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PROSPECTS



► **Extension of social protection coverage to workers in the informal economy in Sudan**



Kingdom of the Netherlands

بتمويل مشترك من
الاتحاد الأوروبي



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the European Union



GRUPE DE LA BANQUE AFRICAINE
DE DÉVELOPPEMENT
AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK GROUP

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► Foreword

This Report represents a collaboration between three ILO programmes in Sudan; namely, the African Development Bank's Sustainable Community-Based Safety-Net Platforms in North Kordofan and White Nile (ILO-CAPISUD) project, the European Commission funded Social Protection project, and the Partnership for Improving Prospects for Forcibly Displaced Persons and Host Communities (PROSPECTS) project funded by the Kingdom of the Government of the Netherlands. Together, these ILO programmes are working to provide a more integrated approach to address vulnerability and seek greater social and health protection coverage for those at risk; particularly those working in the informal economy. Sudan continues to face considerable and on-going multi-faceted shocks and vulnerabilities with direct consequences on the poor and marginalized. Those working in the informal sector are particularly vulnerable against both individual and covariate shocks. However, these households are not or only insufficiently covered by social protection schemes that would provide support in the wake of such shocks.

Over the last 18 months, the ongoing national economic crisis has had significant and negative effects on living conditions of all population groups in the country. It is reinforced and perpetuated by political instability, internal conflicts and displacement, as well as Sudan's increased exposure to weather- and climate-related hazards, such as droughts and floods. To address the diverse and multi-faceted challenges the country is facing, it will be indispensable to develop comprehensive social protection policies and programmes, with the overall goal to effectively combat poverty and vulnerability in the country.

It is widely recognized that social protection is a human right and is defined as the set of policies and programmes designed to reduce and prevent poverty and vulnerability throughout the life cycle. However, in most developing countries and emerging economies a large part of the active workforce – namely workers in the informal economy – are not covered by social protection. This study aims to analyse how social protection could be extended to workers in the informal economy, by overcoming existing supply and demand-side challenge and provides a comprehensive analysis of the existing social protection schemes, their design, and their delivery mechanisms.

The analytical framework for this study was jointly developed by Martina Bergthaller, the ILO's programme management team in Khartoum, the regional specialist for social protection, as well as through the contributions of a number of key technical specialists from various ILO technical departments. The overall methodology for this study is based on qualitative research methods using a mixed-methods approach. This includes an analysis of available legal and policy documents, key informant interviews (KII) with representatives of national and state-level authorities, worker organizations and international development partners involved in the field of social protection in Sudan, focus group discussions (FGD) with workers engaged in key economic sectors and activities, and a service point mapping initiative involving the eight states (East Darfur, North Darfur, South Darfur, West Darfur, Khartoum, North Kordofan, West Kordofan, and White Niles states) covered by the study.

I would like to congratulate the Government of Sudan for its continuous efforts towards creating the necessary conditions to promote self-reliance and integration of refugee populations, in spite of the numerous economic and political challenges faced in the country. Finally, I would like to thank the Embassy of the Netherlands, the European Commission, and the African Development Bank for their generous support to this assessment and the production of this report.



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► Abbreviations

AfDB	African Development Bank	MoSD	Ministry of Social Development
BCISD	Building Capacity for Inclusive Service Delivery	MoTI	Ministry of Trade and Industries
COR	Sudanese Commission for Refugees	MSE	Micro and small enterprises
CSSPR	Commission for Social Safety and Poverty Reduction	NHIF	National Health Insurance Fund
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization	NPSIF	National Pension and Social Insurance Fund
FDP	Forcibly displaced person	OSH	Occupational Health and Safety
FGD	Focus group discussion	SDG	Sudanese Pound
GDP	Gross domestic product	SFSP	Sudan Family Support Programme (Samarat/Thamarat)
GRM	Grievance Redress Mechanisms	SIP	Social Initiative Programme
HC	Host community	SLFS	Sudan Labour Force Survey
ICLS	International Conference of Labour Statisticians	SSN	Social Safety Net
ID	Identity	SWS	Single Window Service
IDP	Internally displaced person	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
ILO	International Labour Organization	UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
KII	Key informant interview	UNICEF	United Nations International Children Emergency Fund
LRC	Local Resistance Committee	UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
MCCT+	Mother and Child Cash Transfer Plus Programme	WFP	World Food Programme
MIS	Management Information System	ZPC	Zakat Poverty Census
MoFEP	Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning		
MoH	Ministry of Health		
MoLAR	Ministry of Labour and Administrative Reform		

► Executive summary

Background and purpose of the study

Poverty in Sudan is deep and multi-dimensional and affects a large share of the population. The failure to generate higher sustainable and inclusive growth since 2010 led to a further increase of poverty rates. According to the latest national household surveys, the share of the Sudanese population living below the national poverty line increased from 46.5 per cent in 2009 to 61.1 per cent in 2014/15. Spatial inequities persist and remain a main impediment to equitable growth and poverty reduction. While living standards are moderately high in Sudan's northern region and in Khartoum, they are still low in peripheral regions of Sudan's western, southern and eastern states. Poverty rates are particularly high in rural areas, with 67.7 per cent living below the national poverty line. The ongoing economic crisis, combined with high inflation and exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, probably has significantly negative effects on living conditions in both urban and rural areas.

Sudan hosts approximately 4 million forcibly displaced persons (FDPs), approximately 1.2 million of whom are refugees and asylum seekers from neighbouring countries. The rest are internally displaced persons (IDP), a result of civil conflict over the last decades. In addition, 9.3 million vulnerable host community (HC) members require regular assistance. These three groups include in total 8.2 million women and girls, 2.1 million people with disabilities, as well as 860,000 elderly who are considered to be particularly vulnerable.

The ongoing national economic crisis is expected to have significant negative effects on the living conditions of all population groups all over the country. The crisis is reinforced and perpetuated by political instability, internal conflicts and displacement, as well as Sudan's increased exposure to weather- and climate-related hazards, such as drought and floods. To address the diverse and multi-faceted challenges the country is facing, it will be indispensable to develop comprehensive social protection policies and programmes, with the overall goal of effectively combating poverty and vulnerability in the country.

Because of their lack of adequate social protection coverage, workers in the informal economy are particularly vulnerable to individual and covariate shocks. The wide diversity of employment arrangements among workers in the informal economy demands innovative approaches that are tailored to the situation of different categories of workers, as there is no one-size-fits-all solution to extending social protection. Extending coverage to workers in the informal economy requires a comprehensive understanding of the situation of different groups of workers engaged in different economic sectors and activities, the risks they have to confront and the different factors contributing to their vulnerability, as well as the institutional context.

In this context, the present study commissioned by the International Labour Organization aims to analyse how social protection could be extended to different groups of workers in the informal economy to reduce their vulnerability and to facilitate their transition from the informal to the formal economy.

- It provides a comprehensive analysis of the existing social protection schemes,¹ their design and their delivery mechanisms. Thereby, it aims at identifying gaps in coverage, adequacy and comprehensiveness of the social protection system and specific supply-side barriers currently faced by workers in the informal economy when accessing social protection schemes.

¹ The analysis included the following social protection schemes: National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF), National Pension and Social Insurance Fund (NPSIF), Strategic Cash Transfer, COVID-19 support, Sudan Family Support Programme (SFSP), Shamel and Zakat schemes for poor and indigent.

- ▶ Moreover, the study contains an in-depth examination of the situation of different categories of workers in the informal economy² in selected states of Sudan³ to investigate the needs and demand for social protection mechanisms, as well as potential demand-side barriers that may hinder their access to existing schemes.
- ▶ Based on the results of the assessment, the study identifies specific options and gives recommendations how social protection coverage could be extended to workers in the informal economy through the adjustment of relevant policies, the design of specific schemes and the adaptation of their delivery mechanisms.

The supply side: assessment of coverage, adequacy and comprehensiveness of Sudan's social protection system⁴

Over recent years, the Government of Sudan has set the foundations for a comprehensive social protection system through the introduction or reform of various contributory and non-contributory schemes. However, significant gaps in coverage, comprehensiveness and adequacy of benefits provided by the existing schemes remain.

The National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF) is the only existing scheme with comparatively high coverage rates, including among workers in the informal economy in rural and urban areas. As a hybrid scheme, combining non-contributory and contributory elements, it is estimated to cover 83 per cent of the population – most of them through poverty-targeted subsidies. Coverage through the contributory arm remains low. Effective coverage of the NHIF is still limited, as many people affiliated to the NHIF are not able to access high-quality health services. Moreover, a range of preventive and promotive health services are not or only partly covered by the NHIF benefit package.

The National Pension and Social Insurance Fund (NPSIF), addressing risks related to old age, disability and work injury, as well as death of the breadwinner, is estimated to cover only 9 per cent of the total active labour force. Approximately 11 per cent of all persons above retirement age receive a pension from the NPSIF. Owing to their low participation in the labour force, coverage among women is especially low. Some categories of workers, such as self-employed workers and agricultural workers, are currently legally excluded from the NPSIF. Benefits under the scheme have been prone to devaluation because of high inflation rates over the last years. This poses a significant challenge for paying adequate pensions.

Coverage of non-contributory programmes targeted at poor and vulnerable population groups has been low – especially when considering that more than 60 per cent of the total population live below the poverty line.

- ▶ The Strategic Cash Transfer targeted at the poorest populations reached approximately 9 per cent of all Sudanese households in 2018. The programme is mostly dedicated to the poorest households without any working capacities and therefore does not explicitly target workers active in the informal economy. The transfer amounts provided to beneficiary families are inadequate, and therefore the programme has not been able to lift households out of poverty.
- ▶ The Shamel Livelihood pillar, with the objective of enhancing people's means of production, creating work opportunities and increasing productivity, provides transfers of assets and agricultural inputs and support for small agricultural projects. The scheme has reached approximately 5 per cent of all Sudanese households up to 2019. Being an ad hoc measure, it has not been able to provide continuous support, which would allow participants to build up more stable livelihoods in the medium to long term.

2 The analysis included workers engaged in the agricultural sector (cash crop farming, gum arabic production, livestock herding, fisheries, subsistence farming and wage-employed agricultural work) and non-agricultural activities (small-scale trading, crafts and related trades, manufacturing and waste picking).

3 The analysis included the following states: East Darfur, North Darfur, West Darfur, South Darfur, North Kordofan, West Kordofan, White Nile, Khartoum State.

4 The inventory in Annex 1 provides an overview of the main features of the existing schemes.

- ▶ Zakat covers more than half of all households across the country, providing cash and in-kind transfers for households without working capacities (Zakat for the Poor), as well as livelihood support for households with working capacities (Zakat for the Needy). However, benefits of Zakat are perceived as inadequate, and eligibility mechanisms are often seen as unfair and clientelistic.
- ▶ After the Sudanese revolution in 2019, various temporary schemes to mitigate the adverse effects of economic reform measures for the population, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, were introduced by the Transitional Government of Sudan with support from the international donor community.⁵

The current social protection system in place is not comprehensive. Some major risks and contingencies faced by the working age population are covered only through employer liabilities regulated in the 1997 Labour Code, namely maternity, unemployment and loss of income due to sickness. Dedicated family benefits, such as child allowances, are also not part of Sudan's social protection landscape. Furthermore, major non-contributory programmes, including the Strategic Cash Transfer and the Shamel programme, are currently inactive, meaning that Zakat is the only programme supporting those without sufficient income or unable to work.

The demand side: diagnosis of the situation of different groups of workers in the informal economy⁶

The detailed analysis of the situation of different categories of workers in the informal economy in selected states of Sudan revealed the following.

a. Prevailing production and income patterns

Most workers in the agricultural sector rely on traditional forms of production. They have limited access to finance, markets and agricultural inputs and generate low returns of investment. Some produce on their own land, while others (especially IDP and refugees) have to rent land for production. Farmers sell their products locally, usually immediately after the harvest, and are often dependent on local merchants and brokers who control the prices. The main labour force in small-scale agricultural activities consists of contributing family workers. Wage labour is prevailing (the harvesting season).

With the exception of some groups of craftsmen, self-employed workers engaged in non-agricultural activities surveyed for this study are usually operating as own-account subsistence enterprises and have no or limited business orientation. They often have no fixed places of work and are in frequent conflict with local authorities. Products are mostly sold to end consumers at the local level. Some of them employ workers, mostly on an informal basis.

Wage-employed workers engaged in non-agricultural activities are often low-skilled migrants from other states and rural areas. Their wages differ across geographic areas and sectors but can generally be considered as low and unstable. Most of them are only contracted for a limited period of time.

b. Degree of formalization and organization

Agricultural activities are usually not registered, and agricultural workers do not pay any taxes (with the exceptions of fishers in the state of White Nile, who usually pay water taxes). There is hardly any form of organization among most agricultural workers, except for gum arabic producers and fishers, who have

⁵ Most reforms and programmes have been put on hold or cancelled since the military took control over the government in October 2021. The country has been without a functioning government since then, and it is unclear if and to what extent the new leadership is still supporting these reforms.

⁶ Annex 2 provides a comprehensive overview of the situation of different categories of workers in the informal economy analysed for this study.

started to form cooperatives and associations in some areas over recent years – sometimes with support from the government, NGOs or international organizations. Wage-employed labourers in agriculture are usually contracted verbally and are not registered at local labour offices.

Most micro and small-scale enterprises run by workers outside agriculture, such as small-scale traders or craftsmen and women, are not registered with local authorities. In some areas they have to pay taxes to local authorities to be able to run their businesses in certain places. Larger workshops are sometimes registered and pay taxes, as they need business licences to operate at larger scale. In general, the degree of organization among self-employed workers outside agriculture is still low, even though some associations and unions – especially in the field of crafts – exist and are active in some of the states surveyed.

Many low-skilled wage-employed workers outside agriculture – even those working for formal enterprises and local administrations – are working informally, are not registered with the local labour offices and do not have a written working contract. The process of formalizing wage-employed work in the public sector and in public enterprises has been recently driven forward in some areas. Wage-employed workers lack representation as they are mostly not organized in any union or interest group representing workers.

c. General risks faced by workers

Work-related diseases are considered as one of the main risks by almost all groups of workers. In addition, work-related injuries (combined with a lack of measures to improve occupational safety and health) have been mentioned by many workers as one of the main threats they have to confront. In rural areas, changing environmental conditions and weather and climate-related covariate shocks, such as droughts or floods, are seen as considerable risks, which have a negative effect on incomes, lives and livelihoods of workers and their families.

d. Access to state-provided social protection

Among all groups of informal workers, coverage with the NHIF is considerably high. However, it is important to notice that most are covered through the subsidized arm. Awareness of the contributory arm of the NHIF and the NPSIF, as well as coverage, are almost non-existent across all the groups of workers and states surveyed. Only a few workers have access to regular non-contributory schemes such as the Strategic Cash Transfer, Shamel and Zakat. But many of them have been benefiting from temporary schemes implemented recently to cushion the adverse effects of economic reform measures for the population and the COVID-19 pandemic – even though they still have to contend with considerable problems and practical barriers in accessing the benefits.

e. Access to any other forms of support

To diversify their incomes and sustain their families, most workers, especially those engaged in agricultural activities, are frequently combining their main activity with other forms of self- or wage-employed labour. Informal mutual support among the community is also common in many areas and among many groups of workers. In the case of emergencies, workers often ask for support from local merchants, brokers or employers through loans and advanced payments. Health costs incurred by work-related diseases or accidents of wage-employed workers are sometimes partly covered, at least, by the employer through direct payments. Support from the international community and NGOs is mostly limited to refugees and IDP.

Matching supply and demand: removing the barriers and facilitating access to social protection schemes through tailor-made mechanisms ⁷

1. **Workers in rural areas** mostly engaged in agricultural activities are legally excluded from major existing work-related social protection schemes addressing a range of risks and contingencies, in particular the NPSIF, as well as employer liability mechanisms. Their contributory capacities to existing social insurance schemes are significantly hampered by low, fluctuating and unstable incomes. There is no existing scheme that covers their increased risk of losing income due to weather- and climate-related shocks. Moreover, they confront considerable physical barriers because of the wide distances they have to travel to access the offices or branches of agencies responsible for different social protection schemes. Access is further hampered by the lack of public and private transportation in many remote areas, low mobile phone and internet coverage, as well as high levels of illiteracy.

Options to overcome existing barriers

- ▶ Consider including agricultural workers in the 2016 NPSIF Act, with adapted administrative and financial arrangements
- ▶ Consider the introduction of shock-responsive elements in major social assistance schemes to cover weather- and climate-related shocks, and thereby ensure that the most important risks of agricultural workers are sufficiently covered
- ▶ Facilitate better access to information, registration, provision of benefits and complaint mechanisms by actively addressing various barriers, such as physical distance, lack of ID and illiteracy, through active outreach
- ▶ Introduce more flexible mechanisms for paying contributions to the NHIF (and the NPSIF) that are suitable for income patterns of agricultural workers
- ▶ Strengthen producer cooperatives as one potential entry point for access to social insurance, and facilitate access to existing social protection schemes for their members by enhancing their role in awareness raising, advocacy and collective registration

2. **Workers in urban areas** often live in informal settlements, not recognized or covered by local authorities, and are therefore legally excluded from accessing a broad range of different social protection schemes. Many of them come from rural areas and are also confronted with limited portability of schemes between their place of origin and their place of work. Their contributory capacities to social insurance schemes, for instance the NHIF and the NPSIF, is often hampered by low and volatile incomes, and their willingness to pay is usually low because of a high degree of dissatisfaction with the benefits offered by such schemes and their lack of trust in government. Workers in urban areas also suffer from physical barriers as offices or branches of agencies responsible for social protection schemes are often absent or hard to reach from marginalized urban settlements.

Options to overcome existing barriers

- ▶ Improve portability of the NHIF (and social assistance) coverage and benefits between different states and occupations
- ▶ Introduce more flexible registration mechanism in urban areas, through strategies to reach out actively and cover marginalized (informal) urban settlements

⁷ Annex 3 gives a comprehensive overview of main barriers to access social protection schemes faced by different groups of workers.

3. **Self-employed workers** are excluded by definition from the employer liability mechanisms regulated in the 1997 Labour Code and are therefore not covered against the risk of income loss caused by maternity and sickness, as well as unemployment. Moreover, not all of them are legally covered by the NPSIF. Those who are, for example, craftsmen and professionals, often have limited financial capacities to pay regular contributions, which are further hampered by inflexible payment options. Their willingness to pay for the NPSIF and the NHIF is low because of the low quality and quantity of benefits provided and the high levels of distrust in government. Self-employed workers are confronted with cumbersome administrative procedures when wanting to formalize, including when registering their business, registering themselves with the NHIF and the NPSIF and renewing their membership – and when registering their (potential) employees with local labour offices and the local social insurance branches (see below).

Options to overcome existing barriers

- ▶ Consider to fully include self-employed workers in the 2016 NPSIF Act with adapted administrative and financial arrangements
- ▶ Reduce contribution rates of self-employed for the NPSIF (currently at 25 per cent of their monthly declared incomes)
- ▶ Investigate the potential of a monotax mechanism to combine NPSIF contributions and tax payments through a simplified mechanism, possibly considering the subsidization of contributions for low-income categories, as well as the use of contributions, levies or ear-marked taxes collected from other parties along the specific value chain, who benefit from the services provided by specific groups of self-employed workers
- ▶ Improve coherence between contributory and non-contributory arms of NHIF and allow for mobility between them to reduce disincentives to pay contributions
- ▶ Introduce more flexible mechanisms for paying contributions to the NHIF and the NPSIF that are adapted to the income patterns of self-employed workers
- ▶ Ease and streamline procedures to register a business, including registration with the NHIF and the NPSIF (consider a one-stop solution)
- ▶ Strengthen professional associations and cooperatives as one potential entry point for access to social insurance, and facilitate access to existing social protection schemes for their members by enhancing their role in awareness raising, advocacy and collective registration

4. **Wage-employed workers** often work on a daily or seasonal basis and are therefore not legally covered by employer liability mechanisms. Moreover, employees of small businesses with fewer than five employees are legally exempted from the NHIF. Mechanisms to ensure compliance with the existing law among employers are absent or weak in almost all states surveyed. Most wage-employed workers are not represented by any union or interest group, partly leading to low levels of awareness for their rights as workers.

Options to overcome existing barriers

- ▶ Consider reviewing the 1997 Labour Code to protect temporary and seasonal workers more effectively
- ▶ Consider reviewing the 2016 NHIF Act to extend coverage to employees of businesses with fewer than five workers
- ▶ Improve the NPSIF benefit package to address more adequately the risks of wage-employed workers
- ▶ Improve awareness among employers for the benefits of the NHIF to cover the costs of work-related illnesses and accidents

- ▶ Make significant investments to improve enforcement and control mechanisms, including improved coordination among responsible authorities
- ▶ Investigate the potential of a monotax mechanism to combine NHIF contributions for employees and tax payments for MSE
- ▶ Ease and streamline procedures to register businesses and their employees with local labour offices, as well as the NHIF and NPSIF branches (consider a one-stop solution)
- ▶ Strengthen labour unions as one potential entry point to raise awareness for social insurance among wage-employed workers

5. **Refugees** face the highest legal barriers when wanting to access state-provided social protection schemes. On the one hand they have to obtain a work permit to be able to participate in the labour market and benefit from work-related social protection, but on the other, they are explicitly or implicitly excluded from most non-contributory schemes. They usually have access only to humanitarian aid provided by the international community, often in cooperation with local or international NGOs. In addition, refugees have limited access to local offices or branches of agencies responsible for social protection schemes – partly because these are not available in the geographic areas they are located in, and partly because they do not provide any services for refugees.

Options to overcome existing barriers

- ▶ Consider reviewing legal rules and procedures for refugees to access the Sudanese labour market to improve their access to work-related social protection in Sudan
- ▶ Consider reviewing the 2016 NPSIF Act to explicitly cover refugees with the NPSIF
- ▶ Assess the feasibility of better including refugees in the NHIF, in line with Article 4 of the 2016 NHIF Act
- ▶ Consider including refugees as an explicit target group of national social assistance programmes, especially in areas where refugees live outside camp settings (by improving coherence and coordination between humanitarian assistance for refugees and national social protection policies)
- ▶ Improve service delivery for refugees at local branches of social protection programmes and other services (including access to ID documentation)

6. **IDPs**, in the past, have not been targeted and included in existing non-contributory social protection schemes, or only insufficiently so. Despite recent efforts to improve their access, considerable barriers still remain – especially because many of them do not possess a national ID, which is the precondition to access any existing scheme. In addition, IDP have limited access to local offices or branches of agencies responsible for social protection schemes – partly because they are not available in the geographic areas they are located in, and partly because services are only accessible for citizens who originate from the area.

Options to overcome existing barriers

- ▶ Strengthen recent efforts to include IDP in existing social assistance programmes more effectively, to strengthen social cohesion between them and host communities
- ▶ Strengthen the humanitarian development nexus by linking humanitarian response activities targeted at IDP to existing social assistance programmes
- ▶ Consider introducing shock-responsive elements in social assistance schemes to address covariate shocks caused by conflicts and displacement
- ▶ Improve service delivery for refugees at local branches of social protection programmes and other services (including access to ID documentation)

- ▶ Improve access of IDP and host communities alike to legal identification mechanisms
- ▶ Strengthen grievance redress mechanisms to monitor and avoid the exacerbation of social conflicts between IDP and host communities

7. Many **women workers** are legally excluded from the NPSIF and the employer liability mechanisms regulated by the 1997 Labour Code, as they are more likely to work in the agricultural sector, as contributing family workers or carrying out informal care. Consequently, they lack any form of protection in the case of maternity or other contingencies. As many women earn less than male workers, their contributory capacities to pay for existing social insurance schemes are further hampered by low and unstable incomes. Owing to their double burden as workers and care givers, and because of prevailing cultural norms, they also confront higher barriers when wanting to access offices or branches of agencies responsible for social protection schemes.

Options to overcome existing barriers

- ▶ Consider reducing the qualifying period for the pension provided under the NPSIF to enable women with shorter working careers because of care responsibilities to accumulate sufficient entitlements to be eligible for a pension
- ▶ Test the feasibility of introducing pension care credits to enhance pension entitlements for women (and men) who interrupt their paid employment to care for children and older persons
- ▶ Consider the introduction of a universal pension to guarantee at least a basic level of income security for women and men after retirement
- ▶ Consider the introduction of a universal non-contributory maternity benefit or a mother and child grant for pregnant women and new-born babies
- ▶ Promote labour market participation and decent employment among women by including them in employment promotion and livelihood programmes
- ▶ Take specific measures to improve access for women to registration mechanisms, such as increasing female staff at local NHIF and NPSIF branches and reserving specific time slots for women to attend, as well as involving women's groups and unions in registration campaigns

Overarching recommendations

To extend social protection significantly to workers in the informal economy in Sudan, a two-track approach is necessary.

First, efforts need to be made to extend social insurance, for instance, the NHIF and the NPSIF, to workers who are not yet adequately protected, especially workers who are already relatively close to the formal economy. These schemes are based on the payment of contributions by the protected person and/or their employers, which gives rise to entitlements or acquired rights. They are based on the principle of risk sharing and solidarity, and thus contributions are usually proportionate to earnings, and specific levels of benefits are guaranteed in line with the applicable legal framework. Extending social insurance coverage to workers who have been unprotected so far is an important step towards the progressive formalization of enterprises and employment – especially to those who are already close to the formal economy (for example, fishers, traders, craftsmen and factory workers). For this purpose, adaptations of the design features of the NHIF and the NPSIF will have to be considered, including the potential to provide temporary full or partial subsidies for workers with insufficient contributory capacities from the government budget. Such subsidies reduce the need for the government to support their coverage from the government budget now and in the future, as part of a strategy to achieve a more sustainable and equitable financing mix for the social protection system and support the progressive formalization of enterprises and employment.

Second, in order to establish and progressively extend a nationally defined social protection floor, the extension of non-contributory social protection schemes, that is, cash transfers, livelihood programmes and the subsidized arm of the NHIF, is indispensable to complement social insurance. This means that at least a basic level of social protection should be guaranteed to the population, irrespective of working status, to provide sufficient protection in the face of various risks and contingencies across the life cycle. Non-contributory schemes can potentially contribute to the formalization of enterprises and employment in the longer run, by increasing investments in people's health and education, empowering people to seize economic opportunities and thereby contributing to labour productivity. The priority of the extension of non-contributory schemes should lie on reaching those groups with the greatest needs and vulnerability against individual and covariate shocks and the most significant barriers to contributory schemes in terms of legislative coverage, physical access and financial ability to pay. This includes, but is not limited to, workers engaged in agricultural activities, IDP and women, as well as workers with disabilities.

In addition, delivery mechanisms and capacities of existing and new social protection schemes will have to be improved to remove existing barriers on the one hand and increase the efficiency and effectiveness of programmes on the other. An integrated service delivery mechanism used by various schemes, which enables workers and employers to access several social protection programmes, as well as possibly other services, at one service point, could help to improve access to social protection and realize economies of scale in the administration of social protection schemes. Such a mechanism would enable to bundle a range of services along the social protection delivery chain for different schemes, such as information, registration, benefit payment or contribution collection. In the Sudanese context, the introduction of rotating mobile offices would be most suitable to realize integrated service delivery. Such offices can be set up for one or more days on a regular basis (for example, quarterly or biannually) in one location and then move to another one, thus reaching a greater number of persons.

A sequenced approach and the prioritization of specific needs and dedicated target groups are needed, given the immense gaps in the social protection system, which are further hampered by the considerable socio-economic challenges currently faced by the country, as well as the limited financial resources and the weak capacities of ministries and agencies responsible for social protection at national and state level. A comprehensive medium- to long-term strategy for the extension of social protection coverage will therefore be needed to allow the articulation and prioritization of key recommendations and measures at different levels to form a coherent action plan.

▶ 1

Introduction and background

▶ 1.1 Context

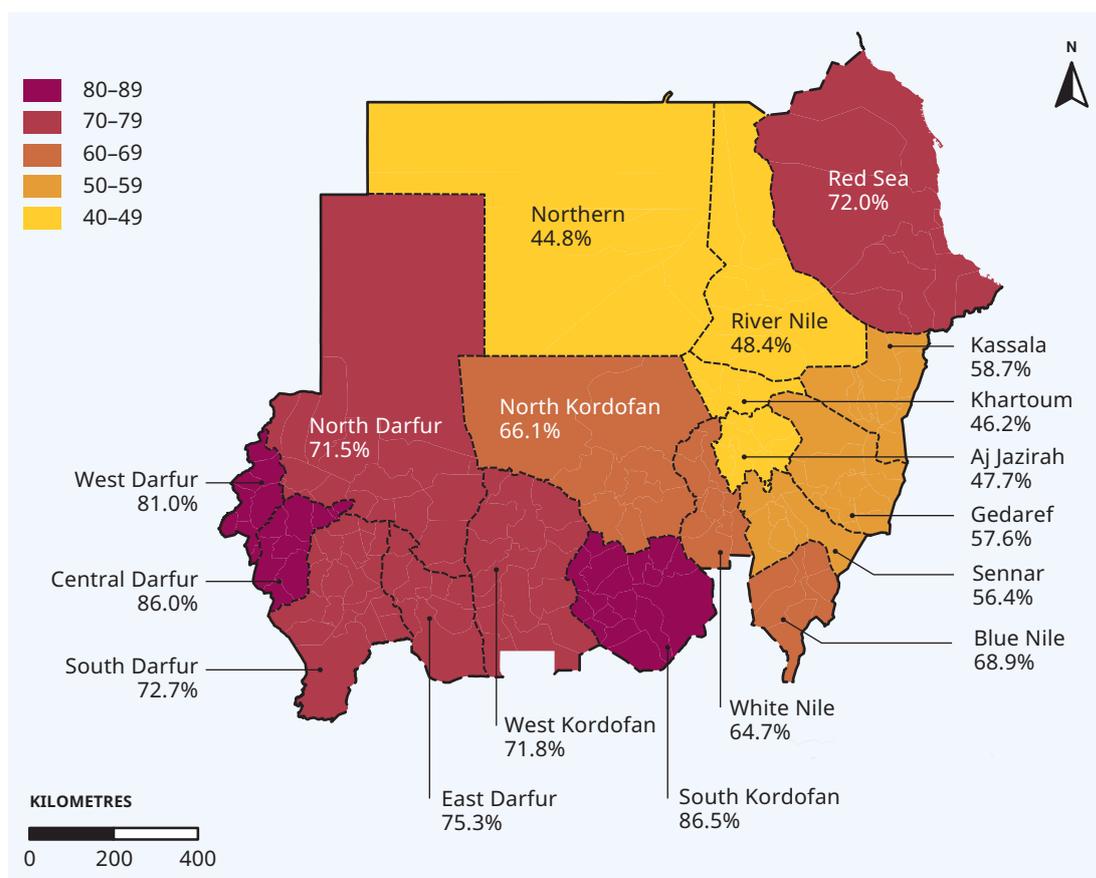
Poverty in Sudan is deep and multi-dimensional and affects a large share of the population. The failure to generate higher sustainable and inclusive growth since 2010 has led to a further increase of poverty rates. According to the last national household surveys, the proportion of the Sudanese population living below the national poverty line increased from 46.5 per cent in 2009 to 61.1 per cent in 2014/15 (MoFEP 2021).

Spatial inequities persist and remain a major impediment to equitable growth and poverty reduction. While living standards are moderately high in Sudan's northern region and in Khartoum, they are still low in peripheral regions of Sudan's western, southern and eastern states. As figure 1 shows, poverty rates are above the national average in Kordofan and Darfuri states. For example, the poverty rate in West Darfur is 81 per cent, compared with 46.2 per cent in Khartoum State (World Bank 2019, Etang Ngip 2020, MoFEP 2021).

Data from 2014/15 show that poverty was particularly high in rural areas, with 67.7 per cent of the population living below the national poverty line. While poverty remains higher in rural areas, urban areas experienced a much higher increase in poverty than rural areas. Poverty increased by 23.5 percentage points in urban areas compared with 8 percentage points in rural areas between 2009 and 2014/15. The ongoing economic crisis combined with high inflation and exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic probably has significantly negative effects on living conditions in both urban and rural areas (MoFEP 2021).

The most vulnerable and marginalized categories in Sudan include vulnerable rural communities who are engaged in farming and pastoral livelihoods, internally displaced persons (IDP) and refugees from South Sudan and other neighbouring countries (see box 1). Among these, women and girls are more likely to experience a worsening of their living conditions, compared with men and boys.

► **Figure 1. Poverty headcount ratio by state 2014/2015 (in per cent)**



Source: based on MoFEP 2021.

Sudan currently faces considerable multi-faceted covariate shocks and vulnerabilities with direct consequences on the poor and marginalized. Vulnerabilities include political instability, internal conflicts and displacement in certain parts of the country; harsh climate conditions, flooding, erratic and low rainfall; frequent economic shocks, a high external debt burden and limited concessional financing. Of concern is the recent food price hikes that contributed to ever increasing inflation, while economic growth and per capita GDP is decreasing (World Bank 2020a).

Informal employment represents the large majority of the labour force in Sudan. Workers in informal employment are particularly vulnerable to individual and covariate shocks. However, they are not only insufficiently covered by social protection schemes that would provide support in the wake of such shocks. The wide diversity of employment arrangements and income patterns among workers in the informal economy⁸ – wage employees, self-employed, employers and contributing family workers – demands innovative approaches that are tailored to the realities within and across these groups. There is no one-size-fits-all solution to extending social protection, as the challenges are manifold and vary by type of worker. Extending coverage to workers in the informal economy requires a comprehensive understanding of the situation of different groups of workers engaged in different economic sectors and activities, the risks they encounter and the different factors contributing to their vulnerability.

Since the Sudanese revolution and the overthrow of the regime of Omar al-Bashir, the civilian-led Transitional Government of Sudan has been committed to developing more comprehensive policies for extending social protection to workers in informal employment and facilitating their transition to the

⁸ The term “worker in the informal economy” is used synonymously with the term “worker in informal employment” throughout the study.

► Box 1. Forcibly displaced persons in Sudan

Sudan hosts approximately 4 million forcibly displaced persons (FDPs). Approximately 1.2 million are refugees and asylum seekers from neighbouring countries, mainly from South Sudan (815,000), Eritrea (121,000), Ethiopia,^a Syria and the Central African Republic. The rest – 2.9 million individuals – are internally displaced persons (IDP), mainly triggered over the last decades by civil conflicts caused by unresolved and inter-communal clashes, naturally-induced or climate-related shocks, expansions in commercial agriculture and exploration and extraction of oil.^b In addition, UN OCHA identified 9.3 million vulnerable host community (HC) members requiring assistance in areas with high numbers of FDPs. These three groups include in total 8.2 million women and girls, 2.1 million people with disabilities, as well as 860,000 elderly who are considered as particularly vulnerable.

Sudan has a long history of hosting refugees, some of whom are looking for better employment opportunities, but most are fleeing conflict in their country of origin (ILO 2021b). For many groups of refugees, the Government of Sudan has adopted and enforced a strict encampment policy, which does not allow them to relocate from the camps into urban areas. This is severely limiting their available economic opportunities. Therefore, they are highly reliant on humanitarian actors to provide basic goods, services and cash assistance.

However, the vast majority of refugees (approximately 70 per cent) are living outside of camp settlements, mostly in remote and underdeveloped rural areas. They usually live in a more integrated manner with host communities. At the same time, they are often uncovered by humanitarian assistance from the donor community, which means that the government and the host communities are shouldering the burden of providing them with essential services in a context with already limited local resources and limited public infrastructure. Refugees in these areas therefore encounter discrimination with respect to access to basic goods and services.

Note a: According to the UNHCR, more than 56,000 Ethiopian refugees have fled to Sudan since the outbreak of the conflict between Ethiopian government troops and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) since November 2020 (ILO 2021b).

Note b: Deeper underlying causes are rooted in state formation and modernization processes, widespread poverty and the socio-economic and political marginalization of peripheral populations. The former regime of Omar al-Bashir and previous governments failed to respond effectively to the needs of the IDP and have often deliberately caused or triggered various forms of displacements or denied the existence of a displacement crisis (Eldin 2020, Schmidinger 2020). Source: OCHA 2021, ILO 2021b, PROSPECTS 2020, MoFEP 2019, Canonge/Guérin 2018.

formal economy.⁹ Extending social protection to workers in the informal economy and promoting their transition from informal to formal economy also reflect recent commitments at the global level, in line with the Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202) as well as the Transition from Informal to Formal Employment Recommendation, 2014 (No. 204). Strengthening social protection systems, including social protection floors, to reach universal coverage, constitutes a central component of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) with its partners supports these efforts of the Government of Sudan with several initiatives.

⁹ At the time of writing the study, it was unclear if there is still political commitment to continue this reform path after the democratic transition was interrupted on 25 October 2021, when the Sudanese military took control and dissolved the civilian-led transitional government.

► 1.2 Background information on ILO projects involved in the study

The following projects implemented by the ILO commissioned this study to support the Sudanese Government in strengthening social protection for workers in the informal economy:

- The PROSPECTS Partnership in Sudan is a multiannual project supported by the Government of the Netherlands. It is implemented by the ILO, the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the International Finance Corporation (IFC) to develop inclusive, comprehensive and durable development programmes for protracted displaced populations and the host communities. The Partnership has a component on strengthening social protection and social health protection for refugees and host communities, focusing on extending coverage of social protection to currently uncovered population groups. PROSPECTS in Sudan is also focusing on supporting the NHIF to extend coverage both horizontally (that is, to new population groups) as well as vertically (comprehensive benefit package and adequate benefit levels). Geographically, PROSPECTS is currently focusing on the states of East Darfur and West Kordofan.
- The Building Capacity for Inclusive Service Delivery (BCISD/CapiSud) project is implemented jointly by the Ministry of Social Development (MoSD) and the African Development Bank (AfDB). The project is managed by a Programme Implementation Unit (PIU) established inside the Ministry and targets two states, North Kordofan and White Nile. Under the programme, the ILO takes responsibility for the realization of major parts of its third outcome on Sustainable community-based safety-net platforms: poor communities will enhance their skills, employment and income generation potential and will hence be enabled to benefit from social protection services.
- The project of the European Union "Support for a Social Protection System in Sudan" has the overall objectives of generating a pragmatic evidence-based national dialogue on social protection, including all major stakeholders, and of strengthening the capacity of the MoSD to develop a comprehensive social protection system. Specifically, the project seeks to enhance policy dialogue and coordination among national and international stakeholders across the development-humanitarian nexus, based on different components of the social protection floor approach. It also seeks to strengthen institutional capacities and operational systems of the MoSD, workers' and employers' organizations, and of other social protection stakeholders. In addition, the European Union provides financing for the programme "Employment Promotion Darfur for Refugees, IDPs and Host Communities", implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für International Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) in the states of South Darfur, North Darfur and West Darfur. The project aims at improving employment opportunities for young refugees, internally displaced and the local population in Nyala, El Fasher and El Geneina.

► 1.3 Study outline

The study is structured as follows.

- Section 2 provides an overview of the main terms and definitions used, relating to workers in the informal economy internationally and in the context of Sudan.
- Section 3 gives an overview of the general situation of workers in the informal economy and their access to social protection in Sudan.
- Section 4 outlines the objectives and scope of the study, as well as the methodologies used to investigate the main research questions.

- ▶ Section 5 provides an overview of the legal and policy framework for social protection in Sudan, as well as the design and implementation features of the main programmes relevant for the working-age population. It also assesses the coverage, adequacy and comprehensiveness of existing social protection schemes.
- ▶ Section 6 presents the profiles of different groups of workers in the informal economy and describes their general characteristics.
- ▶ Section 7 identifies the main barriers to social protection for workers in the informal economy by matching their general characteristics (as analysed in Section 6) with the main design and implementation features of existing social protection programmes (assessed in Section 5).
- ▶ Section 8 provides concrete options on how to improve the design of the social protection system as a whole and of specific schemes to extend social protection to workers in the informal economy in the future.
- ▶ Section 9 describes options on how to improve and streamline social protection delivery mechanisms for various schemes to facilitate access to social protection for all population groups, with a particular focus on workers in the informal economy.
- ▶ Section 10 concludes and recommends the practical next steps that need to be taken to extend social protection to workers in the informal economy in Sudan.



▶ 2

The informal sector, the informal economy and informal employment: clarifying the terminology

▶ 2.1 Statistical definitions of the ILO

The informal economy encompasses a huge range of situations across and within economies. From a policy-making perspective, it is important to stress that workers and economic units – including enterprises, entrepreneurs and households – in the informal economy present a broad diversity of characteristics and needs. This must be known and understood, together with the reasons for the persistence of the informal economy, in order to formulate effective policies for the transition to formality, including the extension of social protection coverage to workers therein. Workers in the informal economy differ widely in terms of income level, age, education level, status in employment, sector, type and size of enterprise, location of workplace (rural or urban, private or public areas), degree of coverage of social and employment protection (ILO 2018).

There are various closely related terms and definitions referring to the informal economy that are often used imprecisely and interchangeably (based on ILO 2021d).

- ▶ According to the international standards adopted by the 15th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS), the informal sector consists of units engaged in the production of goods or services with the primary objective of generating employment and incomes to the persons concerned. The informal sector is a subset of unincorporated enterprises not constituted as separate legal entities independent of their owners. They are owned by individual household members or several members of the same or different households. Typically, they are operating at a low level of organization, on a small scale and with little or no division between labour and capital as factors of production (ILO 2018).

- ▶ The term “informal economy” refers to all economic activities by workers and economic units that are – in law or in practice – not covered or insufficiently covered by formal arrangements.¹⁰
- ▶ The term “employment in the informal sector” is an enterprise-based concept that is defined in terms of the characteristics of the place of work of the worker, i.e. the workplace where the worker is active belongs to the informal sector (see above).
- ▶ The term “informal employment” is a job-based concept that is defined in terms of the employment relationship and protections that are associated with the job of the worker (ILO 2003; Hussmanns 2004). According to the 17th ICLS, informal employment refers to working arrangements that are de facto or de jure not subject to national labour legislation, income taxation or entitlement to social protection or certain other employment benefits (for example, advance notice of dismissal, severance pay, paid annual or sick leave). Workers in informal employment are defined as those who work in informal jobs, whether carried out in formal sector enterprises, informal sector enterprises or households. These include employees holding informal jobs, employers and own-account workers employed in their own informal sector enterprises, members of informal producers’ cooperatives, contributing family workers in formal or informal sector enterprises, and own-account workers engaged in the production of goods for own end use by their household.

For the purposes of analysis and policymaking, it is useful to further divide informal employment into more homogeneous sub-categories according to the status of employment, as follows (Chen 2008 and 2012).

a. **Informal self-employment** including:

- ▶ *employers*: owner operators who hire others;
- ▶ *own-account workers*: owner operators of single person units or family businesses or farms who do not hire others in informal enterprises;
- ▶ *unpaid contributing family workers*: family members who work in family businesses or farms without pay;
- ▶ *members of informal producers’ cooperatives* (where these exist).

b. **Informal wage employment**: employees without formal contracts or social protection employed by formal or informal enterprises or by households. In developing countries, the most common categories of informal wage workers include:

- ▶ *informal employees*: unprotected employees with a known employer (either an informal enterprise, a formal enterprise, or a household);
- ▶ *casual or day labourers*: wage workers with no fixed employer who sell their labour on a daily or seasonal basis;
- ▶ *industrial outworkers*: subcontracted workers who produce for a piece rate from small workshops or their homes (also called homeworkers);
- ▶ *paid domestic workers*.

▶ 2.2 Definitions used by the Government of Sudan

In Sudan, the term “informal labour” was first used in the report of the International Taskforce, issued in 1976 and entitled “Growth, Employment and Equity: A Comprehensive Strategy for the Sudan.” In 1997, the committee on the informal sector, formed by the Minister of Labour, provided a definition

¹⁰ ILO Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204), para. 2(a).

of the informal sector on the basis of encompassing “Micro production and services units, run by small producers working for their own account, with slight capital, low level techniques, very limited skills, and without access to organized markets, credit institutions, and usually at the margin of social protection and work legislation.”

However, to date there are no precise statistical data available on the absolute and relative number of workers in the informal economy and the contribution of the informal economy to the national GDP. The latest, already outdated Sudan Labour Force Survey (SLFS) conducted in 2011 does not allow the extraction of precise numbers of workers active in the informal economy, as no precise statistical definition on informal employment was applied in the survey (Abdel Ati/al-Hassan 2016, UNDP/ILO 2014).

There are, however, some criteria in the SLFS 2011 that can be applied to measure employment in the informal sector (as opposed to informal employment). These include those aged 10 years and above, who reported

- ▶ no specific place of work (question 209), and
- ▶ the number of workers in the enterprise is fewer than five (question 212).

These criteria exclude various categories of informal employment, as defined In Section 2.1, such as persons engaged as contributing family workers, unregistered wage-employees, as well as own-account workers. It is therefore important to consider that, apart from being outdated, data from the SLFS 2011 do not give a complete picture of the situation of workers in informal employment in Sudan.



▶ 3

Overview: workers in the informal economy and social protection in Sudan

Social protection is a human right and is defined as the set of policies and programmes designed to reduce and prevent poverty and vulnerability throughout the life cycle. It can be provided through a range of mechanisms, including cash or in-kind benefits, contributory or non-contributory schemes, and programmes to enhance human capital, productive assets and access to jobs. Social protection also includes benefits and support for women and men of working age (ILO 2021c).

Social protection schemes aim to cover the major risks and contingencies faced by workers and their dependents, such as illness, unemployment, maternity, work injuries, disability, old age and death, and provide for family and child benefits and access to healthcare (see box 2). Social protection coverage is a precondition to ensure decent working conditions and income security and access to healthcare for the working-age population; it also contributes to increases in productivity. Social protection schemes are thus an important investment in inclusive economic growth.

However, in most developing countries and emerging economies, a large part of the active workforce – namely workers in the informal economy – are not covered by social protection. This is also true for Sudan, where workers in informal employment make up 60 to 65 per cent of the workforce (Abdel Ati/al-Hassan 2016, UNDP/ILO 2014).¹¹ Informal employment is often particularly high in certain sectors and occupations, such as agriculture in rural areas and low-skilled services in urban areas. In fact, workers in the informal economy represent the backbone of the economy in many localities (Abdel Ati/al-Hassan 2016).

Informal employment is particularly common in the agricultural sector, which accounts for approximately half of all employment and about 30 per cent of Sudan's GDP. Agriculture (crop, fisheries, livestock and forestry) provides livelihoods to approximately two thirds of the population. Traditional small-scale own-account family farming is the norm, has endured the pressure of agricultural industrialization and still dominates the country's agricultural production. This is especially the case in Western Sudan, where small-scale farming is still prevalent in crop farming, livestock herding, fisheries and forestry (FAO 2017, World Bank 2020b, World Bank 2019).¹²

¹¹ Based on data from the SLFS, the total number of people engaged in the informal sector represents about 25 per cent of total employment. This is, of course, an underestimate (or only a portion) of total informal employment in Sudan, owing to a lack of a precise statistical definition applied therein (see section 4.2) (UNDP/ILO 2014).

¹² Section 6.1 provides more detailed information about informal employment in the agricultural sector.

Informal employment has also been witnessing accelerated growth over the last years in urban areas, such as the State of Khartoum. The main reason for this is the high influx of low-skilled rural migrants to cities, triggered by numerous, often interrelated push and pull factors – most importantly conflicts and civil wars, climate change effects including drought and desertification, and the ensuing displacement and migration waves from rural to urban areas as a result of uneven development and the lack of economic opportunities in rural areas. Rural to urban migrants are, by default, low-skilled workers, mostly being driven out of agriculture. Therefore, when moving to urban areas, they tend to establish informal operations such as street vending, food and beverages (Kesra and traditional food and tea-making), transportation, car wash, and retail. Examples of enterprises that require more skills are tailoring, motorbike maintenance, automotive body repairing and electrical maintenance, and hair cutting (Abdel Ati/al-Hassan 2016, UNDP/ILO 2014).¹³

One important aspect of the informal sector in Sudan is the lack of a legal status of enterprises. Companies operating informally tend not to be registered with the local authorities (see box 14). Such registration would give enterprises legal status, which allows them to do business in a particular jurisdiction but is also associated with a range of responsibilities such as paying taxes or social security contributions for employees. An enterprise survey recently commissioned by the ILO shows that there is considerable variation in the percentage of companies with legal status across states. In Khartoum, 91 per cent of enterprises surveyed were registered with the Commercial Registry, whereas in West Kordofan and East Darfur only 60 per cent and 10 per cent of firms were registered, respectively (ILO 2021a).

As in many other developing countries and emerging economies, workers in the informal economy in Sudan are usually not covered by social protection schemes, or only inadequately so. On the one hand, they are not considered as deserving enough to benefit from social assistance (such as the direct cash transfer, Zakat or subsidized NHIF contributions), and on the other, they are excluded from social insurance schemes that cover workers in the formal sector (such as the contributory NHIF and the NPSIF). Therefore, they are often referred to as the “missing middle” (Bacrot 2013, Barca/Beazley/Bergthaller 2021, Guven et al 2021).

The last SLFS conducted in 2011, covering workers in both the formal and informal economies, enquired about the availability of social security and health insurance at the workplace. About 80 per cent of workers indicated that they were not covered by social insurance; while 74 per cent of workers surveyed indicated that no health insurance plan was available through the workplace or employer (UNDP/ILO 2014).¹⁴

A survey on the impact of COVID-19 on urban and rural households commissioned by the ILO and conducted in the urban region of Khartoum and rural regions of West Kordofan and East Darfur in 2020 revealed similar results on the enterprise side: around 15 per cent of the business owners surveyed in Khartoum indicated that their employees were registered for a pension insurance, around 35 per cent stated that their employees were included in the NHIF through the contributory arm, and approximately the same number of respondents indicated that their women employees get paid parental maternity leave. Coverage is significantly lower in rural areas, with virtually no coverage of employees with pension schemes and maternity leave. Coverage with NHIF through the employer was more common among employees of enterprises in West Kordofan (just under 20 per cent) and almost completely absent in East Darfur (ILO 2021a).

The specific reasons for non-coverage through various social protection schemes can be very diverse and may vary across specific groups and categories of workers. Some might be excluded by legislation, while others might have to confront challenges and barriers to access the social protection schemes that they would be eligible for, in theory. One specific objective of this study is to explore these reasons in more depth for different categories of workers in the informal economy, and the different social protection schemes and risks and contingencies associated to them.

13 Section 6.2 provides more detailed information about informal employment in the urban areas.

14 While these figures generally underline the observations above, they are at the same time an indicator for the high degree of informality among the Sudanese labour force. The guidelines of the 17th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) state that “employees are considered to have informal jobs if their employment relationship is, in law or in practice, not subject to [...] social protection [...]” (ILO 2003).



▶ 4

Objectives, scope and methodologies

▶ 4.1 Study objectives

The present study aims to analyse how social protection could be extended to workers in the informal economy, by overcoming existing supply and demand-side challenges.

It provides a comprehensive analysis of the existing social protection schemes, their design and their delivery mechanisms. Thereby, it aims at identifying gaps in coverage, adequacy and comprehensiveness of the current social protection system (see box 2) and the specific supply-side barriers (see box 3) that workers in the informal economy are currently facing when accessing social protection schemes.

The study also provides an in-depth examination of the situation of different categories of workers in the informal economy in selected states of Sudan. It investigates the needs and demand for social protection mechanisms of different groups of workers engaged in various key sectors and economic activities, as well as potential demand-side barriers (see box 3) that may hinder their access to existing schemes.

Based on this assessment, the study identifies specific options and gives recommendations on how to further extend social protection coverage to workers in the informal economy, as well as the comprehensiveness and adequacy of existing schemes dedicated to the working-age population. This includes proposals to adapt design features of existing contributory and non-contributory schemes and the legal framework for them. The aim is to contribute to developing an integrated social protection policy framework, which covers all segments of the Sudanese population, including different groups of workers and their families.

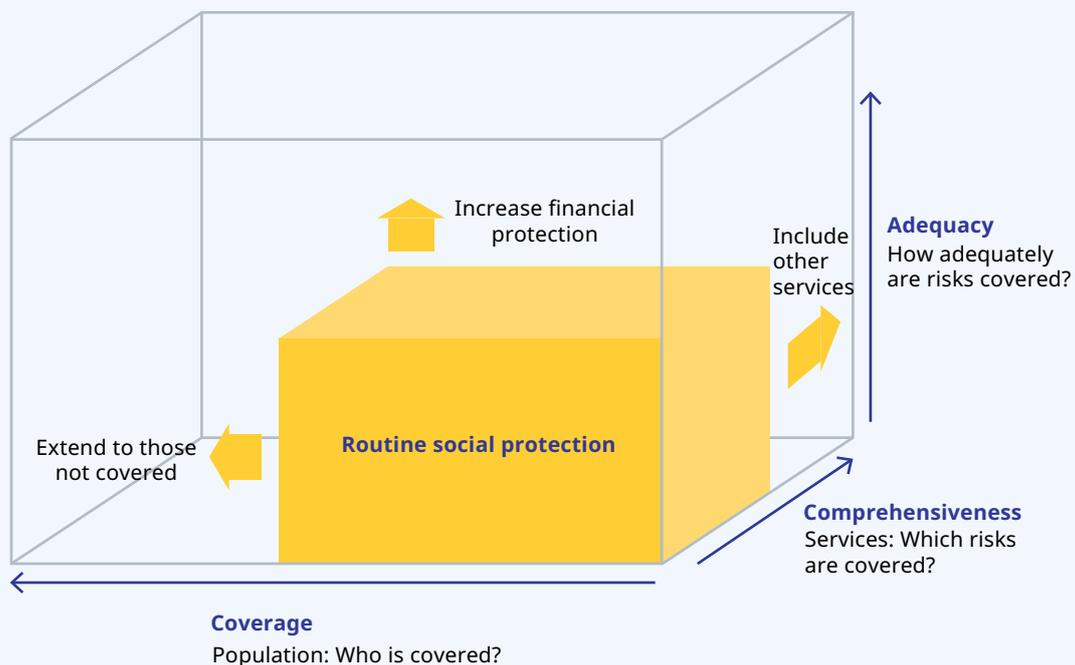
Specific recommendations are also given to guide the establishment of coordinated services of social protection schemes along the social protection delivery chain (see box 4) and assess the feasibility of an approach for integrated service delivery in this regard, among other mechanisms. The rationale is to support the Government of Sudan in re-thinking the way social protection benefits are channelled to the population – including, but not limited to, workers in the informal economy and their families – with the aims of reducing transaction costs and of better coordinating the different schemes and programmes, in order to provide people with a more consistent support throughout their lives.

► **Box 2. The concept of Universal Social Protection as an assessment framework of the social protection system in Sudan**

Based on the concept of Universal Social Protection (USP) there are broad dimensions along which social protection systems can be extended (see figure 2).

- Breadth of coverage refers to the proportion (and specific segments) of the population covered by a specific scheme (and the system as a whole).
- Adequacy of benefits and services (also called depth of services and financial protection) refers to the questions on how adequately risks and contingencies are covered by the existing schemes as soon as they occur.
- Comprehensiveness of benefits and services (also called scope of services) refers to the specific risks and contingencies faced by the working-age population that are covered by one or more of the existing schemes. Idiosyncratic risks and contingencies include illness (and corresponding costs and income loss), unemployment, insufficient income from work, employment injuries, maternity, disability, old age and death. Covariate risks often confronted by the working-age population include weather- and climate-related shocks, large-scale economic shocks or social conflicts.

► **Figure 2. The three dimensions of Universal Social Protection**



Source: based on Ulrichs and White-Kaba 2019.

► **Box 3. Main barriers to the extension of social protection to workers in the informal economy**

To extend social protection to workers in the informal economy, it is essential to understand and analyse the factors underlying coverage gaps in each country context and for specific groups of workers in the informal economy, from a programme perspective (supply-side), as well as from a worker's perspective (demand-side).

In general, the following supply- and demand-side barriers to the extension of social protection to workers in the informal economy can be identified.

- **Legal barriers.** The legal framework may exclude or constrain the participation of workers in the informal economy in social protection schemes (and as a result they may remain in the informal economy by definition). Coverage for work-related schemes is sometimes linked to an identifiable employment relationship between an employer and a dependent worker. Thus, workers without an identifiable employer are legally excluded from contributing to social security schemes. In addition, legislation may include rules based on place of work, type of contract, size of enterprise, number of working hours or income threshold and minimum length of contract, which can exclude some categories of workers. Moreover, legal and policy frameworks for non-contributory social protection schemes often link entitlements to citizenship. This poses a significant barrier for refugees, who are thereby restricted from accessing national social protection schemes in their host countries.
- **Enforcement gaps.** De facto exclusions of those covered by the legal framework often persist, owing to the lack of control and law enforcement. That is, even though the legal framework obliges employers to register their employees or own-account workers to register themselves, there are no or insufficient enforcement mechanisms in place to follow up on this (for example, lack or poor quality of labour inspections). This leads to a low level of compliance. Governments may also be less inclined to ensure inspections of small economic units owing to the relatively high costs and complexity of the procedures involved.
- **Lack of integration and policy coherence.** A high degree of fragmentation within the social protection system and a lack of coordination with other relevant policies, such as policies on enterprise formalization, labour market and employment, enterprise development and macro-economic issues, agricultural development, as well as on health, education and care, poses an additional barrier. For example, the lack of registration of enterprises renders the social protection coverage of workers more difficult. The lack of integration and policy coherence, both among social protection institutions and between social protection institutions and other policy areas, often leads to coverage and adequacy gaps, duplication, inefficiency and distorted incentive structures.
- **Financial barriers.** A high level of contributions is often considered as an economic barrier for workers in the informal economy to participate in a contributory social protection scheme. The fact that they tend to have low, volatile and sometimes irregular incomes makes it difficult for them to contribute to these schemes. Contributions may not be adapted to the level of the income usually earned and can be perceived as too high by workers and their employers, as well as by own-account workers (who might also bear the employers' share of contributions) – especially if they do not value the benefits associated with the respective schemes (see next bullet point). Often workers do not know what they will be earning over the course of a month or year. This is particularly true for those working in agriculture, where incomes are unpredictable because of the seasonality of production, interruptions in agricultural work, and dependence on natural resources subject to covariate shocks, including the effects of climate change. This makes it difficult for many workers to commit themselves to regular contribution payments as they often do not know if they will be able to afford them in the future. In addition, workers and employers operating in the informal economy may also shy

away from the general costs associated with operating in the formal economy, including entry costs and operational costs.^a Especially for small economic units operating on a low level of productivity, such formalization costs may surpass their financial capacity.

- ▶ **Benefits not aligned with priorities.** Workers (as well as their employers if they exist) may be reluctant to contribute to contributory social protection schemes if they are not convinced that the benefits provided will meet their priority needs, such as covering the specific risks they are facing because of their specific occupation. Depending on the specific situation of workers in the informal economy, different types of benefits and services may be required to meet their needs.
- ▶ **Lack of information and awareness.** A lack of information and awareness is another factor contributing to weak incentives to take up social protection among workers in the informal economy. There may also be low levels of understanding among these workers about existing social protection schemes and why they are important. Information, awareness and understanding are often influenced by the level of education of workers, their cultural background, as well as by their religious practices or beliefs. In particular, illiteracy and language barriers, often higher among women and the rural population, may make it difficult for workers to understand regulations that are usually written only in official languages.
- ▶ **Lack of trust in government and its institutions.** Many workers in the informal economy view the state with some suspicion as they are often confronted with punitive and unsupportive state rules and regulations. Owing to a lack of trust, they are often reluctant to hand over a portion of their earnings to the state by paying social insurance contributions. In addition, because of the poor quantity and quality of services provided by state-provided social insurance schemes (such as low levels of pensions or poor quality of health services that can be accessed through affiliation with national social insurance schemes), workers often opt for private insurance schemes.
- ▶ **Lack of representation and organization.** It has been widely acknowledged that there is a direct link between the organization capacity of workers and the ease of their inclusion in contributory schemes. The lack of organization of some categories of workers makes them more marginalized and reduces their chances of being represented in open debates. However, it is important to note in this regard that workers in the informal economy often organize themselves informally.
- ▶ **Administrative barriers.^b** Complex and burdensome procedures may discourage workers in the informal economy, as well as their employers from registering to social protection schemes. In particular micro and small enterprises with limited administrative capacity, as well as own-account workers may struggle to comply with requirements. The low density of administrative structures and services might be an issue especially in rural areas. Long distances to the next responsible office and poor means of transport can signify a high barrier for workers in remote and rural locations, while opportunity costs (costs of transport, time spent as well as risk associated with the movement) may be prohibitively high. The lack of and difficult access to identification documents, which are often a precondition to register for social protection schemes, can pose another barrier to many workers in the informal economy – especially to those living in remote areas with limited access to civil registration offices and/or with low levels of education and literacy. Moreover, administrative barriers frequently hinder effective access to benefits for those who are already enrolled in dedicated schemes.

Note a: Entry costs refer to all the costs associated with the registration procedures, including the registration fees and opportunity costs that enterprises would potentially earn if they continued to do business as usual instead of investing in the administrative process. Operational costs refer to the other costs associated with operating in the formal economy, such as taxes, licence fees and social contributions, as well as the costs of complying with labour regulations, the time required to obtain property registration and apply for formal loans and costs related to inefficient contract enforcement mechanisms.

Note b: Owing to the specific focus of the present study on improving and streamlining delivery mechanisms, dedicated options are being outlined in Section 9 on how to reduce administrative barriers. Source: ILO 2021d, RNSF 2017, ILO and FAO 2021, Sato 2021.

► Box 4. Overview of the social protection delivery chain

The delivery chain is the operating environment for implementing social protection benefits and ensuring that they reach the intended population in the way foreseen in legislation and policy frameworks. This includes the specific delivery mechanisms used during the different phases of implementation of the delivery chain, as well as the main actors responsible for it. It also involves the performance of the delivery mechanisms and of the actors, to ensure that they contribute to an effective and efficient delivery of social protection benefits (Lindert et al 2020).

Broadly, the following delivery mechanisms can be identified within each social protection scheme.



- Mechanisms for outreach and information to inform the intended population about a scheme on a continuous basis.



- Mechanisms for application and registration to gather the relevant information of potential beneficiaries of a scheme and/or to enable them to actively register themselves.



- Mechanisms for needs assessment and eligibility verification (usually only applicable for non-contributory schemes) to facilitate decision-making on who is eligible and who will be enrolled in a scheme.



- Enrolment mechanisms to inform the eligible population that they will benefit from the scheme and to make them aware of their roles and responsibilities as beneficiaries.



- Mechanisms for payment and benefit provision to ensure that regular and full benefits are provided to all eligible participants of the scheme at all times.



- Mechanisms for complaint management to allow citizens to provide feedback to implementers of a given programme or measure and to allow implementers to respond.

These mechanisms are often closely interlinked and sometimes combined within one step.

In addition, the following mechanisms apply for contributory schemes only.



- Mechanisms for contribution payment to collect full contributions by members on a regular basis.



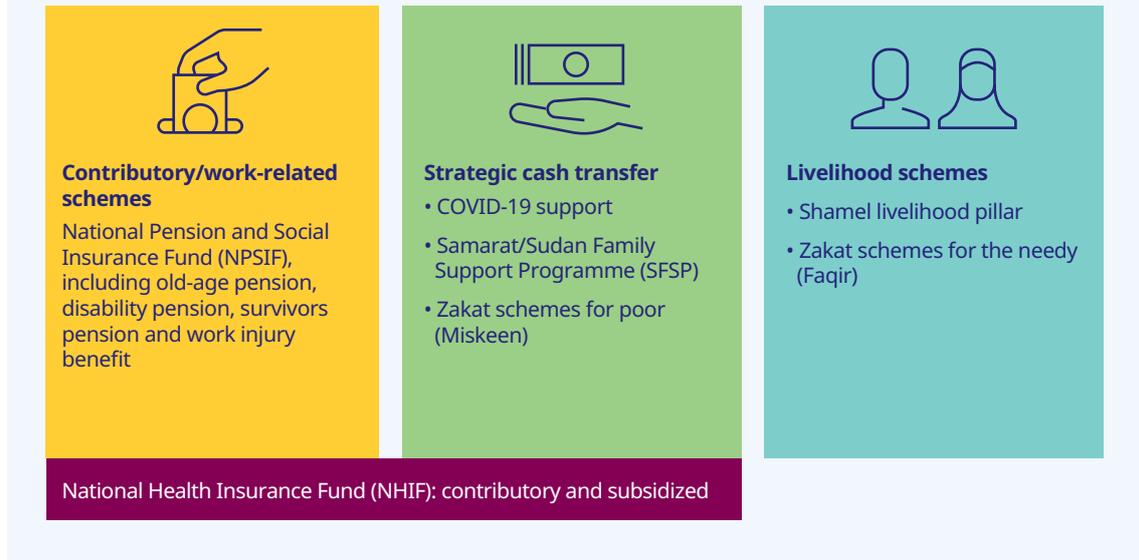
- Enforcement and control mechanisms to ensure compliance with the legal framework.

In close connection with programme design, the delivery mechanisms of each social protection scheme need to be assessed to uncover potential barriers faced by potential beneficiaries when accessing them.

► 4.2 Scope of research

The analysis includes all of Sudan's major governmental contributory and non-contributory social protection schemes, as well as livelihood, employment and entrepreneurship programmes dedicated towards the working-age population, as outlined in figure 3 and described in more detail in section 5.2.

► **Figure 3. Existing social protection schemes in Sudan**



Based on the focal areas of the projects involved in the design and commissioning of the study the following states have been selected for in-depth analysis:

1. East Darfur (PROSPECTS)
2. North Darfur (EC)
3. West Darfur (EC)
4. South Darfur (EC)
5. North Kordofan (BCISD/CapiSud)
6. West Kordofan (PROSPECTS)
7. White Nile (BCISD/CapiSud)
8. Khartoum (chosen as an urban counterfactual to explore in more depth the situation of non-agricultural workers)

The study focuses mostly on rural areas and livelihoods based on agriculture in East Darfur, West Kordofan and North Kordofan and on urban areas and urban-based livelihoods in North Darfur, West Darfur, South Darfur and Khartoum. In White Nile, both workers active in agricultural and non-agricultural activities are covered by the assessment.

A sectoral approach was chosen to compare access to social protection and potential barriers facing the main groups of workers in the informal economy in the different states of Sudan. Therefore, key economic sectors and activities, which constitute the main sources of livelihood, were identified for each state to illustrate the diverse realities, risks and vulnerabilities that different groups of workers in the informal economy in urban and rural areas are facing. In this way, it can be assessed how different production and income patterns, as well as the degrees of formalization and organization prevalent in dedicated sectors

and activities, may provide the means of extending access to social protection schemes, and their entry points. Key economic sectors and activities chosen for each state were also reflected in the composition of the FGDs conducted in the course of the study (see section 4.3).

Rural livelihoods are further differentiated in the study into (i) cash crop farming, (ii) gum arabic production (representing the most important forest product in Sudan), (iii) livestock herding, (iv) fisheries, (v) subsistence farming and (vi) seasonal or daily wage labour outside the worker's own farm.¹⁵

In urban areas, the following key economic activities were assessed in more detail: (i) small-scale vending (self-employed), (ii) craft and related trades (self- and wage-employed), (iii) manufacturing (wage-employed), and (iv) waste picking (wage-employed).

Table 1 gives an overview of the different key economic sectors and activities observed in each state.¹⁶

► **Table 1. States and key economic sectors and activities covered in the assessment**

	East Darfur	North Darfur	West Darfur	South Darfur	North Kordofan	West Kordofan	White Nile	Khartoum
Agricultural activities								
1. Cash crop	groundnut				sesame	hibiscus		
2. Gum arabic					x			
3. Livestock	various				goats	cows		
4. Fisheries							x	
5. Subsistence	x				x	x		
6. Wage labour					sesame	hibiscus		
Non-agricultural activities								
1. Vending		x	x	x			x	x
2. Crafts		x	x	x			x	x
3. Manufacturing							x	x
4. Waste picking								x

By taking into account the specific characteristics of workers active in these key economic activities and sectors, the study also looks into their commonalities and differences based on their employment status, that is, self- or wage-employment. To ensure that the assessment is inclusive to some of the most disadvantaged groups, the study also analyses the specific situation and needs of IDP and refugees engaged in the selected key sectors and economic activities. Moreover, the results of the study are disaggregated by gender.

¹⁵ The study focuses mostly on smallholders.

¹⁶ For more detailed information see annex 4.

▶ 4.3 Data collection methods

The research for the present study was led and conducted by an international social protection expert. Owing to restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic, the consultant could not travel to Sudan. Hence, data collection was carried out remotely with the support of a team of local researchers on the ground, who were guided and coordinated by a lead researcher based in Khartoum.

The overall methodology for this study is based on qualitative research methods. A mixed-methods approach was employed to best address the research objectives. This includes (1) the analysis of available legal and policy documents, (2 and 3) key informant interviews (KIIs) with representatives of national and state-level authorities, worker organizations and international development partners involved in the field of social protection in Sudan, (4) focus group discussions (FGDs) with workers engaged in key economic sectors and activities in all eight states, and (5) a service point mapping in the eight states the study is focusing on.

1. Document analysis

To obtain an overview of the existing social protection system in Sudan, relevant (draft) laws, regulations and policies relevant for the sector were collected and analysed. In addition, a range of (draft) laws, regulations and policies related to employment and labour market policies were assessed. The document analysis provided insight into legal coverage of workers in the informal economy with social protection schemes and existing coverage gaps.

All laws, regulations and policies analysed are listed in section 5.1.

2. Key informant interviews with institutional stakeholders at federal level

Following an initial desk research, the international social protection expert, with the support of a local researcher, carried out a series of KIIs at national level¹⁷ with representatives of:

- a. federal ministries and agencies involved in the sectors of social protection and employment, with the aims of collecting general information about the design and delivery mechanisms of existing social protection policies and schemes and their related policies, and of exploring existing supply-side barriers confronted by workers in the informal economy when accessing social protection;
- b. social partners and interest groups, such as employers' and workers' organizations, with the aims of collecting information on key characteristics of different groups of workers in the informal economy (and their employers), and of exploring potential demand-side barriers they are facing when accessing social protection;
- c. international development partners involved in the field of social protection and employment in Sudan, to inform them about the study, explore their ongoing engagement in extending coverage of workers in the informal economy with social protection, and create synergies with their ongoing projects and activities.

The results of the KIIs were also used to inform the design of data collection methods at sub-national level, that is, KIIs with state-level agencies, FGDs and the service point mapping.

A list of all KIIs conducted at federal level can be found in annex 4.

¹⁷ Owing to social distance requirements during the COVID-19 pandemic, the KII at national level were conducted remotely, using online collaboration tools.

3. KIIs with representatives of state-level agencies

The local team of researchers carried out KIIs with representatives of state-level agencies in all eight states the study is focusing on, with the aims of collecting information about the implementation of social protection schemes on the ground, of unveiling strengths and weaknesses of local delivery mechanisms, and of observing geographical differences in the delivery of social protection schemes to workers in the informal economy and their families. In all states, KIIs were conducted with representatives of state-level Poverty Centres, state-level NHIF branches and the Zakat Chamber of the state.¹⁸

The researchers used standardized semi-structured interview guides to allow for comparison across all states and agencies. The results of the KIIs conducted at state level were summarized by the lead researcher, and analysed and integrated into the study by the international social protection expert.

A list of all KIIs conducted at state level can be found in annex 4.

4. Focus group discussions

The team of local researchers conducted 62 FGDs with more than 400 workers engaged in key sectors in the informal economy in all eight states to understand better their current situation and specific needs, and to unveil to what extent they are currently covered by existing social protection schemes. Moreover, KIIs served to explore reasons for non-coverage of different groups of workers, as well as to identify viable and tailor-made options to cover them in future.

Focus groups were composed homogeneously, based on the key economic activity (as outlined in section 4.2), gender, and the residence status (host community, IDPs or refugees). The researchers used standardized semi-structured interview guides to allow for comparison across different states, economic activities and sectors, gender and residence status. Some optional questions in the interview guides were tailored to specific characteristics of different groups of workers. The results of the FGDs were summarized by the lead researcher and analysed and integrated into the study by the international social protection expert.

A list of all FGDs conducted can be found in Annex 5.

5. Service point mapping

In all eight states included in the study, GIS-based collection of accessible service points was conducted. The following services were covered in the service point mapping: NHIF branches, NPSIF branches, Zakat offices, Poverty Centres, health facilities, chambers of commerce (for the purpose of business registration), local labour offices (for the purpose of registration of employees) and civil registration offices (for the purpose of obtaining a national ID, which is usually a precondition to obtain access to social protection schemes). Information collected for each service includes key facts on accessibility (geographic location, opening days and hours, and availability of staff), type of services provided, clients served, type of documents needed for registering at the service point or claiming benefits

The researchers used a mobile application to collect the data. The results of the service point mapping were summarized by the lead researcher and analysed and integrated into the study by the international social protection expert.

The results of the service point mapping for each state are illustrated in Annex 6.

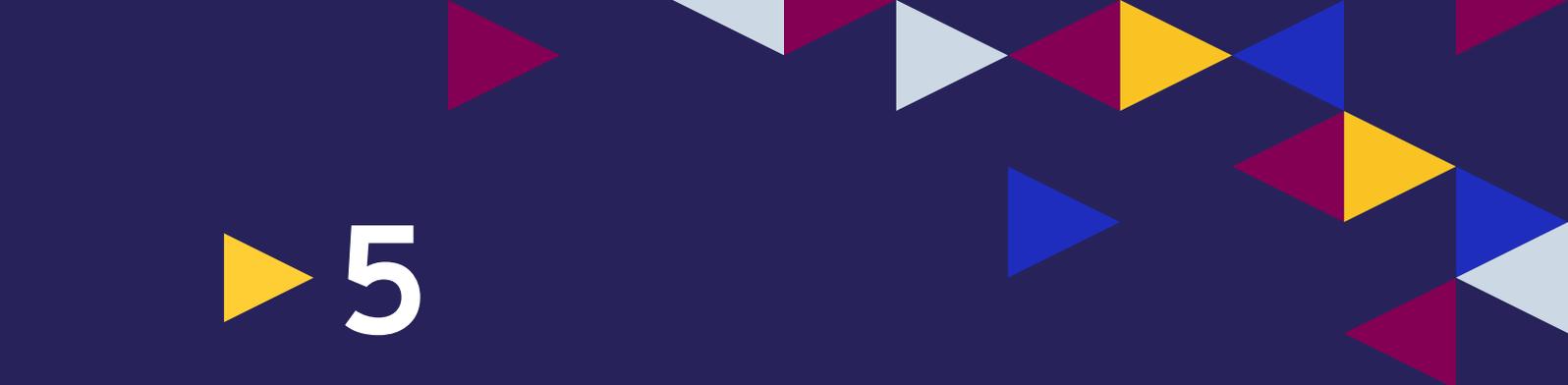
In addition, the expert conducted extensive desk research to collect existing information and analysis of secondary (quantitative) data.

Table 2 provides an overview of the specific purpose of each data collection method, in line with the objectives of the study (as outlined in section 4.1).

¹⁸ In West Kordofan, researchers were unable to conduct a KII with a representative of the Zakat Chamber. In North Kordofan, local researchers were unable to reach out to any of the targeted institutions.

► **Table 2. Overview of purpose of data collection methods**

	1	2a	2b	2c	3	4	5
	Document analysis	KIIs federal government	KIIs interest groups	KII development partners	KIIs state level agencies	FGDs	Service point mapping
Design of the current SP system (coverage/adequacy/comprehensiveness)	×	×		×			
Existing delivery mechanisms for key SP programmes	×	×		×	×	(×)	×
Key characteristics of workers in the informal economy and their current access to SP programmes	×		×			×	
Reasons for non-coverage: supply side	×	×		×	×		×
Reasons for non-coverage: demand side			×			×	
Options to extend the coverage of SP schemes to different groups of workers in the informal economy by improving design		×	×	×	×	×	
Options to improve and streamline services of existing (and new) SP programmes along the delivery chain		×		×	×	×	×



▶ 5

The supply side: analysis of Sudan's social protection system and its delivery mechanisms

This section outlines the most important regulatory and policy frameworks related to social protection for the working age population.¹⁹ Moreover, it provides general information on the design of existing contributory and non-contributory social protection schemes, as well as their delivery mechanisms (see box 4). This includes a summary of challenges in design and delivery faced by the various schemes. Based on the information provided for each scheme, the extent of coverage, adequacy and comprehensiveness of the overall social protection system (see box 2) will be analysed in more depth from the perspective of workers in the informal economy.

▶ 5.1 Legal framework, policies and strategies guiding social protection for workers

Social protection has been enshrined in the constitutional charter for the transitional period. It states that state agencies shall perform an active role in social welfare and achieve social development by striving to provide healthcare, education, housing and social security.

¹⁹ After the Sudanese revolution in 2019, the civilian-led transitional government initiated a considerable number of reform processes to review existing regulatory and policy frameworks, including some mentioned in the current section. Most of these reforms have been put on hold or cancelled since the military took control over the government in October 2021. The country has been without a functioning government since then, and it is also unclear if and to what extent the new leadership is still supporting these reforms.

Moreover, various sectoral laws and regulations regulate different social protection programmes. These include the following.

- ▶ The 1997 Labour Code, applying to all workers except civil servants, members of the armed forces, domestic servants, agricultural workers, family members of an employer, and casual workers, regulates employer liabilities (see box 8), including paid maternity and sick leave, as well as severance pay. It also concerns occupational safety and health (OSH) matters.²⁰
- ▶ The 2016 Health Insurance Act establishes that every Sudanese citizen shall be covered by health insurance or have access to healthcare services without facing financial risk. It also expands the right to access to health to all people, including non-nationals (see section 5.2.7 for more details).
- ▶ The 2016 Social Insurance and Pension Act established the NPSIF through a merger of the Social Insurance Fund (for the private and public sectors) and the National Pension Fund (for the government sector) (see section 5.2.2 for more details).
- ▶ The 2001 Zakat Act is the principle guiding legal document for Zakat, establishing it as a national socio-economic institution charged with providing safety nets, and regulating Zakat contributions, as well as benefits and eligibility criteria (see section 5.2.6 for more details).

It is important to note that – apart from Zakat schemes – there are no legal frameworks for major social assistance programmes outlined in section 5.2.

Sudan has ratified only one of the ILO conventions related to social security, namely the Equality of Treatment (Accident Compensation) Convention (No. 019, 1925). It has not yet ratified other important conventions related to this topic, including the Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention (No. 102, 1952), the Employment Injury Benefits Convention (No. 121, 1964 amended in 1980), the Invalidity, Old-Age and Survivors' Benefits Convention (No. 128, 1967), the Medical Care and Sickness Benefits Convention (No. 130, 1969), the Employment Promotion and Protection against Unemployment Convention (No. 168, 1988) and the Maternity Protection Convention (No. 183, 2000).

There are several other laws and regulations that affect the provision of social protection to self-employed and wage-employed workers and are therefore important to be considered for this study.

- ▶ A new Trade Union Act was jointly developed with a range of social partners, such as workers representatives, the Sudanese Professionals Association (SPA) and the Sudanese Businessmen and Employers Federation (SBEF) and with technical inputs from the ILO. It was approved by the Cabinet in July 2021, thereby laying an important foundation for the development of a new employment policy (see below) and the revision of the Labour Code (see above). (KII 2, KII 19, KII 20).²¹
- ▶ The Cooperative Societies Act of 1991 provides for modalities of establishment and registration of cooperative societies for conditions of membership, for organs and officials of cooperative unions, and regulates financial matters. Under this law, the cooperative movement is supervised and regulated by the Ministry of Trade and Industry at the national level and the Ministries of Finance at the state level. The Cooperative Law includes clauses that allow for political intervention in cooperative activities and afford the Minister of Trade and Industry powers to appoint members to the board of the National Cooperatives Federation, thereby limiting the cooperatives' independence. A new law on Cooperative Societies was drafted in 2020, which was hoped to allow for the launch of cooperative societies in all aspects of the economy (KII 5, ILO 2021a).²²

20 At the time of conducting the data collection for the present study, the Government of Sudan, led by the Ministry of Labour and Administrative Reforms (MoLAR), planned to revise the existing Labour Code, in coordination with state governments and social partners. The revision would foresee clearer regulations of rights and responsibilities of employers and employees, as well as the implementation of stronger enforcement mechanisms (KII 2, KII 3 and KII 19).

21 Sudan also recently ratified the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, (No. 87, 1948). However, it is important to notice that after the military took control over the government in October 2021, all trade unions, employers' unions and chambers of commerce were dissolved by Constitutional Decree 406.

22 At the time of conducting the data collection for this study it was under revision at the Council of Ministers, and it would still have to be approved by the cabinet and signed by the Prime Minister (KII 5, ILO 2021a).

► **Box 5. Supporting consumer and producer cooperatives through the My Commodity programme**

Recognizing the need to mitigate the potentially negative effects of the recent economic reforms package, the Government of Sudan issued an update on the existing cooperative legislations and announced the My Commodity Programme (Silaati) in July 2020. Silaati is a public service initiative which aims to distribute basic commodities and sell them at an affordable, below-market price. The programme aims to make basic commodities affordable and available to consumers, limit the inflationary effect of the economic reforms on the prices of goods in the market, and iron out price volatility due to instability in the exchange rate. The programme was launched at the initiative of the Ministry of Trade and Industries (MoTI) in partnership with other actors, such as the Ministries of Finance and Labour, Al-Nilain Bank and the Sudanese Businessmen and Employer Federation (SBEF).

There are two main types of cooperative societies under the programme.

- A group of people living in the same area can form a consumer cooperative to obtain food commodities at reduced prices. Refugees are able to benefit from this programme because there is no citizenship requirement to participate in a consumer cooperative.
- Farmers can form producer cooperatives and work together as shareholders to get support from the government in producing food commodities, such as access to land or to funds from cooperative banks. A producer cooperative under Silaati should have 40 to 50 members above the age of 18. Members must be holders of national ID cards.

Sources: KII 5, ILO 2021a.

- The 1925 Company's Act provides the legal framework on how to set up a business, its registration procedures, its legal form, name, company declaration and termination (for more information how to register a business see box 14).
- The 2014 Asylum Regulation Act sets the criteria for granting refugee status and procedures, defines the refugee's rights and obligations and regulates the competencies and powers of the Sudanese Commission of Refugees (COR) (for more information about the procedures to apply for asylum in Sudan and to get an employment permit see box 15).

The following policies and strategies provide an important framework for the provision of social protection to workers in the informal economy:

- The Social Initiative Programme (SIP)²³ was introduced by the Government of Sudan in 2011 as the first overarching initiative for the social protection sector. It included various components, such as direct cash transfers to poor families, access to the NHIF, the National Pension Fund and the Social Insurance Fund (recently merged into the NPSIF); the Zakat Fund; micro-finance, and vocational training centres aiming to enhance youth employment.
- The National Five-Year Plan for Economic Reform 2015–2019 explicitly mentioned two objectives related to social protection under Axis 4 "Social Services and Social Care": (1) "Develop the performance of the Zakat Fund/Chamber to satisfy the needs of vulnerable segments of society"; (2) "Enhancing, revising and expanding the role of existing networks and mechanisms of social protection in order to provide social protection for targeted categories [...]"

²³ Also sometimes referred to as the Social Support Programme.

- ▶ The Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) 2021–2023, launched in May 2021, recognizes social protection as one important tool to boost Human and Social Development (together with education, health and safe drinking water and sanitation). It states that it is necessary to develop a comprehensive and universal national social protection policy to address current challenges, such as programme overlaps, geographical inequalities and inefficiencies of the various programmes. The strategy foresees a rollout of regular cash transfer/income support programmes to at least 2 million households, the improvement of targeting mechanisms for various social protection programmes, as well as the improvement of their delivery mechanisms and support systems (including the development of a unified social registry and a unified beneficiary registry).
- ▶ In 2021, the government started to draft a new National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS) – the first of its kind – with support from UNICEF and the ILO. Following the life-cycle approach to social protection, one objective of the strategy would be to include workers in the informal economy in social assistance and social insurance more effectively. Unemployment support, public works, skill development programmes, dedicated support for women to include them in the labour market, and adaptive social protection mechanisms to protect farmers and pastoralists against climate and cyclical shocks, are foreseen as measures to address the needs of the working age population. A specific focus of the strategy would also be to improve the support for IDPs and refugees, as well as for persons living with disabilities, and to address the needs of the younger population, as 72.4 per cent of the population is under the age of 24 (KII 1, KII 14).
- ▶ A draft National Employment Policy was developed in 2016 with support from the UNDP and ILO. It focuses on formalization of employment, including improving workers’ access to social protection. However, this policy has never been formally adopted and implemented. The development of a new employment policy, with the strong involvement of social partners, was planned to start at the end of 2021. It would foresee gradual steps towards formalization of workers in the informal economy, including access to social protection as one important element of formalization (KII 2).²⁴
- ▶ A draft for a National Health Sector Recovery and Reform Strategic Plan (NHRR-SP) 2021–2024, based on the newly developed National Health Sector Recovery and Reform Policy for the same period, is currently being developed. It is the first health-strategy document since the Sudanese revolution. The four-year plan articulates a future direction for health during the transitional period for the Government of Sudan. Thereby, it offers an overarching framework and road map for different stakeholders to organize and strengthen the health system, aiming to achieve Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- ▶ A Draft National Strategy on Solutions for IDPs, Returnees, and Refugees (2021–2025) has recently been developed with the participation of the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan, and with the support of UNHCR and the European Union. The aim of the initiative is to help Sudan and South Sudan to come up with evidence-based and clear strategies and action plans that would provide durable solutions to the protracted refugee and internal displacement challenges (PROSPECTS 2022).

²⁴ The approval of the new Trade Union Act by the cabinet in June 2021 laid an important foundation for the development of a new employment policy and the revision of the Labour Code, with involvement of all social partners, such as the Sudanese Workers’ Trade Union Federation (SWTUF), the Sudanese Professionals Association (SPA) and the Sudanese Businessmen and Employers Federation (SBEF) (KII 2, KII 19, KII 20).

► 5.2 Mapping of existing social protection schemes and their delivery mechanisms

In recent years, the Government has set the foundations for a comprehensive social protection system, through the introduction or reform of various schemes (see figure 3), including:

- a. contributory social insurance schemes, that is, the NHIF and the NPSIF;
- b. non-contributory social assistance schemes targeted at poor families, that is, the subsidized arm of NHIF, the Direct Cash Transfer, the Sudan Family Support Programme (SFSP) and cash and in-kind assistance provided by the Zakat Fund; and
- c. entrepreneurship, employment and livelihood schemes provided under the Shamel programme and Zakat.

To date, social protection schemes in Sudan have been mainly financed by the government (budgetary resources provided by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning), social insurance contributions and Zakat contributions administered by the Zakat chamber as a quasi-independent institution affiliated to the MoSD. Apart from the current financing of the SFSP, development partners have played a minor role in the financing of national social protection programmes to date, but have played an important role to provide humanitarian and transitional aid through in-kind and limited cash support during periods of crises (for example, civil conflict accompanied by displacement, floods, disease outbreak or food insecurity) and for particularly vulnerable groups (especially IDPs and refugees).

The inventory in Annex 1 provides an overview of key design features of the most relevant social protection programmes for the working age population. The remainder of this section gives more details on the design of each of these programmes and maps out their delivery mechanisms (in dedicated boxes).

5.2.1 National Health Insurance Fund²⁵

The NHIF is the main health insurance provider in Sudan. It was established through the National Insurance Corporation Act of 1994 and is currently regulated by the 2016 Health Insurance Act. The NHIF started by including government employees and then gradually expanded to other sectors. Since 1996, membership in the NHIF is compulsory for both public and private-sector employees (Kjellgren et al. 2014). In 2011, the government started to include poor and vulnerable families as one of the components of the SIP, by subsidizing their contributions from public funds.

The NHIF is a semi-autonomous agency under to the MoSD.²⁶ The Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MoFEP) and the Zakat Fund (acting as a semi-autonomous agency under the MoSD, see section 5.2.6) are its main financiers.²⁷ The fund has its head office in Khartoum. In addition, the NHIF runs executive offices in all states and at locality level. State administration and administration units at locality level, as well as Local Committees (see box 7) and Zakat Committees are also strongly involved in implementation, especially for identification of eligible households and verification and validation of their eligibility.

25 The information provided here is based on Bilo et al. 2020 and the results of KII 6, 7 and 8, if not otherwise stated.

26 Until 2019 Ministry of Women and Social Security (MoWSS) and from 2019 to 2020 Ministry of Labour and Social Development (MoLSD).

27 In 2017, only 9 per cent of total revenues of the NHIF were from contribution payments (Cononge and Guérin 2018: 10).

There are different forms of membership in the NHIF.

- a. All government employees, employees of public sector enterprises and private sector employees working in companies with five or more employees have to register to the NHIF on a mandatory basis. Contributions of 10 per cent of fixed salary, constituting of 4 per cent of employees' and 6 per cent of employers' contributions, are directly deducted from the payroll and paid by the employer to the MoFEP (Herberholz and Fakihammed 2016: 216, Flower and Wartonick 2020).
- b. The self-employed can register directly with the NHIF branches at state or locality level, or at intermediary or interest organizations, such as syndicates, associations or unions. Self-employed workers have to pay their contributions – currently a monthly family rate of 300 Sudanese pounds²⁸ – to the account of the State Health Insurance Fund, either directly to the concerned branches or through the organization representing them.
- c. There is also a subsidized arm of the NHIF for poor families, with no clearly defined targeting criteria to select beneficiaries. The MoFEP or the Zakat Chamber currently pays a flat rate of 670 pounds per month for each subsidized family.

In 2019, the Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration of the European Union (EU) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) signed an agreement with the NHIF for a pilot to subsidize NHIF contributions of up to 2,000 Sudanese refugees returning from Libya, Egypt, Niger and Chad, among other countries, as well as their families with a flat rate of 350 pounds.

Article 5 of 2016 Health Insurance Act states that, in addition to all Sudanese nationals, all foreigners and refugees shall be covered by health insurance “in accordance with regulations to be set and through coordination with relevant parties”. In practice, foreign refugees usually do not have access to NHIF because of the lack of a national ID – unless they have a work permit issued by the competent labour office (see box 15) and thereby can gain access to NHIF through a formal sector job. This, however, rarely happens.

According to data provided by the NHIF, about 83 per cent of the total Sudanese population across all 18 states of Sudan have been covered by the NHIF until the beginning of 2021 – approximately 7.7 million families²⁹ and 34.2 million individuals.³⁰ More than 90 per cent of the families identified as poor – 5.8 million families and 24.2 million individuals – have been covered by the NHIF. This means that most of the NHIF members – namely 72.3 per cent of all affiliates – are poor and do not pay contributions. In comparison, formal sector employees (government, employees of public and private enterprises, police) and their family members, and self-employed persons and their family members, account for 13.2 per cent and 9.2 per cent of all affiliates, respectively. Other groups of affiliates are public and private sector pensioners (2.6 per cent) and students (2.7 per cent). Coverage among women is higher: they represent approximately 59 per cent of all individuals covered by the NHIF. The NHIF plans to extend coverage to 90 per cent of the total population by 2024.

28 In the state of Khartoum, the family rate is 700 Sudanese pounds. It is unclear if the rate has been adjusted to inflation since mid 2021.

29 The family is the unit of coverage, including the head of the household, parents, wife or wives, daughters until they get married and sons up to the age of 18, or 25 if they are still studying. Healthcare services for children under 5 years and pregnant women are not covered by the NHIF, as they are provided directly by the MoH.

30 It is, however, important to note that the population estimates of the NHIF are not fully accurate. According to data provided by UN OCHA, the total population of Sudan was 45,198,109 in 2020. Therefore, the actual coverage rate of NHIF is expected to be lower, approximately 75 per cent of the total population at the beginning of 2021.

► **Box 6. Access to healthcare for foreign refugees residing in Sudan**

Currently, access to healthcare for refugees is organized mainly by the Sudanese Commission of Refugees (COR) under the Ministry of Interior, with support from international organizations such as the UNHCR. This is being realized by running dedicated primary health facilities at refugee camps, where medical treatment is provided for camp residents, or through fee-for-service payments for the provision of health services for registered refugees outside camp settings. Secondary healthcare is usually not offered in the on-site health facilities at refugee camps and is provided to refugees at public health facilities.

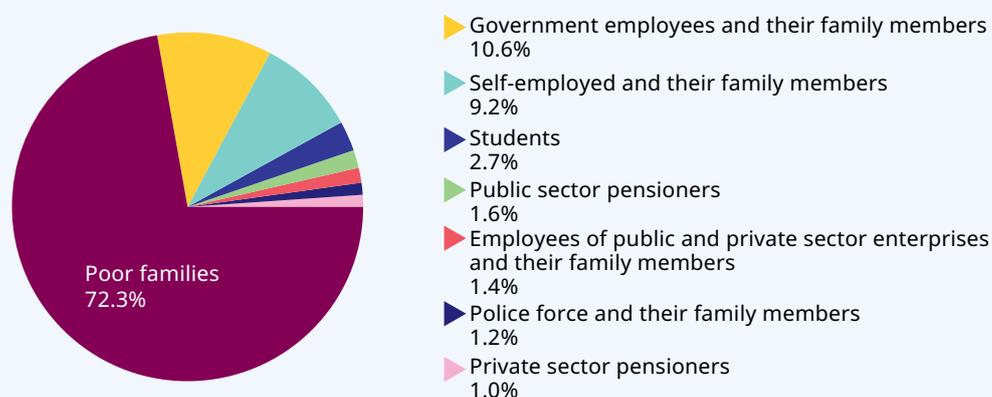
In 2017, the UNHCR, together with the NHIF, launched a pilot programme to enable refugees located in the state of Khartoum to participate in the NHIF. While the project had initially been conceived to enrol Syrians in the NHIF, the roughly 2,500 Yemeni refugees in Khartoum became the project's first targets instead. Eventually 900 of them were enrolled into the pilot. During the first year their NHIF contributions were paid by the UNHCR.

Results of the pilot study indicate that refugees found it easier to access care within the wider network of the medical facilities participating in the NHIF that are located in the places where they live and work, rather than in the refugee-specific system run by COR, where they would have had to present themselves at UNHCR offices and then at one of only two general hospitals with dedicated on-site staff. During the pilot phase, beneficiaries especially valued the speedy treatment inside NHIF-run hospitals and a streamlined course of treatment, without the need to seek additional authorizations or reimbursements for up-front expenses (a problem they have been facing in the system organized by COR). However, some were concerned about the 25 per cent co-payment for medication and their ability to assume this new cost of seeking medical treatment, particularly in light of recent price inflation for other goods and services that placed strains on household budgets. Others were concerned about coverage for exceptional services that were excluded from the benefit package or unavailable within the NHIF network.

The expectation was that refugees would continue to subscribe to the health insurance in the second year by paying contributions themselves. It appears, nevertheless, that most of the refugees can be considered as poor, and their income potential is limited by the lack of economic opportunities. A particular barrier in this regard was that a new band was introduced to the NHIF schedule of contribution rates for "individual refugees" of 50 pounds per person per month: five times the amount paid by individual nationals. Ultimately, the approach could not be sustained beyond the pilot stage or further rolled out. Political guidance from the responsible Sudanese ministries is currently lacking, despite the willingness of UNHCR to subsidize contributions.

Source: Canonge/Guérin 2018, KIIs 6 and 18.

► **Figure 4. NHIF population coverage by membership category (2020)**



Source: Based on data received from the NHIF during KII 7.

All NHIF members have unlimited access to a range of primary health services at public and private health facilities immediately after their enrolment by using their NHIF card, including:

- ▶ out-patient services offered by general practitioners or specialists, such as medical consultations, clinical detections, diagnostic tests, small surgeries, obstetrics, prescription of drugs (as listed in the Essential Medicines List) including referral to specialists, hospitals and laboratory services;
- ▶ dental services, such as clinical detection, gum treatment, fillings, tooth extraction, and prescription of drugs;
- ▶ laboratory tests;
- ▶ radiological and imaging diagnostic services;
- ▶ in-patient treatment at public hospitals, such as a range of surgical operations, endoscopy, intensive and intermediate care;
- ▶ other selected services, such as physiotherapy or psychiatric care.

In addition, 690 drugs are included in the Essential Medicines List. For these, the insured pay 25 per cent of the total costs.

Secondary healthcare services, with some exceptions, and tertiary services, are not covered by the NHIF. For some surgical operations that are not covered, such as cardiac, orthopaedic or neuro surgery, the NHIF provides capped financial assistance.

Table 3 summarizes the most important key performance indicators of the NHIF for the states covered by the study, as well as for the national level, as of 2019.

▶ **Table 3. Key performance indicators of NHIF by state (first half of 2019)**

State	Total population (NHIF estimate)	No. of NHIF cards issued	Percent of population covered ^a	No of NHIF health facilities	Utilization rate
East Darfur	1 568 062	855 286	54.54%	95	24%
North Darfur	2 583 946	1 674 874	64.82%	203	38%
West Darfur	995 019	865	86.94%	83	59%
South Darfur	3 657 603	1 874 409	51.25%	259	56%
North Kordofan	2 698 834	1 969 472	72.97%	313	70%
West Kordofan	1 691 698	1 210 754	71.57%	205	47%
White Nile	2 245 187	1 344 046	59.86%	174	87%
Khartoum	7 108 128	4 775	66.13%	398	51%
National	40 021 693	25 030 761	62.54%	3 327	65%

Source: own calculations, based on data received by NHIF representatives during KII 7.

Note a: Data in this table reflect the situation in 2019. As mentioned above, the official national coverage rate has increased since then and was estimated at 83 per cent by the NHIF at the beginning of 2021. It is, therefore, likely that coverage also increased in the respective states. Moreover, actual coverage rates might differ, as the NHIF population estimates for each state differ significantly from the UN OCHA estimates for 2020. UN OCHA population estimates are lower for East Darfur (1,078,877), North Darfur (2,426,498), North Kordofan (2,126,327) and higher for West Darfur (1,838,371), South Darfur (3,702,165), West Kordofan (1,748,349), White Nile (2,612,410) and Khartoum (8,497,019). These variations also reflect the high mobility of the population between states, partly caused by labour migration and forced displacement.

► Table 4. Delivery chain of NHIF³¹

Wage-employed	
 Outreach	<p>Outreach to private sector enterprises and their employees is organized differently across states. In several of the states surveyed for the present study, awareness campaigns and measures have been realized to inform private sector employers, such as private banks, telecommunication providers or factories, about the NHIF and its specific benefits for them and their employees. There is a loose cooperation between the local labour offices and the NHIF branches in some states that allows the NHIF to reach out to them. However, workers registered with the local labour offices are not automatically registered with the health insurance. In South Darfur and Khartoum, the NHIF branch and the local business registrars cooperate to identify newly registered private enterprises and reach out to them.</p>
 Registration and enrolment	<p>Each private enterprise with more than five employees should have a representative dealing with the NHIF; however, this is not a common practice in all states and private enterprises. Either the NHIF representative of the enterprise can come to local NHIF branches to register their employees, or employees can register themselves. For registration, an ID card of the employee and their family members, photographs of all family members to be covered, as well as the monthly payroll of the concerned employee have to be submitted, and in some states a registration form has to be filled in.</p>
 Contribution payments	<p>Contributions are automatically deducted from the wages and are paid directly by the employer to the NHIF.</p>
 Enforcement and control	<p>Mechanisms to enforce registration among employers in private sector companies are weak and backed neither by adequate legislation nor by institutional capacities of subnational NHIF branches or other institutions tasked with enforcement. In the case of North Darfur, the representative of the state NHIF branch reported that inspection mechanisms have been already set up within the locality branches. However, they have not yet started their work at the time of conducting the field research for this study. In West Kordofan, the state NHIF branch conducts workplace inspections jointly with the Labour Office. Companies that can only operate with a valid business licence, such as pharmacies, usually display higher levels of compliance because they have to bring proof of subscription to the NHIF of each employee when renewing their business licences. In some states, flat rates or special benefit packages are offered to private enterprises, incentivizing them to insure their employees. These packages include more services than the standard NHIF membership.</p>
Self-employed	
 Outreach	<p>Self-employed workers who want to sign up for the contributory health insurance receive all necessary information at NHIF branches at state or locality level. In some states, specific measures are taken to reach out to the self-employed, either through campaigns in the local media, or through agents, such as interest groups (such as craftsmen's associations or producer cooperatives) or local leaders (community leaders or imams). In some states (North Darfur, West Darfur and South Darfur, as well as Kordofan states) specific outreach groups called Shamaa have been formed; their task is to raise awareness of the importance and benefits of the NHIF membership among the local population. Also, national media campaigns are carried out by the NHIF to inform the population about the possibility of signing up to the NHIF.</p>
 Registration and enrolment	<p>Self-employed workers usually have to visit the local NHIF branch to register themselves and their family members for the health insurance scheme. Results of the service point mapping (see annex 6) show that registration is not possible at all NHIF branches in all states. For registration, an ID card (or a birth certificate in the case of children and a marriage certificate in the case of spouses), as well as a photograph of all family members to be covered has to be submitted, and in some states a registration form has to be filled in. Registrations are then forwarded to the Population Coverage Department at state level that is responsible for issuing the membership cards. These can usually be issued within a few hours and have to be picked up by the applicant at the local NHIF branch. NHIF membership cards are renewed on an annual basis, and renewal depends on the regular payment of contributions (see below).</p>
 Contribution payments	<p>Contributions have to be paid to local NHIF branches, either via bank transfers or in cash at the local offices. Results of the service point mapping (see annex 6) show that it is not possible to pay contributions directly at the local NHIF branches in some localities. Depending on the state, it is possible to make annual, quarterly or monthly payments.</p>

31 Based on KII 6 and KII 8, as well as KIIs with representatives of state level NHIF branches and results of the service point mapping.

 <p>Enforcement and control</p>	<p>Even though the current law states that the registration of self-employed workers is mandatory, there are no strict mechanisms in place to enforce it. More specific regulations have been enacted by some state authorities to enforce registration, for instance by linking business registration (see box 14) directly to registration with the NHIF. There are also no direct incentives to encourage the self-employed to register with the NHIF. The main incentive mentioned during KIIs with representatives of the NHIF at national and state levels is to improve the health services offered through the NHIF membership significantly and thereby make subscription more attractive for self-employed.</p>
<p>Poor</p>	
 <p>Outreach</p>	<p>Annual enrolment campaigns are being announced in local media to invite all poor families not yet enrolled in the NHIF to register for the programme. The campaigns are usually carried out in all states and localities at the beginning of each year. Depending on the state and its specific conditions, these campaigns can take two to three months. Local enrolment teams are formed, consisting of different actors as identified by the state governments, such as Local Zakat Committees (LZC), local Change and Services Committees (see box 7), professional federations, associations of persons with disabilities, representatives of IDP's communities, and representatives of NGOs. These local teams are responsible for identifying poor families to be newly enrolled with the NHIF and for informing them to register at local enrolment points (see registration). They usually rely on poverty lists and information about the poverty status of families provided by the Local Zakat Committees (LZC). Each state government is responsible for setting the quota for new enrolments at locality and neighbourhood levels.</p>
 <p>Registration</p>	<p>NHIF teams, consisting of staff from national, state and locality NHIF offices, are responsible for the logistics of the annual registration process and set up enrolment points in the neighbourhoods to register heads of households identified as poor. To do so, they collect all the necessary information and documentation. ID cards and corresponding civil registration documents, such as birth and marriage certificates, are a precondition to register with the NHIF. NHIF teams are usually supported by staff of other authorities, in particular representatives of civil registration offices who have the task of supporting eligible families with the issuance of identification documents, if necessary. In some states, KII respondents also reported that there are flexible mechanisms to register additional persons throughout the year, depending on specific needs.</p>
 <p>Eligibility verification</p>	<p>In back-office operational rooms, NHIF staff enter data of registrants received from the enrolment tents into the management information system (MIS). They do not verify eligibility of beneficiaries selected by the local enrolment committees and do not interfere in the selection process in any form.</p>
 <p>Enrolment and recertification</p>	<p>NHIF enrolment teams move back to neighbourhoods to distribute to each enrolled family envelopes containing NHIF cards and information on how to use them. Usually, these families do not have to pay a registration fee. In South Darfur, some participants of FGDs reported that they had to pay service fees at the time of registration or card renewal. The NHIF membership card is valid for a period of three years, after which time the membership has to be renewed at NHIF offices in the locality.^a Since 2018, a pilot has been carried out in some states to link the renewal to a recertification procedure with the aim of verifying if eligibility criteria for the subsidized arm still apply. But this practice is not yet fully rolled out across all states. Representatives of the NHIF at state level also reported that if there is a lack of funding for the subsidized NHIF memberships they have to deactivate ongoing memberships or are not able to renew memberships.</p>
<p>All</p>	
 <p>Provision of benefits</p>	<p>In the case of illness, the NHIF member visits a health unit, a primary health centre or a family medicine centre in their area to obtain the necessary treatment, or they can be referred to another health provider. State governments are asked in the guidance for annual enrolment campaigns to increase the provision of health services in alignment with the increasing coverage of the population with NHIF, to make sure that the supply of health services is in line with demand. Particularities in benefits provision for poor and self-employed. Benefits are provided to self-employed and subsidized NHIF members only in the state they are registered in.</p>
 <p>Complaint management</p>	<p>The NHIF runs a central-level subscriber service centre with a phone number and dedicated staff to deal with all forms of complaints and specific requests, ranging from problems with registration to complaints related to the services provided at NHIF-affiliated health facilities. There are also complaint and suggestions boxes in most state and locality level NHIF branches, as well as in NHIF-affiliated health facilities. Staff of the subscriber service have the task to follow up on complaints.</p>

Note a: If subsidized members do not renew their cards and visit a health facility, they can still access the services for free. They are then informed at the health facility that they have to visit the NHIF office to renew their card.

► Box 7. The evolution of local Change and Services Committees

During the regime of former president Omar al-Bashir, so-called Local Popular Committees, under the control of his National Congress Party (NCP), played a dominant role in selecting beneficiaries for the subsidized membership of the NIHF and other social assistance programmes. The committees were usually made up of retired army officers, local merchants, land brokers and imams, who often did not apply objective criteria to verify eligibility and were prone to corruption and clientelism.

When the government was overthrown in 2019, the Local Popular Committees were replaced by Local Resistance Committees (LRCs), sometimes called Neighbourhood Resistance Committees. Since 2010, their formation had been spurred by local, non-violent, peaceful activities against al-Bashir's regime, under the slogan *Silmiyya, silmiyya diedd al-Haramiyya* (peaceful, peaceful, against the thieves). These activities were led mainly by students and youth groups.

The LRCs later emerged as one of the most important political agents during the protests that led to the ousting of Omar al-Bashir in 2019 and have continued to play an important role since then. After the revolution, LRCs were formed all over the country. Their members are mainly young, often unemployed, people from all socio-economic classes. The committees' activities have resonated particularly well with politically interested people from the middle class and among the poor. The movement strives to overcome the divides of political party affiliation, calling for a new path.

In November 2020, a policy directive was issued by the transitional government to formalize the LRCs as so-called local Change and Services Committees. The directive foresees that the committees shall be composed of ten to twelve members, nominated in consultation between the Forces of Freedom and Change (FFC) and the residents of the neighbourhood or village, or the workers of a particular market or industrial area in the case of urban areas. Members of the former Local Popular Committees, as well as supporters and associates of the former regime, are officially barred from joining these new structures.

After the military dissolved the civilian-led transitional government in October 2021, the status and function of the Change and Services Committees has remained unclear.

Source: El Gizouli 2020, El-Battahani 2021, KII 1, KII 14.

5.2.1 National Pension and Social Insurance Fund³²

The Social Insurance and Pensions Law of 2016 established the NPSIF to provide social insurance to government, public and private sector employees. The NPSIF includes all government employees whose contributions are paid by the MoFEP, as well as employees of all public and private sector enterprises covered by social insurance contributions. Its strategic objective is to build an effective social security system and provide comprehensive social protection.

The NPSIF is a financially and administratively independent entity under the MoSD, divided into two sectors: government and public. Until 2016, these two sectors were covered by two separate funds: the National Pension Fund for the government sector and the Social Insurance Fund for private sector employees and employees of state enterprises. The 2016 law replaced all previous legislation and created one single fund. However, in practice, the two funds still have their own head offices and individual branches and the same organizational structure as before the merger. The 2016 law also foresees the creation of a Management Board, which must include representatives of trade unions, employers' organizations and pensioners, but it has not yet been realized.

³² The information provided here is based on Bilo et al., 2020 and KII 9, if not otherwise stated.

At the sub-national level, the government arm has branches in 16 states, while the private arm has 22 branches all over Sudan, 9 of them in Khartoum. The number of branches within one state depends on the economic activities in the area concerned. Additional branches have usually been set up in urban or peri-urban regions with considerable economic strength – usually in areas with a high number of manufacturing operations.

Membership of the fund is mandatory for all employees in the government sector, as well as public and private enterprise employees, irrespective of the total number of employees. Their contribution rate is 25 per cent of monthly wages or income, divided as follows: employees' contributions make up 8 per cent of gross monthly wages, whereas employers' contributions consist of 17 per cent of the gross monthly payroll, with 2 per cent of this last assigned to cover work injury insurance. Contributions are deducted directly from the payroll and paid by the employer to the respective fund.

Self-employed craftsmen and professionals are also covered on a mandatory basis. They pay 25 per cent of their monthly declared incomes. The minimum and maximum monthly earnings used to calculate contributions for self-employed persons are 1,500 and 20,000 pounds, respectively.³³ According to the 2016 NPSIF Act, agricultural workers (with the exception of those recruited for operation, repair and maintenance of mechanical equipment, and persons working in agricultural factories and enterprises where agricultural products are manufactured or marketed), domestic workers and contributing family workers are excluded from membership of the NPSIF. Any other forms of self-employment are neither explicitly included, nor explicitly excluded from the Act.

Coverage of the NPSIF has remained low over the last years. In the government sector, about 688,000 employees were insured as of 2018, and 191,000 retirees were receiving benefits. In the public and private sectors, 427,000 employees were covered, and 142,000 pensioners were receiving benefits. Only approximately 11 per cent of all persons above retirement age receive a pension from the NPSIF (Sato 2021: 22). Data from a recent household survey carried out in the states of Khartoum, East Darfur and West Kordofan also showed significant differences between rural and urban areas: Around 15 per cent of the business owners surveyed in Khartoum indicated that their employees were registered for a pension insurance (most probably the NPSIF), whereas coverage of employees of surveyed enterprises with pension schemes in East Darfur and West Kordofan was almost absent (ILO 2021a).

For various reasons, coverage with the NPSIF is especially low among women, making up a share of approximately 40 per cent of all NPSIF affiliates.³⁴ First, only 33 per cent of all working-age women participate in the labour force compared with about 75 per cent of working-age men. Second, if they are active in the labour market, they are often working in the informal economy, with no access to work-related social protection schemes, including the NPSIF. Moreover, average wages of women are only 60 per cent of those of men. Thus, it can be expected that old age pensions and other benefits provided by the NPSIF are significantly lower for women than for men (Etang Ndip and Lange 2019, Beaulieu and Landry 2021).

The NPSIF provides work injury benefits, old-age pensions, disability pensions, survivors' pensions and other benefits to its affiliates and their family members. No data are available about average pension rates provided under the NPSIF. The current minimum pension has been set at 3,125 pounds in April 2020. Benefits have been prone to devaluation due to high inflation rates over the last years. To compensate for the negative effects of hyperinflation, an allowance of 5,000 pounds per pensioner funded from returns of investments of the NPSIF was paid in 2021. There is also a plan to adjust the pensions to current inflation rates in 2022.

More details about eligibility for the respective benefits and the amount and form of benefits provided are outlined in table 5.

33 These thresholds might be outdated at the time of writing this study. It is unclear if they are automatically indexed or adapted to inflation rates on a regular basis.

34 In the private sector, the number of actively insured female members is four times lower than that of male members (Beaulieu and Landry 2021).

Under its current provision, the NPSIF allows for the payment of lump sum compensations in case of resignation or dismissal from service. Together with the severance pay provided by the employer in case of dismissal (see box 8), this is often used by workers as a substitute for the non-existing unemployment benefits. These payments represent very large amounts, especially in the public and private sectors. Over the period 2014–18, they represented on average about 60 per cent of the pension payments. About 95 per cent of the lump sums are paid upon resignation and dismissal, while only 5 per cent are paid upon retirement (Beaulieu and Landry 2021).

To combat poverty among its members, the NPSIF also provides social support to pensioners through microfinance, loans, and other forms of support in the areas of trade, agriculture and livestock, among others. To be eligible, the pensioner has to present a project for evaluation, to be assessed by a social worker of the NPSIF.

► **Table 5. Benefits provided by the NPSIF**

	Eligible persons	Amount or form of benefits provided
Work injury benefits	Insured persons who are subject to permanent disability of 15% or more as a result of work-related injury.	For full disability, a monthly pension equal to 83.33% of the salary at the time of the injury is being paid. If the person requires a carer, the person is eligible for an additional pension equivalent to half of the pension. For partial disability (more than 15%, but less than 100%), a monthly pension that is equivalent to a percentage of the full permanent disability pension based on the assessed degree of disability is being paid.
Old-age pensions	Insured persons aged 65 ^a and above, with at least 20 years of contributions.	For every 12 months of contributions, 2% of the insured person's average monthly earnings in the last three years before retirement is paid. The minimum monthly pension is 40% of the insured person's average monthly wages in the last three years before retirement (with a minimum value of 3,124 pounds since April 2020 ^b). The maximum monthly pension is 83.33% of the insured person's average monthly wages in the last three years before retirement.
Disability pensions	Insured persons who are younger than the normal retirement age assessed with a permanent total disability and have been in covered employment in the last year (with no minimum qualifying period).	The pension is equal to 50% of the insured person's average monthly earnings in the last three years before the disability began, or 2% of the same earnings for every 12 months of contributions (same as for old-age pension), whichever is greater. The maximum monthly disability pension is 83.33% of the insured person's average monthly earnings in the last three years before the disability began.
Survivor pensions	Eligible survivor when the insured person or pensioner dies. Eligible survivors include a widow(er); unmarried, non-working daughters; sons younger than 18 (26 if a student, no limit if disabled); dependent parents; dependent brothers younger than 18 (26 if a student, no limit if disabled); and unmarried, nonworking sisters.	Payment is equivalent to 50% of the last salary, or on the basis of the old-age pension (whichever is more), with a maximum of 83.33% of the last salary, split among the eligible survivors depending on family constellations. (1) Spouse's pension: 30% of the old-age or disability pension the deceased received or was entitled to receive is paid to a widow(er); 50% if there is either an eligible orphan or parent; 75% if there are no eligible orphans and parents but other eligible survivors; 100% if there are no other eligible survivors. If there is more than one widow, the pension is split equally. (2) Orphan's pension: 40% of the old-age or disability pension the deceased received or was entitled to receive is split equally among eligible orphans; 50% if there is an eligible widow(er) or parent; 70% if there is no widow(er) but eligible parents; 100% if there are no other eligible survivors. (3) Other eligible survivors: 30% of the old-age or disability pension the deceased received or was entitled to receive is paid to eligible parents; 50% if there is an eligible widow(er) or orphan; 75% if there is no widow(er) or orphan but eligible brothers and sisters; 100% if there are no other eligible survivors.
Death grants	Eligible survivor when an insured person or pensioner dies. Eligible survivors are the same as in the case of survivor pensions.	A lump sum equivalent to four months of the insured's monthly earnings is paid if the deceased was insured at the time of death; two months of the old-age or disability pension if the deceased was a pensioner.
Health insurance	NPSIF pensioners and their family members if not covered by NHIF otherwise	Payment of contributions to the NHIF directly by the NPSIF, which allows eligible persons to access the NHIF benefit package, as outlined above.

Note a: The normal retirement age can be reduced for arduous work. In the case of early pension from the age of 50 onwards, the old-age pension is reduced by up to 15 per cent.

Note b: The first 150 pounds of the minimum pension for private sector pensioners is supported by the NPSIF, the rest is payable by the government. The law does not provide for any automatic minimum pension or any pension indexation (Beaulieu and Landry 2021). In practice, minimum pensions are usually adjusted when the minimum wage is adjusted (KII 9).

► Table 6. Delivery chain of NPSIF³⁵

 <p>Outreach</p>	<p>Employers and self-employed who need to subscribe for the NPSIF receive all relevant information at the nearest NPSIF branch, usually located in the state capital. The NPSIF also uses the media to advertise actively for subscribing to the NPSIF based on the 2019 NPSIF Act. Information about the NPSIF has also been provided to workers through unions. However, active outreach mechanisms are limited.</p>
 <p>Registration and enrolment</p>	<p>Enterprises employing workers have to subscribe their business to the nearest NPSIF branch and have to hand in various documents, including a copy of the business licence (see box 14), a registration form, and a list with names and salaries of all employees. They receive a certificate that proves the registration of the business with the NPSIF.</p> <p>Self-employed workers usually also have to visit the nearest NPSIF branch to register for the NPSIF. For registration, an ID card and a valid business licence is needed, and in some states a registration form has to be filled in. Results of the service point mapping (see annex 6) indicate that registration is not possible at all NPSIF branches in all states.</p> <p>According to the NPSIF Act, the local business registrar also has to notify the NPSIF of the registration of any enterprise in the concerned area.^a</p>
 <p>Provision of benefits</p>	<p>All affiliates of the NPSIF have to go to the NPSIF branch at state level and show a personal ID document to claim benefits. A medical certificate is needed to claim disability benefits. To claim a survivors' pension, a death certificate and documents to prove the relationship with the deceased and the family composition (such as marriage and birth certificates or certificates of school attendance) are also needed.</p> <p>Payments of benefits are provided on a monthly basis to bank accounts at state-owned banks and post offices in far-flung areas. Lump sum payments are sometimes also provided directly over the counter in cash in state-level branches to avoid people having to open a bank account.</p>
 <p>Complaint management</p>	<p>Complaints can be filed at the nearest NPSIF branch. In some states, complaints can only be made at state-level branches.</p>
 <p>Contribution payments</p>	<p>Contributions of wage-employed workers are automatically deducted from their wages and are paid by employers directly, usually on a monthly basis.</p> <p>Self-employed workers have to pay contributions either via bank transfers or in cash at the local NPSIF branch.^b No information is available about the frequency of payments.</p>
 <p>Enforcement and control</p>	<p>According to the NPSIF Act, if employers have not paid contributions as a result of failing to insure all or some of their employees, if they paid contributions on the basis of fake salaries, or if they fail to pay contributions within the set deadlines, then they have to pay a financial penalty at the rate of 4 per cent of contributions. The Act also foresees that inspectors, designated by the NPSIF, have the right to examine records, log books, papers, correspondences and documents of employers and are authorized to request necessary data from employers, and to investigate the validity of such data. No information could be obtained as to if and to what extent these mechanisms to enforce compliance of employers are effectively implemented. Results of FGDs with wage-employed workers indicate that the inspections are not being carried out in practice.</p>

Note a: It could not be verified to what extent this is currently practised.

Note b: Results of the service point mapping (see annex 5) indicate that direct payments of contributions are not possible at all NPSIF branches.

³⁵ Based on the 2016 NPSIF Act, KII 9 and results of the service point mapping.

► Box 8. Employer liabilities (based on 1997 labour code)

According to the legislation, public and private sector employees are entitled to paid sick leave (100 per cent of the employee's last monthly earnings for the first three months of incapacity; 50 per cent for the next three months; and 25 per cent for up to three additional months. Thereafter, the employee is entitled to unpaid sick leave. As for paid maternity leave, the employee is entitled to 100 per cent of her last monthly earnings for eight weeks – four weeks before and four weeks after delivery. This is fully funded by the employer. For paid sick leave, the person must have been employed for at least three consecutive months before the incapacity began and must provide a medical certificate issued by a registered medical practitioner. For paid maternity leave, the employee must have at least six months of employment with the employer.

To cover the risk of unemployment, employers are required to provide severance pay to employees with at least three years of continuous employment with the same employer. The payment amount varies depending on the number of years of service: one month of the employee's monthly basic earnings is paid for each year of service from three to nine years, plus 1.5 times the monthly basic earnings for each year of service from 10 to 14 years, plus 1.75 monthly basic earnings for each year of service exceeding 15 years. The maximum payment amount is 36 months of the employee's basic monthly earnings.

Furthermore, the 1997 Labour Code foresees paid Idda leave of four months and ten days – a period of time during which a Muslim woman should be in mourning after the death of her husband.

By nature, self-employed workers are not covered by the employer liabilities, as stated in the Labour Code.

5.2.3 Strategic Cash Transfer³⁶

The Strategic Cash Transfer Programme – often labelled as Direct Cash Transfer – started in 2011 under the SIP, following the austerity measures implemented as a result of the economic shock created by the secession of South Sudan. Its major objective is to reduce the burden on families with limited income by securing the necessary means to ensure a minimum standard of living.

The programme comes under the overall responsibility of the MoSD, whose Commission for Social Safety and Poverty Reduction (CSSPR)³⁷ is responsible for its implementation, for the programme MIS, the management of beneficiary lists received by local institutions and financial institutions and the management of payments. At the state level, Poverty Centres, which are CSSPR units within the state-level Ministries of Social Development, have supported the implementation of the programme. Administration units at locality level, Local Popular Committees (see box 7), and Local Zakat Committees at village level have also been strongly involved, especially for the identification of eligible households and the verification and validation of their eligibility.

³⁶ The information provided here is based on Bilo et al. 2020 and the results of KII 1, 11, 12 and 13, if not otherwise stated.

³⁷ CSSPR is tasked with the implementation of most national social assistance programmes. It is also the main implementer for Shamel (see section 5.2.5), the COVID-19 emergency response (see box 10), the SFSP and the Connote MCCT+ (see box 11). Moreover, it is strongly involved in the implementation of the SFSP (see section 5.2.4).

The programme was supposed to provide the poorest households in all 18 states with monthly unconditional cash transfers. Eligibility for the cash transfer was originally determined based on the 2011 Zakat Poverty Census (see box 12), combined with community-based targeting mechanisms, thereby strongly depending on information provided by voluntary Local Popular Committees and/or Local Zakat Committees.

► **Box 9. Improving targeting mechanisms through the Social Safety Net project**

In 2016 the World Bank, through its Social Safety Net (SSN) project, started to support the CSSPR in implementing a new targeting and recertification process, based on three steps: 1) community-based targeting (CBT); 2) applying a proxy means test (PMT) with 29 indicators, based on the 2009 National Household Budget Survey, to households identified as poor through CBT; and 3) verification of a final list with the community. The process also includes checking the existing beneficiary list and excluding ineligible households, using the PMT formula (recertification), and including new beneficiaries (retargeting), thus aiming to correct both inclusion and exclusion errors. An MIS and a beneficiary registry have been set up to support these processes. To date, the project has improved targeting and recertification in six states, namely: North Kordofan, Sennar, White Nile, River Nile, Red Sea and Blue Nile. In addition, there has been an ongoing recertification and targeting process in three additional states (North State, Gazira and Khartoum) with financing from government for the first two and from UNICEF for Khartoum State. In total, more than 400,000 households have been targeted and recertified. The original plan was to scale up the targeting and recertification process to all 18 states, but the programme was interrupted in 2018 and only partially revived in 2019/20 after the change of government. It was redesigned in 2020 to align activities with the preparation of the SFSP (see section 5.2.4)

Sources: World Bank 2016 and 2020b.

Only Sudanese nationals were eligible for the cash transfer. Therefore, refugees were automatically excluded during the selection process. Even though IDPs were not explicitly excluded, the programme did not target them, as there are usually similar programmes available in IDP camps provided by the international community and as it has been difficult to reach out to IDP camps located in conflict zones.

The cash transfer expanded rapidly after its creation and reached a coverage of approximately 600,000 households in 2018. The original target was to cover 1 million households by the end of 2020 (Flower and Wartonick 2020, World Bank 2020a). Yet effective programme implementation suffered significantly from the effects of Sudan's most recent fiscal and macro-economic crisis, and cash disbursements were hampered in April 2018 by a combination of insufficient budget allocation, the lower amount of national currency in circulation and weaknesses and disruptions in administrative capacity. In February 2019, payments were temporarily re-established for approximately 85,000 families, mostly in Khartoum State.³⁸

A breakdown of the cash transfer by geographic locations reveals important variations in coverage across the 18 states and 131 localities of Sudan. Khartoum and Al-Gezira hosted nearly 30 per cent of cash transfer beneficiaries (16 per cent and 11 per cent, respectively), despite relatively low rates of poverty. However, residents of Darfur and Kordofan states, as well as other less developed states where poverty rates are higher (averaging 60 per cent), were significantly worse off in terms of cash transfer coverage than the rest of the country. Residents of Darfur localities were particularly neglected. The eight poorest localities with a poverty rate varying between 65 per cent and 77 per cent are in Central Darfur, West Darfur, and South Darfur. Despite this, they hosted only 3 per cent of cash transfer beneficiaries (Etang Ndip et al. 2020).

³⁸ It is not fully clear if payments have also been re-established in other states afterwards.

More details about the exact coverage of the Strategic Cash Transfer for the states covered in this study as of 2017 can be found in table 7.

► **Table 7. Poverty and cash transfer distribution by state (2017)**

State	No. of households	No. of poor households	Ratio of poor households	No. of beneficiary households	Ratio of cash transfer beneficiaries to poor households ^a
East Darfur	121 994	79 330	65.0%	19 682	24.8
North Darfur	414 592	229 703	55.4%	30 396	13.2
West Darfur	157 812	131 162	83.1%	13 764	10.5
South Darfur	465 712	302 021	64.9%	40 745	13.5
North Kordofan	561 066	286 179	51.0%	32 960	11.5
West Kordofan	148 166	79 684	53.8%	30 429	38.2
White Nile	357 037	193 131	54.1%	28 494	14.8
Khartoum	1 044 267	409 447	39.2%	79 599	19.4
National	6 001 018	2 556 301	42.6%	500 000	19.6

Source: Etang Ndip et al 2020.

Note a: It is important to note that this ratio does not give any information about how many poor households effectively benefited from the Strategic Cash Transfer.

The value of the cash transfer changed over time. The original benefit level was 100 pounds per month per household in 2011 and then increased to 250 pounds in 2017. It was further increased to 400 pounds in 2019 to compensate for high inflation. Originally, the cash transfer was designed as a monthly benefit. However, financing issues have led to a new arrangement of between at least two and at most six disbursements per year. Programme funds were allocated by the MoFEP to the CSSPR or MoSD, and the number of monthly benefits disbursed in each payment cycle depended on the availability of public resources.

The cash transfer is currently inactive. According to the information received by representatives of the MoSD and CSSPR, the plan was to reinstate the programme after completion of the SFSP – see section 5.2.4). Thereby the government wanted to build on the original programme design and delivery mechanisms, as well as on lessons learnt from SFSP. Upon continuation of the programme, beneficiary families should receive 3,000 pounds per month.

► **Table 8. Delivery chain of Strategic Cash Transfer³⁹**

 <p>Outreach</p>	<p>Upon initiation of the Strategic Cash Transfer in the respective areas, members of the Local Popular Committees (see box 7) and/or Local Zakat Committees in the villages reached out to households deemed as eligible, based on the data of the 2011 Zakat Poverty Census (ZPC) (see box 12). They had the task of validating the list of poor households, as determined by the ZPC. The information was then forwarded to the administrative units at locality level.</p>
 <p>Registration and eligibility verification</p>	<p>The locality administration was responsible for conducting household visits to apply a paper-based questionnaire called Cash Transfer Beneficiary Form, used for the final assessment of the eligibility of households. This process was repeated whenever Poverty Centres or localities indicated the need to replace households on the payroll (that is, if a beneficiary family has left the community). The localities forwarded the lists of eligible households to the Poverty Centres at state level, and they sent it to the CSSPR at federal level for approval.</p>

³⁹ Based on KII 1, 11, 12 and 13, as well as KII with representatives of state-level Poverty Centres and results of the service point mapping. This description does not take into account the retargeting and recertification process supported by the SSN (see box 9).



Enrolment and provision of benefits

After approval of the list of beneficiaries, these were informed by local officials, and the CSSPR initiated the payment process by providing the list of beneficiaries under their payroll to payment providers. Depending on framework conditions in the respective states, beneficiaries were assigned to appropriate payment providers and mechanisms. Payments were delivered through the postal service SudaPost;^a the Family Bank,^b the Savings and Social Development Bank,^c as well as the Zakat Committees^d in very remote villages where banks and postal services do not have sufficient branches or insecure areas. The respective payment providers had the task of reaching out to beneficiaries to provide them with the benefits of the programme on a regular basis. The cash transfer was delivered mainly through over-the-counter payments. Frequency of payments varied across states. For example, in East Darfur the cash transfer was paid every six months.

In practice, the payment mechanisms applied generated a range of challenges. Often, funds were returned by payment providers to the CSSPR accounts because they were not able to reach out to the beneficiaries and money was not withdrawn. There were also suspected cases of corruption and reports that the staff of payment providers embezzled the remaining funds, instead of returning it to the CSSPR, if beneficiaries did not withdraw their benefits.



Complaint management

No clear procedures applied for the management of complaints related to the Strategic Cash Transfer. Complaints received were usually handled by local authorities or State Poverty Centres on an ad hoc basis.

Note a: Al-Gezira, North Darfur, North Kordofan, South Darfur, and White Nile.

Note b: Khartoum.

Note c: Al-Gezira, Blue Nile, Gedaref, Khartoum, North Darfur, Northern, River Nile, Sennar, South Darfur, West Darfur, White Nile.

Note d: Blue Nile, Central Darfur, East Darfur, East Kordofan, Gedaref, Kassala, Northern, Red Sea, River Nile, Sennar, South Kordofan, West Darfur and West Kordofan.

► Box 10. Sudan's social protection response to COVID-19

In 2020 and 2021, the government decided to reuse the remaining budget dedicated to the Strategic Cash Transfer to implement a one-off emergency cash and in-kind transfer to support households affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, mainly targeting poor households, workers in the informal economy, teachers and casual workers. The programme was designed to support one million households, 430,000 through cash transfers and 570,000 through in-kind support.

To determine eligibility, a geographical targeting approach was used in Khartoum, which was then potentially replicated in other areas. The city of Khartoum was divided in three groups: a) ineligible areas; b) areas with access to shops, where households would receive cash; and c) areas in which households would receive food baskets (owing to the limited accessibility of shops and food). To select beneficiary households in eligible areas, the government decided to compile a new list of potential beneficiaries, with the support of community-based mechanisms such as the local Change and Services Committees (see box 7). A list of criteria was set up, to be used by the committees for selecting eligible households within their community.

For cash transfers, prepaid cash cards with 3,000 pounds were distributed to beneficiaries, starting at the end of April 2020. In total 390,633 cash cards were distributed. Table 9 shows the number of cash cards distributed in each state covered by the study, as well as the ratio of cash transfer beneficiaries to poor households (based on data from 2014).

The COVID-19 cash transfer is closely linked to the Strategic Cash Transfer (see section 5.2.3), as well as the SFSP (see section 5.2.4). In many states, families that previously benefited from the Strategic Cash Transfer were automatically selected for the COVID-19 support. At the same time, some delivery and supporting mechanisms of the COVID-19 cash transfer, such as beneficiary databases generated and the pre-paid cash cards issued, have been transferred to the newly established SFSP.

In-kind support in the form of food baskets also equalled 3,000 pounds. Each basket contained various commodities, namely: pulses (5 kg), oil (2 l), sugar (5 kg), tea (1 lb), wheat or sorghum flour (7 kg), salt (1 kg), as well as two types of soap (10 pieces). This basket was expected to cover the basic needs of the targeted families for three weeks, the initial time observed for the restricted movement. It is unclear how many households could be eventually reached through in-kind transfers.

The government had to contend with significant challenges when implementing the COVID-19 response. Lack of up-to-date socio-economic household data made it difficult to identify beneficiaries. Logistical barriers, in particular the absence of an established and well-working distribution mechanism, hindered the rollout of the support to most of the targeted beneficiaries in rural areas. There were no monitoring and evaluation strategies in place, nor any feedback mechanisms. Therefore, the effectiveness of the interventions is difficult to measure.

Source: ILO 2021a, Gentilini et al. 2021, KIIs 11 and 12, KIIs with state level Poverty Centres.

► **Table 9. Distribution of cash cards in selected states as part of the Government's COVID-19 response**

State	Cash cards issued ^a	No. of poor households ^b	Ratio of cash transfer beneficiaries to poor households ^c
East Darfur	11 752	79 330	14.8
North Darfur	11 191	229 703	4.9
West Darfur	8 052	131 162	6.1
South Darfur	7 650	302 021	2.5
North Kordofan	12 680	286 179	4.4
West Kordofan	9 723	79 684	12.2
White Nile	12 628	193 131	6.5
Khartoum	194 010	409 447	47.4
National	390 633	2 556 301	15.3

Source: ILO 2021a and Etang Ndip et al 2020 .

Note a: Based on ILO 2021a.

Note b: Based on Etang Ndip et al. 2020.

Note c: Own calculation. It is important to note that this ratio does not give any information how many poor households effectively benefited from the Strategic Cash Transfer.

5.2.4 Sudan Family Support Programme “Samarat/Thamarat”⁴⁰

The civilian-led transitional government of Sudan, in cooperation with the World Bank, the World Food Programme (WFP), the European Union and a range of bilateral development partners, has initiated the SFSP as temporary cash transfer programme – called Samarat or Thamarat in Arabic. The aim of the programme has been to support the Sudanese population during the challenging economic circumstances the country has been facing since the Sudanese revolution. The programme has been on hold since the military took control over the government in October 2021.

The SFSP has been aiming at alleviating the short-term negative effects of the removal of various subsidies on the majority of the population and to help generate the political and economic space for reforms. It was seen as a critical initiative to build the credibility of the transitional government to deliver to the Sudanese people, which would have to be rolled out urgently to move quickly on economic reforms. Moreover, it has been aiming at tackling the socio-economic consequences caused by the COVID-19 pandemic for the poor and vulnerable population.

Another dedicated objective of the programme has been to improve broader social protection delivery mechanisms and support systems through the prototyping and testing of new instruments, in particular outreach and registration mechanisms (including setting up and establishing a social registry and an SFSP beneficiary registry as supporting systems), payment modalities, and grievance redressal channels. The cash payments were planned to be directly linked to national ID card numbers. With this strategy, the SFSP has been aiming at helping to scale up National Civil Registration (NCR) coverage to move towards universal access to identification.

The multi-ministerial programme has been led by an inter-ministerial committee of the MoFEP and the MoSD. A Project Implementation Unit (PIU) was established under the MoFEP, directly supported by the World Bank with technical assistance. The CSSPR, as a semi-autonomous agency under the MoSD, and its decentralized Poverty Centres located within the state-level Ministries of Social Development or Welfare, have also been assigned an active role in implementation.⁴¹

The SFSP should provide direct temporary cash transfers to around 80 per cent of Sudanese families (about 32 million individuals). The cash transfer is supposed to be provided over the period of one year, with a possible extension of up to 18 months. Owing to the funding shortage and to allow for flexibility in resource mobilization, the programme was first implemented in phases. The phasing is geographical (state by state) and time-limited, initially delivering six months of grants to families, subject to availability of resources, scaling up to twelve or eighteen months later on.

To determine eligibility, the application of various inclusion and exclusion criteria were planned:

- a. the poorest localities are fully included, whereas the wealthiest are fully excluded;
- b. civil servants are excluded;
- c. mobile phone use is taken into account as a proxy; and
- d. families can exclude themselves on a voluntary basis.

Exact eligibility criteria applied in practice might differ across states.

⁴⁰ The information provided here is based on World Bank 2020a and the results of KII 11, 12 and 13, if not otherwise stated.

⁴¹ It is not fully clear how the roles and responsibilities between the MoFEP PIU and MoSD CSSPR are being distributed. According to information received by the CSSPR commissioner in a KII, the various entities operate in different geographic areas and are responsible for testing different delivery mechanisms (outreach mechanisms, databases for eligibility, payment mechanisms, and so on).

Only Sudanese nationals were selected as a target group of the SFSP, despite discussions between various national and international stakeholders involved in the design and implementation of the programme on if and how to include refugees. Specific efforts were made to reach out to IDP's communities, especially through cooperation with humanitarian aid organizations with longstanding experience in providing support to them.

The programme should provide 500 pounds⁴² per person per month for up to five family members over a period of one year, paid to the head of household. Thereby, the SFSP would constitute a temporary cash transfer, aiming rather at social impact mitigation than on long-term poverty reduction. It is, however, important to note that in the medium term, the transitional government of Sudan intended to transition eligible beneficiaries of the SFSP into permanent social protection schemes.

The rollout of the SFSP started in February 2021. By mid-June 2021, at the time of conducting the KIIs for this study, 200,000 families in four states, namely Khartoum, South Darfur, Red Sea and Kassala, could be reached.⁴³ After June 2021, the plan was to initiate the rollout to additional states, namely West Kordofan, North Kordofan, South Kordofan, Sennar, White Nile, Blue Nile, East Darfur and Central Darfur. North Darfur and West Darfur were about to be covered through a rural pilot with technical support of the WFP at the time of conducting the field research for this study.⁴⁴ According to the latest Implementation Status and Results Report published by the World Bank at the beginning of 2022, almost 1.5 million families (8.7 million individuals) received cash support through the SFSP by October 2021. The programme was then stopped after the military dissolved the civilian-led transitional government in October 2021.

42 The amount was equivalent to approximately US\$5/4 euro in 2020 when the programme was adopted and has been continuously losing value since then because of inflation. At the time of writing this study it was equivalent to approximately US\$1,10/1.00 euro.

43 According to information received from the CSSPR commissioner, CSSPR has been the key implementer of the SFSP in these states. It has managed to reach 180,000 families registered with poverty centres in June 2021 when the interview was conducted, whereas the SFSP PIU under MoFEP covered only 20,000 families. In the meantime, the PIU was able to register an additional 700,000 households in other selected states.

44 While KII and FGD in North Darfur showed that SFSP has already started at the time of conducting the field research, it has not yet been activated in West Darfur.

► **Table 10. Delivery chain of SFSP⁴⁵**

 <p>Outreach</p>	<p>The SFSP has initiated a comprehensive outreach campaign to inform the public – and in particular potential beneficiaries – about the programme and to build trust. This included the creation of a brand. The SFSP is directly linked to the national ID. Rollout is coupled with a campaign to increase the coverage with national IDs.</p>
 <p>Eligibility verification</p>	<p>Eligible households are automatically pre-identified by using inclusion and exclusion criteria. To determine eligibility of families, the programme builds, on the one hand, on information from already existing databases, such as the one used for the Strategic Cash Transfer (see section 5.2.3) and for COVID-19 emergency response (see box 10), while on the other, there seems to be strong involvement of local level governments and community mechanisms in validating this information and proposing the eligibility of households.^a</p>
 <p>Registration and enrolment</p>	<p>The SFSP uses multiple enrolment mechanisms.</p> <p>(1) In areas such as Khartoum, where registration for the national ID is nearly universal, the National Civil Registry has piloted a system to identify family units using already existing data. This has been linked with Subscriber Identification Module (SIM) registration records to contact potential beneficiaries directly and ask them to verify and validate their information for registration to the programme.</p> <p>(2) In more remote areas, physical enrolment points staffed with local enrolment committees are temporarily set up upon initiation of the SFSP to register those families selected as eligible, based on available data. The committees are composed of all relevant actors, representatives of the Services and Change Committees (see box 7), civil registration offices, Ministry of Finance, banks responsible for payment of cash transfers, and Telkom. They are operating under one roof as a one-stop shop during the period of enrolment. The aim is to provide future beneficiaries with the preconditions they need to receive the benefit, such as an ID number and card, access to a bank account or a mobile phone (depending on the payment mechanism selected), thereby avoiding the necessity to visit various offices or authorities to obtain the necessary documents.</p> <p>(3) There have also been plans to set up an opportunity to register on a website or via a mobile app.</p> <p>Families visiting physical enrolment points are notified directly if they are eligible. Others are informed via phone or SMS. Once selected, the family is enrolled as a beneficiary family in the SFSP database and added to the beneficiary registry and payment list. Families are encouraged to designate women as beneficiaries. They would then receive the full amount of benefits for their family through the selected payment mechanism.</p>
 <p>Provision of benefits</p>	<p>Eligible households can select between the following payment mechanisms:</p> <p>(1) prepaid cash cards, not linked to a bank account;^b</p> <p>(2) mobile wallets;</p> <p>(3) bank accounts as payment channels.</p> <p>The use of mobile payment mechanisms is to be accompanied by measures to improve financial literacy, to ensure that beneficiaries can make effective use of the selected mechanism and to sustain its use beyond the SFSP. In areas where digital payment is not an option, the SFSP programme planned to establish payment service points.</p> <p>When prepaid cash cards are used, beneficiaries are enrolled in the SFSP by issuing a cash card connected with the serial number to the name, the national ID number as verified in the civil registry, and the mobile phone number of the beneficiary. Once the cash card has been delivered, it has to be activated by sending an SMS to a service number. This will generate an automatic message to the system to indicate that the cash card has been activated. The message is then forwarded to the savings bank, and the transfer can be initiated. Upon receipt of their benefits on their cash cards, beneficiaries can collect them at ATMs or can use the card directly for cashless payments in shops with adequate points of sale (POS) systems.</p>
 <p>Complaint management</p>	<p>In cooperation with the World Bank, the government planned to implement a project-specific Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) to provide an avenue for complaints and updates regarding registration and enrolment, payments, and other operational matters. The GRM would include mobile-phone based applications and in-person centres for complaint registration and resolution, as well as a toll-free hot-line linked with a call centre.^c</p>

Note a: As has been the case for other programmes such as the Strategic Cash Transfer (see section 5.2.3), Shamel (see section 5.2.5), Zakat schemes (see section 5.2.6) and the subsidized arm of NHIF (see section 5.2.1).

Note b: Already tested and used during COVID-19 emergency response (see box 10).

Note c: At the time of conducting the field work for this study, the mechanism was not yet active in the states surveyed.

⁴⁵ Based on World Bank 2020a, the results of KII 11, 12 and 13, as well as KII with representatives of state-level Poverty Centres and results of the service point mapping. At the timing of writing the report, the delivery of the SFSP was interrupted.

► Box 11. The Mother and Child Cash Transfer Plus Programme

In 2020, the MoSD and CSSPR launched the Mother and Child Cash Transfer Plus Programme (MCCT+) to provide social security for mothers and their children in the first 1,000 days of their lives, which are particularly important for their development. The programme also aims to mitigate the negative effects of the COVID-19 socio-economic crisis on pregnant mothers and young children. It is supported technically by the UNICEF and has been financed by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. The MCCT+ targets pregnant women and women with children under the age of two with cash transfers integrated with health, nutrition, child protection services and training.

Eligible women and mothers are registered in primary healthcare centres at community level, which are considered as the closest points of public service delivery related to the first 1,000 days, and therefore serve as an entry point for integrated service delivery under MCCT+. Beneficiaries receive personalized bank cards to withdraw their monthly cash benefits. This approach allows for a high level of security in transfer payments and also enables accurate verification of payment transactions.

MCCT+ is initially being rolled out in Red Sea and Kassala. Around 50,000 mothers or pregnant women and their children should benefit from the programme in these two states. There has been a specific focus in building capacity and systems tools, such as registration mechanisms, an MIS, payment mechanisms and accountability tools, that could be further scaled up in a flexible and adaptive manner in other states.

At the time of writing the study, no assessment of the results and effectiveness of the programme was available. The programme is not explicitly included in the present analysis because it is not implemented in any of the states the study is focusing on.

Source: MoSD 2021.

5.2.5 Shamel⁴⁶

Shamel (Arabic for “Comprehensive”) was initiated in 2016 as an ad hoc programme, using funds of the Strategic Cash Transfer that could not be spent, owing to practical problems faced in the delivery of the payments.⁴⁷ It is a community demand-driven umbrella programme that aims to combat poverty from a comprehensive and multidimensional perspective by improving people’s lives and surroundings, focusing on national-level initiatives and efforts. In accordance with the poverty reduction objective of the Five-year Plan for Economic Reform 2015–2019, Shamel’s strategic objective is to contribute to social safety by reducing poverty among fragile population groups by 15 per cent within five years in the areas where the programme operates.

The programme is under the responsibility of the MoSD. The CSSPR at federal level, as well as their Poverty Centres at state level, are responsible for the implementation of the programme. As it is the case for other social protection programmes, it is highly dependent on local community structures for reaching out to potential beneficiaries and determining eligibility. Moreover, Shamel also cooperates with local organizations to implement the projects on the ground.

⁴⁶ The information provided here is based on Bilo et al. 2020 and the results of KII 11 and 12, if not otherwise stated.

⁴⁷ No additional money has been channelled to Shamel since then.

Shamel comprises various pillars, including a livelihoods pillar.⁴⁸ Its specific objective is to enhance people’s means of production, create work opportunities and increase productivity. To achieve this, it provides transfers of assets and agricultural inputs (such as goats and seeds), as well as the promotion of small agricultural projects (for example, home-made oils produced through vocational schools and beehive projects). Moreover, Shamel can provide training with the aim of improving people’s livelihoods.

Shamel aimed to reach 2 million individuals in the poorest localities within its first five years of implementation under all four pillars. Geographic targeting methods were applied by selecting the poorest localities, based on the 2014 household survey. Shamel was implemented in both urban and rural areas. Up to 2019, Shamel offered support to communities in 67 out of 182 localities across all states, except East Kordofan and Al-Gezira.

Under the livelihoods pillar, Shamel reached approximately 347,000 households. They were chosen as beneficiaries through community-based targeting. All nationals could participate in the livelihood pillar if selected by the local committees – even formal sector employees. Specific target groups depended on the state and included, for example, women, persons with disabilities, unemployed youth, small producers, nomadic population, IDPs, and refugee returnees of Sudanese origin. Foreign refugees were also targeted in some specific interventions.⁴⁹ The main decision to target them explicitly was taken by the responsible states. In many states, specific groups were excluded from the livelihood pillar of Shamel, for instance, government employees, official employers or bigger merchants.

It is difficult to systematize the specific benefits provided under the Shamel livelihoods pillar. The selection process for the interventions to be supported under this pillar was based on initial proposals developed by the Poverty Centres of the respective states, which in turn received suggestions for projects from the village and locality level. A technical committee, comprising representatives of relevant state ministries, was usually involved in the selection process.

The programme is currently inactive, and a new programme phase with an adjusted programme design and implementation channels is being planned, supported by UNICEF with technical assistance. The original programme document foresees an implementation period until 2030 and aims at reaching 4 million poor families.

► **Table 11. Delivery chain of Shamel livelihood support pillar⁵⁰**

 <p>Outreach and registration</p>	<p>In villages targeted by Shamel, selection committees comprising village and religious leaders, teachers and medical staff, among others, decided on the households participating in the livelihood interventions and reached out to them directly to inform them about the programme and its opportunities.</p>
 <p>Eligibility verification</p>	<p>Members of the committees conducted household visits to determine whether a household does indeed need to participate in the livelihood intervention. There were no specific guidelines issued by the national or state governments to support eligibility determination. Therefore, the approach differed across states. For example, in East Darfur, the criteria of the ZPC were used to select potential beneficiaries (see box 12). Anyone who fulfilled five out of the 15 categories 5 was considered as eligible. In the case of West Darfur, the state Poverty Centre coordinated with the Zakat office to make sure that beneficiaries did not benefit from both programmes at the same time. After conducting the visits, the committees compiled lists of the names and addresses of the individual beneficiaries identified according to the community-based targeting method described above and forwarded the list to the state Poverty Centres. They did not further verify eligibility of selected beneficiaries.</p>

48 The livelihoods intervention is the most relevant pillar from a perspective to extend social protection to workers in the informal economy and is the only one described here in more detail. The other pillars are: water (implementation of infrastructure projects such as irrigation systems to provide drinking water for humans and animals and to reduce the impact of droughts and environmental degradation); community awareness (support of projects aimed at strengthening local welfare institutions and community-based forms of solidarity, including the organization of groups of producers into associations, and projects aimed at fostering self-help and microcredit initiatives); and school meals (provision of meals for poor students at selected public schools, usually consisting of cereals, beans and boiled eggs, among other items purchased from local markets).

49 However, in the states surveyed for this study, refugees did not benefit from Shamel directly, according to information received during KII with representatives of state-level Poverty Centres.

50 Based on KII 11 and 12, KII with representatives of state Poverty Centres and results of the service point mapping.

 <p>Enrolment</p>	<p>The responsible focal point for Shamel at the Poverty Centres then presented the proposed projects and list of beneficiary communities and households to the CSSPR, which decided on their viability and approved the projects. Beneficiaries were informed in different ways that they benefited from the programmes. For example, in North Darfur they were informed via phone. In most other states, local officials or representatives of the community were asked to inform beneficiaries in person. Based on the decision of the CSSPR, projects were then implemented in the selected communities by initiating the specific activity.</p>
 <p>Provision of benefits</p>	<p>The process of delivering the actual benefits under the livelihood pillar (such as productive assets, training, and so on) differed depending on the specific nature of the intervention and across states and localities, as the projects selected and implemented varied significantly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ·Beneficiaries of the Shamel livelihood pillar in East Darfur received improved seeds or a specific type of goats to improve the breed. In addition, eleven so-called service complexes were established, offering different facilities to support various prevalent agricultural activities, such as oil presses, roasting machines or groundnut peeling machines. ·In North Darfur, the responsible authorities distributed sheep to households and agricultural tractors to communities. ·In West Darfur, poultry breeding was one specific focus of the project, along with support for other agricultural activities, as well as handicrafts among women with disabilities. Moreover, in some areas the component provided direct cash benefits to support livelihood activities. <p>In some states, such as South Darfur and West Kordofan, the livelihood component of Shamel was never active.</p>
 <p>Complaint management</p>	<p>There are no clear procedures for the management of complaints. Complaints received were usually handled by State Poverty Centres on an ad hoc basis.</p>

5.2.6 Zakat schemes for the poor and indigent⁵¹

Zakat is one of the five pillars of Islam and considered a religious duty for wealthy people to help those in need. As in other Muslim-majority countries, Sudan has a long tradition of providing support to poor and marginalized households through Zakat. It provides assistance in many forms, including unconditional cash transfers, payment of health insurance fees for poor people (by partially financing the NHIF), microcredit, livelihoods programmes, and temporary assistance to families during Ramadan or emergencies. The payment of Zakat contributions is mandatory for all those above a certain income threshold.

The Zakat Chamber operates as a semi-autonomous agency within the MoSD and is responsible for the collection of Zakat contributions and their distribution. Zakat is separated from other taxes, and therefore the chamber operates outside the jurisdiction of the MoFEP. An extensive institutional infrastructure reaches all the way down to the village level, where about 22,000 Local Zakat Committees are responsible for identifying the most immediate needs of the local community and providing assistance to the poorest households. The committees are responsible for providing (updated) information on (new) beneficiaries of Zakat, among other tasks.

According to numbers provided by the Zakat Chamber, 3,776,081 families across all states benefited from Zakat.⁵² The Zakat Fund has been able to increase its coverage steadily over recent years. Local Zakat committees are responsible for targeting poor families, applying Community-Based Targeting (CBT)

⁵¹ The information provided here is based on Bilo et al. 2020, Machado et al. 2018, Abdelgadir 2019, Elmaghrabi et al. 2020, and the results of KII 10, if not otherwise stated.

⁵² The Quran lists eight categories of people who can claim the right to Zakat, the two most common being those who are poor and needy. The other categories are those employed to administer the Zakat Fund, recent converts to Islam, those in bondage, those in debt, those committed to some act of service or devotion, and wayfarers. In 2017, 71 per cent of the Sudanese Zakat fund was allocated to the poor and the needy, while 4 per cent was transferred to indebted persons, 0.5 per cent to wayfarers (travellers who lost their money), 3 per cent for advocacy, 2 per cent in the cause of Allah, 15 per cent for those who work for Zakat, and 4.5 per cent for administrative costs.

mechanisms. As the receipt of Zakat benefits is linked to the possession of a national ID, only Sudanese nationals usually have access to these benefits.⁵³ Moreover, in some states, Zakat also excludes IDPs, as citizens are only being served by Zakat in their place of origin.

The assistance provided by Zakat directly to poor and vulnerable households is organized around the following axes.

- a. The first axis focuses on the provision of direct support in cash or in kind (especially food transfers), in particular meeting the needs of poor people without income-generating capacities (*faqir*), such as widows, orphans, the elderly or persons with disabilities. The value of cash transfers can reach up to 1,000 pounds, differing based on the needs of the beneficiaries. The frequency and level of benefits are usually decided by the Local Zakat Committees.
- b. The second axis targets needy people with income-generating capacities (*miskeen*) with productive, small and micro-enterprise business projects, providing, for instance, technical and administrative training, or inputs. Productive support projects can vary significantly in size, with disbursements ranging from 10,000 to 300,000 pounds. In some states, such as in West Darfur, this form of support was discontinued, as it was severely hampered by the security situation in the area. In other states, such as White Nile, this is the main domain of Zakat engagement.

In general, the amount of benefit is also determined by the funds available for distribution at local Zakat offices in both axes.

► **Table 12. Delivery chain of Zakat⁵⁴**

 Outreach	<p>The Local Zakat Committee, as well as Zakat offices at locality level, provide information on a regular basis to the population on available Zakat funds in their area.</p>
 Registration	<p>A person in need of support approaches the Local Zakat Committee to ask for direct support for the poor (in-cash or in-kind) or support for the needy (such as seeds or livestock, repair of equipment, and so on) and submits a completed application form, along with the necessary documentation, which includes the national ID, as well as a poverty certificate issued by a local leader in some states or a health certificate from a medical professional.</p>
 Eligibility verification	<p>The Zakat office at locality level checks the application and decides if the person is eligible (also taking into account the funds available at the time of application). In some cases, Zakat representatives also reported that they visit the households to verify the conditions. The eligibility criteria defined in the ZPC (see box 12) serve as an orientation for determining eligibility but are usually not strictly applied in most states.</p>
 Enrolment	<p>The person is informed by the Local Zakat Committee that they will obtain the support they applied for and is given all necessary information how to receive the benefit.</p>
 Provision of benefits	<p>In case of support for the poor, the beneficiary is provided with a regular cash or in-kind support. This is renewed on an annual basis, provided that there are sufficient funds available and the condition of the beneficiary did not improve in the meantime.</p> <p>In the case of support for needy, the beneficiary is provided with the productive asset or service they applied for. In some cases, productive assets provided are withdrawn from the beneficiaries as soon as their situation improves and are handed over to another family in need of support.</p>
 Complaint management	<p>There are no clear procedures for the management of complaints. Complaints received are usually handled by Zakat offices at the locality level on an ad hoc basis. In some states, Zakat chambers have dedicated grievance committees to deal with complaints related to the collection of Zakat contributions, but they are not dealing with the complaints of beneficiaries.</p>

⁵³ Results of the service point mapping (see annex 5) show some ambiguities in this regard. While in South Darfur, West Darfur, West Kordofan and Khartoum results indicate that refugees could receive services, they could not in North Darfur, East Darfur and White Nile.

⁵⁴ Based on KII 1, KII 10, KII with representatives of state-level Zakat Chambers and results of the service point mapping.

► **Box 12. The 2021 Zakat Poverty Census**

The 2011 ZPC, conducted by the Higher Institute of Zakat Sciences and the Central Bureau of Statistics, interviewed all households in areas found to be among the poorest by the 2009 National Household Budget Survey. Half of Sudan's population at the time was interviewed. The definition of poverty followed the nationally approved definition of poverty levels, and persons considered to be poor had to fall under at least one of the following ten categories.

- The family does not have any income, the head of the family is unemployed, and there is no one able to work.
- The income of the head of the family is less than 120 pounds^a per month, and the family has no income from any other source.
- The average per capita consumption of the family is less than 114 pounds per month.
- The head of the family is unemployed as a result of disability, illness or lack of work.
- The total family monthly income is less than the minimum wage.
- The family is afflicted by diseases that require financial expenditures, and the head of the family is paid.
- The head of the family has a chronic illness and a family of six or more members, who are all in education and have no other source of income.
- The head of the household owns assets such as a house, agricultural land or a taxi that does not work, thus these assets do not generate income, and he has no money to invest and a family that depends on him.
- Entrepreneurs such as carpenters, farmers and blacksmiths who do not produce enough for their sustenance and have no other income.
- Agricultural workers and shepherds who have no livestock or other income and have families of six or more members.

The survey included 54 questions, divided into five sections.

- Characteristics of family members (such as age, gender, marital status).
- Household income from agricultural (both vegetable and animal) and non-agricultural activities.
- Standard of living of the family.
- Experiences of the respondents with social welfare institutions.
- Characteristics of the dwelling or housing.

Based on their answers, households were given scores (the lower the score the poorer the household) and classified in three categories.

- The first category comprises those living in extreme poverty (scoring between 1 and 33 points in the classification system).
- The second group comprises those living in poverty (scoring between 34 and 67 points in the classification system).
- The third group comprises those who are non-poor (whose scores vary from 68 to 100 in the classification system).

The survey identified 2,291,789 poor families: 330,703 were extremely poor; 1,729,449 were moderately poor; and 231,637 were mildly poor.

The ZPC was used as the main source to identify eligible households for the Strategic Cash Transfer after its initiation in 2011, as well as for the subsidized NHIF. It also served as the main source to identify eligible households and individuals of Zakat schemes. Owing to gaps in coverage and the fact that the census was becoming outdated, it has lost its importance over the last years. At the moment, it is not actively used for any of the social protection schemes outlined in this study.

Note a: In 2011, 1 Sudanese pound was equivalent to approximately US\$0.4 or 0.3 euro.
Source: Biló et al. 2020: 24.

► 5.3 Assessment of Sudan's existing social protection system from a workers' perspective⁵⁵

A first assessment of the schemes available for the working age population (and their families) along the three dimensions of USP (see box 2) reveals the following:

Based on the mapping above, it can be observed that the coverage of two schemes is quite high.

The NHIF, as a hybrid scheme combining non-contributory and contributory elements, currently covers an estimated 83 per cent of the population. However, effective coverage is still limited, as many people affiliated to the NHIF are not able to access high-quality health services (see below).

According to information provided by the National Zakat Chamber, Zakat, as the only non-contributory scheme currently active, covers more than half of all households across the country, providing both cash and in-kind transfer for households without working capacities (Zakat for the Poor), as well as livelihood support for households with working capacities (Zakat for the Needy). However, results of the FGDs indicate that there is a huge gap between these official numbers and individuals and families actually benefiting from the various schemes provided under Zakat: only very few respondents of the FGDs stated that they had benefited from Zakat in the past or are still benefiting from it. Many considered access to Zakat as being very restricted, and criteria applied by Zakat to determine who is eligible as rather unclear.⁵⁶

Coverage of other major schemes is considerably low.

The NPSIF, addressing risks related to old age, disability and work injury, as well as death of the breadwinner, only covers 1.1 million public and private sector workers out of an estimated total labour force of 12.8 million (that is, less than 9 per cent), and only 11 per cent of all persons above retirement age receive a pension from the NPSIF. The average annual increase of affiliates has remained low over the last years. Workers in the informal economy are basically excluded from the NPSIF. Because of the low participation of women in the labour force, coverage among women is especially low.

The coverage of the Strategic Cash Transfer, as well as the Shamel Livelihood pillar, were very low with 9 and 5 per cent of all Sudanese households, respectively, especially when considering that 61.1 per cent of the total population live below the poverty line. The cash transfer is mostly dedicated to the poorest households without any working capacities and therefore does not explicitly target workers active in the informal economy. The ratio of cash transfer beneficiary households to poor household coverage, as shown in table 5, suggests that coverage was low even among poor households and is particularly low in the poorest states and localities. This was also confirmed during the field research: only very few workers participating in the FGDs conducted for this study benefited from the Strategic Cash Transfer and Shamel. Moreover, both programmes are currently inactive.

When looking at adequacy, it can be observed that most of the benefits provided under existing schemes can be considered as inadequate – especially those provided by non-contributory schemes that mainly address the risk of poverty due to insufficient household income.

While the benefit package provided by NHIF is often considered fairly extensive, some preventive and promotive measures are missing. Secondary healthcare services, with some exceptions, and tertiary services are not covered. For surgical operations that are not covered, the NHIF provides financial

55 The SFSP programme is not taken into account here as it only constitutes a temporary social impact mitigation programme. Moreover, it has been interrupted after the military took control over the government in October 2021, and at the time of writing this study there were no signs that the programme will continue.

56 Further details are being provided in the next section.

assistance to beneficiaries capped at 25,000 pounds.⁵⁷ In practice, many people lack adequate access to health facilities offering the services covered by the NHIF because of severe supply-side constraints. Many facilities in rural areas are unable to provide essential components of a primary healthcare package. Services are also sometimes completely absent, particularly in conflict zones such as Darfur and Kordofan states (World Bank n. d., Wharton et al 2020).

FGDs have shown that people in remote rural areas, as well as in marginalized urban areas, often have to travel very long distances to reach NHIF-affiliated health facilities. The costs for transportation often exceed the benefits associated with NHIF membership.⁵⁸ In the Darfur states, respondents reported that health facilities where they can access services for free through their NHIF membership are often crowded, and the number of health workers employed there is very limited. Therefore, the number of patients treated per day is also restricted. People sometimes have to wait several days or weeks to get treatment at these health facilities.⁵⁹

Additional challenges associated with the provision of benefits include non-functional referral systems, shortages and absenteeism of medical staff, limited staff performance, frequent drug stockouts (a problem also reported in almost all FGDs across all states), a lack of specialized staff trained in management, human resources and finance in public hospitals, and a fragmentation of service delivery between multiple providers (World Bank n. d., Wharton et al. 2020).

Problems with services provided under the NHIF are also reflected in utilization rates (see table 3). According to figures provided by the NHIF, the overall utilization rate was 62 per cent in 2019, that is, only 62 per cent of all NHIF members used their NHIF card at least once in 2019 to access health services. Use of health services varies significantly across states, reflecting inequalities in access to them; it is particularly low in East Darfur at 24 per cent and high in White Nile at 87 per cent (see table 3).

It is difficult to evaluate the adequacy of benefits provided under the NPSIF. Benefits have been prone to devaluation due to high inflation rates over the last years, and this poses a significant challenge for paying adequate pensions. The current monthly minimum pension of 3,120 pounds was equivalent to approximately US\$56 when it was set in April 2020 and was therefore just enough to lift individual pensioners to the international poverty line of US\$1.90 per day. At the time of writing the study, it was only equivalent to approximately \$7 and can therefore be considered as completely inadequate to sustain the livelihood of a pensioner. This also explains why even workers in the formal economy continue to be economically active after retirement – mostly in the informal sector.

The adequacy of benefits under the NPSIF is further undermined by the fact that many workers affiliated to the fund decide to withdraw lump sum compensations in case of resignation or dismissal from a job, instead of keeping the resources in the fund and continuing to pay as soon as they have found another job. In general, this practice defeats the basic purpose of a pension plan, which is to guarantee participants an adequate regular pension upon retirement (or earlier disability or death) (Beaulieu and Landry 2021).

Non-contributory cash transfers provided to poor families under various schemes have been low in the past. For example, the monthly amount provided to each beneficiary family under the Strategic Cash Transfer in 2019 was equivalent to approximately US\$8, whereas the average household size in Sudan is six members. A recent study answering the question whether the Strategic Cash Transfer Programme in Sudan was benefiting the poor also suggests that the transfer amounts were insufficient to lift households out of poverty and did not find any correlation between the implementation of the cash transfer and poverty reduction (Etang Ngip et al 2020).

57 It is unclear if this cap has been adjusted to inflation rates during the last years. It was equivalent to US\$56 or 51 euro at the time of writing this study, but was almost ten times higher in 2018.

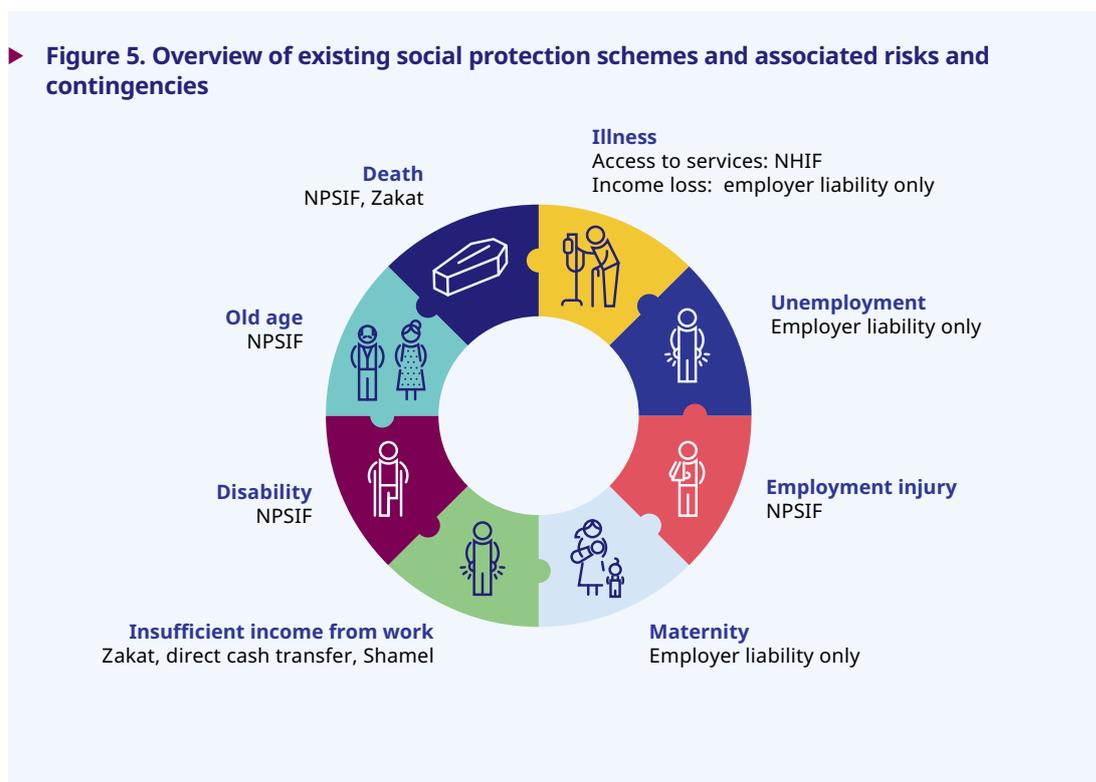
58 Costs for transportation have significantly increased since the partial removal of fuel subsidies.

59 The Sudanese healthcare system suffers from a severe shortage of health workers, with only 4.1 physicians and 8.3 nurses and midwives per 10,000 population in 2015. The main causes for this include low staff retention and high emigration of healthcare workers, driven by political instability, low wages and poor-quality training opportunities (Wharton et al. 2020).

Moreover, transfers have often been provided on an irregular basis for a limited period of time. In addition, the high inflation rates in Sudan over the last years have posed particular challenges to the provision of adequate cash benefits for poor families, as benefits would need continuous and automatic value adjustments. This principle has not yet been applied for most social protection programmes in the past. Increased benefits to compensate for high inflation rates often came too late and were too little.

It is difficult to assess the adequacy of livelihood schemes, including Zakat for the needy and Shamel, as different forms of support are provided across states to different groups. According to the information received during KIIs conducted with representatives of Zakat Chambers and Poverty Centres at state level, the results of these programmes have been mixed and only partially successful in generating additional income opportunities for their beneficiaries, partly because the benefits provided have been considered as insufficient. Owing to its nature as an ad hoc programme, Shamel was also unable to provide continuous support to beneficiaries, which would have allowed them to build more stable livelihoods in the medium to long term, with the potential to provide a pathway out of poverty.

The current social protection system in place is not yet fully comprehensive, as shown in figure 5. Some major risks and contingencies faced by the working age population are only covered through employer liabilities (see box 8), namely maternity,⁶⁰ unemployment⁶¹ and loss of income due to sickness. Dedicated family benefits, such as child allowances, are also not part of Sudan’s social protection landscape.⁶² Furthermore, it has to be noted that the Strategic Cash Transfer, as well as the Shamel programme, are currently inactive, meaning that Zakat is the only non-contributory long-term programme supporting those without sufficient income or unable to work.



60 A non-contributory Mother and Child Cash Transfer was piloted in 2021 with the support of several international development partners (see box 11). Under the current circumstances, it seems unlikely that this programme is going to be further extended.

61 In practice, lump sum payments from the NPSIF are also partly used by workers to compensate for income loss due to resignation or dismissal from a job.

62 Thus, also not included in figure 5.

When looking at comprehensiveness, it is also important to note that there are currently no mechanisms in place to cover covariate shocks, such as naturally induced or climate-related hazards, social conflicts or economic shocks, even though exposure and vulnerability of the population to these shocks is very high, especially for workers engaged in the agricultural sector. Shocks are mostly covered by humanitarian aid provided by international organizations and NGOs – mostly independently and not linked to routine social protection programmes.

In terms of delivery systems and capacities at local level (see separate boxes for each scheme described in section 5.2), most programmes have to contend with considerable challenges. Mechanisms for application and registration of many schemes are either not accessible on a continuous basis or are mostly located at state level. Only the NHIF and Zakat have branches at locality level. In the case of most social assistance schemes, mechanisms for needs assessment and eligibility verification are non-transparent, owing to the absence of clear and binding criteria to be applied by local committees responsible for this step in the delivery chain. Despite considerable efforts to improve benefit delivery over the last years, authorities responsible for the different schemes still have to contend with considerable challenges in delivering cash and in-kind transfers to poor and marginalized population groups, especially in remote rural (and urban) areas. Moreover, complaint mechanisms are non-functional or completely absent for most social protection schemes, except for the NHIF. In the case of the NPSIF, mechanisms for contribution payments are excluding people without bank accounts located far away from NPSIF branches. Last but not least, enforcement and control mechanisms for the NHIF and the NPSIF are poorly equipped and non-functional in most geographical areas. The service point mapping in annex 6 provides a more detailed picture about the accessibility of different services related to social protection in the states surveyed for this study.

These findings are mainly in line with the results of a quantitative study conducted by the FAO and the IPC-IG in 2020. Based on the data captured by the 2014–2015 National Household Budget and Poverty Survey (NHBS) in Sudan, the extent to which the population is covered against the risks that affect them throughout their life cycle was calculated (including food insecurity, unemployment, insufficient earnings, crop failure and livestock issues, as well as health risks). The results of the study indicate that there is a significant social protection coverage gap in Sudan, because benefits provided by government-led social protection schemes are not adequate to address the specific risks that affect the population throughout their life cycle. The study therefore concludes that even though the expansion of coverage of social protection programmes is crucial to enhance the effectiveness of programmes, it is important to keep in mind that the type and level of benefits are also important to be capable of effectively addressing the risks faced by different groups (Bacil and Silva 2020).

The same study also found out that in the absence of adequate and comprehensive social protection schemes provided by the state, most of the risks faced by households in Sudan are addressed either by protection individually acquired, in particular through engagement in different economic activities and the diversification of livelihoods strategies, or by informal social protection, provided by the family, the community, NGOs or humanitarian aid organizations. This is also confirmed by the results of the FGDs with different groups of workers in the informal economy conducted for this study, which will be presented in the subsequent section.

▶ 6

The demand side: diagnosis of the situation of different categories of workers in the informal economy

This section aims at profiling workers in the informal economy engaged in different key economic activities in Sudan, in the agricultural sector as well as in non-agricultural activities. The purpose is to generate a better understanding of living and working conditions of different groups of workers in the informal economy and how these conditions affect their uptake of, access to and enrolment in social protection schemes. The profiles for each group of workers includes the following information:

- a. prevailing production and income patterns;
- b. degree of formalization and organization;
- c. general risks faced by workers engaged in the specific activity;
- d. awareness about and access to the main existing social insurance, social assistance and livelihood schemes (see section 5.2 for more details) among workers surveyed;⁶³ and
- e. access to any other prevailing forms of social protection and social support.

If relevant, each subsection also highlights specific particularities that can be assigned to employment status (self- or wage-employed), the residence status (host community members, IDPs or refugees) and gender of the workers engaged in the concerned sector. Results of the analysis are summarized in annex 2.

⁶³ It is important to note that in many cases, awareness about and access to non-contributory schemes are not directly related to the specific economic activity that workers are engaged in. They are highly influenced by other factors, such as demographic composition and socio-economic status of the household they live in, gender, place of residence or residence status. Therefore, the information provided in this regard for each economic activity aims at generating an overall picture about the potential barriers that workers have to face in the informal economy when accessing non-contributory social protection schemes, rather than assigning these conditions to the specific economic activity they are engaged in.

▶ 6.1 Workers engaged in the agricultural sector⁶⁴

According to data from the latest SLFS conducted in 2011, approximately 45 per cent of Sudan's economically active population works in agriculture as the main economic activity. Although its share in employment has gradually declined as other sectors of economic activity have expanded, agriculture remains the mainstay of a large majority of employed Sudanese, particularly women, the poor, and in rural areas. In 2014, agriculture accounted for approximately 60 per cent of employment among women and 39 per cent among men. Employment in agriculture is more common among the poor. Agriculture is a low-skilled sector, where two in three workers have received no education.

In this sub-section, the situation of agricultural workers engaged in cash crop production (hibiscus, sesame and groundnut), forestry (gum arabic), livestock production,^{65 66} fisheries and subsistence crop farming, as well as wage labour in various agricultural activities, is analysed in more detail.

6.1.1 Cash crop production: hibiscus, sesame and groundnut⁶⁷

a. Prevailing production and income patterns

Approximately 70 per cent of Sudan's population depends partly or entirely on traditional rain-fed crop farming. The sector covers about 9 million ha of land. Crop production zones in Sudan are endowed with diverse natural resources and different climatic zones, and include areas with appropriate conditions for the production of a variety of crops. Cash crop production in the states covered by the present study is mostly conducted by small-scale producers (FAO 2017).

Whereas millet and sorghum are the main subsistence crops (see section 6.1.5), groundnut, sesame and hibiscus are part of the main cash crops in the geographic areas covered in this study. Small family units usually have no machinery available to grow these crops and practise traditional farming, depending on the use of locally made hand tools. Many cash crop farmers are also engaged in other economic activities, such as animal husbandry for food production (see section 6.1.3), as well as gum arabic production (see section 6.1.2) and the production of other forestry products (including charcoal). In addition, poorer farmers depend heavily on paid work (see section 6.1.6 and 6.2), most of it local, but also on seasonal labour migration to bigger cities, especially to Khartoum (FAO 2017 and 2019, USAID 2011). Input levels for crop farming are low, and there is a high variance of return of investment between different cash crops and different regions.⁶⁸ Small-scale crop farmers are subject to poor government and private sector extension services (FAO 2017 and 2019, Khalfalla and Mahmoud n.d.).

FGDs were conducted with hibiscus farmers in West Kordofan, sesame farmers in North Kordofan and groundnut farmers in East Darfur. Except for one group of male refugees and IDP producing hibiscus, all of them farm on their own land. They usually sell their entire cash crop to the traders and processors at local markets, directly after the harvest at current prices. Prices are usually lowest at this time, but they

64 In total 25 FGDs were conducted.

65 It was, however, not possible to generate specific information about the situation of nomadic pastoralists in the course of data collection at local level.

66 Tensions between pastoralists and other groups, such as cash crop or subsistence farmers or gum arabic producers, are widespread in many areas because of competition for land and resources that are increasingly limited owing to climate change and other environmental changes. These tensions often further exacerbate already existing conflicts between host community members, IDP and refugees. A rapid social cohesion assessment conducted by PROSPECTS in East Darfur and West Kordofan at the time of writing this study has shown that in some areas, refugee farmers have been pushed out towards the livestock corridor in the allocation of land.

67 In total, six FGDs were conducted: two with groundnut farmers in East Darfur, two with Sesame farmers in North Kordofan and two with hibiscus farmers in West Kordofan.

68 Return of investment is approximately 20 per cent for sesame, 15 per cent for hibiscus, and 7 per cent for groundnut in East Darfur (Khalfalla and Mahmoud n.d.).

have to sell immediately as they are usually in urgent need of money to sustain their families. In addition, many do not own safe places to store the harvested crops, though some are able to wait and sell their products at times when prices begin to rise again. Prices are often controlled by local traders and their brokers through price agreements. A value chain analysis conducted for another study in East Darfur showed that there is a lack of market information at the level of producers, and that farmers usually have no idea about the prices of their products in markets outside their area, or of price development throughout the year (Khalfalla and Mahmoud n.d.).

Cash crop farmers have limited or no access to formal bank lending. Merchants in the village sometimes provide funding to cash crop producers in exchange for purchasing crops under cultivation at a fixed price, often below the market price at harvesting time (known as the *Shail* system). With this system, producers are obliged to repay village merchants in quantities of the cash crop harvested. This practice is essentially a system of crop mortgage that intensifies the dependence of producers on village traders (Hassan 2017). During FGDs, dependence on the *Shail* system could be observed especially in the case of groundnut producers in East Darfur.

Only groundnut farmers in East Darfur stated that they hire external labour force outside their families to cultivate their land and to receive support during the harvesting season. Seasonal workers are paid in cash or get a share of the harvest in return for their work.

b. Degree of formalization and organization

Usually, farmers are not registered with any authority and do not pay income tax or any other duties. It is unclear if local merchants, as well as their intermediaries, operate as registered companies and if they pay taxes.

Other studies have shown that there is a low degree of organization through farmers' cooperatives or associations of small cash crop producers. Farmers mostly work on an individual basis to access inputs, services and crop markets (FAO 2017). This was also confirmed by the FGD conducted for this study: none of the cash crop farmers surveyed was a member of a producers' cooperative or association.

Workers are hired on an irregular basis and based on verbal contracts and are not registered with the local labour office.

c. Risks faced by workers engaged in the sector

The main risks confronted by cash crop farmers include diseases, caused partly or exacerbated by the hard and strenuous work they are conducting. They are also highly exposed to weather-related shocks, especially unfavourable rainfall, which could even result in complete crop failure and total loss of income. Other risks mentioned by participants of FGDs are pests that affect their crop (such as insects or worms), as well as grazing livestock.

d. Awareness about and access to social protection schemes⁶⁹

Contributory membership of the NHIF offered to self-employed workers is uncommon among cash crop farmers. The cash crop farmers belonging to host communities that participated in the FGDs are all members of the NHIF through the subsidized arm. However, they indicated that they are not satisfied with the services they could access at NHIF-affiliated health facilities. In particular, they complained about unavailability of medicines.

⁶⁹ As agricultural workers, cash crop farmers are explicitly excluded from the NPSIF.

Host community members participating in the FGDs indicated that they would be able and willing to pay monthly contributions for NHIF services (between 500 and 1,000 pounds) if this helped to improve the services offered significantly. Refugees said that they would be able to pay approximately 200 pounds to be included as host community members, provided that they could then access all benefits associated with membership. Among cash crop farmers in West Kordofan and East Darfur, the willingness and ability to pay for other social protection services was limited. In North Kordofan participants stated that they would be willing to pay, provided that services in the area were improved and vulnerable community members would receive adequate benefits.

Cash crop farmers do not provide any form of work-related social protection for their seasonal workers. Farmers who hire workers sometimes come up with health costs if a worker falls sick. But this is being done on an informal basis and without any contractual obligations.

All participants of the FGDs conducted with cash-crop farmers – except for refugees – are well aware and informed about a range of non-contributory social protection programmes, in particular the newly established SFSP. However, none of them already benefits from this programme, probably because at the time of conducting the FGDs it had not yet been fully rolled out to the geographic areas they live in.

Host community members are also mostly aware of the COVID-19 support provided by the government. In the state of West Kordofan some of the participants also benefited from it. However, they complained that it was difficult for recipients to receive the money because of the lack of ATMs in the area.

Some women in North Kordofan also received support from Zakat in the past, as they are widows and therefore qualify for direct support to meet the needs of poor people without income generating capacities (*faqir*). However, the support discontinued some time ago and they were not informed about the specific reason for the discontinuation.

e. Access to any other form of social protection and support

Seasonal wage labour on other farms or in larger cities is a common practice reported among crop farmers to diversify incomes and thereby tackle risks across the year, especially during the lean season. They also borrow from each other in case of an emergency or in times of increased needs.

Refugees participating in the FGDs in West Kordofan were previously supported through provision of seeds by Concern Worldwide in cooperation with the Sudanese government, but they reported that the programme stopped. They also receive regular food support by the WFP. They need to be officially registered as refugees to obtain regular food support. It was reported that refugees newly arriving in the area often need to address challenges to access the programme. They first have to be registered as refugees, and this is a cumbersome process which can take several weeks or months.⁷⁰ The food aid received by registered refugees is therefore often shared with those who do not qualify and also with people without any additional sources of income.

⁷⁰ The COR is obliged by Article 9 of the 2014 Asylum Regulation Act to determine the asylum application within three months (PROSPECTS 2022).

6.1.2 Forest production: gum arabic⁷¹

a. Prevailing production and income patterns

Officially classified as a forest product in Sudan, gum arabic is known to grow extensively in the so-called gum arabic belt extending approximately 520,000 sq km from western to eastern Sudan. It has been one of Sudan's primary export commodities for over a century and is also the most important forest product.⁷² It is estimated that 10 per cent of Sudan's population is dependent directly or indirectly on the gum arabic sector, and that the product contributes 15 to 25 per cent to the household income in Sudan. This indicates the importance of the commodity to the livelihoods of the Sudanese people (FAO 2017, World Bank 2020b).

The gum arabic belt stretches across the poorest of Sudan's 18 states, and most producers operate in remote areas with limited access to finance, markets, and agricultural inputs such as fertilizer, technology and implements. Producers either collect gum arabic from the trees planted on their own land or in natural forests controlled by the government. Owing to its seasonal nature, producers do not usually rely on gum arabic production alone. It is typically collected by small-scale farmers and can be seen as a business model perfectly organized to complement crop farming. In autumn, producers harvest other crops cultivated during the rainy season, such as subsistence crops (for instance, millet and sorghum; see section 6.1.5) and cash crops (for example, sesame; see section 6.1.1). They can then turn to gum arabic for income generation to ensure that they can cover their subsistence needs throughout the year. Many of them also raise and sell livestock (see section 6.1.3). In addition, poorer farmers are engaged in seasonal and occasional wage labour (see sections 6.1.6 and 6.2) (FAO 2017, Hassan 2017, USAID 2011).

All the gum arabic producers participating in the FGDs conducted in North Kordofan owned gum arabic (*hashab*) trees growing on their own land, in addition to other crops. They sell the product at current prices to traders at the local market on specified market days throughout the harvesting season. These local brokers usually control the prices. They, in turn, resell the product at intermediate markets in relatively large towns. From there, wholesale traders and agents of large exporters buy the products for further processing (World Bank 2020b). Participants of FGDs complained about the power of brokers controlling the market and the low prices they receive for their products.

Gum arabic producers stated that they have limited access to financial services, such as bank accounts and credits. Other studies indicate that they are also often highly dependent on the *Shail* system (World Bank 2020b).

Some producers hire labourers on a daily basis during the gum arabic collection period. Wages paid are partly dependent on the amount harvested.

b. Degree of formalization and organization

Results of the FGDs indicate that usually neither the producers nor the local traders own business licences, and therefore the sector can be classified as rather unregulated and informal at these initial stages of the value chain.

Gum Arabic Producers Associations were established with support from the government and international organizations in order to strengthen gum producers, enhance their marketing and bargaining powers and provide them with access to credit and extension services (World Bank 2020b), but none of the

71 Two FGDs were conducted in total, both in North Kordofan.

72 Other widespread forestry activities include charcoal production and timber cutting. Charcoal production plays an important role in providing employment opportunities and reducing poverty in rural areas, especially for itinerant, casual and unskilled workers. People often freely collect the fuelwood from natural woodlands, especially during drought years in the absence of other income opportunities (FAO 2017).

participants of the FGDs is a member of one of these associations. Some mentioned that they would welcome being part of an association to have a representative body through which they could access various services.

Workers in this sector are usually hired on a daily basis through informal verbal contracts and are not registered with the local labour office.

c. Risks faced by workers engaged in the sector

General risks confronted by gum arabic producers include injuries at work, exhaustion due to work pressure (combined with a lack of health services available in the area), as well as climate-associated risks – especially heavy rains, which have negative impacts on gum arabic production. In addition, grazing livestock such as camel or sheep also harms gum arabic production.

d. Awareness about and access to social protection schemes⁷³

Contributory membership of the NHIF offered to self-employed workers is uncommon among gum arabic producers. All participants of the FGDs, as well as their family members and most of the members of the community they live in, are members of the NHIF through the subsidized arm. However, satisfaction with services provided by NHIF is in general low among the gum arabic producers surveyed. They complained mostly about the unavailability of free and high-quality health services in their specific locality and indicated that they have to travel to the state capital to receive better and more comprehensive healthcare.

In general, the willingness to pay for social protection (including for the NHIF) was slightly higher among gum arabic producers than among workers involved in other rural-based livelihoods. They indicated that they would be willing to pay a monthly contribution of 1,000 to 1,500 pounds for NHIF if this helped to improve the health services provided in their community and locality. They also stated that they could pay regular contributions for other social protection schemes, such as support in case of accidents, provided that these services actually benefit those who are in need of it.

Wage-employed workers hired are usually not provided with any work-related social protection benefits.

Participants were aware of a range of non-contributory social protection programmes provided by the government, such as the COVID-19 cash transfer and the Strategic Cash Transfer. Some of them also benefited from these two programmes. But they were not entirely satisfied with the services provided. They complained, in particular, about the selection process and the payment mechanisms via ATMs, as they were difficult to access. Most gum arabic producers have also heard about the SFSP, but it has not yet been implemented in the area at the time of conducting the FGDs. Expectations of being enrolled in this programme were not very high among this group of workers.

e. Access to any other form of social protection and support

Many gum arabic producers own livestock and sell it in case of an emergency or pressing needs of family members. To diversify their income, they are also engaged in small businesses and offer their goods and services once a week at the local market, where they find solidarity with other individuals and families of their community. They reported that they frequently help each other on an informal basis in the case of an emergency.

⁷³ As agricultural workers, gum arabic producers are explicitly excluded from the NPSIF.

6.1.3 Livestock production: goat, sheep and cattle⁷⁴

a. Prevailing production and income patterns

Livestock and animal production in Sudan is predominantly traditional. The pastoral system based on extensive livestock production in the rangeland environment and on livestock mobility is the dominant system of production. In general, most Sudanese households keep livestock for subsistence, and more than one third depend on livestock for their livelihood. However, only 5 per cent of rural households identified animal husbandry as their main source of livelihood in 2014. The poverty rate was found to be slightly lower among those mainly engaged in animal husbandry than among those mainly engaged in crop farming (FAO 2017, World Bank 2020b).

There is an extensive and diverse pastoral system consisting of nomadic and transhumance subsystems (with little integration of livestock and crops), and of sedentary and semi-sedentary agro-pastoralist subsystems (consisting of a combination of livestock herding and crop farming). The specific system applied by the producers depends on the geographic area, as well as on the type of animal produced. Fully nomadic pastoralists usually hold camels and cattle, as well as other animals as a by-product.⁷⁵ Transhumance pastoralists mostly focus on cattle and have other animals as a by-product. They are sometimes also engaged in crop-farming as a subsistence activity and sell milk to local markets. Sedentary agro-pastoralists often keep goats and sheep, and usually combine livestock and crop-farming (see section 6.1.1). Often, different systems are combined. Cattle, sheep, goats and camels are the foremost livestock raised in Sudan (FAO 2017, World Bank 2020b).

All participants of the FGDs conducted in North Kordofan, West Kordofan and East Darfur own their own livestock (usually goats and cattle).⁷⁶ Male pastoralists usually sell livestock to local traders, mostly present at the village level. These traders then transport the purchased livestock to the major livestock markets and sell it to brokers. The brokers in turn sell the livestock to the domestic meat processors and exporters (World Bank 2020b).

In contrast, dairy production is often the sole domain of women in pastoralist communities (FAO 2017). Women livestock herders who participated in the FGDs stated that they sell their milk directly to end users in their neighbourhood, either at their homes or at village markets. Surplus milk produced by smallholder farmers in remote areas is sometimes sold to local traders who transport it to the urban areas where it is sold to local milk shops, restaurants, or dairy processors. They, in turn, sell the produce in the local markets and supermarkets (World Bank 2020b).⁷⁷

Participants of the FGD with male livestock holders in East Darfur indicated that they employ shepherds to take care of the animals in the countryside and pastures. Employed shepherds are often paid at least partly in kind (FAO 2017).

b. Degree of formalization and organization

No concrete information could be obtained through FGDs about the prevailing practices of registering businesses in the sector, but it seems that actors at the lower stages of the livestock value chain tend not to be registered and therefore operate mostly on an informal basis.

74 Three FGDs were conducted in total: one each in East Darfur, North Kordofan and West Kordofan.

75 In West Kordofan, 25 per cent of the state population (500,262 individuals) are nomadic pastoralists (PROSPECTS 2020). As a group living mostly in remote and far-flung areas, and often without a permanent place of residence, pastoralists have achieved a high degree of self-reliance and developed a specific culture (FAO 2017).

76 From the FGD conducted with male livestock herders in East Darfur, it did not become clear which type of animals the participants own.

77 A few large commercial dairy farms collect, produce, process and distribute milk and dairy products through their own supply chains (World Bank 2020b).

Only the participants of the FGD with women livestock holders in North Kordofan stated that they were members of a producer's association set up and supported by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). They also received their goats from this association and could pay them in the form of monthly instalments. The association also provided training and assets, but it discontinued some time ago because the women had insufficient resources to pay their instalments.

Workers are usually hired on a daily basis through informal verbal contracts and are not registered with the local labour office.

c. Risks faced by workers engaged in the sector

Women livestock herders in North Kordofan and West Kordofan indicated that the main risks they are facing include animal diseases that affect their goats and cows. Such events often lead to loss of livestock, which means a significant loss of income. They also reported theft of livestock. Participants in the FGD in West Kordofan said that the amount they earn from selling milk is usually not enough to sustain their families. This is especially true for widows, some of whom had lost their husbands as a result of the local conflict.

The main risks of male livestock herders include a lack of water (potentially caused by climate-related hazards) and the absence of rangeland for their animals.

d. Awareness about and access to social protection schemes⁷⁸

Results of the FGDs indicate that contributory membership of the NHIF is uncommon among livestock holders. All participants of the three FGD stated that they are covered by the NHIF through the subsidized arm and have membership cards.⁷⁹ Results of the discussions show that in all three communities where FGDs with livestock holders took place, almost all community members are covered by the NHIF. Participants in North Kordofan stated that "everyone who has a national number, birth certificate or age assessment certificate can become a member of NHIF". However, satisfaction with the health services that can be accessed through NHIF membership is low. Access to adequate and high-quality drugs, and long distances to reach NHIF-affiliated health facilities, were of particular concern in the areas where livestock herders were surveyed.

Most participants agreed that they would be willing to pay a monthly contribution for NHIF affiliation (up to 500 pounds among women participants and around 100 pounds among male participants) if this helped to improve the quality of services of nearby health facilities, because this would avoid having to make out-of-pocket payments for transport and services offered by private facilities that are often used in the absence of NHIF-affiliated health facilities. There is also a certain willingness to pay regular contributions for social insurance schemes among this group of workers, provided that the benefits would reach their communities directly and that those in need would be supported. Trust in the government in office at the time of conducting the interviews was high among female participants of FGDs, whereas male livestock holders in East Darfur said that they do not trust the government.

Livestock herders employing shepherds usually do not register them with the NHIF. The livestock holders usually pay any costs for health services if a shepherd in their employ is ill. They also tend to continue paying wages during the period of sickness. Other than these informal arrangements, they do not provide any form of work-related social protection for their employees.

Awareness about and access to non-contributory social protection programmes was mixed. Participants of the FGD with women in North Kordofan stated that they are not aware of any other social support programmes, nor have they ever benefited from a specific scheme. In contrast, participants of the FGD

⁷⁸ As agricultural workers, livestock herders are explicitly excluded from the NPSIF.

⁷⁹ Reaching out to nomadic livestock herders was mentioned as one specific challenge during a range of KIIs with NHIF representatives at national and state levels.

with women in West Kordofan, and with males in East Darfur, were aware of several social assistance and livelihood support programmes, such as the SFSP (even though it has not yet started in the concerned areas at the time of conducting the field research), Shamel, Zakat schemes for widows and other vulnerable groups, and the COVID-19 support. Some women in West Kordofan had benefited from the COVID-19 support in 2020 and others received support through Zakat as widows. All other participants of the three FGDs with livestock holders stated that they have not yet benefited from any social protection programme.

e. Access to any other form of social protection and support

In case of an emergency or any major life-cycle event, livestock holders often sell animals to obtain additional income. They are also engaged in seasonal and daily wage labour: men often go to larger cities and send money back home to support their families. Women reported that they sometimes work as domestic servants or offer goods and services at the local market. They also borrow from each other if they need financial support.

6.1.4 Fisheries on inland waters⁸⁰

a. Prevailing production and income patterns

Even though the contribution of fisheries to the Sudanese GDP is marginal, the fisheries sector plays a major role in the food security and livelihoods of a portion of the Sudanese population located close to water resources. It is estimated that there are 25,000 fishers all over Sudan and another 85,000 workers engaged in related jobs as fish traders or fishmongers, processors or suppliers of fishing gear. Fishers active in the inland waters tend to have a low socio-economic status and are generally constrained by the lack of proper organization and by poverty (FAO 2017).

Most fishers in Sudan's inland waters are engaged as own-account workers – sometimes assisted by family members – and use traditional boats and rudimentary fishing gear. They benefit from the open access water management systems prevailing in Sudan. The majority combine fishing with agriculture to sustain their livelihoods. The sector as a whole receives insufficient support services from the government (FAO 2017).

The results of FGDs conducted in the state of White Nile revealed that fishers active in the Gebel Aulia reservoir sell their product to different customers. While some of them sell to local merchants, others sell directly to restaurants or households, either at local markets (in the town of Kosti), or directly on the shore. Sometimes fishers receive loans from fish merchants for purchasing their gear, with agreements to provide the merchants with fish at a certain price. Others hire fishing equipment from the merchants, and the renting fee for equipment is then deducted when selling the fish to them. In exceptional cases they also take a loan from the bank to purchase equipment and build up their business.

The fishers surveyed do not hire employees for their own business.

b. Degree of formalization and organization

Fishers active in the inland waters in the state of White Nile have to pay so-called water taxes to local authorities to be allowed to carry out this economic activity. However, all participants of the FGDs conducted confirmed that they are not officially registered as own-account workers, do not own a business licence and do not belong to a large company.

⁸⁰ Two FGDs were conducted, both of them in White Nile.

Other studies conducted in the fisheries sector have shown that the sector is poorly organized in general. However, in the state of White Nile, some well-organized and efficient fisher societies and unions can be found that support their members in their economic activities (FAO 2017). The fishers participating in the FGDs for this study confirmed that they are members of a fishermen's association that was formed without support from the government or any other organization. These organizations have the purpose, among others, of providing support for poorer fishers who cannot afford their own equipment, and also of solving disputes between fishers. It is hoped that they could support fishers in being officially recognized as business owners

c. Risks faced by workers engaged in the sector

Fishers are exposed to various risks, including work-related injuries and diseases (especially bilharzia and snake bites), as well as the growth of seaweed in the reservoir, which often damages the fishing nets. Theft of fishing nets was also reported as frequent threat during the FGDs. In addition, White Nile has shown some signs of overfishing, endangering the livelihoods of fishers in the area (FAO 2017).

d. Awareness about and access to social protection schemes⁸¹

Results of the FGDs indicate that contributory membership of the NHIF is uncommon among fishers, whereas awareness about and membership in the NHIF through the subsidized arm is the rule among this group of workers. However, most fishers complained about the quality of services offered at NHIF-affiliated health facilities and the limited opening hours of the nearest facility. Moreover, they reported that medicines needed (for example, for the treatment of malaria, which is widespread in the area) are often not available.

Results of the FGDs show that fishers would not be able or willing to pay contributions for any social protection scheme, including the NHIF. The main reasons mentioned were that they do not trust the government and that the services provided are poor. The general perception among fishers is that people who are better off benefit more from government schemes than those in need of support. They mentioned that the community usually takes care of poor and needy people and that government support barely reaches the area they live in.

Fishers are also aware of the SFSP, COVID-19 support, the Strategic Cash Transfer, Zakat schemes and the My Commodity programme. However, only a few people participating in FGDs among fishers claimed that they already receive support through the SFSP. Some participants complained that even though they registered for the SFSP they could not yet access the benefits, partly because they had problems accessing ATMs, which are not located in the area. Recipients would have to travel to the nearest town to withdraw the benefit from the ATM. Others do not know why they have not received anything so far. The participants who received the benefit said that the cash is provided incompletely and on an irregular basis.⁸²

With regard to the COVID-19 support, participants of FGDs reported that fishers were among those mostly affected by the crisis in their area as a result of closed markets during lockdown. However, only a few cash cards were issued to the community and then distributed to those most in need by the local Change and Services Committee. Therefore, most fishers in the area could not benefit from the COVID-19 support.

One FGD also revealed problems with the My Commodity programme (see box 5), which had been recently rolled out in the area. Several fishers stated that they are part of a Silaati cooperative society, which they formed in their community several months ago as instructed by the neighbourhood Change and Services Committee, and that they paid 1,200 pounds per person to receive discounted goods. But the goods they were offered eventually had the same price as on the market. Therefore, they consider the programme to be useless.

81 As agricultural workers, fishers are explicitly excluded from the NPSIF.

82 It is, however, important to note in this regard that many fishers participating in the FGD are not fully aware of the benefit they are entitled to, in particular the fact that support is only provided for up to five family members.

Fishers also complained about Zakat in the area as they have not been able to receive any support from it, even in the case of an emergency.

e. Access to any other form of social protection and support

Several non-governmental organizations, such as Plan Sudan, are active in the area supporting fishers, for example, through the provision of fishing equipment. However, only few fishers have benefited from this support so far. They frequently complained that they do not have any other form of support in the area.

6.1.5 Subsistence crop farming⁸³

a. Prevailing production and income patterns

Subsistence crop farmers in Sudan mostly rely on rain-fed agriculture. They practise traditional farming and usually do not have any machinery available. The main subsistence crops in the target areas of the study are millet and sorghum. Subsistence crop farming is usually combined with herding of small livestock, especially sheep and goats. In addition, they sell their surplus production, if any, at local markets. The food produced by a large number of subsistence farmers and the cash obtained from selling potential surplus crops is often not enough to sustain their families. This is the reason why many resort to supplementary resources of income such as selling firewood, tapping gum arabic (see section 6.1.3) or working as seasonal labourers (see section 6.1.6), at times in faraway places (FAO 2017).

FGDs were conducted with men and women subsistence farmers belonging to host communities, as well as IDPs and refugee communities in East Darfur, West Kordofan and North Kordofan. Most of the farmers surveyed in this group do not own the land they are working on. This is especially true for IDPs and refugees. Sometimes they rent the land in return for crops harvested. They grow different crops, such as sorghum and millet (mostly for their own consumption), groundnuts, sesame, beans, watermelon, and okra.

Subsistence farmers sell the crops that they do not need for their own consumption at local markets, to end consumers or local merchants or brokers representing larger companies. The products are sold at the current market price, which is set by local merchants and is usually lowest at the beginning of the harvesting season. Many farmers have to sell their crops immediately after the harvest at the lowest price, either because they do not have any opportunities to store them, or because they need money urgently to pay off their debts with local merchants or landowners or to sustain their families. Only few farmers stated that they are able to wait for good market prices before they sell their surplus crops. After debts are paid in kind to landowners and local merchants, the quantities that can be sold at local markets are often small, especially in years when harvests are affected by bad weather conditions.

The whole family is usually engaged in farming, including husbands, wives and children. Only those owning their land are sometimes able to hire workers to get support during specific production stages.

b. Degree of formalization and organization

Most subsistence farmers participating in the FGDs have never heard of any associations or cooperatives in the area representing their interests. Some cooperatives exist around Ed Daein, and IDPs located there are also active members.

⁸³ In total, eight FGDs were conducted: four in East Darfur, one in North Kordofan and three in West Kordofan

Contracts with seasonal and daily workers are short term and based on verbal agreements. Those not owning land, especially IDPs and refugees, are often engaged in occasional day labour themselves. They carry out the work based on verbal agreements. In some cases, employers pay the costs associated with an illness or accident of a hired worker, but this does not seem to be a common practice and depends on the benevolence of the specific employer.

c. Risks faced by workers engaged in the sector

The main risks mentioned by subsistence farmers include the lack of their own land and their high dependence on landowners, their large debts with merchants or landowners, and the loss of crops due to theft, grazing livestock or climate-related conditions such as heavy rains. Malaria is also a primary concern for many subsistence farmers. In case of a disease, some of them are obliged to sell their crops to local merchants before the harvest at very low prices (also known as the *Shail* system).

d. Awareness about and access to social protection schemes⁸⁴

Unsurprisingly, results of the FGDs show that contributory membership of the NHIF is rather uncommon among subsistence farmers. Most subsistence farmers among IDPs and host communities are members of the NHIF through the subsidized arm. However, in general they are not satisfied with the services they can access through their NHIF membership. Host community members living close to the Al Nimir camp in the locality of Assalaya in East Darfur reported that if they are sick, they often head to the refugee camp and use the facilities there, as otherwise they would have to travel to the state capital to access public health services (including those affiliated to the NHIF). Farmers also reported about problems using the NHIF cards in other states, such as Khartoum, where they often migrate in search for wage employment during the lean season.

Among subsistence farmers of the refugee community living in El Meriam, some had access to the NHIF as in the past they were able to obtain a national ID. Interestingly, this is one of the few groups that indicated that they are satisfied with the services they could access through their NHIF membership, even though they are aware of some shortfalls, such as the lack of medicines in NHIF-affiliated pharmacies in the area. A reason for this could be that they see that other members of their community, who are excluded from the subsidized membership of NHIF because of their refugee status, have to address even more challenges in accessing adequate health services than they do themselves.

Despite their unstable and limited income, some subsistence farmers stated that they would be able to pay monthly contributions (ranging from a symbolic amount of 100 pounds to up to 1,000 pounds) for NHIF membership. However, most of them would only be willing to pay if NHIF services in their proximity improve significantly. This would help them to reduce their costs for health services in the long run, and therefore NHIF membership is seen as an investment, rather than an additional financial burden. Some subsistence farmers also suggested that they would need flexibility in contribution payments, that is, instead of monthly or annual instalments (as currently practised) they would prefer to pay three or four times a year. Most subsistence farmers refuse the idea of paying a considerable amount for any other form of social protection, either because they consider themselves as too poor or because they do not trust the government. Willingness to pay was only visible among one group of IDPs in East Darfur, whose participants stated that they trust the present government at the time of conducting the FGD.

Subsistence farmers belonging to the IDP community in East Darfur are well aware of the SFSP, and many of them are already registered. They reported that many people in their community had problems with registration because of a lack of national ID cards. At the time of conducting the FGD, the SFSP was not yet active or being paid out in the areas surveyed in East Darfur. Some of the subsistence farmers of the IDP community benefited from the COVID-19 cash support.

⁸⁴ As agricultural workers, farmers are explicitly excluded from the NPSIF.

Participants of all FGDs with host communities in East Darfur, as well as in West Kordofan and North Kordofan, said that they have never been part of any social protection programme. Only one male participant of an FGD conducted with host community members in West Kordofan stated that he was part of the Strategic Cash Transfer, but that this support was delivered on an irregular basis and was stopped a few years ago.

e. Access to any other form of social protection and support

As most other groups engaged in agricultural activities, subsistence farmers reported that the diversification of their income from work is one of the main strategies to address the risks they are facing. All family members, including children, are therefore often engaged in different forms of casual work, such as producing and selling charcoal, selling water, or working in the construction sector, in restaurants or markets. Men often migrate to larger cities to find seasonal wage labour there. In times of increased needs, they also borrow from other community members or from large merchants. If available, they sell livestock in times of an emergency.

Subsistence farmers of refugee communities living in West Kordofan are supported by the World Food Programme with regular food aid. Some of them also reported that their community had previously received support in the form of seeds by Concern Worldwide, but only a few could benefit from this programme, and the support had already ended at the time of conducting the field research for this study.

6.1.6 Wage-employment in agriculture⁸⁵

a. Prevailing production and income patterns

A significant part of households located in rural areas of Sudan are engaged in seasonal wage labour. Small-scale and subsistence farmers and members of rural landless households (including FDP households) often offer their labour for farming activities outside their own farms. In fact, seasonal and occasional wage employment provides one of the most important income sources for rural households in most of the states surveyed for this study and is prevalent in many agricultural sub-sectors, in particular in crop farming, forestry and livestock production (see sections 6.1.1, 6.1.2 and 6.1.3) (FAO 2017).

Participants of FGDs conducted in North and West Kordofan are mainly active as occasional, seasonal or daily wage labourers in hibiscus and sesame production. Three out of four FGDs were conducted with FDPs, who own only a small piece of land, or none at all. Most of the agricultural wage labourers surveyed work for various farmers on a daily or hourly basis. They usually go in the morning to gathering points where farmers look for workers to support them on their farms for an agreed period of time.

Male participants of FGDs in North Kordofan stated that the average hourly wage paid to them was 1,000 pounds. No similar information about average daily or hourly wages could be obtained from other FGDs. Women engaged in hibiscus production in West Kordofan said that they work either in return for money or receive a share of the crop they cultivated from their employer after the harvest. In the latter case, they go to the local market to sell the product to local merchants.

b. Degree of formalization and organization

Written working contracts are almost non-existent in agricultural wage labour in the areas surveyed. Working conditions are agreed verbally, often on a daily basis. It is also uncommon for them to be registered by their employer with the local labour offices. As a consequence, workers usually do not receive any other work-related benefits than the agreed wages (or share of the crop).

⁸⁵ In total, four FGDs were conducted: three in North Kordofan and one in West Kordofan.

Results of the FGDs indicate that no associations, unions or other types of organization representing the interests of wage-employed workers engaged in agriculture are present in the areas covered.

c. General risks faced by workers engaged in the sector

Wage-employed workers engaged in agricultural activities face several risks. These include illnesses (in particular malaria), leading to high spending on health and limited or no working capacity, accompanied by a lack of income. Exhaustion and fatigue due to the high pressure at work and long working hours is another problem often mentioned. In addition, low – sometimes fluctuating – wages are of particular concern for this group of workers, often leading to a lack of food for their family. Problems are further exacerbated by a lack of written agreements between landlords and labourers.

d. Awareness about and access to social protection schemes⁸⁶

Wage-employed workers are usually not registered with the NHIF through the contributory arm. All wage-employed workers in agriculture of Sudanese origin participating in the four FGDs were members of the NHIF through the subsidized arm. But they complained that the services covered by NHIF do not meet their needs.

Only participants of the FGD with male host community members stated that they would be able and willing to pay a small monthly contribution (approximately 500 pounds) for NHIF membership, provided that this helped to improve health services available in the area. The ability and willingness to pay for social protection services was limited in this group of workers. On the one hand they stated that their incomes are low and fluctuating, on the other they also mentioned that they do not trust the government and fear that the money invested would not lead to any specific benefits for them, their families and their communities.

It is remarkable that even though they can be considered to be one of the most vulnerable segments of the rural population none of the agricultural wage-employed workers present during FGDs received any form of non-contributory social protection provided by the government. This might be explained partly by their residence status: three out of the four FGDs were conducted with IDPs and refugees. They usually face higher barriers in accessing state-provided social protection schemes, especially because they often lack a national ID, which is often a precondition for enrolment (see sections 7.5 and 7.6).

e. Access to any other form of social protection and support

All wage labourers in agriculture reported that they rely mainly on their own income from work and try to diversify their family income as much as possible by engaging family members, including their children, in different economic activities. Men often go to larger cities to work in wage employment during the summer season. Women and children are engaged in casual work at markets or restaurants. They also cut trees to produce charcoal or work as domestic servants. If their income from work is not enough, they rely on the support from members of their community or borrow from shop owners to purchase the goods needed and pay them back later, as soon as they have gained some income.

Participants of the FGD with refugees in West Kordofan stated that they receive food support by the WFP. They also provided information about a programme of the IFAD, which supplies seeds to small farmers in the area. However, they could not yet benefit from the programme, as they do not know how to get access.

⁸⁶ As agricultural workers, wage labourers in agriculture are explicitly excluded from the NPSIF.

► 6.2 Workers engaged in non-agricultural activities⁸⁷

While agriculture clearly dominates the economy in rural areas, the labour force in urban areas is mainly active in the service and industrial sectors. In 2015, approximately 47 per cent of all Sudanese workers were engaged in the service sector and 8 per cent were active in industry. The education levels of workers in both sectors are slightly higher than those of agricultural workers: the share of workers without formal education is approximately one in three in both sectors (AfDB 2018, Etang Ndip and Lange 2019).

In this sub-section, the situation of workers engaged in small-scale trading, craft and related trades, manufacturing and waste picking will be analysed in more detail.

6.2.1 Small-scale trading: street vendors and market traders⁸⁸

a. Prevailing production and income patterns

According to the latest SLFS, approximately 19 per cent of all employed persons above the age of 15 have been active in the services and sales sector. In urban areas their share was approximately 26 per cent, with 27 per cent of all active male workers and 24 per cent of all active women working in the sector (UNDP/ILO 2014). Street vendors and market traders are an integral part of urban economies, offering easy access to a wide range of affordable goods and services. They work and offer their goods (and services) in broadly defined public spaces, including roads, transport junctions, built market areas, or urban communities by offering their goods at the doorstep. Even though they are a large and visible workforce in Sudan's urban areas, it is difficult to estimate their numbers accurately, and no efforts have been made so far to do so.

According to a study conducted by UNDP in 2013, most small-scale traders in the state of Khartoum are active as own-account workers and can be classified as subsistence enterprises, which are mainly working for survival, rather than in a business-oriented way. Most street vendors and market traders can be considered as poor, have no or only limited formal education and a low level of business-related skills (UNDP 2013).

For the present study, FGDs with different groups of male and female street vendors and market traders were conducted in North Darfur, West Darfur, South Darfur, White Nile and the state of Khartoum. Most of them sell in consumer markets in urban areas or directly on the street. Some walk from house to house in their neighbourhoods to offer their goods (and services) at the doorstep. Most of the traders participating in the discussions sell directly to end consumers; some of them also sell to restaurants.

Products sold by vendors include food such as milk, oil, fruits, vegetables and spices (some of them process the goods before they sell them, for instance buying milk from farmers and making yogurt, or buying lentils, fruit and vegetables to cook ready meals), tea and coffee, clothes and shoes, mobile phones, phone equipment and value cards, school equipment, cigarettes, perfumes, plastic products, toys and scrap iron.

Depending on the product, the vendors usually purchase their goods from wholesale traders, farmers, or other retail merchants at consumer markets. Either they borrow the goods from these merchants and pay them after selling their products (on a daily or on a more irregular basis, depending on the specific goods) or they pay directly in cash before reselling to end consumers. In the past, some of them borrowed from merchants, banks or relatives to start or extend their business.

⁸⁷ In total, 38 FGDs were conducted.

⁸⁸ In total, 15 FGDs were conducted: three each in North Darfur, West Darfur, South Darfur, White Nile and Khartoum.

Street vendors and market traders mainly work as single own-account workers and do not hire employees. Most of the traders surveyed work exclusively as street vendors, apart from some participants in the state of Khartoum who work as teachers and sell items on the streets because their salary is too low to provide for their families. Other participants are students at local universities who work as vendors before or after attending courses at university.

b. Degree of formalization and organization

Cooperatives or associations are almost non-existent, according to the results of the FGDs. In White Nile and West Darfur, some participants provided information about the existence of Rotating Savings and Credit Associations (ROSCA) organized by traders in their community. Members of these associations can borrow money in case of an emergency or if they want to invest in their business.

All traders surveyed for this study are not officially registered with their businesses. Some reported that they have to pay market fees to local authorities. One of the major problems reported by participants in North Darfur and White Nile is that their economic activities (that is, selling products on the street) are considered to be illegal, and they frequently clash with local authorities. Surprise police raids at local markets or popular selling points are known in Sudan as *kash*. They can be seen as a method of taxing the informal sector (El Gizouli 2020). Street vendors are asked to pay fees⁸⁹ or are expelled from the places where they sell their goods. Sometimes their goods are confiscated by local authorities.

Disputes with local authorities cause a frequent loss of income among vendors, and this puts them under stress when paying back their debts to merchants. At the same time, vendors complained that public authorities do not provide any form of protection, security or public services (such as cleaning the roads or provision of public toilets) in the places they usually work. Because of this frequent conflict with local authorities, they are reluctant to pay fees or taxes.

c. Risks faced by workers engaged in the sector

Street vendors and market traders are exposed to a range of work-related risks resulting from carrying out their work outside in public places, such as exposure to environmental pollution, dust, heat and sunlight. Women traders reported that they and their businesses are frequently subject to theft and looting. They and their families also suffer from malaria and other illnesses. In the event of an illness, they lose income because they cannot continue working on the streets.

d. Awareness about and access to social protection schemes

Results of the FGDs indicate that contributory membership of the NHIF is uncommon among small-scale traders, even though their access to the subsidized arm is limited, especially in Khartoum. Some of the FGD participants stated that they were previously members of the NHIF,⁹⁰ but they did not renew their membership. The reason given was mainly because there are no NHIF-affiliated services available in the area they live in and therefore, they do not see the added benefit of NHIF membership or why they should invest in cumbersome administrative procedures to renew it.

In White Nile, most vendors reported that they are members of the NHIF through the subsidized arm, and that this is the case for most families located in the area they live in. Street vendors in the city of El Hideib in the locality of Al Jabalain were among the few groups surveyed for this study who were highly satisfied with the services they can access through their NHIF membership. However, one widow belonging to the city's IDP community said that she is unable to access the NHIF because she cannot afford to take

89 It is unclear if these are official fees or bribes.

90 From the information received during FGDs it is not fully clear if their membership was through the contributory or the subsidized arm.

photographs of herself and her family members, which is a precondition for registering for subsidized membership. Others reported substantial problems with renewing their NHIF membership card and the inability of the staff in the local welfare and NHIF offices to support them in this regard.

No clear information could be obtained from FGDs about the actual enrolment of street and market vendors in the states of North Darfur, West Darfur and South Darfur into the NHIF. In the state capitals of Nyala in South Darfur and El Geneina in West Darfur, participants reported that there is a service fee to obtain a membership card for the subsidized NHIF or to renew their membership. They consider the fee as quite low and they do not see it as an obstacle to obtaining membership. Vendors in the Darfur states often complained about long waiting periods, large crowds and a limited number of doctors in the NHIF-affiliated health facilities.

Ability and willingness to pay for the NHIF is almost absent among small-scale vendors in the states of West Darfur, North Darfur and White Nile. In South Darfur and Khartoum, street vendors indicated that they could pay a limited – rather symbolic – monthly contribution but would only be willing to pay if the services of NHIF-affiliated health facilities in their area improved significantly.

Results of the FGDs show that affiliation of street vendors and market traders to the NPSIF is the exception. The willingness to contribute to other forms of social protection was absent in almost all FGDs, mainly because participants have no confidence that they or their community members would get anything in return. Vendors shared many stories about bad experiences with paying for government services in advance (such as the My Commodity programme, electricity, water and public schools), but not receiving anything or only services of bad quality in return. Only vendors in South Darfur showed a certain willingness to pay, but they would only be able to contribute small amounts – with the exception of one group of male street vendors belonging to the host community who said that they would be able to pay up to 1,000 pounds per month.

Almost all vendors in the states of South Darfur (in the city of Nyala), White Nile and Khartoum are aware of the SFSP and have information about it. Vendors in the Khartoum area in particular are well informed about the details of the programme, such as registration mechanisms or the amount of cash paid per family member. However, enrolment is still limited among this group of workers in White Nile and Khartoum. Even those who are registered for the programme and receive the benefit often reported that they only received it once and have no information about the next payment.

Vendors enrolled in the SFSP programme working in a small town of Al Jabalain in the state of White Nile also reported about the practice of handing their ATM cards and pin codes to representatives of local social welfare offices, who travel to Kosti, the closest town with ATMs, and withdraw the money on their behalf. These agents usually charge fees for this service. One FGD participant mentioned that a fee of 500 pounds was charged by the representative of the local welfare office for a withdrawal of 3,000 pounds.

Awareness of the SFSP and access to it is very limited among vendors in North Darfur and West Darfur, probably because the programme has not yet been rolled out in their area at the time the FGDs were conducted. Only one group of vendors belonging to the IDP community in West Darfur stated that they are already benefiting from the programme. However, they complained that a lot of people in their community have to surmount a considerable barrier in accessing the programme, as many families lost their ID cards and other documents during recent conflicts when their houses were burnt.

In all states, most vendors are informed about various COVID-19 support schemes (one-time cash transfer and various forms of food support, depending on the state they are residing in). As market activities were interrupted by the lockdown and their livelihoods and incomes were negatively affected, vendors were one of the main target groups of the COVID-19 support. In the case of West Darfur and North Darfur, vendors could register for the COVID-19 cash support directly at the markets. However, the majority of FGD participants reported that they did not benefit from the COVID-19 support schemes offered in their area. Only vendors in Khartoum and in one of the localities in White Nile said that they received cash or in-kind benefits. In Khartoum, a respondent who received the COVID-19 food basket stated that the food provided was not enough to feed his family as it lasted for less than a week, while the full lockdown in the state lasted for several weeks.

Some of the vendors in White Nile and North Darfur stated that they are part of the My Commodity programme. They were asked to form cooperative societies of approximately 20 members. Each member had to pay 1,200 pounds, and they were promised that they could purchase food commodities below market prices in return. However, they had not received any benefits from their membership at the time of conducting the FGDs and were therefore highly disappointed in the programme.

It could also be observed that satisfaction with local Zakat committees was particularly low among street and market vendors surveyed in White Nile and Khartoum, who did not trust the committees. When they go to Zakat to ask for help in case of emergencies, they are asked to hand in many documents, and procedures are cumbersome. Waiting times between registration and receiving the benefit is perceived as long, the benefit eventually received is often not worth the efforts made and is of little help.

Interestingly, in the Darfur states, awareness about recently initiated social protection programmes and access to them tends to be higher among vendors belonging to the IDP communities than among the host community. One reason for this could be that the federal, as well as the state governments, have placed a specific emphasis on reaching out to IDP communities for newly initiated programmes.

e. Access to any other form of social protection and support

Vendors in all five states complained that they can hardly rely on informal support mechanisms. Some vendors help each other in the case of a health problem or any other emergency by collecting money from members of their community. Others rely mostly on their extended family. In case of an emergency, they sometimes borrow from their suppliers and pay back their debts as soon as they have sufficient money.

6.2.2 Craft and related trades⁹¹

a. Prevailing production and income patterns

According to the latest SLFS, approximately 12 per cent of all employed persons above the age of 15 were active in craft and related trades. In urban areas their share was approximately 19 per cent. The share of women working in crafts work was considerably lower, at less than 2 per cent (UNDP/ILO 2014).

FGDs were conducted with craftsmen and women belonging to host communities, as well as IDP communities in North Darfur, West Darfur, South Darfur, White Nile and Khartoum. One of the focus groups conducted in White Nile consisted of craftsmen and women with disabilities who are trained and active in the production of leather goods and other small handicrafts. Craftsmen surveyed for the study are mostly active as carpenters, plumbers, blacksmiths, and car mechanics, or repair small electronic goods. One group surveyed in Khartoum consisted of craftsmen mostly involved in construction work, such as painters and tilers. Women engaged in crafts and related trades are often engaged in producing textile or leather products, such as shoes and handbags, accessories, cosmetics or cooking stoves.

Most craftsmen and women sell directly to the end consumer. Those producing more expensive goods, such as carpenters, work on request and receive advance payments to purchase raw materials. The remainder is paid by the customers when they receive the product. Only a few craftsmen, namely those producing or maintaining large goods, run dedicated workshops at specified places. Most of them produce their goods in their homes or directly at market stalls, where they also sell their goods. Many craftsmen and women complained about the increased prices of raw materials and the deteriorating rates of return they are generating from their economic activity. This is also the reason why they often cannot afford to rent their own workshops.

91 113 From the information received during FGDs it is not fully clear if their membership was through the contributory or the subsidized arm.

Whereas all craftswomen in all states stated that they work on their own account, some male business owners employ their own workers. Some male FGD participants also indicated that they are employees of bigger workshops. In West Darfur, some craftsmen belonging to the host and IDP communities reported that they used to hire employees, but this is difficult at the moment because of the deteriorating security situation in the state. Some of them even stopped operating their workshops or prefer to produce from home. In White Nile and Khartoum, some wage-employed workers were among the FGD participants, mostly in the field of carpentry. Craftsmen involved in construction work usually work with a supervisor or site managers responsible for the construction site. Employees are often paid on a daily basis. In some cases, workers do not receive a salary as remuneration but are given the goods produced, which they can resell on the market.

b. Degree of formalization and organization

As in most other sectors covered by this study, the majority of the businesses active in craft and related trades operate on an informal basis and do not pay taxes. This is especially true for small businesses working on their own account, often operated by women. They usually consider themselves as not being obliged to register their businesses. Moreover, they stated that only those running their own workshops and having fixed workplaces can usually register their business.

Some larger craft workshops, especially those active in carpentry, have a valid business licence and pay taxes. However, the practice of operating on an informal basis to avoid paying taxes and increased obligations towards employees could be observed among larger craft businesses. Some benefits associated with business registration were mentioned among craftsmen, such as increased reputation among customers, access to credits, increased opportunities to import raw materials from abroad, or facilitation of interstate trade. The main barriers that businessmen and women need to address when wanting to register include the absence of a dedicated place to operate the business (entrepreneurs have to show a lease agreement or proof that they own the place of business themselves), as well as complicated, costly and cumbersome procedures. In the case of West Darfur, FGD participants reported that there is no registration office active in the state at the moment, and they would have to travel to Khartoum to register their business (see box 14).

Being a member of a professional association is still the exception rather than the rule for most businessmen and women. Access to such groups seems to be particularly difficult for IDPs. However, there are some active associations and unions that represent the interests and rights of craftsmen and women in the Darfur States, especially the Small Industries and Craftsmen Union (SICU).⁹² SICU looks for cooperation for support and training to improve products and productivity, finance, marketing for export and the establishment of industrial groups for different crafts. In North Darfur, SICU also helped its members in obtaining NHIF membership through the subsidized arm. Craftsmen and women with disabilities are organized in the Federation of the Blind. Anyone with a medical certificate proving their visual impairment can join the federation. They also received training through this organization.

Wage employment is mostly organized through verbal working contracts. Whereas employers said that they do not want to give low-skilled workers written contracts, workers stated that employers want to avoid obligations towards workers, such as paying social security contributions or permitting paid annual or sick leave. Craftsmen engaged in construction work said that they usually have a written work contract with the site manager, but this contract only regulates their obligations to work on the construction site until its completion and does not provide them with any work-related benefits. Written contracts are also sometimes issued to apprentices, but these contracts do not contain any work-related benefits.

92 114 Persons who register a workshop or business in Sudan can become a member of SICU. The Small Industries and Crafts Union (SICU) in El Geneina counts 1,900 members, while SICU's branch in El Fasher has 1,250 members. Although exact figures for SICU's branch in Nyala are not available, estimates amount to 2,500 members, taking into account the comparative strength of the small industries and craft sector in the South Darfur capital (European Union n.d.).

c. Risks faced by workers engaged in the sector

Craftsmen and women face high exposure to work-related illnesses and injuries. Some have to lift heavy equipment and work with dangerous machines. Others are exposed to pollution and dust, which can cause infections. Information provided in the FGD suggests that OSH standards in most workshops are very poor.

d. Awareness about and access to social protection schemes

It is important to highlight that out of all the FGDs conducted for this study, only some of the participants of a focus group with self-employed car mechanics who own their own workshops in South Khartoum stated that they registered their families to the NHIF two years ago and pay a monthly flat rate contribution of 250 pounds for their membership. The group of blind craftsmen and women were enrolled in the subsidized arm of NHIF through the Federation of the Blind.

As in the case of all other groups of urban workers surveyed, the coverage among craftsmen in Khartoum through the subsidized arm of NHIF is very low. In White Nile, as well as in all three Darfur states surveyed, coverage with the NHIF through the subsidized arm is high among craftsmen and women. Only one group of craftsmen and women belonging to the IDP community in North Darfur indicated that they face considerable problems in accessing the NHIF. The same group also stated that health services provided under the NHIF are better than nothing. Otherwise, the services provided by the NHIF are considered as poor and insufficient by craftsmen and women across all states surveyed.

The willingness to pay for NHIF can be considered as low among craftsmen and women across all states surveyed. FGD participants in Khartoum stated that those who have NHIF cards still have to pay a considerable amount for treatment, and services that can be accessed through NHIF membership are poor, sometimes even completely absent. One group in West Darfur mentioned that they prefer to subscribe to a private health insurance, as costs are more or less the same and the quality of the health services that can be accessed is better. In another discussion conducted in Khartoum, participants did not understand why they should pay in advance for something they might not need. Important preconditions for paying regular contributions for NHIF membership, often mentioned during the discussions, were that the health services offered to members must improve significantly, and that high-quality medicine needs to be provided without co-payments.

Wage-employed craftsmen are usually not covered by the NPSIF, nor do they benefit from employer liabilities. However, employers in the sector sometimes support their workers financially in the case of sickness or injury by continuing to pay wages or cover health costs. In the case of construction workers, this is also regulated by their written contracts, but the employer only pays costs of hospital treatment for work-related accidents. Across all states, some craftsmen and women declared that they had the financial means to pay monthly contributions to a comprehensive social protection package, but most of them are not willing to do so because of their lack of trust in the government and disappointment in previous programmes.

Craftsmen and women who participated in the FGD discussions are mostly aware of the SFSP, except for North Darfur and West Darfur where the programme has not yet been fully rolled out at the time of conducting the FGD. In South Darfur it could be observed that craftsmen and women belonging to the IDP community had better access and were therefore more satisfied with the programme than those belonging to the host community. However, they also complained that the lack of national ID cards and mobile phones poses a significant challenge in accessing the programme. In White Nile, most FGD participants have been already registered in the programme, but only a few have received support. In Khartoum, the situation was even worse: many complained that they have not had the chance to register, and none has been able to benefit from the programme so far.

In Khartoum and White Nile, workers engaged in craft and related trades were mostly aware of in-cash and in-kind COVID-19 support packages, and many of them could also benefit from these initiatives. In the three Darfur states surveyed, access to COVID-19 support among craftsmen and women was limited. FGD participants in West Darfur stated that craftsmen were explicitly excluded from the support.

Other non-contributory cash or in-kind benefits mentioned by this group of workers included the Strategic Cash Transfer and Zakat. The group of blind craftsmen and women in White Nile, as well as another blind participant in North Darfur, complained that they could not benefit from the support provided by Zakat despite their handicaps because the Zakat Act does not explicitly define blind persons as eligible. In Khartoum and White Nile, FGD participants had to contend with considerable problems in accessing Zakat benefits because they are asked to travel to the Zakat office several times for one request, and transportation costs often exceed the benefits they would obtain. Another group in West Darfur stated that Zakat usually does not respond to any requests and applications sent to them.

e. Access to any other form of social protection and support

In case of an emergency, craftsmen and women often collect money among themselves to help the person in need. Wage-employed also ask employers for help, and sometimes they can get advanced wage payments. Most craftsmen and women rely almost exclusively on their own work and that of their family members to sustain their livelihoods and deal with the risks they are facing.

6.2.3 Manufacturing⁹³

a. Prevailing production and income patterns

Manufacturing in Sudan remains a relatively small sector of the economy, accounting for approximately 10 per cent of the GDP as of 2018. The value added from manufacturing has been stagnant for decades. Manufacturing is the most productive sector of the economy, where a considerable share of formal jobs is created. But manufacturing also employs far fewer people than the agricultural or service sector.

The country's manufacturing base is mainly dominated by the processing of food and agricultural products, including sugar refining and production of vegetable oil. Other industries include the production of textiles, oil refining and the production of shoes, chemical fertilizers, and cement. Many factories, however, operate at a mere fraction of their capacity (Asare et al 2020, AfDB 2018).

Male and female participants of FGDs with manufacturing workers work in factories producing and processing food (tahini, oil, sweets and ice), textiles, gum arabic, electronic products and plastic in the industrial area of Sofala in Khartoum, as well as around Kosti and Rabak in the state of White Nile. Some of them indicated that they are labour migrants from other parts of Sudan. Average wages of manufacturing workers seem to differ across industries and geographic areas.⁹⁴ Their salary is often unstable as it depends on the number of working days per month.

b. Degree of formalization and organization

All of the workers in manufacturing surveyed are employed in large registered factories in and around urban areas. However, despite working in a formally registered enterprise, low-skilled employees of these factories usually do not have written contracts or any other written work agreements. They mostly have verbal agreements with their employers to regulate their income on an hourly basis. Some workers have written contracts, but they are usually only valid for up to one year. The main reason mentioned for this

93 In total six FGDs were conducted: three in White Nile and two in Khartoum.

94 For example, male workers in a gum arabic factory in Khartoum stated that they received 4,5000 pounds per month. Female workers in an oil factory in White Nile said that they received 450 pounds per working day.

practice is that employers want to ensure that their employees do not qualify for work-related benefits such as social security, paid annual leave, sick or maternity leave. Workers with written contracts have not usually been informed if they have been registered by their employers at the local employment offices.

Only more educated employees in higher positions receive long-term written contracts and could fully benefit from the advantages associated with them, such as regular working hours, fixed wages, enrolment in work-related insurance, paid annual leave, sick and maternity leave. Workers stated that controls or inspections are rarely carried out by state authorities in the companies they work for, and therefore it is easy for their employers to avoid registration of employees with authorities.

c. Risks faced by workers engaged in the sector

Most of the factory workers are exposed to a range of work-related illnesses, for instance, eye infections due to dust, and accidents such as burns from explosions or cuts from sharp tools. They also have to do heavy lifting or repetitive movements, which make them more susceptible to injuries and further deteriorate their physical condition. Information provided during the FGDs suggests that OSH standards in most of the factories are poor and depend largely on the willingness of employers to establish good OSH practices and their understanding of its added value. In addition to work-related risks, manufacturing workers suffer from poor housing conditions, especially those who live in the Safola industrial area in the state of Khartoum.

d. Awareness about and access to social protection schemes

Provision of work-related benefits to workers without a regular working contract is highly dependent on the good will of employers and usually done on an informal basis. Therefore, many differences could be observed across factories. Some workers stated that their employer pays for the costs of healthcare if they suffer from a work-related illness or an accident, and that they receive up to three days of paid leave in such instances. But in the case of a longer absence, their income is usually stopped. Others provided information about a form of severance payment made on termination of work in the factory, but they complained that the amount paid is low and that they only receive it after a minimum working period of three years.⁹⁵

None of the workers surveyed is insured through the wage-employed arm of NHIF or the NPSIF. It could be observed during the FGDs that workers in this sector lack information about the specific benefits they would be entitled to as wage-employed. This could be explained partly by the fact that they are not members of any labour union that represents their interests and stands for better working conditions. Most of the factory workers and their families residing in the Safola area of Khartoum are not covered by the subsidized arm of NHIF, even though many of them can be considered as poor because of their low wages and standard of living. Some IDPs located in the area previously had access to NHIF in their state of origin, but they could not use the NHIF card in Khartoum. In White Nile, the situation was mixed: workers in Kosti reported that almost every family in their area is covered by the subsidized arm of NHIF, while those in Rabak said that very few people are NHIF card holders.

Willingness to pay for the NHIF is extremely low among factory workers, compared with other groups surveyed. During most FGDs with manufacturing workers, participants complained that they cannot afford regular contributions with their low salaries, and that the services available for free through NHIF membership are extremely poor. Moreover, they felt that it is their employers' obligation to sign them up to the NHIF and to pay the contributions on their behalf.

In general, willingness to pay contributions for any form of social insurance is low among participants of all FGDs conducted among factory workers, mainly because they do not trust the government and authorities responsible for social protection programmes, including the NHIF and Zakat. Some FGD participants reported that they have had bad experiences with paying money to the state in the hope of obtaining services in return, because generally this did not have any positive outcome and the money disappeared.

⁹⁵ This practice is in line with the regulation for severance payment of the 1997 Labour Code (see box 8).

Most factory workers are aware of the recently initiated SFSP, as well as COVID-19 support but have not received much information about other programmes that existed in the past. Most of the factory workers in the Safola area in the state of Khartoum received support in the form of food baskets during the COVID-19 crisis. In both states, most of the workers are already registered for the SFSP through local committees. However, they had not yet received any support from the programme at the time of conducting the FGDs.

Discontent with Zakat is considerably high among factory workers in Khartoum, as well as White Nile. One reason for this is that Zakat offices are not available in the concerned areas. In addition, factory workers often feel that they are being discriminated against by the local Zakat authorities. Participants of one FGD in Khartoum reported that the Zakat office usually ignores applications from the area they live in. Clientelism and corruption are other reasons frequently mentioned for the high discontent towards Zakat.

In the industrial area of Safola, one of the main barriers preventing workers from gaining access to any social protection programme, including the SFSP, is that the area is not classified as residential.⁹⁶ The workers here live mainly in informal settlements, government authority offices are inexistent, and state services, such as public health facilities or schools, are not provided. The lack of opportunities to register and obtain benefits results in limited awareness and information about social protection programmes, as well as inadequate access.

e. Access to any other form of social protection and support

Factory workers in both states complained that they can rarely rely on informal support mechanisms. Some factory workers with regular incomes and a permanent contract can get their salary in advance in case of emergencies such as an accident or sickness. Some reported that they help each other, but the degree of solidarity among this group of workers seems to be lower than among other groups surveyed for this study.

6.2.4 Waste picking⁹⁷

a. Prevailing production and income patterns

Waste pickers provide an indispensable public service with economic, social and environmental benefits to their communities. However, they usually suffer from poor working conditions, a lack of official recognition, discrimination and stigmatization. They often live at the bottom of the economic pyramid, struggling to survive with their families. There is little information available about living and working conditions of waste pickers in Sudan. A study conducted in 2014 found that waste pickers in Khartoum are often uneducated and illiterate young people, old men and women (ILO 2021a, Abukaber et al 2014).

The collection, transfer and disposal of solid wastes is managed in different ways across states and localities. In Khartoum State, the administrations of the localities are in charge of solid waste management. The Khartoum State Cleaning Corporation (KSCC) is responsible for transporting the waste to landfill sites and its disposal. KSCC aims at outsourcing collection work to the private sector or localities (Federal Ministry of Health 2016).⁹⁸

All participants of the FGDs with waste pickers in Khartoum work as employees for local cleaning authorities in the area of Omdurman.⁹⁹ Many of them migrated to Khartoum from other states, partly because of displacement. They said that their monthly income from their work as waste pickers is approximately 4,000 to 5,000 pounds. The salary usually depends on the number of working days per month.

96 FGD participants estimated that the number of families living in the area exceeded 6,000.

97 In total, three FGDs were conducted, all in Khartoum.

98 Approximately 5,000 tonnes of general solid waste are collected in Khartoum every day. However, only parts of the urban populations benefit from functional solid waste management services. Many households burn waste or dump it on the open ground or in storm water drains (Federal Ministry of Health 2016).

99 Owing to a sampling error, only formal workers of the Khartoum Cleaning Corporation were selected for this FGD. Considering this, it is of special interest that they do not enjoy any of the benefits that tend to be associated with a formal job.

b. Degree of formalization and organization

Despite working for a public entity, none of the waste pickers surveyed for the study has a written working contract. Participants of one FGD reported that they were recently asked by their employers to bring their documents, most probably for the purpose of registering them with the local labour office.

There are no unions or cooperatives available for waste pickers in the area.

c. Risks faced by workers engaged in the sector

Waste pickers tend to face high risks of work injuries as they often work in hazardous and dangerous conditions. They are particularly exposed to car accidents as they are working in areas with large volumes of traffic. They are also exposed to various health risks resulting from exposure to dangerous materials, dirt, pollution and heat. All the FGD participants stated that their employers did not equip them with adequate protective gear such as masks, gloves or shoes. In addition to the risks they face at work, waste pickers suffer from poor housing conditions, especially those who came to Khartoum from other states.

d. Awareness about and access to non-contributory social protection schemes

It is remarkable that most of the waste pickers surveyed do not have access to the NHIF, neither through the non-contributory arm (despite the fact that they can be considered as relatively poor), nor through the mandatory arm for wage-employed (despite the fact that they are working for a public authority). Closely linked to this, waste pickers stated that the main obstacle they are facing when wanting to access health facilities is the lack of money.

FGD participants provided information that employer liabilities, as regulated in the 1997 Labour Code, are practised by their employers, in particular the provision of sick and maternity leave with full remuneration. Some of them mentioned that they are about to be signed up for the NPSIF by their employer. However, others complained that paid sick leave is only provided if they have a medical report, which is difficult to obtain as their access to health facilities is inadequate and they have to pay for them out of their own pocket. It was observed that waste pickers lack sufficient information about the specific benefits they would be entitled to as wage-employed workers of a public entity. Most waste pickers stated that they would be willing to pay their own contributions for NHIF membership, even though their ability to pay is limited because of their low wages (between 100 and 200 pounds per month). They showed a certain degree of willingness to pay for social insurance in general, but said that they could only afford to pay a small symbolic amount (for instance, 100 pounds per month).

Results of the FGDs indicate that waste pickers seem to be less likely to be included in social assistance programmes than other groups of workers. In general, they are aware of various programmes and are informed about them, in particular the SFSP and, to a lesser extent, COVID-19 support but have significant problems in accessing these schemes – mainly because of a lack of national identification cards among this group. Only one participant out of more than 30 claimed that she is enrolled in the SFSP.

Waste pickers also complained about the inexistence of Zakat in their area, hence even the most destitute usually qualifying for support from Zakat do not get any support.

e. Access to any other form of social protection and support

Waste pickers can rarely rely on any other form of support in the case of an emergency. Sometimes they help each other. Some reported that they could borrow from merchants or shop owners at the market if they do not have the money to buy the goods they need.



7

Matching supply and demand: summary of the main barriers preventing specific groups of workers in the informal economy from accessing social protection schemes

As highlighted in the previous section, the informal economy in Sudan consists of diverse groups with different characteristics. Therefore, a single approach cannot sufficiently address the challenges encountered by these workers. To identify concrete and tailor-made options for the extension of social protection to workers in the informal economy (see sections 8 and 9) this section outlines the main demand- and supply-side barriers faced by specific groups of workers wanting to access social protection, as outlined in box 3, by building on the results of sections 5 and 6. It provides a first set of recommendations for each group, which are elaborated in more detail in sections 8 and 9. In this section, specific groups of workers surveyed for this study (see section 6) are further clustered in broader categories, that is, workers in rural areas, workers in urban areas, self-employed, wage-employed, refugees, IDPs and women workers.¹⁰⁰ The results of the analysis of main supply- and demand-side barriers are summarized in annex 3.

¹⁰⁰ It is important to note that these groups are not mutually exclusive, and many workers surveyed for this study could be assigned to two or more of these categories.

► 7.1 Workers in rural areas

For workers engaged in agricultural activities, their explicit exclusion from the 2016 NPSIF poses a significant legal barrier to access a comprehensive social protection package. Wage-employed workers, as well as contributing family workers, are also excluded from the 1997 Labour Code and the employer liabilities regulated therein. Therefore, self-employed and wage-employed workers in the agricultural sector are not protected against the most common life-cycle risks, such as work injuries, disability, old age (covered by the NPSIF), or maternity, loss of income due to illness or unemployment (covered by employer liabilities). At the moment, there is no work-related scheme or programme in place in Sudan which addresses these risks and contingencies specific to agricultural workers. Therefore, they have to rely on non-contributory schemes or informal mechanisms to cope with them.

A lack of integration and policy coherence between agricultural and social protection policies can be observed at the federal level, which might further exacerbate the insufficient access of agricultural workers to existing social protection schemes. In the past, the Ministry of Agriculture has not been involved in the design and implementation of any social protection programme, apart from Shamel (KII 4).

Administrative barriers to accessing social protection programmes are considerably higher in rural areas, given the wide distances people have to travel to visit responsible agencies, and the absence of public and private transportation in marginalized rural areas. Many agricultural workers do not own mobile phones and do not have access to the internet. Therefore, they face an additional barrier as they are often disconnected from concerned entities and cannot reach out to them or be reached by them. The frequent lack of a national ID card, which is a precondition for entry to all social protection programmes, poses an additional challenge for agricultural workers. Moreover, many of them are illiterate and therefore meet considerable problems in obtaining information or in following the administrative procedures required to access social protection schemes.

Results of the FGDs have clearly shown that farmers depend mostly on low, unstable and fluctuating incomes and therefore face high financial barriers when wanting to access contributory social protection schemes. Especially during the lean season in autumn, they often lack income and struggle to sustain their families, and it would be impossible for most of them to pay regular contributions for social protection programmes throughout the year. However, many workers engaged in agricultural activities indicated that they have a certain capacity to pay for contributory social protection programmes. This capacity varies across specific agricultural activities (see section 6.1).

Benefits provided by existing social protection programmes are not aligned with priorities of agricultural workers. There is no direct support offered to bridge their lack of income during the lean season, and therefore, they have to engage in other economic activities, in particular wage labour in urban areas or on other farms. Agricultural workers are disproportionately exposed to weather- and climate-related shocks such as drought and heavy rainfall. These events pose a significant threat of losing part of their income or even all of it. In Sudan, there are no mechanisms in place at the moment to address this covariate risk. The Ministry of Agriculture tries to raise the awareness among small farmers for agricultural insurance schemes. But there is no direct support offered to them to facilitate access to such schemes (KII 4). Non-contributory shock-responsive schemes are completely absent.

As for all other groups, the risk of falling ill, losing income and increased health costs was often mentioned as one of the main threats agricultural workers have to face. Even though most workers living in rural areas and engaged in agriculture have access to the NHIF through the subsidized arm, their effective coverage is often limited. They meet serious barriers in obtaining access to adequate health services because of the lack of health facilities in rural areas and their poor quality (see section 5.3 for more details).

The lack of adequate and well-organized and functioning cooperatives or any other form of interest groups poses another barrier to accessing social protection for agricultural workers. There are active producer cooperatives in some areas and for some sectors in Sudan, such as gum arabic production or fisheries, but most of them are not involved in any cooperative. The Ministry of Agriculture is currently making efforts to support the formation of cooperatives among small-scale traditional farmers (KII 4).

► **Box 13. The role of cooperatives in Sudan**

A cooperative movement was instituted officially in Sudan in 1948 and kept growing and progressing under the support and encouragement of the government. The government facilitated the registration process of cooperative organizations, established the national centre for cooperative training in 1976 and the Cooperative Development Bank in 1982, leading to the flourishing and expansion of the cooperative movement. But from 1989 onwards, the cooperative movement began to weaken and lose its foothold in the economy because of the sudden political change, which led to the dismantling of the National Cooperative Training Centre and the Cooperative Development Bank. Before the Bashir regime took over, there were 4,000 registered cooperatives. While this number grew to 29,000, most are considered corrupt and unproductive.

Recent developments in Sudan have created renewed potential for cooperatives. The Ministry of Trade and Industries (MoTI) has shown renewed interest in reviving the cooperative movement as a means of furthering local economic development, especially for youth and women. The MoTI's declared ambitions include empowering the cooperatives' department through additional funds and resources, as well as administrative changes that would link the department more closely to the private sector, making it a council with an independent secretary. Furthermore, the MoTI has been keen on developing stronger relationships with international organizations to promote cooperatives and expand their activities beyond agricultural and trade-related activities.

Summary recommendations

- Improve coherence and coordination between social protection and agricultural policies (see [section 8.1](#))
- Strengthen producer cooperatives as one potential entry point for access to social insurance (see [section 8.1](#))
- Consider including agricultural workers in 2016 NPSIF Act (see [section 8.3](#))
- Consider the introduction of shock-responsive elements in major social assistance schemes (see [section 8.4](#))
- Facilitate better access to information, registration, provision of benefits and complaint mechanisms by actively addressing various barriers such as physical distance, lack of ID and illiteracy (see [sections 9.1 to 9.4](#), as well as [section 9.7](#))
- Introduce more flexible mechanisms for paying contributions to the NHIF and the NPSIF that are suitable for income patterns of agricultural workers (see [section 9.5](#))

▶ 7.2 Workers in urban areas

For various reasons, workers in the informal economy in urban areas face considerable barriers when wanting to access cash transfer and livelihood schemes. Marginalized urban areas, in particular informal settlements, have often been neglected during active enrolment campaigns for specific programmes, including the NHIF, SFSP and Shamel, and the presence of community-based mechanisms for registration, in particular local Zakat committees, is limited. At the same time, the offices of responsible agencies in urban areas are hard to reach by public transport from the areas where workers in the informal economy are usually located. Sometimes they are asked to make several journey to complete registration procedures, and in the end they often cannot access any benefits. This results in high transaction costs for enrolment. Moreover, workers in urban areas are not always well informed about existing schemes, their eligibility criteria and specific benefits provided.¹⁰¹

Results of the field research in urban areas reveal that the limited portability of the subsidized NHIF from rural to urban areas poses another barrier for migrant workers: even those who hold NHIF membership cards issued in other states are not able to use them in the state of Khartoum where they migrated for labour.

In sum, these negative conditions lead to a lack of trust in the government, which is especially high among workers located in urban areas. This in turn causes a low willingness to pay for contributory social protection programmes, even though some workers might have the financial capacity to do so. In the case of NHIF, the low willingness to pay is further nurtured by the poor quality of health services that can be accessed through NHIF affiliation.

Summary recommendations

- ▶ Improve portability of the NHIF (And Social Assistance) Coverage And Benefits Between Different States And Occupations (See [section 8.2](#))
- ▶ Introduce More Flexible Registration mechanisms in urban areas, through strategies to reach out and cover marginalized (informal) urban settlements actively (see [sections 9.2](#) and [9.7](#))

▶ 7.3 Self-employed workers

Some self-employed workers face a legal barrier to accessing the NPSIF, as many forms of self-employment are not explicitly covered in the 2016 NPSIF Act, and a valid business licence is a precondition for registration. As they lack an employer, they are also, by definition, excluded from the 1997 Labour Code and the employer liabilities regulated therein. Therefore, they are not protected against the most common life-cycle risks, such work injuries, disability, old age (covered by the NPSIF), maternity, or loss of income owing to illness or unemployment (covered by employer liabilities).

Even though the 2016 NHIF Act states that registration for self-employed workers is mandatory, there are no strict mechanisms in place to enforce their registration. Only in some states, NHIF branches cooperate with the local business registrars to follow up with those who have registered or renewed their business licence and enrol them into the health insurance scheme. For those self-employed workers legally covered by the NPSIF, there are no or only weak mechanisms in place to ensure and improve their compliance. The fund struggles to ensure compliance among bigger enterprises and therefore has very limited resources to concentrate on smaller business entities. In addition, as in the case of the NHIF, cooperation

¹⁰¹ The problem could be observed particularly in the state of Khartoum where workers surveyed also had considerable problems in accessing the subsidized arm of the NHIF. The reason for this may be that these areas have not yet or only partly been covered by the annual enrolment campaigns, but no further information could be obtained in this regard.

with other entities involved in the formalization of businesses is limited. This is partly caused by a lack of integration and policy coherence between social protection and trade and industry policies at federal, as well as at state and locality, levels.

Related to this, self-employed workers face considerable administrative barriers when wanting to formalize their business, including when they want to access work-related social protection schemes. There is no entity coordinating all steps of business registration (see box 14), and therefore they face cumbersome, complicated and time-consuming procedures. As the steps to register for the NHIF and the NPSIF are separated from the step of business registration itself, self-employed workers also have more chances to opt out from the social insurance schemes. An important barrier for business registration in general seems to be that a business address is needed to officially register a business – something that most self-employed workers cannot present, as they lack any documents of legal property or an official lease agreement.

► **Box 14. Business registration in Sudan**

According to the latest Doing Business Report for Sudan, the registration of a business takes approximately 34 days. The registration process is not enforced by one entity but by different governmental authorities and involves the following basic procedures.

Step 1. To apply for the registration of a business, the entrepreneur must visit the business registrar agency at locality level and submit several documents for preliminary approval. They must also specify the place of the business activity. This is accompanied by a request containing the required legal stamps. The preliminary approval to proceed with the company registration is usually issued by the licensing office within two or three days.

Step 2. Before applying for final approval and registration, the entrepreneur must submit a preliminary approval request to the Taxation Chamber. These documents are also submitted to the Zakat Chamber for its approval.

Step 3. Various documents and forms, including a copy of the lease agreement or property certificate of the company premises, must be submitted to the business registrar agency to finalize the business registration.

Step 4. After finalization of business registration, the entrepreneur must apply for a Tax Identification Number and register for Value Added Tax (VAT) with the Taxation Chamber.

Step 5. If in need of employees, the entrepreneur must also register with the local labour office by depositing the basic work and penalties regulation.^a

Step 6. To subscribe to social insurance as a business and enrol employees in social security, the entrepreneur must visit the nearest NPSIF branch and hand in various documents, including a copy of the business license, a registration form, and a list with names and salaries of all employees.

Step 7. To subscribe to health insurance as a business and enrol employees in social health insurance, a designated NHIF representative of the business must visit the NHIF branch at locality level and hand in various documents. Alternatively, the employee can register him- or herself.

Alternatively, a business can be also registered at the closest Chamber of Commerce, which assists its members in the various steps of registration. However, the service point mapping conducted for this study revealed that Chambers of Commerce are non-existent or inactive in all states included in this study, except for East Darfur.

Note a: Until 2019, an initial inspection of the business site by the Labour Office concerned was mandatory to obtain the final approval for starting a business. This requirement was removed to make the process easier.

Source: World Bank 2020c, UNDP 2013, GIZ 2021, KII 7 and KIIs with representatives of state-level NHIF branches.

As NHIF branches are located at locality level they are relatively easy to access. However, the annual renewal of NHIF membership for self-employed workers, which has to be done at the NHIF branch, is sometimes perceived as cumbersome and is one of the main reasons for drop-out in this group. In contrast, NPSIF branches cannot be found in all localities, as they are mostly situated in areas with considerable economic strength. This makes registration in the NPSIF especially cumbersome and unattractive for self-employed workers operating outside these areas and is reflected in their coverage: none of the self-employed surveyed for this study indicated that they are a member of the NPSIF.

The financial capacity to pay regular contributions for social insurance programmes is mixed within this group of workers. In general, the tendency to avoid any form of taxes or other costs related to setting up and running a business is high among self-employed workers surveyed for this study. And even those with sufficient financial means of contributing regularly to the NHIF or the NPSIF are often not willing to pay because they do not trust the government and its institutions and they are not satisfied with the services currently provided under the respective schemes, especially the NHIF.

The lack of information and awareness about the specific functions and principles of a social insurance poses another barrier for accessing contributory schemes. In addition, most self-employed workers have little or no incentives to register with the NHIF and pay regular contributions because they are already enrolled through the subsidized arm, or they are expecting to be included in one of the next enrolment campaigns. In most cases, self-employed workers did not even seem to be aware that there is an opportunity to enrol with the NHIF through paying contributions.

Even though some groups of informal self-employed workers belong to a business association or union, or any other form of interest group, the degree of organization among them is still low. In geographic areas and sectors where they exist, it could be observed that it is unusual for such organizations to support their members in getting access to existing social protection schemes. Most of these organizations do not seem to be engaged in raising awareness about opportunities to enrol into social protection programmes or providing information to self-employed workers.

Summary recommendations

- ▶ Ease and streamline procedures to register a business, including registration with the NHIF and the NPSIF (consider a one-stop solution) (see [section 8.1](#))
- ▶ Improve coherence and coordination between social protection and trade and industry policies at federal, as well as at state and locality, levels (see [section 8.1](#))
- ▶ Strengthen professional associations and cooperatives as one potential entry point for access to social insurance (see [section 8.1](#))
- ▶ Improve coherence between contributory and non-contributory arms of the NHIF and allow for mobility between them to reduce disincentives to pay contributions (see [section 8.2](#))
- ▶ Consider including self-employed workers fully in the 2016 NPSIF Act (see [section 8.3](#))
- ▶ Reduce contribution rates of self-employed for the NPSIF (see [section 8.3](#))
- ▶ Investigate the potential of a monotax mechanism to combine NPSIF contributions and tax payments (see [section 8.3](#))
- ▶ Introduce more flexible mechanisms for paying contributions to the NHIF and the NPSIF that are suitable for income patterns of self-employed workers (see [section 9.5](#))

► 7.4 Wage-employed workers

A significant share of wage-employed workers in Sudan, both in agricultural and non-agricultural activities, face legal barriers to accessing work-related social protection because they are employed as seasonal, temporary or casual workers (KII 2). As such, they are explicitly exempted from the 1997 Labour Code and do not benefit from employer liabilities. The registration of temporary workers is mandatory for the NPSIF. However, it is common practice, even among formal enterprises, that workers are not registered with the local Labour Offices and NPSIF branches and do not have a written work contract. Even though the 1997 Labour Code foresees that any contract exceeding three months in duration has to be made in writing, most employers do not comply with this regulation. Employees of micro and small businesses with fewer than five employees are explicitly excluded from the contributory arm of the NHIF.

Gaps in enforcement pose another significant barrier (KII 19). As stated above, the NHIF has no active compliance mechanisms in place in most states. No information could be obtained in the course of this research as to what extent the compliance mechanisms regulated in the 1997 Labour Code and in the 2016 NPSIF are implemented in practice. However, results of the FGDs with wage-employed workers indicate that labour inspections are not or only insufficiently carried out in most states. An Occupational Safety and Health Inspector from the state labour office in the State of Khartoum confirmed that no specific efforts are made by the office to encourage registration of enterprises and their employees (KII 3). It is also important to note that even public sector employers do not always fully comply with existing legislation. This could be observed, for example, in the case of waste pickers working for the locality in Khartoum. However, efforts are currently being made to close these gaps.

Cooperation and coordination mechanisms between the local labour offices, the NHIF and the NPSIF to streamline registrations are weak (KII 2). Hence, employers face considerable administrative barriers when registering their business or registering new employees (see box 14). In the case of the NHIF, there are also administrative barriers for employees themselves because the employer is not explicitly obliged to register the employee with the fund. If there is no designated NHIF representative in the enterprise, employees have to register themselves and bring along the respective documents.

Across all sectors, the practice of informal agreements between employers and employees to settle health costs in the case of an illness or a work-related accident could be observed (see for example sections 6.1.1, 6.1.3, 6.1.6, 6.2.2 and 6.2.4). This is partly seen as a substitute for the affiliation with the NHIF or the employment injury insurance provided under the NPSIF and is also in line with one of the most important risks faced by this group of workers, as it became clear during FGDs. But this support is usually considered as insufficient by employees and as a specific economic burden by employers.

Benefits provided by a pension through the NPSIF to wage-employed workers after retirement are mostly unable to cover their basic needs and have been continuously devalued as a result of high inflation rates. Therefore, they usually do not plan to fully rely on their pensions to sustain their livelihoods and often continue to work during retirement and become engaged in informal sector activities (KII 19, KII 20). Moreover, their risk of being unemployed is not covered if the employer does not comply with the regulations of the 1997 Labour Code, and they can hardly rely on any non-contributory schemes, in particular Zakat, the only active one at the moment, to compensate for the loss of income.

In general, wage-employed workers have very limited knowledge of work-related social protection and employer liabilities. Since they are working on an informal basis, they are also not represented in a labour union such as the SWTUF, or any other interest group. Mobilization and unionization of workers in the private sector is in general low (KII 19). There is also a considerable lack of trust in the government among wage-employed workers, mainly because they feel that the government does not represent their interests and does not care about their needs.

Summary recommendations

- ▶ Ease and streamline procedures to register businesses and their employees with local labour offices, as well as the NHIF and NPSIF branches (consider a one-stop solution) (see [section 8.1](#))
- ▶ Improve coherence and coordination between social protection and labour policies at federal, as well as at state and locality, levels (see [section 8.1](#))
- ▶ Strengthen labour unions as one potential entry point to raise awareness for social insurance among wage-employed workers (see [section 8.1](#))
- ▶ Consider reviewing the 1997 Labour Code for more effective protection of temporary and seasonal workers (see [section 8.1](#))
- ▶ Consider reviewing 2016 NHIF Act to extend coverage to employees of businesses with fewer than five workers (see [section 8.2](#))
- ▶ Investigate the potential of a monotax mechanism to combine NHIF contributions for employees with tax payments for MSE (see [section 8.2](#))
- ▶ Improve awareness among employers for the benefits of the NHIF to cover the costs of work-related illnesses and accidents (see [section 8.2](#))
- ▶ Improve the NPSIF benefit package to address risks of wage-employed workers more adequately (see [section 8.3](#))
- ▶ Make significant investments to improve enforcement and control mechanisms (see [section 9.6](#))

▶ 7.5 Refugees

The legal rules and procedures for the registration of refugees and regulations concerning their access to the Sudanese labour market pose the main challenges for them to access any form of work-related social protection in Sudan (see box 15). When looking at the legislation concerning social protection, the NHIF is the only programme that explicitly includes refugees as a target group. However, in practice they cannot access the programme as they do not own national ID cards, which are usually a precondition to benefit from the programme. Refugees have not been targeted by the subsidized arm of the NHIF. They are usually explicitly excluded from the policy framework of other non-contributory programmes or the practices applied to them (see, for example, section 5.2.3 and 5.2.4) or are not targeted in practice.

The baseline survey for PROSPECTS conducted in 2021 underlines these findings. None of the refugees sampled in the study were employed formally, and so they were unable to access any form of work-related social protection. The refugees sampled did not report receiving Zakat payments or any other form of social assistance provided by the government. The survey found that some households had access to social protection services from international NGOs and UN agencies, such as free or subsidized healthcare, livelihood support, and vouchers or in-kind distributions for food support (ILO 2021b). But even coverage with these programmes is low and the support provided was often described as inadequate by refugees during FGDs conducted for the present study.

It is difficult to assess the financial capacity of refugee workers to pay regular contributions to work-related social protection schemes such as the NHIF. In some cases, refugees indicated that they would be able to pay small contributions, and many of them seemed to be willing, as they would see this as an opportunity to access a more comprehensive range of services, instead of relying entirely on the support provided by humanitarian aid.

In 2019, the transitional government of Sudan made nine pledges in support of durable solutions at the Global Refugee Forum, including facilitating work for refugees, facilitating movement, and gradually integrating refugee education into the national education system. However, as yet, no legislation has been drafted to put these pledges into practice (PROSPECTS 2022).

► **Box 15. Rules and procedures for the registration of refugees and their access to the labour market**

Article 7 of the Asylum Regulation Act requires individual asylum seekers to submit a written application to the nearest office of the COR, as the authorizing agency for refugee registration, or another government authority office within 30 days of entry to Sudan, in order to begin the process of determination of refugee status. The COR has 30 days to assess the circumstances of the case. The asylum seeker will be issued a temporary blue card, valid for three months, while waiting for their application to be treated. Once approved, the asylum seeker and family members (who have subsidiary asylum status) will be registered in a national, central registry as refugees. In line with Article 17, they will be issued with a green refugee ID card bearing an Alien Registration Identity Number, which is valid for one year and subject to renewal. Asylum seekers who register at a camp are eligible to receive refugee services at that camp. They are not eligible for refugee services if they leave their camp and travel elsewhere, and they may not re-register elsewhere.

Article 18 of the Asylum Regulation Act states that refugees are allowed to work if they can obtain a work permit from the competent labour office, who is obliged to send a copy of the permit to the COR and the Ministry of Interior. This is in line with the Regulation of Employment of Non-Sudanese Act (2000), which states that it is not possible for non-Sudanese to engage in work unless they have obtained permission from the Ministry of Labour and Social Development, specifying further that work permits shall not be issued to non-Sudanese unless there is no Sudanese worker who is able to perform the work. Under this law, work constitutes industrial, commercial, agricultural and any other profession or craft, including domestic service.

There are exemptions to these procedures for refugees of South Sudanese origin. In 2012 a Framework Agreement between Sudan and South Sudan was signed to provide South Sudanese in Sudan with the freedom to reside, move, undertake economic activity, and acquire and dispose of property in Sudan if they were in possession of a legal proof of identity (the so-called “Four Freedoms”). At this point, however, most did not have any legal proof of identification such as a refugee card or a South Sudanese passport or ID card. After the adoption of a Memorandum of Understanding between the UNHCR, COR and the Directorate General of Passports and Immigration of the Ministry of Interior to allow for registration and documentation of South Sudanese in Sudan, registration centres were established to document, register, and issue South Sudanese with ID cards free of charge and valid for their entire period in Sudan. With these ID cards, South Sudanese could enjoy the full privileges of the Four Freedoms in addition to access to public services. South Sudanese refugees are now able to register with COR as a refugee. However, they are not legally compelled to do so. By registering and taking on formal refugee status, they do not lose their Four Freedoms and are still exempt from the limitations on these areas outlined in the 2014 Asylum Act.^a

Exemptions also exist for citizens of Arab League countries, such as Syrians and Yemenis. They have the so-called “Brother and Sister” status and thereby do not have formal refugee status; they are not covered by the 2014 Asylum Regulation Act or any other piece of legislation. The Brother and Sister status includes the right to reside in Sudan and the right to apply for a Sudanese passport after six months; it offers essentially a fast-track system to residency and the right to work, open a business and access healthcare in the same way as Sudanese. However, many people in this category are still vulnerable and in need of assistance. Considered as Persons of Concern (POC), they can register with the UNHCR as asylum seekers and be issued with an Assistance Card with a progress number from COR, with which they are eligible for access to refugee services.^b

Note a: This exceptional situation was intended to be captured either as a provision within the Asylum Act or through a separate Gazette announcement, but to date neither has happened. Without being captured in any legal tool, practice has evolved without clear guidance or shared understanding of rules.

Note b: Under Sudanese law, Brother and Sister status remains legally ambiguous and is not provided for in any Sudanese legislation; this issue is due to be reconsidered by the Ministry of Interior. Source: PROSPECTS 2022.

Summary recommendations

- ▶ Consider reviewing legal rules and procedures for refugees to access the Sudanese labour market to improve their access to work-related social protection in Sudan
- ▶ Improve coherence and coordination between humanitarian assistance for refugees and national social protection policies (see [section 8.1](#))
- ▶ Assess the feasibility of including refugees more effectively in the NHIF, in line with Article 4 (see section 5.2) of the 2016 NHIF Act (see [section 8.3](#))
- ▶ Consider reviewing the 2016 NPSIF Act to explicitly cover refugees with the NPSIF (see [section 8.3](#))
- ▶ Consider including refugees as an explicit target group of national social assistance programmes, especially in areas where refugees live outside camp settings (see [section 8.4](#))
- ▶ Improve service delivery for refugees at local branches of social protection programmes and other services (see [section 9.2](#))

▶ 7.6 Internally Displaced Persons

In theory, as citizens of Sudan, IDPs do not face any more legal barriers to accessing social protection schemes than host communities. However, in practice they have often been partly or completely excluded from such schemes and had to confront significant disadvantages compared with host community members. Since the revolution, this situation has improved, and specific efforts have been made, especially for non-contributory programmes, to extend coverage of IDPs. This is already reflected in their awareness levels and their actual access to specific programmes, in particular the SFSP and the COVID-19 support.

However, the lack of ID cards still poses the most significant challenge to them when wanting to access social protection schemes or any other government services. This is also sometimes the case among host community members, but the problem is even more prevalent among IDP communities. As many of them have lost their ID cards because of displacement or conflicts with the local population and are unable to get them re-issued, owing to the lack of necessary documents and limited possibilities of accessing civil registration offices.

The Draft National Strategy on Solutions for IDPs, Returnees and Refugees (see [section 5.1](#)), which was due to be published at the time of writing this study, could provide an adequate policy framework and an opportunity to strengthen the humanitarian-development nexus by linking humanitarian response activities targeted at IDPs to existing social protection programmes, taking into account their specific situation and needs. In the medium to long term this would have the potential to contribute to durable solutions for IDPs, reduce their aid dependencies and improve their self-reliance.

An additional problem is that the current peace conditions in Darfur are deteriorating. The drawdown of the UNAMID Darfur peacekeeping mission in 2021 was supposed to have been replaced by government forces, but they have yet to be deployed and the replacement UNITAMS mission focuses on transitional support rather than peacekeeping. Within this vacuum, insecurity and local conflict have increased with even further displacements, and there is extremely little confidence among displaced communities about their safety and security (PROSPECTS 2022). Under these difficult circumstances, it will also be challenging to roll out further state-provided social protection programmes to those areas.

Summary recommendations

- ▶ Improve access of IDPs and host communities alike to legal identification mechanisms (see [section 8.1](#))
- ▶ Strengthen recent efforts to include IDPs more effectively in existing social assistance programmes to strengthen social cohesion between them and host communities (see [section 8.4](#))
- ▶ Strengthen the humanitarian-development nexus by linking humanitarian response activities targeted at IDPs to existing social assistance programmes (see [section 8.4](#))
- ▶ Consider introducing shock-responsive elements in social assistance schemes to address covariate shocks caused by conflicts and displacement (see [section 8.4](#))
- ▶ Improve service delivery for refugees at local branches of social protection programmes and other services (see [section 9](#))
- ▶ Strengthen GRM mechanisms to monitor and avoid the exacerbation of social conflicts between IDPs and host communities (see [section 9.4](#))

▶ 7.7 Women workers

Even though women workers in Sudan do not have to contend with any other direct legal barriers to accessing social protection than men, their effective access is constrained by a range of practical barriers.¹⁰²

Stark gender differences exist in labour force participation. In 2014, only one working-age woman in three is employed or actively seeking employment, compared with three men in four. Many women who participate actively in the labour force are engaged in the agricultural sector, which accounts for 60 per cent of employment among women. Therefore, in general they are partly or fully excluded from any work-related social protection schemes. This is reflected in the low coverage rates with the NPSIF among women.

Women's work in Sudan is characterized by low and unstable earnings. Therefore, even though they are often more willing to pay regular contributions for social insurance programmes than men, their financial capacity to do so is low. Unsurprisingly, FGDs with women workers have shown that they bear the main responsibilities for unpaid care work within their household. This further lowers their incomes, while lengthening their working days.

In terms of administrative procedure, women workers often face higher barriers than men when wanting to register, because of their multiple roles as workers and caregivers for family and community members, resulting in limited time for other activities. Moreover, prevailing cultural norms often do not allow women to travel alone without being accompanied by a male family member and restrict their interaction with men in public spaces (GIZ n.d.).

The benefits provided by existing social protection schemes are not aligned with the most pressing needs and priorities of women workers. There is no maternity protection scheme apart from the employer liability regulated in the 1997 Labour Code, which many employers do not comply with.

¹⁰² However, women in Sudan face significant legal obstacles to accessing the labour market, enshrined in the 1997 Labour Code (see [section 5.1](#)). They cannot work the same night hours as men, perform jobs deemed hazardous, arduous or morally inappropriate, perform the same tasks, or work in the same industries (World Bank, 2019b).

Summary recommendations

- ▶ Consider the reduction of the qualifying period for the old-age pension provided under the NPSIF to enable women with shorter working careers because of care responsibilities to accumulate sufficient entitlements to be eligible for a pension (see [section 8.3](#)).
- ▶ Test the feasibility of introducing top-up systems and care credits to guarantee pension entitlements for women (and men) who interrupt their paid employment to care for children and older persons (see [section 8.3](#)).
- ▶ Consider the introduction of a universal old-age pension to ensure women's coverage in old age (see sections 8.3 and 8.4)
- ▶ Promote labour market participation among women through productive inclusion measures (see [section 8.4](#))
- ▶ Consider the introduction of a universal non-contributory mother and child grant for pregnant women and new-born babies (see [section 8.4](#)).
- ▶ Take specific measures to improve access for women to registration mechanisms, such as increasing female staff at local NHIF and NPSIF branches and reserving specific time slots for attending women, as well as involving women's groups and unions in registration campaigns (see [section 9.2](#))



▶ 8

Options for improving the design of social protection schemes to extend coverage among workers in the informal economy

Based on the results of the previous sections, this section elaborates a first set of recommendations, options and pathways to show how social protection could be better extended to workers in the informal economy in terms of coverage, adequacy and comprehensiveness. It contains general recommendations with an overarching character that apply across different schemes and categories of workers (section 8.1), as well as specific options for different types of schemes (sections 8.2, 8.3 and 8.4) and how they can be improved to allow for extension to specific categories of workers in the informal economy.

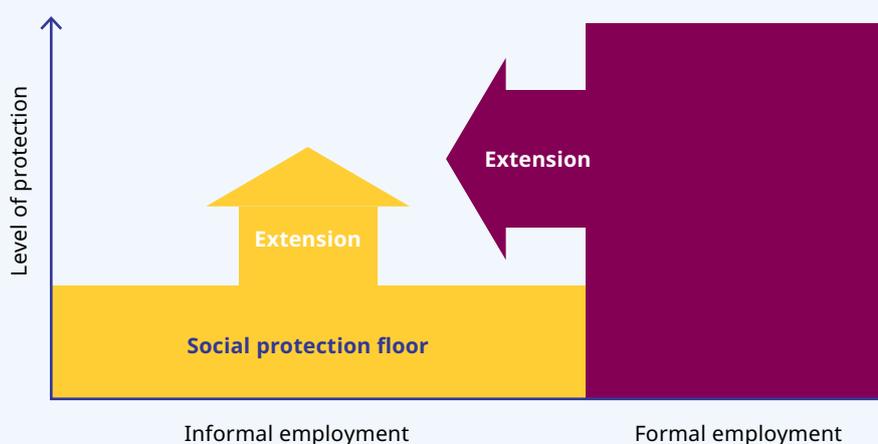
▶ 8.1 General recommendations

To extend social protection significantly to workers in the informal economy in Sudan, a two-track approach is necessary (ILO 2021d).

First, efforts need to be made to extend social insurance, that is, the NHIF and the NPSIF, to workers who are already relatively close to the formal economy. These schemes are based on the payment of contributions by the protected person and/or their employers, which gives rise to entitlements or acquired rights. They are based on the principle of risk sharing and solidarity; thus, contributions are usually proportionate to earnings and specific levels of benefits are guaranteed in line with the applicable legal framework. Extending social insurance coverage to workers who have been unprotected so far is an important step towards the progressive formalization of enterprises. For this purpose, adaptations of the design features of the NHIF and the NPSIF will have to be considered, including the potential to provide temporary full or partial subsidies for workers with insufficient contributory capacities.

Second, in order to establish and extend a nationally defined social protection floor, the gradual extension of non-contributory social protection schemes to complement social insurance is indispensable. This means that at least a basic level of social protection should be extended to the population, independently of working status, to provide sufficient protection in the face of various risks and contingencies across the life cycle. As they are mostly financed from general taxation, other state revenues or external grants or loans, non-contributory social protection schemes are provided independently from work relations and incomes and play a key role in ensuring a basic level of protection. Potentially, they can contribute to the formalization of enterprises in the long run by increasing investments in people's health and education, empowering people to seize economic opportunities and thereby contributing to labour productivity (ILO, 2021d).

► **Figure 6. Overall strategy for the extension of social protection to workers in the informal economy**



Source: ILO 2021d.

This approach, displayed graphically in figure 6, does justice to the mobility of workers in and out of poverty, between formality and informality (though approaches need to be carefully designed to avoid disincentives for formalization), as well as within different economic activities, such as agricultural and non-agricultural labour or wage- and self-employment. More detailed options for the extension of various contributory and non-contributory schemes are outlined in the subsequent subsections.

The development of the first National Social Protection Strategy (see section 5.1), initiated in 2020, has provided an important momentum and an entry point to anchor such a comprehensive approach sustainably within Sudan's policy landscape. In this regard, it would be important to strengthen the linkages of a comprehensive social protection policy with other policy areas, such as employment policies and economic policies, including enterprise development, tax policies, local economic development, agricultural policies and asylum policies. The extension of social protection to workers in the informal economy has to go hand in hand with the review of laws and regulations from other sectors, such as the 1997 Labour Code, the Cooperatives Act, rules and regulations related to business registration and licensing, as well as rules and regulations for the registration of refugees and IDPs (see section 5.1).

A simultaneous progressive extension of both tracks to close existing coverage gaps should be envisaged, based on the results of the present study and more in-depth assessments, which can be based broadly on the following prioritization criteria (ILO 2021d).

The priority of the extension of contributory schemes, that is, the contributory arm of the NHIF (see section 8.2 for more details) and the NPSIF (see section 8.3 for more details), could be to reach out first to those workers of the informal economy who are close to the formal economy. This includes, for example, fishers, traders, craftsmen, factory workers and waste pickers, as they are often registered (or it would be at least mandatory for them or their employers to do so) or already paying taxes to local authorities

on a regular basis (see section 6 for more details). This would have to go hand in hand with efforts to improve registration of workers and enterprises alike, as well as enforcement and control mechanisms (see section 9). Moreover, rollout could start with those groups of workers that have already a certain degree of organization, a certain contributory capacity and for whom cooperatives or professional organizations could facilitate the extension strategy. This is partly the case for gum arabic producers, fishers, craftsmen and women. The increased involvement of interest groups representing workers engaged in specific economic activities may mitigate the strong distrust towards central authorities responsible for social protection schemes. Furthermore, specific needs of different groups of workers may be better targeted and addressed with this approach. Such efforts would have to be closely linked to strategies to strengthen these organizations, increase their membership base and build their capacities with regards to social protection.

The priority of the extension of non-contributory schemes, that is, cash transfers, livelihood programmes and the subsidized arm of the NHIF, should rest on reaching those groups with the greatest needs and vulnerability against individual and covariate shocks and the most significant barriers to contributory schemes in terms of legislative coverage, physical access and financial ability to pay. This includes, but is not limited to, workers engaged in agricultural activities, IDPs and women, as well as workers with disabilities. However, owing to the high degree of poverty and vulnerability in Sudan, and limited institutional capacities to implement and monitor a targeting mechanism, it will be important to avoid narrow targeting approaches. Universal or categorical schemes should therefore be considered as an option (see section 8.4 for more details).

Regardless of the specific prioritization, a progressive extension of coverage will require a more detailed and sequenced strategy that defines a stepwise approach. Besides dedicated approaches to extend coverage to different groups of workers, such a strategy should also envisage the progressive extension of coverage of all types of risks and contingencies faced by them (see box 2) through the combination of contributory and non-contributory elements.

Strategies for better identification and registration of individual and households on the one hand, and enterprises and their workers on the other, are crucial, and a precondition for implementing such a comprehensive approach to improving access to social protection schemes.

Results of the FGD suggest that significant gaps in coverage with ID documents remain among most groups of workers, despite recent efforts to increase ID coverage which have been linked to enrolment campaigns of social protection programmes (see sections 5.2.1 and 5.2.4). Therefore, it will be important to improve civil registration further and extend the coverage with national ID cards among IDPs and host communities alike, as well as the coverage of refugee ID cards among refugees. They constitute a vital precondition for administering contributory and non-contributory programmes effectively (Guyen et al 2021). The provision of legal identities for workers in the informal economy will help to make them more visible and legitimize them as citizens (or residents) with defined rights and responsibilities, including the right to access social protection and the responsibility of contributing to such schemes, based on their contributory capacity.

Moreover, and also closely linked to this, it will be necessary to strengthen the system of business registration and registration of wage-employed workers, and thereby contribute to their gradual formalization, which implies coverage with contributory schemes. One important step in this direction would be to simplify and streamline current business registration and licensing procedures by reducing the number of steps to register a small business (see box 14) and renew business licences. This would include a simplification and better integration of the step to register own-account workers and employees with social security institutions and to collect their contributions. A concrete option would be to link the registration of self-employed and their businesses at the local business registrars directly with enrolment into relevant social insurance schemes through a one-stop shop solution. The registration of businesses and their workers would also be a precondition and an important element in further strengthening enforcement and control mechanisms for contributory schemes (see section 9).

More efforts also need to be made to strengthen transparency, accountability and good governance of social protection schemes and the system as a whole. This would help to improve the trust of workers in the informal economy in existing and future schemes, as well as in the government and state institutions in general. FGDs conducted for this study have shown that among most groups of workers in the informal economy, trust in the social protection system and in the state is alarmingly low. Only if workers and their employers perceive existing schemes as reliable and efficient will they be willing to participate and pay regular contributions (ILO 2021d). This issue is closely linked to mechanisms to improve delivery mechanisms for social protection schemes (see section 9).

Formulating strategies for the extension of social protection coverage to workers in the informal economy should be based on a broad national dialogue that involves representatives of workers and employers, and other relevant stakeholders. The meaningful and effective participation of workers and employers, including those active in the informal economy, is an essential precondition for the formulation of effective strategies for the extension of coverage. Their active participation will also be key to build their trust and support and to ensure a sense of ownership (ILO 2021d). Results of the research conducted for this study have shown that interest groups for almost all groups of workers, such as labour unions, agricultural cooperatives or profession associations, are relatively weak, and membership of such a group among workers is uncommon. Therefore, as a first step, the roles and capacities of these interest groups would have to be strengthened, and workers in the informal economy would have to be encouraged to become members. In future, functional interest groups could also have an active role in the actual implementation of social protection schemes dedicated to workers in the informal economy, wherever feasible. Consequently, efforts could be made to facilitate access of informal economy workers to social protection schemes through the engagement of interest groups in outreach and information, including advocacy, and collective registration (ILO 2022) (see section 9).

► 8.2 Specific options for NHIF

Compared with other schemes, the coverage of the NHIF is already quite high. This has been mostly reached by the approach of subsidizing the NHIF contributions of poor households: 72 per cent of all families affiliated to the NHIF are subsidized. Less attention has been paid in the past to strategies for extending contributory coverage of the NHIF.

To ensure long-term sustainability of the fund, a comprehensive and phased strategy is needed to link the contributory and subsidized arms of the NHIF and to allow for progressive transition and mobility between them. An important element of such a comprehensive approach would be to apply recertification procedures regularly among those households enrolled under the subsidized arm, with the aim of verifying if eligibility criteria still apply. The recertification process should be combined with raising awareness for the contributory arm among those households that do not further qualify for the subsidized arm.

Gradually phasing out subsidies for those families who no longer qualify for the subsidized arm should also be considered, to allow a smooth transition towards the contributory arm. At the same time, those families affiliated to the contributory arm of the NHIF who become poor should be allowed to apply for the subsidized arm. The introduction of a sliding scale fee system could facilitate transitions between different forms of NHIF membership. A precondition for such an approach would be the collection and regular updating of nationwide socio-economic and demographic information through the implementation of a comprehensive social protection information system (see box 16). Such a strategy would address the prevailing practice among self-employed workers to wait until they are enrolled into the subsidized arm, instead of actively registering to the contributory arm of the NHIF.

It would be important to improve the portability of the NHIF coverage across states and different economic activities. As FGDs have shown, many workers combine and move between different economic activities to diversify their livelihoods. Thereby, they often cross state borders and switch between self- and wage-

employment, as well as agricultural and non-agricultural work. NHIF members who are not in the wage-employed arm can only make use of their NHIF cards within the state where they are officially registered (see section 5.2.1). Therefore, migrant workers often cannot access services provided by the fund in areas where they migrate to search for labour. Consideration should therefore be given to allowing NHIF members to access services anywhere in Sudan, regardless of their membership status.

To create incentives for those who have to pay contributions, it will be indispensable to improve further the adequacy of the benefit package offered by the NHIF. Satisfaction with services provided by the NHIF is still low among all groups of workers surveyed for this study, in both rural and urban areas. The high degree of dissatisfaction is caused by a range of closely interrelated factors, which would have to be addressed simultaneously. They include the poor quality of services that can be accessed through NHIF membership perceived by many participants of the FGD, the difficult access to health facilities affiliated to the NHIF in remote areas, as well as the explicit exclusion of a range of services from the NHIF benefit package. Dedicated measures to address these challenges would be a precondition for improving satisfaction among NHIF members and building trust in the system, especially among those workers who have to pay regular contributions. The objectives of the NHIF strategic plan 2021–2024 already include increased measures to improve the quality of the existing network of NHIF health services, to boost the use of health services, to provide adequate and sustainable resources for national health insurance to meet the needs of beneficiaries, and to use resources efficiently. Efforts in this regard will have to be accelerated to achieve the objective of Universal Health Coverage (UHC) enshrined in the National Health Sector Policy 2017–30 (see section 5.1).

The legal coverage of the NHIF, as defined in the 2016 NHIF Act, is already quite comprehensive. However, to extend coverage further among workers, removal of the minimum threshold of workers in an enterprise, currently set at five, could be considered. This would have to go hand in hand with improved enforcement and control mechanisms for MSE to monitor their compliance with the law (see section 9.6) and could be combined with special incentives to register MSE and their employees with the NHIF.

One concrete option to incentivize MSE with a limited number of wage-employed workers to register with the NHIF would be to unify tax and NHIF contributions for small businesses into one payment (often referred to as a *monotax*¹⁰³). Such an approach could be linked to the current practice that can be observed in some states of offering flat rates to private enterprises to incentivize them to insure their employees with the NHIF (see section 5.2.1). One of the major advantages of a *monotax* mechanism is that it facilitates the payment of social security contributions and taxes, considering the limited administrative capacities of MSE, which can constitute a considerable barrier for formalization. A combination of tax payments and NHIF contributions for employees would make it easier for small enterprises to understand and predict the total amount that they will have to pay. Such a mechanism could also reduce the financial burden faced by MSE, for instance through a unified rate which is lower than the usual tax, and NHIF contributions paid by entrepreneurs that are outside the mechanism. An important precondition for such an approach is the increased coordination between NHIF branches and tax chambers at state and locality level (Gaarder et al 2021, ILO 2021d, ILO 2021e).

Another entry point to increase the coverage of wage-employed workers would be to provide better information to employers about the benefits the NHIF would bring them. FGDs have shown that in some sectors, such as agriculture, crafts and manufacturing, it is a common practice that employers pay health costs in case of an accident or work-related illness (see section 6). This is mostly regulated on an informal basis. The costs of these informal practices for employers could exceed by far the amount they would have to pay in the form of contributions to the NHIF. More efforts to raise awareness among employers of the benefits of the NHIF to cover unexpected health costs of wage-employed workers could help to channel their willingness to meet their workers' health expenses into increased registration with the fund.

103 *Monotax* mechanisms are implemented in various countries, including Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay to overcome financial and administrative barriers of own-account workers or micro and small enterprises to pay taxes and social security contributions. They offer the possibility for some categories of enterprises and workers to pay a flat payment instead of various tax and social security contributions. The level of contributions usually differs according to income categories. While participation in *monotax* mechanisms is usually voluntary, simpler procedures and in some cases lower (subsidized) contribution rates render these mechanisms attractive for eligible categories of self-employed workers and microenterprises (ILO 2021d).

Last but not least, the inclusion of refugees into the NHIF through a two-track approach should be considered. First, it should be ensured that refugees working in the informal economy with sufficient contributory capacities have the right to enrol (in the case of self-employed) or be enrolled (in the case of wage-employed) into the NHIF. This would be fully in line with Article 5 of the 2016 NHIF Act, as outlined in section 5.2. As most refugees are officially registered in Sudan (see box 15) the refugee ID card could be used as unique identifier (similar to the national ID in the case of Sudanese citizens). Moreover, registration with the NHIF could be linked to the process of obtaining a work permit (see box 15). Second, the contributions of refugees without sufficient contributory capacities, especially those located in urban areas with sufficient access to health services provided by the NHIF, could be subsidized by international development partners who usually cover the health costs of refugees through a parallel system (see box 6). This could be linked to a system of gradual reduction of subsidies and introduction of co-payments for those refugees who transition out of poverty to encourage them to move to the contributory arm. Such an approach could build on the experiences gained during the pilot project conducted in 2017.

► 8.3 Specific options for NPSIF

A high degree of labour mobility between different types of work, such as a combination of agricultural and non-agricultural activities, work in urban and rural areas, self- and wage-employment, suggests that the best option to extend pensions and other social insurance benefits to workers currently operating in the informal economy would be to extend the existing NPSIF legislation – instead of implementing a specific legislation and creating a separate fund for dedicated groups of workers (such as agricultural workers) as often seen in other countries. Otherwise, portability across schemes might pose a significant barrier for effective coverage for many workers.

To extend legal coverage, the 2016 NPSIF Act will have to be reviewed and adapted. First of all, it should provide a clearer framework for self-employed workers and extend the groups covered beyond craftsmen and professionals, which are the only self-employed groups mentioned explicitly in the Act. Moreover, it would have to be reassessed to what extent agricultural workers, as well as other groups currently excluded from the Act, such as domestic workers, could be legally covered in the medium to long term. Another option for increasing legal coverage would be to explicitly include workers with verbal contracts in the Act. Progressively extending coverage to categories of uncovered workers under social security legislation is a crucial and necessary step towards ensuring better protection for them and their families (Beaulieu and Landry 2021). However, this will only be effective if backed by strengthened enforcement and control mechanisms (see [section 9.5](#)), as well as measures to raise awareness among workers and their employers (see [section 9.1](#)).

A review of the qualifying condition for an old-age pension should be considered. At present it is set with 20 years of contributions. Long qualifying conditions can discourage people from joining and contributing, thereby discouraging them from moving from the informal to the formal economy. Therefore, in line with ILO Convention 102, it is recommended to reduce the qualifying period for a minimum pension from 20 to 15 years. This will enable workers with short working careers, particularly women, to accumulate sufficient entitlements to be eligible for a pension (Beaulieu and Landry 2021).

To extend the coverage of NPSIF to women working in the informal economy, it will be crucial to integrate gender-sensitive design features into the NPSIF. Owing to their low levels of labour force participation and their low wage levels, women are more likely to lack any form of old-age protection, and if they receive pensions at all, these are typically low because of shorter and more interrupted working careers. To promote a gender-responsive pension system, the feasibility of introducing top-up systems and care credits to guarantee pension entitlements for women and men who interrupt their paid employment to care for children and older persons (pension care credits) could be explored (Beaulieu and Landry 2021, Alfors and Barca 2021).

The extension of legal coverage will need to be jointly implemented with measures that reduce financial barriers, to ensure that coverage does not remain just on paper. Given that the income of the large majority of workers in the informal economy tends to be low, and is often volatile, it is key to design the extension strategy in a way that takes into account the contributory capacity of workers and envisages appropriate mechanisms to adapt contribution rates and schedules to their situation. Despite being legally covered, many self-employed workers may not be able to contribute 25 per cent of their earnings to the pension scheme and therefore lack access to the benefits provided by the NPSIF. This might also be the case for self-employed agricultural workers if they were to be included in future. In addition, the minimum monthly earnings used to calculate the contributions of self-employed workers may pose additional challenges, as this threshold may be too high for many self-employed workers in Sudan.

More concrete options to overcome financial barriers include the following (Beaulieu and Landry 2021, Alfery and Barca 2021).

- ▶ The feasibility of reducing the contribution rates for self-employed workers (and agricultural workers if included in future) should be explored in more detail, taking into account the financial sustainability of the fund. A monotax approach (see [section 8.2](#)) could also be considered in this regard but would require an increased cooperation between local NPSIF branches and local tax chambers, as well as coordination at the national level between the NPSIF and the MoFEP.
- ▶ The NPSIF is already partially subsidized by general revenues, and cross-subsidization could be used to contribute proportionately to the NPSIF for self-employed and other groups of vulnerable workers who might have limited contributory capacities. However, it is important to establish eligibility criteria based on low earnings or appropriate easily observable proxy indicators, rather than informality status, to avoid negative incentives to remain in the informal economy.
- ▶ For certain groups of self-employed workers, it could be an option to explore the possibility of contributions, levies or earmarked taxes from parties disproportionately benefiting from the services of these workers along the value chain. This can be seen as an additional levy on the commercial relationship (Alfery and Barca 2021). This option could be considered, for example, in the case of construction workers who are usually hired through intermediaries by property developers, or for certain groups of agricultural producers (such as gum arabic or cash crop farmers) who sell their products at local markets to larger merchants or brokers, who in turn resell them to larger companies.
- ▶ Another option would be to study the possibility of introducing a non-contributory universal pension, at some basic level, for all Sudanese above the age of 60 or 65 (see [section 8.4](#)). This would have implications for the design of the NPSIF, including its minimum pension.

The comprehensiveness and adequacy of NPSIF benefits would have to be adapted to encourage workers in the informal economy to affiliate to the fund. This could be addressed by the following options, which would also benefit existing contributors (Beaulieu and Landry 2021).

- ▶ If pensions are too low and are continuously devaluated as a result of high inflation, people will lose confidence in the system. An increase of the minimum pension and an automatic indexation of the pension levels would therefore provide clear incentives to contribute. Benefit amounts should be re-evaluated every year according to inflation levels.
- ▶ Social protection benefits should be designed in such a way as to meet workers' priority needs and encourage their participation. As the risk of injuries at work was often mentioned as one of the primary risks faced during FGDs with workers of different categories, the compensation for work-related accidents and injuries – together with a pension benefit – could be one specific package to be offered to self-employed workers at reduced contribution rates.
- ▶ Specified benefit packages that offer other short-term benefits could include cash benefits in the case of maternity, sickness and unemployment, which are currently only covered by employer liability (see [box 8](#)) and therefore exclude a wide range of workers, especially those who are self-employed.

- ▶ The significant number of lump sum withdrawals deters the extension of pension coverage, as well as the provision of adequate and comprehensive benefits under NPSIF, as they do not provide adequate protection in old age or for any other risk or contingency covered by the NPSIF. Therefore, it is recommended to eliminate the opportunity of withdrawing lump sum payments before retirement age. However, to ensure acceptance for this reform among current and future NPSIF members, this would have to go hand in hand with measures to increase the amount of benefits upon retirement (or earlier in the case of disability or death) and to adjust them regularly to inflation levels.

▶ 8.4 Specific options for non-contributory schemes

As outlined in section 8.1, the extension of non-contributory schemes constitutes an important element of a comprehensive strategy to extend social protection to workers in the informal economy. Non-contributory schemes are almost non-existent in the Sudanese context and would have to be significantly strengthened and improved. Such efforts would include several options.

First, the coverage of programmes, in particular cash transfer programmes and livelihood programmes, would have to be significantly extended. There were 2.6 million poor households according to 2014/15 household survey estimates, and with recent developments, including political and macro-economic instability, high inflation and shortages of bread and other food, as well as low economic growth, the number of eligible poor and vulnerable people is expected to have risen substantially. Therefore, the coverage of non-contributory programmes needs to be increased accordingly, if the objective of non-contributory programmes is to reduce poverty and vulnerability (Etang Ndip 2020). Moreover, to increase effective coverage, the main social assistance programmes would have to be grounded in an adequate national legal framework, in line with and backed by the NSPS, which is currently under development (see section 5.1).

Second, if a dedicated aim of such programmes is to improve the living conditions of workers in the informal economy, non-contributory programmes would also have to reach households with working capacities, which were mostly excluded from previous schemes because of narrow poverty targeting methods. Categorical social assistance schemes, such as grants and access to services for pregnant women and new-born babies (see box 11), child grants, and universal old-age pensions, would be one option to include workers and their families in the informal economy more effectively. Such programmes have the potential to benefit everyone within a certain category and are usually easier to administer as they do not have to go through complex targeting procedures (Alfers and Barca 2021, Etang Ndip 2020). By using objective and transparent measures to determine eligibility that are observable for everyone, a categorical approach could also help to improve social cohesion in a society characterized by a high level of social conflicts. It could also be a means of building trust in government (Kidd et al. 2020).

Alternatively, a specific focus of extending poverty-targeted non-contributory schemes could rest on extending coverage to specifically vulnerable groups of workers in urban and rural areas, as identified in section 8.1. This approach would have to be combined with improved poverty targeting mechanisms, with the use of existing administrative data to “target out” those who are likely to be relatively richer and thus ineligible (affluence testing). For this approach, considerable efforts and resources would be needed to build a comprehensive social protection information system supporting such schemes (see box 16).

Third, cash transfers and other non-contributory programmes would have to be improved in terms of adequacy. The amount of the transfers provided by previous programmes was not appropriate, and the rising inflation over the last years further eroded the value of the transfer amounts. If the objective of

non-contributory programmes is to reduce poverty among workers in the informal economy and other vulnerable groups, then the value must be an amount that is suitable to fill the poverty gap and would have to be adjusted to inflation rates on a regular basis.

As soon as functioning social assistance schemes are in place, integration of shock-responsive elements could be considered, to address shocks that affect a large proportion of the population simultaneously (covariate shocks). Such an approach encompasses the adaptation of routine social protection programmes and systems to cope with changes in context and demand following large-scale shocks. Well-functioning non-contributory schemes could be topped up for existing beneficiaries to provide more adequate benefits after shocks (vertical extension) and could be extended to further population groups affected by a shock (horizontal extension). The initiation of shock-responsive elements in existing social assistance schemes would be best suited to address the risk of natural hazards and climate change, which was mentioned as one of the most relevant risks faced by workers engaged in agricultural activities during FGDs (see section 6.1). In addition to reacting to environmental risks, a shock-responsive social protection system also has the potential to address social risks, such as local conflicts which often lead to displacements, or economic risks, such as the effects of the COVID-19 crisis.

Strengthening the linkages between social assistance programmes such as the Strategic Cash Transfer and livelihood schemes such as Shamel should be considered, by further building synergies of their design and implementation features. Such an approach has the potential to help self-employed workers, for instance farmers, street vendors or craftsmen and women, to diversify their economic activities, to improve their productivity sustainably and to increase their household income. Women could be the primary target group of this integrated approach to strengthen productive inclusion. Shamel or similar programmes could also be used more strategically to foster formalization, for instance by supporting participants to create producers' cooperatives and registering them, by boosting entrepreneurship and linking such activities to business registration, or by helping participants to seek formal employment.

An approach to extend the coverage, adequacy and comprehensiveness of non-contributory social protection schemes in Sudan would need to go hand in hand with the exploration of options to extend fiscal space for such schemes, including reallocating public expenditure, increasing tax revenue, and eliminating illicit financial flows (Ortiz et al. 2019). Some efforts to create fiscal space have already been made by the civilian-led transitional government since 2019 but would have to be advanced further in future.

9

Options for improving and streamlining programme delivery mechanisms

Providing quality benefits that meet the needs of workers is the best way to build trust in social protection systems and convince the workers and their employers to participate in existing schemes. Effective and efficient delivery mechanisms for social protection help governments to earn the trust of the population (ILO 2021d). Therefore, the last section of this study gives recommendations on how to improve the delivery mechanisms of existing social protection schemes as described in box 4 (sections 9.1 to 9.6). In addition, section 9.7 outlines concrete options for streamlining different social protection schemes along their delivery chain (see box 4) by applying coordinated approaches for outreach, registration, eligibility decisions, enrolment, provision of benefits and collection of contributions.

▶ 9.1 Outreach and information

Facilitating access to information on available schemes and benefits, workers' and employers' rights and obligations, as well as on procedures for registration, is a precondition for the extension of social protection to workers in the informal economy. However, many workers do not have sufficient access to information about available contributory and non-contributory schemes (ILO 2021d).

FGDs with different groups of workers have clearly shown that workers (and their employers) often do not know which contributory social insurance schemes are available to them, have no information about the costs and benefits of such schemes or what their rights and obligations are under the law, and do not know how they can access these schemes to ensure their protection. Both the NHIF and the NPSIF should, therefore, be more proactive, ideally in partnership with employers' and workers' organizations as well as other functional interest groups (such as agricultural cooperatives and professional associations) to raise awareness and facilitate access for those in the informal economy. Local authorities, such as local business registrars and labour offices, can also play an important role in providing information to workers about the NHIF and the NPSIF, thereby raising their awareness.

In addition, workers should have sufficient information about non-contributory schemes, the eligibility criteria applied, the procedures to register for these schemes, the documentation necessary for registering, the benefits provided, as well as channels to file complaints. Whereas community-based structures usually provide information about such programmes in rural areas, access to adequate information about non-contributory schemes seems to be particularly difficult for workers located in urban areas, where these community structures are often dysfunctional. Moreover, informal settlements in urban areas are often not covered by such mechanisms. Therefore, alternative approaches for outreach and information would need to be considered, especially in urban settings. As workers in urban areas have better access to mobile phones and the internet, outreach campaigns could rely, at least partly, on digital communication channels, using SMS messaging, social media and automated calling services. The first experiences gained during the initial implementation of the SFSP could be evaluated and further improved. Outreach, registration and enrolment campaigns should target marginalized urban areas proactively, in particular the informal settlements close to markets and industrial areas where many workers in the informal economy are located.

► 9.2 Registration (including eligibility verification for non-contributory schemes) and enrolment

Facilitating access to application and registration procedures and access points is another key element for removing existing entry barriers to social protection for workers in the informal economy. Results of FGDs, KIIs and the service point mapping (see annex 6) have shown that different groups of workers are confronted by multiple difficulties when they want to register for contributory or non-contributory schemes. Potential barriers include lack of information (see section 9.1) or misinformation, difficult physical access to the competent authorities responsible for registration, or discrimination of certain groups, such as IDPs, refugees and women.

In order to encourage affiliation, the NHIF and the NPSIF would have to review their administrative procedures for registration and enrolment. This should be done in close consultation with interest groups representing different groups of workers in the informal economy, as well as organizations of workers and employers. Alternative approaches to facilitate registration procedures for these schemes include (ILO 2021d):

- expanding and adapting opening hours of local branches (see annex 6), taking into account the typical work schedules of different groups of workers;
- making sure that all groups of workers can register at any local branch, regardless of residence status;
- involving trade unions, professional associations and agricultural cooperatives in registration campaigns;
- making active use of local business registrars (for self-employed) and local labour offices (for wage-employed) as access points for NHIF and the NPSIF (including making use of the same supporting documents across different registration procedures by facilitating automated information exchange between the competent authorities);
- taking specific measures to improve access for women to registration mechanisms, such as increasing female staff at local NHIF and NPSIF branches and reserving specific time slots for attending women, as well as involving women's groups and unions in registration campaigns;
- taking specific measures to improve the access of refugees and IDPs to registration mechanisms, such as removing existing restrictions to access competent authorities (see annex 6) and dedicated registration campaigns in refugee and IDP camps.

As shown in section 5.2, almost all non-contributory social protection schemes in Sudan, including the subsidized arm of the NHIF, the Strategic Cash Transfer and the SFSP, have conducted annual or one-off registration campaigns to enrol new beneficiaries. Thereby, they have relied to a great extent on community-based structures such as local Zakat Committees and Service and Change Committees to facilitate registration and verify eligibility. Such mechanisms are often perceived as unfair and nepotistic by different groups of workers, in both urban and rural areas. Owing to the absence of agencies responsible for these schemes at the lower local levels, in particular at neighbourhood and locality level, the most feasible option will be to continue involving and making use of these structures in the future. However, it will be indispensable to improve the transparency and accountability of community-level organizations involved in these procedures to build trust in the social protection system and, at the same time, improve trust in state institutions in general. Therefore, community-level structures would need to be “disempowered” to a certain degree, by providing them with clear guidelines and concrete standard operation procedures for registration and eligibility verification. Moreover, control and complaint mechanisms would need to be introduced and strengthened to improve their accountability (see section 9.4).

► 9.3 Delivery of benefits

The delivery of benefits is a key stage in the social protection delivery chain. Despite significant efforts to improve such mechanisms, the provision of benefits to beneficiaries located in remote rural areas, as well as in marginalized urban areas, is still a major challenge faced by authorities responsible for the respective schemes. On the one hand, the payment infrastructure, such as banks, ATMs, or mobile phone coverage, is not available in many areas. On the other, programmes have been facing significant challenges in delivering payments because of limited liquidity of funds in remote areas. Participants of FGDs frequently reported that the direct or indirect opportunity costs to receive the benefits, such as travel expenses, waiting times, formal and informal fee payments for agents, often exceed the benefits of the transfer they receive. This is one of the main reasons for the high degree of dissatisfaction with existing social protection schemes among workers in the informal economy.

The study has clearly shown that more efforts will be necessary to identify tailor-made, reliable and efficient payment mechanisms in different areas to improve the access of workers in the informal economy to the benefits of existing schemes. The right mix of digital payments (by mobile phone, cash cards or online bank accounts) and manual over-the-counter payments will be crucial in this regard. A separate assessment would be needed to identify concrete payment options, based on specific geographic contexts.

► 9.4 Complaint mechanisms

For both contributory and non-contributory schemes, mechanisms that allow (existing and potential) beneficiaries to file complaints and feedback to responsible authorities and allow them to respond – often referred to as Grievance and Redress Mechanisms (GRM) – are critical tools to promote transparency and accountability and build trust in the social protection system. Complaints can be related to unclear programme guidelines, lack of information, potential inclusion and exclusion errors, an unsatisfactory package of benefits and services, or problems with the payment of benefits or the provision of services. GRM mechanisms can support efforts to ensure that social protection schemes are tailored to their context, are locally appropriate and effective in addressing vulnerabilities. Moreover, well-designed complaint mechanisms have the potential to ensure that the design of a programme does not exacerbate local conflict dynamics in contexts with low levels of social cohesion and trust among different groups of the population. The study has clearly shown that complaint mechanisms are not yet well established for most social protection schemes in Sudan. The only programme with a relatively functional GRM is the

NHIF. More efforts would have to be made by authorities responsible for other schemes to build up and improve such mechanisms. Lessons learned with mechanisms used by the NHIF can thereby inform the design and implementation features of complaint mechanisms of other programmes.

Moreover, for contributory schemes, effective grievance mechanisms need to be established to allow workers to submit complaints if their employers do not register them or do so incorrectly (for example by underestimating their salaries). Such mechanisms should be impartial, transparent, effective, simple, rapid, accessible and inexpensive, and free of charge to the applicant (ILO 2021d). In fact, such mechanisms are an important element in improving compliance with the legal framework for contributory schemes such as the NHIF and the NPSIF (see also section 9.6). As for improving enforcement and control mechanisms in general, the NHIF and NPSIF can also join forces to set up effective grievance mechanisms.

▶ 9.5 Contribution payments

Workers and employers in the informal economy might face practical difficulties in paying contributions for the NHIF and NPSIF, for different reasons. Self-employed workers may not have the knowledge and/or the time to provide, prepare, process and send the information requested and effect payments. Employers, particularly in MSE, may not have the administrative capacity and/or knowledge to prepare declarations and effect payments for their employees. For agricultural workers, payment procedures may require additional time and costs for travelling since they often do not have access to locations where payments can be effected (ILO 2021d).

A combination of innovative approaches will be necessary to facilitate contribution payments for groups of workers located in different geographic areas, depending on their level of education, access to internet and mobile phones, possibility of visiting an office or bank to settle payments, and other factors. In general, coordination of contribution collection among different authorities (for instance, through a monotax mechanism, see section 8.2) can facilitate payment procedures and make contribution payments more attractive for workers in the informal economy and their employers.

Moreover, some groups of workers with volatile incomes will need greater flexibility in paying contributions. Contribution collection schedules may be spaced over time, allowing workers to make monthly, quarterly or annual contributions, depending on their specific income patterns. Allowing for contributions to be made at a time when workers' income is highest may facilitate social security coverage, especially for those in the agricultural sector, who depend on crop schedules, weather conditions and opportunities to market their harvest. Similarly, many self-employed, including own-account workers, active in non-agricultural activities may benefit from such more flexible payment schedules to account for variability in their economic activity (ILO 2021d).

▶ 9.6 Enforcement and control mechanisms

Enforcement and control mechanisms are key for the extension of social insurance schemes to workers in the informal economy, as they ensure the application of the respective laws, and more resources will have to be allocated to strengthen human and institutional capacities of the responsible authorities (ILO 2021d). Proper registration of businesses and their workers with the local labour offices, as well as with the NHIF and the NPSIF, and the full payment of contributions, should be relevant areas of an improved labour inspection system. Instead of creating and fostering separate inspection mechanisms at labour offices, NHIF and NPSIF branches, joint mechanisms could be created and used. This would help to increase the

efficiency and effectiveness of labour inspection mechanisms significantly. A precondition for this would be to improve cooperation and the exchange of data and information between all responsible agencies at national and subnational levels.

► 9.7 Streamlining delivery mechanisms across schemes through an integrated service delivery mechanism

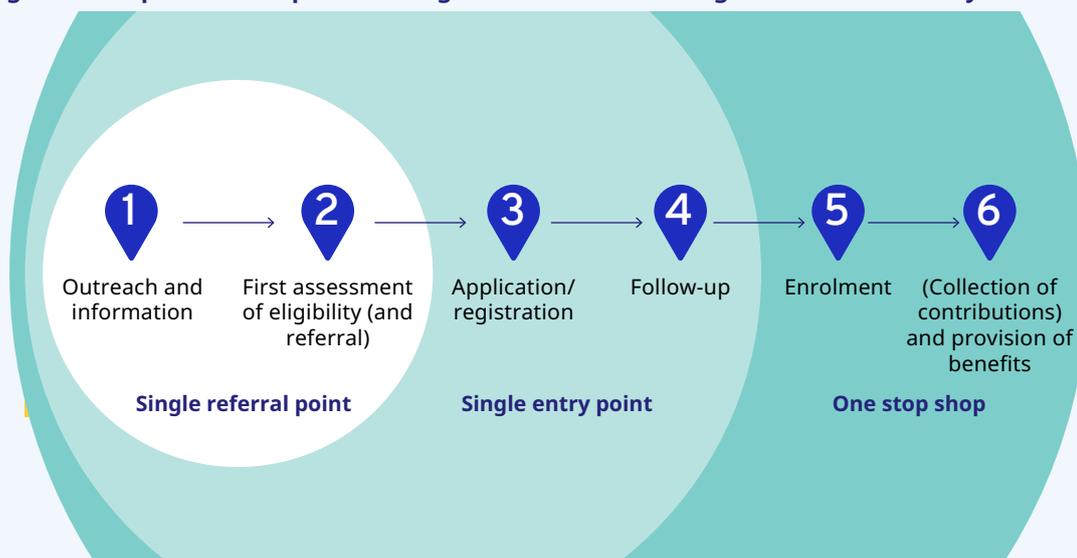
Integrated service delivery mechanisms, or single-window services (SWS), can help improve access to social protection, in particular in rural areas and marginalized urban locations, and realize economies of scale in the administration of social protection schemes. Through the provision of one integrated point of service, workers and employers can access several social protection programmes at one facility. Such a mechanism would enable a range of services to be bundled along the social protection delivery chain for different schemes, such as information, registration, benefit payment or contribution collection (see sections 9.1 to 9.6). Integrated services can considerably reduce time, costs and effort for future and present members of social protection schemes by avoiding multiple visits to different offices (ILO 2021d).

In the Sudanese context, rotating mobile offices can be an effective and efficient way to reach populations in remote areas, including rural populations and workers in marginalized urban areas. Such mobile offices may be set up for one or more days on a monthly, quarterly or bi-annual basis (depending on available resources) in one location (ideally at community or locality level) and then move to another one, thus reaching a larger number of persons. This approach could benefit from the experience already gained through previous (annual) enrolment drives conducted for various social protection schemes, such as the NHIF (see section 5.2.1), the Strategic Cash Transfer (see section 5.2.3) or the SFSP (see section 5.2.4), as well as from the lessons learned.

Rotating mobile offices could be staffed with dedicated and well-trained common front officers who are closely linked to the authorities responsible for the individual schemes and guided by them. Alternatively, they could operate as mobile one-stop shops through a co-location of staff of the concerned authorities within the mobile offices, such as State Poverty Centres, local Zakat offices, local NHIF and NPSIF branches, as well as representatives of Civil Registration Offices to facilitate coverage with ID documents. Rotating offices will require a high level of supporting technology and should ideally be linked to an integrated social protection information system (see box 16), to support various programmes for selected steps along the social protection delivery chain (see box 4). They would also have to be backed by offline modes and regular synchronization features to facilitate applications in remote localities with weak or no connectivity (World Bank 2020a).

Depending on the specific scheme, mobile offices can be used for outreach and information purposes only, combined with a first assessment of needs and eligibility and referral to the authorities responsible for the schemes the person might be eligible for (usually referred to as **single referral point**) or could also handle the registration process for programmes and the follow-up with concerned authorities (usually referred to as **single entry point**). In the case of initiating mobile one-stop shops, such offices could also take over more comprehensive functions along the delivery chain, including enrolment processes, the actual provision of benefits and the collection of contributions in the case of the NHIF and the NPSIF (Ramkissoon 2016, Bergthaller and Ebken 2017). The scope of the different approaches is summarized in figure 7.

► **Figure 7. The potential scope of rotating mobile offices for integrated service delivery**



Source: Based on Ramkissoon 2016 and Bergthaller and Ebken 2017.

Initial investment costs for such an approach would be high. However, these costs are likely to repay the investment by reaching a larger number of people. A gradual approach could be applied to roll out the approach, starting in the most remote and marginalized geographic areas with substantive challenges to access local offices of concerned authorities, with a limited number of programmes and a limited scope of services, which could vary between programmes. The approach could then be scaled up to other areas, programmes and services. This should be accompanied by an integrated approach of Monitoring and Evaluation to digest lessons learnt and continuously adapt the approach.

► **Box 16. Building an integrated social protection information system to support streamlined delivery**

An integrated social protection information system supporting a streamlined approach for delivery of social protection programmes would have to build linkages between various government information systems, including

- a. beneficiary registries to provide relevant information about beneficiaries and programme operations of all major contributory and non-contributory social protection programmes;
- b. a social registry to provide accurate, comprehensive and up-to-date socio-economic information of individuals and households to determine eligibility – especially in the case of poverty-targeted programmes;
- c. the national ID system to support the identification and authentication of individuals (with potential benefits in terms of interoperability between registries via the provision of a unique identifier);
- d. the civil registry to pre-populate, verify, validate, authenticate and update information on life events (births, deaths, marriages, and so on);
- e. the tax registry to cross-check and verify self-reported information for assessing needs and conditions of potential beneficiaries – supporting the prevention of error and fraud.

Source: Barca and Chirchir 2019.

▶ 10

Conclusions

This study analyses existing demand- and supply-side barriers for workers in the informal economy in Sudan to access social protection schemes, and outlines a comprehensive set of policy options for extension of coverage. The detailed analysis of the design of social protection schemes and their key delivery mechanisms (section 5) has given useful insight into the strengths of existing schemes that future reform efforts could build upon, as well as their current shortfalls and bottlenecks that need to be overcome to further extend the coverage of the social protection system, with a particular focus on the extension to workers in the informal economy. The in-depth assessment of the specific characteristics of different groups of workers in the informal economy (section 6) has proved to be useful, both as an indication of the manifold and multiple challenges to expanding coverage (section 7) and to tailor coverage expansion efforts to the exact needs and demands of workers not yet covered (sections 8 and 9).

The options presented in this study (sections 8 and 9) are based on a systems approach and are complementary to each other. On the one hand, they provide general directions to improve design and implementation features of the dedicated schemes, including suggestions for initiating new programmes. On the other, they give a guidance for specific and tailor-made actions to address specific conditions and needs of dedicated groups of workers. A combination of complementary policy approaches will undoubtedly be needed to address the diversity of challenges that exist in Sudan.

At the same time, a sequenced approach and the prioritization of specific schemes and dedicated target groups are needed – given the immense gaps in the social protection system, which are further hampered by the considerable socio-economic challenges faced by the country, as well as the limited financial resources and the weak capacities of ministries and agencies at national and state levels. A comprehensive medium- to long-term strategy for the extension of social protection coverage will, therefore, be needed to allow key recommendations and measures at the different levels to be articulated and prioritized into a coherent action plan.

► Annex 1. Inventory of social protection schemes

Name of scheme	Eligibility criteria	Contributions (for contributory schemes only)	Number of active members (for contributory schemes only)	Type of benefit(s)	Amount of benefit(s)	Number of active beneficiaries
NHIF	<p>Subsidized membership for poor families: those identified as poor by local enrolment committees (community-based targeting)</p> <p>Non-subsidized membership for workers and their dependents: Mandatory for formal sector workers and de facto voluntary for informal sector workers</p>	<p>Poor families (subsidized): family flat rate of 670 pounds</p> <p>Employees: 10% of fixed salary (4% of employees' salary + 6% employers' gross payroll)</p> <p>Self-employed: Family flat rate of 300 pounds</p>	7.7 million families with 34.2 million individuals across all states (83% of the population)	Access to primary health services at public and selected private health facilities	Based on actual need (no ceiling applied)	
NPSIF	<p>Mandatory for all public and private sector employees, self-employed craftsmen and professionals</p> <p>No option for voluntary affiliation</p>	<p>Employees: 25% of monthly wages or income (8% of employees' salary + 17% of employers' gross payroll, including 2% to cover employment injury insurance)</p> <p>Self-employed: 25% of monthly declared incomes (minimum and maximum earning used for calculation: 1,500–20,000 pounds)</p>	<p>Approx. 9 % of the active labour force</p> <p>Government sector: 688,000 employees</p> <p>Private sector: 427,000 employees and self-employed</p>	Work injury (cash)	<p>Full disability: monthly pension of 83.33% of previous salary</p> <p>Partial disability (over 15%): monthly pension that is equivalent to the full disability pension based on degree of disability</p>	<p>Approx. 11% of all persons above retirement age</p> <p>Government sector: 191,000 retirees</p> <p>Private sector: 142,000 pensioners</p>
				Old-age pension (cash)	<p>2% of insured's average monthly earnings in the last three years before retirement for every 12 months of contributions</p> <p>Minimum: 40% (min. 1,125 pounds)</p> <p>Maximum: 83.33%</p> <p>Early retirement: 50–54: pension is reduced by 15%</p>	
				Disability pension (cash)	<p>50% of insured's average monthly earnings in the last three years before disability began or 2% of the same earnings for every 12 months of contributions (whichever is more)</p> <p>Maximum: 83.33% of the insured's average monthly earnings in the last three years before disability began</p>	
				Survivors' pension (cash)	<p>50% of the last salary or on the basis of the old-age pension (whichever is more)</p> <p>Maximum: 83.33% of the last salary</p>	
				Death grant (cash)	<p>Active employment: four months of the insured's monthly earnings</p> <p>Pensioner: two months of old-age or disability pension</p>	

Name of scheme	Eligibility criteria	Contributions (for contributory schemes only)	Number of active members (for contributory schemes only)	Type of benefit(s)	Amount of benefit(s)	Number of active beneficiaries
Direct Cash Transfer (currently inactive)	Old system: those households listed as extremely poor in the 2011 ZPC (based on HH ranking according to scores) New system (SSN): those HH selected in a 3-step process of Community-Based Targeting, Proxy-Means Testing and verification of final list of HH by community			Cash transfer	400 pounds per month per household (as of 2019) delivered by the postal service, the Family Bank, the Social Development Bank or Zakat Committees	600,000 households in 2018 (approx. 9% of all households) across all states
SFSP (currently inactive)	a) Poorest localities are fully included and wealthiest fully excluded b) Civil servants are excluded c) Mobile phone consumption as a proxy for eligibility determination d) Voluntary self-exclusion e) Community-based targeting			Cash transfer	500 pounds per person per month for up to five family members during a period of up to one year, delivered through pre-paid cash cards, mobile wallets, bank accounts or over-the-counter payments	Target: 32 million individuals (80% of the total population)
Shamel (currently inactive)	Eligible households of participating communities ¹ selected through community-based targeting			Livelihoods	Asset and agricultural input transfers Promotion of small productive projects Trainings	59,700 households in 67 localities in 2019
	All HH of eligible communities (implemented at community level)			Water	Provision of new (or revival of existing) water-related infrastructure implemented by enterprises selected in an open bidding	334,700 households in 34 localities in 2019
	All HH of eligible communities (implemented at community level)			Community awareness raising	Strengthening of local welfare institutions and community-based forms of solidarity (including forming of producer's associations)	346,500 households in 45 localities in 2019
	Eligible students of selected public schools in participating communities are selected by dedicated counsellor in schools			School meals	Meals consisting of cereals, beans, boiled eggs and other items purchased from local market	158,000 students in 51 localities in 2019
Zakat	Poor households identified by Local Zakat Committees			Provision of direct support (in cash or in kind) for poor people without income generating capacities (<i>faqir</i>)	Up to 1,000 pounds (frequency and level of benefit decided by the Local Zakat Committees)	3.8 million families across all states (22.4 million individuals when multiplied with the average HH size of 5.9) in 2018
				Provision of livelihoods support for needy people with income generating capacities (<i>miskeen</i>)	10,000–300,000 pounds	

Note a: Eligible communities are those that are the poorest according to the 2014 National Household Survey.

► Annex 2. Summary of the situation of different categories of workers in the informal economy

	a) Production and income patterns	b) Degree of formalization and organization	c) Major risks	d) Awareness about and access to state-provided social protection	e) Any other forms of protection
Workers engaged in the agricultural sector					
(i) Cash crop farming (sesame, hibiscus, groundnut)	<p>Traditional rainfed farming without machineries prevalent, mostly on own land (except for refugees)</p> <p>Frequently combined with other economic activities to bridge lean season</p> <p>Low returns of investments for many cash crops (especially for groundnut)</p> <p>Crops usually sold to merchants at local markets directly after harvest (when prices are lowest)</p> <p>Limited use of wage-employed labour (mostly during harvest season)</p> <p>Limited access to formal bank lending, mostly relying on <i>Shail</i> system</p> <p>High dependence on merchants, controlling local markets and prices</p>	<p>Cash crop farmers usually not registered with any authority and not paying taxes</p> <p>Low degree of organization through farmers cooperatives</p> <p>Farmers mostly operating individually to access inputs, services and markets to sell crops</p>	<p>Diseases, partly caused or exacerbated by strenuous working conditions</p> <p>Weather- and climate-related shocks destroying crops</p> <p>Pests</p> <p>Grazing livestock</p>	<p>Cash crop farmers mostly covered by NHIF through subsidized arm, low satisfaction with services provided</p> <p>Excluded from NPSIF by law</p> <p>Mixed willingness and financial ability to pay regular social insurance contributions</p> <p>High awareness for SFSP, but still low coverage</p> <p>Partially covered by COVID-19 support, but difficulties in accessing benefits due to administrative barriers</p> <p>Low coverage with other non-contributory schemes</p>	<p>Seasonal wage labour (frequently used as compensation for lack of access to state-provided social protection)</p> <p>Borrowing money from each other in times of crises</p> <p>Refugees: supported by WFP with food aid and agricultural inputs and provision of various services by international NGOs, if registered officially as refugees</p> <p>Health costs of wage-employed seasonal workers sometimes (partly) covered by farmers in case of sickness or accident</p>
(ii) Gum arabic production	<p>Gum arabic collected from trees growing own land or natural forests controlled by government</p> <p>Frequently combined with other economic activities (crops, livestock, wage labour)</p> <p>Most producers operating in remote areas, with limited access to finance, markets and agricultural inputs</p> <p>Gum arabic usually sold to merchants at local markets throughout the harvesting season</p> <p>Limited access to formal bank lending, mostly relying on <i>Shail</i> system</p> <p>High dependence on local brokers, controlling prices</p> <p>Wage labourers often hired on a daily basis during harvesting season</p>	<p>Gum arabic producers and local traders usually not registered with any authority and not paying taxes</p> <p>Producer's associations/ cooperatives exist (established with support from government) but membership still low among producers</p> <p>Wage-employed workers usually hired on a daily basis through informal verbal contracts</p>	<p>Injuries at work and exhaustion</p> <p>Weather and climate-related shocks destroying harvest</p> <p>Grazing livestock</p>	<p>Gum arabic producers mostly covered by NHIF through subsidized arm, low satisfaction with services provided</p> <p>Excluded from NPSIF by law</p> <p>Higher willingness and financial ability to pay regular social insurance contributions (compared to other groups of workers)</p> <p>High awareness for SFSP, but still low coverage</p> <p>Partially covered by COVID-19 and other non-contributory schemes in the past, but high degree of dissatisfaction due to administrative barriers</p>	<p>Selling livestock to compensate loss of income in times of crises</p> <p>Engagement in other economic activities (trading of goods and services)</p> <p>Helping out each other in the case of emergency</p>

	a) Production and income patterns	b) Degree of formalization and organization	c) Major risks	d) Awareness about and access to state-provided social protection	e) Any other forms of protection
(iii) Livestock herding	<p>Diverse pastoral system, including nomadic and transhumance, as well as sedentary and semi-sedentary subsystems combined with cash crop farming (depending on geographic area and type of animal)</p> <p>Men usually selling livestock to local traders</p> <p>Women often engaged in dairy production, selling to end consumers (and sometimes local traders)</p>	<p>Livestock herders usually not registered with any authority and not paying taxes</p> <p>Producer's associations or cooperatives sometimes exist, but are not very active and membership is still low among livestock herders</p> <p>Employed shepherds often hired on a daily basis by male livestock holders (paid at least partly in-kind)</p>	<p>Lack of water and absence of range land (due to climate conditions)</p> <p>Animal diseases</p> <p>Theft of livestock</p> <p>Income not sufficient to sustain family (among women)</p>	<p>Herders mostly covered by NHIF through subsidized arm, low satisfaction with services provided</p> <p>Excluded from NPSIF by law</p> <p>Higher willingness and financial ability to pay regular social insurance contributions (compared to other groups of agricultural workers)</p> <p>Mixed awareness about and coverage with non-contributory schemes</p>	<p>Seasonal wage labour (frequently used as compensation for lack of access to state-provided social protection)</p> <p>Selling livestock to compensate loss of income in times of crises</p> <p>Borrowing from each other in the case of emergency</p> <p>Health costs of shepherds sometimes (partly) covered by herders in case of sickness or accident</p>
(iv) Fisheries	<p>Use of traditional equipment prevalent</p> <p>Fish usually sold to local merchants, to restaurants or directly to end-consumers (at local markets or directly at the port)</p> <p>Limited access to formal bank lending, loans sometimes provided by local merchants (e.g. for purchasing fishing gear)</p>	<p>Fishers usually paying water taxes to local authorities, but not officially registered as businesses</p> <p>Fisher societies and unions exist in the State of White Nile, and many fishers active in them</p> <p>Mostly engaged as own-account workers, sometimes assisted by family members</p>	<p>Work-related injuries and diseases</p> <p>Changing environmental conditions in water reservoir (increase of seaweed and overfishing)</p> <p>Theft of fishing gear</p>	<p>Fishers mostly covered by NHIF through subsidized arm, low satisfaction with services provided</p> <p>Excluded from NPSIF by law</p> <p>Low willingness and financial ability to pay regular social insurance contributions (compared to other groups of workers)</p> <p>High awareness about non-contributory schemes, but low coverage, high level of dissatisfaction with existing schemes</p>	<p>Support through International NGOs</p> <p>Helping each other in the case of emergency</p>
(v) Subsistence farming (millet, sorghum, groundnuts, sesame, beans, water melon and okra)	<p>Traditional rainfed farming without machineries prevalent, on own and rented land (especially in the case of refugees and IDPs)</p> <p>Frequently combined with other economic activities to bridge lean season</p> <p>Products grown mostly for own consumption and surplus sold at local markets – either to local merchants or end consumers – directly after harvest, when prices are lowest</p> <p>Low levels of production and in turn low incomes from selling surplus crops</p> <p>Often indebted with landowners and local merchants</p> <p>High dependence on merchants, controlling local markets and prices</p>	<p>Subsistence farmers usually supported by family members, with limited use of seasonal wage-employed labour</p> <p>Farmers usually not registered with any authority and not paying taxes</p> <p>Very limited degree of organization through farmers cooperatives</p> <p>Farmers mostly operating individually to access inputs, services and markets to sell crops</p>	<p>Lack of own land and high cost for rent</p> <p>High debts with land owners and merchants, further limiting their income</p> <p>Weather and climate-related shocks destroying harvest</p> <p>Grazing livestock</p> <p>Theft of crops</p> <p>Diseases, especially malaria</p>	<p>Subsistence farmers mostly covered by NHIF through subsidized arm, low satisfaction with services provided</p> <p>Excluded from NPSIF by law</p> <p>Mixed willingness and financial ability to pay regular contributions for NHIF and low willingness to pay social insurance contributions to cover other risks and contingencies</p> <p>High awareness for SFSP and COVID-19 support, considerable levels of coverage, but considerable problems in accessing the scheme (partly due to lack of ID)</p> <p>Low coverage with other non-contributory schemes</p>	<p>Seasonal wage labour and child labour (frequently used as compensation for lack of access to state-provided social protection)</p> <p>Borrowing money from each other in times of crises</p> <p>Refugees: supported by WFP with food aid and agricultural inputs and provision of various services by international NGOs, if registered officially as refugees</p>

	a) Production and income patterns	b) Degree of formalization and organization	c) Major risks	d) Awareness about and access to state-provided social protection	e) Any other forms of protection
(vi) Wage labour in agriculture	<p>Prevalent in cash crop farming, forestry and livestock production</p> <p>Small-scale and subsistence farmers often offering their labour outside their own farm on a seasonal or occasional basis</p> <p>Often meeting at gathering points in the area where farmers come to search for daily labourers</p> <p>Working either in return for money or for receiving a share of the crop</p>	<p>Usually no written working contracts and no registration at local labour offices</p> <p>Working conditions agreed verbally, often on a daily basis</p> <p>Complete absence of associations or unions representing wage labourers in agriculture</p>	<p>Diseases, especially malaria, leading to high health costs and lack of income from wage labour</p> <p>Low and fluctuating incomes</p>	<p>Employees in agricultural sector mostly covered by NHIF through subsidized arm, low satisfaction with services provided</p> <p>Excluded from NPSIF by law</p> <p>Low willingness and financial ability to pay regular social insurance contributions (compared to other groups of workers)</p> <p>Often not aware of and mostly excluded from non-contributory schemes</p>	<p>Mostly relying on own income and diversification of income with participation of all family members (including child labour)</p> <p>Borrowing from community members, shop owners and employers</p> <p>Health costs of wage-employed workers sometimes (partly) covered by employers in case of sickness or accident</p> <p>Refugees: supported by WFP with food aid and agricultural inputs and provision of various services by international NGOs, if registered officially as refugees</p>

Workers engaged in non-agricultural activities

(i) Small-scale trading	<p>Mostly operating as subsistence enterprises, with no business orientation</p> <p>Usually selling to end consumers at local markets, directly on the street (e.g. road junctions) or going from house to house</p> <p>Large variety of different products offered</p> <p>Purchase of goods to be sold from wholesale traders, farmers, or retail merchants at consumer markets</p> <p>Goods to be sold either directly paid when purchasing them or paid after selling them to end consumers</p> <p>Loans to start or extend business provided by local merchants, banks or relatives</p>	<p>Traders mostly operating as own-account workers</p> <p>Low degree of organization in the form of cooperatives or associations</p> <p>Usually not registered with local authorities</p> <p>Payment of market fees in some cases</p> <p>Often considered as illegal by local authorities and expelled from markets or selling points</p> <p>no support from public authorities</p>	<p>Exposure to environmental pollution, dust, heat and sunlight</p> <p>Theft and looting</p> <p>Diseases, especially malaria</p>	<p>Some traders covered by NHIF through subsidized arm (especially outside Khartoum), but low levels of coverage with contributory arm, and often no renewal of membership (due to low levels of satisfaction with services and cumbersome administrative procedures)</p> <p>Very limited coverage with NPSIF</p> <p>Low willingness and financial ability to pay regular social insurance contributions (compared to other groups of workers), especially due to a high degree of lack of trust in government</p> <p>Mixed levels of awareness about and access to SFSP and the COVID-19 support (depending on the geographic area)</p> <p>High levels of dissatisfaction with Zakat</p>	<p>Supporting each other in the case of emergencies or in times of increased needs (e.g. through Rotating Saving and Credit Associations)</p> <p>Borrowing from suppliers in case of emergencies</p>
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	a) Production and income patterns	b) Degree of formalization and organization	c) Major risks	d) Awareness about and access to state-provided social protection	e) Any other forms of protection
(ii) Crafts and related trades	<p>Large varieties of products produced and maintained</p> <p>Usually selling to end consumers (some of them producing on request)</p> <p>Producing at home, in workshops or at market stalls</p> <p>Suffering from deteriorating rates of return as a result of continuous inflation</p>	<p>Micro businesses of craftsmen and women usually not registered with local authority and not paying taxes</p> <p>Larger workshops registered, with valid business licenses, and paying taxes</p> <p>Associations and unions exist, but membership is not common in all geographic areas and for all types of crafts</p> <p>Craftsmen and women mostly working on their own-account, some male craftsmen also employing wage-employed workers</p> <p>Craftsmen engaged in construction work usually working for a supervisor</p> <p>Usually no written working contracts and no registration at local labour offices</p> <p>Working conditions agreed verbally, often on a daily basis</p>	<p>Work-related injuries and illnesses (from exposure to dust or chemicals)</p> <p>Low OSH standards at work places</p>	<p>Some craftsmen and women covered by NHIF through subsidized arm (especially outside Khartoum), but low levels of coverage with contributory arm, and often no renewal of membership (due to low levels of satisfaction with services and cumbersome administrative procedures)</p> <p>Very limited coverage with NPSIF</p> <p>Low willingness to pay regular social insurance contributions, despite a certain degree of financial ability especially among craftsmen, mainly due to a high degree of lack of trust in government</p> <p>Preference of private insurance among some groups of craftsmen</p> <p>Wage-employed craftsmen (and -women) usually not covered with work-related schemes, i.e. NHIF and NPSIF and not benefitting from employer liabilities (as they are not officially registered)</p> <p>Mixed levels of awareness about and access to SFSP and the COVID-19 support (depending on the geographic area)</p> <p>High levels of dissatisfaction with Zakat</p>	<p>Supporting each other in the case of emergencies or in times of increased needs</p> <p>Borrowing from employers and advanced wage payments, in the case of employees</p> <p>Health costs of wage-employed workers sometimes (partly) covered by employers in case of (work-related) sickness or accident</p>
(iii) Manufacturing	<p>Dominated by processing food and agricultural products, textiles, oil refining, fertilizers and cement</p> <p>Employees are often labour migrants from rural areas</p> <p>Wages differ across states and industries and are often fluctuating and unstable (depending on number of working hours and days)</p>	<p>Most factories are officially registered, but low-skilled wage-employed factory workers are commonly employed on an informal basis and not registered with the local labour office</p> <p>Working contracts are usually verbal, sometimes also written, but only for a limited period of time (up to one year)</p>	<p>Work-related injuries and illnesses (from exposure to dust or chemicals)</p> <p>Low OSH standards at work places</p> <p>Poor housing conditions</p>	<p>Low-skilled workers usually not covered with work-related schemes, i.e. NHIF and NPSIF and not benefitting from employer liabilities (as they are not officially registered)</p> <p>Mixed levels of awareness about and access to SFSP and the COVID-19 support (depending on the geographic area) – informal settlements where factory workers live sometimes not covered</p> <p>High levels of dissatisfaction with Zakat</p>	<p>Borrowing from employers and advanced wage payments in the case of emergencies</p> <p>Health costs of factory workers sometimes (partly) covered by employers in case of (work-related) sickness or accident</p>
(iv) Waste picking	<p>Collection, disposal and transfer of solid waste usually managed by local administrations in urban areas</p> <p>Employees are often labour migrants from other States</p> <p>Wages depend on working hours and days</p>	<p>Working contracts usually verbal and informal but formalization has been initiated recently in some localities in the State of Khartoum</p> <p>No form of organization due to lack of unions or cooperatives for waste pickers</p>	<p>Work-related injuries and illnesses (from exposure to dangerous materials, dirt, pollution and heat)</p> <p>Low OSH standards at workplaces</p> <p>Poor housing conditions</p>	<p>Lack of coverage with NHIF (both contributory and non-contributory arm)</p> <p>Lack of coverage with NPSIF, but some recent efforts by local administrations to affiliate waste pickers</p> <p>Mixed application of employer liabilities according to 1997 Labour Code</p> <p>Very limited access to non-contributory schemes</p>	

► Annex 3. Summary of main barriers of specific groups of workers to access social protection schemes

	Rural workers	Urban workers	Self-employed	Wage-employed	Refugees	IDPs	Women workers
Legal barriers	Excluded from 1997 Labour Code and the 2016 NPSIF act	Often living in unrecognized informal urban settlements, not recognized by local authorities Limited portability of schemes between place of origin and place of work for migrant workers	Many forms of self-employment not explicitly mentioned in 2016 NPSIF act Excluded by definition from employer liabilities regulated in 1997 Labour Code and associated risks (unemployment, paid maternity and sick leave)	Daily and seasonal workers excluded from 1997 labour code Employees of businesses with fewer than five employees excluded from NHIF membership	Considerable legal barriers in accessing the Sudanese labour market Not explicitly included in 2016 NPSIF act Explicitly excluded from most non-contributory schemes		Excluded from 1997 Labour Code and 2016 NPSIF act as contributing family workers and unpaid care workers
Enforcement gaps			No strict mechanisms in place to enforce registration with NPSIF No de facto enforcement for NHIF registration	Mechanisms to ensure compliance with NHIF and NPSIF act absent or weak in almost all states			Frequently engaged in informal and vulnerable employment due to their role as main care giver in the family
Lack of integration and coherence	Insufficient coordination between social protection and agricultural policies		Insufficient coordination between procedures for registration of businesses and registration with NHIF and NPSIF	No or insufficient coordination between local labour offices, NHIF and NPSIF branches when registering employees	Lack of coordination between social protection and asylum policies	Insufficient linkages between humanitarian response and social protection policies Lack of integrated approaches to create durable solutions	
Financial barriers	Insufficient, fluctuating and seasonal incomes	Low incomes, combined with low willingness to pay due to lack of trust in government	Mixed financial capacity to pay regular contributions, hampered by inflexible payment options, combined with low willingness to pay taxes and contributions due to low quality of state-provided services				Low and unstable earnings
Benefits not aligned with priorities	No support to bridge insufficient income during lean seasons and weather and in the case of weather and climate-related shocks		No coverage in the case of unemployment or maternity even for those enrolled in contributory schemes (only covered by employer liabilities)	Inadequate levels of pensions for those who have been contributing to the NPSIF	Usually only access to humanitarian aid provided by the international community		No protection in the case of maternity or provision of care for children, sick, disabled or elderly
Lack of information	Low mobile phone and internet coverage, high levels of illiteracy		Weak understanding and acceptance of insurance principles	Limited information and awareness on workers' rights			Low mobile phone and internet coverage, high levels of illiteracy
Lack of trust in government		High levels of distrust in government and its institutions, owing to frequent conflict with local authorities	High levels of distrust, owing to absence of services provided by the state (and frequent conflicts with local authorities)	High levels of distrust, owing to the perception that the government does not take into account the interests of workers			
Lack of representation	Only very few well-organized and functioning producer cooperatives or associations		Degree of representation and organization through professional organization low	Degree of representation through labour unions very low			
Administrative barriers	Wide distances to service points, combined with absence of public and private transportation and high transportation costs	Insufficient access to service points in marginalized urban settlements, combined with high costs for public transport	Cumbersome administrative procedures for business registration and registration with NHIF and NPSIF (for themselves and potential employees) Complicated procedures for renewal of membership in NHIF and NPSIF		Challenges to access social protection schemes owing to the lack of a national ID Limited access to local service points in areas where refugees are located	Not (or only insufficiently) targeted by enrolment campaigns for non-contributory schemes in the past Challenges to access social protection schemes owing to a lack of national ID Limited access to local services points in areas where IDPs are located	Higher barriers because of their extended working hours as workers and care givers and prevailing cultural norms

► Annex 4. List of KIIs

No.	Institution	Position of person interviewed	Data
Federal level ministries and agencies			
1	Ministry of Social Development (MoSD)	Director and staff of Department of Planning and Policy	May 2021
2	Ministry of Labour and Administrative Reform (MoLAR)	Director Policies, Planning, and Research	June 2021
3	Ministry of Labour and Administrative Reform (MoLAR)	Staff of Labour Inspection Unit	July 2021
4	Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources (MoA)	Director General Directorate of Planning	July 2021
5	Ministry of Trade and Industries (MoTI)	Advisor of the Cooperatives Department	July 2021
6	NHIF	Director Population Coverage	April 2021
7	NHIF	Representative of the Directorate of Policy and Planning	April 2021
8	NHIF	Director Health Services	April 2021
9	NPSIF	Head of Planning Department	June 2021
10	Zakat Chamber	Administrative manager	June 2021
11	Commission for Social Safety and Poverty Reduction (CSSPR)	Commissioner for Social Safety, Solidarity and Poverty Reduction	June 2021
12	Commission for Social Safety and Poverty Reduction (CSSPR)	Programme Director Shamel	May 2021
13	Commission for Social Safety and Poverty Reduction (CSSPR)	Manager Direct Cash Transfers	June 2021
Development partners			
14	UNICEF	Child protection specialist	May 2021
15	Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO)	Various	May 2021
16	European Commission (EC)	Various	May 2021
17	International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth (IPC-IG)	Various	May 2021
18	UNHCR	Social Protection Officer	May 2021
Workers' and employers' organizations			
19	Sudanese Professionals Association (SPA)	Spokesman	June 2021
20	Sudan Workers Trade Union Federation (SWTUF)	President	June 2021
State level agencies			
ED1	NHIF East Darfur	Director of Finance and Administration	Aug 2021
ED2	Zakat Chamber East Darfur	Secretary General	Aug 2021
ED3	Poverty Centre East Darfur	Director	Aug 2021
ND1	NHIF North Darfur	Director	Sep 2021
ND2	Zakat Chamber North Darfur	Deputy secretary	Sep 2021
ND3	Department of Social Security, Solidarity and Poverty Alleviation	Director	Sep 2021
WD1	NHIF West Darfur	Director	Sep 2021
WD2	Zakat Chamber West Darfur	Secretary	Sep 2021
WD3	Poverty Centre West Darfur	Director	Sep 2021
SD1	NHIF South Darfur	Director	Sep 2021
SD2	Zakat Chamber South Darfur	Secretary General	Sep 2021
SD3	Poverty Centre South Darfur	Director	Sep 2021
WK1	NHIF West Kordofan	Director	Sep 2021
WK2	Poverty Centre West Kordofan	Director	Sep 2021
WN1	NHIF White Nile	Representative	Sep 2021
WN2	Zakat Chamber White Nile	Director of Zakat Chamber in Rabak and Gabaleen	Sep 2021
WN3	Poverty Centre White Nile	Director of Poverty Reduction	Sep 2021
K1	NHIF Khartoum (national)	Director of Insured Affairs Department (Health Insurance Subscribers Services)	Aug 2021
K2	Zakat Khartoum (national)	Director of Statistics and Information Technology	Aug 2021
K3	CSSPR Khartoum (national)	Manager Direct Cash Transfers and Planning and Policy Manager	Aug 2021

► Annex 5. List of FGDs

Economic sector	Specification	Residence status	Gender	State	Locality	Community	Date	No. of part.
Agricultural activities								
Cash crop	Groundnut production on own land	HC	Male	East Darfur	Assalaya	Assalaya	31 Aug 21	6
Cash crop	Groundnut production on own land	HC	Male	East Darfur	Assalaya	Assalaya	02 Sep 21	9
Cash crop	Sesame production on own land	HC	Female	North Kordofan	Umrwaba	Mabroka Arabi	28 Sep 21	7
Cash crop	Sesame production on own land	HC	Male	North Kordofan	Umrwaba	Mabroka Arabi	02 Oct 21	6
Cash crop	Hibiscus production on own land	HC	Female	West Kordofan	El Meriam	El Meriam	13 Sep 21	6
Cash crop	Hibiscus production on rented land	IDPs and refugees	Male	West Kordofan	El Meriam	El Meriam	16 Sep 21	6
Gum arabic	Production on own land	HC	Male	North Kordofan	Omsemama	Kedo	24 Sep 21	12
Gum arabic	Production on own land	HC	Male	North Kordofan	Omsemama	Kedo	26 Sep 21	6
Livestock	Various	HC	Male	East Darfur	Ed Daein	Ed Daein	29 Aug 21	4
Livestock	Goats	HC	Female	North Kordofan	Umrwaba	Mabroka Arabi	28 Sep 21	6
Livestock	Cows	HC	Female	West Kordofan	El Meriam	El Meriam	15 Sep 21	9
Fisheries	-	HC	Male	White Nile	Goly	Goly Tawon	18 Sep 21	6
Fisheries	-	IDPs	Male	White Nile	Goly	Taweela	20 Sep 21	10
Subsistence farming	Sorghum, millet, sesame, groundnuts, beans, watermelon and <i>tibish</i> (a type of melon)	HC	Female	East Darfur	Ed Daein	El Nimer Camp	31 Aug 21	5
Subsistence farming	Sorghum and millet Various crops to be sold Production on own and rented land	HC	Female	East Darfur	Assalaya	Assalaya	27 Aug 21	5
Subsistence farming	Various subsistence crops	IDPs	Male	East Darfur	Ed Daein	El Nimer Camp	28 Aug 21	8
Subsistence farming	Sorghum, millet, sesame, groundnuts, beans, watermelon, okra and <i>tibish</i> Production on rented land	IDPs	Female	East Darfur	Ed Daein	El Nimer Camp	28 Aug 21	6

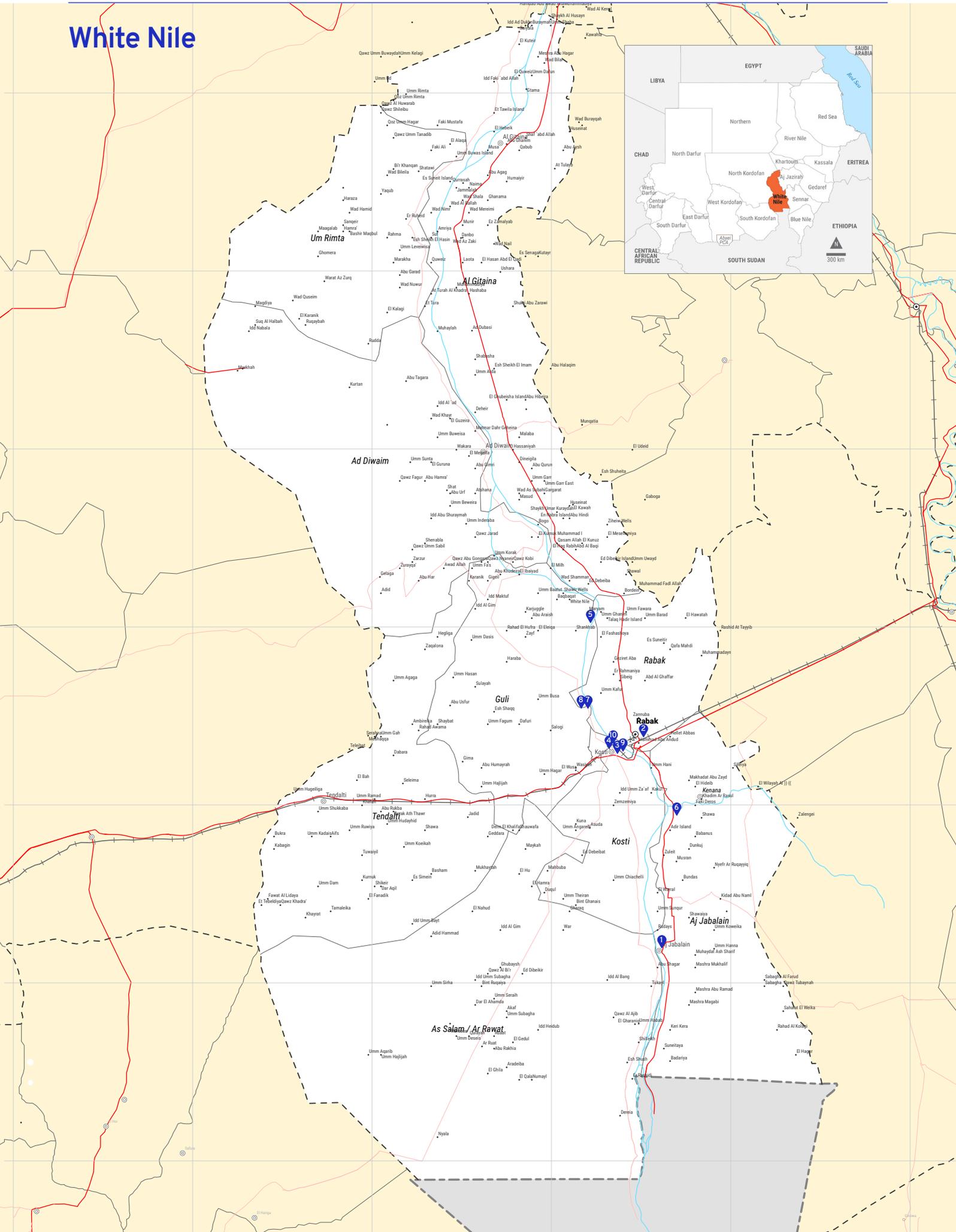
Economic sector	Specification	Residence status	Gender	State	Locality	Community	Date	No. of part.
Subsistence farming	Various	HC	Female	North Kordofan	Umrwaba	Mabroka Arabi	02 Oct 21	7
Subsistence farming	Various	HC	Male	West Kordofan	El Meriam	El Meriam	15 Sep 21	6
Subsistence farming	Various	Refugees	Female	West Kordofan	El Meriam	El Meriam	14 Sep 21	6
Subsistence farming	Various	Refugees	Male	West Kordofan	El Meriam	El Meriam	18 Sep 21	6
Wage labour	various	HC	Male	North Kordofan	Umrwaba	Mabroka Arabi	02 Oct 21	6
Wage labour	Sesame	IDPs	Male	North Kordofan	El Obeid	El Obeid	04 Oct 21	7
Wage labour	Sesame	IDPs	Female	North Kordofan	El Obeid	El Obeid	04 Oct 21	9
Wage labour	Hibiscus	Refugees	Female	West Kordofan	El Meriam	El Meriam	13 Sep 21	6
Non-agricultural activities								
Crafts	Handicrafts Leather and textiles Cosmetics Maintenance of electronic devices	HC	Female	North Darfur	Elfasher	Elfasher	04 Sep 21	17
Crafts	Carpenters Blacksmiths Car repair	HC	Male	North Darfur	Elfasher	Elfasher	09 Sep 21	8
Crafts	Carpenters Blacksmiths Cosmetics Leather and textiles	IDPs	Male and female	North Darfur	Elfasher	Elfasher	09 Sep 21	6
Crafts	Plumbers Maintenance of electronic devices	HC	Female	West Darfur	El Geneina	El Geneina	18 Sep 21	5
Crafts	Carpenters Tailors Maintenance of electronic devices	HC	Male	West Darfur	El Geneina	El Geneina	18 Sep 21	4
Crafts	Handicrafts Sweets and soap making Carpenters Blacksmiths	IDPs	Male	West Darfur	El Geneina	El Geneina	22 Sep 21	7
Crafts	Various	HC	Male	South Darfur	Nyala	Nyala	24 Sep 21	6
Crafts	Leather and textiles Production of cooking stoves	IDPs	Female	South Darfur	Nyala	Outash Camp	20 Sep 21	11
Crafts	Leather and textiles	IDPs	Male	South Darfur	Nyala	Outash Camp	19 Sep 21	5
Crafts	Leather and textiles Handicrafts	HC (persons with disabilities)	Male and female	White Nile	Kosti	Kosti	29 Sep 21	9
Crafts	Carpenters	HC	Male	White Nile	Al Jabaleen	Al Jabaleen	28 Sep 21	9

Economic sector	Specification	Residence status	Gender	State	Locality	Community	Date	No. of part.
Crafts	Carpenters (wage-employed)	HC	Male	Khartoum	Khartoum	Local market (land port)	01 Sep 21	8
Crafts	Plumbers	HC	Male	Khartoum	Khartoum	Jabal Awlya	05 Sep 21	6
Crafts	Mechanics	IDPs	Male	Khartoum	Khartoum	West Khartoum (Industrial Zone)	04 Sep 21	8
Trading	Fruits	HC	Female	North Darfur	Elfasher	Elfasher	09 Aug 21	3
Trading	Mobile phone credits Sweets Cigarettes	HC	Male	North Darfur	Elfasher	Elfasher	09 Sep 21	6
Trading	Fruit, vegetables and nuts Mobile phones Apparel Cosmetics	IDPs	Female and male	North Darfur	Elfasher	Elfasher	09 Sep 21	7
Trading	Fruits Textiles Plastic goods	HC	Male	West Darfur	El Geneina	El Geneina	15 Sep 21	7
Trading	Vegetables	HC	Female	West Darfur	El Geneina	El Geneina	17 Sep 21	5
Trading	Food, fruits, nuts and spices Tea and coffee Cosmetics Mobile phone credits	IDPs	Female and male	West Darfur	El Geneina	El Geneina	23 Sep 21	10
Trading	Vegetables, nuts Tea and milk Textiles Agricultural products	HC	Female	South Darfur	Nyala	Nyala	26 Sep 21	6
Trading	Textiles and shoes Plastic bags	HC	Male	South Darfur	Nyala	Nyala	27 Sep 21	5
Trading	Textiles and shoes	IDPs	Male	South Darfur	Nyala	Outash Camp	22 Sep 21	6
Trading	School equipment Various	HC	Male	White Nile	Kosti	Kosti Tawon	25 Sep 21	5
Trading	Household utensils Cosmetics	HC	Female	White Nile	Al Jabaleen	Al Hidab	27 Sep 21	9
Trading	Spices, oils and other cooking ingredients Fruits, vegetables and nuts Milk and yoghurt cosmetics	IDPs	Female	White Nile	Al Jabaleen	Al Jabaleen Town	26 Sep 21	6
Trading	Spices Household utensils Food items Scrap iron	HC	Female	Khartoum	Khartoum	Jabal Awlya	25 Aug 21	8

Economic sector	Specification	Residence status	Gender	State	Locality	Community	Date	No. of part.
Trading	Shoes Cosmetics Spices	HC	Female	Khartoum	Bahry	Al Haj Yosif	28 Aug 21	9
Trading	Plastic containers Cooking tools Spices, nuts and beans Food items Sweets Textiles	IDPs	Female	Khartoum	Khartoum	Jabal Awlya	26 Aug 21	7
Manufacturing	Wage-employed in ice-factory	HC	Male	White Nile	Kosti	Kosti factory	21 Sep 21	6
Manufacturing	Wage-employed in tahini factory	HC	Female	White Nile	Rabak	Rabak factory	23 Sep 21	8
Manufacturing	Wage-employed in oil factory	IDPs	Male	White Nile	Rabak	Rabak factory	22 Sep 21	5
Manufacturing	Wage-employed in various factories (plastic, textiles, sweets, electronic goods)	HC	Male	Khartoum	Bahry	Safola factory	29 Aug 21	6
Manufacturing	Wage-employed in gum arabic factory	IDPs	Male	Khartoum	Bahry	Safola factory	30 Aug 21	8
Waste picking	Wage-employed at local cleaning authority	HC	Male	Khartoum	Omdurman	Omdurman East	06 Sep 21	10
Waste picking	Wage-employed at local cleaning authority	HC	Female	Khartoum	Omdurman	Omdurman market	08 Sep 21	11
Waste picking	Wage-employed at local cleaning authority	IDPs	Male	Khartoum	Omdurman	Omdurman East	07 Sep 21	10

► Annex 6. Results of service point mapping

White Nile



1 NHIF OFFICE COMMUNITY LEVEL
Gabalain National

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th OPEN 07:30 CLOSE 16:30

SERVICES
Registration
Claiming of benefits
Filing complaints
Information sharing

WHO CAN ACCESS?
✓ Local people ✗ Other Sudanese ✗ State residents
✗ Refugees ✓ IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

2 ZAKAT CHAMBER COMMUNITY LEVEL
Kosti State

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th OPEN 06:30 CLOSE 15:00

SERVICES
Registration
Claiming of benefits
Filing complaints
Information sharing

WHO CAN ACCESS?
✓ Local people ✗ Other Sudanese ✗ State residents
✗ Refugees ✓ IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

3 BUREAU FOR SOCIAL SECURITY COMMUNITY LEVEL
Kosti National

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th OPEN 08:00 CLOSE 15:00

SERVICES
Registration
Claiming of benefits
Filing complaints
Information sharing

WHO CAN ACCESS?
✓ Local people ✗ Other Sudanese ✗ State residents
✗ Refugees ✓ IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

4 CIVIL REGISTRATION OFFICE COMMUNITY LEVEL
Kosti National

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th OPEN 08:00 CLOSE 15:00

SERVICES
Claiming of benefits
Information sharing
Registration of birth
Issuing of personal identification

WHO CAN ACCESS?
✓ Local people ✗ Other Sudanese ✗ State residents
✓ Refugees ✓ IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

5 NHIF CLINIC COMMUNITY LEVEL
Kosti -

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th Sa OPEN 08:00 CLOSE 14:00

SERVICES
Primary Care
Emergency Care
Laboratory

WHO CAN ACCESS?
✓ Local people ✗ Other Sudanese ✗ State residents
✓ Refugees ✓ IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

6 HOSPITAL (MoH) COMMUNITY LEVEL
Al-Hadeeb -

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th Sa OPEN 08:00 CLOSE 22:00

SERVICES
Primary care
Nutrition services
Emergency care
Maternal and newborn care
Pharmacy
Laboratory

WHO CAN ACCESS?
✓ Local people ✗ Other Sudanese ✗ State residents
✓ Refugees ✓ IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

7 PRIMARY HEALTH CARE CENTER COMMUNITY LEVEL
Kosti -

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th Sa OPEN 07:00 CLOSE 23:00

SERVICES
Nutrition services

WHO CAN ACCESS?
✓ Local people - Other Sudanese ✓ State residents
✓ Refugees ✓ IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

8 PRIVATE CLINIC COMMUNITY LEVEL
Kosti -

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th Sa OPEN 09:00 CLOSE 23:00

SERVICES
-

WHO CAN ACCESS?
✓ Local people ✗ Other Sudanese ✗ State residents
✓ Refugees ✓ IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

9 POVERTY CENTRE COMMUNITY LEVEL
Kosti State

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th Sa OPEN 07:00 CLOSE 17:00

SERVICES
Registration
Claiming of benefits
Filing complaints
Information sharing

WHO CAN ACCESS?
✓ Local people ✗ Other Sudanese ✓ State residents
- Refugees ✓ IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

10 LABOUR OFFICE COMMUNITY LEVEL
Kosti State

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th OPEN 08:00 CLOSE 15:00

SERVICES
Registration
Payment of fees
Claiming of benefits
Filing complaints
Information sharing

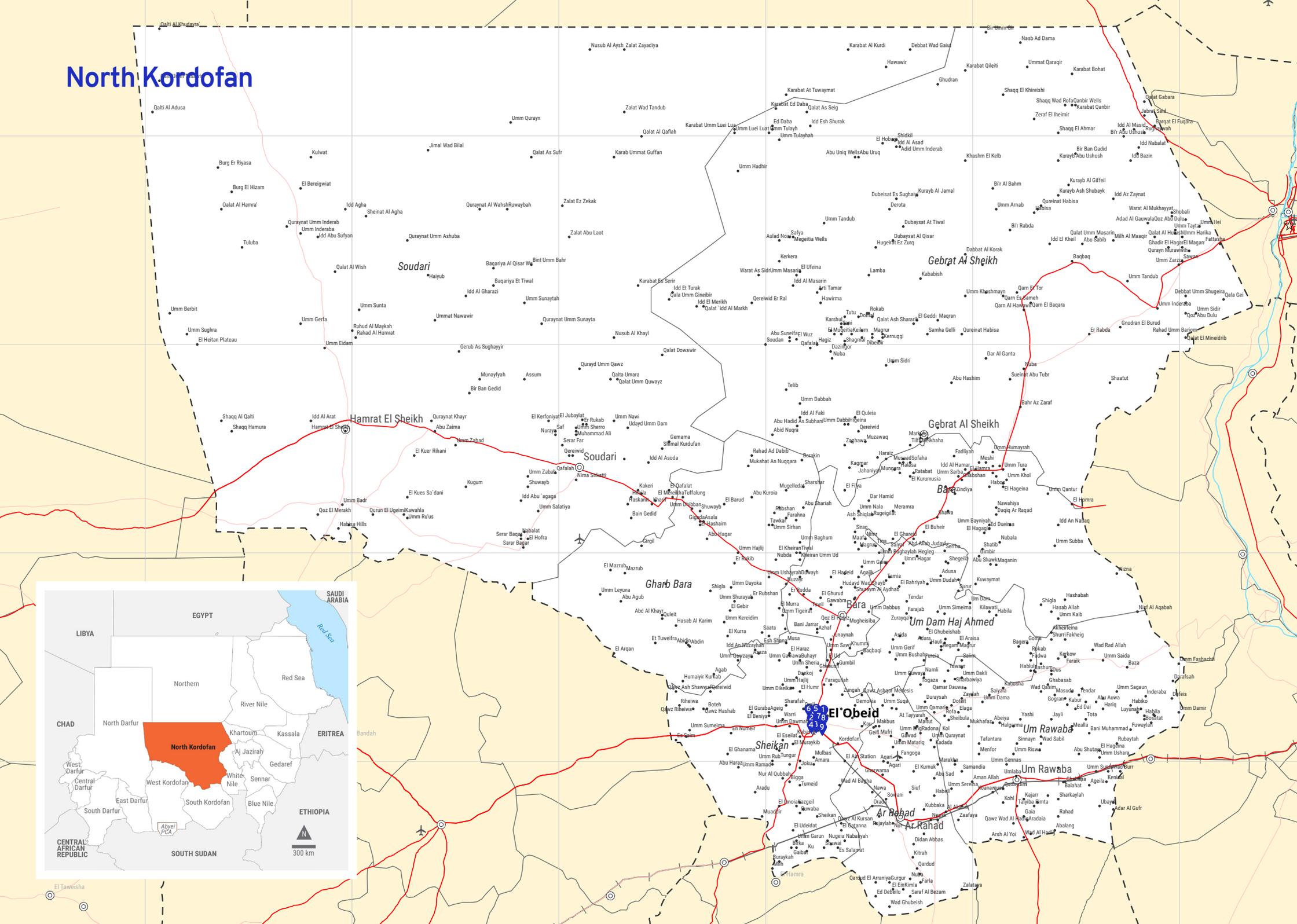
WHO CAN ACCESS?
✓ Local people ✗ Other Sudanese ✗ State residents
✗ Refugees ✓ IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

- Membership card
- Personal identification
- Registration form
- Birth Certificate
- Marriage Certificate
- Letter from community leader
- Letter from medical professional
- Letter from witness
- Voucher

North Kordofan



1 NHIF OFFICE COMMUNITY LEVEL
El Obeid State

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th OPEN 07:30 CLOSE 15:30

SERVICES
Registration
Claiming of benefits
Filing complaints
Information sharing

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION
 ID BC

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS
 M

2 BUREAU FOR SOCIAL SECURITY COMMUNITY LEVEL
El Obeid State

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th OPEN 07:30 CLOSE 15:00

SERVICES
Claiming of benefits
Filing complaints
Information sharing

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION
 ID BC

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS
 M

3 CIVIL REGISTRATION OFFICE COMMUNITY LEVEL
El Obeid State

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th OPEN 07:30 CLOSE 15:00

SERVICES
Registration of birth
Issuing personal identification

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

4 NHIF CLINIC COMMUNITY LEVEL
El Obeid -

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa OPEN 07:00 CLOSE 15:00

SERVICES
Primary care
Nutrition services
Emergency care
Maternal and newborn care
Pharmacy
Laboratory

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS
 M

5 HOSPITAL (MoH) COMMUNITY LEVEL
El Obeid -

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa OPEN 06:00 CLOSE 18:00

SERVICES
Primary care
Specialised care
Emergency care
Pharmacy
Laboratory

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

6 NHIF CLINIC COMMUNITY LEVEL
El Obeid -

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa OPEN 07:00 CLOSE 15:00

SERVICES
Primary care
Nutrition services
Emergency care
Maternal and newborn care
Pharmacy
Laboratory

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS
 M

7 NHIF CLINIC COMMUNITY LEVEL
El Obeid -

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa OPEN 07:30 CLOSE 15:30

SERVICES
Primary care
Nutrition services
Maternal and newborn care
Pharmacy
Laboratory

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS
 M

8 POVERTY CENTRE COMMUNITY LEVEL
El Obeid State

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th OPEN 07:30 CLOSE 14:30

SERVICES
Registration
Claiming of benefits
Filing complaints
Information sharing

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION
 ID BC

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS
 ID M

9 LABOUR OFFICE COMMUNITY LEVEL
El Obeid State

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th OPEN 07:30 CLOSE 15:30

SERVICES
Registration
Payment of fees
Claiming of benefits
Filing complaints

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

M Membership card

ID Personal identification

BC Birth Certificate

1 NHIF OFFICE COMMUNITY LEVEL
El Fula State

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th OPEN 07:30 CLOSE 15:00

SERVICES
Registration
Claiming of benefits
Filing complaints*

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION
 R NID BC

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS
 M

2 ZAKAT CHAMBER COMMUNITY LEVEL
El Fula State

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th OPEN 09:00 CLOSE 15:00

SERVICES
Claiming of benefits
Filing complaints
Information sharing

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

3 CIVIL REGISTRATION OFFICE COMMUNITY LEVEL
El Fula State

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th OPEN 07:00 CLOSE 15:00

SERVICES
Registration of birth certificates
Issuing personal identification

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

4 HOSPITAL (MoH) COMMUNITY LEVEL
El Fula -

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa OPEN 07:30 CLOSE 14:00

SERVICES
Primary care

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS
 M

5 HOSPITAL (MoH) COMMUNITY LEVEL
El Meriam -

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa OPEN 07:00 CLOSE 19:00

SERVICES
Primary care
Nutrition services
Emergency care
Maternal and newborn care
Laboratory

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

6 HOSPITAL (MoH) COMMUNITY LEVEL
El Fula -

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa OPEN 00:00 CLOSE 23:59

SERVICES
Primary care
Nutrition services
Specialised care
Emergency care
Maternal and newborn care
Pharmacy
Laboratory

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS
 M

7 HOSPITAL (MoH) COMMUNITY LEVEL
El Fula -

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th Sa OPEN 07:30 CLOSE 14:00

SERVICES
Primary care
Nutrition services
Maternal and newborn care

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS
 M

8 POVERTY CENTRE COMMUNITY LEVEL
El Fula State

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th OPEN 09:30 CLOSE 15:30

SERVICES
Registration
Claiming of benefits

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION
 NID BC

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS
 ID

9 LABOUR OFFICE COMMUNITY LEVEL
El Fula State

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th OPEN 07:30 CLOSE 15:00

SERVICES
Registration
Claiming of benefits

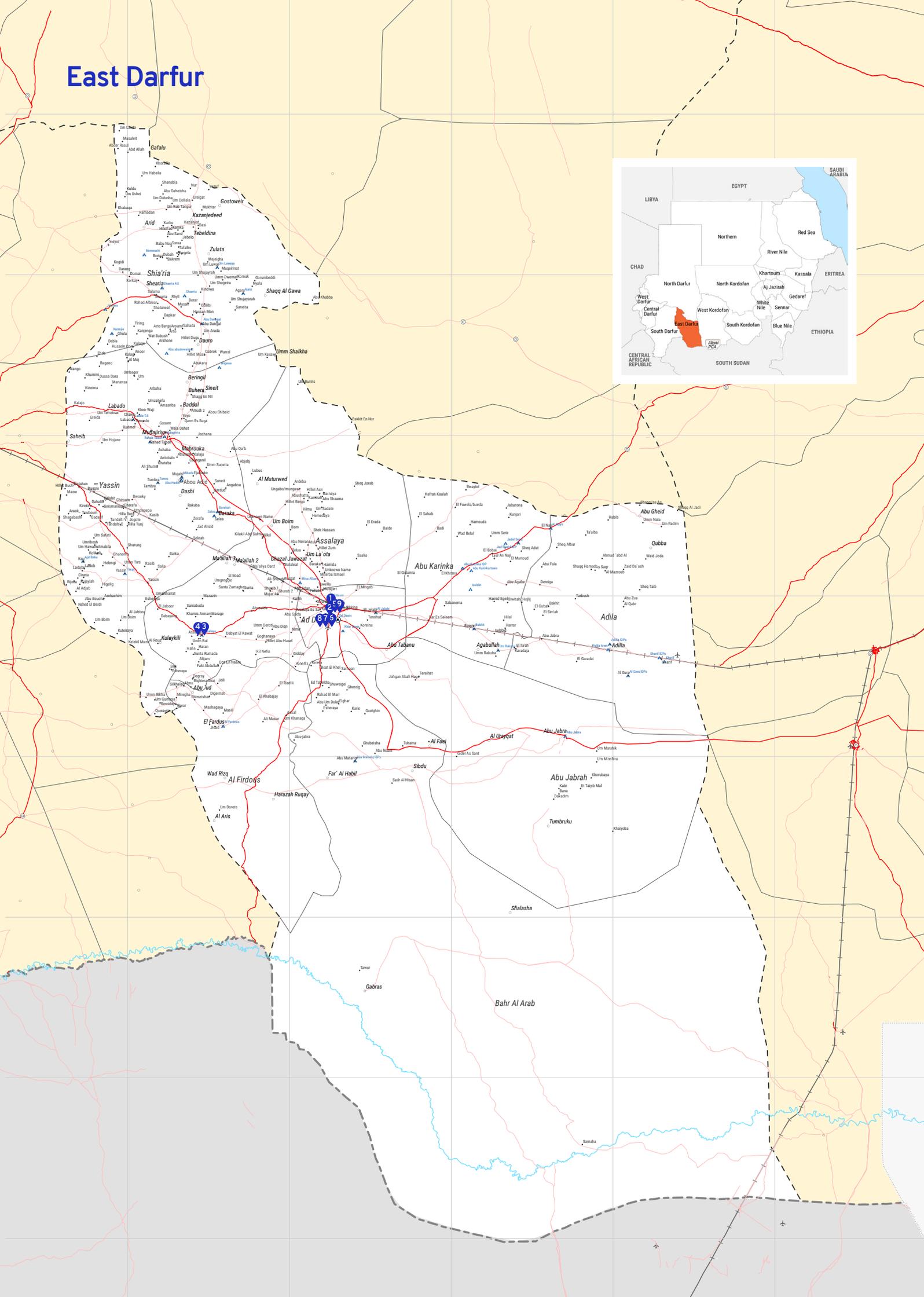
WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

- M Membership card
- NID National identification
- ID Personal identification
- R Registration form
- BC Birth Certificate

East Darfur



1 NHIF OFFICE COMMUNITY LEVEL
Assalaya Locality

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th OPEN 07:00 CLOSE 15:00

SERVICES
Registration
Payment of fees
Claiming of benefits
Filing complaints
Information sharing

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION
 R ID

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS
 M

2 NHIF OFFICE COMMUNITY LEVEL
Ed Daein State

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th OPEN 08:00 CLOSE 16:00

SERVICES
Registration
Payment of fees
Claiming of benefits
Filing complaints
Information sharing

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION
 R ID

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS
 M

3 NHIF OFFICE COMMUNITY LEVEL
Ed Daein State

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th OPEN 08:00 CLOSE 16:00

SERVICES
Registration
Payment of fees
Claiming of benefits
Filing complaints
Information sharing

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION
 R ID

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS
 M

4 ZAKAT CHAMBER COMMUNITY LEVEL
Ed Daein State

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th OPEN 08:00 CLOSE 16:00

SERVICES
Registration
Claiming of benefits
Filing complaints
Information sharing

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION
 R ID EMP

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS
 ID M INGO

5 ZAKAT CHAMBER COMMUNITY LEVEL
Assalaya State

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th OPEN 08:00 CLOSE 15:00

SERVICES
Claiming of benefits
Filing complaints
Information sharing

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION
 R ID EMP

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS
 ID

6 ZAKAT CHAMBER COMMUNITY LEVEL
Ed Daein State

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th OPEN 08:00 CLOSE 16:00

SERVICES
Registration
Claiming of benefits
Filing complaints
Information sharing

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION
 R ID EMP

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS
 ID M INGO LNGO

7 BUREAU FOR SOCIAL SECURITY COMMUNITY LEVEL
Ed Daein State

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th OPEN 08:30 CLOSE 15:30

SERVICES
Registration
Claiming of benefits
Filing complaints
Information sharing

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION
 R ID

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS
 ID

8 POVERTY CENTRE COMMUNITY LEVEL
Ed Daein State

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th OPEN 08:00 CLOSE 15:30

SERVICES
Registration
Claiming of benefits
Filing complaints
Information sharing

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION
 R ID

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS
 ID

9 LABOUR OFFICE COMMUNITY LEVEL
Ed Daein State

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th OPEN 08:00 CLOSE 16:00

SERVICES
Registration
Payment of fees
Claiming of benefits
Filing complaints
Information sharing

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS



Membership card



Personal identification



Registration form



Letter from medical professional



Letter from international non-governmental organization



Letter from local non-governmental organization

1 NHIF OFFICE COMMUNITY LEVEL
Nyala State

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th OPEN 08:30 CLOSE 16:00

SERVICES
Claiming benefits
Filing complaints
Information sharing

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

2 ZAKAT CHAMBER COMMUNITY LEVEL
Nyala State

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa OPEN 08:00 CLOSE 18:00

SERVICES
Registration Filing complaints
Payment of fees Information sharing
Claiming benefits

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

3 ZAKAT CHAMBER COMMUNITY LEVEL
Nyala State

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th OPEN 08:00 CLOSE 16:30

SERVICES
Registration
Claiming benefits
Filing complaints
Information sharing

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

4 BUREAU FOR SOCIAL SECURITY COMMUNITY LEVEL
Nyala State

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th Sa OPEN 08:00 CLOSE 15:00

SERVICES
Registration Information sharing
Claiming benefits
Filing complaints

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

5 NHIF CLINIC COMMUNITY LEVEL
Nyala -

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th Sa OPEN 08:00 CLOSE 17:00

SERVICES
Primary care Pharmacy
Nutrition services Laboratory
Maternal and newborn care

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

6 NHIF CLINIC COMMUNITY LEVEL
Nyala -

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th Sa OPEN 08:00 CLOSE 18:00

SERVICES
Primary care Maternal and newborn care
Nutrition services Pharmacy
Specialised care Laboratory

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

7 NHIF CLINIC COMMUNITY LEVEL
Nyala -

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa OPEN 08:00 CLOSE 17:00

SERVICES
Primary care Pharmacy
Nutrition services Laboratory
Maternal and newborn care

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

8 NHIF CLINIC COMMUNITY LEVEL
Nyala -

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th Sa OPEN XX:00 CLOSE 20:30

SERVICES
Primary care Emergency care
Nutrition services Pharmacy
Specialised care Laboratory

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

9 NHIF CLINIC COMMUNITY LEVEL
Nyala -

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th Sa OPEN 08:30 CLOSE 14:00

SERVICES
Primary care Pharmacy
Maternal and newborn Laboratory
care

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

10 NHIF CLINIC COMMUNITY LEVEL
Nyala -

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th Sa OPEN 08:00 CLOSE 18:00

SERVICES
Primary care Pharmacy
Nutrition services Laboratory
Specialised care
Maternal and newborn care

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

11 NHIF CLINIC COMMUNITY LEVEL
Nyala -

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th Sa OPEN 08:00 CLOSE 18:00

SERVICES
Primary care
Pharmacy
Laboratory

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

12 NHIF CLINIC COMMUNITY LEVEL
Nyala -

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th Sa OPEN 08:00 CLOSE 18:00

SERVICES
Primary care
Emergency care
Pharmacy
Laboratory

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

13 POVERTY CENTRE COMMUNITY LEVEL
Nyala State

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th Sa OPEN 08:00 CLOSE 16:00

SERVICES
Registration
Claiming benefits
Filing complaints
Information sharing

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

14 LABOUR OFFICE COMMUNITY LEVEL
Nyala State

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th OPEN 08:30 CLOSE 16:00

SERVICES
Registration Filing complaints
Payment of fees Information sharing
Claiming benefits

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

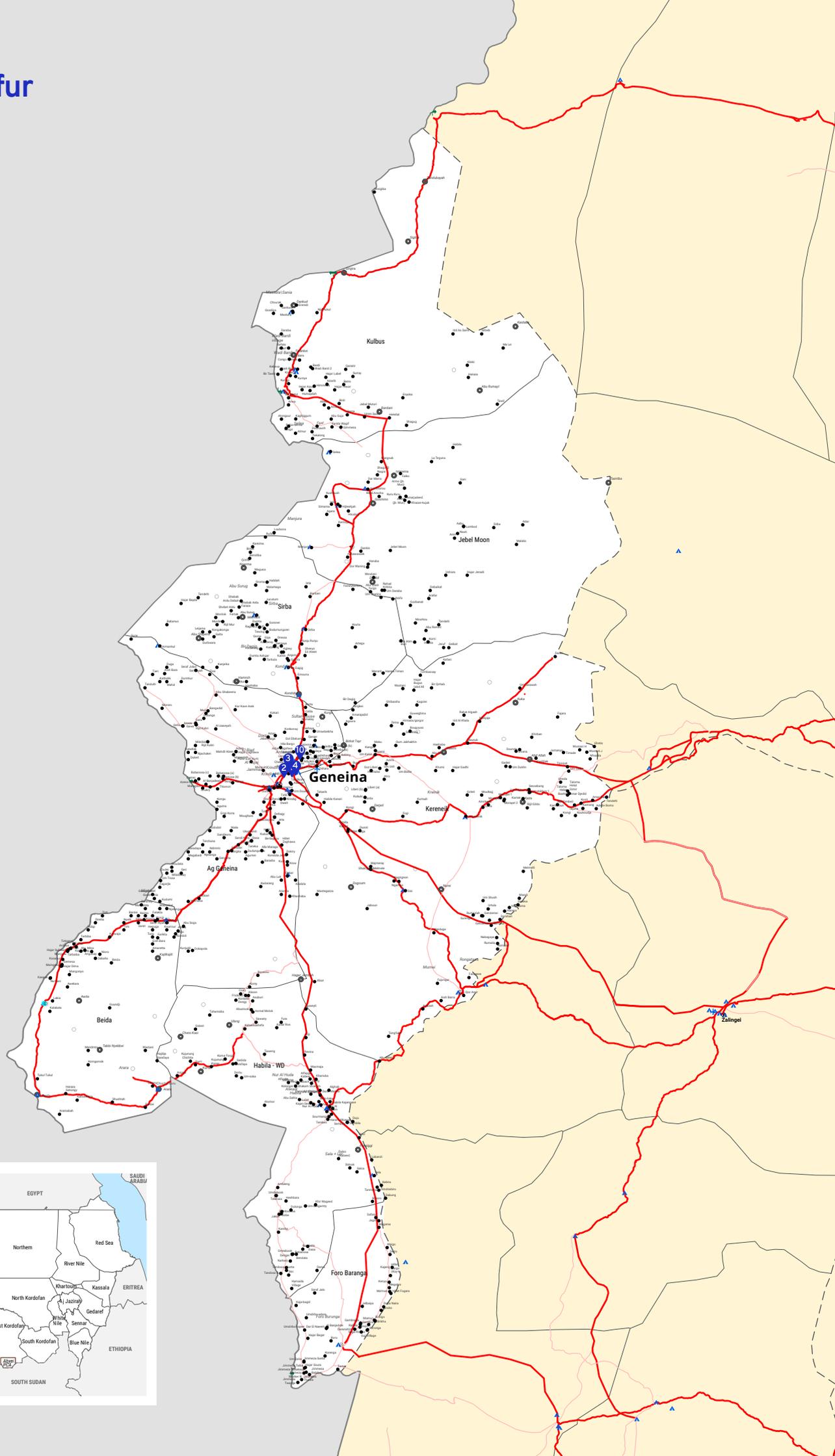
DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

Membership card

Personal identification

West Darfur



1 NHIF OFFICE COMMUNITY LEVEL
Geneina National

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa OPEN 08:00 CLOSE 21:00

SERVICES
Payment of fees
Claiming of benefits

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS **M**

2 NHIF OFFICE COMMUNITY LEVEL
Geneina State

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th / / OPEN - CLOSE -

SERVICES
-

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

3 NHIF OFFICE COMMUNITY LEVEL
Geneina State

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th / / OPEN 08:30 CLOSE 15:30

SERVICES
Registration
Payment of fees
Claiming benefits
Filing complaints
Information sharing

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

4 ZAKAT CHAMBER COMMUNITY LEVEL
Geneina State

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th / Sa OPEN 8:30 CLOSE 16:00

SERVICES
-

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

5 ZAKAT CHAMBER COMMUNITY LEVEL
Geneina State

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th / / OPEN 8:00 CLOSE 15:30

SERVICES
-

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

6 BUREAU FOR SOCIAL SECURITY COMMUNITY LEVEL
Geneina State

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th / / OPEN 08:00 CLOSE 16:00

SERVICES
Registration
Claiming of benefits

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION **R** **ID**

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

7 CIVIL REGISTRATION OFFICE COMMUNITY LEVEL
Geneina National

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th / / OPEN 07:30 CLOSE 16:00

SERVICES
Registration of birth
Issuing personal identification

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

8 HOSPITAL (MoH) COMMUNITY LEVEL
Geneina -

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th / / OPEN 08:30 CLOSE 15:30

SERVICES
Primary care Maternal and newborn care
Specialized care Pharmacy
Emergency care Laboratory

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

9 NHIF CLINIC COMMUNITY LEVEL
Geneina -

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa OPEN 08:00 CLOSE 21:00

SERVICES
Primary care Maternal and newborn care
Nutrition services Pharmacy
Specialized care Laboratory
Emergency care

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS **M**

10 HOSPITAL (MoH) COMMUNITY LEVEL
Geneina -

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th / Sa OPEN 09:00 CLOSE 18:00

SERVICES
Laboratory

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS **M**

11 HOSPITAL (MoH) COMMUNITY LEVEL
Geneina -

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th / Sa OPEN XX:XX CLOSE 18:00

SERVICES
Primary care Maternal and newborn care
Nutrition services Pharmacy
Specialized care Laboratory
Emergency care

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

12 NHIF CLINIC COMMUNITY LEVEL
Geneina -

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th / / OPEN 09:00 CLOSE 14:00

SERVICES
Nutrition services
Emergency care
Maternal and newborn care

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

13 NHIF CLINIC COMMUNITY LEVEL
Geneina -

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th / / OPEN 09:00 CLOSE 15:00

SERVICES
Primary care

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS **M**

14 POVERTY CENTRE COMMUNITY LEVEL
Geneina State

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th / / OPEN 08:30 CLOSE 16:00

SERVICES
Registration
Claiming benefits

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION **ID**

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS **ID**

15 LABOUR OFFICE COMMUNITY LEVEL
Geneina State

DAYS
Su Mo Tu We Th / / OPEN 08:30 CLOSE 16:00

SERVICES
Registration Filing complaints
Payment of fees Information sharing
Claiming benefits

WHO CAN ACCESS?
 Local people State residents Other Sudanese
 Refugees IDPs

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR REGISTRATION

DOCUMENTS FOR CLAIMING BENEFITS

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