allow for public scrutiny. That level of transparency could empower citizens, the media and advocacy groups to

monitor progress independently, ensuring that recovery efforts were aligned with the public interest and were held to high standards.

Together, these mechanisms reflect a multilevel approach to accountability, promoting trust, transparency and responsiveness throughout the recovery process. By fostering a culture of openness and public engagement, the Sudan can ensure that reconstruction efforts are not only effective but also equitable and widely supported.

3.11.20 Overall vision for post-conflict development in the Sudan

Respondents articulated a vision for the Sudan in which they emphasized inclusive governance, sustainable economic growth and social cohesion, underscoring the importance of rebuilding a country that was resilient, equitable and united.

Good governance and democratic transformation. Respondents envisioned the Sudan of the future as a country governed by democratic principles, with institutions that served all citizens fairly and effectively. Many respondents stressed the need for a civilian-led, decentralized governance model that provided fair representation across regions, acknowledging the historical marginalization issues in the Sudan. That vision included a governance framework rooted in transparency, the rule of law and accountability, ensuring that all communities had a voice in national decisions and fostering a sense of national unity.

Sustainable and inclusive economic growth. Economic recovery and growth were central to respondents' visions for the future of the Sudan, with an emphasis on diversifying the economy, promoting agriculture and creating jobs. Respondents advocated an economy that provided equitable opportunities, in particular for young people, women and marginalized communities. By investing in education, vocational training and sustainable industries, the Sudan could build a resilient economy that supported development across all regions and contributed to lasting peace.

Social cohesion and reconciliation. Respondents highlighted the need for a society that valued reconciliation and inclusivity, where diverse groups worked collaboratively towards a common future. Many respondents advocated initiatives that addressed historical grievances and promoted reconciliation at both the community and national levels. That vision for social cohesion reflected the importance of healing past divisions and creating a society where all people in the Sudan felt a sense of belonging, thus reinforcing peace and stability.

This vision represents a shared hope for the recovery of the Sudan, one that prioritizes equity, inclusivity and resilience. By aligning reconstruction efforts with these values, the Sudan can create a strong foundation for a stable and prosperous future.

3.11.21 Priorities for recovery and development in the Sudan

Security and stability. Ensuring safety is the foundation for all recovery efforts. The Sudan must prioritize security measures, including robust disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes to reduce violence and reintegrate ex-combatants into society. Strengthening the judicial system and law enforcement can reinforce stability and uphold the rule of law, which is essential for sustainable peace.

Governance and institutional reform. Transparent and accountable governance is critical for rebuilding trust in public institutions. Recovery in the Sudan should focus on restoring central and local governance, improving accountability and ensuring community participation in decision-making. Decentralized governance that empowers local authorities has proven to be successful in other post-conflict settings and could enhance responsiveness to local needs in the Sudan.

Rebuilding of infrastructure. Reconstructing essential infrastructure – transport, water, sanitation and energy systems – is essential to restore basic services and facilitate economic growth. This priority has both immediate and long-term benefits, as infrastructure improvements enable access to healthcare, education and markets, supporting overall recovery.

Economic recovery and development. Economic stability is vital to prevent poverty, displacement and reliance on aid. The Sudan should focus on revitalizing agriculture and supporting small businesses to stimulate local economies. Equitable resource management, especially given the natural resources of the Sudan, is essential to prevent conflict and ensure that revenue contributes to development in the various regions of the country.

Education recovery and access to education. The rebuilding of educational institutions can address long-term human capital needs and mitigate the impact of interrupted education. Access to education for displaced and vulnerable children should be prioritized, along with vocational training to prepare young people to join the workforce, thereby contributing to social stability and economic growth.

Humanitarian and social support. Humanitarian aid is essential for immediate relief, especially in relation to food security, healthcare and clean water access. Transitioning from emergency aid to sustainable development will reduce dependency, support local capacity and build resilience. Trauma-informed mental health support is equally crucial, especially for displaced individuals and conflict survivors.

Social cohesion and reconciliation. Healing social divides requires inclusive reconciliation processes. National and local dialogues can foster understanding, address grievances and promote unity. Involving women, young people and marginalized groups in recovery efforts enhances cohesion and ensures that recovery reflects the needs of all segments of society.

International partnerships and diaspora engagement. Collaborative partnerships among the Government, civil society organizations and private organizations can strengthen recovery efforts and ensure inclusivity. Engaging the country's diaspora can open up access to financial resources, expertise and international networks, adding critical support for economic development, capacity-building and knowledge transfer.

4. National strategy for rehabilitation and reconstruction in the Sudan

4.1 Introduction

The path to recovery for the Sudan after years of conflict requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach to address the deep-rooted challenges that have affected every aspect of society. A long-term strategy for post-conflict reconstruction and development is outlined in the present section of the report, with the aim of guiding the Sudan in building a resilient, inclusive and peaceful country. Drawing from extensive needs assessments, stakeholder insights and lessons from international post-conflict experiences, this strategy has been developed with an emphasis on sustainable recovery across vital sectors, ensuring that the Sudan can achieve both stability and growth. Reconstruction strategies should prioritize gender-sensitive approaches, ensuring that women and marginalized groups play active roles in decision-making and implementation processes.

4.2 Areas requiring urgent intervention

There are several critical gaps in current reconstruction efforts in the Sudan that, if unaddressed, may hinder sustainable recovery and progress. These gaps span institutional, structural and social dimensions, underscoring the need for comprehensive, multisectoral strategies. Immediate attention is required in the following areas.

4.2.1 Weak institutional capacity and governance

Public institutions in the Sudan face challenges in effectively coordinating and managing post-conflict reconstruction programmes. Deficiencies in accountability, transparency and oversight mechanisms result in limited public trust and inefficiencies in service delivery. Strengthening institutional capacity through robust governance reforms, anti-corruption initiatives and enhanced public sector accountability is essential to ensure effective resource use and community engagement.

4.2.2 Explosive hazard threats in reconstruction efforts

The presence of explosive hazards in conflict-affected areas poses a significant risk to reconstruction and development initiatives. This threat, prevalent in both rural and urban centres, directly affects the safety and timelines of rebuilding efforts. There is therefore an urgent need to prioritize and address explosive hazard threats in reconstruction efforts.

4.2.3 Limited access to basic services in conflict-affected regions

Access to basic services remains critically low in many conflict-affected and marginalized areas. Healthcare, education, clean water and sanitation are either scarce or inaccessible, creating a severe humanitarian crisis and stalling recovery. Partnerships with civil society, international organizations

and local authorities are essential to rebuild these services and ensure equitable access, in particular in remote communities.

4.2.4 Inadequate focus on social cohesion and reconciliation

Social cohesion and reconciliation efforts lack sufficient funding and integration into broader reconstruction programmes. The absence of community-driven peacebuilding initiatives poses a risk of reinforcing existing social divisions. Scaling up projects that promote reconciliation, intercommunal dialogue and transitional justice is necessary to foster unity and lay the groundwork for a peaceful and inclusive society.

4.2.5 Need for a national economic development project

Economic revitalization efforts are fragmented, with a lack of cohesive strategies to stimulate sustainable growth, generate employment and support local industry. To address this, the Sudan urgently needs a comprehensive economic development project that is focused on the coordinated economic development of all regions of the country. The project should prioritize job creation, vocational training, and support for small and medium-sized enterprises and value added industries to diversify the economy and reduce dependence on external assistance. This project should also include frameworks for public-private partnerships to leverage investment in agriculture, manufacturing and renewable energy, empowering local economies across regions.

4.2.6 Reform of the security sector

Reforming the security sector is critical for building trust, reducing violence and establishing a stable environment that is conducive to development. Recovery in the Sudan requires professional, accountable and community-focused security forces that prioritize human rights and public safety. Security sector reform efforts should include training programmes, clear oversight mechanisms and initiatives that foster cooperation between security forces and communities to promote peace and stability.

4.2.7 Shortcomings in infrastructure development and restoration

Infrastructure in the Sudan, which has been severely affected by conflict, remains largely in disrepair, limiting mobility, access to services and economic development. Gaps in infrastructure development affect transportation, electricity, water supply and communications, especially in rural areas. A strategic infrastructure restoration plan would prioritize critical sectors and underserved regions, facilitating access, trade and connectivity, which are essential for economic resilience and national integration.

4.2.8 Lack of comprehensive monitoring and accountability systems

Robust monitoring and accountability systems are crucial for tracking the effectiveness of reconstruction efforts, preventing corruption and adapting strategies to changing conditions. Currently, the Sudan lacks an integrated monitoring framework that can transparently evaluate the progress and outcomes of recovery initiatives. Establishing independent oversight bodies and involving civil society in monitoring

processes will strengthen accountability, increase transparency and build public trust in the recovery process.

4.2.9 Environmental sustainability issues

Addressing environmental challenges is essential for the country's long-term resilience. Conflict and unregulated resource extraction have degraded natural resources, affecting water, soil quality and biodiversity. An environmental sustainability strategy that includes reforestation, sustainable agriculture and climate adaptation measures is necessary to protect natural resources. Such measures will mitigate environmental degradation, build resilience to climate change and support sustainable economic development.

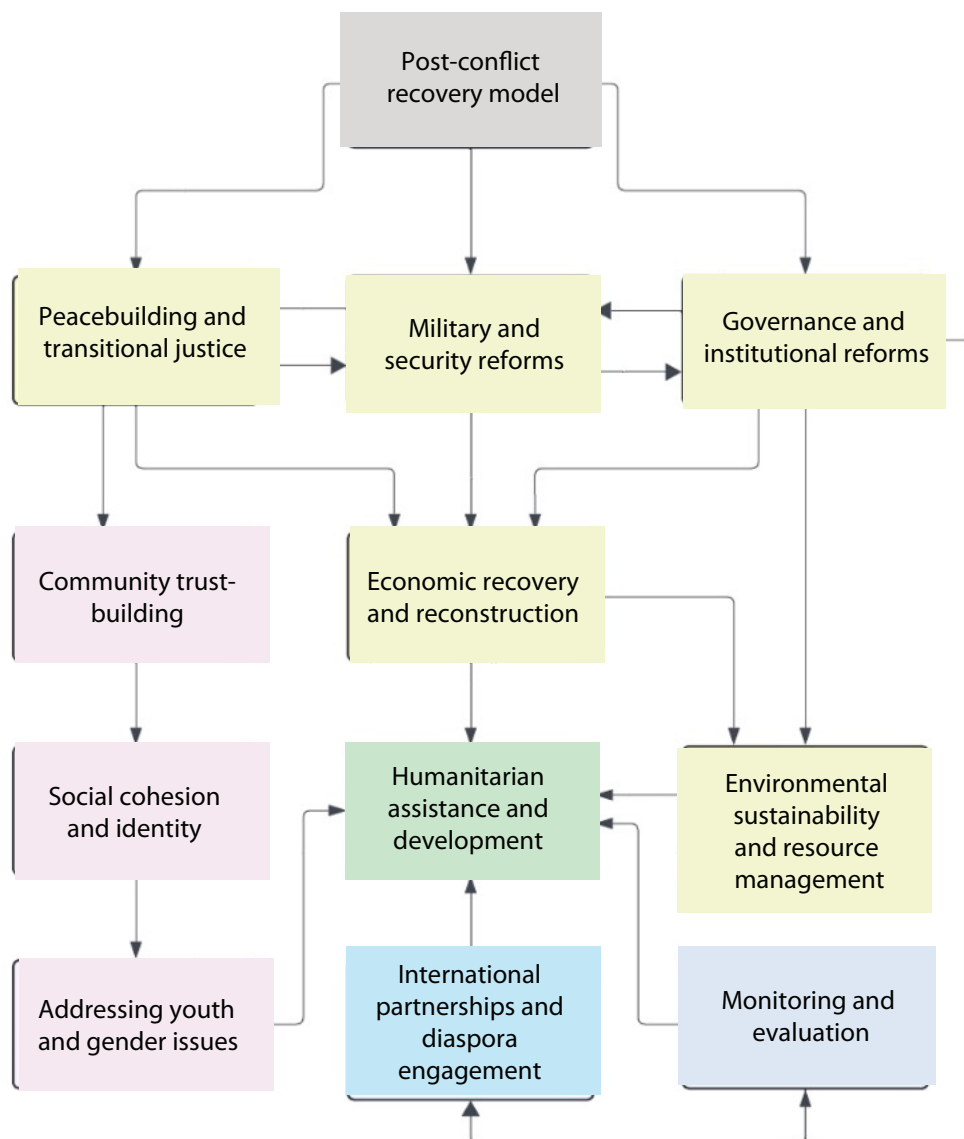
The overall framework for the post-conflict recovery strategy in the Sudan is outlined in figure X, illustrating how each priority area – security, governance, social cohesion, economic development, infrastructure, humanitarian support and diaspora engagement – interacts to support long-term stability and resilience.

4.3 Linkages among resilience, peace and development

Resilience, peace and development are deeply interconnected in a reinforcing cyclical relationship. Human resilience, in particular in conflict-affected areas, plays a vital role in fostering social cohesion and rebuilding communities, which is essential for sustainable peace. This peace creates the stability needed for development initiatives to thrive. Investments in development, in turn, strengthen resilience by addressing structural inequalities and improving access to such essential resources as education, healthcare and livelihoods. These interventions not only enhance individual and community capacities but also reduce the risk of future conflicts, creating a positive cycle of resilience, peace and development.

For instance, communities that rebuild after conflict often demonstrate resilience through such initiatives as local peacebuilding efforts or the rebuilding of infrastructure, which lay the groundwork for broader development projects. In turn, these projects – such as microfinance programmes or vocational training – bolster community resilience by equipping individuals with the skills and resources needed to withstand future shocks. This cyclical dynamic underscores the importance of integrated approaches that simultaneously address resilience, peace and development to achieve a lasting impact.

Figure X: Overall framework for the post-conflict recovery strategy in the Sudan (Percentage)



Source: Author.

4.4 Purpose and scope of the strategy

The purpose of the present strategy is to provide a road map that prioritizes the immediate and long-term needs of the population while fostering conditions for peace and sustainable development. Guided by the principles of transparency, inclusivity and resilience, the strategy addresses the root causes of instability and is aimed at building a future that is based on equitable access to resources, accountability and community involvement. It is acknowledged in the strategy that recovery must be holistic, integrating humanitarian relief, the rebuilding of infrastructure, economic development and social reconciliation.

4.5 Pillars of the strategy

The strategy is organized into eight strategic pillars, each representing an essential aspect of recovery in the Sudan. These pillars are adapted from international best practices and customized to reflect the country's unique challenges and opportunities. In the present section of the report, long-term goals, main actions and examples of relevant lessons from post-conflict countries are provided in relation to each pillar, offering a phased approach to recovery in which immediate needs are balanced with sustainable progress.

Eight strategic pillars

- 1. Governance and institutional reform.** Establishing accountable governance structures that can maintain stability and support inclusive public administration.
- 2. Infrastructure development.** Rebuilding and modernizing critical infrastructure, such as transportation, communication, energy and sanitation infrastructure, to restore basic services and enable economic growth.
- 3. Basic needs and social support.** Addressing urgent humanitarian needs while building local capacities to transition from emergency aid to self-sufficiency.
- 4. Economic recovery and development.** Revitalizing vital sectors, such as agriculture and small enterprises, and implementing transparent resource management to support a diversified and resilient economy.
- 5. Social cohesion and reconciliation.** Facilitating inclusive reconciliation at the national and community levels to foster unity, trust and social stability.
- 6. Humanitarian and emergency support.** Meeting immediate needs through rapid response efforts while establishing pathways for longer-term resilience and self-sufficiency.
- 7. International partnerships and diaspora engagement.** Leveraging national networks and the country's diaspora for knowledge-sharing, investment and resource mobilization.
- 8. Ensuring environmental sustainability.** Integrating environmental sustainability into development projects will safeguard natural assets for future generations and support resilient economic growth.

Each pillar is aligned with specific objectives and timelines to ensure that progress is measurable and adaptable over time. This phased approach to implementation begins with immediate stabilization measures, followed by medium-term and long-term development initiatives that strengthen the capacity of the Sudan for self-sufficiency and peacebuilding. In this way, the strategy provides both a foundation for urgent recovery and a blueprint for sustainable development.

4.6 Guiding principles

The strategy is built on the following guiding principles, which are essential for successful recovery and development in post-conflict contexts.

- **Inclusivity.** Ensure that all communities in the Sudan, including women, displaced persons and other marginalized groups, are engaged in decision-making and benefit equitably from recovery efforts.

- **Transparency and accountability.** Build trust through open, accountable governance and by establishing independent oversight mechanisms to prevent corruption.
- **Sustainability.** Focus on long-term solutions that address the root causes of conflict and reduce dependency on external aid.
- **Community-led development.** Empower local communities to play a central role in planning and implementing recovery efforts to ensure that interventions meet regional and local needs.

4.7 Detailed strategy pillars

4.7.1 Governance and institutional reform

Effective governance and strong institutions are foundational for post-conflict recovery, enabling the Sudan to maintain stability, deliver essential services and ensure that all communities have equitable access to resources and opportunities. Years of instability and conflict in the country have eroded public trust in the Government, weakened central and local institutions and disrupted the rule of law. A priority set out in the present strategy is to build transparent, inclusive governance that strengthens the rule of law, fosters public accountability and empowers communities across the Sudan.

Long-term goals

- **Establish accountable and transparent governance.** Build institutions that are transparent, inclusive and accountable to all communities in the Sudan. This includes establishing anti-corruption measures and independent oversight mechanisms to ensure that public resources are managed responsibly.
- **Promote decentralization and local empowerment.** Empower regional and local governance bodies to administer services and respond to community needs effectively. Decentralized governance can increase responsiveness, improve service delivery and foster a sense of ownership and accountability among local populations.
- **Strengthen judicial and legal systems.** Rebuild the country's legal and judicial systems to uphold the rule of law, ensure fair access to justice and protect human rights. A strong legal framework and accessible courts are critical for long-term stability and social cohesion.

Main actions

To achieve these goals, the following main actions are recommended, using a phased approach to support immediate stabilization and sustainable development.

Immediate actions (within 1-2 years)

- **Create independent oversight bodies.** Establish bodies tasked with overseeing the management of public resources, aid distribution and recovery projects. This measure builds public trust and ensures accountability from the outset.
- **Strengthen anti-corruption mechanisms.** Develop policies and institutions to prevent corruption and to ensure transparent financial management, especially within central government institutions.

- **Enhance law enforcement capacity.** Train and equip law enforcement personnel to uphold peace and order while ensuring adherence to human rights standards. Emphasis should be placed on community-oriented policing.

Medium-term actions (within 3-5 years)

- **Decentralize government functions.** Gradually transfer administrative powers to local governments, giving communities greater autonomy in decision-making, especially in such sectors as healthcare, education and resource management.
- **Build capacity in local governance.** Provide training and support to local officials, enabling them to manage resources effectively, engage with communities and implement region-specific development plans.
- **Strengthen judicial capacity and access.** Rebuild courthouses, improve legal aid services, and recruit and train judges, lawyers and court personnel. Special programmes should be developed to ensure justice for women, children and marginalized groups.

Long-term actions (within 6-10 years)

- **Establish transparent public budgeting.** Implement transparent budgeting processes at both the national and local levels, with public consultations and regular reporting to ensure that citizens are informed of and engaged in financial decisions.
- **Develop legal reforms for equity and inclusion.** Introduce legal reforms that promote inclusivity, protect minority rights and prevent discrimination. These reforms should address historical grievances and ensure that all citizens of the Sudan have equal access to justice.
- **Implement governance monitoring and evaluation systems.** Regularly evaluate governance reforms and adapt them on the basis of community feedback and changing needs. Monitoring systems should measure progress towards transparency, accountability and effective service delivery.

Lessons from international experiences

The recovery experiences of post-conflict countries, such as Liberia and Rwanda, underscore the critical role of governance and institutional reform in rebuilding public trust and restoring government legitimacy. The successful decentralization efforts in Rwanda empowered local authorities, fostering community engagement and transparency. Similarly, judicial reforms in Liberia promoted accountability and the accessibility of legal systems, contributing to a more stable governance structure. The Sudan can apply these lessons by focusing on governance structures that promote transparency, reduce corruption and involve local communities in decision-making. Decentralization, when combined with accountability mechanisms and legal protections, can prevent conflict recurrence and foster a stable environment for growth.

4.7.2 Infrastructure development

Infrastructure development is essential for post-conflict recovery in the Sudan, as it enables access to vital services, supports economic activities and fosters social cohesion across regions. Years of conflict have led to extensive damage to roads, energy systems, water facilities and public institutions, disrupting daily life and limiting economic opportunities. In the present strategy, priority is given to rebuilding and modernizing infrastructure in the Sudan in order to lay the foundation for sustainable growth and ensure that all regions benefit equitably from recovery efforts.

Long-term goals

- **Re-establish essential services.** Restore critical infrastructure, including transportation networks, water and sanitation systems, healthcare facilities, and power grids to improve the quality of life and support public health.
- **Enable economic activity and connectivity.** Invest in infrastructure that supports agriculture, small businesses and trade among different regions in the country, to create jobs and foster economic resilience.
- **Strengthen climate-resilient and sustainable infrastructure.** Build infrastructure that is resilient to climate impacts, ensuring that the Sudan can withstand future environmental challenges and protect vulnerable communities.

Main actions

The following phased approach is aimed at addressing immediate infrastructure needs while supporting long-term development and economic stability.

Immediate actions (within 1-2 years)

- **Repair and reopen vital transport routes.** Focus on repairing primary roads and bridges to enable the movement of goods and people, especially in regions where access is limited. Restoring transport routes is critical for emergency aid delivery, trade and mobility.
- **Restore basic water and sanitation facilities.** Repair or replace damaged water systems to ensure access to clean water in affected communities. Prioritize sanitation facilities in displacement camps to reduce disease risk and support public health.
- **Establish temporary power solutions.** Deploy temporary power solutions, such as solar generators, in regions where the energy grid is down, ensuring that such critical facilities as hospitals and schools have electricity.

Medium-term actions (within 3-5 years)

- **Rebuild hospitals, schools and public facilities.** Invest in rebuilding crucial public infrastructure to restore education and healthcare services. Prioritize these investments in regions most affected by conflict, so as to support community health and human capital development.
- **Expand water and energy infrastructure.** Develop water treatment plants, expand the energy grid and increase access to renewable energy sources to support long-term resource availability.
- **Establish rural-urban connectivity.** Improve rural road networks to enhance connectivity between agricultural areas and urban markets, boosting local economies and creating income-generating opportunities for rural communities.

Long-term actions (within 6-10 years)

- **Invest in national infrastructure for economic growth.** Build infrastructure that supports major economic sectors, such as industrial parks, railways and ports, so as to facilitate trade and investment, generating jobs and revenue.
- **Develop climate-resilient and sustainable infrastructure.** Integrate climate resilience into infrastructure planning, including flood defences, drought-resistant water systems and renewable energy sources, ensuring that infrastructure can withstand future environmental challenges.

- **Establish public-private partnerships.** Encourage public-private partnerships to fund large infrastructure projects, mobilizing private investment in such areas as renewable energy, telecommunications and transportation.

Lessons from international experiences

The recovery experiences of post-conflict countries, such as Angola, Rwanda and Sierra Leone, highlight the importance of infrastructure in stabilizing communities and driving economic recovery. In Angola, the focus placed on transport and energy infrastructure facilitated trade and market access, while in Sierra Leone the prioritization of infrastructure in underserved regions promoted equitable growth. In Rwanda, the emphasis on infrastructure in rural areas improved rural-urban connectivity, supporting agriculture and small businesses.

The Sudan can learn from these experiences by focusing on both short-term infrastructure repairs to restore basic services and long-term investments that promote economic resilience and sustainability. Climate-resilient planning, as seen in post-disaster recovery models in Southeast Asia, can also ensure that the infrastructure in the Sudan can withstand future environmental challenges, protecting vulnerable communities and securing economic stability.

4.7.3 Basic needs and social support

The humanitarian crisis in the Sudan demands an urgent response to meet basic needs while creating the foundation for long-term social support systems. Years of conflict have left millions without reliable access to food, healthcare and safe water, in particular in regions affected by displacement and poverty. In the present strategy, both immediate humanitarian interventions and the gradual shift to sustainable social development are emphasized, building resilience within communities and supporting their capacity for self-sufficiency.

Long-term goals

- **Ensure access to basic needs and services.** Provide food, healthcare and water security in conflict-affected areas to stabilize communities and prevent further crises.
- **Strengthen local capacity for sustainable development.** Transition from emergency relief to development by empowering local organizations and communities to manage essential services.
- **Support vulnerable populations and displaced persons.** Create pathways for the safe return, resettlement and social integration of displaced persons, ensuring that they receive equal access to services and opportunities.

Main actions

To address humanitarian and social support needs effectively, the following phased approach is recommended.

Immediate actions (within 1-2 years)

- **Deliver food, medical supplies and water.** Mobilize resources to provide emergency food aid, healthcare supplies and access to clean water in highly affected areas. Prioritize vulnerable populations, including displaced families, women, children and the elderly.
- **Establish temporary health and sanitation facilities.** Set up temporary health clinics and sanitation facilities in displacement camps and underserved areas to reduce the spread of disease and ensure access to basic healthcare.

- **Begin psychosocial support services.** Provide mental health support, especially in displacement camps, to address the trauma caused by conflict. Trained social workers and women-led and community-based stakeholders can offer counselling and basic mental healthcare to stabilize affected communities.

Medium-term actions (within 3-5 years)

- **Develop community-based health and education programmes.** Transition from temporary services to community-managed health and education programmes. Support training for local healthcare workers and teachers to improve service delivery and increase self-reliance.
- **Promote sustainable food security.** Establish agricultural programmes, such as community farms, and provide resources for small-scale farmers to improve local food production. Agricultural training programmes can empower communities to maintain food security independently.
- **Build social safety nets for vulnerable groups.** Develop social protection programmes, including cash transfers and job training, aimed at empowering vulnerable populations, such as single mothers, elderly citizens and young people.

Long-term actions (within 6-10 years)

- **Institutionalize public health and social welfare services.** Integrate health and welfare services into permanent community infrastructure, ensuring that healthcare, education and social support are accessible in all regions.
- **Support the reintegration of displaced persons.** Implement programmes to facilitate the safe return or resettlement of displaced persons, providing housing, education and job opportunities to support their reintegration.
- **Encourage community-based development initiatives.** Empower communities to initiate and manage their own development projects, such as local cooperatives or social enterprises, fostering resilience and self-sufficiency.

Lessons from international experiences

Post-conflict experiences from Rwanda and South Sudan underscore the importance of both addressing immediate needs and building long-term resilience. In South Sudan, integrating food aid with agricultural training programmes provided communities with the tools to sustain food security, reducing dependency on external assistance. Investment by Rwanda in community health workers improved healthcare access, even in remote areas.

For the Sudan, applying these lessons means prioritizing both short-term relief and capacity-building within communities so that they can manage essential services independently. Establishing a framework for transitioning from emergency aid to sustainable development will empower communities to support themselves, build resilience and reduce future vulnerability.

4.7.4 Economic recovery and development

A resilient and diversified economy is essential for long-term recovery in the Sudan, as economic stability reduces poverty, supports livelihoods and strengthens social cohesion. Conflict has disrupted vital sectors in the Sudan, including agriculture and extractive industries, which are central to the country's local economies and natural resource wealth. In the present strategy, the development of synergies between agro-industries and extractive industries to foster sustainable growth, equitable resource management and job creation is prioritized, ensuring that all communities benefit from economic recovery. Economic

recovery efforts should focus on empowering women through targeted skill-building programmes, access to credit and support for female-led businesses. This approach not only promotes gender equity but also enhances household and community resilience.

Long-term goals

- **Revitalize agro-industries and local economies.** Strengthen the agricultural sector, which employs the majority of the country's workforce, by expanding agro-industries to enhance food security, value added production and rural economic growth.
- **Develop sustainable extractive industries.** Promote responsible management and development of the natural resources of the Sudan, including oil, minerals and other extractives, with transparent revenue-sharing models to benefit all regions equitably.
- **Foster job creation and industrial synergies.** Create job opportunities and support entrepreneurship in both agro-industries and extractive sectors by providing training, resources and access to markets, especially for young people and ex-combatants.

Main actions

A phased approach will address the country's immediate economic needs while building a sustainable foundation for growth through collaboration between the agro-industrial and extractive sectors.

Immediate actions (within 1-2 years)

- **Support small farmers and agroprocessing.** Provide seeds, tools and financial assistance to small farmers to restore agricultural production and food security. Establish agroprocessing facilities, such as milling and food packaging, in rural areas to add value to agricultural products and create local employment.
- **Introduce microfinance for agribusinesses and small enterprises.** Establish microfinance programmes for small agribusinesses and entrepreneurs, in particular for women and young people, to stimulate local economies and empower small-scale producers in post-conflict regions.
- **Launch public works programmes for employment.** Create public works projects focused on infrastructure that is critical for both the agricultural and extractive sectors, such as road repairs, irrigation systems and the building of rural access roads. These programmes provide immediate employment while improving access to markets and production sites.

Medium-term actions (within 3-5 years)

- **Build agro-industrial infrastructure and training.** Invest in irrigation systems, agro-industrial training and technology to boost productivity and efficiency in agriculture. Establish agricultural cooperatives to help local farmers to pool resources, reduce costs and gain access to larger markets, supporting economic resilience and food security.
- **Develop transparent resource revenue-sharing models.** Implement fair revenue-sharing frameworks for natural resources, ensuring that revenues from extractive industries support investments in local infrastructure, healthcare and education, in particular in resource-rich but underdeveloped regions.
- **Expand trade networks and market access.** Improve transport and communication infrastructure to connect rural areas with urban centres and regional markets. Doing so will enhance access for both agricultural products and resource-based exports, strengthening market integration and improving trade flows.

Long-term actions (within 6-10 years)

- **Encourage agro-industry and extractive sector synergies.** Invest in agro-industrial development alongside resource extraction to maximize synergies between sectors, such as by using agricultural by-products in energy production or applying mining technologies to improve agricultural productivity. Doing so can boost efficiency and sustainability across both industries.
- **Promote public-private partnerships for sustainable growth.** Develop public-private partnerships to attract investment in agro-industries, mining and renewable energy. Strategic partnerships can enhance infrastructure, technology and skills transfer, laying the groundwork for sustainable economic growth across sectors.
- **Create specialized vocational training programmes.** Establish training programmes for high-demand skills in both agro-industrial and extractive sectors, such as machinery operation, processing techniques and sustainable resource management. Prioritize young people and ex-combatants to increase their employability and ensure their integration into the workforce.

Lessons from international experiences

Post-conflict recovery experiences in Mozambique and Sierra Leone reveal the importance of stimulating diverse economic activities to promote stability. Investment by Mozambique in agriculture created employment in rural areas, while in Sierra Leone the focus on microenterprise support helped to rebuild local economies. In Rwanda, agricultural cooperatives and access to local markets revitalized rural economies and promoted food security. These experiences show that the Sudan can drive inclusive growth by developing synergies between agro-industries and extractive sectors, supported by fair resource management and investment in workforce training.

In the Sudan, prioritizing agro-industrial development alongside responsible resource extraction, coupled with equitable revenue distribution and training programmes, will create an inclusive and diversified economy. By implementing these measures, the Sudan can lay the foundation for sustainable economic resilience and shared prosperity across regions.

4.7.5 Social cohesion and reconciliation

Restoring social cohesion and fostering reconciliation are essential for the Sudan to transition from conflict to stability. Years of conflict have exacerbated social divisions, undermined trust and caused widespread trauma, in particular among marginalized communities. Inclusive reconciliation processes that engage communities at both the national and local levels are emphasized in the present strategy, ensuring that recovery efforts promote unity, build trust and create a foundation for sustained peace.

Long-term goals

- **Foster national and local reconciliation.** Promote unity in the Sudan by addressing grievances, facilitating dialogue and building understanding among diverse communities.
- **Ensure inclusive development.** Engage marginalized groups, young people and women in recovery efforts to create equitable opportunities and a sense of ownership among all people in the Sudan.
- **Address trauma and support mental health.** Establish community-based mental health services and trauma recovery programmes to support individuals and communities affected by conflict.

Main actions

A phased approach to achieving social cohesion and reconciliation is outlined in the present section of the report, addressing immediate needs and subsequently building sustainable peace in the long term.

Immediate actions (within 1-2 years)

- **Initiate national dialogue and truth-telling forums.** Establish truth-telling and dialogue forums that allow communities to share grievances and experiences. These forums can promote healing, validate the suffering of affected populations and set the stage for reconciliation.
- **Develop mental health and trauma support programmes.** Provide immediate mental health support to address the trauma of conflict, especially in displacement camps and conflict-affected areas. Community health workers can offer basic counselling, while training programmes can build local capacity for the provision of trauma-informed care.
- **Launch local reconciliation councils.** Set up local councils to facilitate community-based reconciliation, involving local leaders, young people and women's representatives in dialogue and peacebuilding activities.

Medium-term actions (within 3-5 years)

- **Integrate reconciliation initiatives into education.** Incorporate education on peace, empathy and tolerance into school curricula to foster understanding among younger generations. Educational programmes can also address conflict history, building a shared national narrative.
- **Support community-led development projects.** Fund community development projects that promote cooperation across diverse groups, such as cooperatives, shared markets and infrastructure initiatives. Community-based projects create shared economic interests and foster collaboration.
- **Expand mental health services and build capacity.** Develop permanent mental health services that are accessible to conflict-affected communities, especially in rural and underserved areas. Training community members as counsellors can create local support systems and reduce stigma around mental health.

Long-term actions (within 6-10 years)

- **Establish a national reconciliation commission.** Form a commission to oversee national reconciliation, monitor progress and promote an inclusive narrative for the country's future. Such a body can also address systemic grievances and facilitate restitution or compensation where appropriate.
- **Foster cultural and social cohesion initiatives.** Support the arts, cultural exchanges and public events that bring communities together to celebrate shared heritage. Encouraging cultural expression and collaboration can help to rebuild social bonds and foster unity.
- **Institutionalize trauma-informed social services.** Integrate mental health and trauma support into social services in the Sudan, ensuring accessible care for all citizens. Such an institutional approach strengthens resilience and addresses the lasting effects of conflict.

Lessons from international experiences

Such countries as Rwanda and South Africa and have demonstrated the transformative impact of reconciliation initiatives that foster dialogue and social cohesion. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa helped communities to confront the past and promote healing, while

community-based reconciliation programmes in Rwanda supported social unity through local dialogues and shared community projects.

In the case of the Sudan, a focus on community-driven reconciliation and trauma-informed care can build social resilience, prevent future conflicts and create a shared sense of purpose across diverse regions and communities. Engaging all people in the Sudan, especially marginalized groups, ensures that social cohesion efforts contribute to an inclusive, peaceful and united future.

4.7.6 Humanitarian and emergency support

Addressing the humanitarian crisis in the Sudan is essential for ensuring the basic well-being of affected populations and creating a foundation for sustainable development. Years of conflict have led to widespread displacement, severe food insecurity and insufficient access to healthcare, water and sanitation. A phased approach that provides urgent humanitarian aid while establishing the structures needed for long-term resilience and recovery are emphasized in the present strategy.

Long-term goals

- **Provide adequate social services.** Ensure that all people in the Sudan have access to essential services, including food, clean water, healthcare and sanitation, especially in conflict-affected and displacement-prone areas.
- **Transition from emergency aid to development.** Shift from short-term relief to sustainable development by empowering local communities and building their capacity so as to reduce dependency on humanitarian aid.
- **Support vulnerable populations and promote resilience.** Establish targeted programmes for women, children and displaced populations to foster stability and resilience in the face of ongoing hardships.

Main actions

A phased approach to humanitarian support and development is outlined in the present section of the report, beginning with immediate relief efforts and progressing towards sustainable, community-led solutions.

Immediate actions (within 1-2 years)

- **Deliver emergency food and nutrition aid.** Distribute food and nutrition assistance to areas with high levels of food insecurity, targeting displaced populations and vulnerable groups. Supplement food aid with agricultural inputs where feasible to support local food production and reduce reliance on imports.
- **Provide essential healthcare and medical services.** Establish mobile clinics and field hospitals in conflict-affected regions to address urgent health needs. Immediate priorities include maternal and child health, vaccination campaigns and the distribution of essential medicines.
- **Restore water, sanitation and hygiene services.** Repair and expand water supply and sanitation infrastructure, especially in displacement camps and densely populated areas. Distribute hygiene kits and build temporary sanitation facilities to prevent disease outbreaks.

Medium-term actions (within 3-5 years)

- **Build capacity among local health services.** Transition from emergency healthcare to locally managed health facilities by training local healthcare providers and establishing community health programmes. Expanding training programmes can strengthen community-based healthcare

delivery and create resilient local health systems. Healthcare efforts must prioritize maternal and reproductive healthcare to address the unique needs of women in post-conflict settings, ensuring access to essential services and gender-sensitive medical care.

- **Support sustainable food and livelihood programmes:** Implement programmes that encourage sustainable agricultural practices, including the provision of seeds, tools and training to local farmers. Supporting community-led cooperatives can improve food security and create employment opportunities.
- **Expand access to safe water and sustainable sanitation.** Develop permanent water, sanitation and hygiene infrastructure in underserved areas, prioritizing conflict-affected regions. Community-managed water systems and waste treatment facilities can reduce disease and support long-term health improvements.

Long-term actions (within 6-10 years)

- **Establish local health networks for ongoing care.** Develop permanent health centres and community clinics across rural and underserved areas to ensure that all people in the Sudan have access to healthcare. Establishing a network of local health facilities can reduce future reliance on emergency aid.
- **Enable local food production and market access.** Support long-term food security by investing in agricultural infrastructure, such as irrigation systems, storage facilities and rural markets. Improving market access can foster self-sufficiency and increase resilience against economic shocks.
- **Institutionalize water, sanitation and hygiene standards and community-led maintenance.** Incorporate water, sanitation and hygiene standards into local governance frameworks and empower communities to manage and maintain water and sanitation facilities. Community ownership can ensure sustainability and minimize the risk of future infrastructure breakdowns.

Lessons from international experiences

The humanitarian and emergency support responses in Angola and Mozambique emphasize the importance of aligning humanitarian aid with long-term development objectives. The approach followed in Angola of integrating humanitarian assistance into recovery efforts reduced aid dependency, while the rapid deployment of emergency support by Mozambique after crises minimized long-term social disruptions.

The Sudan can leverage these insights to structure humanitarian efforts that transition effectively into sustainable development, ensuring that aid is both immediate and adaptive.

4.7.7 Environmental sustainability and natural resources management

Environmental sustainability is essential for recovery and long-term development in the Sudan, as decades of conflict and resource mismanagement have significantly degraded the environment, disrupted agriculture and heightened vulnerability to climate change. Sustainable practices across agriculture, resource management and climate adaptation are prioritized in the present strategy. These practices are informed by successful approaches followed in other post-conflict African contexts and are aimed at building resilience, protecting ecosystems and supporting livelihoods, all of which are integral components of recovery in the Sudan. Competition for resources, in particular land and water, has a

disproportionate impact on women, who often depend on these resources for their families' sustenance. The inclusion of women in resource management and dispute resolution processes is essential for achieving equitable solutions.

Long-term goals

- **Promote sustainable land and water management.** Enhance land and water management practices to address soil degradation, water scarcity and desertification – important challenges given the ecological and agricultural context in the Sudan.
- **Develop climate-resilient agriculture and extractive industries.** Support climate-smart practices in agriculture and extractive industries to boost productivity, protect the environment and ensure long-term food security and economic stability.
- **Conserve biodiversity and ecosystems.** Protect and restore natural habitats, incorporating biodiversity conservation into development projects to maintain ecological balance in the Sudan.

Main actions

A phased approach promoting environmental sustainability and climate resilience is followed in the present strategy.

Immediate actions (within 1-2 years)

- **Reforestation and soil conservation.** Launch programmes focused on reforestation and soil conservation in areas most severely affected by conflict-related environmental degradation.
- **Water-saving initiatives.** Invest in rainwater harvesting, small-scale irrigation and other water-efficient practices to support water-scarce and drought-prone areas.
- **Sustainable extractive practices.** Develop guidelines for environmentally responsible practices in extractive industries, in particular in the mining and oil sectors.

Medium-term actions (within 3-5 years)

- **Expand climate-resilient agriculture.** Scale up climate-smart agricultural techniques, such as agroforestry and conservation tillage, to reduce emissions and improve food security.
- **Sustainable water infrastructure.** Invest in infrastructure, including efficient irrigation systems and reservoirs, to ensure sustainable water access for agriculture and industry.
- **Strengthen environmental regulation and enforcement.** Strengthen policies and enforcement mechanisms to prevent deforestation, reduce pollution and ensure compliance with environmental standards.

Long-term actions (within 6-10 years)

- **Renewable energy and clean technology.** Promote investments in renewable energy sources, such as solar and wind, to diversify the energy supply and support rural electrification.
- **Protected areas for biodiversity.** Designate protected areas to conserve biodiversity and safeguard critical ecosystems.
- **Environmental education and stewardship.** Foster environmental awareness and stewardship through educational programmes that promote sustainable practices and climate adaptation across communities.

Lessons from international experiences

Post-conflict recovery efforts in such African countries as Angola, Liberia and Rwanda offer practical insights for the Sudan. In Angola, the focus placed on pollution control and environmental regulations in resource extraction demonstrates the importance of managing the environmental impact of such industries as mining and oil. The experiences of Liberia and Rwanda illustrate the benefits of climate-smart agriculture and renewable energy in promoting resilience and sustainable growth.

In relation to the Sudan, these examples underscore the value of responsible resource management, community engagement and climate-adaptive practices as essential components of long-term environmental sustainability.

4.7.8 International partnerships and diaspora engagement

International partnerships and active engagement with the country's diaspora are critical for post-conflict recovery. These efforts bring essential resources, expertise and connections that can drive the country's sustainable development and resilience. By fostering structured, collaborative engagement, the Sudan can attract investments, strengthen local capacity and build effective pathways for long-term growth.

Long-term goals

- **Establish collaborative international partnerships.** Form partnerships with international organizations, African Governments and NGOs to support reconstruction, capacity-building and sustainable development.
- **Engage the diaspora of the Sudan in investment and knowledge transfer.** Create opportunities for diaspora members to invest in the economy of the Sudan, share technical expertise and participate in humanitarian and development initiatives.
- **Leverage international resources for sustainable development.** Access international funding, technology and knowledge to drive sectoral growth and foster the country's self-sufficiency.

Main actions

A phased approach to recovery and development in the Sudan is outlined in the present section, categorizing actions as immediate, medium-term and long-term priorities.

Immediate actions (within 1-2 years)

- **Formulate a national strategy for international cooperation.** Develop a strategy for international engagement that is aligned with the recovery priorities for the Sudan.
- **Establish a diaspora investment fund.** Create a fund to attract diaspora investment in healthcare, education and agriculture.
- **Mobilize humanitarian support for urgent needs.** Coordinate with international organizations to address critical needs in food security, healthcare and shelter.

Medium-term actions (within 3-5 years)

- **Strengthen capacity for managing partnerships.** Develop government capacity to oversee partnerships transparently.
- **Create diaspora engagement platforms.** Establish forums and networks for diaspora knowledge-sharing and technical assistance.
- **Encourage public-private partnerships.** Promote public-private partnerships with international investors in infrastructure, agriculture and energy.

Long-term actions (within 6-10 years)

- **Develop research partnerships with African institutions.** Partner with African universities and research centres to strengthen sectoral expertise.
- **Implement diaspora bonds for long-term funding.** Issue diaspora bonds to support infrastructure and development projects.
- **Strengthen trade and export relationships.** Establish trade agreements to enhance market access for products from the Sudan.

Lessons from African experiences

The role of international partnerships and diaspora engagement in recovery, as illustrated in Liberia and Sierra Leone, shows how international support can be harnessed for effective reconstruction. The establishment of partnerships by Sierra Leone helped to mobilize critical resources, while Liberia leveraged its diaspora for expertise and funding. The Sudan can engage with international partners and its diaspora community to generate support for recovery efforts, ensuring that they are well coordinated and impactful.

4.8 Implementation framework

A clear and coordinated implementation framework is essential for translating the recovery strategy for the Sudan into actionable steps that drive meaningful change. In the framework outlined in the present section of the report, a phased approach to implementing main priorities is followed, roles and responsibilities are established, and coordination mechanisms are defined to ensure efficiency and alignment among stakeholders.

4.8.1 Phased implementation

The strategy will be implemented over three main phases, allowing the Sudan to address urgent needs while building a foundation for long-term stability and growth.

Immediate phase (within 1-2 years)

- Focus on addressing critical humanitarian needs, restoring essential services and stabilizing communities affected by conflict. The priority actions are emergency food and healthcare support, rapid restoration of water and sanitation infrastructure, initial disarmament and reintegration programmes, and the establishment of community-based mental health services. The expected outcomes are improved safety and well-being for vulnerable populations, reduced risk of disease outbreaks and stabilization of conflict-affected areas.

Medium-term phase (within 3-5 years)

- Transition from emergency relief to sustainable development by enhancing local capacity and rebuilding essential infrastructure. The priority actions are expanding healthcare facilities, scaling up education and vocational training, implementing community-based reconciliation programmes, and creating employment opportunities through agriculture and small businesses. The expected outcomes are strengthened healthcare, education and economic sectors; improved social cohesion; and decreased dependency on humanitarian aid.

Long-term phase (within 6-10 years)

- Focus on sustainable economic growth, institutional reform and the full reintegration of all communities in the Sudan. The priority actions are to establish permanent infrastructure, foster economic diversification, develop environmental sustainability programmes and embed trauma-informed services within social institutions. The expected outcomes are a self-sufficient economy, resilient infrastructure and institutions capable of supporting lasting peace and stability.

4.8.2 Roles and responsibilities

Successful implementation requires clearly defined roles and responsibilities across all sectors and stakeholders:

- Government agencies lead the overall recovery efforts, coordinate sector-specific initiatives and ensure alignment with national policies. Essential ministries, such as those overseeing health, education and infrastructure, will have primary responsibility for their respective areas.
- Local authorities play a central role in implementing community-specific actions, from social cohesion initiatives to local governance reform. Empowering local authorities enhances responsiveness to unique regional needs.
- International partners provide technical assistance, funding and knowledge-sharing, especially during the immediate and medium-term phases. International organizations, foreign Governments and NGOs will support capacity-building efforts and foster international cooperation.
- Civil society organizations facilitate community engagement, implement social support programmes and bridge the gap between government agencies and local communities. They play an essential role in ensuring the inclusivity and relevance of recovery programmes.
- The private sector and the diaspora contribute to economic recovery through investment, job creation and skills transfer. Public-private partnerships and diaspora engagement initiatives will drive sustainable economic growth and support infrastructure development.

4.8.3 Coordination mechanisms

Coordination is essential to ensure cohesive and efficient implementation, prevent overlap and maximize resource allocation. The following mechanisms will support ongoing collaboration among all stakeholders:

- **National recovery coordination committee.** Establish a committee that includes representatives of government agencies, local authorities, international partners and civil society organizations. The committee will oversee and monitor recovery efforts, resolve inter-agency challenges and ensure that actions align with the goals set out in the strategy.

- **Regional and local coordination councils.** Create councils at the regional and local levels to facilitate area-specific implementation. These councils, led by local authorities and women-led and community-based stakeholders, will allow for direct feedback from communities and enhance the responsiveness of recovery efforts.
- **Regular stakeholder meetings and reporting.** Hold quarterly stakeholder meetings to review progress, discuss challenges and make necessary adjustments. Comprehensive reports will be produced to track the status of implementation and provide transparency.
- **Integrated data and information systems.** Develop a centralized data system to gather, monitor and share information across all sectors and phases. Accessible data systems enable informed decision-making and improve coordination across diverse areas, such as healthcare, education and economic development.

4.9 Monitoring and evaluation

A robust monitoring and evaluation framework is essential for tracking progress, ensuring transparency and enabling responsive adjustments throughout the recovery process in the Sudan. Outlined in the present monitoring and evaluation framework are performance indicators, data collection and data reporting mechanisms, and feedback channels that will allow stakeholders to assess the impact of recovery efforts and address any emerging challenges effectively.

4.9.1 Main objectives of monitoring and evaluation

- **Measure progress and impact.** Track the outcomes of priority actions and assess their effectiveness in achieving long-term recovery goals.
- **Ensure accountability and transparency.** Maintain open communication with stakeholders by sharing regular updates on progress and challenges.
- **Facilitate adaptive management.** Use data-driven insights to adjust programmes and resources, ensuring that the strategy remains responsive to evolving needs and circumstances.

4.9.2 Performance indicators

Clear and measurable indicators are critical for assessing progress across each phase and priority area. Key performance indicators include the following:

Humanitarian and social support

- Reduction in malnutrition and food insecurity rates
- Increase in access to clean water and sanitation services
- Improvement in healthcare access, measured by the number of operational health facilities

Security and stability

- Number of communities with active disarmament and reintegration programmes
- Reduction in violent incidents and crime rates in conflict-affected areas
- Community perception of safety and security, determined on the basis of regular surveys

Economic recovery and development

- Growth in agricultural production and market access
- Increase in employment rates, in particular among young people and ex-combatants
- Number of small and medium-sized enterprises supported through grants or microfinance programmes

Governance and institutional reform

- Number of functional local governance structures and councils
- Increase in public trust and satisfaction with government services, measured through surveys
- Progress in institutional reforms, such as anti-corruption measures

Infrastructure and education

- Number of schools, healthcare facilities and infrastructure projects completed
- Increase in school enrolment and literacy rates, in particular in underserved regions
- Improvement in road and transport access across rural areas

4.9.3 Data collection and reporting

To ensure accurate and timely monitoring and evaluation, a combination of quantitative and qualitative data collection methods will be used. Regular reporting will keep stakeholders informed of progress and support evidence-based decision-making.

Data collection methods

- **Surveys and assessments.** Conduct baseline and follow-up surveys with households, communities and important stakeholders to gather quantitative and qualitative data on the impact of activities carried out.
- **Field monitoring.** Establish field monitoring teams to visit project sites, verify activities and document progress.
- **Community feedback channels.** Set up feedback mechanisms, such as hotlines, suggestion boxes and community meetings, to gather insights from local residents.

Reporting mechanisms

- **Quarterly progress reports.** Share updates with all stakeholders, detailing progress, challenges and necessary adjustments for each priority area.
- **Annual impact evaluations.** Conduct comprehensive evaluations each year to assess the overall effectiveness of recovery programmes and make strategic recommendations for improvement.
- **Public dashboards and updates.** Develop a centralized, accessible dashboard where data on main indicators are regularly updated. Doing so will enhance transparency and enable the public tracking of progress.

4.9.4 Feedback mechanisms

A continuous feedback loop is crucial for ensuring that the recovery strategy remains responsive and effective. The following channels will facilitate ongoing dialogue and provide actionable insights from the ground:

- **Community feedback and consultations.** Conduct regular consultations with local communities, including vulnerable and marginalized groups, to gather their perspectives on recovery efforts and address their concerns.
- **Stakeholder engagement sessions.** Organize regular stakeholder meetings at which government agencies, NGOs, civil society organizations and international partners can discuss progress, share insights and suggest improvements.
- **Independent evaluations.** Engage independent evaluators to conduct periodic reviews of the monitoring and evaluation framework itself, ensuring that the evaluation process remains objective, effective and aligned with best practices.

4.9.5 Adaptive management

The data gathered through the monitoring and evaluation framework will support adaptive management, allowing for timely course corrections to the strategy by means of the following:

- **Continuous programme adjustment.** Use real-time data to identify areas needing improvement or additional resources. Doing so ensures that recovery efforts remain relevant to current needs.
- **Scenario planning.** Develop contingency plans that can be activated if specific risks emerge, ensuring that the strategy can be adapted to changing political, economic or social contexts.

4.10 Risk management and sustainability

To achieve lasting peace and development, the recovery strategy for the Sudan must proactively address potential risks and build resilience against future challenges. In the present section of the report are outlined the major risks, mitigation strategies and sustainability measures designed to reinforce the strategy's long-term impact and adaptability.

4.10.1 Main objectives

- **Identify and mitigate risks.** Anticipate obstacles that may hinder implementation and develop strategies to address them proactively.
- **Enhance programme resilience.** Build adaptive capacities across all priority areas to ensure continuity despite unexpected challenges.
- **Ensure the sustainability of outcomes.** Embed sustainable practices in recovery strategies and development programmes to maintain recovery gains and support growth in the Sudan beyond the recovery period.

4.10.2 Risk assessment

The recovery strategy for the Sudan faces several potential risks. The following are some of the major risks faced and the factors influencing them:

- **Political instability.** Political uncertainties or potential changes in government could disrupt recovery initiatives or lead to shifts in policy priorities, affecting programme continuity and stakeholder engagement.
- **Resource constraints.** Limited financial resources and reliance on external aid could delay projects or reduce the scope of recovery efforts, especially in infrastructure and social services.
- **Security threats.** Persistent insecurity or the resurgence of violence in certain regions could endanger progress, in particular in conflict-affected areas where trust-building and disarmament initiatives are still ongoing.
- **Social and economic disparities.** High levels of poverty, unemployment and regional disparities could increase tension, hinder social cohesion and undermine community-driven development.

4.10.3 Mitigation strategies

To counter these risks, the following mitigation strategies will be implemented:

Strengthen governance and political engagement

- Engage all political parties, local authorities and women-led and community-based stakeholders to create a unified vision and commitment to recovery goals. Doing so can reduce the impact of political changes on programme continuity.
- Establish independent oversight bodies to ensure transparency, accountability and adherence to recovery priorities, regardless of political shifts.

Diversify funding sources and promote self-reliance

- Seek diverse funding sources, including international partnerships, public-private partnerships and diaspora contributions, to reduce dependency on any single source.
- Promote self-sustaining initiatives in such sectors as agriculture and small industries to build economic resilience and reduce long-term reliance on aid.

Implement conflict-sensitive programming

- Design all projects with a conflict-sensitive approach, prioritizing programmes that promote peace, inclusivity and inter-community collaboration.
- Establish early warning systems and local peace committees to address emerging security threats and prevent violence in at-risk areas.

Address social inequities and support inclusive growth

- Target marginalized regions and vulnerable populations in economic recovery through social programmes to reduce disparities.
- Develop training and employment opportunities specifically for young people, women and marginalized groups, fostering inclusivity and equal access to benefits.

4.10.4 Sustainability measures

To ensure that recovery efforts deliver long-lasting benefits, sustainability across all programme areas is emphasized in the strategy through the following actions:

Build local capacity and empower communities

- Train local leaders, community-based organizations and government staff to sustain and manage projects independently. Building local capacity promotes community ownership and ensures that initiatives continue without external intervention.
- Encourage community-driven approaches that empower local populations to lead development initiatives, thereby fostering social cohesion and increasing programme sustainability.

Promote environmental sustainability

- Integrate sustainable practices into agriculture, infrastructure and energy projects. This includes promoting climate-resilient farming, renewable energy sources and the use of eco-friendly building materials to reduce environmental impacts.
- Develop educational programmes on environmental stewardship and resource conservation to encourage sustainable practices within communities.

Institutionalize programme benefits

- Embed trauma-informed social services, peace education and economic support systems into public institutions, ensuring that they are part of long-term service delivery in the Sudan.
- Strengthen policies that support equal access to education, healthcare and economic opportunities, embedding these outcomes in governance structures.

Create feedback and learning mechanisms

- Regularly assess programme outcomes and gather feedback from stakeholders to refine and improve sustainability strategies.
- Establish knowledge-sharing platforms to document lessons learned and promote best practices across all sectors, helping the Sudan to remain adaptable and resilient over time.

By proactively managing risks and including sustainability measures, the recovery strategy for the Sudan is aimed at establishing a resilient foundation that supports lasting peace, stability and growth across the country.

4.11 Budget and resource mobilization

A well-planned budget and effective resource mobilization strategy are critical for achieving the objectives outlined in the recovery plan for the Sudan. In the present section of the report, an overview of funding needs is provided, potential sources of finance are identified, and mechanisms for transparent resource allocation to maximize the impact of available funds are outlined.

4.11.1 Main objectives

- Define funding requirements. Outline budgetary needs for each priority area, balancing immediate and long-term requirements to ensure comprehensive recovery.
- **Identify diverse funding sources.** Mobilize resources from a wide range of international and domestic partners to reduce dependency on any single funding source.
- Establish transparent financial oversight. Implement mechanisms to ensure the efficient and transparent allocation of resources, fostering accountability and building public trust.

4.11.2 Funding sources

To meet these budgetary needs, the Sudan will seek to diversify its funding sources, balancing external and domestic contributions to ensure sustainability.

International development organizations and donors

- Important partners include the African Development Bank, the World Bank, United Nations entities and other multilateral organizations. Bilateral donors, such as the European Union and individual donor countries, can also provide grants and concessional loans.
- Funding will focus on large-scale infrastructure projects, humanitarian aid and capacity-building programmes.

Public-private partnerships

- Mobilizing private sector investments through public-private partnerships can support infrastructure, energy and technology initiatives. Incentivizing private investment in strategic sectors can accelerate development and reduce the Government's financial burden.

Diaspora contributions

- Engaging the country's diaspora through such initiatives as diaspora bonds and investment funds offers a unique opportunity to attract capital for targeted projects, in particular in such sectors as healthcare, education and entrepreneurship.
- Remittance programmes can also provide additional resources for local development.

Domestic revenue mobilization

- Leveraging domestic revenue through improved tax collection, resource royalties and transparent budget management can generate funds for critical needs. Strengthening the tax system in the Sudan and streamlining revenue collection processes are vital to achieving this.

Innovative financing mechanisms

- Exploring innovative funding sources, such as impact bonds, climate financing and microfinancing platforms, can mobilize additional resources. These mechanisms can fund specific areas, such as renewable energy and climate-resilient agriculture, aligning with global sustainability goals.

4.11.3 Resource allocation and financial oversight

To ensure the efficient use of funds, the Sudan will establish the following transparent mechanisms for resource allocation and financial oversight:

- **Transparent budget allocation processes.** Funds will be allocated on the basis of priority areas outlined in the recovery strategy, with regular reviews conducted to ensure that budget allocations reflect changing needs. Priority areas, such as humanitarian support and the rebuilding of infrastructure, will receive funding initially, with a gradual shift towards allocations for long-term programmes.
- **Financial oversight bodies.** Independent oversight bodies, including financial auditors and transparency committees, will monitor budget implementation to prevent mismanagement and corruption. These bodies will work closely with government agencies, international partners and civil society organizations to ensure accountability.
- **Public financial reporting.** Regular public reports on funding sources, expenditures and programme outcomes will be published to maintain transparency and build public trust. Public dashboards and progress reports will be accessible to stakeholders and the general population.
- **Performance-based funding adjustments.** Adjustments to funding allocations will be made on the basis of the results of monitoring and evaluation efforts. Underperforming areas will be subject to additional support or corrective measures, while successful programmes may be scaled to maximize impact.

4.12 Conclusion and call to action

The Sudan stands at a pivotal moment, with an opportunity to move beyond conflict and lay the groundwork for a peaceful, prosperous future. The present recovery strategy provides a comprehensive road map, addressing such critical areas as security, infrastructure, economic resilience, social cohesion, governance and international partnerships. Together, these priorities form a foundation for sustainable development and long-term stability. Gender-sensitive approaches are essential for ensuring sustainable and equitable post-conflict reconstruction. By prioritizing women's empowerment, addressing systemic inequalities and fostering inclusive decision-making, the present strategy outlines a pathway for transformative development that benefits all segments of society.

Call to action

Achieving these goals will require a united commitment from all sectors of society. The Government of the Sudan, local authorities, civil society, international partners and the country's diaspora each have a vital role to play in ensuring the success of the strategy. Important actions moving forward include the following:

- **Commitment to transparent and inclusive governance.** Government leaders and local authorities must prioritize transparency and inclusivity, engaging communities and ensuring that recovery benefits all regions and groups equitably.
- **Active participation by local communities and civil society.** Community engagement is essential for sustaining progress. Civil society organizations and women-led and community-based stakeholders are encouraged to participate actively in the implementation of the strategy, contributing insights and holding institutions accountable.

- **Ongoing support from international partners.** Recovery in the Sudan depends on the continued support of the international community, including donor countries, development organizations and NGOs. International partners are called upon to provide resources, technical assistance and advocacy to drive sustainable recovery in the Sudan.
- **Diaspora engagement and investment.** The diaspora of the Sudan has an important role to play in supporting the strategy, whether through investments, knowledge transfer or humanitarian assistance. Its involvement will contribute significantly to rebuilding the Sudan and fulfilling a shared vision for a stable and prosperous future.

In the present strategy, each stakeholder is invited to commit to a shared vision for the Sudan – one in which peace, unity and development are not only goals but realities. If all stakeholders work together, the Sudan can achieve lasting change, ensuring that future generations inherit a country rooted in resilience, opportunity and hope.

5. Main findings and recommendations

5.1 Summary of main findings

The study conducted of post-conflict reconstruction in the Sudan for the purpose of preparing the present report reveals a landscape deeply affected by the lasting impacts of prolonged conflict, institutional fragility and severe economic disruption.

Through that assessment, the following critical areas for intervention and strategic opportunity, which are foundational to recovery in the Sudan, have been identified:

- **Institutional weakness and governance challenges.** The country's public institutions suffer from significant capacity constraints, which impede the effective implementation of recovery initiatives. Comprehensive governance reforms, with a focus on transparency, anti-corruption and accountability, are urgently needed to rebuild public trust, improve service delivery and strengthen institutional resilience.
- **Critical gaps in access to basic services.** Conflict has decimated essential services, in particular in marginalized and conflict-affected regions, leaving many communities without access to healthcare, education, clean water and adequate infrastructure. Closing these service gaps is crucial to restoring human dignity, reducing inequality and promoting equitable development.
- **Economic instability and infrastructure deficits.** The economy of the Sudan faces multiple obstacles, including high unemployment, inflation and an overreliance on just a few sectors, such as agriculture and extractive industries. Infrastructure in the areas of transportation, energy and telecommunications remains underdeveloped, limiting connectivity and economic potential. Revitalizing the economy will require coordinated investments in diverse sectors, targeted job creation programmes and significant upgrades to infrastructure with a view to facilitating trade, attracting investment and boosting productivity.
- **Socioeconomic fragmentation and unemployment.** Economic recovery in the Sudan is hindered by fragmentation, uncoordinated development efforts and high unemployment, which collectively limit growth and perpetuate inequality. A unified, inclusive approach that addresses regional disparities and fosters job creation is essential for sustainable economic stability and social cohesion.
- **Need for social cohesion and reconciliation.** Decades of conflict have fractured the social fabric in the Sudan, eroding trust and exacerbating divisions. Promoting community-led reconciliation, addressing historical grievances and fostering inclusive dialogue are essential for rebuilding social cohesion, restoring confidence and achieving lasting peace.
- **Environmental degradation and climate challenges.** Environmental sustainability is essential to the country's resilience, as climate change, desertification and resource degradation increasingly threaten livelihoods and contribute to social tensions. Integrating climate adaptation, resource management and conservation into reconstruction efforts will be crucial to ensuring a stable, resilient future.

5.2 Strategic recommendations

The following recommendations are directed towards the Government, civil society and international partners with a view to supporting an effective recovery and reconstruction process:

For the Government

- **Institutional reform.** Strengthen public institutions through governance reforms that emphasize transparency, accountability and efficiency.
- **Equitable service delivery.** Ensure that such basic services as healthcare, education and clean water are accessible, in particular in marginalized and conflict-affected regions.
- **Security sector reform.** Reorganize and professionalize the security sector to promote stability and prevent future conflict, with a focus on protecting human rights and community safety.
- **Environmental management.** Develop policies and practices for sustainable land use, reforestation and climate adaptation.
- **Support for local governance.** Support local governance initiatives in conflict-affected areas, ensuring that women are actively involved in leadership roles and decision-making processes.

For civil society organizations

- **Community engagement.** Facilitate grass-roots reconciliation efforts, community dialogues and local capacity-building to strengthen social cohesion.
- **Advocacy and accountability.** Act as watchdogs for government transparency and international aid use, ensuring that recovery resources reach their intended beneficiaries.
- **Support for livelihoods.** Collaborate with local communities to provide vocational training, small business support and other initiatives that create jobs and economic stability.

For international partners

- **Funding and technical assistance.** Provide financial aid and technical support, prioritizing projects that build institutional capacity, infrastructure and economic development.
- **Humanitarian support and capacity-building.** Ensure that humanitarian aid is aligned with long-term development goals, with a focus on transitioning from emergency relief to sustainable development.
- **Environmental initiatives.** Support climate resilience programmes, sustainable agriculture and natural resource management in partnership with the Government and local communities.

5.3 Proposed actions for immediate, medium-term and long-term needs

In order to address immediate, medium-term and long-term needs, a phased approach is essential.

Immediate actions (within 1-2 years)

- **Restore basic services.** Prioritize healthcare, education, water and sanitation in the most affected areas. Gender-sensitive education strategies should include increasing access to education for girls, in particular in rural and conflict-affected areas, and creating safe learning environments that address girls' specific vulnerabilities.
- **Launch reconciliation programmes.** Initiate truth-telling forums and local peace committees to address grievances and support community-driven reconciliation.

- **Mobilize humanitarian aid.** Expand food security and medical aid to displacement camps and remote areas facing extreme hardship.
- **Prioritize demining.** Carry out demining operations and community education campaigns to raise awareness of explosive hazards.

Medium-term actions (within 3-5 years)

- **Develop infrastructure and economic opportunities.** Implement infrastructure projects in transportation, communication, energy and agriculture to support economic recovery and reduce regional disparities.
- **Strengthen governance and capacity.** Build institutional capacity through training, anti-corruption programmes and partnerships with international organizations.
- **Expand education and employment initiatives.** Establish vocational training centres and educational reforms to build a skilled workforce that is aligned with the economic needs of the country.

Long-term actions (within 6-10 years)

- **Establish a sustainable economic model.** Diversify the economy through investment in agriculture, renewable energy and small industries to reduce reliance on aid.
- **Build resilient communities.** Continue to promote social cohesion through education, mental health support and community resilience programmes.
- **Ensure environmental and resource sustainability.** Integrate environmental sustainability into national policies, including sustainable resource management and climate adaptation initiatives.

5.4 Pathway for ensuring sustainable peace and development

To foster lasting peace and stability in the Sudan, the following pathway is recommended:

- **Commit to inclusive development.** Recovery in the Sudan must be gender-sensitive and must include marginalized groups and conflict-affected regions, creating equal opportunities and ensuring that all communities benefit from development.
- **Promote transparent governance.** Reforms that build accountability and transparency in public institutions are critical to restoring public trust and supporting sustainable development.
- **Invest in resilience and sustainability.** Integrate environmental and social resilience into all aspects of reconstruction, focusing on climate adaptation, social cohesion and disaster preparedness.
- **Empower local communities and civil society.** Empower women-led and local communities to lead in the recovery process, with civil society organizations playing a central role in both implementation and oversight.
- **Strengthen international cooperation and partnerships.** Engagement of the international community, the diaspora of the Sudan and partners in Africa and the Arab world will provide resources, expertise and solidarity, which are essential for the country's path to peace and development.

Annex

Survey questionnaire administered to respondents to inform the post-conflict development framework for the Sudan

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview. This study is aimed at developing a comprehensive post-conflict reconstruction and development framework for the Sudan. Given the ongoing challenges caused by the prolonged conflict, the purpose of the study is to identify priority areas that will facilitate sustainable recovery, peacebuilding and long-term development.

The main objectives of this study are to:

- Gather insights from important stakeholders, such as yourself, on the critical needs and priority areas for post-war recovery in the Sudan
- Develop a customized framework for post-conflict development, informed by lessons from international experiences and adapted to the unique sociopolitical and economic context in the Sudan
- Ensure that the framework is aligned with national goals, promotes inclusive governance and supports socioeconomic stability

Your input will be instrumental in shaping the strategy and ensuring that it addresses the most urgent and relevant measures needed to rebuild the Sudan in a way that fosters peace, stability and prosperity.

Section 1: participant information

- Name
- Role/position within the organization
 - Government
 - NGO
 - Private sector
 - Academia
 - International organization
 - Other (free-text input)
- Years of experience in conflict-affected regions or post-conflict recovery
 - 0–5 years
 - 6–10 years
 - 11–15 years

- 16–20 years
- 20+ years

Section 2: views on main development priorities

- What do you consider to be the most critical areas for immediate post-war development in the Sudan?
 - Infrastructure
 - Governance
 - Security
 - Education
 - Healthcare
 - Livelihoods
 - Other (free-text input)
- How do you prioritize these areas? Why are they critical to long-term stability in the Sudan?

Section 3: institutional and governance structures

- What governance and institutional reforms are essential for reconstruction in the Sudan?
 - Constitutional reform
 - Electoral reform
 - Judicial reform
 - Decentralization
 - Public sector accountability
 - Other (free-text input)
- What is the role of local governance and decentralization in the recovery process?
- Are there specific models from post-conflict countries that you believe to be adaptable to the situation in the Sudan?

Section 4: social cohesion and reconciliation

- What strategies should be adopted to promote peacebuilding and social cohesion?
 - National dialogues
 - Local reconciliation councils
 - Inclusive political participation
 - Youth engagement programmes

- Women's empowerment initiatives
- Other (free-text input)
- How can the Sudan effectively involve marginalized groups, such as women, young people and displaced populations, in the recovery process?
- What role can civil society organizations play in supporting reconciliation efforts?

Section 5: economic recovery and development

- What sectors should be prioritized for economic recovery?
 - Agriculture
 - Oil and gas
 - Small industries
 - Gold and mining
 - Manufacturing
 - Technology
 - Other (free-text input)
- How can the Sudan leverage its natural resources to support equitable economic development and avoid the resource curse?
- How should job creation, especially for young people and ex-combatants, be approached?

Section 6: security and stability

- What are the main security challenges that need to be addressed to ensure sustainable peace?
 - Border security
 - Disarmament
 - Reintegration of ex-combatants
 - Protection of civilians
 - Enforcement of the rule of law
 - Other (free-text input)
- How should disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes be structured to succeed in the Sudan?

Section 7: humanitarian and emergency support

- What immediate humanitarian needs must be addressed in the short term?
 - Food security
 - Shelter

- Healthcare
- Education
- Water and sanitation
- Other (free-text input)
- How can the Sudan ensure a smooth transition from emergency humanitarian assistance to long-term development?

Section 8: learning from international experiences

- Are there any specific international or regional post-conflict recovery experiences that the Sudan can draw from?
- How can the Sudan adapt lessons from such countries as Liberia, Mozambique and Sierra Leone?

Section 9: monitoring and evaluation

- How should the success of reconstruction efforts be measured?
 - Economic growth indicators
 - Employment rates
 - Infrastructure development
 - Social cohesion metrics
 - Reduction in violence or conflict
 - Other (free-text input)
- What monitoring and accountability mechanisms should be implemented to ensure transparency and effectiveness in the recovery process?

Section 10: closing remarks

- What is your overall vision for post-conflict development in the Sudan?
- Do you have any additional recommendations or thoughts on how the Sudan can achieve long-term peace and prosperity?

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