The Humanitarian Country Team

Strategy for Protection

in Sudan

2019-2021

Endorsed on 25 April 2019

I. **Introduction**

Content

Rationale and objective

While acknowledging that the primary responsibility to protect civilian populations lies with the Government of Sudan (GoS), the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) commit to the below-mentioned objectives to fulfill their shared responsibility to the protection of civilians.

In line with the IASC statement on the Centrality of Protection (2013)[1] and the IASC Protection Policy (2016), the 2019-2021 HCT protection strategy analyzes protection threats and identifies priority protection gaps[2] in areas affected by conflict and natural disaster. This strategy lays out key protection objectives to prevent or respond to identified protection risks.

Through this strategy, and under the leadership of the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator (RC/HC), the HCT commits to maximize the protection impact of its work, ensuring responses are informed by priority concerns that are addressed through coherent and coordinated approaches based on HCT members' mission and mandates, capacities and comparative advantage.

The HCT protection strategy 2019-21 aims, also, to provide a foundation for a comprehensive system wide Protection strategy covering broader protection outcomes to enable everyone in Sudan to claim and enjoy their rights.

Given the fast evolving political and security situation in Sudan, and given further the significance of the HCT protection strategy addressing the emerging humanitarian protection needs, the HCT protection strategy 2019-21, and its related action plan, will be reviewed and updated on **a quarterly basis, and as deemed necessary,** by the HCT protection task force. The strategy shall be adopted up to December 2021 from the date of its endorsement. The evolution of the political situation in Sudan, as a consequence of the regime change, offers an opportunity for the HCT to enhance its efforts for

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[1] The Statement was also referred to by Senior Transformative Agenda Implementation Team in its Sudan Mission Report (10 May 2014), which recommended that "protection issues must be at the forefront of the response and integrated in all sectoral activities".

[2] The HCT strategy guides the collective humanitarian protection response to situations of internal displacement, IDP and Refugee returnees, and their hosting communities. . It does not include the refugee protection and related solutions strategy and responses, led and coordinated by UNHCR.

building a conducive protection environment building on the gains made in previous years and on the offered opportunity for enhanced Humanitarian Access and, potentially, addressing humanitarian needs through a sustained and longer term humanitarian- development- peace complimenting effort.

II. <u>**Analysis of the protection situation in Sudan**</u>

Overall protection situation[3]

The decades old conflict in Sudan resulted in protracted displacement of 1.86 Million IDPs in need of protection and assistance. Combined with other factors such as climate, the economic crisis, and the presence of over 1.3 Million Refugees, there are 5.7 million people in need of protection and humanitarian assistance in Sudan, according to the 2019 HNO. Around 1.6 million people are living in IDP camps in Darfur and have reported protection threats such as harassment, rape and killings in and outside camps and settlements. In South Kordofan over 186,000 IDPs are hosted among the local communities and self-settlements in the GoS controlled areas. Furthermore, the SPLM-N also estimates that there are over 300,000 people displaced in need of protection and humanitarian assistance in the SPLM-N controlled areas in South Kordofan and Blue Nile states, hereafter referred to as the Two Areas. Furthermore, the 2019 HNO reported over 324,000 IDP and Refugee returnees in need of sustainable reintegration and development assistance.

While a detailed analysis of the protection risks is provided as *Annex 2* to this document, some of the identified major protection risks include: inter-communal disputes and violence, HR abuses reported across various states of Sudan including Darfur and the Two Areas, lack of sustainable Durable Solution prospects in the context of displaced populations, Sexual and Gender based Violence and threats to children, Human Trafficking/ smuggling and other threats faced by migrants using Sudan as a migratory rout to Europe and beyond.

The absence of long-term socio-economic opportunities, coupled with a country-wide economic crisis, continues to prevent those most vulnerable from rebuilding their lives, meeting their basic needs and strengthening community-based protection. Durable solutions for the displaced will be hampered by the unresolved land disputes, limited access to basic services and safety in areas of return, and lack of policies, compensation and assistance protocols in relation to local integration and resettlement.

Although protection and humanitarian needs remain high, the funding of the humanitarian response has decreased from 650m in 2016 to 432m in 2018. Humanitarian assistance has consequently been cut and rationalized to meet the needs of the most vulnerable people among communities affected by protracted displacement and conflict. With the growing humanitarian needs, and in the absence of development funding, depleting humanitarian funding poses a serious challenge to meeting protection needs of those at risk.

Difficulties faced by Humanitarian actors in accessing specific areas amid security and access restrictions, especially for non-governmental organizations (both national and international), limit the effectiveness of humanitarian response in most of the conflict affected areas in Sudan. GoS Institutional capacity remains low to effectively respond to humanitarian needs emerging from on-going conflict situations, inter-communal conflict, natural disasters and worsening economic and uncertain political situation of the country.

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[3] Cf. annex 2 "Protection analysis in Sudan" for a more comprehensive analysis.

Insecurity despite the subsidence in armed conflict

Since mid-2016, active armed conflict between the GoS and armed opposition groups has subsided in Darfur and in the Two Areas, resulting in a decrease of direct threats and attacks on civilians[4]. Inter-communal clashes have also decreased, especially through the efforts of the GoS and of UNAMID aimed at promoting peaceful resolution of inter-communal disputes, and through the deployment of security forces; as well as the implementation of the weapons collection campaign launched by the Government. The delimited areas affected by current armed conflict and small scale clashes in the Jebel Marra area generated small-scale displacement throughout 2017, 2018 and first quarter of 2019. IDP and local communities cite humanitarian and development needs as one of their greatest concerns, alongside lawlessness, criminality and lack of access to justice. These gaps have significant implications for their safety, social cohesion and stability.

Although the overall security situation has been relatively stable, the situation remains unpredictable in many states, with a risk of relapse into conflict and violence because the main drivers of conflict have not been sufficiently addressed, including land and resource distribution, rule of law, law enforcement gaps, and the lack of basic services for local populations. The occurrence of security incidents and inter-communal clashes in parts of Central, West and South Darfur during the regime change beginning of April 2019, points towards the fragility of the security and law enforcement situation.

The most active non-state armed group, the SLA-AW, maintains a presence in a few pockets of the Jebel Marra area. Moreover, it is not participating in the peace process and has sporadically clashed with the GoS forces. Although clashes have been localized, there has been an increase in violent confrontations in the Jebel Marra region in Darfur since mid-March 2018, causing the displacement of civilians to isolated mountain tops and to neighboring areas in North, Central and East Jebel Marra. Access to people in need has remained limited, although there have been some tightly controlled missions into the Jebel Marra region and some of the gray areas in South Kordofan State[5]. Protection assessments encountered intense scrutiny and opposition by parts of the GoS security apparatus. Humanitarian access to the Blue Nile state remains even more limited, while to the three localities of South Kordofan under SPLM-N controlled areas remains inaccessible.

In view of the political transition currently taking place in the country, there is a risk of increased localized inter-communal conflict and criminality as civilian and police capacity is stretched and conflict resolution mechanisms fail.

In addition to the internal unpredictability, several armed groups remain present in neighboring Libya and South Sudan with a capacity to resume armed activities in Darfur and the Two Areas, despite their current inactivity. This has been proven by the clashes between SLA-MM and GoS in North Darfur in May 2017. Furthermore, while SLA-MM, JEM, and SPLM-N are participating in the AU-facilitated peace

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[4] The UN Panel of Experts noted a significant decrease in overall reported fatalities (including combatants and civilians) in Darfur: from 2213 in 2016 to 789 in 2017. Casualties are attributed as follows: 28% armed violence between GoS forces and rebel forces, 26% inter-communal conflict, 18% ERW, 17% militia-led violence, 11% criminal activities.

[5] In 2017: Golo, Central Darfur. In July 2018: Belle Elsereif, Leiba and Mershing in East Jebel Marra in South Darfur State. In March 2018: Giessan and Bau in Blue Nile. In October 2018: Thur in Central Darfur.

process, this has remained stalled, notably because of a lack of agreement over humanitarian access modalities for the Two Areas and other conflicting parallel agreements made by the GoS with other groups.

Weak GoS institutional capacity to address protection issues

The Government of Sudan institutional capacity to address protection issues and provide effective response is weak, lacking the basic capacities and resources to prevent and respond to protection and risks. The long history of politicization and inadequate resource allocation to the government social services institutions having key protection functions such as legal system, police, family and child protection units, Ministry of Social Affairs, NCCW, have impacted the capacity of these institutions to respond to the humanitarian and protection needs of affected communities.

III. <u>Shared vision and strategic objectives</u>

The HCT, drawing on its members' mandates and capacities, and its collective strength, will contribute to building a protective environment in which men and women, boys and girls alike enjoy their rights without discrimination and can live in conditions of safety and dignity in areas affected by conflict or natural disaster, as well as in areas of displacement or return.

This strategy includes two priority and larger objectives for the HCT: [objective 1] ensuring a protective environment in areas of conflict, displacement and return; and [objective 2] Ensuring the centrality of protection is fulfilled by all HCT members in all collective and individual actions.

Objective 1: Ensuring a protective environment in areas of conflict, displacement and return

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1. Ensure protection programming for a more protective environment

The HCT commits to work towards a protective environment in which all individuals enjoy full respect for their rights in accordance with international law, including international humanitarian, human rights and refugee law, regardless of their age, gender, social, ethnic, national, religious or other backgrounds. The HCT will ensure adoption of strategic approaches are in place to strengthen the protective environment in Sudan, including by identifying at-risk and excluded groups and responding with appropriate programming, supporting community-based protection mechanisms and delivering services to provide immediate short-term life-saving assistance.

The HCT will continue advancing protection of civilians in Sudan, through:

i. <u>Protection-focused programs and activities</u>

The HCT will maintain specialized protection activities carried out by mandated protection agencies and partners including, but not limited to, GBV prevention and response, child protection specialized services, demining and mine action awareness, community-based protection and support to persons with specific needs, legal and land rights services and protection capacity

building. Protection monitoring and systematic protection data collection for analysis and informing response will be ensured through a collective efforts and by establishing a central Information Management System within the Protection Sector.

ii. <u>Protection integration within sectorial response</u>

The HCT will include protective actions into programming, when applicable and possible, in other than Protection specialized response. Humanitarian action should enhance the protection of civilians through the strategic use of humanitarian assistance (protection by presence or targeted assistance to at-risk populations). Likewise, targeted and dedicated programming should reduce vulnerability to risks by reducing exposure to threats.

iii. <u>Protection mainstreaming</u>

The HCT members will incorporate protection mainstreaming principles into the design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation phases of cross-sector programming. In doing so, 15% of the overall emergency and pool funding shall be allocated to the implementation of protection activities, through either or all protection modalities, and the HCT will earmark clear protection activities within each project implemented utilizing this funding.

Protection Sector and Protection Working groups will provide technical support to the HCT, ISCG sectors, A/HCTs and A/ISCGs as well as the implementing agencies and partners on operationalizing and mainstreaming protection activities in various projects.

2. Prevent a relapse into greater conflict and violence

The HCT will maximize its commitment, and collaboration with key partners, to avoid a relapse into renewed cycle of violence in Darfur and the Two Areas, by contributing to addressing the drivers of conflict, supporting long-term solutions and enhancing the understanding and observance of international law, as well as Rule of Law and Human Rights.

i. Protection Monitoring of the conflict, displacement and return areas

The HCT will enhance its efforts to ensure Protection monitoring at the conflict affected, displacement and return areas. Building on the capacity and presence of the HCT members, and in close coordination with other protection actors, a robust protection monitoring mechanism shall be maintained with the technical assistance and support of Protection Sector and field based Protection Working groups.

In the context of UNAMID withdrawal from Darfur the HCT (along with the UNCT) will reinforce its efforts to assist in the monitoring the overall security situation as well as the effects and consequences of UNAMID drawdown from Darfur. Under the overall leadership of the Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator (DHC) Darfur and with the technical support of the Protection Sector an agreement was reached by the UNCT with the UNAMID Protection of Civilian (POC) unit to continue using a remote monitoring questionnaire for assessment of the locations where UNAMID withdrew in 2017 and additional ten sites closed in 2018.

During the first two rounds of monitoring of the closed sites, conducted in March 2018 and February 2019, the overall analyses provided that no adverse impact had been reported from the drawdown of UNAMID and the closure of the team sites. More specifically, the local population and internally displaced population reported that the reduction of UNAMID patrols did not affect significantly their freedom of movement and access to livelihood services however access to basic services and humanitarian assistance was cited as the major gap.

Within the context of UNAMID planned exit in 2020, this monitoring and analysis will (i) inform protection strategy and programming in Darfur, ensuring complementarity; (ii) support advocacy and protection responses to emergent concerns; (iii) facilitate ongoing mapping of crisis areas and related reporting; (iv) inform situational awareness; and (v) inform, support and facilitate crisis management and response.

The outcome of the monitoring will also inform (UN) Country Team and UNAMID senior leadership with regard to the protection situation in Darfur, thus influencing decision-making and advocacy, including with (in) the UN Security Council.

The monitoring will be integrated in to the longer term protection programmatic activities of the Humanitarian Country Team, within the overarching frameworks of both protection monitoring and accountability to, and communications with, the affected communities. The State Liaison Functions (SLF) introduced within the UNCT AFPs with co-location of UNAMID staff will ensure joint planning, programming and implementation of protection activities between UNAMID and the United Nations country team in coordination with government counterparts on ensuring protection capacity building of the GoS institutions. The SLFs will be instrumental in monitoring the benchmarks set by the SC for UNAMID drawdown and eventual exist for Darfur.

ii.   Enhance durable solutions by addressing drivers of conflict

The HCT will strengthen its programming and its advocacy efforts to support addressing, in a sustainable and coordinated manner, the drivers of conflict[6]. The HCT will scale up its efforts to ensure that durable solutions[7] can be attained for individuals and communities affected by conflict and displacement, seizing momentum as the search for durable solutions for IDPs and refugee returnees has become a priority for the GoS in Darfur and the Two Areas. Policy frameworks on durable solutions incorporate key protection principles, in particular the right of IDPs and Refugees to make a free and informed decision preserving their safety and respecting their dignity, the participation of IDPs and returnees in the planning and management of durable solutions, the access of humanitarian and development institutions and effective monitoring mechanisms. Under a tripartite agreement, on Voluntary Repatriation and Reintegration of Sudanese refugee living in Chad, signed in May 2017 between the Government of the Sudan, Government of Chad, and UNHCR, 3,819 Sudanese refugees were assisted to repatriate to Sudan during the period of May 2018 through March 2019. The assisted Voluntary Repatriation will continue, as confidence in the security situation in Darfur continues to improve, with an estimated 20,000 Sudanese returning annually. Furthermore, 10,000 spontaneously repatriating refugees shall be provided individual assistance, per year, once they have been de-registered in Sudan. Through the Protection and RRR sector partners, the HCT will monitor areas of displacement, return, local integration and resettlement to verify the voluntary nature of the durable

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[6] Including but not limited to: tensions and skirmishes between non-state armed groups and the government, tensions between communities, proliferation of small arms, disempowerment and disenfranchisement of IDPs, tensions between IDPs and host communities, deteriorating humanitarian and socioeconomic situation, etc.

[7] Durable solutions should not be understood as the sole return or resettlement of IDPs and refugee returnees but rather as a holistic combination of factors including long-term safety, security, freedom of movement, recovery of property and land, access to basic services and reconstruction.

solution and, based on need assessments, provide assistance or advocacy support to the communities. In addition, the HCT will ensure that appropriate protection is provided to people with specific needs such as women, children, elderly, minorities and people with disabilities.

iii.   Promoting greater adherence to the international normative framework (IHL, IHRL, IRL)

The government of the Sudan has ultimate responsibility for the protection and safety of its citizens and others in the country. The HCT will continue to foster a political, social, cultural, institutional and legislative environment that is conducive to the full respect of the rights of individuals and that enables the authorities to respect their obligations and commitments in this regard. The HCT will contribute to promoting and disseminating applicable normative frameworks including International human Rights law, International Humanitarian law and Principles, and the Refugee rights. The HCT will promote access to justice and the effectiveness of the rule of law through advocacy initiatives, two key elements to avoid a relapse into conflict. The HCT will promote the development of legal and policy frameworks pertaining to the protection of people affected by man-made and natural disasters.

Objective 2: **Ensuring the centrality of protection is fulfilled by all HCT members in all collective and individual actions.**

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1. **Increased advocacy initiatives with national and local authorities and donors to enhance Humanitarian access and protection**

Under the leadership of the RC/HC, the HCT will strengthen its engagement with the GoS and other relevant stakeholders in bilateral and multilateral fora to raise their attention on protection concerns and patterns of protection issues reported in the field, including in areas under the control of non-State armed groups.

The HCT will also maintain continued engagement with the federal and state authorities as well as with targeted communities to enhance the humanitarian space and ensure meaningful access to areas of conflict, displacement, return and to areas where UNAMID will no longer have a presence. HCT members will maintain and provide data and information in relation to access for evidence-based advocacy. HCT members will advocate for ensuring protection assessments are carried out and protection programmes implemented in all areas of conflict, displacement and return.

The HCT will work with the GoS and all the sectors to advocate for and support the advancement of durable solutions as well as to address long-term drivers of conflict according to the needs and desires of the affected communities.

2. **Protection is a collective responsibility**

The centrality of protection approach set out in the IASC statement recognizes the complementary nature of the different mandates and roles of humanitarian actors. In a protracted situation of conflict and displacement, such as Sudan, protecting people in need requires collaboration among all different actors in country and these and the GoS. [8]

Given their respective duties in relation to protection, the HCT, the UNCT,UNAMID, UNISFA and other stakeholders will continue close coordination of their efforts and design a complementing approach to protection and set up a complementary agenda, where possible and relevant. The HCT will enhance its efforts to collaborate with country team, peace keeping missions, development actors and donors for building a protective environment.

3. Ensuring protection mainstreaming and uphold a holistic approach to protection

"Protection of all persons affected and at risk must inform humanitarian decision-making and response, including engagement with States and non-State parties to conflict. It must be central to the HCT preparedness efforts, as part of immediate and life-saving activities, and throughout the duration of humanitarian response and beyond"[9]. Key protection principles[10] will be effectively mainstreamed through the whole humanitarian program cycle. The HCT will also ensure that its working arrangements remain in line with the humanitarian principles while collecting data, assessing needs and designing and implementing responses.

The HCT will adopt a holistic and integrated approach to protection. In addition, the HCT will coordinate its protection activities with Government of Sudan, donors, development and peacebuilding actors. The Collective Outcomes for Sudan provides a basis for a strengthened cooperation of the HCT with development partners, and key stakeholders, on protection and human rights, capturing common goals that require action across the humanitarian and development work streams[11].

IV. **Implementation, monitoring and evaluation**

1. Implementation

The action plan attached in annex-1 will identify the roles and responsibilities of the HCT members who are accountable for the implementation of this strategy.

Protection will remain a standing item on the agenda of the HCT and the ISCG. A HCT protection task force will be created, under the chairpersonship of the RC/HC, to (i) monitor the implementation of this strategy; (ii) ensure reporting on progress and consistency with other relevant strategic

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[8] Coordination is also done on the basis of the UNAMID/UNCT Integrated Strategic Framework (2017-2019), which foresees synergies towards common protection objectives.

[9] IASC Principals' Statement, The Centrality of Protection in Humanitarian Action, 2013 (https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/sites/default/files/centrality_of_protection_in_humanitarian_action_statement_by_iasc_princi.pdf)

[10] Known as: do no harm, safety and dignity of response, meaningful access, accountability to affected population, participation and empowerment of communities.

[11] See Collective Outcomes – Sudan, consolidated draft, 29 March 2018

frameworks for the Sudan; (iii) and advise on courses of action. The task force will comprise: OCHA, UNICEF, UNHCR, UNFPA, WFP, UNMAS, UNDP and representatives of INGOs, NNGOs and Donors. The HCT task force will liaise closely with Protection Sector on coordination efforts with all protection-related working groups (e.g. UNAMID PoC at Mission HQ, UNDP/ governance/RoL). The HCT protection task force will update on progress as it arises and will provide quarterly progress report on the implementation of this strategy.

2. Monitoring and evaluation

Through the Protection Tasks force, and building on the capacities of the HCT members, ISCG and Protection partners, the HCT will ensure putting in place mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of this strategy for the following purposes:

- to measure the evolution of protection risks and determine progress towards identified protection priorities and outcomes in a particular situation: e.g. temporally, geographically, comparatively;

- to adjust, adapt and change system wide strategies, objectives and plans of action;

- to contribute to a permanent institutional learning process based on experience;

- to be accountable within the protection sector and across the HCT and to communities, GoS and donors.

Annex 1: Action plan

Key Activities	Progress Indicators and/or expected results	Lead	In coordination/consultation with
Objective 1: Ensuring a protective environment in areas of conflict, displacement and return			
Ensure protection programming for a more protective environment			
1.1 Strengthen Community Based Protection (CBP) systems for increasing the community capacity and ensuring protection of the most vulnerable people at the community level.	- Increased capacity and resilience of the community based networks to provide protection to the most vulnerable. - Community based identification and support to the most vulnerable through referral to interagency response mechanisms.	UNHCR	Protection Sector. Protection Working groups at states level. Sub Sectors and corresponding working groups. HCT/ Interagency partners.
1.2 Strengthen community protection systems for preventing and responding to violence against children and women, recruitment of children and for providing psychosocial support services for the most vulnerable people affected by the crisis	- Increased capacity of communities to protect children from physical injuries, prevent child recruitment, and to provide psychosocial support services. -	UNICEF	Child Protection subsector and Child Protection Working Groups in each state
1.3 Strengthen multi-sectoral GBV services (referral, psychosocial support, medical response, case management, etc.) to prevent and respond to GBV Including strengthened community protection and response systems.	- Increased number of locations with multi-sector services for GBV prevention and response - GBV referral mechanisms are in place in all affected localities - Enhanced capacity of communities on prevention & response to GBV.	UNFPA	GBV Sub Sector, Health sector, Protection Sector, Child Protection subsector, Livelihoods sector (Other sectors through integration)
1.4 Ensuring prioritization of protection programming	A minimum budget for protection mainstreaming and integration is set and its implementation demonstrated	HC	OCHA, Protection sector
Prevent a relapse into greater conflict and violence			

1.5 Ensure monitoring of and reporting on the impacts of UNAMID closing team sites and eventual exit	- Communities are consulted remotely and physically to monitor the perception of their life environment, security and safety, and their adjustment to the closing of team sites. - Inter-agency assessment missions include protection needs analysis - The monitoring results inform the HCT and the relevant sectors' response strategy - The monitoring is included in the reports for the SG	Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator (DHC) Darfur	Protection sector, the HCT/UNCT members, UNAMID PoC and SLF staff
1.6 Monitor and report grave violations against children	- Information shared and/or reports produced on reported grave violations - Advocacy and activities to reduce the risks to which children and adolescents are exposed	UNICEF/ UNAMID	Protection sector and sub-sectors
1.7 Ensure monitoring areas of return: conduct joint (UN/GoS) assessments and monitoring missions with the aim of informing area-based and community-driven durable solutions plans.	- Assessments are conducted and reports finalized and shared. - Assessments should be participative and inclusive of communities' representatives - Returns, if any, occur in line with principles: voluntary, safe, dignified.	RRR/ UNHCR	All HCT members
1.8 Facilitate safe movement for displaced persons by removing landmines and providing mine risk education	Areas of displacement, return or local integration continue to be cleared and become safe for the movement and return of displaced civilians	Mine action sub-sector	UNMAS, Protection sector
1.9 Within the framework of the Joint Rule of Law and Human Rights Programme (cf. annex 4), the HCT promotes the awareness of the civil administration and the security sectors about humanitarian principles, protection, IHRL, undertake activities to reinforce their capacities in that field. 1.10 Increase capacities of GoS protection institutions.	- GoS Police forces ability to provide human rights-based policing services is developed - Knowledge and understanding of IHL and IHRL is enhanced for GoS police and armed forces - Tools and guidelines about minimum protection standards are disseminated	UNDP, OCHA Protection Sector	Protection sub-sectors

	- Legal and policy frameworks in relation to protection are brought in line with international guidelines		
1.11 Develop engagement with the National Council for Child Welfare, the National Human Rights Commission, and the Advisory Council for Human Rights to increase their knowledge and understanding of protection standards and to promote their involvement in the protection of people affected by conflict.		HC	Protection sector and sub-sectors
1.12 Support/advocate for the establishment of an office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)	- Talks and negotiations are ongoing.		

Objective 2: Ensuring the centrality of protection is fulfilled by all the HCT members

Increasing advocacy initiatives with national and local authorities and donors is crucial to enhance access and protection

2.1 Update the set of common key messages to be used in Sudan on protection and access.	Set of common messages is prepared, disseminated and used for collective advocacy efforts	UNCWG	All HCT
2.2 Enhance participation of HCT members in the monthly access survey	HCT members participate in the monthly access survey to enable evidence-based advocacy on behalf of humanitarian partners Monthly access survey is rationalized through consultations with partners	OCHA	All HCT
2.3 Enhance engagement with GoS relevant authorities, and with all parties to the conflict with evidence-based advocacy	Step up engagement with the GoS and with parties to the conflict, stressing the need for humanitarian access, protection of civilians and other basic principles of IHL and IHRL, highlighting the need to address drivers of conflict and to enable durable solutions.	HC	HCT, OCHA, all member states

Ensure a complementary and coordinated approach to protection: protection is a collective responsibility

2.4 Create a HCT protection task force	- The HCT protection task force monitors and reports on the implementation of the strategy and progress made. Protection is a standing agenda item. Comprehensive progress report is delivered each semester.	HC (Secretariat-UNHCR)	All HCT members
2.5 Enhance coordination with Protection Sector and UNAMID regarding the protection of civilians during transition and exit	- HCT members participate to the JPG meetings - Protection analysis and strategies of HCT are shared with PoC UNAMID	DHC	OCHA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNFPA, IOM, UNMAS
Ensuring protection mainstreaming and uphold a holistic approach to protection			
2.6 Facilitate the understanding of, and make operational, protection mainstreaming 2.7 Promote protection integration in the humanitarian response plan 2.8 HCT members will discuss modalities to incentivize protection integration and protection mainstreaming. 2.9 Sensitize the development sectors about protection standards and principles	- Protection analysis is developed in the HNO and HRP with sector-specific commitments in terms of protection. - Policies, guidelines and tools related to IDPs, GBV and children protection are disseminated across sectors. - Donors uphold and advocate for protection mainstreaming. - GBV prevention is mainstreamed.	Protection Sector, UNHCR, OCHA	Protection sector and sub-sectors, ISCG members
2.10 Improve sharing of information on protection issues and trends across the country among clusters for incorporation into their respective programming	- Number of analytical, situational or contextual protection reports shared with the clusters and humanitarian field sites - Number of forums where protection information is shared cluster-wide at the state level	Protection sector	NGOs, OCHA
2.11 Set up mechanisms to ensure feedback from the affected populations	- An Accountability to Affected Population Framework (AAP) is operationalized following an AAP mapping exercise - HRP review reports include a community accountability component	OCHA	Protection sector

	- HCT consults with affected populations in its field visits and report on findings		

Annex 2: Protection analysis in Sudan

Context of the protection crisis

For more than a decade, Darfur has experienced armed conflicts between the Government of Sudan (GoS), supported by allied Arab militias and paramilitary movements, and non-State armed groups. At the same time, inter-communal conflicts have continued to cause significant insecurity and regular displacement of civilians in different areas of Darfur. Since 2011, armed conflict has also persisted between the GoS and SPLM-North in South and West Kordofan as well as in Blue Nile.

Underlying causes for violence and insecurity in conflict-affected areas are manifold and include the lack of a political settlement, impunity for the perpetrators of human rights violations, insufficient oversight and accountability mechanisms within security forces and armed groups, lack or absence of law and order institutions (police and justice), and the proliferation of weapons. Conflicts are also fueled by the increased pressure on limited resources (land and water), as a result of rapid population growth and drought, and the competition for the control of mineral resources. Land and natural resources remain indeed at the heart of inter-communal conflicts and constitute the key to durable solutions for Internally Displaced People (IDP) and refugee returnees.

While there was limited displacement in 2018, access to newly opening areas in Jebel Marra, South Kordofan and Blue Nile has led to identification of new needs for IDP, returnees and host communities in these areas. In addition, a large number of those who have fled their homes since 2004 remain displaced. By the end of 2018, around 1.86 million displaced people remained in need of assistance in Sudan, many of whom have been displaced for well over a decade. Some 1.6 million people are living in IDP camps in Darfur. The SPLM-N also estimates that there are over 300,000 people displaced in the areas under its control in the Two Areas. In addition, about 450,000 Sudanese are refugees who sought protection in neighboring Chad and South Sudan, among other countries.

The area of Abyei, on the Sudan and South Sudan border, has long been a major flashpoint between its Dinka Ngok population and the northern nomadic Misseriya tribes. Following violence in May 2011, the Governments of Sudan and of South Sudan signed a temporary peace agreement in June 2011, which called for a UN security force (the UNISFA) and preserved the right of the Ngok Dinka and other "residents" of Abyei to vote in a final status referendum, without elaborating further on eligibility criteria. This referendum has yet to occur.

The evolution of political situation in Sudan, as a consequence of the regime change, offers an opportunity for the HCT to enhance its efforts for promoting a conducive protection environment building on the gains made in previous years and on the offered opportunity for enhanced Humanitarian access and, potentially, addressing Humanitarian needs through a sustained and longer term humanitarian- development- peace complimenting effort. Sustained efforts are hence required from humanitarian actors and partners to meet the needs of the affected civilian populations, especially the ones of internally displaced communities in conflict areas.

Current protection threats and trends

i.   Inter-communal conflicts and human rights abuses

In many parts of Darfur, inter-communal conflict is one of the main factors of insecurity and recurrent causes of injuries and displacement. Such localized armed violence takes place most frequently between sedentary-farming and nomadic-pastoral communities, as well as between nomadic communities, clashing over access to, use of, and management of resources, especially land. Indeed, land ownership issues have endured for more than a decade and caused long-standing grievances between communities. These have steadily given rise to clashes that have resulted in hundreds of casualties[12]. For instance, conflicts between the Zaghawa and Rezeigat (West Darfur); the Salamat, Habaniya and Falata (South Darfur); the Rezeigat and Maaliya (East Darfur); and the Northern Rezeigat and Beni Husein (North Darfur). The impact of such clashes is aggravated by the involvement of heavily armed tribal militias and the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in communities. Though the number of casualties has decreased, civilians have remained direct or collateral victims of such violence and armed conflict. Moreover, Kidnappings and abductions, including of children, have also been reported in the context of disputes between communities.

Human rights and international humanitarian law violations have been regularly reported such as the destruction of civilian properties and livelihoods, arbitrary killings, forcible disappearances, torture and cruel treatment. Between February – October 2018 and October UNAMID reported 303human rights abuse cases, involving 812 victims and including 101 children.

ii.   Protection threats to civilians in the context of displacement

In Sudan, around 2 million displaced people remain in need of assistance, most of whom have been displaced for more than a decade. Insecurity remains a major concern in the areas where displaced communities have sought safety and shelter, due to the presence of armed groups near civilian settlements, including IDP camps, and to a lack of effective rule of law. While protection threats to IDPs vary significantly depending on their location, IDPs continue to face harassment, killing and rape, both within camps and settlements and in their vicinity, especially while carrying out livelihood activities. This is particularly the case in and around Jebel Marra area as well as in South Kordofan and Blue Nile. Armed groups are reportedly using several camps as shelters, exposing their residents to violence both perpetrated by these groups and by GoS forces and affiliated militias. Allegations of forced recruitment of IDPs into militias have been reported. IDPs also continue to be victims of arbitrary arrest and detention by GoS forces when they are suspected of association with armed groups. Although the GoS has made significant efforts in terms of security guarantees with the aim of complying with its primary responsibility to protect civilians, policing and law enforcement within camps and remote areas have remained major challenges.

Displacement as a result of natural disasters remains a significant threat in Sudan, including in areas doubly affected by conflicts and violence. In 2016, over 200,000 people were affected by floods and over 22,000 houses were destroyed. Increased competition over resources may prompt more crop

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[12] The UN Panel of Experts on Sudan of the Security Council Sanctions Committee noted a decline in reported incidents of communal violence from 115 in 2016 to 63 in 2017. In 2017, UNAMID recorded 40 incidents with some 270 fatalities.

destructions by livestock and generate tensions between farmers and herders. As a result, displacement and migration towards urban centers continues, with the risks of family separation and of lack of community-based support for those affected[13].

    iii.   Threats/Challenges for durable solutions

The government has expressed its wish to close IDP camps promote the local integration of displaced people, their return, or their relocation. In May 2017, the Government of Sudan, Government of Chad and UNHCR signed tripartite agreement on the voluntary Repatriation of Sudanese refugees in Chad. While there are reports of IDPs and refugees returning to their areas of origin, the large majority have remained in camps, settlements or urban areas as well as in the asylum countries. To date, return has been possible for a limited number of IDPs and Sudanese refugees, mostly to areas with a homogenous ethnic composition (as in Tine, Kornoi, and Um Baru localities in North Darfur or Um Dukun in Central Darfur and parts of South Kordofan State). Persistent insecurity, land tenure, the risk of ERWs in areas of return, and lack of access to basic services, are amongst the main concerns preventing the safe, voluntary and sustainable return of IDPs and refugees and the realization of other durable solutions. Land is a particular concern as many IDPs report their land of origin is occupied. Others own land in areas still impacted by conflict-related insecurity, for example, in Jebel Marra, Blue Nile or South Kordofan. Some IDPs reported returning to cultivate their fields on a seasonal basis, yet being unable to return permanently because of the insecurity.

Sexual and gender-based violence

Sexual and gender-based violence particularly affects women and girls in IDP camps and in rural communities, where they systematically fall prey to armed men, especially while they engage in livelihood activities including collecting water or firewood or working in fields. From January 2014 to December 2018, UNAMID documented 536 cases of sexual violence involving 884 victims. In 2 cases, 6 women were killed for having resisted attempted rape while almost half of the recorded rape survivors sustained serious physical injuries. The range of victims ranged from 2 to 70 years. Cases of mass rapes account for high number of victims vis-à-vis cases. The current situation is well captured in the UNSG report on CRSV where it is indicated that conflict-related sexual violence remains a concern as a result of some ongoing clashes among armed groups and the renewal of conflict in parts of Jebel Marra between Government forces and the Abdul Wahid faction of the Sudan Liberation Army. The proliferation of weapons, criminality and sporadic intercommunal clashes render civilians, particularly women and girls, vulnerable. Sexual violence displaces civilians from their homes and prevents their return, which implies losing access to land and is a devastating outcome for most internally displaced persons, who once earned an income from farming. One specific pattern of sexual violence concerned women and girls in rural communities or in camps for internally displaced persons, who were routinely preyed upon while travelling or engaged in livelihood activities outside camps.

The available data does not reflect the actual scale and magnitude of violations, which are underreported due to stigma, fear of reprisals, community pressure, weak institutions, and access

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[13] See Interagency Sudan El Nino Mitigation and Preparedness Plan, 21 February 2016

restrictions. As observed by the UNSRSG-SVC and highlighted in her press release after visiting Sudan in March 2018, there is an existence of a deep-seated culture of denial which enhances and feeds the culture of silence about sexual violence. Unlike victims of other crimes where perpetrators are condemned, it is usually the victims of sexual violence who are shamed or stigmatized. As a result, victims of sexual violence are very often fearful of reporting the crime or seeking assistance, further compounding their suffering. Because sexual violence is so vastly underreported, the lack of reported cases cannot be equated with the absence of violence.

Poor living conditions in IDP camps, including overcrowding and confined spaces, exacerbate risks of gender-based violence, including domestic violence, child/forced marriage, and female genital mutilation. As of April 2019, the Framework of Cooperation (FOC) between the office of UNSG Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict to develop an action plan against conflict related sexual violence.

Violence against children

In Sudan, six parties are listed on the UN watch list of children and armed conflict, including Government security forces. In March 2016, the Government signed an action plan to end and prevent the recruitment and use of children by government forces. Instructions for the dissemination of the action plan were issued, from the top to the bottom of the hierarchy, and focal points were appointed to facilitate discussions on access. The listed armed groups JEM, SLA/MM, and SPLM-N have also signed action plans or Memorandum of Understanding with the UN towards ending and preventing grave violations, although the conditions for their implementation and their results remain imprecise. SLA/Abdul Wahid is the only listed party which has not signed an Action Plan with the United Nations. The data collected by Monitoring & Reporting Mechanisms (MRM) indicate that 221 children were the victims of child right violations in 2017. Among the "six grave violations", killing and maiming (165 children in 2017) of children and sexual violence (42 children in 2017) remain key concerns for children. In his last report from April 2018 (S/2018/389, paras. 8 and 17), the SG notes that UNAMID documented 77 cases of child rights violations affecting 22 children. The situation for children improved especially owing to the decrease in fighting due to continued ceasefire in Darfur and Two Areas.

Threats to the safety, security and dignity of migrants and the phenomenon of mix- migration in Sudan

Regardless of the reasons for migrating, people can become vulnerable at many stages of their journey as they travel from their home countries. Migrants transit through areas of armed conflict or other situations of violence. And all along their route, they make easy targets for abuse and exploitation, while facing countless other risks. Asylum seekers and Refugees caught in these mix-migratory movements face significant risk of refoulement when attempting to transit though Sudan in order to seek asylum in another country. Approximately 70 per cent of new arrivals who end up in Shagarab Reception Centre in Kassala move onward before they are registered by the Government of Sudan's Commission for Refugees (COR) and UNHCR.

In Sudan, migrants, often smuggled into and trafficked through the country, are highly vulnerable to exploitation and harm. They often become victims of human trafficking and hence get extremely isolated, dependent on their holders, and are kept in areas affected by weak law enforcement and a lack of rule of law. They face gender-based and racial discrimination and as such are vulnerable to exploitative practices. The majority of the identified victims usually come from low income and deprived areas and have little or no formal education.

Humanitarian access and protection data collection

Humanitarian access includes humanitarian actors' ability to reach populations affected by crisis as well as the ability of the affected populations to access humanitarian assistance and basic services.
Over the past two years, the number of access restrictions experienced by the humanitarian community has decreased significantly.
However, where clashes have been persisting, timely and efficient access to populations in need is restricted. Likewise, the affected populations have not always been able to reach needed humanitarian assistance. In particular, populations located in areas under the control of non-State armed groups are largely deprived of access to humanitarian assistance e.g. pockets of the Jebel Mara area under SLA/AW. Cross-line access to opposition-controlled areas in South Kordofan, Blue Nile and parts of Darfur (Jebel Marra region) continues to be challenging. The lack of access has prevented the HCT from engaging into timely and evidence-based advocacy with the relevant parties to the conflict about humanitarian needs and potential law infringement.

HAC directives of December 2016 emphasized the need for protection to play a large part in needs assessments. While several inter-agency assessments have been facilitated by the Government including in formerly inaccessible areas in South Kordofan, Blue Nile and Jebel Marra, other inter-agency assessments were not approved. In addition, GoS has remained largely present in humanitarian assessments thus closely monitoring the assessments and their findings.

The heavy presence of the GoS has, to a certain extent, compromised humanitarians' independence, neutrality and impartiality and reduced the space for humanitarian access. Unhindered and Independent Protection data collection and protection assessments has been a challenge. GoS persistent interventions in the protection assessments conflict with the humanitarian principles underpinning humanitarian activities and which are essential to protection work[14].

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[14] For further references on protection work cf. *Professional Standards for Protection Work (*Third Abridged Edition, 2018), ICRC (in collaboration with UN-OCHA, UNHCR, OHCHR, INGOs), it is aimed at humanitarian and human rights actors engaged in protection work, and is intended to act as reference to the minimum standards to be met and the recommended guidelines to be followed in such work. Also cf. *Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian response*, The Sphere Project.

Annex 3: Key protection principles guiding humanitarian action

1. Prioritize safety and dignity avoiding causing harm

Through this principle, humanitarian organizations aim to ensure that all efforts will be made to prevent and minimize as much as possible unintended negative effects of their interventions which can increase people's vulnerability to both physical and psychosocial risks. In the context of Sudan, this requires in particular that humanitarian organizations, jointly with the targeted communities, strengthen their analysis of protection risks which their response may generate or aggravate, and identify ways to prevent them to the extent possible. For example, does the assistance provided risk creating tensions with host communities? How do the location and the modalities of humanitarian services contribute to reduce the exposure of communities, and their vulnerable members, to security risks? Mechanisms to ensure protection of beneficiaries against sexual exploitation and abuses should also be put in place.

2. Effective and meaningful access

It is the government's responsibility to facilitate humanitarian action and access to affected populations, and to protect humanitarian organizations. Humanitarian organizations have the right to provide assistance, to ensure the affected population's right to receive assistance, and to deliver assistance in accordance with IHL and humanitarian principles.

The ability of the HCT to establish and maintain humanitarian access is related to the adherence to humanitarian principles by humanitarian actors.

- *Access to people in need*

The restricted humanitarian space and access in Sudan hampers the ability of the HCT to provide protection and assistance to the population against the effects of armed conflicts, violence and displacement. Access for protection monitoring, assessments and protection program assessment is usually denied or strictly monitored to control the processes. The HCT shall intensify its advocacy initiatives to parties to the conflict and to influential stakeholders in order to gain full and unimpeded access to people in need of lifesaving assistance.

- *Access of affected communities to assistance*

The HCT should as well enhance its advocacy with key messages on the imperative and pressing need of affected communities to access to humanitarian aid and basic services to ensure their survival and preserve their dignity.

In Sudan, particular attention should be provided to the situation of vulnerable people who may face particular problems in accessing services, because of their gender or age, reduced mobility, marginalization among their communities, or other reasons. The mechanisms and procedures for the easy referral or orientation of people with special needs by partners outside the protection sector

should be reinforced, including by using and improving coordination with existing community systems where feasible. Social/cultural obstacles to services for GBV survivors/victims should also be addressed.

3. Accountability to affected people (AAP) and Prevention of all forms of Exploitation and Abuse

Within their respective mandates, humanitarian actors are accountable to affected communities and base their action on participatory approaches that can allow people to have an active role in the decision-making processes that affect them. This includes ensuring the participation of women, elder persons, children as well as other persons with specific needs. Humanitarians must also communicate in a transparent manner about their activities and consult with communities and their leaders on decisions that affect them, while also respecting the confidentiality of personal information.

The HCT should also ensure the existence of appropriate mechanisms through which complaints or concerns of affected populations regarding humanitarian assistance can be shared with humanitarian partners and followed up.

The HCT will ensure having mechanism within the respective organizations, and system wide, to ensure prevention of all forms of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse of the people and communities of concern to the humanitarian actors with Zero Tolerance for any form of SEA. Systems shall also be put in place to ensure effective and timely identification, reporting and accountability in the event of suspected SEA including, but not limited to, awareness raising among staff and beneficiary communities. Mechanism for survivor and witness protection shall also be established.

Annex 4: Key strategic frameworks related to protection

The Multiyear Humanitarian Strategy (MYHS 2017-2019)

The over-arching objective of the strategy is to protect the lives, security and integrity, as well as the fundamental wellbeing and dignity, of people affected by emergencies, including conflict. At the same time, self-reliance and resilience of affected people, in particular for those living in long-term crises, will be strengthened through further integrating an early recovery approach. The Strategy anchors the humanitarian response in humanitarian principles, International Humanitarian Law, International Human Rights Law and International Refugee Law.

By capitalizing on the impact of life-saving interventions and strategically linking the emergency response to resilience, development, and peacebuilding programming, the strategy aims at gradually reducing the number of people in Sudan who are in need of humanitarian assistance. The Humanitarian Country Team has agreed on three strategic outcomes:

- Outcome 1: Populations affected by natural or man-made disasters receive timely assistance during and in the aftermath of the shock
- Outcome 2: Displaced populations, refugees, returnees and host communities meet their basic needs and/or access essential basic services while increasing their self-reliance
- Outcome 3: Vulnerable residents in targeted areas have improved nutrition status and increased resilience

Centrality of Protection and accountability are reaffirmed as key principles in the humanitarian response. Humanitarian partners will take all necessary steps to avoid exposing people to further harm, and to reduce their exposure to risks to their safety and dignity. Participation of affected people in all stages of the Humanitarian Programme Cycle will be instrumental to ensure that their feedback is taken into account and that the response addresses their concerns in an appropriate and sustainable way. Humanitarian partners commit to ensure that services provided to beneficiaries are accessible without discrimination and based on needs. The Strategy also promotes a Gender and age-sensitive programming.

The Protection Sector Strategy (2018-2019)

The strategy, as reflected in the Humanitarian Response Plan, applies to the work of humanitarian protection organizations which are members of the Protection Sector and its subsectors (Child Protection, GBV and Mine Action) in Sudan. The Strategy identifies three objectives contributing to the realization of the outcomes of the Multiyear Humanitarian Strategy. Under Outcome 1, the vulnerable, newly displaced or affected by disaster will receive timely protection to ensure their safety and dignity. Within Outcome 2, the sector will strengthen the capacity of communities to protect their members and will reinforce social services to those in protracted displacement. Under Outcome 3, the child protection sub-sector will focus on the specific needs of vulnerable children and women. Policy guidance and capacity building will be provided to social child protection services, catering for the special needs of women and children in their response.

UNAMID Protection of Civilians Strategy (2017)

The strategy identifies protection priorities applicable to all components, whether civilian or military, of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur whether civilian or military. Overarching goals of the strategy is to: prevent, and reduce, and when necessary, stop the violence against civilians; to ensure safe, timely and unhindered humanitarian access, and facilitate redress and reparation to victims and their relatives, and to assist the GoS in assuming its protection responsibilities. Three approaches are proposed: 1) protection through dialogue and engagement, 2) provision of physical protection, and 3) establishing a protective environment. The strategy provides for coordination mechanisms among the Mission's sections and with humanitarian partners, in particular Joint Protection Groups, at the Darfur and State levels.

The UNAMID /UNCT Integrated Strategic Framework (ISF): A Strategy for UNAMID/UNCT Joint Work in Darfur (July 2017 – June 2019)

This Integrated Strategic Framework (ISF) outlines three strategic priorities where the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and the UN Country Team (UNCT) in Sudan will work to contribute towards peace consolidation in Darfur, namely: (i) Rule of Law and Human Rights, (ii) Durable Solutions for IDPs and returnees (iii) Peacebuilding for Human Security. The ISF Coordination Team, led by UNAMID and the UN Resident Coordinator's Office, is responsible for overall ISF coordination at the technical level. The Rule of Law and Human Rights Working Group is co-chaired by UNAMID and the UNCT. Coordination for durable solutions is performed by the Durable Solutions Working Group, composed of representatives from the UNCT, UNAMID and international non-governmental organizations. The Peacebuilding for Human Security Working Groups is co-chaired by UNAMID and the UNCT. An existing coordination mechanism under the UNAMID strategy to address communal violence provides a platform for UNAMID and UNCT to jointly address communal violence and implement activities that prevent and mitigate conflicts, support reconciliation and promote peacebuilding across Darfur.

The Darfur Development Strategy (2013-2019) and the DDS refresh (2020-2024) process

The document was developed pursuant to article 31 of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (2011), on behalf of the Darfur Regional Authority. Pillar I of the strategy focuses on governance, justice and reconciliation. It includes security sector reform, increased access to justice, reconciliation and conflict management, as well as enhanced access to land. Pillar II ("Reconstruction") focuses on improved access to essential services (including health and education), as well as the reintegration of returnee. Pillar III ("Economic Recovery") aims to improve agriculture, livestock production and other livelihood opportunities, as well as the management of natural resources. Under each pillar, the strategy includes a series of Foundational and Short-term Activities (FaST activities), to kick start the longer-term objectives of the strategy and demonstrate the benefit of peaceful cooperation. With the completion of first DDS by end of 2019, the DDs refresher process will provide a potential opportunity to enhance the linkages between Humanitarian and development response for sustaining peace in Darfur.

United Nations Development Assistance Framework for the Republic of Sudan (UNDAF)(2018-2021)

The United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) is the plan for the United Nations Country Team's (UNCT) contribution towards national development priorities in 2018-2021 and incorporates the ambitions of the 2030 Agenda. This plan outlines how the UNCT aims to collaborate with partners during the UNDAF period on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The document identifies five interlinked UNDAF focuses for UN development collaboration in 2018-2021: (i) economic development and poverty reduction; (ii) environment, climate resilience and disaster risk management; (iii) social services; (iv) governance, rule of law and institutional capacity development; and (v) community stabilization.

Four core UN programming principles are underlying the development of the UNDAF: (i) human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment; (ii) sustainable development and resilience; (iii) leaving no one behind; and (iv) accountability.

Action Plan to prevent the recruitment and use of children by the Sudan Government security forces

Signed on 27 March 2016, by the Government of Sudan with United Nations, to end the recruitment and use of children in armed forces. The Action Plan provides an additional framework to address any form of recruitment and use of children in Government armed forces, encourage the enforcement of laws related to CAAF/G and address any remaining gaps related to CAAF/G. The Government of Sudan committed to appoint a High-level focal point to coordinate the implementation of this Action Plan with the United Nations and to monitor its implementation.

Child protection action plans of non-State Armed Groups

The SPLM-N, after signing an action plan in November 2016, committed to ensuring the release of children and to taking steps to halt child recruitment, including through military orders and the appointment of a high-level focal point to coordinate and collaborate with the United Nations to ensure the full implementation of the action plan. The group also pledged to facilitate the reintegration of the children into their communities and provide for their access to education.

The Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) signed a Memorandum of Understanding in July 2010 and and Sudan Liberation Army-Minni Minawi (SLA/MM) signed an Action Plan in June 2007. Implementation Plans were agreed which outlined key next steps and areas for assistance with time-bound benchmarks to end and prevent recruitment and use of children by the groups.

The Joint Programme for the Rule of Law and Human Rights in Darfur (2016-2019)

The Joint Programme has been developed to strengthen delivery, coherence and maximize the impact of United Nations support to the rule of law in Darfur. It brings together all relevant interventions under one framework, pool resources and establish shared priorities in addressing the lawlessness and criminality in Darfur.

Through the programme, the UN system will work closely with the government, civil society and local communities to strengthen the institutional capacity of the justice, corrections and police as well as other institutions upholding the rule of law. Activities include: revision of selected laws and procedures; re-establishment of the criminal justice chain in pilot areas to which Internally Displaced

Persons (IDPs) are likely to return; and building the capacity of and oversight over justice and security institutions. JPROL will also provide robust support to improve access to justice through the legal empowerment of vulnerable populations in Darfur, especially women, children and IDPs. In order to address the root causes of the conflict in Darfur, JPROL will support rights-based resolution of land issues.

Draft Framework of Cooperation on GBV and CRSV between the GoS and UNSRSG-SVC

The draft Framework of Cooperation (FoC) was as a result of the GoS engagement with the office of the UNSRSG-SVC including the visit of the UNSRSG-SVC to Sudan in 2018. When adopted, the FoC will reflect the Government's commitment to address conflict-related sexual violence, and provide a framework for United Nations support to be provided through my office (including the Team of Experts on the Rule of Law/Sexual Violence and the inter-agency network United Nations Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict); the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID); and the United Nations Country Team in Sudan. It will also serve as a basis for mobilizing the necessary resources for such support. The draft FoC focuses on five priority areas: survivors' access to medical, psychosocial, legal and socioeconomic services; monitoring, analysis, documentation and information sharing on sexual violence; rule of law responses to conflict-related sexual violence; engagement with the security sector; and engagement with religious leaders and civil society.

End