

Sudan Country Source Book
Best Practices and Innovations
in Knowledge Management
assets, tools and approaches

SKIM

**Strengthening Knowledge Management
for Greater Development Effectiveness
in the Near East, North Africa,
Central Asia and Europe**



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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ARC - Sudan	Agricultural Research Corporation Sudan
BIRDP	Butana Integrated Rural Development Project
CCI	Community Capability Index
CCU	Central Coordination Unit
CDC	Community Development Centres
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CRC	Conflict Resolution Centre
CRCVP	Climate Resilient Community Village Plan
COSOP	Country Strategic Opportunity Programme
CP	Country Programme
FNC	Forest National Corporation
FAD	Food and Agricultural Organisation
GALS	Gender Action and Learning System
GOS	Government of Sudan
IAMDP	Integrated Agriculture and Marketing Development Project
ICARDA	International Centre for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas
ICO	In-Country Office
IDP	Internally Displaced People
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILPMP	Improving Livestock Production and Marketing Project
KM	Knowledge Management
LPG	Liquified Petroleum Gas
LR	Learning Route
LEW	Local Extension Networkers
LMRP	Livestock Marketing and Resilience Programme
LRM	Learning Route Methodology
MET	Mobile Extension Team
MFI	Micro Finance Institution
MTR	Mid Term Review
NA	Native Administration
NEN	IFAD Near East, North Africa, Europe Division
NR	Natural Resources
NRF	Natural Resource Forum

NRM	Natural Resource Management
NRGF	Natural Resource Governance Framework
NRMG	Natural Resource Management Group
NTC	National Telecommunication Corporation (NTC)
IOE	Independent Office of Evaluation
PFS	Pastoralist Field School
PROCASUR	Programme for Rural Development Training
PTA	Former Policy and Technical Advisory Division IFAD
RPA	Range and Pasture Administration
SCG	Saving and Credit Group
SCRD	Sudanese Company for Rural Development
SCU	State Coordination Units
SDP	Seed Development Project
SNLRP	Sudan Sustainable Natural Resource and Livelihoods Programme
SSTC	South-South and Triangular Cooperation
SR	Stock Routes
SUSTAIN	Supporting Small-scale Traditional Rainfed Production in Sinnar State
TOT	Train of Trainers
UN	United Nations
VDC	Village Development Committee
VSCG	Village Saving and Credit Groups
WFP	World Food Programme
WSRMP	Western Sudan Rural Management Project

Table of Measures

One sack of sorghum grain weighs approximately 90 kg

One feddan equals 1.038 acre or 0.42 has

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Background

A ICARDA-led partnership, including PROCASUR, a global not-for-profit learning organization, has been commissioned to implement an IFAD facilitated grant on ‘Strengthening Knowledge Management for Greater Development Effectiveness in the Near East, North Africa, Central Asia and Europe’. In this context, a Sudan Country Source Book with a collection of cases of ‘Best Practices and Innovations in Knowledge Management (KM) assets, tools and approaches’ is developed. The immediate use of this Source Book is to inform ICARDA Grant audiences and target groups as defined in its Collaboration Agreement with PROCASUR, March 2020. The partnership between national and international stakeholders is expected to drive forward wider and more inclusive development impacts through the development of knowledge management capacity, using the following approach [see Box 01: Approaches].

Box 01: IFAD ICARDA Grant Approaches

I. Assess current Knowledge Management (KM) systems via wide consultation and identify the knowledge gaps and opportunities for using and transferring agricultural solutions for enhanced development impact at wider scales.

II. Develop the organizational capacity of public institutions: to develop and share solutions to enhance the role of agriculture in the rural sector of country economies; transfer knowledge and innovation strategies; and measure and evaluate development efforts.

III. Facilitate South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) across Moldova, Morocco and Sudan¹, acknowledging the varied capacities and experience in knowledge creation, management, and transfer within each country and amongst them—namely of solutions, lessons learnt and scaling-up of results.

IV. Develop platforms where knowledge is collected, shared, developed, and used with measurable development outcomes on a large scale.

V. Strengthen the innovation and knowledge transfer ecosystem to enhance job opportunities for young people and vulnerable groups, by identifying specific methodologies and tools.

VI. Evaluate the impacts of the improvements made in the KM processes in partner institutions and countries.

In Sudan, the project focuses *inter alia* on developing and strengthening knowledge to increase the use of productive agricultural technologies and natural resources management to ensure effective water management techniques, drought resilience and conservation agriculture. The IFAD Sudan COSOP [Country Strategic Opportunity Programme] sets the stage for the engagement with IFAD projects² in the Sudan (including IFAD’s Sudan Knowledge Management Strategy) [see Box 02].

Box 02: The strategy of the grant in Sudan

The strategy of the proposed work is therefore directed at efficient, effective and sustainable knowledge management processes that include co-learning partnership activities involving diverse organizations and end-users. To ensure the application of agricultural and rural solutions, end-users will be involved in the process from early on in project implementation. Such inclusion fosters interactive feedback from participating stakeholders and enhances the capacity of organizations and agents to develop and utilize rural development knowledge. This work supports the inclusion of rural knowledge-based solutions and innovations that will benefit the in-country stakeholders, with a particular focus on indigenous knowledge, practical, and development experience.



¹ In the context of Sudan, the In-Country Office (ICO) staff in the IFAD NEN Division has been explicitly approached by the Ministry of Agriculture at the Federal Level to help fill that gap. In the cases of Moldova and Morocco, previous consultations were carried out with country teams who identified a strong potential for the proposed KM activities in the two countries and considered them likely to succeed.

² https://operations.ifad.org/web/ifad/operations/country/project/tags/sudan/1332/project_overview

Overarching IFAD KM Strategy

The latest IFAD KM Strategy³, May 2019, clearly defines what it takes to achieve behavioral change as the ultimate impact of a series of coherent actions in KM: better development results (see Figure 1: Theory of Change).

Figure 1. Knowledge management theory of change



³ IFAD Knowledge Management Strategy, 2019

The Sudan enabling framework and learning culture for sustainable Knowledge Management

This Sudan Country Source Book highlights the importance of an enabling framework and creating a learning culture as prerequisites for sustainable KM asset building. For the Sudan, over the last ten years, knowledge asset building was enabled by:

- I. IFAD corporate KM Framework 2014-2018 and Action Plan 2016-2018
- II. Coherent COSOPs highlighting the importance of knowledge management
- III. The presence of an IFAD staff in the country office responsible for KM
- IV. The recruitment of a KM coordinator in the CCU
- V. The establishment of a KM core group with the membership from IFAD ICO, CCU, projects, KM focal points from key line ministries, and others⁴
- VI. The elaboration of a Country Programme KM strategy 2017-2019
- VII. A number of KM-oriented grants
- VIII. Explicit attention to KM in project designs.

Sudan's three-tiered approach to KM and learning

This Sudan Country Source Book pinpoints at the wider overlap between the three tiers [see Figure 2]. Therewith it also defines the target audience of this collection of Cases of Best Practices and Innovations in KM assets, tools, and approaches.

Focused on informal and tacit learning, the prime audience is constituted by Rural Development practitioners and policy makers. As will be shown, these are supported in their uptake of KM by concerted efforts by international and national agricultural research centers, universities, and training centers.

Figure 2. **Sudan Country Programme three-tiered approach to KM and learning**



⁴ The Sudan Knowledge Management Core Group meets at regular intervals to review and finalize the annual KM plans of the respective ongoing IFAD projects, currently focusing on follow up to the 2020 KM Plans for IAMPD and LMRP. Similarly, it updates the roles of the KM Core Group, receives guidance from the CCU website developer, and updates and adjusts the Sudan Country KM Strategy to accommodate the KM objectives of bespoke projects. The meetings are chaired by the IFAD Country Programme Officer/ICO and attended by the KM Officer of the CCU, the CCU M&E Officer and project M&E Officers, Gender focal points, and NRM consultants.

The Sudan Country Source Book addresses the 5 W's and H: What, where, why, who, when and how. These questions are elaborated in the Sudan Country Programme Knowledge Management Strategy⁵.

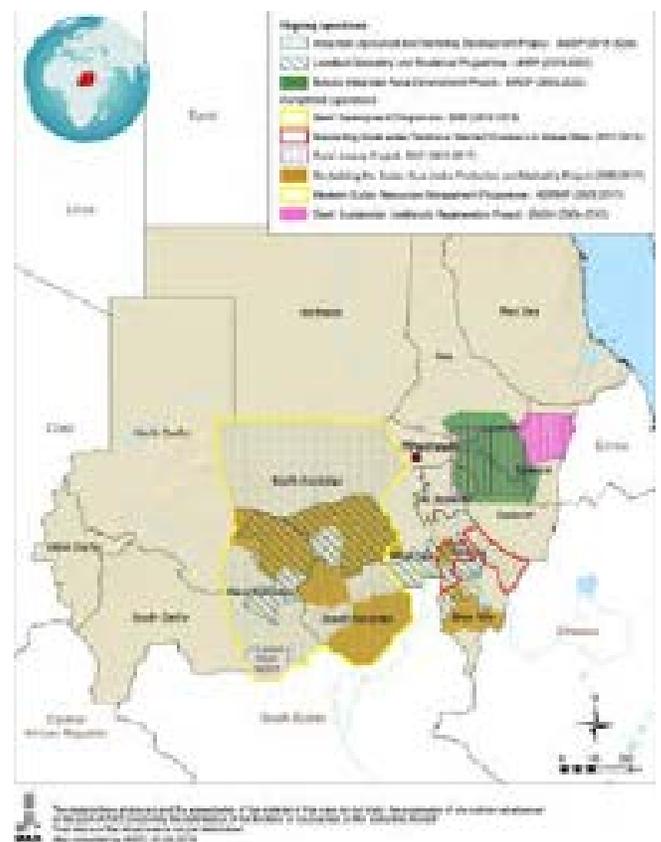
Major assets in Knowledge Management in the Sudan

The Sudan country programme has made important strides in building assets and tools for knowledge management. This is evidenced by knowledge systematization and cross-learning between the projects⁶, particularly around natural resource management and governance, and women empowerment. Collaboration with international and/or national entities, e.g. CGIAR, Agricultural Research Center (ARC), Universities or similar research and academic agencies was also mobilized.

Starting with functional monitoring and evaluation systems and corresponding capacity for critical reflection and analysis in projects, approaches to knowledge management were gradually developed. The good practices and knowledge generated are being scaled up and translated to wider institutional practices⁷, policies⁸ and their implementation.

Key tool of knowledge management in the Sudan: Learning Routes

Building on exposure to the Learning Route Methodology, an award-winning⁹ knowledge transfer method promulgated by PROCASUR, the projects¹⁰ in Sudan (see Map) were involved in over ten Learning Routes around Natural Resources Management (NRM), agricultural productivity, rural financial services, and women empowerment.



⁵ IFAD, IFAD Sudan Country Programme Knowledge Management Strategy (2017-2019), 2017. Sudan is one of the few IFAD countries with its own KM Strategy.

⁶ Case 01: Learning Routes, which describes the internal LR held and organized by the Sudan, in 2016.

⁷ Case 02: GALS and Case 03: Networks

⁸ Case 04: Notably BIRDP and WSRMP, achieved important milestones influencing policy frameworks, in particular in the area of natural resource governance.

⁹ https://www.ifad.org/documents/38714170/39887213/GRS_APR_ROUTASIA.pdf/918b8196-316d-09de-8526-4a5952528d55#:~:text=ROUTASIA%20was%20awarded%20the%202016,on%20knowledge%20sharing%20by%20IFAD.&text=The%20overall%20goal%20of%20the,Asia%20and%20the%20Pacific%20region.

¹⁰ Case 01: Learning Routes

One Learning Route stands out as it represents a turning point in the mainstreaming of the Learning Route Methodology in, by and for the Sudan. The in-country 2016 Learning Route facilitated exchanges across the Sudan-based projects resulting in adaptation and replication of good practices including: i) community networking (practice learned by WSRMP/SDP from BIRD); ii) conflict resolution approach (from WSRMP to BIRD); iii) awareness raising on women empowerment (all projects), and iv) *guar* cultivation (from Kordofan to BIRD).

Following this turning point, several more learning routes were organized *inter alia* for participants from Kenya (County Government of Kajiado). This illustrates how Sudanese institutional capacities were strengthened to embed KM in work processes and institutional culture, how partnerships contributed to KM and learning, and how country-level knowledge was strengthened and taken up. In other words, the Sudan transitioned from a 'consumer of knowledge' to a 'provider of knowledge services'.

In sum, and in representation of aforementioned enabling factors and emerging learning culture, this Sudan Country Source Book highlights a selection of Best Practices of KM assets, tools, and approaches as well as an outlook on the future (see Box 03) of the Learning Route Methodology in the IFAD Sudan Country Portfolio.

Box 03: Learning Route Methodology innovations in transitioning to the New Sudan

The year 2019 has witnessed a fundamental change in the political environment of the Sudan. After a long-term ruling regime, a transitional government with civil society participation was established. The New Government is expected to pave the way to democracy, peace, accountability, transparency as well as partnerships. In support, IFAD projects should adopt a strategy that enshrines natural resources governance as a top priority and adopts natural resource management, with good practices as a platform for change.

The strategy would inform and steer future partnerships between the international research and development community, development actors and the Government of the New Sudan. The next New Sudan IFAD Country Strategy and corresponding KM Strategy would be transformative in its aspirations and visions and informed by innovations.

The Learning Routes have engendered a considerable number of ex-alumni (over 220) with different backgrounds and experiences. As an innovation supporting the transitioning to a New Sudan, bringing field-level knowledge owners together with these ex-alumni in one legal entity (e.g. 'Learning Society of Sudan') would help in sustaining service provision of Learning Route Methodology services.

As an innovation, the privately owned TV channel (Ghanat Al-Maarefa, which alludes to Knowledge in Arabic) transmits, communicates, and shares knowledge. This channel has extensively cooperated with BIRD, WSRMP and other development actors. The TV Channel has built capacities and skills across target communities and has links with extension services and actors in the private sector. They can now be scaled-up.

Social media as well as radio stations offer complementary knowledge transfer opportunities. Apart from Om Durman Radio Station, which is a federal institution, ministries now have an ambition and motivation to have their own radio stations. For example, the Federal Ministry of Animal Resources has already operated its radio station for more than three years while the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources is in the final process of installing and operating one. Such radio stations could provide good space for LR scaling-up and sustainability of its impacts. [See Case 03 for Women Radio Listening Groups].

The Source Book is expected to inform an ICARDA-PROCASUR (virtual) knowledge sharing event, indeed a (virtual) Learning Route, targeted at ICARDA grant stakeholders from Moldova, Morocco, and the Sudan. The selection of the four Case Studies of Best Practices in KM was informed by (i) the long-term country experience of PROCASUR and its familiarity with Learning Routes and GALS, and (ii) the findings and recommendations of the Independent Office of Evaluation/IFAD of the Sudan Country Strategy and Programme Evaluation, March 2020, and the considerations of the strategic direction of the 2020-2024 Country Strategic Opportunity Programme [COSOP] with its corresponding KM Strategy. The selection was corroborated by the IFAD ICO/CCU KM Core Group when deliberating the 2020 KM Plans of LMRP and IAMDP, respectively.

Four Cases Studies, co-written by national resource persons as well as interested IFAD projects, constitute the Sudan Country Source Book and illustrate this important learning journey:

- Case 01: **Learning Routes**
- Case 02: **Gender Action Learning System GALS**
- Case 03: **Networks – the At-Tasab experience**
- Case 04: **Natural Resource Governance - the process of multi-stakeholder consultation**

In essence, the Cases correspond with specific KM Tools and approaches which cover different thematic areas as indicated in Figure 3: Cross-table of Cases, KM Tools and Thematic Areas.

Figure 3: **Cross-table of Cases, KM Tools and Thematic Areas**

Case number	KM Tool	Natural Resource Management	Agriculture and Livestock Productivity	Women and Youth
01	Learning Routes	✓	✓	✓
02	GALS	✓	✓	✓
03	Networks	✓	✓	
04	Consultations	✓	✓	



Case 01: The Learning Route Methodology – Facilitating peer-to-peer learning in the Sudan

Authors: Mohamed el Hassan Ali ¹

Executive Summary

Learning Routes were introduced as a key knowledge management and learning methodology to the Sudan in the context of the IFAD Country Programme. Learning Routes are a means to exchange knowledge between peers, here usually farmers and rural development practitioners. Sudanese development stakeholders started abroad with Learning Routes on Best Practices in Natural Resource Management, Agricultural Productivity and Women Empowerment. Then insights were modified and successfully applied to the Sudanese project contexts and have significantly contributed towards greater development effectiveness. The Learning Route Methodology has been recognized, replicated, scaled up and institutionalized.

1. Introduction

As defined by PROCASUR, the Learning Route Methodology (LRM) is a Knowledge Management approach focusing on brokering Best Practices. Till date, Learning Routes (LR) have mainly been 'presential', i.e. based on peer-to-peer live exchanges and interactions between people in the field. The peer-to-peer approach is essential to LR as it represents mutual respect at eye-level between equals.

The LR is essentially a planned journey with learning objectives that are designed based on i) the

knowledge needs of development practitioners ('the learner') who are faced with problems associated with rural poverty and, ii) the identification of relevant experiences in which local stakeholders (the 'hosts' or 'local champions') have tackled similar challenges in innovative ways, with successful results and who share accumulated knowledge potentially useful to others.

Knowledge is systematized and captured in a Source Book specific to the LR in question. The LR allows for the experiential encounter between 'learners and 'hosts', both having mutually useful experiences and knowledge. The LRM encompasses the preparation of learners and hosts, the systematization of the brokered knowledge, the implementation of the inter-active journey, and the elaboration of an Innovation Plan to put the acquired knowledge to work under the circumstances of the learner.

2. Sudan Interest in Learning Routes

In the context of IFAD's corporate fostering of knowledge management in its portfolio, selected project staff were exposed² to KM events and PROCASUR-facilitated LR abroad. The resounding success in terms of brokering knowledge into the Sudan³ and the uptake of innovations incentivized the IFAD Sudan In-Country-Office (ICO) and various projects to develop their own in-country capacity to engage in LR as a tool for sharing lessons between projects. This also strengthened multi-stakeholder

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² Figure 'Timeline'

³ An international economic embargo limiting free movement abroad has for long affected The Sudan

policy engagement at various levels. Sudan was the first country to have successfully organized an internal in-country LR with minimal outside support.

Widespread uptake of the LRM, as a successful driver of change, has accelerated integration of actors in the rural development path of the Sudan. The success of LRM has placed a responsibility on the Government of Sudan (GOS) to react positively and take genuine actions towards LRM mainstreaming moving from project-based knowledge to institutionalization in the rural development sector.

3. Storyline of Learning Routes in the Sudan

This section portrays the storyline of successes of the IFAD projects in the Sudan to which the LRM greatly contributed as the main knowledge tool, approach, and asset-building mechanism. During the last decade, many LRs were organized by PROCASUR with, by and for Sudanese stakeholders. The LRs led to many countries (Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Morocco, India, Egypt, Niger). Furthermore, the knowledge transfer approach was applied to internal LR.

The timeline of LRs broadly follows three development stages (see Figure 1):

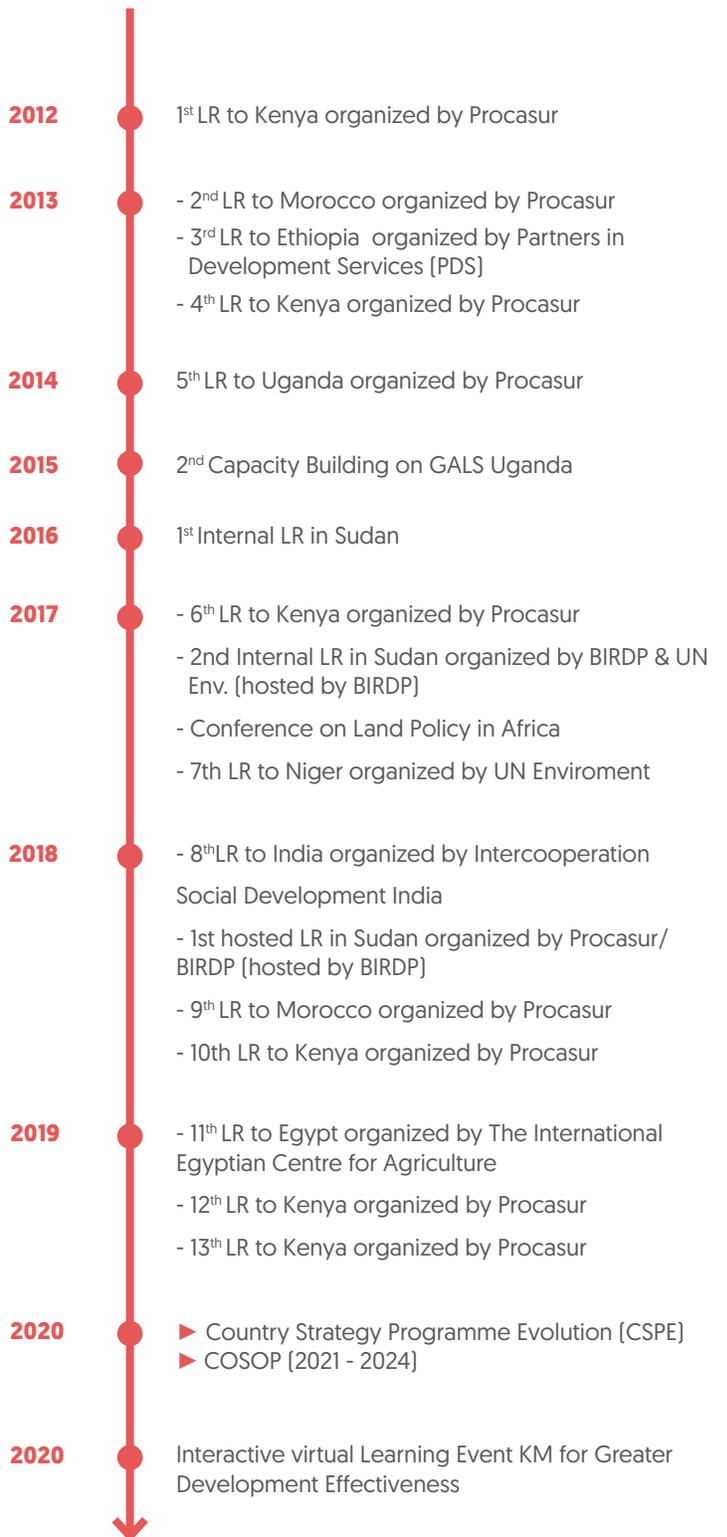
1. Early experimentation in LRM by exposing selected staff of IFAD co-funded projects to peer experiences outside the Sudan
2. Uptake and replication within the Sudan of the LRM ('mainstreaming and scaling up LRM') and
3. Making Sudanese expertise and LRM available to peers outside the Sudan.

This pathway of incorporating LRM into rural development is characterized by a watershed moment in 2016 when the Sudan ICO and projects successfully organized their internal Learning Route with four participating projects, the Central Coordination Unit of the Ministry of Agriculture (CCU), and GOS officials.





Figure 1: The Timeline of Learning Routes (LRs) in the Sudan



Stage I: Early Experimentation

The first LR that was organized and made a breakthrough by introducing this important KM methodology in the Sudan is the one under the title Innovative Livestock Marketing from Northern to Eastern Africa which was convened in Kenya during 27 February - 09 March 2012 by PROCASUR [see photos].



Methodologically, this LR covered five good practices in different parts in Kenya with the main focus on how smallholder producers access the meat market and once organized, achieve a better bargaining position. The LR addressed how livestock traders could ensure steady and sustainable supply of livestock to the market and maximize their profits weighing in benefits to the livestock producers. This win-win value was achieved by the construction of a privately operated slaughterhouse, the Keekonyokie slaughterhouse in Kiserian Town in Kenya. Butchers and meat traders are benefiting equally from the sales of high quality, hygienic meat and increasing their incomes. In addition, the biogas plant (fed on waste from the slaughterhouse now benefits rural households by availing clean energy at affordable price and save the natural environment and secure the natural tree cover).

As a next step demonstrating commitment to transfer knowledge and good practices, each project then developed its respective innovation plan based on guidelines provided by PROCASUR. This 'spark' took a good many years in 'lighting the fire' since major governance issues over roles, responsibilities and benefit sharing needed to be sorted out. But the five years innovation journey bore fruit⁴. Old ways gave way to hygienic ones [see photos before/after].

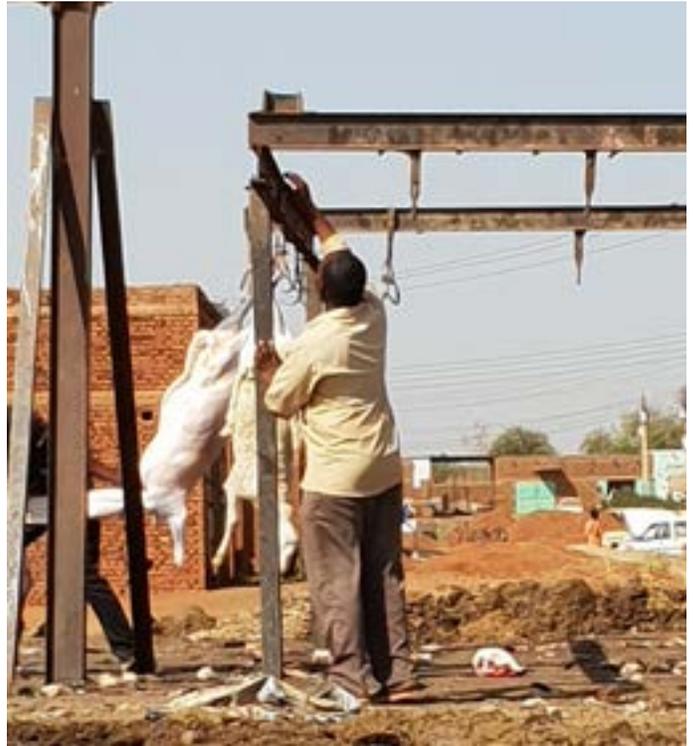
This LR involved all IFAD projects in the Sudan at the moment (BIRDP, Gash Project, SUSTAIN and WSRMP).

⁴ <https://ifad-un.blogspot.com/2017/05/a-five-years-innovation-journey-bears.html>

Box 01: The BIRDP Innovation Plan

The BIRDP innovation plan focused on one slaughterhouse in Tamboul, a rural town in Butana.

It is characterized by a good location in terms of better access to major roads for a greater population or consumption centers. It has abundant water, natural range resources and irrigated fodder, and is close to a veterinary college and a hospital. Furthermore, the site is close to a famous camel research center. Value-add is secured as the slaughterhouse complements the largest secondary livestock market which was completely renovated by BIRDP. The private sector is represented by the butchers who, with legal support from BIRDP, organized themselves in a legal entity, the Meat Commodity Cooperative. The LR achieved success in value adding to the livestock value chain through the construction of primary livestock markets backed-up by small slaughterhouses constructed in three adjacent community settlements. All these facilities are operated and managed by the Community Development Committees (CDCs) with the sole objective to benefit both producers, traders, butchers, and consumers in Um Shadeeda community, Ashababeet Community and At-Tasab Network communities [See Case 03]. It is worth to mention that a big share of the collected fees is transferred to the benefit of the communities.



Diversifying from the livestock value chain, also in 2013, a LR was organized to Morocco by PROCASUR. It demonstrated good practices of well organized, strengthened, and empowered grassroots institutions (cooperatives) and farmers organizations. Thus strengthened, these managed to improve the added value of their agricultural produce and eventually their income and livelihoods.

Women empowerment and gender equity play a big role in the Sudan IFAD portfolio. The main knowledge transfer tool is the GALS Methodology [Gender Accelerated Learning System] (see Case 02).

It relates to the 1st LR convened in 2014 to Uganda under the title ‘Gender and rural microfinance, new approaches, services and products for the empowerment of economically active rural communities by ensuring gender equality’. Based on the ensuing innovation plan, BIRDP started with formulation of ten saving and credit groups (SCGs), two in each of its five participating States. It reached 536 groups by the end of the project. Besides contributing to poverty reduction, the intervention has been associated with an amazing transformation of women from passive and dependent subjects to pro-active and self-reliant agents of change.



Stage II): Mainstreaming the Learning Route Methodology

A watershed event in terms of internalizing the LRM was the internal LR in 2016. Under guidance of ICO, CCU, and with technical support of PROCASUR, five projects organized a LR with the main objective to contribute to knowledge sharing and peer-to-peer learning at country level. More specifically, it built technical capacities within IFAD’s operations and partners on good practices related to Natural Resources Management and Agricultural Productivity. Secondly, it also built the capacity of IFAD-funded projects in Sudan and government institutions to use the LRM developed by PROCASUR and replicate similar LR in Sudan. BIRDP, ICSP, LMRP, SUSTAIN and WSRMP were involved with 30 participants including representatives from Federal Ministries of Agriculture and Animal Resources.

Box 02: Memorable quotes from the LR

Adil Mohammed Sharif, Ministry of Animal Resources: “the Learning Route has strengthened the partnership between the ministries and partners who are supporting us in implementing our strategies.”

Aida Osman, Gender and Community Development Officer, BIRDP: “In addition to the cases presented by the other projects I have learned how to organise a Learning Route, especially the roles of the Methodological Coordinator and the Technical coordinator, and how to select and write a Learning Route case and present it to others”.

Atika Marouf, Community Development Officer, WSRMP: “From BIRDP we learned how to empower and build the capacity of community based organisations, from SUSTAIN we learned how to improve the production of farmers and how to

linking them to the private sector, and from WSRMP we learned how to create a link between farmers and pastoralists”.

Faisal Hasabdelrasoul Eltack, NRM Consultant, WSRMP: “It was a Learning Route with people from different backgrounds and from different geographical areas. We learned a lot from SUSTAIN and from BIRDP on the issues of networking and how to integrate NRM in crop production”.

Isam Altahir, M&E Officer, SUSTAIN : “I’m convinced that the Learning Route is a powerful learning tool which enables participants to share their experience, analyse their challenges and arrive to a reasonable solution on how to address present challenges. The challenge for us now is to see how we can continue sharing knowledge in other areas such as microfinance for example”.

Mohammed El Hassan, NRM Officer, BIRDP: “This is a successful Learning Route because each project managed to benefit from the practices shown by the other projects. I’m am happy that we achieved the objectives of the Learning Route”.

Musa Elfaki, Policy Officer, SUSTAIN: “We benefited much from this Learning Route. From BIRDP we learned about community networking, from WSRMP about demarcation of livestock routes, co-management of stock routes and the idea of pastoralist field schools. We will implement this knowledge in our area”.

Yassin Doleeb, M&E Officer, BIRDP: “For me the Learning Route was useful in terms of new technical, logistical and documentation skills. With my project staff we are now able to prepare our own Learning Route and invite others to join”.

BIRDP developed an innovation plan to scale up the good practice of SUSTAIN in increasing agricultural productivity through adapting and replicating the extension package (improved, certified seed of food and fodder crops, chisel ploughing as well as micro-financing) and improving NRM through vertical expansion in agriculture. The result is illustrated in the following box.

Box 03: Boosting sorghum productivity through terracing

The innovation plan that was born in BIRDP operational area after the internal LR in 2016 targets 370 HHs (River Nile State = 260 HHs + Khartoum State =110 HHs) in 20 potential communities (25% of beneficiaries are females headed households and 30% of them are female and male youth). The result and impact of this innovation taken from SUSTAIN is that the majority of the selected farmers used the recommended package (terracing, chisel, used of improved seed, building of green shelter/wind break around farm, intercropping by cultivating both leguminous and cereal crops). The terrace is soil bund done by tractor-mounted scraper. The terrace is effective in collecting and trapping rainwater. Its dimensions depend on the prevailing conditions such as soil type and topography. The bund is constructed in a tapering manner with approximately 200 cm at the base, 150 cm at the middle and 30 cm at the apex. Sometimes small subsidiary bunds (locally known as kawajreeb) are constructed inside the plots. These kawajreeb permit excess runoff. Pipes installed at the corners drain excess runoff while rocks with earth are piled along the terrace or at the end to constitute a spillway (see picture).

The principal staple food crop cultivated is sorghum which reported increases in average productivity from 6 to 9.6 sacks/feddan (a 60% increase).

For instance, Mohammed Ahmed AL-Lahawy (here pictured in front), a farmer from Wad Al-Hammad community (member in At-Tasab Network -see Case 03), cultivated 5 feddans that produced 48 sacks of sorghum grains (on average 9.6 sacks/feddan) while farmer Ballal Ali Fadl Allah (also pictured) cultivated 5 feddans that produced 55 sacks (on average 11 sacks/feddan). His success story was promoted among the beneficiaries of BIRDPA and, since then, Ahmed has been hosting several exchange visits from the neighborhoods to learn and scale up his approach. These are now the real local champions of change making their knowledge available for their fellow farmers and Community Extension Agents (25% of which are women).



Stage III): The transition from LR client to a LR service provider

A major success of the uptake of the LRM was that it turned the Sudan from a participant in LRs to a service provider of LRs. BIRDPA entered into a LR partnership with UN Environment ADAPT Project in October 2017. The LR developed under this service provision partnership involved 18 participants from the Forests National Corporation (FNC) and the Range and Pasture Administration (RPA) representing different States, including Kordofan and Darfur.

The LR focused on the integration of innovations into climate resilience and environmental management programmes, such as ‘green fencing’.

Box 04: Green fencing – a useful innovation

The FNC in Gedaref State adopted green fencing of eight hafirs in three localities by using the *Acacia Mellifera* tree. This green fence helps in reducing evaporation rates, prevents animal intrusion that causes water losses and pollution, and regulates water use. In Kassala State, and specifically in Wad Al-Helew area, which hosts large number of IDPs and refugees, one hafir was green fenced. In restoring gold mining borrow pits, tree seed in micro-catchments was broadcast. The land area covered by this broadcasting is approximately 756 hectares.





Subsequently, another LR was organized and managed by BIRDP as a service provider during October 2018 for participants from Kajiado County in Kenya. The delegation met with women who proudly shared their experiences on solar panel driven irrigation and shared their visions for a better life through so-called 'lifeline stories', a GALS methodology [see Case 02].



Participants also learned best practices on community networking to protect and secure land rights and natural resource management [see Cases 03 and 04, respectively].



4. Drivers and Enabling Factors of the LRM

The decade long experience of IFAD projects in the Sudan with LRM offers a solid base to define drivers and enabling factors:

- The existence of functional projects and interested key actors as key drivers of innovative KM tools
- The build-up of national resource persons [champions] of recognized expertise with the capacity to implement the LRM training-of-trainers workshops [TOT] and write up of best practice cases
- Political support at different levels of institutions [local, state, federal]
- Creating space to experiment through IFAD grants with strong support from PROCASUR, IFAD HQ and ICO to development of effective Knowledge assets and approaches
- A supporting framework by means of the different COSOPs and KM Strategy 2017-2019, and the Human Resources to make it happens [CPM/ICO, KMO, KM Core Group, Project Directors]
- Demonstrated success and impact of IFAD projects in creating strong and powerful grassroots institutions of legal entities e.g. CDCs, VDCs, and Community networks

- A functional monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system and nascent capacity for critical reflection and analysis in projects as a basis for knowledge management
- Developing partnerships for knowledge management with other partners including private sector (Al-Maarefa TV Channel, Local Radio / Community Radio as the one executed in SCU Kassala).

Box 05: Alternative knowledge transfer channels: the radio

The community radio is installed and operated by Kassala State Radio Station (KSRS) with the main objective is to help boosting rural development aspects in an area rife with intrinsic and extrinsic obstacles e.g. fragile ecosystem, influx of refugees from both Eritrea and Ethiopia, and a striking diversity and heterogeneity in ethnic composition. KSRS partnership with BIRDP covered 15 communities in the Butana area. The knowledge transfer project started with six villages and then expanded. In the first group of villages nine listening groups were established and out of them 21 coordinators (13 males and 9 females) were selected and trained by the Community Radio Station.

This was followed up by the station by supplying one radio to each listening group (see picture). On frequently aired radio sessions the listeners shared their views, skills and knowledge, experiences, and achievements specifically those materialized by BIRDP. Their queries were immediately answered on live radio by the relevant BIRDP staff and their partners. Women take evidently share and actively participate taking the lead in the radio programme. Based on the evaluation done by the two partners, the programme has significant impacts in i) scaling up of

terraces as rainwater harvesting techniques in area with low and erratic rainfall, ii) wide dissemination of home tree nurseries, iii) adoption of vegetables cultivation in home backyards (this helps in reducing cases of night blindness), and iv) increasing the number of food processing/nutrition classes, etc. Madame Fatima Abdelaal from Asbury is an active coordinator in the community radio and has good skills that assist her in the moderation of her listeners group and build strong linkages with the radio base station. According to an assessment of listeners groups and community audience and the partners, Madame Fatima Abdelaal now deserves the title of champion in community radio.



5. Challenges to implement the Learning Route Methodology

Notwithstanding the many positive experiences with LRM, challenges remain:

- Scouting of cases of good practices takes time and skills. PROCASUR trained national resource persons, mostly staff of IFAD projects, in the proper methodology of identification, systematization and documentation.
- The incorporation of Innovation Plans into Annual Plans of Work and Budget and corresponding M&E system needs more commitment from the engaging party, i.e. the projects themselves. An a priori commitment before selecting participants to a LR may be reached by involving the CCU and KM Core Group.
- Informing mid-level and senior government officials of the LRM, and hence of the consequential approval of resulting Innovation Plans, requires key consideration. This staff needs to be exposed to the feasibility of setting pro-poor, pro-Natural Resource Governance policy agendas using knowledge tools and LRM.
- Ill-timing of LR. The inaccessibility of field sites of a LR due to impassable roads and/or security issues needs to be considered well ahead in the planning cycle of LR.
- Pandemics like COVID-19 may make person-to-person contacts non-desirable. Consequently, the transition from presential LR to virtual LR merits to be considered.
- Financing the implementation of LR is a big challenge where external sources may no longer be available. Thus, when planning a LR, the sponsoring

project should anticipate such LR at least a fiscal year in advance.

- Appropriate KM and M&E staffing at project levels and/or IFAD ICO may be a concern. The KM Core Group may be an appropriate means to buffer eventual gaps.
- Securing sustainability of LRM. Institutionalization of KM in the government system would secure sustainability. This requires appropriate cadres, reasonable budgets with focus on capacity and human resource development at all levels.

6. Institutionalization of Learning Route Methodology

The LRM is fully acknowledged as a key KM tool and approach, also in the context of South-South Triangular Cooperation (SSTC). The IFAD Sudan KM Strategy 2017-2019 institutionalizes the LRM, the combination of LR, peer-to-peer exchanges and Innovation Plan. Similarly, the 2019 Country Strategy Programme Evaluation by the Independent Evaluation Group of IFAD, recognizes the attribution of LR to the impact of the Sudan country portfolio.

Furthermore, IFAD⁵ stated ‘The LR approach developed by IFAD and Procasur is an efficient instrument which applies IFAD’s proactive approach to SSTC by mainstreaming it into its business model and ensuring synergies between loans and grants. This also creates learning spaces for scaling up by IFAD partners within and across regions. For instance, the First Sudan LR is an original case, illustrating how PROCASUR’s expertise and LR methodology were used to build the technical capacities of the IFAD country team and partner institutions in natural resource management and agricultural development, in support of IFAD’s operations in Sudan’.

⁵ <https://www.ifad.org/en/web/knowledge/publication/asset/39591286>



Case 02: The Gender Action Learning System GALS in Sudan

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Executive Summary

The introduction and mainstreaming of Gender Action Learning System (GALS), a women empowerment methodology based on empowerment through knowledge mobilization and transfer, in the IFAD portfolio in Sudan has led to remarkable economic, social, environmental, and political impacts. The Training-of-Trainers approach, supported by Learning Routes and exchange visits, all knowledge management tools, has created an ample number of committed national resource persons and qualified trainers in GALS.

1. Introduction

The Gender Action Learning System (GALS)³ is a truly transformative socio-economic innovation⁴. It is a community-led empowerment methodology based on appreciating knowledge, using corresponding transfer tools, and inducing behavioral change which aims to give women as well as men more control over their lives, and catalyze and support a sustainable movement for gender justice.

GALS, as a knowledge transfer and empowering household methodology, originated in 2004 from

Micro Finance Institutions (MFIs) and NGOs in Pakistan and India. From 2007 onward it was developed as a coherent methodology to promote gender equality and women participation with development organizations in Kasese District in Western Uganda as part of Oxfam Novib's WEMAN program⁵.

GALS works with women and men to develop their visions for change, appreciate their strengths and achievements and analyze and address gender inequalities within the family and community as challenges which prevent them from achieving their vision. It empowers women and men, as individuals and collectively, to collect, analyze and use information and knowledge to improve and gain more control over their lives at the micro- and macro levels.

Sudan is the first country within the IFAD Near East, North Africa, Europe (NEN) Division where the GALS methodology was piloted. By 2014, GALS was mainstreamed into all IFAD country operations⁶, hence also into the Sudan portfolio. The CGIAR Gender Platform also uses GALS as a framework for qualitative gender action research⁷.

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³ GALS Equal and Together - Linda Mayoux, May 2013

⁴ Corporate-level evaluation (CLE): IFAD's support to innovation for inclusive and sustainable smallholder agriculture, Independent Office of Evaluation, 2020 <https://www.ifad.org/documents/38714182/41125821/IFAD-CLE2020-COMplete-01.pdf/af251dad-10bd-5e80-3fae-a97a82f2059e>

⁵ Under WEMAN and other initiatives the methodology has been used in different forms by large number of women and men in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Caucasus. See: Rocky Road to Diamond Dreams March 2014 - Linda Mayoux

⁶ <https://www.ifad.org/documents/38714170/40198517/How+To+Do+Household+Methodologies.pdf/f564875ac-af4b-4409-9271-0c90ff464b3b#:~:text=The%20most%20complete%20group%2Dbased,with%20a%20small%20IFAD%20grant.>

⁷ <https://gender.cgiar.org/gals-for-qualitative-research/> and <https://www.cgiar.org/research/program-platform/cgiar-gender-platform/>

2. Why GALS is of interest to The Sudan

Women represent 49% of the population in Sudan. They, and rural women in particular, are suffering from gender inequality and facing challenges in access to economic opportunities, productive resources, land ownership, credit and decision-making due to illiteracy and suppressive sociocultural attitudes⁸. Closing these gender gaps remains a high priority and fully justifies why the Sudan is interested in GALS.

As early as 2004 a gender mainstreaming curriculum was developed by the North Kordofan Rural Development project (NKRDP), an IFAD funded project in collaboration with University of Khartoum/ Development Studies and Research Center. The gender mainstreaming curriculum was adopted and used at different levels by all IFAD projects as well as its counterpart government institutions, especially the State-level Ministries of Agriculture. While these efforts have shown significant results in promoting women participation in development interventions, a sizeable gap still remains to be closed.

The application of the GALS methodology has amply demonstrated⁹ to be the most effective and the shortest way for realizing a major jump in gender equality and empowerment at individual, household, and community levels of sustainable rural development in Sudan.

3. The story line of success of GALS

The storyline of success of GALS, an eleven year journey, knows several key dates, key actors as champions and decisive moments where enabling factors and drivers of change came together in a constellation that allowed for i) piloting, peer learning by exposure and early uptake by individual projects, to be followed by ii) adjustment, value-adding and expansion of the GALS knowledge transfer methodology among a wider set of projects ('mainstreaming') as well as in geographic coverage, to iii) its scaling up in the IFAD country programme portfolio and incipient institutionalization by means of a 'peer pyramid' or 'snowball' of national GALS resource persons and Training-of-GALS Trainers.

Two projects paved the way: BIRDP and WSRMP, both focused on reducing rural poverty by improving Natural Resources Management, Land Tenure and local Governance¹⁰. Broadly speaking, three stages can be distinguished in the development of GALS in the Sudan.

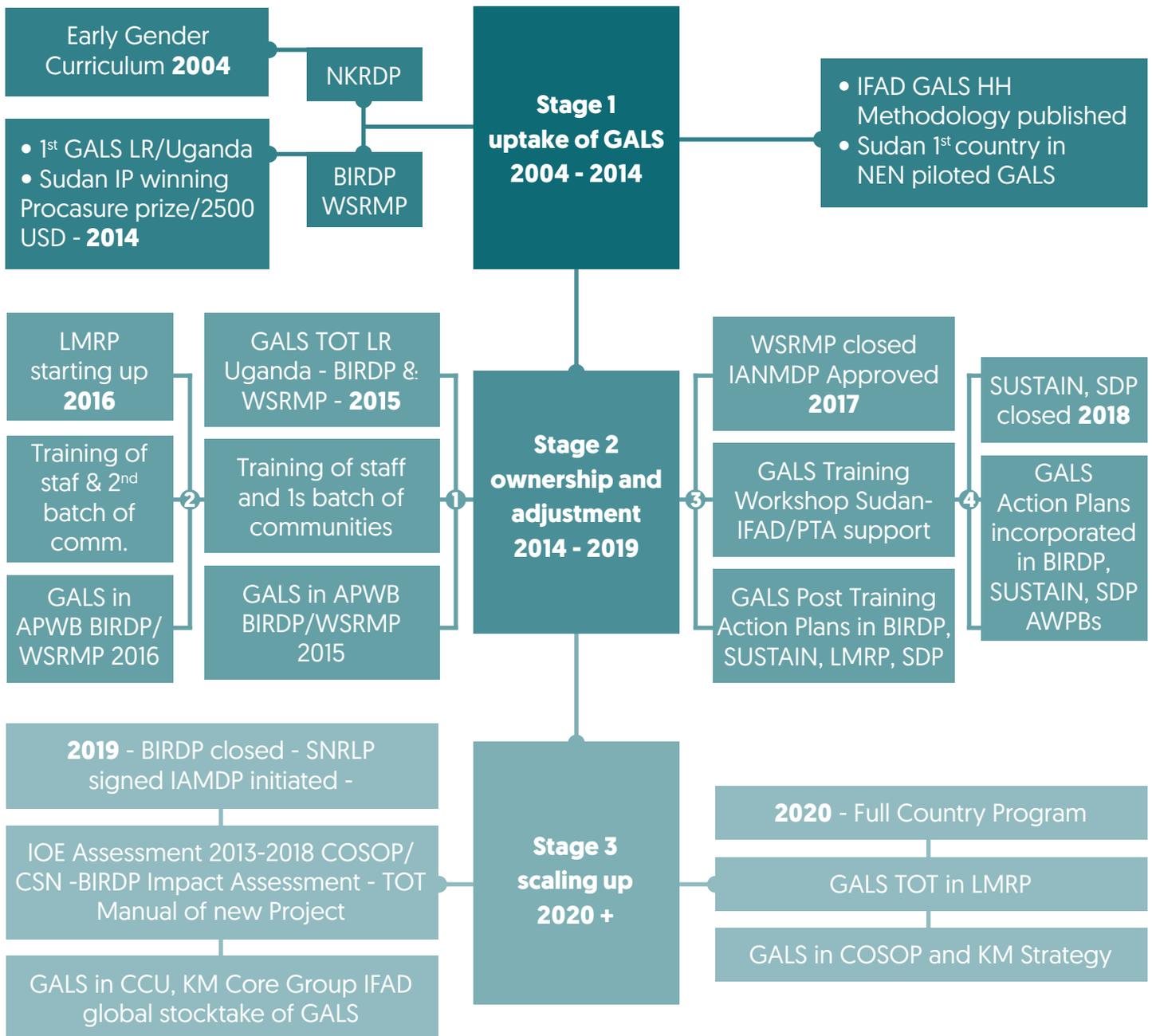
The first stage ('uptake of GALS') covers the period up to 2014, the second ('ownership and adjustment') the period between 2014 till 2019, while the third period ('scaling up') roughly begins in 2020 with scaling up of Best Practices on Knowledge transfer by GALS. It is now being scaled-up into a new generation of IFAD projects LMRP and IAMRP and into the new Sudan Country Strategy 2021-2024 supported by its corresponding KM Strategy. See Figure 1: Development stages of GALS in Sudan [2004-2020]

⁸ Sudan's HDI [Human Development Index] value for 2018 is 0.507— which put the country in the low human development category— positioning it at 168 out of 189 countries and territories. ³ Between 1990 and 2018, Sudan's HDI value increased from 0.332 to 0.507, an increase of 53.0 percent. http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/SDN.pdf and <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/SDN>

⁹ Significant rises in IFAD Supervision ratings of 'Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment' were achieved following the introduction of GALS in BIRDP [IFAD Supervision/MTR Report, BIRDP, September 2012] [see Box 03]. The Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment rating has since reached 6, 'highly satisfactory', the maximum score.

¹⁰ Cases 01, 03 and 04.

Figure 1: Development stages of GALS in Sudan (2004-2020)



The exposure of Sudan to GALS started by a first Learning Route that was organized by PROCAS-UR, on Gender and Rural Microfinance in Uganda in June 2014 where staff from two IFAD co-financed projects participated.

Box 01: Learning Route GALS Uganda 2014

This knowledge sharing event was constituted the first opportunity for IFAD project staff to know about GALS as knowledge and empowerment methodology that enables transformative changes for men and women in rural areas. Each of the participating project's teams, inspired by the event and appreciating the benefits achieved, had prepared an action /innovation plan developed from the knowledge built up during the mentioned learning routes and to be incorporated and implemented during 2015 -2016. The innovation plan prepared by BIRDP team won a reward equivalent to 2500 US dollars from PROCASUR for each of the three best country plans. This reward received by BIRDP catalyzed an investment by the committed learning route participants and convinced BIRDP management to organize and capacity building of the 1st women savings and credit groups formed.



Photo: GALS and Saving and Credit Groups

A proud batch of trained GALS trainers

As a next step, the BIRDP/WSRMP teams translated a simple manual [steps of the basic GALS tools]. In Butana 37 development team members and young professionals from the 5 State Coordination Units [SCUs] as well as 22 male and 19 females of five communities were trained. Similarly, in WSRMP extension staff (five male, two female) and 60 community members [40 females, 20 males] were trained and started a 'snowball' by training a further 99 community members [76 females, 23 males] in 2016



The training of development teams on GALS methodology as planned by BIRDP and WSRMP was conducted through a follow-up exchange visit/learning route¹¹ on innovative tools and approaches to enhance gender equality in value chain development, again in Uganda¹². As part of the learning route methodology, each project team developed an action plan that was then incorporated in the projects' respective AWPBs of 2016. The objective of the BIRDP post-training action plan was to build a vision culture with, by and for households and communities to improve their livelihood through application and adopting of GALS methodology.

¹¹ Case 01 on the widespread use of Learning Routes as the key vehicle for Knowledge Transfer between peers.

¹² Learning Route – Uganda 23rd November – 1st December 2015 organized by Procasur for 21 participants [13 from BIRDP and 8 from WSRMP].

As a result, women became more aware of their roles in the community and eager to participate in different training events. Now, they own special property and their contributions to the HH income have increased¹³.

The application of GALS in BIRDP communities proved the efficiency of the methodology in accelerating changes in gender roles and empowerment comparing to training on gender sensitization using other gender mainstreaming methods. Striving to stay on top, a refresher training and mobilizing technical support to implement GALS in thematic areas particularly natural resources management (NRM) was organized.

Box 2: GALS Refresher Training Workshop Sudan 2017¹⁴

A 10- days training workshop was conducted in October 2017, facilitated by two resource persons in GALS, one from PASEA Port Sudan and one from Uganda and supported by two GALS champions from Port Sudan.

The workshop was attended by a number of 33 participants (21 females and 12 male), eight participants from each of the four IFAD co-financed projects (BIRDP, SUSTAIN, LMRP, SDP) in addition to one female staff from the Central Coordination Unit (CCU). In addition to the more skills and knowledge acquired, this training workshop helped in building common understanding among IFAD co-financed

projects. Moreover one of the most important output is that each project formulated an action plan with activities to be conducted immediately during the last two month of 2017 and for the year 2018 that has been declared as year of the GALS in Sudan during the closing ceremony. The BIRDP post training action plan aimed at scaling up of GALS methodology for realizing empowerment of rural communities through improvement of gender participation and equality at individual, household, and community levels in Butana area through rolling out and scaling up of basic GALS and introduction of advanced tools regarding Microfinance and NRM and moreover, organization of communications and exchange visits within BIRDP communities, localities and states as well as between different IFAD co- financed projects to achieve the maximum benefits that can be realized from application and adoption of GALS in Sudan rural areas.

Before 2014, BIRDP used a mix of methods on gender equality and women empowerment in its trainings and extension programs. Results were slow in the coming. The introduction in 2014 of the GALS methodology in addressing gender issues in selected BIRDP communities made a breakthrough in gender empowerment and gender transformation.

¹³ BIRDP Progress Reports, state Coordination units/SCUs annual reports and Missions Reports

¹⁴ IFAD in Sudan: putting inclusive rural transformation in practice, IFAD social reporting blog, Mia Madsen and Anja Rabezanahary, posted January 16, 2018 and GALS Training Workshop Flash Report, November 2017.

Box 3: GALs in BIRDP Impact¹⁵ Assessment 2019¹⁶

The project has brought about a remarkably positive process of economic, social, environmental and political impacts. It has produced very high economic impacts including e.g. general improvements in livelihoods and the economic situation in Butana (83.6%), and improved food security (82.2%) as the most salient ones. GALs has significantly contributed to these changes. Gender empowerment and transformation is possibly the area where the impacts of the project are most conspicuous and most easily observable. These impacts are widely perceived and recognized as highly important: improvement of women economic situation; increased respect to women and their role in society; increased role of women in managing family resources; enhanced women empowerment; women capacities to express their views in meetings; recognizable role of women in leadership positions in society; and increase in women self-confidence. The positive social impacts created by the project are widely perceived to include increase in community participation in its own development (91.8%); strengthening social relations and cohesion (91.5%); improved social status of women in the community (87.5%). The communities of the Butana have also been politically empowered by the project. Significant impacts include: increase in community organization; enhanced knowledge about rights and how to claim these rights; increased community participation in village affairs and improved knowledge of government institutions as well as improved civic-government

engagement. The impacts at the household level are equally impressive. The percentage of the poor and very poor has declined from 50.4% before the project to 11.8%. More than 80% of the targeted population is no longer categorizing themselves as poor. The project investments have managed to positively impact women's social and productive skills and knowledge, their organization, access to land and financial resources and their effective representation together with investments in resolving water supply problem and the introduction of clean domestic energy.



Women of Butana presenting their vision on rangeland protection

¹⁵ BIRDP supervision mission report 2019

¹⁶ BIRDP Impact Assessment, 2019

Women of Butana are experiencing a powerful improvement in agency (individual and collective capacities, knowledge and skills), attitudes, critical reflection, assets, actions, and access to services); they are self-aware, confident and inspired enough to recognize the added value of their participation. Women constituted 64% of beneficiaries in different types of extension and training programmes and 99% of VSCG membership. 25%, of the BIRDOP trained Community Extension Agents are women. A balance in age structure had also been maintained where youth, males and females, are effectively represented and actively engaged in the planning, implementation and follow up of project interventions. The majority of Young Professionals fostered by BIRDOP is female. Women in Butana are successfully applying the skills and knowledge they gained guided by the passion for good life and family welfare and supported by the men and the community members who realized the value of women empowerment. The gender gap in participation and decision making is narrowing and a new social contract is emerging.

based water management and management of community range reserve in Gadaref State [See Case 03: the At Tasab Network].

Box 4: Taking GALS further in LMRP

Early 2020, the Group Enterprise and Development Officer (female) in the North Kordofan state implementation unit was appointed as gender officer at the program level. She, supported by the M&E officer, organized a training-of-trainers workshop (TOT) on GALS Methodology in August 2020, facilitated by two Sudanese facilitators (former BIRDOP staff). In response to implementation challenges regarding gender issues in LMRP, the TOT was provided to the development teams of the Western sector/North and West Kordofan State. In all, 33 participants (14 female and 19 male) attended the TOT. The one-day field work practical exercises at Tinga community, El Obeid, North Kordofan state enabled the participants to use and facilitate three of the basic GALS tools¹⁷ (vision Road journey, Gender Balance Tree and gender challenge action tree).

In spite of the gender equity and women’s empowerment achievements of BIRDOP, GALS was less successful outside Butana. The main reason is the lack of gender focal persons at all project levels. Moreover, no budget was allocated for gender sensitization and empowerment activities. This reflects the low priority by the management at that time. However, staff organized a cross-visit to learn from the good practices of the At-Tasab Network in River Nile State focused on community–



¹⁷ Further GALS knowledge transfer tools are enumerated in <https://www.ifad.org/documents/38714170/40205133/Gender+Action+Learning+System+%28GALS%29+in+Ghana%2C+Nigeria%2C+Rwanda%2C+Sierra+Leone+and+Uganda/31ebaea7-3fd4-4370-a031-bfdb20eb-c9f6>; and <https://www.ifad.org/en/web/knowledge/publication/asset/39409831>



Gender Challenge Action Tree



Lifeline on bags



Lifeline in tree

At the end of the LMRP TOT training workshop the participants and project manager committed to their action plans. A project budget was secured for a 2nd TOT training workshop for the staff of the Eastern sector [White Nile, Sinnar and Blue Nile States] which was implemented in early October 2020 with [12] female and [24] males attending the training. This has brought the total number of GALS trainers or resource persons in LMRP to [69].

4. Access to Knowledge on GALS Methodology in the Sudan

Knowledge on GALS methodology in Sudan is lodged at several levels. Key staff of BIRDP, WSRMP, SUSTAIN, SDP and now IAMDP are considered qualified resource persons and champions of change [see Box 04]. Furthermore, the IFAD Sudan Country Office [ICO], staff at the CCU and in the KM Core Group have been familiarized with GALS. Most importantly, at community, village and State levels there are ample knowledge bearers on GALS. They can bring about change [see Box 03]. Former staff have turned into Facilitators/Trainers-of-Trainers and have adapted GALS training materials and guidelines. The knowledge base on GALS is accessible on the website of the CCU (www.ifadccu.sd) and is frequently used.

5. The Enabling Factors¹⁸

The main factors that enabled the application and scaling up of GALS processes in the Sudan can be summarized as follows:

- IFAD ICO staff with mutual support and close follow up on application of GALS at projects level
- IFAD Gender team and PTA with continuous follow up on progress of uptake of GALS training methodology in Sudan. moreover, facilitate the access to the financial support and co-organized the refreshment training workshop and technical support to the IFAD co funded projects in Sudan

- Existence of KM core group at CCU level to coordinate and facilitate the Knowledge sharing process between IFAD projects and other governmental institutions and NGOS
- Existence of national GALS facilitator with the capacities needed to provide TOT training on GALS Methodology and follow up on field applications and results
- Following the results achieved projects are interested in scaling up of GALS Methodology and project managements are committed to backup GALS training and application at different level i.e. project management are committed to gender transformation
- The interest, willingness and needs of rural communities to change and improve their lives together with the commitment of women and men in communities who use the methodology to share what they learn with others through pyramid peer learning.
- Existence of well-organized communities a positive competition spirit towards development successes will assisted in the uptake of the GALS methodology.

6. The Lessons Learned¹⁹

Key factors for success²⁰ for GALS are listed as:

- The use of very simple, visual graphics on locally available material that can be easily used by poor illiterate women and men
- Inclusion of everyone who wishes to be listened to in an atmosphere of mutual respect

¹⁸ Stocktake of the use of household methodologies in IFAD's portfolio, IFAD 2019, pages 39 cf. (<https://www.ifad.org/en/web/knowledge/publication/asset/41377994> and https://www.ifad.org/documents/38714170/41377902/hhm_stocktake.pdf/d64f0301-19d5-b210-3ace-765ba0b5f527)

¹⁹ Stocktake of the use of household methodologies in IFAD's portfolio, IFAD 2019. (<https://www.ifad.org/en/web/knowledge/publication/asset/41377994> and https://www.ifad.org/documents/38714170/41377902/hhm_stocktake.pdf/d64f0301-19d5-b210-3ace-765ba0b5f527)

²⁰ BIRDP Supervision Report, November 2018

- The articulation of people’s collective needs and plans for future, with minimal external interventions
- The inclusion of a large number of young female professionals who live in the community and facilitate peer-learning every day
- The adoption of a comprehensive livelihoods’ strategy, which recognizes and values the multiple farm and non-farm activities, importance of savings and credit, introduction of new technology and building institutions, where men and women play distinctive and complementary roles
- Aggregation of interest groups and CDCs into Community Networks for collective planning, and joint action on protecting natural resources and representing before government agencies.

Beyond BIRDP, the overarching lessons learned based on the practical experiences of working with GALS methodology that included participating and receiving training on GALS, exposure to good practices and results as well as training and application of GALS at community level can be summarized as follows:

- GALS methodology can address different gender issues at different levels and can be integrated in different ways of development interventions to make it more effective for both women and men
- GALS tools are useful and viable in analyzing gender issues, planning, monitoring and evaluation as well as risk management by having clear visions and planning to overcome challenges to realize them.
- GALS is highly effective in improving the inequalities between women and men in a short time period comparing with other approaches/

methodologies and can play a big role in encouragement of women and men to define development problems/challenges, prioritize their needs, formulate their plans and take collective action for change with minimal external interventions

- GALS Methodology using low-cost local materials for drawing, diagrams and open space public discussions which are highly attractive to the communities and very helpful in involvement of poor and illiterate people. Some communities in Butana were very creative in drawing their future plans and visions using locally available materials such as skins and local carpets made from palm leaves. Drawings on these types of materials are sustainable and can be kept for a long time and easily moved for exhibitions or presentations.

7. Challenges typically encountered when introducing GALS²¹

As stated in the 2019 IFAD Stocktake of Household Methodologies, GALS is not yet a “business as usual” approach. The biggest two challenges are getting the GALS process under way and securing sufficient resources to do it well.

For Sudan, the principal challenges to GALS, correspond to three levels:

General

- A lack of understanding by key people of what GALS entails, how it is delivered and which the benefits are it generates; as a result, project management may yet not be very convinced of the need to invest in GALS

²¹ From: Stocktake of the use of household methodologies in IFAD’s portfolio, IFAD 2019, p 41 cf. [<https://www.ifad.org/en/web/knowledge/publication/asset/41377994> and https://www.ifad.org/documents/38714170/41377902/hhm_stocktake.pdf/d64f0301-19d5-b210-3ace-765ba0b5f527]

Project level

- Irregular allocation of sufficient resources for a thorough GALS process, both in terms of funds for implementation, reasonably senior level ‘open ears’, and staffing the projects with qualified GALS focal persons
- Late planning in of GALS and failure to appreciate the time frame required to complete the full GALS process
- GALS activities are often assumed to be stand-alone rather than integrated into overall project activities and implemented at their own pace; this has implications for the off-take of the methodology and its mainstreaming across project activities.
- A failure of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems to adequately capture changes, especially around well-being, which is often not reflected in standard indicators, and to systematically document the lessons learned and accrued knowledge.

Community Level

- Build ample public communal level solidarity between men and women to reduce the ‘culturally induced’ risks to women losing their tangible (e.g. access to land) and intangible [‘voicing interests’] asset base they accrued through GALS.





Case 03: Community Knowledge-based Peer Networks: the At-Tasab experience

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Executive Summary

Establishing good natural resource management governance frameworks was identified as priority by local communities. The establishment of knowledge-based peer Community Networks in At Tasab provided an important impetus as well as a concrete indicator of community empowerment and the institutionalization of social change processes. One of the visible important indicators of empowerment is the capacity of the communities to take own initiatives to improve community livelihoods.

1. Introduction

The Government of Sudan, in cooperation with the International Fund of Agricultural Development (IFAD), in 2006 concerted efforts to support development of the Butana region³ by designing and implementing the Butana Integrated Rural Development Project (BIRDP). This project became effective in July 2008 and closed in 2019. It largely achieved or outperformed its development goals⁴, namely to improve

in a sustainable manner the livelihoods and resilience to drought of the poor rural households.

Establishing good governance frameworks was identified by the local communities as the priority of BIRDP. A new form of empowerment of communities was piloted: knowledge-based peer networks. Several neighboring communities have come together under one such network⁵. It was set up as a legal entity which benefited from the existence of a Community Development Committee (CDC).

This priority followed the pressures on and changes in the development environment as perceived by the communities. These concern the current accelerated rate of dwindling availability and access to natural resources and institutions. Climate change-induced limitations are one driver. The other main driver is the high pressure on land exacerbated by outsiders and land grabbing⁶. Irrigated agriculture using sophisticated systems to pump groundwater resources mechanized rain-fed

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³ Butana occupies an estimated area of 81,497km² between latitude 14° 33' and 16°22' north and longitude 33°33' and 35°33' east. This location positions the area at the centre of the north-eastern Sudan, in a rectangular shape surrounded by River Atbara from the northeast, River Nile from the Northwest, Blue Nile from the Southwest and Gedaref-Kassala Road from southeast [Map 1]. The Butana area was for centuries and till the independence of Sudan in 1956 constituted one socio-economic and political unit. Today, it is fragmented between five States of Khartoum, Gedaref, River Nile, Gezira and Kassala States.

⁴ BIRDP Impact Assessment study [Oct.2019]

⁵ 'Introduction on RAAKS by Tayseer El Hadj Omer, case in SKIM Newsletter 4, April 2020'. For an application see: Application of RAAKS networking in the Rahad Agricultural Scheme, Tayseer El Hadj Omer, case in SKIM Newsletter 5, May 2020

⁶ Yasin Elhadary, Hillo Abdelatti, The Implication of Land Grabbing on Pastoral Economy in Sudan, *World Environment*, Vol. 6 No. 2, 2016, pp. 25-33

farming in addition to overgrazing by semi-nomadic people, and livestock rearing at the suburbs of the main towns are key factors. Yet the overriding reason is perceived to lie in the then failing governance of public institutions eroding traditional organizations and tenure arrangements for land and natural resources.

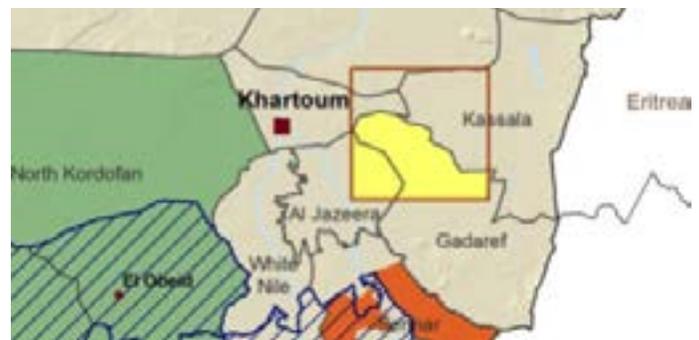
Communities have come together under a pyramid of knowledge-based peer networks. The networks approach was pioneered by the At-Tasab network of six communities in Shendi Locality, River Nile State. It was established in 2014 following a public assembly attended by representatives from the six communities with the main objective to protect their land that sustains natural resources as their principal source of livelihoods. Its solidarity and coherence-based services expanded to include social services such as secondary education for girls and telecommunication services.

2. Community Peer Networks in Butana Region

BIRDP successfully managed to constitute a vibrant and dynamic process of social and economic change in the Butana, a five State region East of Khartoum [see Map 1]. The people of the Butana are now organized in a wide range of legally recognized structures. Investment in people and their capacities has equipped them with knowledge, skills, and the power of voicing their interests and claiming their rights. Consequently, the Community Capability Index (CCI) has significantly gone up⁷.

The establishment of Community Networks provides an important impetus as well as a concrete indicator of community empowerment and the institutionalization of the social change process. The networks have brought about 186 communities of men, women, and youth together around shared interests, therefore adding to the power of the people and the enhancement of their voice while creating strong sense of belonging to each other. The structure of the Networks as exemplified by the organizational structure of Al-Tasab Network of the River Nile State (see Map 2) has provided an

Map 1: **The Butana Region**



Map 2: **The At-Tasab Network area**



⁷The Community Capability Index before BIRDP was described as limited standing at the level of 62%. The Mid Term Review of the project in 2012 estimated CCI as standing at 70%. One of the salient factors contributing to a better and capable community is the ability to organize. At present the Butana communities are highly organized in inclusive 378 CDCs, 18 Community Networks and a wide range of women and youth groups. This in addition to NRM-related functional interest groups (water harvesting, vegetables cultivation, range lands, forests, rangelands animal feed, livestock health) that involved 150,269 community members (53.8% females and 46.2% males). The 2018 BIRDP Impact Assessment Study judges that CCI among Butana communities now stands at around 80%.

important avenue for the empowerment of the communities and their struggle for their development rights.

The At-Tasab Network, established in 2014 by six communities in Shendi locality in River Nile State, represent a case of success. Six neighboring communities with 1,489 households came together under one legal entity. Each one of these communities now has a Community Development Committees (CDC) formed, is now empowered, and was registered with support of BIRD.

Results and achievements

One of the visible important indicators of empowerment is the capacity of the communities to take own initiatives to improve community livelihoods (e.g. schools, health centers, women center, electricity, wadi crossings, midwife, primary livestock market, etc). A 94% of the surveyed

respondents reported that they possessed Climate Resilient Community Village Plans (CRCVPs) or Community Development Plans (CDPs). The overwhelming majority of the households (91.3%) participated in the implementation of the initiatives in their villages either in cash or in kind. Moreover 97.4% of the surveyed people rated the positive benefits of the initiatives.

BIRD trained 14,554 community-based extension agents on diverse relevant issues to deliver effective extension services for their own communities and the communities around them. Improved knowledge on technologies are reflected in the high percentage of adopters (Figure 1). The highest level of adoption was reported in management of water which was the key entry point for development in Butana. The figures also reflect changes in attitude and behavior on the part of the communities which provides an important input of sustainability.

Figure 1: Adoption and application of improved Knowledge

Adoption percentages [%]	Agriculture production	Animal production	Forest range/land	Water
Less than 25%	5,8	3,9	9,8	3,5
25% to 49%	23,0	17,6	16,3	11,3
50% to 74%	28,3	30,6	33,6	20,2
75% +	42,9	47,9	40,3	65,0
All	100	100	100	100

Source : BIRD Impact Assessment Study (Oct.2019)

Capitalizing on indigenous knowledge and practices has improved land management practices, climate-resilient-land management; forest and rangelands rehabilitation, establishment of community forests and afforestation at village level, and institutionalization of fodder cultivation, hay collection and storing.

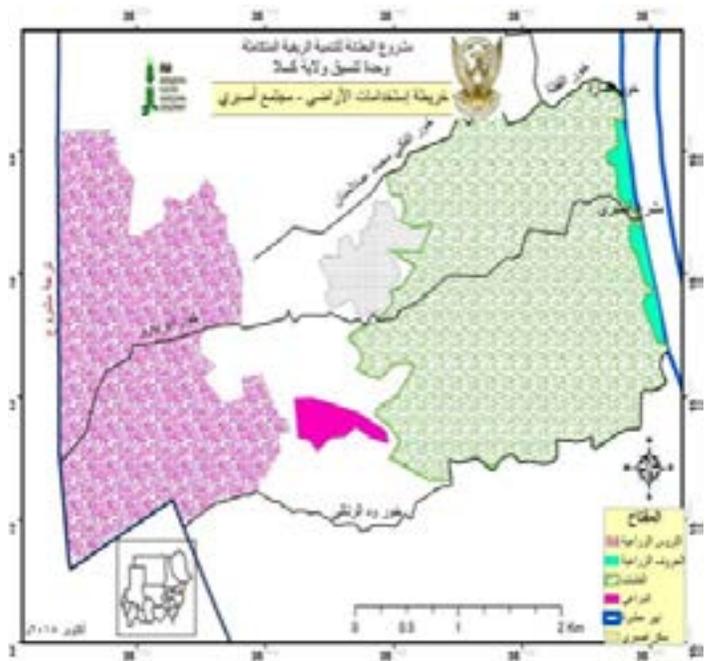
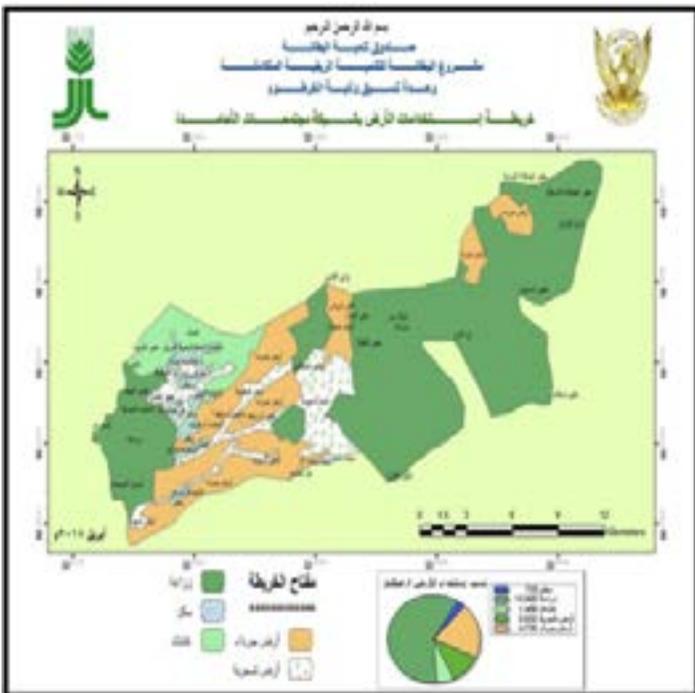
Various interest groups recognized by the CDCs are in place and include forests, range, water, agriculture, livestock, and fodder groups. The majority of the communities have managed to demarcate and map their lands and natural resources. The demarcation and mapping processes have provided for the integration of neighboring communities in cooperative negotiation processes. These have diffused tension while fostering confidence and mutual trust and a general sense of shared interests. Land use maps of the Al-Lahamda Network (left),

Khartoum State, and the Asbury Community (right), Kassala State, illustrate these profound changes.

Challenges

The Network still faces many ‘higher-level’ challenges and problems typifying the Butana Region. Among these problems are the heterogeneous and often times contradicting laws providing for registration of local institutions within Butana region. The dysfunctional Butana Development Fund adds to the list. It is assumed to address sustainability of BIRDP successes. However, it is deemed not very effective in mobilizing partnerships with financial institutions or private sector.

The networks keep momentum by engaging in the Sustainable Natural Resources and Livelihood Programme (SNRLP), a follow-up project scaling up good practices from BIRDP, *inter alia* on networking.



3. Networks as a source of Knowledge

The network, being a new grassroots institution in the prevailing rural development setting, has attracted the attention and interest of development actors and practitioners. This has resulted in many learning exchanges, especially to the first At-Tasab network. These learning exchanges were supported by documentation in different shapes and forms. All these events, including dissemination and awareness building, constitute a good platform for launching programmes on KM products sourced from networking.

Knowledge on the network methodology in Sudan is lodged at several levels. Former key staff of BIRDP, and now staff of SNLRP, are considered resource persons and champions of change. Furthermore, the IFAD Sudan Country Office (ICO), staff at the CCU and in the KM Core Group have been familiarized with the Network methodology. Most importantly, at community, village, and State levels there are ample knowledge bearers on what networks can achieve. The knowledge base on Networks is accessible on the website of the CCU (www.ifadccu.sd) and is frequently used.

4. At Tasab Community Network: its Evolution

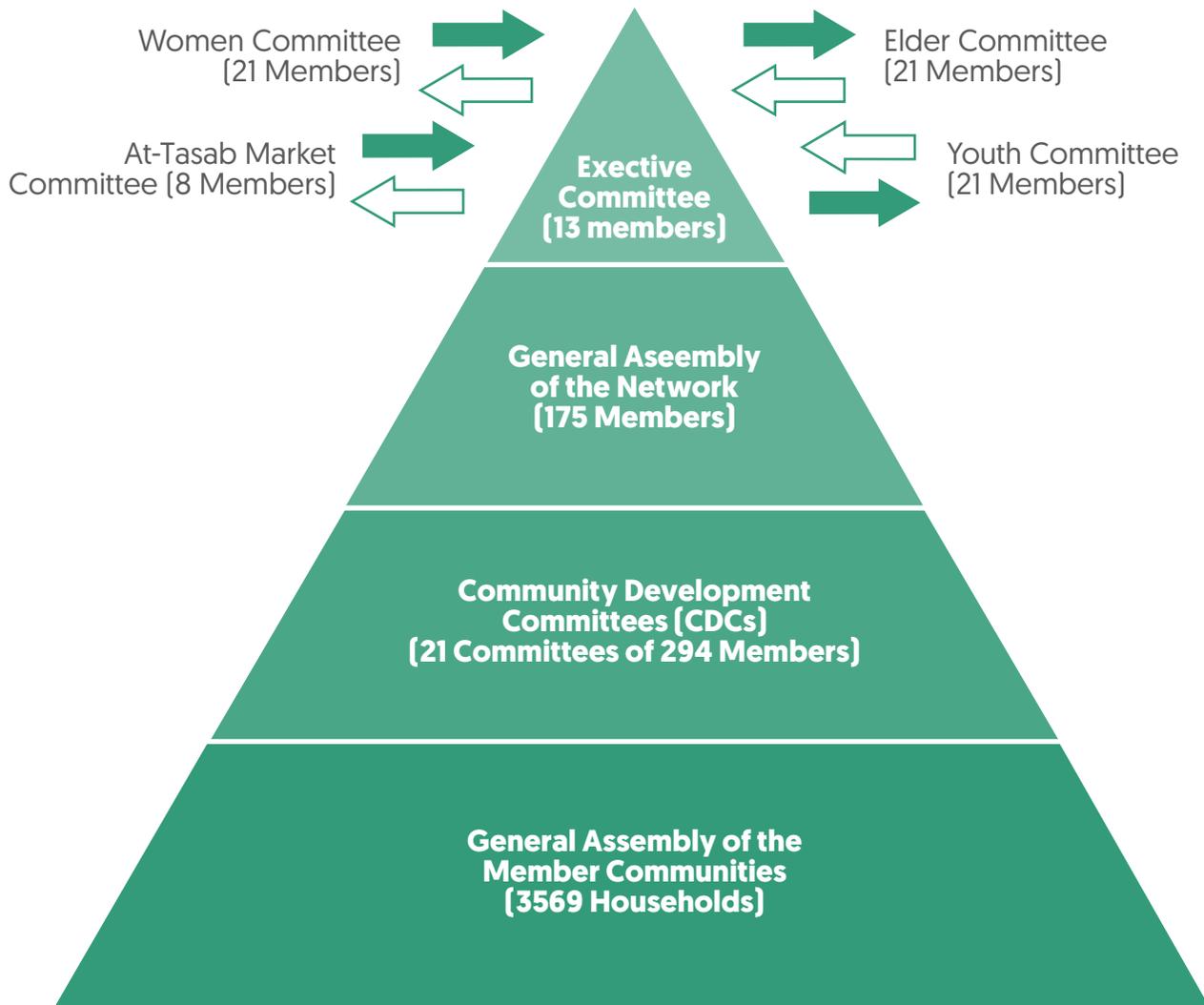
The Butana Integrated Rural Development Project (BIRDP) covered the Butana grazing area. It hosts approximately 8 million head of livestock, and the area is inhabited by 800,000 persons spread over about 700 villages. Butana is the home to many tribal groups in addition to many other groups of pastoral and non-pastoral nature who utilize the area on seasonal, occasional, and year-round basis.

Box 01: The problem of the Butana

The Butana is currently under enormous pressure. Following the abolition of the native administration system, and subsequently the traditional land use rights (1970s), the entire of the Butana area was converted to an “open grazing area” to people from within and outside the Butana. Since the early 1990’s, the expansion of semi mechanized farming sector expanded enormously inside the Butana region; particularly in Gedaref and Eastern Gezira. This is aggravated recently by investment in irrigated agriculture mainly by foreigners and more recently by gold mining. However, with the transition to a market economy and better availability of agricultural technology (mainly tractors), the Butana became subject to rapid agricultural expansion around the villages at the expense of pastoral lands (which come in addition to the long existing problems of lacking basic social services). One of the interventions to arrest encroachment and expansions is community networking for management of natural resources and sustainable development.

The organizational structure of the At-Tasab Network (see Figure 2) was agreed following a series of consultation meetings among the six communities. It involves representatives of the CDCs, women, and youth groups as well as elders, particularly those who have tribal administration capacity.

Figure 2: **Organizational Structure of At-Tasab Network**



The membership expanded from six to 21 communities distributed in 53 hamlets and so-called mother villages totaling 3569 households (comprising the General Assembly). Each community in the At-Tasab Network has a CDC (CDC members ranging from 12 to 15 persons) which works as an autonomous body selected by the members of the respective community. It is in charge of leading development at community level. Each CDC communicates and represents the link between the

network at the higher level and organizes and supervises all meetings of the Network at community level, e.g. compiling and submitting suggestions and proposals of the community as part of the Network plan.

Since its establishment, the Network has established community range reserves thus protecting community resources from the rapidly expanding agribusiness investments in the area.

5. The Network Strategies

The At-Tasab Network has defined six specific strategies which include:

- Mobilizing and integrating in the development path all community categories whether youth, women groups as well as elders
- Maximizing the benefits and impacts of BIRDP by sharing and scaling up successful knowledge along specific action plans clarifying what these are, and who are responsible, who are champions and timeline of action
- Diversifying into additional activities whether of direct or indirect impact on natural resource regeneration and restoration
- Creating partnerships with relevant stakeholders and actors in rural development in general and natural resources in particular
- Working to keep up integrity and solidarity among the member communities and the common interest as the top priorities
- Mobilizing and amalgamating more neighboring communities for further strengthening and empowerment.

6. Impacts of the At-Tasab Network

Over the years of its existence, the At-Tasab Network has achieved impacts for its members in:

Livelihood sources for improved NRM: The At-Tasab Network has managed to open up livelihood options for youth groups. As an example, ten youth members in the Um-Hatab community established an LPG bottle-refilling center after carrying out a feasibility study and signing an agreement with the CDC.

The ten youth members have set a norm with guidelines, procedures, and regulations to operate

the centre as a business and as well as to avail their ecosystem services to patrolling and developing natural resources (a forest of 42 has). Through the local supply of gas, nearly all of the households [350 HHs] have saved at least 30% of fuel cost due to cuts on expenditures on transport.

Improving crop and Natural Resource-based productivity: To maximize the benefits and impacts of BIRDP the At-Tasab Network has backed up BIRDP activities. One example is that the At-Tasab Network has managed to scale up the practice of water retention terraces and encouraged adoption amongst its member communities.



It has increased sorghum productivity from 250 to 855 kg/feddan as well as relieved pressure on natural resources (see Case 01). These terraces have also enhanced women access to and control over land which supports both food security and animal fodder production.

Access to a livestock market: In 2017, a primary livestock market was established by At-Tasab Network with support from BIRDP. The Commissioner of Shendi Locality authorized all market revenues to go to the At-Tasab Network. Currently subsidiary businesses are flourishing which add value to the market e.g. construction of small slaughterhouse, water yard, catering venues, mini market for consumption, household items and agricultural produce, veterinary hospital, etc.

Improved Social services: Two communication towers have been erected and constructed after At-Tasab Network has approached the National Telecommunication Corporation (NTC) at Khartoum. The NTC has encouraged the respective companies to avail this service to the communities. The mobile phone service has had a positive contribution towards natural resource patrolling and conservation as well as curbing and reducing cases of animal theft. The voluntary guards have managed to communicate with each other to improve patrolling. This service is followed in 2020 by construction of rural hospital with focus on maternity ward, with childhood health as well as primary health care.

Women empowerment: The At-Tasab communities were the first communities trained in the GALS Methodology in Butana region (see Case 02). Their

adaptation saw the 2018 creation of a women sub-committee of 21 members (one from each community). It was added to the Network Board to secure women roles and benefits. Linkages with Micro-Finance (MF) institutions were developed, in particular with the Sudanese Company for Rural Development (SCRD). The network committee managed to get an important loan for 7 saving and credit groups. Moreover, the Network secured that 30% of the stalls established around the livestock market are allocated for women. Currently, women in the network communities freely participate in NRM forums and express themselves on behalf of their communities.

7. Champions and Drivers of Peer-to-Peer Development Networks

Less than one decade after the birth of the first network (At-Tasab), the communities count with many champions. Some of the network champions underwent further training, notably in facilitating networking skills. They have become key persons in communities with regard to networking, in and beyond the Butana.

Box 02: Testimony by Al-Fadil Abdel Aaty, chairperson of At-Tasab Network

Mr. Al-Fadil Abdel Aaty is the chairperson of At-Tasab Network. He was born towards the end of 1960s in Um Hatab village which is in the middle of the At-Tasab area. Al-Fadil was one of the few pioneers who were behind the idea of community networking. As the pilot-guide of the At-Tasab Network he was the flagship of networking in Butana Region. A true hero, he is a role model of hard sincere work. He is engaged to see his communities resilient to drought

and climate change by securing NR tenure, constructing dams, hafirs and terraces for rainwater retention and diversion, building crossings and culverts across wadis, etc. Mr. Al-Fadil is planning for better health, education, and communication services. Also, he forges links with micro-finance institutions and outlets to foreign markets for medicinal herbs like Cassia Italica which is endemic to the area. He prefers to not look back to miseries and grievances e.g. land grabbing, poverty, drought, women burden and work overload, climate harshness, etc. Mr. Al-Fadil now is the trainer, facilitator, storyteller, and the champion in networking for the new development paradigm in rural Butana.

8. Enabling factors of Establishing and Scaling up of Networks

One of the prime success factors of At-Tasab, as a first network in Butana, is that it was born at a time of major land grabbing in the Butana. In this context of asymmetric power relations, certain enabling factors were necessary for the networks to come alive and thrive. The following non-exhaustive list enumerates some key enabling factors:

- Mobilization over time of supporting regulations and legislation at all levels of the government system to encourage establishment of networks as well as to help them in implementing their plans and priorities
- The existence of some strong institutions with the capacity and power to decide on issues outside

the village territory and VDC/CDCs to adopt the initiative and support the birth of strong networks

- The presence of potential actors of good capacity to mobilize resources for integrated programmes, including rural infrastructure (e.g. roads, water, warehouses) facilitating further enabling conditions for rural communities to be engaged in productive activities
- Existence of good institutional structure (CDC/ VDC) specifically at the locality level
- The existence of male and female champions knowledgeable on the whole networking process and with capacity and skills to transfer the good practice to other communities
- The At-Tasab network itself became an enabling factor for scaling up networks by using documentation and related means of communication e.g. social media, websites⁸, radio, video shots, TV, share fair, exhibition, leaflets, and brochures. Visits to the At-Tasab network and using cross-learning visits were important.

9. Lessons Learned and Challenges of Community Networking

The following are examples of knowledge assets, tools and approaches, reflected as lessons learned:

- The community network does not compete nor replace the Village Development Committee (VDC) nor the Community Development Committee (CDC)
- A first requirement to establishing a network is the existence of strong VDCs/CDCs. Second is bringing together common interests shared by the proposed villages for networking. Shared

⁸ The Al-Khalwat village, member of At-Tasab Network, set up its own website

forestland, rangeland or water sources are examples. Thirdly, establishing a common understanding and clear definition of community networking is incredibly important. Fourthly, provide in legal documents for the perceptions and interests of communities. Fifth, let the villages/communities be the drivers of the ideas and approaches of networking

- The formation of the network and network committees takes time, a lot of time to shoulder the responsibilities
- The Networks, that are defending communal land and natural resources and are lobbying for their development rights, must be brought together in collaborative processes that add to their power, enhances their voice while creating a strong sense of belonging to each other and to the Butana at large.



Stock Route Demarcation



Case 04: Natural Resources Governance - the process of multi-stakeholder consultations

Authors: Mohammed Elhassan Ali¹
and Faisal El Jack²

Executive Summary

Non-conducive land legislation and the abolishment of the Native Administration put communal land rights in conflict with modern laws. A new bottom-up Natural Resources Governance Framework and policies governing co-management of stock routes were informed by multi-stakeholder consultations fostered by IFAD co-funded projects. The consultations encouraged communities and their networks to share their knowledge in consultative natural resource management forums and conflict resolution processes.

1. Introduction

Competition over land and natural resources has been the source of tension and conflicts for decades in many parts of the Sudan. Rain-fed and irrigated agriculture, and recently gold mining, are competing increasingly with pastoralism for the land and water resource base. Blocked migration corridors and denied access to grazing land or water points create tensions and foster conflict. The effects of climate change and continuous land degradation have further increased pressure on natural resources and intensified existing conflicts over land and natural resources. Furthermore, the encroachment of semi-mechanized farming and private investors and an influx of refugees and

internally displaced peoples (IDPs) as a result of on-going conflicts in the region has increased the competition for land³. This situation has been dramatically aggravated after the secession of South Sudan, resulting in dry season grazing lands no longer being accessible for pastoralists in the north.

In Sudan, land is crucial to support livelihoods, especially for the rural poor who derive their main economic activities from various land uses, in the form of crop farming or extensive livestock production. Located in the Arid and Semi-Arid land of the larger Horn of Africa, 70% of Sudan's 37 million people live in rural area, of which 20% are largely nomadic. Poverty incidence is the highest among livestock herders in the traditional rainfed sector.

Box 01: Understanding mobile pastoralism in the Sudan

With an estimated livestock population of 104 million heads, the extensive livestock production system contributes significantly to Sudan's national growth domestic product. Livestock contributes the largest share of agriculture growth (46%) and possibly up to 90% comes from smallholders and migratory producers. Government policies have recognized

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³ Yasin Elhadary, Hillo Abdelatti, The Implication of Land Grabbing on Pastoral Economy in Sudan, World Environment, Vol. 6 No. 2, 2016, pp. 25-33

the sector as key for poverty reduction and among the best placed to fuel growth and replace oil as strategic export commodities. The performance and resilience of pastoral economies largely depends on seasonal movements of herds. Key building blocks of traditional animal husbandry regimes include access to natural seasonal rangelands, water points and veterinary services. Understanding mobile pastoralism is key to strengthening the capacity of pastoral institutions, to prevent competition over natural resource and provide a supporting environment for various resource users in the wake of growing market opportunities. Peace⁴ and prosperity building are overarching objectives. However, despite an increasing recognition that investment in the livestock sub-sector can ensure broad based and inclusive growth, much remains to be done to inform and raise the awareness of decision makers about mobile pastoralist systems which represents the cornerstone of pastoral economies.

The Government of Sudan (GOS) has over the years drawn its land policies and practices through a series of non-conducive land legislations. The abolishment of the Native Administration put communal land rights in conflict with modern laws. Different administrations and systems imposed fragmented policies, while legal and institutional regimes dealt with each natural resource in a different manner. This did not exactly foster integrated,

communities-driven, and coherent natural resource governance framework set for a post-conflict context ensuring sustainable governance, i.e. use and management of natural resources in the region.

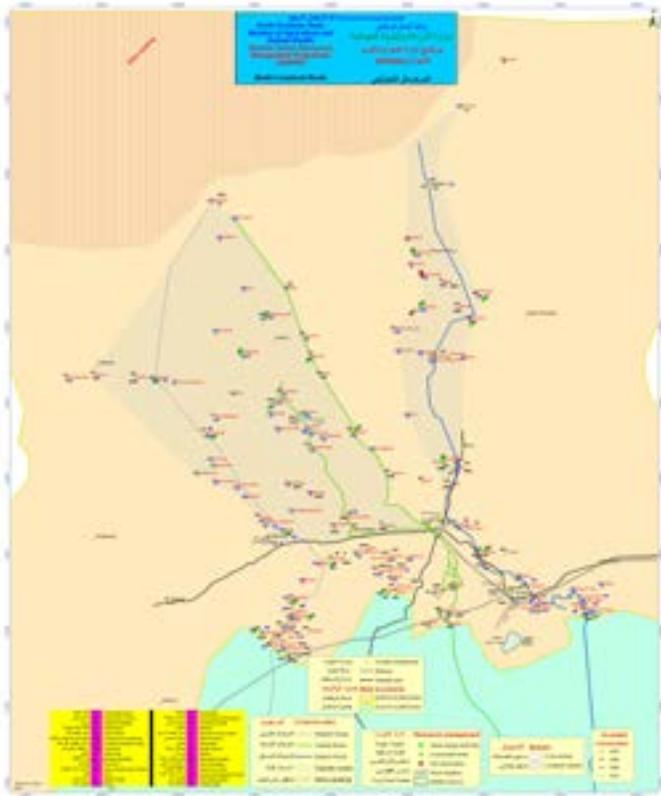
2. Using multi-stakeholder consultations for sustainable governance of natural resources

GOS together with its development partners World Bank and IFAD created space for trying out approaches towards sustainable governance of natural resources in a post-conflict region. The World Bank ILPMP⁵ developed effective models for community-based natural resource management in which multi-stakeholder consultations were essential as a knowledge tools.

IFAD included lessons learned from ILPMP in the design of two successor projects. These scaled up informed multi-stakeholder consultations as a key knowledge sharing tool to achieving natural resources governance. The Western Sudan Resource Management Program (WSRMP, 2006-2017) in the Western part of the Sudan, covered the Kordofan region, while the Butana Integrated Rural Development Programme (BIRDIP, 2008-2019) addressed issues in the Central-Eastern region of Butana (see Map).

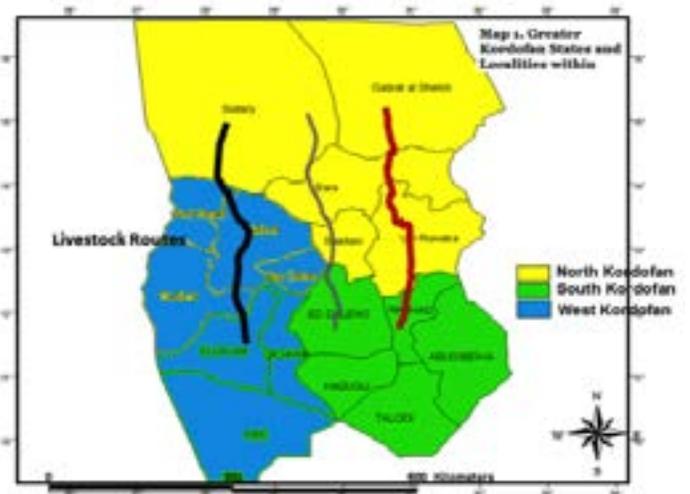
⁴ Egis BCEOM International (2011), Study to Assess Factors Contributing to Conflict among Pastoralists/Agro-Pastoralists and Sedentary Farmers. Khartoum: Improving Livestock Production and Marketing Project (ILPM) – Ministry of Animal Resources and Fisheries.

⁵ ILPMP Pilot Grant 2013 Completion Report, World Bank. The pilot phase of the ILPMP covered North Kordofan, Blue Nile, White Nile, and Sennar States.



Map of WSRMP Stock Routes and Watering Points for livestock

Western Sudan Resources Management Programme



The Kordofan region is the main livestock producer in the country, the region consists of three states with total animal population about 50 million head following traditional pattern of raising, mobility, and communal use of grazing resources. In order to warrant seasonal mobility, pastoralists developed three major Stock Routes (SR) linking summer, wet grazing areas with their homeland [see Map]. Over time the customary norms governing this mobility became weak due to bespoke factors but the abolishment of the Native Administration (NA) ranks as a top reason.

WSRMP improved equity, efficiency, and stability of economy through rationalization of regulations related to NRM and enabling access of poor rural people to services. In NRM, it focused on participatory rangeland management, forestry, soil conservation and water provision. However, management of resources remained its weakest point requiring a people-driven Natural Governance Framework allowing for mapping, demarcation, and legalization of stock routes.

Box 02: Key tools for Natural Resources Governance

In Kordofan key tools for the co-management of natural resources were the demarcation of Stock Routes (SRs) and establishing Conflict Resource Centers (CRCs). In accordance with the specificities of the Butana Region, networking and Natural Resource Forums achieved the Natural Resource Governance Framework.

Preparatory steps included: awareness raising and orientation sessions on targeting; organization, formulation, and legalization of grassroots' institution; community mobilization for supporting common initiatives and trust and ownership building, and capacity building of community institutions and the development teams.

BIRD, implemented largely in parallel, sustainably improved the livelihoods and resilience to drought of poor rural households in the Butana. It established a coherent and cost-effective natural resources governance framework (NRGF) that ensures regulated access of community-based organizations to land and water resources of the Butana. Both IFAD-funded projects extensively used multi-stakeholder consultations to encourage communities and their networks⁶ or formal organizations, such as CDC/VDC, to participate and share their knowledge in consultative natural resource management forums and conflict resolution processes. This was backed by building the awareness of local communities on their communal land rights and introducing participatory approaches through which

communities were able to raise issues related to land rights, influence and consolidate land policies at locality, state and national level [Box 03].

Box 03: The NRGF Methodology in BIRD

Here the NRGF was achieved by a participatory bottom-up process focused on knowledge sharing through consultations. It has seven characteristics namely:

- 1. Result oriented process*
- 2. Commitment to multi-stakeholder participatory processes at different levels*
- 3. Recognition of the potential positive power of the poor*
- 4. Investment in community organization and institutions for collective action and advocacy*
- 5. Recognition and support for indigenous knowledge*
- 6. Equality and Equity: equal opportunity to rights of ownership, access and benefit sharing by all members of stakeholders, and*
- 7. Co-investment in knowledge production.*

The process has three underlying assumptions:

- 1. Reform in natural resources management is prerequisite for poverty reduction as well as for the social and political stability in Butana and the country at large*
- 2. Support from higher levels of GOS for the NRMG reform processes is needed yet difficult to mobilize given political agendas*
- 3. Communities have untapped power that can harness change the course of events and lead to the required reform in natural resource management and governance.*

⁶ Case 03: The At-Tasab Network

Consultative Natural Resource Forums

In BIRDP the bottom-up approach of multi-stakeholder consultations was started at the community level by conducting a series of consultative Natural Resources Forums (NRF). Participating villages/communities are usually divided into clusters of villages with a high similarity. Each cluster, which can be composed of 7 to 10 neighboring villages/communities, constitutes an NRF. Each community/village is represented in the NRF by participation of selected members of Community Development Committee (CDC) to which a network is affiliated [see case 03].

The entire community of the NRF hosting village, including youth and women, are mobilized to participate in the NRF with the idea to share good practices in natural resource management and land tenure arrangements. Moreover, representatives from some neighboring villages, which are not part of the project's direct beneficiaries, are invited by the hosting village to attend the forum. In each NRF, the total number of participants ranges from 150 to 200 persons, with women and youth representing approximately 25% and 20%, respectively.

Co-management of Stock Routes

WSRMP focused on introducing the co-management approach, a different if similar governance framework, for managing of stock routes. This hybrid approach addresses managing mobility of pastoralists and herds. Mobility is a livelihood coping strategy to avoid harsh environments in the South in the rainy season and to benefit from early pastures in North.

The WSRMP co-management teams started by managing the three major stock routes in respectively North, West and South Kordofan states.

Box 04: The History of Stock Routes in Kordofan

Historically SRs in Kordofan were managed by leaders of the Native Administration (NA). These united pastoralists and settlers, and by consensus negotiated mobility requirements and arrangements to start the annual livestock movement within agreed routes. This governance arrangement collapsed after abolishment of the NA in 1969 and management of Natural Resources and of stock routes came under the responsibility of Local Government. The newly established system was not able to deal with the complex nature of NRM and in particular with transhumant pastoralists affairs. Such failure was reflected in an increasing number of resource-based conflicts, abuse and degradation of resources.

Following the Transhumant Pastoralists Act 1999 and Native Administration Act 2006, innovative NRM practitioners and leaders of the revived NA concurred that co-management needs to be supported by strong legislation and specialized cadre from government, and build on past experiences and knowledge from both customary and government systems.

WSRMP proceeded in co-managing SRs in this way and set up co-management teams. These teams started negotiations with landowners, local governments, the Ministry of animal resources, the Water Corporation, and other concerned bodies to keep the SR open. Over 70 Co-Management Agreements were reached and implemented.

Supportive government acts helped in successful implementation of co-management, e.g. the Federal Grazing Resources Act 2015 and several local ordinances issued by concerned localities gave legality for teams to deal with management of SRs

and to organize mobility. This resulted in a reduction of resource- based conflicts, easier movement of herds, and most importantly, having pastoralists empowered to voice their interests to policy makers and to government concerned departments.

The co-management teams are linked with Pastoralists Field Schools (PFSs) for the purpose of knowledge sharing and with Conflict Resolution Centers (CRCs). Through this arrangement co-management teams became capable to deal with the management of NR and stock routes utilizing the new approach by themselves.

3. The storyline of implementing change

The establishment⁷ of the NRGF in BIRDP is characterized by four key elements: i) Community Organization and Networking, ii) Natural Resource Forum (NRF), iii) Interest groups, and iv) Climate Resilient Community Village Plans (CRCVP).

Community Organization and Networking

BIRDP invested heavily in organizing communities and building their capacities. 378 community development committees CDCs were established and legalized. CDCs played an important role in protecting and promoting NRM governance. To that end, sub-committees for water, rangeland, forests, agriculture, and livestock were established and capacitated.

A similarly important development in community organization are community networks connecting neighboring villages around natural resources

and shared interest. During 2014-2019 a total of 22 networks have been established bringing 186 communities together around the issue of NRM. A typical example of these networks is Al Tasab Network in River Nile State established in 2014 (see Case 03). This Network has managed to effectively protect community resources from the rapidly expanding agribusiness investment in the area and establishing community range reserves. All networks were trained and capacitated by BIRDP and are active in mobilizing their constituencies to pro-actively participate in community forums and the discussions around the NRGF.

Box 05: Implemented Plan of Action for establishing the NRGF (2015 – 2019)

1. Natural Resource Forums performed:

- I. Conducting [24] NRFs at Community Level, 2014-2015*
- II. Conducting [9] NRFs at Locality level, 2016*
- III. Conducting [5] NRFs workshops at State level, 2017*
- IV. Undertaking research [4 studies] to inform NRGF*
- V. Conducting [1] Inter-states NRFs at Federal level, 2019*
- VI. Validation of the NRGF*
- VII. Printing out and dissemination of the Framework [in Arabic and English].*

⁷ Inspired from: Supervision Report, August 2019, Technical Paper 1: Prepared by Omer Egemi, Faculty of Geography and Environmental Sciences, University of Khartoum, 2019

2. Key Issues deliberated in the NRFs:

a) *The state of NRs (water, rangeland, forestland, farmland, livestock and livestock routes)*

b) *How to activate, revise, strengthen and or reinforce some existing laws and regulations:*

I. Village Sanctuary: haram al-qaraiya

II. Grazing Line: khat al-mara'a

III. Tree belt: 10% in mechanized fain-fed farming, and 5% in mechanized irrigated farming

IV. Use of wide disc in plough for farming in traditional sector

c) *Critical gaps in existing policies (examples):*

I. Gold mining (license, revenues, SCRs, public health, environmental considerations)

II. Communal water management

III. Rangeland management

d) *Mapping and documenting good practices to inform the envisaged NRGF*

3. Synthesis of customary practices and regulatory frameworks in NRM

I. Mapping and documenting customary arrangements for NRM

II. Practices to document, harmonize and integrate existing and contradicting customary and statutory systems to NRM of laws, regulations, and good practices among different stakeholders

4. Arrangements for the implementation of NRGF.

NRM-related functional interest groups focusing on water harvesting, vegetables cultivation, range lands, forests protection and rehabilitation, rangeland rehabilitation and conservation, animal feed, livestock health have been established and capacitated. These groups involved 57,621 individuals at community level including 24,806 (43%) females and 32815 (57%) males. The experiences, best practices and challenges gained by these groups provided an important contribution to inform the NRGF.

Box 06: Examples of NRGF in practice in Butana Region

a) Community Level NRFs

- *Adoption of protection of communal as well as government forests by a communal women group in Abu 'Ushar*
- *Provision of incentives or salary payments for forest guards as in the case of Shorfa village community*
- *Community lobbying in taking collective action in resisting the establishment of new Ceramic factory inside 'Andalha' forest*
- *Adoption of cultivating quar species as fodder in traditional farming with annual increase from 180 feddans in 2015 to 314 feddans in 2017*

b) Locality and State Levels NRFs

- *Fire line demarcation to protect rich open rangelands increased from 100 km in 2017 to 2000 km in 2018 as a result of the joint effort between Department of Rangeland and Pastures at state, locality and local communities*

- The Education Department at Locality agreed to introduce “Green Education” in schools at Asubri and Umm Rish villages per requests from the respective communities
- The Minister of Agriculture and Livestock in Kassala State issued a decree and formed a committee composed of relevant institutions and customary native administration to design and implement public awareness media program aiming at promoting the culture of nature conservation
- An East Gezira Locality issued a local order in 2017 aiming at regulating land uses in order to minimize conflicts between pastoralists and farmers. Gedaref state reactivated and reinforced the law restricting cultivation beyond the grazing line (latitude 14' - 45°)

Box 07: The WSRMP consultation process towards co-management of Stock Routes

The consultation processes were conducted in the following way:

a) *Legal Reform: Pastoralists and resource users deal with the region as one ecological unit yet each state within Kordofan region has its own NRM legislation. Hence, this legislation was harmonized by: Collecting all state legislations related to NRM; Consulting judiciary authority for legal advice; The actual harmonization process; and Issuance and circulation of the amended legislation.*

b) *Policy Reform: Technical teams drafted proposals for enabling environmental policies. After introductions, approval was obtained of the proposed policies by a council of ministers within each state, followed by the endorsement of approved policies by the Wali (Governor) of the State. This process takes more than two years, yet the real challenge is to shift from theory to practice.*

c) *Institution Legalization of community institutions and implementation of a capacity development programme.*

d) *Mobile Extension Team (METs) accompanied pastoral communities during their stock routes mobility phases to assess the situation on the ground and to help in building capacity of pastoral civil society institutions. These METs shared knowledge with other METs and co-management teams.*

e) *Local Extension Networkers (LEWs) were deployed at local community level.*

f) *Co-management teams were set up for each unit along the stock route.*

Coming together in the Butana, on July 13, 2019 an inter-State forum was organized under the theme: ‘Towards a Coherent NR Governance Framework for Butana’, under auspices of the Under-Secretary, the Acting Minister, Ministry of Agriculture and Forests⁸. Issues that require inter-state and or federal support, collaboration and/or coordination with regard to policies, strategies, legislations and law enforcement mechanisms pertained to natural

⁸ The inter-State Level Forum was attended by wide range of stakeholders at different levels of governance including relevant Federal Ministries, Central Coordination Unit of IFAD funded projects in Sudan, IFAD country office, BDF, state level line ministries, relevant departments and state legal advisors; authorities at locality level and community representatives.

resource management within Butana, and between the Butana and the surroundings were thoroughly discussed and debated. Recommendations for the realization of the NRGF have been made and incorporated in the document which has been unanimously endorsed.

Box 08: the recommendations endorsed at higher federal level to realize the NRGF are:

1. From natural resource governance perspective, the participants endorse the idea of dealing with Butana as a unified ecological system, different from the surroundings, for it is a rangeland that provides livelihood base for rural communities while contributing considerably with animal resources in national economy.

2. Validate and support the produced NRGF for Butana and collaborate in its implementation process to ensure sustainable natural resource management and utilization.

3. The participants validate and support implementation of the proposed policies, institutional and legislative arrangements outlined in the NRGF document with aim of achieving coherent natural resource governance in Butana

4. As the BIRDP is coming to the end, it was agreed that the federal Ministry of Agriculture and Forest shall supervise and lead the process of implementing the NRGF's proposed policies, institutional and legislative arrangements in collaboration with relevant stakeholders at federal, state, locality and community levels as well as with Butana Development Fund and any existing and or potential international partners.

5. Ensure the inclusion of NRGF, the outcomes and recommendations of this federal NR forum into BIRDP Exit Strategy as well as in the annual plans

of the five states and their nine localities with close coordination in implementation process.

6. Establishment of following up/ taskforce committee under leadership of the Under Secretary of Ministry of Agriculture and Forest composed of representatives of Federal, state, locality, and community levels, with major task of ensuring operationalization of NRGF and its outlined policies, legislative and institutional arrangements.

7. The participants recommend that NRGF as an idea, process, and outcome can be considered as good practice that deserves to be consolidated further in Butana while being replicated in other similar parts of Sudan by IFAD and or other relevant national or international agencies.

Coming together in the Butana, on July 13, 2019 an inter-State forum was organized under the theme: 'Towards a Coherent NR Governance Framework for Butana', under auspices of the Under-Secretary, the Acting Minister, Ministry of Agriculture and Forests. Issues that require inter-state and or federal support, collaboration and/or coordination with regard to policies, strategies, legislations and law enforcement mechanisms pertained to natural resource management within Butana, and between the Butana and the surroundings were thoroughly discussed and debated. Recommendations for the realization of the NRGF have been made and incorporated in the document which has been unanimously endorsed.

4. Champions and Drivers of Multi-Stakeholder Consultation Processes in the Sudan

The dynamism of the process and enthusiasm for this consultation process has sprouted champions and drivers at all levels. For instance, at community forums the champions and drivers were drawn from the participants from both CDCs and the influential, knowledgeable tribal/native administration leaders i.e. a wide base/range of participation. Usually two or three participants (considering gender and youth) from each community forum were selected to participate in the higher-level forums (locality, state, and federal level). This opportunity, having access to different actors and modes of implementation, has helped them to improve their championship with better knowledge and skills in consultations.

5. The Enabling Factors of Multi-Stakeholder Consultation Processes

Through adopting the consultation process, as an inclusive knowledge sharing methodology, BIRDP achieved the establishment of the Natural Resources Governance Framework (NRGF).

WSRMP achieved effective co-management stock route governance models. These successes represent a breakthrough in the Sudanese context, given its crucial importance in helping communities sustainably manage natural resources and reduce conflicts among end users (settled farmers and transhumant pastoralists). Its greater success is a result of an interwoven process that took into consideration all facets and factors like that underline a lengthy learning process.

Moreover, when improving the livelihoods of small rural producers, flexibility in response to the prevailing and evolving political economy is key. IFAD redesigned WSRMP and BIRDP to match the prevailing situation on the ground which enabled these projects to achieve their respective goals.

Box 09: Enabling factors for change

- *Respect for diverse perspectives and differences, appreciation of others, non-interference, recognition, and support for indigenous knowledge*
- *The existence of strong grassroots' institutions and tribal native administration, highly sensitized and empowered by using different tools and instruments like the Community Capability Index (CCI)⁹*
- *The existence of knowledgeable and influential communities' leaders representing legal local entities and tribal administration*
- *A continuum from bottom to top and vice versa, 'lived' relations between the locality, state and the federal line ministries*
- *Government authorities at all levels welcomed participation and collaborated with existing communities' organizations and structures, including customary authorities; both authorities adhered to integrity and commitment and justification of shared rule by a community*
- *The consultation processes were inclusive in engagement of people involved or affected by ecosystems and landscapes*
- *Existence of good institutional structure at all levels (locality, state and federal level);*
- *Peaceful situation especially in areas prone to or affected by protracted conflict.*

⁹ The CCI before BIRDP was described as limited standing at the level of 62%. In 2012 it was estimated at 70% and by completion of the project in 2019 the BIRDP Impact Assessment Study estimated it around 80%.

6. Lessons Learned and Challenges of Consultation Processes

Consultations a stakeholder-driven process that has not taken the short-cut of imposing change but has taken the long route of a sequence of four exchange levels (community, locality, state, and interstate/federal levels). This sequence was reflected in all aspects e.g. from preparation, in content, by participation, through presentations, engaging discussions, fostering adoption, sharing findings, disseminating outcomes, making decisions, and enjoying impacts.

Box 10: Lessons learned of the consultation processes

- To include participants from non-target villages/communities in these NRFs, i.e. those communities who were not covered by BIRDP. This relates to shared or common resources and interest, avoidance of disillusionment, and support for spillover and scale up effects
- The NRF constitutes an entry point for the establishment for community networks
- Setting up a knowledge share fair and exhibition beside NRF can add more benefits and results (scale up);
- Preparations at all levels take time, therefore clear timeline for the activities should be developed and discussed early
- Forums at high level (federal) should be instructive and concise to avoid protracted discussions that may lead to missing out of key decision-makers
- Venue for convening a forum is an issue at all levels and therefore merits receive due attention

- *The practice of bottom up, participatory consultative natural resource forums in Butana demonstrates that good and effective governance of natural resources, particularly water resources, starts at community level, then passes through locality, state, inter-state, and federal levels of governance. Even in a fragile context with pressure from people displaced by climate change and other socioeconomic forces, it is possible to establish a coherent and cost-effective natural resource governance framework that ensures sustainable management of natural resources.*
- *The Community Capability Index (CCI), as used by BIRDP, proffers to be a good instrument to influence policy process beside Bottom up NR Forums.*

BIRDP and WSRMP faced the following challenges in its journey to improved NR governance:

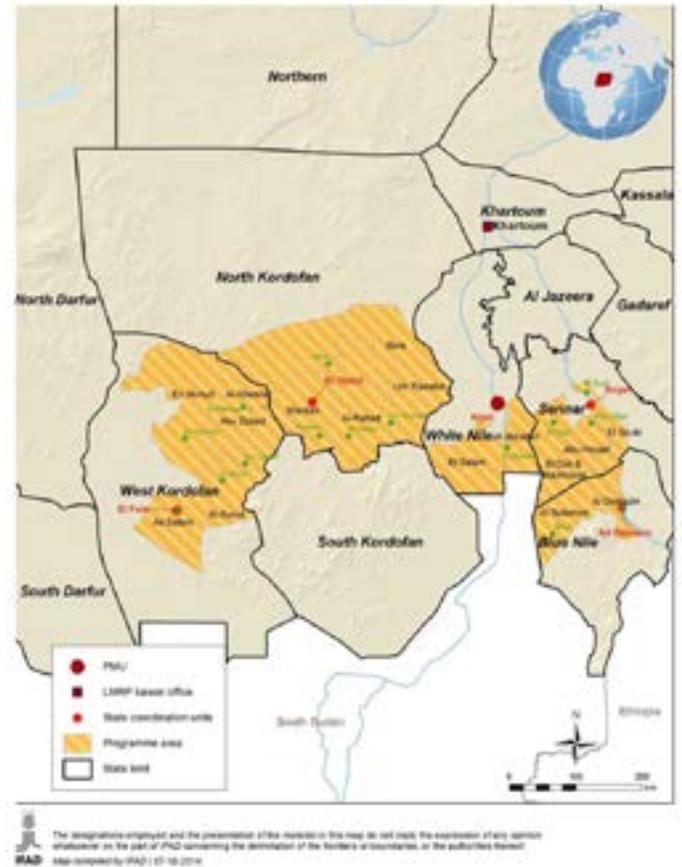
- Time consuming process in face of short-lived project or time-bound funding
- The process is relatively of high cost
- The process needs strong coordination specially with bodies outside line departments
- No immediate strong links, cooperation, or support from all of Central government
- Poor capacity in some key government cadres
- The high turnover among the staff in key government institutional structures
- Reluctance of government to reform land policies because of its peace agenda under negotiation with rebel fronts and/ or affecting sources of financial revenue for State treasurer
- Volatile and shaky political situation.

7. Scaling up of Consultation Processes into the IFAD Sudan Portfolio

The Livestock Marketing and Resilience Program (LMRP, 2018-2024) is a relatively new project defined by GOS and IFAD and covers five states [see Map]. It has adopted the co-management approach, pastoralist field schools (PFS) and conflict resolution centers (CRC) as good practices, scaling up many lessons learned from WSRMP.

The central strategy of another relatively new project, IAMDP 2017-2023 [see Figure 1: Map of IAMDP], will improve household incomes and resilience to climate change of the smallholder producers, rural women, and youth in rainfed areas of Sinnar, North, South and West Kordofan States. Project objectives are met through better access to improved agricultural inputs and services, enhanced business skills, access to rural finance and appropriate marketing support, and better organization of producer's associations. IAMDP will (i) consolidate the investment activities supported by the ending projects; and (ii) move from demonstration to scale-up to the same and additional geographical areas where other smallholder farmers face similar challenges on low crop productivity, limited access to market and finance, and vulnerability to climate change. Resource persons from the staff and communities have managed to gain good knowledge and skills through training and active participation in these long change processes. They are now qualified to lead NRM Governance consultations in different places in the Sudan.

Figure 1: Map of IAMDP



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