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Humanitarian
Policy Group

City limits: urbanisation and vulnerability in Sudan

Synthesis report

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Contents

Acronyms/abbreviations

BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
CAR	Central African Republic
CES	Central Equatoria State
COD	Commission of Displaced
COR	Commission of Refugees
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
DFID	Department for International Development
ESPA	Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement
ESRDF	Eastern Sudan Reconstruction and Development Fund
FGD	focus group discussion
GoSS	Government of Southern Sudan
GPR	Guiding Principles on Relocation
HAC	Humanitarian Aid Commission
IDP	internally displaced person
IRC	International Rescue Committee
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
MDTF	Multi-Donor Trust Fund
MHLPU	Ministry of Housing, Land and Public Utilities
MoH	Ministry of Health
MPI	Ministry of Physical Infrastructure
MPPPU	Ministry of Physical Planning and Public Utilities
NCP	National Congress Party
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
SPLM	Sudan People's Liberation Movement
SSRRC	South Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN DSRSG/HC/RC	United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNHCR	Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees
UNMIS	United Nations Missions in Sudan

Figure 1: Map of Sudan

Egypt

NORTHERN

RED SEA

Port Sudan

Chad

NORTHERN
DARFUR

RIVER
NILE

KHARTOUM

Khartoum

KASSALA

Eritrea

NORTHERN
KORDOFAN

GAZIRA

WHITE
NILE

Ed Daein

Al Fasher

GEDAREF

WESTERN
DARFUR

El Obeid

SENNAR

Nyala

SOUTHERN
DARFUR

SOUTHERN
KORDOFAN

BLUE
NILE

Bentiu

Malakal

UPPER
NILE

Ethiopia

Aweil

UNITY

NORTHERN
B.A.G

WARRAP

WESTERN BAHR
AL GHAZAL

Wau

JONGLEI

Central African
Republic

Rumbek

LAKES

Bor

WESTERN
EQUATORIA

Juba

EASTERN
EQUATORIA

Yambio

Democratic Republic
of Congo

BAHR AL
JEBEL

Torit

Kenya

1. Introduction and methodology

Sudan is urbanising rapidly. Although the trend is not new (and is consistent with a trend towards greater urbanisation across Sub-Saharan Africa[1]), the pace in Sudan appears to be accelerating. For a country of its size Sudan has relatively few cities, which means that the population drift from rural areas is focused on a small number of urban centres.

The Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG) at the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) has been commissioned by the Department for International Development (DFID) to carry out a study on urbanisation in Sudan. The overall objectives of the study are:

- To deepen understanding of the drivers of urbanisation in different parts of the country, in relation to the broader economic, political and security context in Sudan.
- To analyse the consequences of rapid urbanisation, socially, economically (paying particular attention to urban livelihoods) and environmentally, and in terms of urban infrastructure and the provision of services.
- To assess the implications in terms of the vulnerability of urban populations to future hazards and shocks, and in terms of development opportunities.
- To identify how international aid can best engage with changing settlement patterns in Sudan, and the implications for humanitarian and development programming in the future.

The study focuses on four urban centres, Nyala, Khartoum, Port Sudan and Juba, and a case study report has been produced for each city. This paper constitutes the Synthesis Report.

The adapted livelihoods framework from the Feinstein International Center provided the conceptual underpinnings of the four case studies (see Annex 1). The methodology used for all the case studies combined secondary and primary data collection. For each city, secondary data was gathered through an in-depth literature review on patterns of urbanisation, displacement and vulnerability among rural and urban populations. While the majority of the sources reviewed were in English, a limited number of Arabic sources were also studied. Secondary data was also collected by each research team during the fieldwork, from state government departments and international and national humanitarian and development organisations. This included policy-related documents, other studies relating to urbanisation and qualitative and quantitative data on service provision. Primary data was collected through fieldwork in Khartoum, Juba and Nyala, carried out by a team of international and national researchers and staff seconded by state government ministries. The international researchers were denied permission to visit Port Sudan by the Sudanese authorities, and as a result were unable to carry out fieldwork

there. Fieldwork was done instead by a Sudanese team (for further details see the Port Sudan report).

In each city the fieldwork was carried out in a series of steps, as follows:

- A profile of the different quarters of the city was developed (including squatter areas, illegal settlements and IDP camps in the city outskirts), according to when the area was settled and why, the current socio-economic status of residents in the area and its residential classification.[2] From this profiling exercise locations were selected for in-depth fieldwork.
- A stakeholder mapping exercise was carried out by the research team, first of formal institutions (e.g. government departments, the chamber of commerce) with responsibility for aspects of urbanisation such as urban planning, economic development and service provision; and second, of informal and community-based institutions. These were mapped using Venn diagrams to indicate the relationships between institutions, with the size of the circles representing their relative power. These were subsequently used to identify key informants for interviews.
- Key informant interviews, guided by a series of checklists, were conducted with a wide range of actors, including government officers, private sector organisations and entrepreneurs, union representatives and representatives of national and international agencies.
- Focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted in the sample locations, where possible with men, women and young people separately, and with different population groups (e.g. IDPs and residents). These were carried out according to a checklist of questions.

Summary of key findings

Together with seasonal and economic migration, forced displacement has been a key driver of the exponential growth of Sudan's cities and towns. Rapid urbanisation has been accompanied by growing numbers of poor and vulnerable urban dwellers – a significant proportion of whom are displaced populations – who live in abject poverty, are vulnerable to a range of threats to their physical and mental wellbeing and face acute challenges in accessing livelihoods, basic services and land. The economic boom of recent years has mainly benefited an emerging economic, social and political elite, and has offered very little to the majority of the urban population.

The national strategic response to urbanisation has been weak. While urban development planning at national and state levels may have long-term benefits, it often carries immediate

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1 It is estimated that, within two decades, more than half of the population of Sub-Saharan Africa (currently the world's most rural region) will be living in urban areas (UNHCR, 2006).

2 Following the practice introduced by the British colonial administration, Sudanese towns are subdivided into four classes of residential land. These classes determine the type of housing that can be constructed in different areas (plot size, lease terms, land fees and taxes and the quality and permanence of building materials), and service provision. See Section 6 for further explanation.

negative repercussions for the lives and livelihoods of a large number of poor urban residents. Policies relating to IDPs have failed to take into account the positive contribution that displaced populations can make to long-term peace and stability, and urban planning processes at state level have often been unrealistic and non-participatory. Political decentralisation does not appear to have translated into effective fiscal decentralisation, particularly in relation to service provision and urban infrastructure.

The value of land in urban areas has increased exponentially in recent years, pushing the urban poor further and further from the centre towards the peripheries of each city, away from services and jobs. Gaining access to land even in these peripheral, low-value areas is a costly, cumbersome and unclear process, and as a result most of the urban poor are effectively excluded from land ownership.

Urbanisation has also had a major impact on social norms and behaviour. There has been surprisingly little tension between ethnic groups, and urbanisation has in some cases resulted in more opportunities for women and has enhanced their status in society. At the same time, however, increasing economic and social pressures have also resulted in the breakdown of family structures, with a rise in divorce rates, abandonment of women and children and a growing gang culture among disaffected young people. Combined with high levels of insecurity, including conflict, rising crime, political unrest and weak rule of law, these processes expose the poorest and most vulnerable to serious risks of exploitation and abuse.

Despite significant urban growth over the past few decades and the acute vulnerabilities and needs of millions of urban dwellers, international aid still focuses on rural areas and largely ignores urban-based populations. This is partially driven by a general assumption that those who make it to the cities are 'alright'. In the absence of substantial assistance, both by the government and the international community, the urban poor have shown great strength, resilience and creativity, initiating their own credit transfer systems, creating civil society organisations to support service provision and drawing on traditional governance systems to resolve disputes and support social cohesion. Extraordinary as these efforts are, they cannot address the fundamental challenges that urbanisation presents. A major shift is needed in the approach of the federal and state governments, as well as the international community.

2. History and drivers of urbanisation

The history of urbanisation in Sudan begins in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Of the four cities studied, Khartoum is the oldest, dating back to 1821, while Juba is the youngest, having been established in the 1920s. Broadly, the history of urbanisation falls into two periods: the

first half of the twentieth century up until the 1970s, when each of the four cities grew at a steady though accelerating pace, and the period since the 1970s, when the rate of urbanisation has been extremely rapid. It is estimated that close to 40% of Sudan's total population is now living in towns, and that half of the urban population is in Khartoum (Assal, 2008). Khartoum itself grew by a factor of eight between 1973 and 2005 (an average annual growth rate of over 6%), and now has a population of well over 5 million (UN-Habitat, 2009; see also Annex 2 for a brief history of each city). The population of Juba has more than doubled in the five years since the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005, with estimates up to 600,000 (JICA, 2009; Deng, 2010; study data). Estimates of Nyala's population vary, but it is widely believed that the city has trebled to around 1.6m since the early 2000s, taking account of the large numbers of displaced people who have gathered in and around Darfur's largest town.[3] Figures for population growth in Port Sudan have been more difficult to obtain, but estimates for the last 20 years suggest numbers of up to 1m (Forman, 1992; van Breukelen, 1990, in Pantuliano, 2000). Any study of urbanisation in Sudan is however hampered by a lack of accurate data, not least on population.

Urbanisation during the first period of expansion, until the 1970s, was mainly driven by the pull factors of economic growth as Sudan's economy expanded. This was supported by improved transport and communications infrastructure in the cases of Nyala (with the arrival of the railway) and Port Sudan (which grew rapidly as a port city), and the growing importance of each city as an administrative centre. The second and more rapid period of urbanisation from the 1970s onwards has been driven more by push factors, particularly natural disasters and armed conflict. Drought and conflict have devastated many rural areas, resulting in periodic influxes of large numbers of displaced people into each of the four cities. Of these two push factors conflict is by far the most significant. Over 2m people fled to Khartoum during the second North–South civil war in Sudan between 1983 and 2005; approximately half that number may have returned home since the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005, according to the UN, but there are no accurate figures.[4] In 2005, it was estimated that there were approximately 87,000 IDPs in Juba (UNEP, 2007), and our study findings indicate that many have decided to stay there rather than return to their rural areas of origin because services and security are better than in their home areas. Nyala is currently hosting around 300,000 IDPs, mostly in camps in or close to the city (de Waal, 2009). The pattern that emerges is of large flows of displaced people moving from insecure rural areas to more secure cities during periods of conflict, with only a portion returning when peace is

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3 See De Waal, 2009. Officials in the MPPPU estimate that the town population is around 1.3m, with approximately 300,000 displaced people in and around Nyala.

4 The UN puts the total number of IDPs living in Khartoum at around 1–1.2m (Brumat, 2010), but this represents a conventional estimation rather than a precise statistical reference.

restored. This pattern is consistent with other conflict-affected countries in Africa, such as Angola and Sierra Leone.

One consequence of these waves of displacement is that each city has expanded through the uncontrolled growth of informal settlements, particularly in the case of Khartoum. According to a recent study, formally designated IDP camps and squatter sites in Khartoum occupy a total area of 33km² and are inhabited by an estimated 800,000 people (Murrillo et al., 2008). The proportion of poor urban residents has grown in each city, to an estimated 60% in Khartoum (UN-Habitat, 2009). Each of the four cities has also become more multi-ethnic over the years. Although there is some ethnic concentration in settlement patterns, ethnic groups are more mixed than in most rural areas. For example, the thousands of residents of Baghdad, one of the most recent and largest illegal settlements in Port Sudan, include Darfurians, Beja, Beni Amer, Nuba and Southerners.

3. Policy overview

Government policy has not kept pace with Sudan's rapid urbanisation, either in the North or in the South. The Government of National Unity's Twenty-Five Year National Strategy (2007–2031) does not address urbanisation as a separate issue. The strategy is more about sustainable development, increasing agricultural productivity, reducing poverty and promoting good governance. The strategy aims to make the countryside a more appealing place to live and work, thereby reducing the rate of rural-to-urban migration.

There is a long tradition of urban planning in Sudan. The first plan for Khartoum dates back to the early years of the twentieth century, and there have been several others since. There is, however, also a history of plans not being implemented, or being overwhelmed by large population movements. Overall, the picture that emerges is of a government struggling to cope with the pace and nature of urbanisation, in both the North and the South.

The current Structural Plan for Khartoum, covering the period 2007 to 2033, was developed by an Italian firm between 2007 and 2010. The philosophy underlying this plan is the integration of different neighbourhoods through improved road networks and transport systems. It has been approved by Khartoum's State Cabinet but has already run into problems because of competing and conflicting interests between different parts of government, especially over land use.

Nyala has a new Master Plan, in preparation since the mid-1990s and recently passed by the South Darfur Legislative Council. It covers a 15-year period from 2006 to 2021. This plan seeks to modernise the city with a business and commercial centre comprising multi-storey office blocks, shopping malls and car parks. It appears to have been drawn up by technicians and engineers with little local consultation, there is no sense of heritage in the plan and it does not take account of how Nyala has changed during the Darfur conflict.

The current Master Plan for Juba was developed by JICA (JICA, 2007), and is apparently being updated. It, too, has been criticised for its top-down approach and lack of consultation and for maintaining the current land zoning system, which if followed would result in low-density settlement in the centre of the town and would require the relocation of large numbers of people to overcrowded settlements in the periphery. A more sustainable approach has been proposed, of a compact town with higher densities in the centre and therefore lower service delivery costs, and more participatory approaches to urban planning (UNDP–UN-Habitat, 2009). Meanwhile, disagreements about the appropriate approach to take to urban planning and to informal settlements exacerbate the already tense relationship between the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) and the authorities of Central Equatoria State (CES).[5]

Port Sudan has had no new Master Plan since the 1970s, despite the rapid changes the city has experienced including exponential population growth. This is indicative of the general neglect under which Eastern Sudan labours.

Since the early 1990s, the government has attempted to manage urban sprawl and address the issue of rapidly expanding squatter settlements by replanning squatter areas, preparing sites for communities affected by replanning and relocating communities (Bannaga, 1996). Replanning and relocation efforts may have potential long-term benefits in terms of urban development as they ultimately aim to open up roads, expand services and spaces for social functions and markets and regularise housing through the granting of a land title to each family, either in the replanned area itself or in the relocation site (*ibid.*). However, in practice these processes have often had immediate negative repercussions on the lives and survival strategies of a large number of urban poor. Furthermore, limited attention has been paid to effectively preparing sites to host communities affected by the replanning process.

The promised benefits of federalism and decentralisation are yet to be fully realised in any of the four cities in this study. So far there has been little genuine devolution of power to the local level in Northern Sudan, beyond the office of the *Wali* (governor) of each state. Federal funds are unreliable and inadequate; combined with constraints on revenue-raising powers locally, this makes it very difficult for state governments to provide basic services and develop urban infrastructure. Meanwhile, despite the concentration of large

5 For example, while the GoSS Ministry of Housing, Land and Public Utilities (MHLPU) is promoting a policy of providing low-cost housing to the poor on the outskirts of Juba as a way to decongest and replan the town, the CES Ministry of Physical Infrastructure (MPI) continues to allow official and unofficial land allocation in the peri-urban areas of the town.

numbers of poor people in urban centres, poverty alleviation efforts, by the government and international actors alike, focus on the rural population. Most initiatives directed at the urban poor have involved micro-finance, but a large proportion of the urban poor have limited or no access to these forms of credit. *Zakat* (obligatory Islamic alms) is an important form of redistributive welfare under the Islamic system in the North, but it too has proved inadequate.

IDPs form a large proportion of the urban poor. Displaced people are largely perceived as a problem by the authorities, and as a political and security threat, in Northern cities in particular. Despite periodic statements of support from the government, consistent with the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, this commitment has rarely been followed by practical steps to help IDPs. Institutional responsibility for IDPs is in flux and the political will to address the issue of internal displacement has generally been lacking (see Box 1). This has resulted in negligible government assistance for newly displaced populations, and little support for rights-based, practical and durable solutions to displacement.

Evidence from recent surveys (borne out by the findings of this study) indicates that a large proportion – perhaps 50% or more – of the long-term displaced will not return to their rural areas of origin.[6] However, the authorities in both Northern and Southern Sudan refuse to accept this reality. In Nyala the government of South Darfur has sought to disperse IDPs despite ongoing conflict and insecurity in rural areas, and in the face of the wishes of the large proportion of IDPs who want to remain in the town. A small number of IDPs have been offered residential land (albeit with ambiguous security of tenure) in return for giving up their IDP status. In Khartoum there have been periodic attempts by the state government to resettle IDPs, usually in peripheral and poorly serviced areas. Following the signing of the CPA the GoSS has encouraged Southern IDPs to quit Khartoum and return to the South, although again many have chosen to remain. With the upcoming referendum on secession for the South in 2011, the fate of Southern IDPs in the capital is a cause of particular concern, but the National Congress Party (NCP) and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), and for that matter the international community, only started to engage in serious discussion on this issue in late 2010.

Government policy on refugees has been more consistent. Essentially, the policy has been to locate refugees in designated camps close to the border with the country from which they arrived (usually Ethiopia and Eritrea). Refugees are not legally allowed to move to the cities except with the permission of the Commission of Refugees (COR). This means that the many thousands of refugees who have made their way to the cities, especially to Khartoum and Port Sudan, are considered illegal residents.

6 See Pantuliano et al. 2008; Pantuliano et al., 2007.

Box 1: Government responsibility for IDPs: a shifting landscape

In 1984 the government took several steps to address the issue of displacement, including establishing a military committee to direct relief operations. Two years later the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission was established, along with the National Council for Displaced Affairs. In 1988 the Commission of Displaced (COD) was formed. When the government changed in 1989, a new Ministry for Relief and Displaced Affairs was created, but this was dissolved in 1993 and its various commissions hived off to different ministries. Some of the responsibilities for IDPs were transferred to the newly established state governments in 1994, when federalism was introduced.

Currently, IDPs are the responsibility of the Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC). The HAC was established in 1995, since when it has moved between various ministries, and is today part of the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, formed in 2003. In 2004 and 2005, the HAC and the Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (SRRC) engaged in a series of debates and policy discussions on internal displacement, including signing a joint policy framework articulating rights relating to return. In 2009, the Government of National Unity adopted a new national IDP policy setting out the rights of IDPs and the appropriate responses to their needs. The government has also ratified (but not yet implemented) the Pact on Peace, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region and its related protocols on displacement and property rights, and has endorsed (but has yet to sign and ratify) the African Union Convention on the Protection and Assistance of IDPs in Africa (the Kampala Convention).

4. Governance and leadership in urban areas

Confusion regarding roles and the division of responsibility between different levels of local governance, especially between traditional leaders and government representatives, characterises the governance experience in the four towns examined in this study. In each, the influx of large numbers of IDPs, refugees and returnees, all with their own traditional leadership structures, has resulted in parallel and overlapping systems of administration.

In Northern Sudan the local government system has four levels – *Wilaya* (State), *Mahalya* (Locality), *Alwihda al-Idaria* (Administrative Unit) and *Lajna Sha`biya* (Popular Committee). Whilst powers and competences are enshrined in the Local Government Act of 1991, amended in 2003, the reality on the ground is much more nebulous, especially at the level of the Popular Committees. These are elected bodies of volunteers, usually traditional leaders. Their numerous responsibilities include monitoring the agencies and service departments operating

within their boundaries, the provision of services, community mobilisation for self-help projects or to participate in political events such as rallies and support to the police in maintaining law and order. Many of these functions overlap with those of the Administrative Units and the localities. Popular Committees are also used by the local government as a cost-effective way to gather and disseminate information, collect charges and fees and distribute rationed goods and *zakat*. The Committees are however often perceived by their communities as self-serving and corrupt. Some communities interviewed for this study in Khartoum, Nyala and Port Sudan considered them to be political bodies selected by the government according to political affiliation, and therefore more interested in political organisation than community issues.

The 'Native Administration', as tribal leaders are commonly referred to both in the North and the South, still plays an important role, especially when formal governance mechanisms fail. In Nyala the Native Administration has helped incoming rural populations to gain access to government institutions and services, and has played a mediation role when formal justice and other systems fail or are deemed inappropriate; it successfully brokered the end of a strike by teachers and doctors in Nyala in 2005/06, and it manages the *diyya* (blood money) and compensation arrangements for settling disputes.

In Nyala many IDP camps have no government presence and essentially run themselves, with their own informal rules, militia and taxation systems. A new generation of urban IDP leaders has emerged, and is challenging traditional authority structures and the Native Administrations, particularly if they feel that they are associated with the government. The authority of these new leaders derives from their control over aid resources and other assets, such as land, commerce and security; various camp committees have been created in collaboration with aid agencies to manage service provision. IDPs have become highly dependent on these (invariably male) representatives to negotiate on their behalf with service providers, including international actors. The process is considered highly politicised, with reports of *sheikhs* often being co-opted with money and privileges. At the same time, these new leaders have organised resistance to government policies that are not seen to be in the interests of IDPs. In El Sereif IDP camp, on the western side of Nyala, for instance, the sheikhs wrote to government and UN officials rejecting the land allocation process proposed by the HAC, which they perceived as being politically led. In some camps IDP leaders use the people they control as a means to exert political influence and draw attention to their situation.

In Juba, the lack of clarity over the respective roles of the GoSS and the state government, and the integration of traditional leaders into official local administrative structures, has led to a proliferation of different and often contradictory policies and laws. Ambiguity and power struggles over the duties of the different overlapping administrations are common, especially with regard to land allocation and tax collection. Meanwhile, customary law continues to be applied to certain matters within

the town, such as inheritance of wives, even though chiefs do not retain the same powers with regard to land within the town as in the surrounding areas of Juba (Deng, 2010). Although the CES government ordered all IDP chiefs to return to their original home areas in 2006, some continue to exercise their functions within the town in connection with the affairs of their particular community. At the local level, many more unofficial and often overlapping structures for resolving local disputes exist than are officially acknowledged. In several areas visited, multiple *shuyukh-al-hilla* and chiefs claimed to represent local communities. It was often unclear whether these were the remnants of the old Sudanese government or part of new, separate local arrangements made by the communities themselves.

The lack of effective leadership and representation in decision-making processes has a significant impact on the urban poor in a number of critical areas, including livelihoods, land, services, infrastructure and security provision. Poor coordination amongst international actors providing different forms of support to traditional leaders and local government (for instance around land tenure arrangements) has exacerbated the situation.

5. The urban economy and livelihoods

The urban economies looked at here have mostly followed the fortunes of the wider Sudanese economy, experiencing growth and buoyancy until the early 1970s, followed by a period of contraction and rising unemployment until oil started to flow in the late 1990s. The oil boom benefited Khartoum and Port Sudan (the main point of export) in particular. However, a feature of this most recent period of growth is the inequality it has generated. Wealth has become heavily concentrated in the hands of a few, especially in Khartoum, and the majority of the urban population have reaped little benefit. In all four cities the value of real estate has risen dramatically, putting further pressure on the livelihoods of the urban poor.

Khartoum, where much of Sudan's wealth is concentrated, has attracted high levels of foreign investment, including real-estate investment from the Gulf, inviting the nickname 'Dubai on the Nile'. The influence of Gulf architecture and styles of development are evident in the centre of the city, with mirrored skyscrapers and gated communities – a far cry from the poorly served shanty towns on the periphery. Port Sudan too has seen substantial urban infrastructure development, particularly in its better-off neighbourhoods. A paved road has been built connecting areas of the city, street lights have been improved in the city centre and along the seafront and the seaside has been beautified with cafes, restaurants and playgrounds for children.

The urban economies of Juba and Nyala have been heavily influenced by conflict in recent years. Although Juba is nominally in a post-conflict phase, while Nyala and the wider Darfur

region are still in the grip of conflict, the two cities share some common features in their economic development. Juba's economy stagnated during the two decades of civil war, but the signing of the CPA in 2005 ushered in a new era and the city became accessible once again. The establishment of the GoSS in Juba and the arrival of hundreds of international aid agencies breathed new life into the city. As well as oil revenues, goods and financial capital started to flow. But there is concern that the economy is predominantly service-oriented, catering to the better-off, including government officials and aid personnel, and that this is neither a strong nor a sustainable economic base. Longer-term, strategic investment in industry and infrastructure are absent and those benefiting from Juba's growth are often foreign entrepreneurs rather than local businessmen.[7] The lack of domestic agricultural production around Juba and the absence of local manufacturing companies mean that the town is almost entirely dependent on imports.

In Nyala the economy has been distorted and artificially stimulated by the rapidly changing settlement pattern in South Darfur, and especially by the unprecedented presence of the international aid community. This has fuelled a construction boom and a surge in the retailing of foodstuffs, particularly processed food. As a result, Nyala has switched from being a net exporter, based on South Darfur's vibrant pre-conflict rural economy, to a net importer of construction materials and foods from Central Sudan. Indeed, businesses from Central Sudan have penetrated Nyala's economy to an unparalleled extent, fuelling local concerns that the Darfuri private sector is being dangerously weakened.

In neither Nyala nor Juba are the urban poor fully participating in economic growth. This creates a dual economy. One part of it is booming, closely linked to the international presence and foreign investment and, in the case of Juba, opening up to the regional and global economy. Entrepreneurs in this part of the economy are doing well. In the other part of the economy, however, the urban poor engage in informal and small-scale activities. Competition for jobs and trade is increasing, even amongst unskilled workers.

In the urban economies of the cities of Northern Sudan, close links have reportedly developed between economic activity and the political power of the ruling NCP. During field work for this study in Khartoum control and access to power and economic opportunity were consistently linked to the ruling party. Many interviewees in poor neighbourhoods mentioned NCP party membership as one of their main survival strategies. This link was also evident in Nyala, where the security institutions of the state possess a range of trading and business interests including timber, selling firewood and processing and trading groundnuts. These institutions have privileged access to government

departments and services, are exempt from taxes and have access to finance and subsidised transport to rural areas.

A crippling taxation regime is a feature of all the urban economies studied.[8] Formal taxation is imposed by different layers of government, a burden exacerbated in Southern Sudan and South Darfur by informal taxation and protection payments. Traders in Juba report up to 15 illegal checkpoints taking fees between Juba and the Ugandan border, and there are over 100 checkpoints between Nyala and Zalingei. In Nyala the government has doubled, and in some cases quadrupled, taxes to shore up revenues.

As far as livelihoods are concerned, the majority of the urban poor depend upon a range of marginal activities in the informal sector, including daily labouring and petty trade. In Nyala, Port Sudan and Juba people also collect firewood and make charcoal. Remittances are another significant source of income for some poor households, but often the flow of resources appears to be from the city to rural areas. In Khartoum, women from poor households appear increasingly to be the primary breadwinners for their family, and are often involved in multiple income-generating activities, from food sales and domestic labour to the illegal production and sale of *araki* and *marissa* (home-brewed alcohol), as well as commercial sex work. Water, transport and food were the main items of daily expenditure for the urban poor, especially those on the edge of town. In Khartoum, health and education were the main expenditures for most interviewees. In Juba it was food, education and health services. In all cities, perhaps with the exception of Nyala, rent usually represented the main item of overall household expenditure among the poor. Ironically, services usually cost more in the unplanned areas occupied by the poorest.

In Juba and Nyala some poor households (including some IDPs in the case of Nyala) engage in agriculture on the outskirts of the town. Insecurity in rural areas around Juba has encouraged a shift from subsistence agriculture in more distant fields to peri-urban farming. In Nyala there has been remarkable growth in urban and peri-urban agriculture to service the burgeoning urban population, and as farmers (often better-off households) move their assets from insecure rural areas to the more secure peripheries of the town. Most striking is the emergence of a major dairy industry, alongside poultry and market gardening. In Port Sudan there are three types of 'town pastoralists', usually Beja: those who work in the town with the aim of making enough money to regain a pastoral livelihood; those for whom livestock-keeping is one amongst many, mainly urban, livelihood activities; and those for whom engagement in the urban economy represents livelihood diversification, whilst herds are maintained at home (Pantuliano, 2002). Most Beja migrants retain some links with rural areas, with weaker ties among those born in town and those who have developed successful urban careers. The strongest links are with young men who come to town only temporarily.

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7 However, increasing numbers of Southern Sudanese are engaged in regional trading, including trade in foodstuffs such as maize, flour, sugar, rice, beans and salt, as well as beer and sodas bought from wholesalers either in Sudan (including Khartoum) or in neighbouring countries.

8 No information is available on Port Sudan.

A theme emerging in both the Khartoum and Juba case studies is the growing competition faced by unskilled Sudanese labourers from labourers from neighbouring countries. In Khartoum, the impact on livelihoods for the urban poor, including the displaced, was highlighted repeatedly during focus group discussions. Migrant labourers come mainly from Egypt and Ethiopia. There has also been a large influx of Egyptians working in skilled trades such as plumbing and carpentry and in the construction sector. In Juba casual labourers from Southern Sudan face stiff competition from their more skilled but cheaper counterparts from Kenya and Uganda. Anecdotally, this trend is attributed to a stronger work ethic amongst migrant labourers.

High levels of unemployment amongst young people are another concern. In Khartoum and Juba this seems to be linked to an emerging gang culture – a new and disturbing phenomenon that could spread to Nyala and Port Sudan. Although Sudan has more universities than ever before, both the private and public sectors are struggling to provide sufficient graduate-level jobs. Many graduates are doing manual or semi-skilled work, especially in Khartoum.

Despite the more individualised style of living associated with urban areas, there are some striking examples of poor households supporting each other. Port Sudan has a long-standing mechanism for allocating jobs at the port known as the *kella* system (groups of workers affiliated by kinship ties, each with their leaders or *rais*). Although it is declining, it still serves as a safety net for new arrivals in the town and provides an important link between urban and rural populations. In Khartoum poor communities have developed a variety of self-help approaches, including the creation of credit unions ('*Takafol Sandouqs*') that members can access in case of ill-health or loss of income. The level of organisation of these *sandouqs* varies, from local women's groups to structured savings accounts in better-off areas.

6. Land and urban growth

Efforts to contain urban sprawl and regulate the use of land in the large towns of Sudan have largely failed. In all Sudanese cities, urban residential land is categorised in three classes (four in colonial times). Class 1 corresponds to affluent areas with large plots, Class 2 to a middle-class group and Class 3 to low-income groups. This housing system was inherited from the British colonial administration, which used it as a form of social segregation, whereby the poorest were kept on the outskirts of the city. This is particularly apparent in Port Sudan, one of the few towns in Sudan designed and planned from the beginning, where the four residential areas were drawn up along strict ethnic and occupational lines (Forman, 1992; Pantuliano, 2000).

The abolition of fourth-grade housing in 1957 (the year after independence) meant that people living in areas reclassified

as 'three' had to be able to build houses according to Class 3 specifications (e.g. with permanent materials) in order to keep their plot. Construction on Class 3 plots technically has to take place within one year. The short period allowed for construction makes it difficult for the urban poor to acquire ownership of tenure over their plot, as most cannot afford to upgrade their houses in such a short time, and can potentially open people up to the risk of expropriation if construction does not take place within the statutory time. The rule is however very rarely upheld by the authorities. The short duration of the land lease for Class 3 (ten years, renewable for a further ten) has generally discouraged investment by the poor, who instead often decide to keep their plots empty.[9]

The demand for urban land has consistently outstripped the availability of new residential land allocated by the government, both in the North and in the South. This has led to informal squatting on unplanned land, especially by IDPs and returnees. In the past much of this squatting was eventually regularised through the demarcation or registration of unplanned areas, usually a few years after the squatters' arrival. This continues to some extent in Port Sudan and Nyala, although the Ministry of Physical Planning and Public Utilities (MPPPU) is overwhelmed by the increased demand for urban land, especially in Nyala. In Khartoum, the government's replanning efforts have led to the forcible removal of people living in informal settlements, followed by the demolition of their houses by the security forces. In some cases squatters settle on land belonging to either private or public entities and are therefore evacuated by the authorities to free up the land again. In other cases local authorities sell land plots in newly demarcated areas, relocating the occupants if they are unable to pay for it. It is estimated that more than half of the urban poor living in planned or unplanned camps have moved or been forced to move at least once since their arrival in Khartoum, and some up to 3 times as a result of government relocations. A 2008 study in Khartoum reported that, of 212 respondents who had been forced to move, 30% had to do so because they could not afford to pay the rent (Jacobsen, 2008).

Evictions, housing demolitions and relocations of IDP communities in Khartoum peaked in the last phases of the CPA negotiations. Of the estimated 665,000 IDPs forcibly relocated since 1989, more than half were moved after 2004 (Jacobsen, 2008). The intensification of the relocations prompted the UN to advocate with the government for the adoption of specific guidelines on relocations. The Guiding Principles on Relocation (GPR), co-signed in April 2007 by the government of Khartoum State and the United Nations, reaffirmed the commitment of the State government to respect international laws and standards in the demolition and replanning of squatter settlements and IDP areas in Khartoum. Since the signing of the GPR there have been improvements in the process of urban

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9 The timing restrictions seem particularly unfair when compared to those that apply to upper-income groups, who have respectively 30- (Class 2, renewable for another 20) or 50-year (Class 1, renewable for another 30) land leases.

replanning and land allocation: the authorities have notified residents ahead of scheduled relocations and have largely refrained from the use of force (UNHCR, 2009); demolition of existing public infrastructure, such as schools and religious buildings, has been avoided and community involvement in the replanning process has increased. Despite these welcome improvements, relocations still have a significant adverse impact on the populations involved. This is mainly because resettlement areas are usually located on the very edge of the city, with the result that relocated people lose access to jobs, markets, services and social networks, or have to pay exorbitant amounts for transport. Our study indicates that people relocated from Soba to El Fatih spent an average of 20–40% of their daily income on transport,[10] with a staggering 95% of the population commuting for work. This has led to a growing trend whereby men stay in Khartoum during the week and return to the periphery only at the weekends. Many of those who have relocated to distant parts of the city also return to their original squatter areas to access services and livelihood activities within their pre-existing networks.

The relocations in Khartoum have generally been part of a process of replanning guided by the successive master plans developed since independence. As we saw in Chapter 2, a top-down master plan is also driving replanning in Juba. The plan, developed by JICA, was drawn up without taking into account current settlement patterns and again proposes the relocation of people in overcrowded settlements to the periphery (USAID, 2007). The CES Ministry of Physical Infrastructure (MPI) indicated that half of the population of Juba would need to be relocated or compensated to implement the JICA plan (Pantuliano et al., 2008). Forcible evictions have also been carried out. Demolitions of informal settlements took place in January 2009. People were given a notice period of seven days to vacate their plots. While the South Sudan Relief and

Rehabilitation Commission (SSRRC) estimated that, between January and May 2009, 27,800 people were affected by the demolitions (UN Demolition Taskforce Meeting, 2009), United Nations Missions in Sudan (UNMIS) officials suggest that an additional 30,000–40,000 people were displaced between March and June (Deng, 2010). International Rescue Committee (IRC) Monitoring Reports found that a surprisingly large number of people supported the objectives of the demolitions, such as opening up roads for police patrols or ambulances (IRC, 2009), but the way that the demolitions were carried out alienated many. People were given late or incorrect information about which homes were to be demolished, making it impossible for them to save their belongings from the bulldozer.

The intensification of the relocations in Khartoum has been linked to the significant increase in the commercial value of the land on which IDP camps and squatter settlements are located (De Geoffroy, 2007). Similar trends appear to be at work in other cities as well. Table 1 sets out the often staggering increases in residential and commercial land prices in Khartoum, Nyala and Juba over the last two decades or so.

In Nyala the HAC has been offering IDPs in some areas residential plots since 2008, but they have to construct their own houses and are only given temporary documentation with the promise that, if they are still on the plot in two years' time, they will be given a lease of 50 years. However, in order to receive a residential plot, a household has to give up its IDP status (including its ration card for general food distributions), although there is no indication that services will be provided to them by the government.[11] This *ad hoc* policy is strongly disliked by many IDPs, not least because it runs parallel to the normal procedures for allocating residential land, raising suspicions about the political motivations behind the policy; indeed, a special committee has been appointed by the *Wali*'s

Table 1: Increase in residential and commercial land prices in Khartoum, Nyala and Juba: examples from selected neighbourhoods

Khartoum			
Neighbourhood	**Residential land prices during early 1990s**	**Residential land prices today**	**Percent rise**
Haj Yusuf	SDG 100 ($40)	SDG 30,000 ($12,500)	29,900%
Nyala			
Neighbourhood	**Residential land prices in 2002**	**Residential land prices today**	**Percent rise**
Direij	SDG 750 ($310)	SDG 1,500 ($620)	100%
Hai Al Matar	SDG 15,000 ($6,200)	SDG 150,000 ($62,500)	900%
Juba			
Neighbourhood	**Commercial land prices in 2004**	**Residential land prices today**	**Percent rise**
Gudele Block 9	SDG 3,000 ($1,250)	SDG 25,000 ($10,400)	733%

10 The bus fare for a return trip from El Fatih to El Salama (their previous location and also the site of their livelihood base) via Sabreen and Khartoum centre is SDG 4.20 ($1.75).

11 The track record for government services to newly settled IDPs is not good. For example, the drought-displaced who were given land in the Direij area of Nyala in the early 1990s still have not received the full complement of services.

office to organise the process.[12] The process also offers little security of tenure.

Tenure is equally insecure for most IDPs and other migrants in Khartoum, many of whom welcome urban planning decisions as they hope to be able to finally own land through plot allocations in relocation areas. As Box 2 illustrates, the process of acquiring land in Khartoum is however costly, cumbersome and unclear.

In Juba, the process of acquiring land is even lengthier and more challenging. Land in the municipality can be purchased or acquired through the official land allocation system of the MPI, while in peri-urban Juba land is still governed by customary law and a plot may be obtained through discussions with the traditional authorities and the local community. The capacity for land administration in Juba is low and people have to wait up to three years for an official surveyor to inspect plots and transfer ownership between individuals, as trained personnel to survey and gazette land in urban areas are scarce (Deng, 2010). Few individuals can afford to pay current commercial land prices.

Acquiring land through the official government allocation procedure is equally expensive and long-winded. CES officials reported having a list of 20,000 applications for land but new demarcations are proceeding slowly and the process is currently suspended because squatters are occupying newly demarcated areas and because of a dispute between the GoSS and CES over the location of the Land Registry. Officially, those who have waited for land for some time, those whose homes have been recently demolished and those with proven long-term residence in an area which has been officially demarcated are given priority. In practice, however, the process is highly untransparent and corruption is rampant. New land is allegedly given to the highest bidder or to well-connected and powerful individuals. The newly demarcated area of Durupi was initially meant for people whose houses had been recently demolished, but most of the 30,000 plots were allegedly given to ministers and MPs.

The legal vacuum and the lack of transparency surrounding land administration and allocation in Juba have encouraged corruption. Many interviewees pointed to corrupt networks of powerful people with connections and money, with government officials and chiefs increasingly controlling access to land in the peri-urban perimeter of the town. Communities cite many examples of chiefs collaborating with corrupt government officials to sell community land to foreign investors or rich locals without their knowledge. In Rajaf *payam* people complained that powerful individuals often negotiate access to large pieces of land directly with the chiefs. Chiefs on the other hand allege that community members themselves pretend ownership and sell land that they have no right to.

Box 2: Acquiring land in Khartoum: a costly and cumbersome process

The issue of land eligibility is ambiguous and closely connected with the official status of IDPs and other migrants. The government only deems eligible for a plot people registered as IDPs up to 1997 who have received an official document from the government called a *dibaja* ('token' or 'badge'), which serves as proof of residence and land entitlement. Eligibility is predicated on the ability to provide official documents including a Nationality Certificate, birth certificates for dependants, a marriage certificate or a death certificate (in the case of widows inheriting their husband's entitlement to land or children inheriting from their parents). However, most IDPs are unable to provide these documents and the procedure for obtaining them in Khartoum is lengthy and expensive.

Those in possession of a *dibaja* and with all official documents can participate in a lottery organised by the MPPPU, the administrative fees for which amount to a total of SDG 461 ($190). Other fees have to be paid to obtain the official deed from the MPPPU (reportedly SDG 1,200–1,500 or $500–$625, though interviewees quoted an average of SDG 3,000 or $1,250). Once the lottery has taken place, plots of about 220m² are demarcated by MPPPU engineers, who then give the family a certificate called the *shihadat misaha* (surveying certificate). In addition to the administrative costs attached to obtaining land, relocated families also have to shoulder all the costs for the construction of the building on the new plot. UN-Habitat estimates that more than 300,000 land plots have been allocated in the last 50 years in Khartoum, with more than 270,000 going to residents of IDP and squatter areas (Murillo et al., 2008).[13] However, some 50% of these plots are uninhabited, largely because people cannot afford to build on them (*ibid.*). People who have received a *shihadat misaha* often try to build something on the land, even if it is only a *rakuba* – a shelter made of branches, plastic sheets and cardboard – or a fence, to prevent the plot from being illegally occupied by others.

In this way plots of land are sold out four or five times with forged land titles. Officials in the MPI are also reported to be selling out empty spaces reserved for services within the town to the highest bidder. Land-grabbing has become an increasingly well-organised and institutionalised activity in high-value first-class areas such as Tong Ping.

Allegations of corruption within the land allocation process are also frequent in Khartoum. In 2001 the Commissioner of Omdurman stopped the land allocation process in Salha because of irregularities, mainly duplications of land sales, and there are reports of deeds being misappropriated by Popular Committees and Land Office officials in El-Fatih and Mandela. Misappropriations are made easier by the fact that people often sell their *shihadat misaha* or even the *dibaja*, a trend accelerated

12 The *shuyukh* in Es Sereif camp have rejected the offer of residential plots from the HAC, stating that any process must be organised through the MPPPU, and that it is unacceptable to ask them to give up their ration cards.

13 Other analysts consider this figure an underestimate and put the number of plots allocated in the last 50 years at 1.2m (Bannaga, pers. comm.).

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by the return of IDPs to the South following the signing of the CPA. Only those whose name is on the original documents can finalise land transactions and obtain a deed. This means that those who have purchased a *shihadat misaha* or a *dibaja* from someone else have to track down the original owners to act on their behalf. Another complicating factor for Southerners is that Christian names are often wrongly transliterated into Arabic on the *dibaja* or the *shihadat misaha*, leading to disputes over the validity of the document. The government has however been trying to facilitate access to plots for Southerners post the CPA, in a bid to discourage their return to the South. Special Mobile Nationality Teams were reportedly put in place ahead of the elections to speed up the process of acquiring ID cards for IDPs. The promise of land and Sudanese nationality was apparently repeatedly made ahead of elections in May. Many Southerners indicated that the promise of a plot of land is a strong incentive for them to stay in Khartoum, especially given the obstacles to accessing new land in Juba, or even ancestral land in some rural parts of the South and the Three Areas.[14]

7. Basic services and urban infrastructure

The enormous pressures that rapid and often uncontrolled population growth is putting on the services and infrastructure of Sudan's urban centres, together with the severe financial constraints faced by localities, are producing severe negative impacts on basic services. This finding runs counter to widespread assumptions that the urban poor have better access to basic services and infrastructure than their counterparts in rural areas. The poorest and most vulnerable segments of the population in Nyala, Khartoum, Port Sudan and Juba are disproportionately affected by the widespread inefficiencies that afflict public services. Health, education, water and sanitation facilities and infrastructure are failing to keep pace with rising demand, driven by the rapid acceleration of population growth in urban areas. For example, primary school classes in all four cities are severely overcrowded. In Nyala some classes host up to 100 students, and in some areas of Juba and Khartoum the figures are as high as 140. In Sharg Alneel, one of the poorest localities of Khartoum State, there is one doctor for every 26,000 people. Covering only 10,000 customers, the piped water network in Nyala is woefully inadequate to address the needs of the rapidly growing urban population. Lack of or poor access to water is a particularly acute problem for Port Sudan's residents, where the network system covers only a quarter of the city.

In all cities, state service delivery systems suffer from poor technical, administrative and funding capacity. In Sudan this appears to be linked to the fact that, although responsibility for delivering basic services has long been decentralised, budget management and allocations are controlled by the federal state. In the absence of any meaningful devolution of power and resources, municipal localities find it very difficult to act

14 Interview with manager of Western Soba Unite.

as effective service providers. Some Khartoum localities end up receiving as little as 25% of the already inadequate funds allocated by the Ministry of Health (MoH). Nyala suffers from inadequate funding from the federal government and at state level, where security issues are prioritised over service provision and urban infrastructure in the allocation of state funds. Public services in Nyala are therefore heavily dependent on localities' ability to raise adequate revenues. In Port Sudan, the limited financial resource base at municipal level is one reason for low investment in basic services and urban infrastructure in the areas of the city where the most vulnerable and needy live.

Adequate access to clean, safe water is one of the most serious problems faced by poor urban households. According to the Nyala Water Corporation the piped water network in Nyala is contaminated by asbestos, while the bacteria count in drinking water from all sources is above recommended levels (Abdelrahman and Eltahir, 2010). Similarly, poor cleaning and disinfection of Port Sudan's water network carries high risks of water contamination. In Nyala, newly rehabilitated public schools are affected by water and electricity supply problems and lack basic infrastructure, such as walls around the school compound. In Juba only the inner areas of town and Kator are covered by the piped network. The majority of urban poor therefore rely on boreholes or mobile water tanks.

The lack of qualified and skilled teachers was cited as a particularly acute problem in poor neighbourhoods. In Port Sudan qualified teachers prefer to work in better-off areas of the city, where they can earn higher salaries. Khartoum's schools are also short of teachers, largely because state budgets are inadequate to finance teachers' salaries. The deterioration of secondary education in Nyala during the conflict is leading many better-off households to move their entire family from Nyala to Khartoum when their children reach secondary level.

The poorest and most vulnerable living in the urban centres that were the focus of this study also face significant financial barriers to accessing basic services. Because of severe funding shortfalls in localities' budgets, some of the costs that should be covered by the state are passed onto service users in the form of user fees. Thus, while primary healthcare and education services should be free, in reality they are not. In all four cities the costs of school furniture, maintenance, stationery, water supply and so on are borne by parents in the form of monthly school fees, and in Juba, Nyala and Port Sudan parents also contribute towards teachers' salaries. The indirect costs of education, such as transport and meals, are an additional burden for families in the low-income bracket, and affect children's enrolment and retention in school. For many poor urban residents these costs are simply unaffordable, and access to basic services therefore becomes a luxury few can afford. Paradoxically, the poor urban dwellers of Port Sudan, Nyala and Juba incur higher costs for accessing water than their wealthier counterparts. In Juba, buying a barrel of non-treated water in unplanned areas costs up to SDG 10 ($4), twice as much as in the town centre. In Port

Sudan, monthly household expenses for water (through private sellers on donkey carts) in the poorest neighbourhoods can reach SDG 200–300 ($85–$130), while in the better-off areas of the city water costs (in the form of a monthly connection fee to the network piping system) amount to just SDG 20 ($8.50) – a tenth of the price.

The high concentration of facilities such as health clinics, hospitals and school buildings in the city centres is acting as a geographical barrier to access for the thousands living in IDP camps, illegal settlements and squatter areas located in the outskirts of cities. In Nyala the geographical coverage of health services is concentrated in the centre of town, making access a problem for many, particularly vulnerable individuals with mobility difficulties such as the elderly and chronically ill. In Baghdad, the largest squatter settlement in Port Sudan, health facilities and primary schools are utterly absent, meaning that users need to travel elsewhere to access services, incurring often prohibitive transport costs. Similarly, in the peri-urban areas of Juba there are no government health services and patients need to be transported over long distances, sometimes by foot on makeshift stretchers, to reach the Juba Teaching Hospital in the centre of town. In this way, access to services is largely determined by location, the ability to pay direct and indirect user fees or, alternatively, the ability to pay for very expensive private services.

In response to inadequate public services, alternative non-state providers and community-based initiatives have become key in all four cities. In Nyala the health system is heavily dependent on international assistance. This mainly focuses on prevention, such as controlling cholera outbreaks and acute malnutrition. The private sector and community initiatives have stepped in to supplement inadequate government provision, particularly in the water and education sectors. In Juba international assistance is channelled to the GoSS through the MDTF to support the rehabilitation of public primary schools and teacher training, but poor financial management, procurement delays and low government capacity are hampering these efforts. In response to the widespread health and education needs of urban residents, some communities have started up their own clinics and schools. In Gumbo Rajaf *payam* in Juba, for example, the community built a clinic in 2006 out of funds generated from taxing trucks. However, a lack of resources meant that the clinic was forced to close.

8. Social and environmental consequences of urbanisation

Without doubt, rapid urbanisation is having a profound effect on social and cultural norms and behaviour, and on the environment. In addition, whilst urbanisation has created opportunities, it has also compounded existing vulnerabilities and exposed people to new threats, including natural disasters, environmental disasters and violence and further conflict.

As in many other contexts, urbanisation is resulting in fundamental changes in Sudanese society, to both positive and negative effect. This is playing out differently in each of the four cities covered in this study, though there are common themes, related to security, gender relations and the family, community leadership and social cohesion.

Insecurity, related to conflict or political unrest, rising crime and persistently weak rule of law, is a primary concern in each of the four cities. In Juba in particular, levels of violent crime have risen significantly as a result of high levels of poverty and unemployment, weak law enforcement and the proliferation of small arms. In Nyala, a pervading sense of fear linked to conflict-related violence and generalised crime discourages residents of all strata from leaving their homes at night. In Port Sudan and Khartoum, crime and insecurity in the poorest neighbourhoods, though not on the same levels as in Juba and Nyala, are also major concerns. In the capital this is set against the wider political backdrop of a highly fragile peace process and the imminent referendum.

Rising crime rates and violence do not appear to have an ethnic dimension. Ethnic violence has a long history in Sudan, but in each of the cities studied any pre-existing tensions between ethnic groups, displaced and home communities or returnees and those who had remained appears to have been superseded by the common threats and challenges facing all urban poor, whatever their ethnicity. Indeed, in Juba respondents noted that the diversity of ethnic backgrounds was facilitating greater social freedom and that different groups were learning from each other; similar feelings of solidarity were expressed by respondents in Nyala and Khartoum. Rather, tensions relate to wealth and economic status – the lives of the rising elite in the capital and other cities compare starkly with the experiences of the vast numbers of urban poor. Poor communities in Khartoum in particular complained that the realities of urban life were exacting a psychological and emotional toll and generating resentment against wealthier residents.

Many of the urban poor also expressed frustration with what they considered a lack of any tangible improvement in their daily lives stemming from peace agreements and related initiatives. These high levels of frustration, depression and anxiety, combined with changes in family and community structures, render this vast population vulnerable to political and criminal exploitation. Given the uncertainty of the post-referendum period, and weak governance and rule of law throughout the country, the threat of political exploitation is serious. The potential consequences for the urban poor, and the rest of the country, of any upsurge in political violence would be severe.

This raises concerns for long-term security and stability. The impact of political, economic and social marginalisation is already evident amongst urban youth, with a growing and often violent gang culture in Juba and Khartoum linked to widespread unemployment, the disintegration of family and community

structures and a general feeling of disenfranchisement. Many youth expressed a desire to stay in urban areas based on an expectation that this would present greater access to educational, social and economic opportunities, but the reality has not matched their expectations. Respondents in Juba stated that the rise of gang culture was linked to feelings of insecurity, the lack of protection provided by the state and lack of employment opportunities; conversely, gang membership gave youth a sense of social inclusion and belonging.

The disintegration of family structures through divorce or abandonment, or through multi-nodal family strategies aimed at maintaining access to areas of origin as well as services in cities, has had a major impact on children. In all the cities considered in this study there has been a significant rise in the number of children living on the streets, in child labour and in the sexual and other exploitation of children. High levels of poverty and inadequate basic services such as health and education are all having a significant impact on children's physical, mental and social development.

Rapid urbanisation has also affected gender relations. For many women and girls, the transition from rural to urban life has presented exciting opportunities for education, employment and social mobility – often resulting in a greater say in their families and communities. However, in some cases these greater responsibilities have affected the relationship between husband and wife, and altered family structures. Men and male youth respondents reported feeling under enormous pressure to perform their traditional dominant role in society given the new status of women and the lack of traditional 'masculine' livelihood opportunities. In Juba, this appears to have been exacerbated by poor gender analysis underpinning international assistance strategies, which have sought to empower women without considering the impact on men. Although the new opportunities for women in Sudan are clearly a positive development, changes in gender relations have contributed to an increase in divorce rates, the abandonment of women and children and the disintegration of family structures.

It is also important to note that some of the traditional areas of gender discrimination and female vulnerability remain as problematic as ever. Women are not entitled to register ownership of land, for example, and many female-headed households have been rendered landless and homeless. Women and girls, particularly those who find themselves alone, are extremely vulnerable to sexual exploitation, including commercial sex work, or are forced into illegal or risky livelihoods such as alcohol brewing and domestic labour. Although no reliable data is available on the prevalence of HIV/AIDS in Sudan, risky sexual behaviour, together with acute levels of deprivation, marginalisation and lack of access to basic health and other services, compound the risk of HIV infection.

The environmental effects of rapid urbanisation have also been severe. Recent rapid economic development is transforming cities throughout the country, but this development, combined with rapid urbanisation, is having a major detrimental effect on the environment, depleting forests and impacting upon air, water and soil quality. Deforestation is a priority concern in all of the cities covered in this study. The brick-making industry, firewood and charcoal-making for personal consumption and as an income source and the need to clear land for settlement are key drivers of deforestation, in Juba and Nyala in particular. The construction boom in Nyala, which is closely associated with the large international presence, has resulted in a doubling of the number of brick kilns during the conflict years. Identified as a major cause of deforestation, UNEP (2008) estimates that at least 52,000 trees were needed in 2008 just to fuel the brick kilns around Geneina, Zalingei and El Fasher, let alone Nyala. UNEP (2007) has estimated that, in Southern Sudan, 40% of forest resources had been depleted by 2006, with the rate of deforestation highest around urban areas, in particular Juba.

Poor water quality and soil contamination in each of the cities studied is related to inadequate solid waste management, the lack of sanitation systems and infrastructure and the dumping of industrial waste. Air pollution was also a concern, due to high levels of traffic and the use of charcoal-burning stoves and furnaces. The impact on the physical environment has a major knock-on effect on public health, as well as on the use of land for agriculture and other industries. Although environmental degradation presents a major problem for all urban residents, it is the urban poor, those who reside at the edges of the cities in areas where waste dumping and environmental damage is most prevalent, who are most affected. The negative impact on the environment of industrial development and rapid urbanisation is compounded by the failure to enforce existing environmental protection legislation. Government institutions responsible for environmental protection lack capacity, and there is a general lack of awareness in the government, and amongst the population at large, of the long-term impact of environmental damage.

The threat of flooding, including flash floods, is particularly high for poor urban populations residing on marginal, flood-prone land on the edge of cities. This is a particularly acute risk in Khartoum and Nyala, which regularly experience devastating floods. In 2009, floods in Khartoum caused extensive damage in squatter areas and informal settlements; approximately 12,000 houses were destroyed in Soba Aradi alone (UNEP, 2007). Flooding also has a major impact on health as pools of stagnant water, coupled with the poor sanitation environment, lead to regular outbreaks of waterborne and other diseases such as cholera.

9. International assistance

The international community has a long history of providing humanitarian and development assistance to Sudan. However, to date this has focused almost exclusively on rural communities. There have been limited interventions

in urban contexts, most of which have been humanitarian, targeting IDPs during and after periods of displacement. There has, however, been some international aid investment in urban infrastructure, for example in new hospitals in Nyala and Khartoum. Much of this has been provided by non-DAC donors such as China and Turkey. JICA, UNDP and UN-Habitat have also supported urban planning in Juba. What has been lacking, however, has been a more holistic understanding and analysis on the part of the international aid community of the extent and nature of urban poverty and urban development.

Apart from the current focus on IDPs in Nyala, there is in fact little awareness of the acute vulnerabilities prevalent amongst the urban poor, or of the enormous challenges they face in simply accessing basic services, seeking employment and attaining even a minimum standard of living. Apart from IDPs, there appears to have been a pervading assumption that those who are residing in the cities are 'alright'; that they have greater access to basic services, are benefiting from economic development and increased livelihood opportunities and enjoy greater security than those who have remained in rural areas. This study challenges that assumption. Given the high concentration of international actors in Juba and Khartoum in particular, this lack of attention to the desperate plight of hundreds of thousands of the poorest people in Sudan is extraordinary.

In Khartoum, international engagement, including by the UN, is focused on advocacy relating to the forced relocation of IDP communities, contingency planning for the annual rainy season and the floods which hit the peripheries of the city each year and contingency planning for the forthcoming referendum, as well as some smaller-scale micro-finance and vocational training programmes. In Nyala, international support specifically targets IDPs residing in camps on the edge of the city, and is predominantly humanitarian in nature. International actors have been slow to engage with longer-term trends including urbanisation, though there are signs that this may be changing.[15]

In Juba, although there has been significant engagement in urban planning, this has not sought to address the priority needs of the urban poor. Micro-finance initiatives in Juba are extensive, but access is problematic and their commercial viability is not always evident. In Port Sudan, international assistance is almost exclusively focused outside the city. Most international actors have simply failed to keep pace with the implications of changing settlement patterns. In the North this is exacerbated by the limited availability of development aid from DAC donors. The expulsion of international NGOs in March 2009 has further weakened international aid capacity and reduced coverage.

This study provides evidence of the widespread and acute vulnerabilities prevalent amongst the urban poor. There is

15 A recent document (UN Sudan, 2010) setting out priorities for the UN in Darfur highlights urbanisation as one of the demographic shifts that UN agencies must engage with, and identifies support to urban livelihoods as a priority.

a clear need for the international community to develop interventions that can provide the necessary technical, financial and programmatic support that the authorities and communities require. Whatever the outcome of the forthcoming referendum, it is clear from this study that urbanisation is a fact of life in Sudan. As such, international engagement in urban contexts, aimed at supporting resident communities, displaced communities and returnees, is needed now, and in the long term. There are opportunities to learn from the small portfolio of aid-supported urban interventions, whether micro-finance initiatives, support to vocational training and the private sector, urban planning or investment in urban infrastructure.

Aside from aid programmes in urban areas, it is important to recognise the wider role that the international aid industry has played in the urbanisation process. The rapid expansion in the number of international humanitarian and development actors in Nyala, Juba and to an extent in Khartoum has had a major impact on local economies and markets, on livelihood opportunities and on infrastructure. The massive presence of agencies in Nyala and Juba in particular may offer economic opportunities, particularly employment, but it has also distorted local markets and put pressure on already inadequate service infrastructure. It may also have raised unrealistic and unsustainable salary expectations, and it has certainly vastly inflated commercial and residential property prices.

The primary responsibility for the welfare of the Sudanese people lies with the government of Sudan. Far more investment is required in infrastructure, basic services, livelihoods, rule of law and governance, to address the immediate needs of the urban poor, and their social, political and economic marginalisation. However, as echoed by government respondents, given the scale of the challenges inherent in rapid urbanisation in Sudan, international engagement in terms of technical assistance, funding and programmatic interventions is crucial.

10. Conclusions and recommendations

Rapid urbanisation has been underway in Sudan for several decades, and the desire to leave traditional rural ways of life in search of urban opportunity is now an established trend. For at least the past three decades conflict and drought have forced rural populations to seek refuge in towns. For many years there has been a general assumption within the government and the international community that those who make it to the cities are 'alright'. The findings of this study do not support this assumption. Rather, it is evident that, whatever their reason for leaving rural areas, the urban poor are living in abject poverty, and are vulnerable to a range of daily threats to their physical and mental wellbeing. Indeed, in relation to security, economic development and livelihoods, basic services, land and social development, the urban poor are consistently disadvantaged in the urbanisation process, with minimal access to the positive opportunities

that urbanisation can present and maximum exposure to the negative consequences of this process.

To date, the national strategic response to urbanisation has been weak. While attempts at urban development planning at national and state levels are welcome and may have long-term benefits, these plans have often had immediate negative repercussions on the livelihoods and survival strategies of a large number of urban poor. In addition, policy relating to IDPs – who represent a significant percentage of the urban poor – has been driven more by security concerns than by need. Crucially, such polices have also failed to take into account the positive contribution that displaced populations can make to long-term peace and stability. Even at state level, where some efforts have been made to consider the consequences of dramatic changes in settlement patterns, urban planning processes have been unrealistic and non-participatory. The various levels of government are frequently at odds and financial investment has been woefully inadequate. Political decentralisation does not appear to have translated into effective fiscal decentralisation, particularly in relation to service provision and urban infrastructure. Localities are unable to invest in existing basic services, let alone extend services to new and expanding areas. Consequently, where services are available to the urban poor they are irregular, exorbitantly expensive and often of poor quality. The urban poor are, in both real terms and proportionately, paying more for worse services than better-off urban households.

The national economic boom of recent years has had a transformative impact on Sudan's main urban centres. Cities are opening up to greater regional and international trade, and there has been a major boom in real estate, supported by international investment. Rapid economic development, however, has not resulted in major economic or social benefits for the urban poor. Economic power has remained predominantly in the hands of an emerging economic, social and political elite, while the urban poor have become dependent on informal and even illegal livelihoods. A dual economy has developed in each of the four cities in this study, and inequality is deepening. Ways for the urban poor to participate in economic growth must be found, for reasons of equity as well as long-term stability.

Access to land has been a major factor in urbanisation across the country, and has had a critical impact on the vulnerability of the poorest city dwellers. As the value of land in urban areas has increased exponentially due to industrial development, the real-estate boom, population growth and the international presence in Nyala and Juba, the urban poor have been pushed further and further from the centre towards the peripheries of each city, away from services and jobs. Accessing land even in these outlying low-value areas is a costly, cumbersome and unclear process. Most of the urban poor are effectively excluded from land ownership.

Urbanisation has also had a major impact on social norms and behaviour, changing the way that families and communities are defined. There has been surprisingly little tension between ethnic groups, and urbanisation processes have in some cases resulted in more opportunities for women and have enhanced their status in society. At the same time, however, increasing economic and social pressures have also resulted in the breakdown of family structures, with a rise in divorce rates and abandonment of women and children and a growing gang culture among disaffected young people. Combined with high levels of insecurity, including conflict, rising crime, political unrest and weak rule of law, these processes expose the poorest and most vulnerable to serious risks of exploitation and abuse. The acute vulnerabilities of much of the urban poor in Sudan, and their frustration, desperation and disaffection, potentially have major political and social consequences for Sudan's long-term peace and stability.

Despite exponential urban growth over the past few decades, current international humanitarian and development approaches are not yet geared to respond to urbanisation's challenges, or capitalise on the opportunities it presents. The predominant focus and mode of international aid is still rural- rather than urban-based. As a result, the urban poor in Sudan have been effectively left to fend for themselves – largely forgotten by the government and the international community alike. In response, they have shown great strength, resilience and creativity, initiating their own credit transfer systems, creating civil society organisations to support service provision and drawing on traditional governance systems to resolve disputes and support social cohesion. However, extraordinary as these efforts are, they cannot address the fundamental challenges that urbanisation has presented. A major shift is needed in the approach of the federal and state governments, as well as the international community.

Recommendations

Government authorities
- The government (federal, GoSS and state) must acknow- ledge that rapid urbanisation is taking place, and develop appropriate and inclusive federal, national and state strate- gies that capitalise on the economic and development oppor- tunities that this growth offers, and address the challenges that are presented in this process, including the fate of displaced populations and overwhelming urban poverty.
- A different approach to urban planning is needed, one that is participatory and consultative, based on a realistic projection of urban growth and costs and which challenges the legacy of the colonial system of land zoning in favour of more compact settlement patterns. Support is also needed for the effective provision of services and urban infrastructure. Developing a Master Plan for Port Sudan is an urgent priority.
- Increased financial investment at all levels of government is essential to upgrade existing services and infrastructure, and to facilitate the expansion of services to new and

informal areas. Greater allocations from central/state budgets and work to minimise delays in transfers to localities would be a significant step forward in this regard. The principle of equitable access to basic services should underpin such efforts.

- Greater investment in central and state-level capacities for environmental protection is required to support existing environmental protection legislation and policy. This should be coupled with more effective public information on the long-term impact of environmental damage on economic growth, public health, housing and land.

- A coherent strategy for addressing urban poverty should be formulated for both Northern and Southern Sudan, with particular attention to urban–rural linkages. This should address the provision of start-up capital and loans for poor households, made available in a form that is accessible to households engaged in the informal sector. Improved and expanded vocational training would increase local labour skills and support key growth sectors of the economy; this would also help to integrate the displaced into the urban economy by upgrading their skills.

- The adoption of the GPR in Khartoum State has shown the potential to improve urban replanning in line with international standards and to reduce tensions between the authorities and affected communities. Lessons must be learned from this experience for the benefit of other Sudanese towns and to address current shortcomings in the implementation of the GPR in Khartoum.

- In line with international legal obligations, the government should ensure that refugees are granted freedom of movement throughout the country. This requires the provision of documentation guaranteeing this right. Legislative measures supporting refugees' rights to work, including amendments to the 2008 Labour Decree, must also be taken.

International humanitarian and development organisations
- The international community must abandon the assumption that the urban poor in Sudan's largest cities are necessarily better off than poor people elsewhere in the country. The long-term large-scale development and shorter-term humanitarian needs highlighted in this study require the urgent support of, and coordination between, humanitarian and development organisations. The offices of the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator must be strengthened to lead these efforts.

- Greater engagement with the authorities is required to support more effective national and state urban development strategies, including the provision of technical, financial and policy support. Such efforts should be part of a long-term strategy to help strengthen federal and state governance. Specialised UN agencies, in particular UN-Habitat, UNDP and UNHCR, should ensure that their expertise and capacity is available to federal, GoSS and state authorities. UNESCO may also have a role to play in addressing issues of cultural heritage with regard to town centres.

- The vital role that civil society organisations have played during the past decades should be recognised. With help from international donors, specialised UN agencies and INGOs should make financial support and capacity-building to civil society organisations a priority, and should ensure greater engagement of civil society organisations in the design and implementation of international programmes and strategies in urban centres.

- Targeted livelihoods support, based on an in-depth analysis of the needs, risks and vulnerabilities of the various urban groups, is necessary to help address the economic, social and protection needs of the urban poor.

- Ways of supporting and strengthening the private sector should also be explored. In collaboration with the government and civil society organisations, international NGOs could support more livelihoods activities, for instance through cash for work programmes. Supporting small business development may be one of the best ways to reach the urban poor.

International donors
- International donors must acknowledge the precarious situation of Sudan's urban poor. Greater strategic and financial support should be provided to state and municipal authorities to address the humanitarian and long-term developmental needs of urban populations. This demands closer dialogue between donor agencies and the government at all levels.

- Jointly with local and international NGOs, donors should develop a coordinated advocacy strategy highlighting the need to address urbanisation in national and state development strategies. DFID should consider leading this.

- Financial and technical support for the creation or revision of urban development plans should be made available to government authorities. This support should be part of a long-term strategy to help strengthen federal and state governance to provide improved services and livelihoods opportunities for the urban poor.

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Annex 1
Adapted livelihoods framework

A livelihoods analytical framework for understanding the totality of people's livelihoods
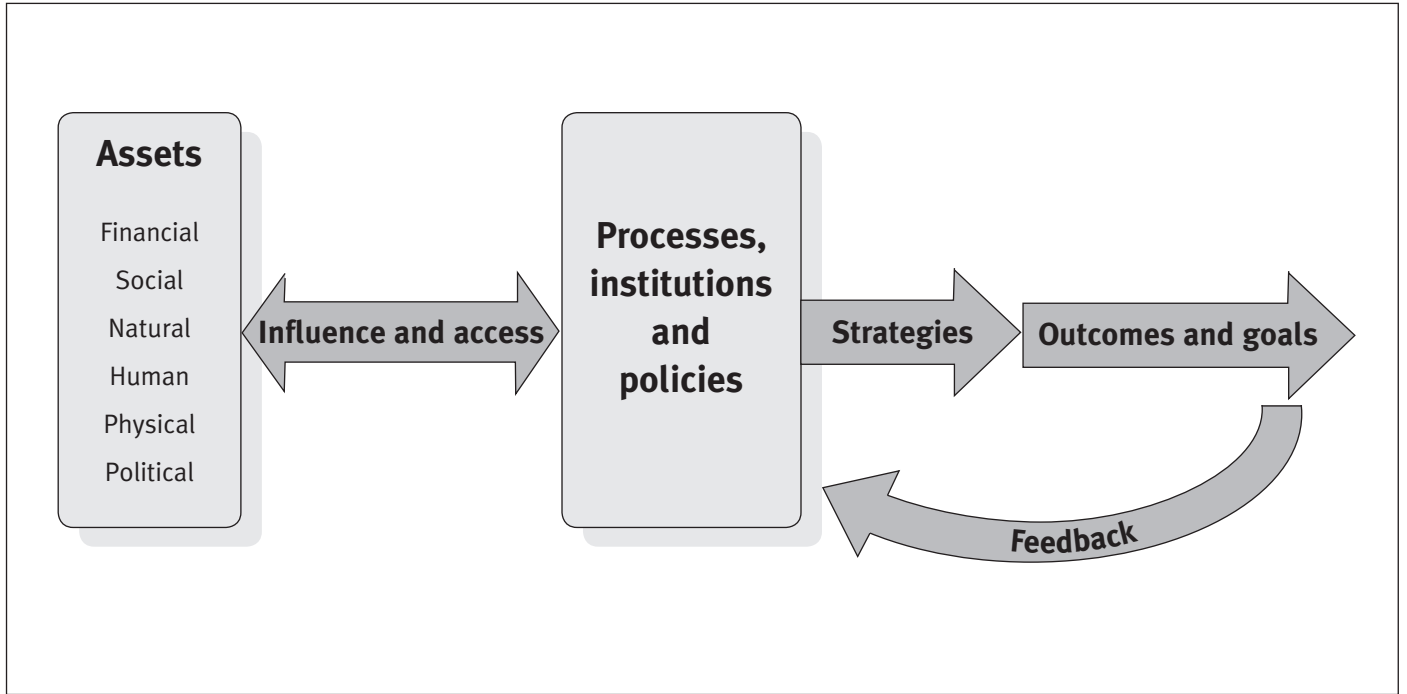
Source: Lautze and Raven-Roberts, 2009.

Annex 2
A brief history of Khartoum, Juba, Nyala and Port Sudan

City	Origins	Brief history	Current population
Khartoum	1821 – outpost for Egyptian army and regional trading post National capital since 1899	• Comprises 3 cities: Khartoum (commercial hub); Bahri (industrial centre); Omdurman (historic centre and agricultural links) • Migration to Khartoum used to be seasonal. Since the 1970s it has become more permanent • *Pull factors* – economic growth and education opportunities in first half of 20th century • *Push factors* – drought migration early 1970s and mid-1980s; refugees 1980s; massive conflict displacement since 1980s	5–6 million
Juba	1920s – military base and trading outpost Capital of Southern Sudan since 1956	• *Pull factors* – economic growth and employment opportunities 1970s and early 1980s; prospect of better services, economic growth and security since the signing of the CPA in 2005 • *Push factors* – conflict displacement since mid-1950s, especially early 1990s–2005; continued insecurity in rural areas since signing of CPA • Influx of immigrants due to business opportunities since signing of the CPA	Approx 500,000–600,000
Nyala	First settlement in 1880	• Evolved from a nomadic camp in 1920s to become an administrative and service centre in 1930s • *Pull factors* – construction of railway attracting increased commercial activity 1950s to 1970s; trade with neighbouring countries including Libya and Central African Republic • *Push factors* – drought migration early 1970s and mid-1980s; massive conflict displacement since 2003	1.3–1.6 million (including IDPs)
Port Sudan	Founded in 1905 during Anglo-Egyptian Condominium	• Early population – trading immigrants • Beja migration began 1930s • *Pull factors* – expansion of port activities and demand for manual labour in 1960s and 1970s • *Push factors* – drought migration late 1940s, mid-1950s, early 1970s, mid-1980s, 1990s; refugee influx 1970s and 2000s; conflict displacement 1990s onwards	500,000–1 million-plus