

**DARFUR COMMUNITY PEACE AND STABILITY
FUND - PHASE II EXTENSION PROJECT**

EVALUATION REPORT



March 2024

ABOUT THE REPORT

This is an evaluation report for the DCPSF Phase II extension projects which were implemented by seventeen implementing partners across the five states of Darfur in Sudan.

The report provides the projects relevance, achievements of intended results, efficiency, sustainability, coherence to existing peacebuilding frameworks, key lessons learned, innovative approaches and best practices observed during project life. It also assesses whether the seventeen projects were executed in a conflict sensitive manner and draws actionable recommendations for future references.

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The contents in the evaluation report does not necessarily reflect either the views of DCPSF or that of its implementing partners. The reports reflects the key findings from desk reviews of DCSF phase II extension project monitoring data, other related literatures and key informant interviews of selected stakeholders involved in the implementation of DCPSF phase II extension across the five states of Darfur.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CDA	Conflict and Development Analysis
DCPSF	Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund
DDS	Darfur Development Strategy
CA	Context Analysis
CBRMs	Community Based Reconciliation Mechanisms
CFR	Case Fatality Rate
COVID-19	Corona Virus Disease 2019
FMU	Fund Management Unit
GoS	Government of Sudan
IDPs	Internally Displaced People
MDTF	Multi-Donor Trust Fund
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisation
SLF	State Liaison Function
TOR	Term of Reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UN	United Nations
USD	United States Dollars

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction/Background

The primary objective of this comprehensive evaluation was to critically assess the efficacy and impact of the Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF) Phase II project, which spans 17 distinct initiatives across the five states of Darfur, alongside the COVID19 small grants and the Gender Initiative (GaPI) initiated in 2019. Employing the OECD/DAC criteria, the evaluation focuses on gauging the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of the DCPSF's endeavors in fostering peacebuilding at the grassroots level. Special attention is given to the program's inclusivity, particularly the engagement of women and youth, its strategic response to Sudan's shifting socio-political landscape, and its contribution towards establishing sustainable peacebuilding mechanisms. Furthermore, the assessment aims to scrutinize the program's alignment with broader peacebuilding frameworks, its adherence to the Women, Peace and Security and Youth, Peace and Security agendas, and its approach to conflict-sensitive implementation. The evaluation is poised to uncover best practices and innovative strategies employed by the DCPSF, deriving lessons that could shape future peacebuilding initiatives in Sudan. This exercise is pivotal in guiding UN agencies, international NGOs, donor governments, and other stakeholders as they refine their strategies for continued involvement in Darfur's peacebuilding efforts.

Since 2003, Darfur has been ensnared in conflict driven by complex factors including land disputes, competition for resources, and ethnic tensions, affecting nearly 2.6 million IDPs. Efforts by the Transitional Government and international interventions like UNAMID have seen limited success in stabilizing the region. The Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF), established as a UN Multi-Partnership Trust Fund, has played a pivotal role in local peacebuilding and social cohesion through dialogue, mediation, and reconciliation. Focusing on grassroots approaches, DCPSF's initiatives aim to rebuild trust among communities, with a strong emphasis on gender mainstreaming and inclusivity to ensure comprehensive participation in peace efforts. Despite these efforts, the region remains volatile, underscoring the need for sustained, community-based peacebuilding strategies to address the root causes of conflict.

Methodology

The evaluation of the Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF) project employed an agile, participatory approach focused on reviewing secondary sources of data and collecting insights from a wide range of stakeholders due to the inaccessibility of primary beneficiaries caused by the ongoing civil conflict in Sudan. This approach involved collaborating closely with the DCPSF technical secretariat to provide monitoring data and identify key informants with direct experiences with the project's primary beneficiaries. The evaluation protocol was carefully adjusted to fit the security challenges in the Darfur region, optimizing evaluation activities and informant selection to ensure comprehensive and context-sensitive insights.

Utilizing a post-intervention evaluation design, the study primarily relied on desk reviews and interviews with relevant stakeholders, given the constraints on direct beneficiary

surveys. This methodology acknowledged the limitations imposed by the security situation, opting for a blend of convenient and purposive sampling to gather a representative spectrum of insights. Interviews were conducted remotely across various digital platforms, compensating for the disrupted communication infrastructure in Sudan.

The secondary data reviewed encompassed a broad spectrum of DCPSF and related documents, providing a rich backdrop against which the project's impacts and challenges were assessed. The evaluation was particularly mindful of ethics and quality controls, ensuring conflict-sensitive approaches and maintaining confidentiality for all interviewees. Data analysis was rigorously performed, with quantitative data processed through Microsoft Excel and qualitative data through thematic analysis, ensuring a robust framework for understanding the project's outcomes.

Despite these methodical efforts, the evaluation faced inherent limitations, primarily due to the security situation and communication breakdowns in the region, which hindered comprehensive data collection and impacted the depth of stakeholder engagement. These challenges were partly mitigated by leveraging technology for interviews and extensively reviewing secondary data to fill in gaps.

The evaluation, grounded in the OECD/DAC framework, offered critical insights into the DCPSF project's alignment with local needs, its effectiveness in achieving peacebuilding outcomes, and the sustainability of its initiatives. It also explored the project's coherence with broader peace efforts and its impact on gender and youth inclusion. While acknowledging the methodological constraints, the findings provide a nuanced understanding of the project's contributions to peacebuilding in Darfur, underscoring both its achievements and areas for future enhancement.

Summary of Conclusions

- **Project Design:** The evaluation revealed that the DCPSF project was thoughtfully designed, effectively aligning with its goals to mitigate conflict drivers through robust community engagement. Its adaptable nature allowed it to respond to evolving needs effectively. Recommendations include conducting more comprehensive needs assessments and establishing clear mechanisms for ongoing stakeholder feedback.
- **Project Relevance:** The project's relevance to the needs of the target communities was affirmed, with its efforts directly addressing fundamental conflict causes such as resource scarcity. Enhancements in project relevance could be achieved by deepening engagements with local actors and incorporating considerations like climate change impacts more explicitly.
- **Project Coherence:** Demonstrating strong coherence, the DCPSF project complemented existing peacebuilding initiatives, ensuring synergy and avoiding duplicative efforts. Future recommendations include improving partnerships and ensuring that activities are aligned with national peacebuilding strategies to enhance the project's overall impact.
- **Project Effectiveness:** The project effectively reduced conflict incidents and improved community resilience and livelihoods, with beneficiaries reporting significant positive

changes. To further validate these impacts, additional efforts to measure the long-term effects on peace and economic stability are recommended.

- **Project Efficiency:** Implementation was marked by efficiency, with strategic resource use and effective management practices. However, external challenges occasionally hindered timely activity execution. Improvements in planning, coordination, and the exploration of innovative solutions could enhance future project efficiency.
- **Project Sustainability:** Sustainability emerged as a highlight, with the project establishing mechanisms for lasting impact, including community ownership and local peace committees. For enhanced sustainability, a more systematic approach to capacity building and securing long-term funding is advised.
- **Peacebuilding Approach:** The project's holistic approach to peacebuilding was praised for addressing economic, social, environmental, and cultural factors. Future strategies should aim to fill inclusivity gaps and ensure marginalized groups play a more significant role in peacebuilding efforts.
- **Long-Term Solutions and Government Integration:** The project's focus on long-term solutions and government integration laid a foundation for sustainable peace. Enhancing this integration through continued dialogue with government entities is crucial for sustaining momentum.
- **Economic and Social Development:** Significant contributions were made towards addressing conflict roots and bolstering community resilience. Expanding economic interventions to reach more marginalized populations and integrating them into wider economic development plans could magnify these impacts.
- **Capacity Building and Exit Strategies:** Emphasizing capacity building and clear exit strategies ensures project impacts persist. Future projects could benefit from more tailored training and co-created exit strategies that resonate with community needs.
- **Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning:** The project's commitment to monitoring and evaluation was key to its adaptability. Incorporating innovative and participatory monitoring methods could enhance the understanding and effectiveness of peacebuilding interventions.
- **Comprehensive and Adaptive Project Design:** The project's design effectively combined various elements of peacebuilding. Future designs should include more thorough assessments and feedback mechanisms for targeted interventions that address the community's complex needs.
- **Sustainability Through Local Ownership and Capacity Building:** The project's emphasis on local ownership and capacity building is laudable. Continuing to build local capacities and secure long-term support is vital for maintaining peace and development progress.
- **Challenges in Political and Security Instability:** Addressing the challenges posed by Darfur's political and security instability is crucial. Adaptive program designs and stronger local and national authority collaborations are essential for the safe and effective continuation of peacebuilding work.
- **Inclusivity and Empowerment of Marginalized Groups:** The project's focus on inclusivity and empowerment is crucial for equitable peacebuilding. Future initiatives should aim for broader outreach and greater access to resources for all community members.

- Environmental Considerations in Conflict Resolution: Acknowledging the role of environmental sustainability in conflict resolution is forward-thinking. Strengthening environmental components in peacebuilding strategies is necessary for addressing resource scarcity and promoting long-term community resilience.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In November 2023, the Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund Technical Secretariat (DCPSF TS) embarked on a critical mission to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of its Phase II project. This comprehensive evaluation, guided by the OECD/DAC criteria, was designed to scrutinize the contributions of 17 diverse projects implemented across 26 localities in the five states of Darfur. The scope of this evaluation extended beyond the core projects to include the COVID19 small grants projects and the Gender Initiative (GaPI), both initiated in 2019.

The primary objective of this evaluation was multifaceted, aiming to ascertain the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of the DCPSF's efforts in mitigating conflict and fostering peace within the Darfur region. This evaluation sought to determine how well the DCPSF addressed the root causes of conflict, met the targeted communities' needs, ensured the inclusion of women and youth, and adapted to the ever-changing socio-political landscape of Sudan.

The evaluation was structured around several key objectives, including assessing the alignment of DCPSF's initiatives with peacebuilding needs, evaluating the programme's contributions to community-level peace efforts, and analyzing the operational efficiency and strategic implementation of the projects. It also aimed to examine the sustainability of the projects' outcomes, their coherence with other peacebuilding interventions, and the promotion of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) as well as the Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) agendas. Additionally, the evaluation was tasked with documenting good practices, innovations, and lessons learned, with an eye towards providing actionable recommendations for future peacebuilding programming in Sudan.

Given the tense security situation in Sudan, particularly in the areas where the DCPSF Phase II projects were executed, the evaluation employed a combination of desk reviews and remote methodologies. This approach enabled the international consultant to engage with relevant stakeholders and derive a nuanced understanding of the project's impact against the backdrop of ongoing challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic's effects on project implementation.

This introduction sets the stage for an in-depth analysis of the DCPSF's endeavours in Darfur. It underscores the significance of this evaluation in informing the strategies of UN agencies, aid organizations, donor governments, and NGOs as they navigate the complex peacebuilding landscape in Darfur. Through this evaluation, we aim to elucidate the strengths, challenges, and opportunities inherent in the DCPSF's approach to peacebuilding, with the ultimate goal of contributing to a more peaceful and stable Darfur.

1.1 BACKGROUND CONTEXT

Sudan, a country at the crossroads of Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East, has been embroiled in a series of complex challenges that have tested the resilience of its people and the stability of its political structures. These challenges are deeply rooted in historical grievances, ethnic tensions, and socio-economic disparities, making the path to peace and prosperity a formidable journey. The Darfur region, in particular, has become a poignant symbol of these enduring struggles, reflecting the myriad of unresolved issues

ranging from governance and resource allocation to ethnic strife that plague the broader Sudanese context.

The country's political landscape experienced a seismic shift with the ousting of President Omar al-Bashir in April 2019. Bashir's regime, which lasted for three decades, was marked by autocracy, conflicts, and human rights abuses, notably in Darfur, where the government's heavy-handed approach to quelling rebellions exacerbated ethnic tensions and led to widespread violence. The International Criminal Court indicted Bashir for crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide, highlighting the international community's concern over the atrocities committed in Darfur.

The removal of Bashir was precipitated by widespread protests driven by the Sudanese people's demand for democracy, economic reforms, and an end to military rule. The revolution was seen as a beacon of hope for a country yearning for change, leading to the establishment of a transitional government aimed at steering Sudan towards democracy and stability. This government, initially led by Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok, was tasked with navigating the complexities of Sudan's political divisions, economic challenges, and societal fractures.

However, the journey toward stability was abruptly disrupted by a military coup in October 2021, which ousted Hamdok and placed the country back into the hands of military rulers. This coup sparked widespread protests and was met with international condemnation, complicating the already fragile peace building efforts in Sudan. The political upheaval underscored the persistent power struggles within Sudan and highlighted the difficulties of transitioning from decades of autocratic rule to a democratic system.

The situation in Sudan was further exacerbated by the outbreak of a new wave of conflict in April 2023, which has had devastating consequences. This conflict led to mass displacement, with more than one million people fleeing Sudan and an additional 3.4 million being internally displaced. Gender-based violence surged¹, healthcare systems were overwhelmed, and the fabric of Sudanese society was further strained. The recent conflict, like many before it, has had direct implications for peace building strategies in Darfur and across Sudan, posing significant challenges to any future efforts aimed at reconciliation and stability.

The Darfur region, in particular, has been a crucible for conflict in Sudan, with its complex web of ethnic tensions, governance issues, and struggles over resources. Since the conflict erupted in 2003, Darfur has been a flashpoint for violence that has led to significant loss of life, displacement, and suffering. The region's challenges are emblematic of the broader national issues, reflecting a mix of governance failures, inequitable resource allocation, and deep-seated ethnic discord. These factors have fueled a cycle of violence that has devastated communities and posed significant challenges to national unity and peace building efforts.

The conflict in Darfur and the broader Sudanese context is not only a product of internal dynamics but also influenced by regional and international factors. Sudan's strategic location, coupled with its rich natural resources, has attracted interest from various global actors, complicating the internal power dynamics and influencing the trajectory of its

¹ <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/protection-brief-gender-based-violence-sudan-situation-december-2023>

conflicts. The international community's response to the crises in Sudan, including sanctions, humanitarian aid, and peacekeeping efforts, has varied in effectiveness and has been subject to geopolitical considerations.

The transitional government's attempt to address Sudan's multifaceted challenges was a critical step towards reconciliation and peace building. The signing of the Juba Peace Agreement in October 2020, which included various rebel groups, was a hopeful development aimed at resolving long-standing conflicts, including those in Darfur. However, the military coup and subsequent political instability have derailed these efforts, highlighting the fragility of peace processes in the face of entrenched power structures and competing interests.

The recent wave of conflict in Sudan, coupled with the military coup, has not only deepened the humanitarian crisis but also complicated the landscape for peace building and reconciliation. The displacement of millions², the surge in gender-based violence³, and the collapse of healthcare infrastructure are immediate issues that require urgent attention. However, addressing these symptoms without tackling the root causes of Sudan's conflicts, including governance issues, resource allocation, and ethnic tensions, will only perpetuate the cycle of violence.

In the case of Darfur, the region's long history of marginalization, conflict, and suffering underscores the need for a comprehensive approach to peace building that considers the unique challenges and dynamics at play. Efforts to stabilize Darfur and Sudan more broadly must prioritize inclusive governance, equitable development, and reconciliation among the diverse communities that make up the country's rich social fabric. This requires not only national commitment but also sustained international support and engagement, grounded in a deep understanding of Sudan's complex history and current realities.

The path forward for Sudan, and Darfur in particular, is fraught with challenges but also presents opportunities for transformative change. The aspirations of the Sudanese people for peace, democracy, and prosperity remain undiminished despite the setbacks. Achieving these goals will necessitate a collective effort that bridges political divides, addresses historical grievances, and fosters a culture of dialogue and mutual understanding. As Sudan navigates this critical juncture in its history, the lessons learned from Darfur's conflict and the broader struggles of the Sudanese people will be vital in shaping a future that reflects the diversity and resilience of this storied land.

1.2 PROGRAMME BACKGROUND

The Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF) represents a pivotal initiative in Sudan's Darfur region, aimed at fostering peace and stability amidst a backdrop of protracted conflict. Established in 2007, the DCPSF emerged in response to the urgent need for rebuilding community cohesion and resilience through mediation, reconciliation, and peaceful conflict resolution mechanisms.

² <https://dtm.iom.int/sudan>

³ <https://www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/july-2023/sudan-un-condemns-spike-violence-against-women-and-girls>

Darfur, a region marked by complex socio-political dynamics and a history of intra and inter-communal conflicts, has seen its traditional conflict-resolution mechanisms strained. The DCPSF's inception was guided by the principle that local communities hold the key to sustainable peace, leveraging long-established practices of negotiation and mediation. It is a multi-donor program that underscores the collaborative effort of international donors, including the governments of Sweden, the United Kingdom, Norway, and Switzerland, alongside UN agencies and Sudanese NGOs and CSOs. The program's approach was characterized by an "area-based" strategy, prioritizing conflict hotspots and leveraging the comparative advantages of various UN agencies to address key conflict drivers. This method ensures interventions are tailored to the specific needs and potentials of targeted communities, identified through extensive stakeholder consultations.

Since its inception, DCPSF has been instrumental in strengthening community-based conflict resolution and reconciliation mechanisms (CBRMs), promoting interdependence and co-existence through livelihood support and effective natural resource management. Additionally, the project has been pivotal in empowering women's organizations, including representatives of pastoralist women to meaningfully participate in peace building platforms and development efforts at local and state levels.

In December 2020, the DCPSF Steering committee approved 17 new projects "extension of DCPSF Phase II" which were implemented across the five states of Darfur by 17 partners. In this phase of the Fund, implementing partners were categorized in two groups; Window 1 which was comprised of seven (7) international Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) who worked with sub-grantees (national organisation) to carry out selected activities as well as build their capacity to support their communities in peacebuilding. Window 2 comprised of ten (10) national Non-Government Organisations (NGOs). A total of 800,000 USD was allocated for the window 1 implementing partners, 350,000 for window 2 implementing partners and a small grant amounting to 50,000 USD were allocated to 5 implementing partners to support COVID-19 preparedness response and recovery efforts. Window 1 recipients comprised of international NGOs such as Catholic Relief Services (CRS) in Central Darfur, World Relief Sudan (WRS) and Concern Worldwide in West Darfur, Welthungerhilfe (WHH) and Practical Action (PA) in North Darfur, Alight (former ARC) East Darfur and - World Vision International (WVI) in South Darfur. Window 2 recipients consisted of national NGOs such as SAHARI Organization for development in Central Darfur, Rural Community Development Organisation (RCDO) and Siyaj Charity Organisation (SCO) in West Darfur, Kebkabiya Small holder Chartable Society (KSCS), Sudan Organization for Recovery and Development (SORD), SOS Sahel Sudan and Al Rayan for Social Development (RSD) in North Darfur, Darfur Development and Reconstruction Agency (DDRA) in East Darfur, Emergency Relief and Rehabilitation and Development Agency (ERRADA) and Peace Bridge Association (PBA) in South Darfur. The main roles of DCPSF Technical secretariate was to provide technical support, coordinate project activities across implementing partners and manage donor relations while the implementing partners were mainly in-charge of the frontline implementation of the planned project activities.

The DCPSF phase II programme was designed to respond to 2019/2020 DCPSF Conflict Analysis findings and to build on the previous phase of DCPSF project so as to reinforce

peacebuilding in Darfur. Through the phase II programme, it was articulated that a peaceful, cohesive, and economically interdependent society of Darfur would be achieved under the following pre-conditions and assumptions:

***IF** CBRMs membership are established in a diverse and inclusive manner and trained to negotiate, mediate, and resolve conflict resolve intra and intercommunal peacefully, **THEN** Communities will be equipped to handle disputes internally and reduce escalation of conflicts, cultural norms will also promote peaceful co-existence in communities, and ultimately foster stronger cohesion, reduced violence, and harmonious co-existence among different community groups, and **IF** Community peacebuilding initiatives and livelihood support are implemented, actions are implemented to conserve and restore natural resource in order to reduce resource-based conflicts, social amenities that facilitate interdependence and co-existence are developed, and economic needs and root causes of conflicts are addressed, **THEN** social amenities such as community centers, markets, and water sources would enable collaboration and peaceful co-existence, eventually the Communities will become economically and socially resilient to prevent and peacefully resolve conflicts, and **IF** women organizations and youth, women, men and other marginalized groups are empowered to participate in peacebuilding platforms and processes, **THEN** women organisations, women, men, youths and other vulnerable groups would meaningfully participate in peacebuilding process, and **IF** CSOs capacity is built in peacebuilding and conflict management, networking and coordination is fostered among implementing partners, UN agencies, NGOs, and CSOs to align efforts, and best practices are routinely shared, **THEN** peacebuilding ecosystem would be strengthened to facilitate peace efforts, a cohesive and collaborative approach to peacebuilding across peace actors, key learnings and best practices are adapted across peace actors, in the end, peace actors would effectively network and coordinate to build and sustain peace efforts – collectively these intervention logic would lead to a peaceful, cohesive, and economically interdependent Darfur society where women and vulnerable groups meaningfully participate in peacebuilding and development processes at local and state levels as depicted graphically in appendix. The development of this logic model was grounded in the following development frameworks:*

- 1) UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) Outcome 5, which states that: “By 2021, security and stabilization of communities affected by conflict are improved through utilization of effective conflict management mechanisms, peace dividends and support to peace infrastructures and durable solutions that augment peaceful coexistence and social cohesion.”
- 2) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly goal 16 on peace, justice, and strong institutions and goal 5 on gender equality.

The phase II extension projects was designed to achieve four main outcomes through various intervention strategies as summarized below:

Outcome one “Community-based conflict resolution and reconciliation mechanisms are in use and working effectively to resolve conflict” was intended to be achieved through establishment and support of a diverse and inclusive CBRMs membership; trainings of

the CBRM members on how to negotiate, mediate, and resolve intra and intercommunal conflicts peacefully.

Outcome two “Peace dividends for community interdependence and coexistence are delivered” was planned to be attained through strengthening community peacebuilding initiatives and livelihood support, implementation of actions to conserve and restore natural resource to reduce resource-based conflicts and establishment of the social amenities such as community centers, markets, and waters sources which enables interdependence and co-existence within and between communities.

Outcome three “Women’s organizations, including representatives of pastoralist women are empowered to meaningfully participate in local and state-level peace building platforms” would be achieved through empowerment of Women organizations and youth, women, men and other marginalized groups to meaningfully participate in peacebuilding platforms and processes – formation of women networks and helping women to take up leadership roles in peacebuilding platforms and processes

To achieve outcome 4 “Improved networking, coordination and learning between local and state-level peace building institutions”, the projects built capacity of CSOs in peacebuilding and conflict management, fostered networking and coordination among implementing partners, UN agencies, NGOs, and CSOs to align efforts, and facilitated sharing best practices across implementing partners and other peace actors.

Worth noting is that the impact of COVID19 pandemic in 2020 and the political unrest between 2019 to 2022 alongside emerging communal conflicts led to the slowdown in the implementation of DCPSF projects in some parts of Darfur. Nonetheless, the DCPSF partners adapted to the evolving circumstances and continued to serve as a beacon of hope for the Darfuri communities until April 2023 when the civil war erupted between two rival factions of the military government of Sudan, the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) under Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) under Hemedti. This insecurity also disrupted the smooth closure of the DCPSF project by June 2023 as planned – some project activities were interrupted and the full project evaluation was not achievable.

In July 2023, the DCPSF secretariate commissioned a term of reference seeking to hire an international consultant who would apply the OECD/DAC evaluation using desk reviews and remote interviews with relevant stakeholders to evaluate the contribution of DCPSF project phase II extension to the peace building results.

1.3 THE EVALUATION

In November 2023, DCPSF Technical Secretariat contracted an international consultant to evaluate DCPSF Project Phase II extension alongside COVID19 grants of 2020 and the Gender Initiative (GaPI) of 2019. The evaluation followed the OECD/ DAC criteria so as to elaborately examine the contributions of the three projects in achieving intended results.

1.3.1 EVALUATION PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The main purpose of this evaluation was to examine the project relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, coherence with existing development frameworks, coordination with other peacebuilding efforts and actors, best practices during the project life and key recommendation to inform decisionmakers and future related programmes. The evaluation focused on assessing the efficacy of the interventions implemented the DCPSF programme between 2019 and 2022 - under the phase II extension projects alongside COVID19 grants of 2020 and the Gender and Peacebuilding Initiative (GaPI) of 2019. In the evaluation process, the target population engaged were mainly relevant stakeholders involved during the project life. Geographically, the evaluation focused on assessing the projects activities and results evident within the 5 states of the Darfur region. While we fully assessed the project outputs and selected intermediate outcomes, not all the project performance indicators at outcome level were assessed due to the insecurity situation in Darfur and Khartoum.

1.3.2 EVALUATION OBJECTIVES

The design of this final evaluation was guided by the OECD DAC evaluations criteria, thus focus were directed towards specifically examining the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the projects. It also concentrated on assessing how coherent, coordinated and complementary were the projects to other peacebuilding interventions, the extent to which the projects integrated women, youth peace and security agendas as well as examining how the projects were implemented in a conflict sensitive manner. In order to richly assess each of these dimensions, the following evaluation questions were used to guide the evaluation process:

1) Relevance:

- To what extent did the projects address conflict drivers and factors identified a conflict analysis?
- Was the phase II extension timely, and did it capitalize on a specific window of opportunity?
- To what extent was the causal relationship between project interventions to desired outcomes “the validity of the theory of change”? or Was the theory of change grounded in evidence?
- To what extent did the project respond to changing contextual; conflict dynamics including military coup of October 2021, COVID-19 pandemic between 2020/2021, changing operation of the UN - departure of UNAMID and establishment of UNITAMS)?
- In the changing context, who were the most affected? what DCPSF project activities and locations were most affected? and how did the projects adjust its goals, approaches, strategies, and coverage?
- To what extent did projects identify, build on and support the existing local peace initiatives and structures in target localities or states in Darfur?
- To what extent did projects respond to the needs and priorities of the target groups/beneficiaries (including women and young people)? Were these groups consulted during development and implementation of the projects, and did their inputs get incorporated into programme design and adjustments?
- How appropriate and clear was the beneficiary targeting? Was targeting equal

and/or equitable across tribes, different geographies and/or was it perceived as such? Were target groups involved in the prioritization of geographic areas?

- To what extent did the projects contribute to gender equality, the empowerment of women and the human rights-based approach? Specifically, the evaluation will measure if the gender marker of the project was in line with the achieved results.

2) Efficiency

- To what extent was the use of DCPSF funds (human and financial) utilized as planned?
- How timely were the project execution; funds disbursement, procurement, and activities execution?
- Was there value for money? Were there any implementation modalities such as partnerships to optimize the cost? Were there specific components that provided high value/results for input (or low value for input)? And how effectively was use of data to manage the project?

3) Effectiveness:

- To what extent did the project contribute to achievement of intended objectives? To what extent did it make progress on desired outcome-level peacebuilding results?
- How did the project's M&E mechanism contribute to meeting project results? How effective DCPSF Fund M&E system to collect, manage and use data to monitor and evaluate results at outcome and output level in a gender sensitive manner?
- To what extent was the programme successful in planning and executing a community-based approach to peacebuilding?
- To what extent did DCPSF substantively mainstream gender and support gender- and youth-responsive peacebuilding?

4) Sustainability and Ownership

- To what extent did DCPSF implement an appropriate sustainability and exit strategy to promote positive after the projects? Did it promote national/local ownership and use of national capacity?
- How strong is the commitment of the State administrations, communities, and other stakeholders to sustain the results of the projects and continuing initiatives considering women and youth participation?
- How well did the programme work with government and community interlocutors to sustain commitment?
- Was the programme financially and/or programmatically catalytic? Has the programme helped to attract any additional peacebuilding funding, scale-up other peacebuilding programmes, and/or contributed to unlocking political or peacebuilding processes?
- What are the key lessons derived from the knowledge and experiences provided by the project and that can be used by UNDP, donor, and government to enhance decision making and programming?

5) Coherence and coordination

- To what extent did implementing partners design and implement the projects a

coordinated and coherent way?

- What coordination mechanisms were set up within and across states to support execution of the programme? and how effective were they?
- To what extent did partners complement each other's work and leverage each other comparative advantages?
- How well did the DCPSF Technical Secretariat team communicate with implementing partners, stakeholders, and beneficiaries?
- What other UN agencies and implementing agencies were active in targeted areas during the programme period?
- To what extent did the implementing partners ensure synergies among these different actors?
- Were the DCPSF led Peace Building Working Group (PBWG) meetings and gender forums beneficial for building coordination and synergies?
- To what extent did the DCPSF supported projects complement existing or previous peacebuilding interventions, including UNAMID State Liaison Functions and other UN or non-UN projects?

6) Conflict-Sensitivity

- Did the DCPSF have an explicit approach to conflict-sensitivity? To what extent was it implemented?
- To what extent were the capacities of the implementing partners sufficient to ensure that the programme was implemented in a conflict-sensitive manner?
- In the high-risk and volatile context of the region, how well did DCPSF monitor and mitigate risks, especially those identified by the programme documents and the rationale for programme selection? Were there any contingency plans in place?
- Were the Fund's projects responsible for any unintended negative impacts? How were these impacts addressed?
- Was there an ongoing process of context monitoring and a monitoring system that allows for monitoring of unintended impacts established?

7) Gender and Youth-Responsiveness

- To what extent did the programme ensure inclusion of women and young people in its projects and outputs? How did the inclusion of women and young people result in their meaningful participation in peacebuilding platforms and process?
- Did the programme consider the different challenges, opportunities, barriers, and capacities of women, men, young women, young men, girls, and boys (including persons with disabilities) in the design, implementation and monitoring of the projects? Did it respond to new obstacles to promoting gender equality as they arose during implementation?

The evaluation also aimed at providing actionable recommendations for future references to peacebuilding initiatives in Sudan. The evaluation matrix in section two provides the sources of information that were examined to exhaustively answer each of the evaluations on the project relevance, effectiveness, impact, efficiency, sustainability, coherence of the programme with existing development frameworks, coordination with other peace building actors, key best practices and actionable recommendation for future references.

1.4 REPORT STRUCTURE

This evaluation report is divided into three parts. Part one of the report is comprised of the title page, table of contents, acronyms, acknowledgment and executive summary. Part two is the main body of the report is sub-divided into four chapters; background, project description, methodology, evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations. The last part of the report contains appendices or additional information which supports the information presented in the main body of this report.

METHODOLOGY

2.1 APPROACH

The evaluator employed an agile and participatory approach in executing this evaluation. Agility was observed by breaking down the entire evaluation processes into 10 well sequenced stages. Stage one involved inception reporting and a joint review of the evaluation protocol – particularly alignment of the evaluation tool and methods to the security context of Darfur region. We also rationalized the schedules of the evaluation activities to the Darfur context. Subsequently, the evaluators profiled best suited key informants, mobilized and coordinated interviews with support from DCPSF technical secretariate team and the implementing partners, then secondary documents for review were mapped and organized in a folder, and the profiled primary respondents were mobilised for interviews, the secondary documents were then reviewed while the profiled primary respondents were interviewed respectively as scheduled. Following data collection, the raw data cleaned, coded and analysed accordingly. Findings from primary and secondary data sources used to produce draft zero (0) of the evaluation which led to the final reporting.

To ensure the evaluation approach was participatory, study participants were drawn from DCPSF technical secretariate, implementing partners and representatives from Youth/ Women organisation and peace building platform in the Darfur region, peace building agencies and representatives from the UN bodies. The primary were not approachable due to the insecurity situation in Sudan, particularly in Khartoum and the Darfur region where the civil war is mostly concentrated. As a remedy to the inaccessibility of the primary project participants, the evaluators worked closely with DCPSF technical secretariate team lead to maximize review of the available monitoring data in addition to interviews with key informants who had worked closely with project beneficiaries at village, locality and at state level.

Although the security situation in Darfur did not permit application of robust approaches of evaluation such as a complete theory-based evaluation – which attempts to attribute change to the project interventions, the evaluators employed a contribution analysis. In this approach, changes contributed to by the project interventions were assessed at different levels of results – focusing on outputs, key outcomes and some impact stories which relates to the project interventions.

2.2 EVALUATION DESIGN, METHODS AND TOOLS

The study employed a post-intervention evaluation design – adopting both qualitative and quantitative methodologies through application of desk review of key documents, review of monitoring data and analysis, and interviews with key relevant stakeholders. Since the evaluation design was not experimented and there was no survey of project beneficiaries, there was also no comparison group to provide what would have happened to participants in areas where the program never existed. For this, the achievements reflected in this evaluation cannot be attributed to the project intervention due to the methodological constraints. In terms of data sources, the study explored both secondary and primary data sources. The secondary data sources involved both internal and external data while the

primary respondents comprised of sampled key informants from groups and agencies involved in the project implementation. Given the intricacies caused by the insecurity situation that did not permit surveying the project primary beneficiaries, the key informants who were closely involved in the project implementation were found most capable to help the evaluation team answer the evaluation questions more accurately.

The primary respondents were selected using both convenience and purposive sampling technique. A total of 9 key informants sampled and interviewed using a semi-structured sets of questions aligned with the evaluation questions “interview guide”. This tool was administered to one DCPSF technical secretariat staff managers, seven field implementers from DCPSF partners and one representative from peacebuilding platform. The breakdown in the communication and internet infrastructures due to insecurity situation in Darfur and Khartoum accounts for the non-participation of other target key informants such as regional government business heads, subject matter experts such as researchers on the Darfur conflict dynamics and gender experts, UN representatives, other NGOs. As a remedy, we extensively interviewed the 9 key informants who were able to connect with the evaluators virtually and vigorously reviewed project monitoring data and other external data sources.

The evaluators made concerted efforts to integrate gender equality, disability, vulnerability, and social inclusion into its methodology through a participatory approach, careful selection of key informants, ethical research practices, and attempted to analyse secondary data with a gender lens. Although the evaluation faced challenges in acquiring enough gender-disaggregated primary data due the security concerns, the reliance on secondary data – especially the DCPSF annual progress report of 2022 and GaPI project reports relatively provided sufficient information with a gender lens. Additionally, the review and analysis of other gender-specific reports such as perception survey of 2022 and women/ youth participation study of 2019 suggests that study methodology integrated gender. However, the integration of other vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities in the evaluation methodology was a gap due to the limitations in accessing primary beneficiaries and other groups.

Using the desk review templates and guiding themes, secondary data sources reviewed. The documents reviewed include DCPSF Darfur Conflict Analysis Report of 2019, 2020 and updated version of 2021, DCPSF 2020 Call for Proposals for Phase II extension (2021-2023), Approved project documents for the 17 DCPSF partners funded, DCPSF Gender and Peace building Initiative Final Report 2020, DCPSF COVID19 Emergency Projects Results Final Report 2020, DCPSF Annual Reports 2020, 2021 and 2022, DCPSF Bi-annual Reports and partner Quarterly Progress Reports, Partner Success Stories, DCPSF Best Practices and Lessons Learnt Workshop Report, DCPS Phase II Evaluation Report 2018, UN Peace building Fund Darfur Programme Evaluation Report 2024, Perception Survey Report 2022 by DDRA, Local Capacities for Peace Assessment Report 2020 by World Vision, Conflict Prevention and infrastructure for Peace project Survey 2021, Peace building Working Group Meeting minutes, Women/ Youth Participation Study (Sawtaha HerVoice GAPI) 2019, UNDP Evaluation Guidelines and OECD-DAC evaluation criteria including UNEG norms and standards. Annex three provides the summary of the evaluation design matrix.

The entire evaluation process took approximately 52 working days with daily level effort ranging between 8 to 12 hours, starting from the inception phase to the submission of draft zero evaluation report. Annex four depicts the specific evaluation activities undertaken and their sequence of occurrence in day/weeks. The consultant recruited one senior research assistant who assisted in administering selected key informant interviews and data processing. Interviews were conducted remotely through various technology channels; WhatsApp call, Microsoft Teams, Zoom or Google meet depending on the convenience of the respondents. Interview notes were captured using a computer voice recorder and editor application. Data transcripts were then cleaned, coded and analysed using the matrix framework based on themes in each study objectives. Quantitative data were extracted from the different monitoring data and other research studies conducted in Darfur. These data extracts were then entered in Microsoft Excel application and processed to assess project success based on selected performance indicators.

2.3 ETHICS AND QUALITY CONTROLS

Methodologically, this evaluation design and approaches were conflict sensitive. The evaluation protocol, especially the research methods and tools, were reviewed and approved by the DCPSF evaluation steering committee. The tools were pre-tested, refined, and respondents' profiles were reviewed collectively with the DCPSF technical secretariate team to ensure completeness and gender inclusivity. However, although the plan was to conduct key informant interviews with 26 people, only 9 responded to our invitation, and interestingly, these respondents were all male. This unexpected outcome limited our gender inclusivity goals and may have influenced the diversity of perspectives and insights collected. Despite this, consultations were made with each individual target respondents and groups to collect consent and agree on their most convenient date and time for interviews. The interview meetings were then scheduled based on respondent's convenient timeframe, and acceptance of the meeting invites are the available evidence of informed consent from primary respondents. Individual and organisation level information collected during interviews have been kept confidential. By using a computerized voice recorder and editor, the researchers minimized the likelihood of error due to erroneous interview notes, since the interview recordings in real time transcribed in text.

2.4 DATA ANALYSIS

Secondary data were obtained from DCPSF secretariate and partners in three different formats, namely; Microsoft word, Excel and PDF formats. Some excel datasets were constructed or derived from DCPSF narrative annual report, perception survey report, DCPSF phase II evaluation report and the UN-PBF evaluation report. The quantitative data were then processed and visualized in graphs and tables with the aid of Microsoft excel application.

Qualitative data were downloaded from the computer voice recorder/ editor into word document, cleaned and processed by identifying themes, coding and summarizing similar responses based-on the evaluation thematic areas. The processed qualitative data were finally analysed using a matrix framework of themes. Depending on how striking a

respondent's answer to the interview question, the evaluator quoted in verbatim most striking responses from participants. In the end, findings from qualitative interviews were systematically used to triangulate findings in quantitative data and desk reviews. The respective analysis output provided the ingredients for determining the project relevance, effectiveness, conflict sensitivity, efficiency, sustainability, coherence, gender and youth inclusivity, best practices, innovations, learnings and key challenges observed during its execution.

2.5 LESSONS LEARNT

The evaluation of DCPSF projects revealed several key lessons:

1. **Agility and Flexibility Are Crucial:** The agile and participatory approach, adapting to security constraints, and modifying evaluation protocols to fit the context of the Darfur region proved essential for conducting evaluations in conflict-affected areas.
2. **Importance of Secondary Data and Key Informants:** In situations where primary data collection is hindered by security issues, leveraging secondary data and insights from key informants becomes invaluable to validate evaluation questions.
3. **Technology Facilitates Accessibility:** Utilizing various technology platforms like WhatsApp, Microsoft Teams, Zoom, and Google Meet can overcome barriers to communication, ensuring that evaluations can proceed despite infrastructural challenges.
4. **Ethical Considerations and Informed Consent:** Ethical practices, including securing informed consent and scheduling interviews at convenient times for participants, are non-negotiable, even in difficult operational contexts.
5. **Adaptability in Data Analysis:** The ability to adapt data analysis methods to accommodate the type of data available (e.g., processing qualitative data from voice recordings) is key in deriving meaningful insights from the information collected.
6. **Evaluation Criteria Alignment:** Aligning with recognized evaluation frameworks like OECD/DAC enhances the credibility and utility of the findings, ensuring they contribute constructively to the project's objectives and the broader peacebuilding efforts.
7. **Acknowledging Limitations:** Recognizing and explicitly stating the limitations of the evaluation methodology enhances the transparency and reliability of the findings, even when data gaps exist due to uncontrollable external factors.
8. **Utilizing Success Stories:** Success stories serve as important qualitative evidence of impact, especially when quantitative data collection is challenged.
9. **Challenges as Opportunities for Innovation:** Encountering methodological and technological challenges necessitated innovative solutions, demonstrating that limitations can spur creativity in evaluation processes.

These lessons underscore the necessity of flexibility, ethical considerations, and innovative methodologies in evaluating projects in conflict-sensitive regions, ensuring that despite challenges, evaluations can yield valuable insights for future peacebuilding efforts.

2.6 EVALUATION STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS

The evaluation, grounded in the OECD/DAC evaluation framework, also integrated the theory of change and contribution analysis to understand the DCPSF projects' alignment with Darfur's community needs and broader peacebuilding efforts in Sudan. It examined the extent to which DCPSF project achieved its intended outcomes, especially in strengthening CBRM, promoting peace dividends, empowering women to meaningfully participate in state and local level peace building efforts, and improving networking, coordination and learning across state and local level peace actors. The findings provide account on how well the DCPSF projects resources were utilized cost-effectively to achieve intended outcomes; scrutinised how the interventions and results will be sustained; how the project focus is aligned with broader peace building efforts and well-coordinated with other peace actors. The findings also examine how the project implementation was conflict-sensitive and empowered women and youth to meaningfully participate in peace building efforts at state and local level.

As anticipated, the evaluation encountered some methodological limitations regarding unsuccessful interviews, especially survey of project primary beneficiaries and some key informants interviews due to the insecurity situation and the communication breakdown in Darfur region and Khartoum. As a result, we missed adequate information to fully answer the evaluation questions, particularly measuring the project indicators, which presented immense challenges in accurately assessing the projects' impact. As a remedy, we used success stories from project periodic progress reports to demonstrate impact.

The ongoing civil war and the breakdown in the communication infrastructures, power outages, coupled with poor internet connectivity in Darfur region also imposed a huge challenge during individual interviews and group interviews with DCPSF partners, peace building platform representative including women and youth organisation representatives. To remedy these challenges, we explored use of multiple technology channels successfully complete interviews, WhatsApp calls were used in options where connectivity through Microsoft Team, Zoom and Google meet failed – occasionally, we rescheduled interviews based on most convenient date and hour for the respondents.

Although we attempted to provide remedy for the data gap, the findings of this evaluation cannot be used without putting these limitations in perspectives. We cannot also claim that the small or big wins observed are attributable to the project interventions – since we did not use any experimental evaluation design. However, the results positive changes observed has a direct causal relationship with project interventions.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

3.1 QUALITY OF PROJECT DESIGN

The findings in 2021 Conflict Analysis report indicated that the participation of CBRM structures, the police and women in peace building efforts were low, these findings justified that the DCPSF project was worth investment. The 17 DCPSF Projects were therefore designed with the relevance to revitalize the utilisation of existing CBRMs, establish new ones and strengthen their participation in conflict resolution, promote peace dividends, empower youth, women including women organisations to meaningfully participate in peace building efforts at local and state levels. The 2021 Context Analysis also identified room for improvement with regards to how peace actors work together, as such, the fourth outputs of the DCPSF projects were designed to improve networking, coordination and learning between local and state-level peace building institutions, thus justifying the project relevance.

About 90% of the approved 17 new projects had a project Theory of Change (ToC) and the results framework, suggesting the top two basic logic models of a quality project design were in place. The ToC of each of the 17 projects were well aligned to the DCPSF programme goal, the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) Outcome 5 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) particularly Goal 16 on peace, justice, and strong institutions, Goal 5 on gender equality, Goal 1 (No Poverty), 13 (Climate Action), and 15 (Life on Land). Each ToC fully described how the different project interventions contribute to the overall goal. However, some partner's project design documents did not expressively define the key assumptions underpinning their theory on change. Although most designs were bearing anticipated project risks and their mitigants, some projects did not articulate within the TOC how these risks factors could affect the achievement of specific results. All the 17 project presented a results framework which systematically showed how different levels of results – mainly activity outputs and outcomes were linked to the DCPSF programme goal.

In summary, each of the 17 DCPSF project had a clear rationale for investment, project goal, logic models with measurable indicators, anticipated assumptions, risks, constraints and their mitigants, a well-defined geographical coverage, key deliverables such as activities along with planned resources (human resources and a costed budget) to support the project execution. Each project had a clear implementation plan including Monitoring and Evaluation methods and tools to track implementation progress and assess achievement of intended results.

3.2 PROJECT RELEVANCE

Relevance is a critical component of any peace building project. Its significance stems from the necessity of aligning the project's objectives and activities with the specific needs, contexts, and dynamics of the target communities and broader societal and political environments. Building on the concept of relevance in peace building involves several key considerations and strategies to ensure that initiatives not only address the surface symptoms of conflict but also engage with its underlying causes and contribute to lasting peace and stability.

The 17 DCPSF projects have been instrumental in addressing the multifaceted needs of communities across Darfur, reflecting a deep understanding of the region's unique challenges and requirements. By focusing on peace building, community empowerment, and livelihood support, the DCPSF project directly responded to the needs of Darfur's communities, which have been severely impacted by years of conflict, displacement, and economic hardship.⁴

Relevance to community needs is evident in the project's peace building and reconciliation initiatives, which aimed to mitigate conflict and foster social cohesion among diverse groups. These efforts were crucial in a region where communal tensions and conflicts over resources have perpetuated cycles of violence and displacement. By promoting dialogue and understanding, the DCPSF projects helped lay the groundwork for durable peace and stability, essential components for community development and wellbeing. As mentioned by one stakeholder: *"The project's deep understanding of Darfur's unique historical context and its collaborative approach with local governance have been pivotal. By directly addressing the roots of community conflicts and fostering local peace mechanisms, it has shown a profound relevance to the needs of the Darfur people."*

Additionally, the project's focus on enhancing livelihoods through agricultural support, vocational training, and small business development which is directly aligned with the economic needs of Darfur's communities. These interventions were designed to improve income generation, food security, and economic resilience, addressing the critical challenges of poverty and unemployment that many residents face.

However, gaps remain in the project's ability to fully meet the comprehensive needs of Darfur's communities. One significant gap is in the coverage and accessibility of basic services, such as healthcare, education, and water supply. While the DCPSF project has made strides in economic and social initiatives, the provision of essential services is still lacking in many areas, impacting the overall quality of life and long-term development prospects of the communities.

Another gap is the sustainability and scalability of the interventions. Many of the project's initiatives require ongoing support and resources to ensure they can be sustained over the long term and scaled up to reach more communities. This gap underscores the need for a more integrated approach that combines immediate humanitarian assistance with long-term development planning, ensuring that interventions are not only effective in the short term but also contribute to lasting improvements in community wellbeing.

3.3 RELEVANCE TO KEY DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

3.3.1 Sustainable Development Goals

The DCPSF projects have been instrumental in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the Darfur region, demonstrating a strong alignment with global agenda for peace, prosperity, and environmental sustainability. By focusing on community-level peace building, reconciliation, and stability initiatives, the DCPSF projects contributed significantly to several key SDGs, most notably Goal 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong

⁴https://mptf.undp.org/sites/default/files/documents/2023-05/2022_final_narrative_report_darfur_comm_peace_stab.pdf

Institutions) but also touching upon Goal 1 (No Poverty), 5 (Gender Equality), 13 (Climate Action), and 15 (Life on Land).⁵

The relevance of the DCPSF project to the SDGs is particularly evident in its efforts to reduce violence, enhance access to justice, and build effective, accountable institutions at the community level. These initiatives directly support the achievement of Goal 16 by fostering a peaceful and inclusive society in Darfur, a prerequisite for sustainable development. Moreover, by engaging women and youth in peace building processes, the project contributes to Goal 5, promoting gender equality and empowering all women and girls.

Furthermore, the DCPSF project's emphasis on sustainable land management and environmental restoration activities aligns with Goals 13 and 15, addressing climate action and the sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems. These efforts were crucial in a region where environmental degradation and competition over natural resources have fueled conflicts.

However, gaps remain in fully harnessing the potential of the DCPSF project to contribute to the SDGs. One significant gap is the limited integration of economic development and livelihoods enhancement within the project's scope. While peace and stability are foundational, the absence of a strong focus on economic growth and job creation (Goal 8) limits the project's impact on long-term sustainable development and poverty alleviation (Goal 1). This gap highlights the need for a more holistic approach to peace building that includes economic development as a core component.

Another gap is the project's scale and reach, which, despite its successes, has not been sufficient to cover all communities in need within Darfur. Expanding the project's reach is essential to ensure that the benefits of peace building and stability efforts are more widely distributed, thereby contributing more effectively to the SDGs.

Overall, the DCPSF project's alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals underscores its relevance and contribution to global efforts to achieve a more peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable world. However, addressing the gaps in economic development and project reach is crucial to maximizing its impact on the SDGs in Darfur. Enhancing the project's scope to include more comprehensive economic and livelihood initiatives, along with expanding its geographical coverage, will be key steps in fully realizing its potential to support sustainable development in the region.

3.3.2 UN Strategic Framework for Darfur

The Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF) project is closely aligned with the objectives of the United Nations Strategic Framework for Darfur, aiming to support peace building, humanitarian assistance, and development efforts in a region that has faced protracted conflict and instability. The relevance of the DCPSF project to the UN Strategic Framework is rooted in its commitment to addressing the underlying causes of conflict and building the foundations for sustainable peace and development in Darfur.

The DCPSF project contributed to the UN Strategic Framework through its emphasis on community-level interventions that promote peace and reconciliation. These initiatives are

⁵ <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

critical for establishing a stable and peaceful environment, which is a prerequisite for any development activities. By focusing on conflict-affected communities, the project supported the Strategic Framework's goal of fostering social cohesion and inclusive governance, thereby enhancing the resilience of communities to withstand and recover from the impacts of conflict.

Moreover, the DCPSF project's efforts to empower local communities and build the capacities of local governance structures align with the UN Strategic Framework's objectives to strengthen institutional capacities for good governance and service delivery. These efforts are essential for ensuring that governance in Darfur is participatory, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of its citizens, which is fundamental for lasting peace and development.

The Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF) project has played a pivotal role in advancing the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)/Country Programme Document (CPD) outcomes, specifically contributing to CPD Outputs 2.1 and 2.2. By enhancing community cohesion and resilience through capacity building, economic empowerment, and infrastructure development, the project aligns with CPD Output 2.1. Simultaneously, it supports CPD Output 2.2 by establishing local peace committees and community-based conflict resolution mechanisms, strengthening conflict prevention, and resolution efforts. These contributions underscore the DCPSF project's significant impact on promoting sustainable peace, stability, and development in the targeted regions, demonstrating its integration with broader UNDAF/CPD objectives.

However, despite these alignments, there are gaps in the full realization of the UN Strategic Framework's objectives through the DCPSF project. One significant gap is the project's limited scope in terms of geographic coverage and thematic focus. While the project has made impactful strides in specific areas, its reach is not extensive enough to address the widespread needs across all of Darfur. This limitation highlights the necessity for scaling up the project and broadening its thematic areas to include more comprehensive development initiatives that can address the multifaceted challenges facing the region.

Another gap pertains to the sustainability of the project's outcomes. Achieving sustainable peace and development in Darfur requires long-term commitment and resources, yet the DCPSF project, like many donor-funded initiatives, faces challenges in ensuring the sustainability of its interventions beyond the project lifecycle. This underscores the need for integrating the project's activities into broader national development plans and strategies to ensure that the gains made are durable and self-sustaining.

3.3.3 Sudan Government Peace Framework

The Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF) project was strategically aligned with the Darfur Government Peace Framework. This alignment was crucial in ensuring that the efforts to bring peace and stability to Darfur are cohesive, comprehensive, and directly address the region's unique needs and circumstances.

DCPSF project's alignment with the Sudan Government Peace Framework⁶ is evident in

⁶ <https://redress.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Framework-Agreement-Final-ENG-05122022.pdf>

its community-centered approach to peace building. The project focused on empowering local communities, fostering dialogue and reconciliation, and building the capacities of local governance structures. These efforts resonated with the Peace Framework's objectives to promote local governance and involve communities in peace processes, ensuring that peace building initiatives were grounded in local realities and needs. This approach was designed to build sustainable peace from the ground up, addressing root causes of conflict such as competition over resources, ethnic tensions, and governance issues.

However, there are notable gaps in the alignment between the DCPSF project and the Darfur Government Peace Framework that could hinder the effectiveness of peace building efforts. One significant gap is the limited scope of the DCPSF project in terms of geographic coverage and thematic areas. While the project has made considerable strides in certain communities, many areas in Darfur remain untouched by its initiatives, leaving significant segments of the population without access to peace building and community stabilization resources. This discrepancy highlights the need for an expanded scope and increased resources to ensure that the project can reach more communities across Darfur.

Another gap lies in the sustainability of peace building efforts. While the DCPSF project has successfully implemented various initiatives aimed at immediate peace and stability, there is a need for a stronger focus on long-term development and resilience building. This includes addressing underlying socio-economic issues that fuel conflict in Darfur, such as poverty, unemployment, and lack of access to basic services. The Darfur Government Peace Framework envisions a comprehensive approach to peace building that not only addresses immediate security concerns but also lays the foundation for long-term development and prosperity. Bridging this gap requires a more integrated approach that combines peace building with development initiatives, ensuring that progress made is sustainable over the long term.

3.3.4 National Development Agenda of Sudan

The Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF) project has been a pivotal initiative in aligning with the National Development Agenda for Sudan⁷, particularly in fostering peace, stability, and community development in the Darfur region. The project's relevance to the national development goals is multifaceted, addressing both immediate needs and long-term development strategies in a region that has faced significant challenges over the past decades. One respondent mentioned that, *"By aligning closely with government strategies and priorities, particularly in enhancing local conflict resolution capacities, the project not only mirrored the region's immediate needs but also integrated seamlessly into broader peacebuilding frameworks, showcasing its relevance and strategic foresight."*

Firstly, the DCPSF project directly contributed to the peace building and reconciliation efforts in Darfur, which are critical underpinnings for any sustainable development. By focusing on community-level interventions, the project fostered dialogue and understanding among different groups, thereby reducing tensions and creating a more

⁷ <https://sudannextgen.com/national-strategic-plan/>

stable environment for development activities. This focus on peace as a precursor to development is in line with Sudan's broader development goals, which recognize the necessity of stability for progress in areas such as education, healthcare, and economic growth.

Moreover, the DCPSF project has played a significant role in enhancing local governance and community resilience, empowering local communities to participate in decision-making processes. This empowerment is crucial for the sustainable development of Darfur, ensuring that development initiatives are both inclusive and reflective of the community's needs. In this way, the project supported the National Development Agenda's emphasis on inclusive governance and community-based approaches to development. As mentioned by a key informant: *"The project was well-coordinated with local government authorities, contributing to its acceptance and support. This alignment with government strategies was key to its success in institutionalizing peacebuilding efforts at local levels."*

However, despite its successes, the DCPSF project has faced several gaps that need to be addressed to fully realize its potential in contributing to the National Development Agenda. One significant gap is the limited scale and reach of the project, confined to specific communities within Darfur. This limitation means that many areas in need of intervention are left without support, highlighting the need for expanded coverage and increased funding.

Another gap is the project's focus on immediate peace and stability efforts, sometimes at the expense of long-term development planning. While peace is undoubtedly a prerequisite for development, there needs to be a more balanced approach that also invests in long-term development goals, such as infrastructure development, education, and healthcare. This would ensure that the peace and stability achieved through the project are sustainable and that communities are equipped to pursue their development aspirations.

3.3.5 UNDP Strategic Plan

The Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF) project's relevance to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Strategic Plan⁸ is marked by its comprehensive approach to peace building, community development, and resilience. By focusing on grassroots initiatives that foster community cohesion, improve livelihoods, and strengthen local governance, the DCPSF project aligned closely with the UNDP's strategic objectives in Darfur, which aim to promote sustainable development, peace, and security.

This alignment was particularly evident in the project's commitment to empowering communities and local institutions, a core component of the UNDP's strategy to build resilience and reduce vulnerabilities across Darfur. By investing in capacity building, conflict resolution, and economic recovery initiatives, the DCPSF project contributed directly to the stabilization and development of the region, addressing both the symptoms and root causes of conflict and underdevelopment.

However, gaps exist particularly regarding the scale and sustainability of its interventions.

⁸ <https://www.undp.org/publications/undp-strategic-plan-2022-2025>
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While the DCPSF project has made significant strides in targeted communities, its reach is limited compared to the widespread needs across Darfur. This limitation points to a gap in resources and coverage, highlighting the need for expanded investment and collaboration to extend the benefits of the project to more communities.

Additionally, sustainability remains a challenge, as many of the project's initiatives require ongoing support to ensure their long-term viability. This gap underscores the importance of integrating DCPSF interventions into broader national development plans and securing commitments from both local and international partners to sustain funding and support over time.

Key Findings:

- **Project Design and Strategic Alignment:** The DCPSF projects were thoughtfully crafted to enhance community-based resource management (CBRM), peace building participation, and coordination among peace actors, underpinned by a solid theory of change (ToC) and results framework. These projects align with key international frameworks and goals, such as the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and various Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Despite their comprehensive design, there are noted gaps in the articulation of key assumptions and risk management strategies.
- **Community-Centric Approach and Impact:** At the heart of the DCPSF projects is a focus on addressing the complex needs of Darfur's communities, particularly in peace building, empowerment, and livelihood enhancement. This approach has been essential in fostering social cohesion, enhancing economic resilience, and laying the groundwork for sustainable peace. However, the analysis points to notable gaps in service coverage and the sustainability of interventions, highlighting areas for improvement in meeting the comprehensive needs of the community.
- **Sustainable Development and Peace building:** The DCPSF projects have significantly contributed to advancing SDGs in Darfur, with a particular focus on peace, justice, gender equality, and environmental sustainability. Despite their contributions, there is a need for a more holistic approach that includes economic development and a broader reach to maximize their impact on the SDGs.
- **Alignment with UN and National Frameworks:** The projects align with the UN Strategic Framework for Darfur and the Sudan Government Peace Framework, supporting community-level peace and reconciliation efforts. Yet, limitations in geographic coverage and thematic focus, as well as challenges in ensuring the sustainability of outcomes, indicate the need for expanded scope and resources.
- **Supporting National Development and UNDP Strategic Goals:** The initiatives support Sudan's National Development Agenda and UNDP's Strategic Plan by fostering peace, enhancing local governance, and building community resilience. However, their limited scale and the focus on immediate peace efforts highlight the necessity for broader development planning and long-term sustainability.
- **Sustainability and Long-term Development Focus:** The need for a balanced approach that includes long-term development planning alongside immediate peace and stability efforts is underscored. The analysis suggests expanding

project reach and integrating initiatives into broader development plans to ensure sustainability and a more profound impact on community well-being.

3.4 COHERENCE AND COORDINATION

3.4.1 Coherence with SDGs

The Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF) project exhibited a strong coherence with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), embodying the integrated approach essential for achieving sustainable peace and development in conflict-affected regions. By focusing on community empowerment, peace building, and economic recovery, the DCPSF project aligned with multiple SDGs, most notably SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions), but also significantly contributes to SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), and SDG 15 (Life on Land), among others.⁹

This coherence is evident in the project's emphasis on creating peaceful and inclusive communities through dialogue and reconciliation efforts, directly supporting the aims of SDG 16. Additionally, by facilitating access to economic opportunities and supporting livelihoods in Darfur's communities, the DCPSF project contributes to reducing poverty (SDG 1) and promoting sustained, inclusive economic growth (SDG 8). Its focus on including women in peace building processes and decision-making roles also advances the goals of SDG 5.

However, gaps remain in the full realization of the SDGs through the DCPSF project. One significant gap is the limited scope of environmental sustainability initiatives. While the project addresses some aspects of SDG 15 (Life on Land) through its efforts to mitigate land conflicts, more comprehensive environmental conservation and climate action measures could enhance its alignment with other SDGs, particularly SDG 13 (Climate Action).

Another gap lies in the scalability and sustainability of the project's interventions. The reach of the DCPSF project, although significant, is not sufficient to meet the extensive needs across Darfur. Expanding its scope and ensuring the sustainability of its achievements are crucial for a more profound impact on the SDGs. This requires not only increased funding but also stronger partnerships with local and international stakeholders, and integration of the project's initiatives into broader national development plans.

3.4.2 Coherence with Government Priorities

The alignment of the DCPSF's initiatives with the government's priorities in Darfur was crucial for the sustainability and legitimacy of its interventions. By aligning with government strategies for peace building, reconciliation, and development, the DCPSF reinforced national efforts towards these ends. This alignment encompassed support for community-based conflict resolution mechanisms, which complemented broader government strategies for peace and security. The fund's role in facilitating dialogue between communities and government authorities underscored its contribution to the government's peace framework, bridging gaps in understanding and building mutual trust.

Furthermore, the DCPSF project's initiatives aimed at improving livelihoods and economic resilience aligned with the government's priorities for economic recovery in Darfur.

⁹ <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

Through vocational training, agricultural support, and small enterprise development, the project contributed to reducing poverty and enhancing economic opportunities for communities affected by conflict, thereby supporting the government's agenda for economic revitalization and job creation.

While the DCPSF project has made notable strides in targeted communities, its reach remains limited compared to the extensive needs across Darfur. Expanding the project's scope to align more comprehensively with national development plans and strategies is essential for maximizing its impact.

In addition, challenges arise from fluctuating political will and occasional shifts in policy focus, which often diverge from the fund's objectives and strategies. Bureaucratic hurdles and limited governance capacities at the local level further impede effective project implementation. These gaps highlight the necessity for enhanced collaboration between the DCPSF, government bodies, and local governance structures to ensure that interventions are both aligned with national priorities and adaptable to changing political landscapes. Additionally, there is a need for enhanced coordination and collaboration between the DCPSF project and various government agencies. Strengthening these partnerships can ensure that the project's initiatives are fully integrated into the national development agenda, avoiding duplication of efforts and leveraging resources more effectively.

3.4.3 Coherence within the UNDP Strategic Framework

The DCPSF projects were closely aligned with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Strategic Framework, showcasing a concerted effort to address critical issues of peace building, governance, and sustainable development within the Darfur region. This coherence was pivotal, ensuring that the project's endeavours are integrated with broader UNDP goals aimed at fostering stability, peace, and development across conflict-affected areas.

Central to the DCPSF project's alignment with the UNDP Strategic Framework is its emphasis on community empowerment and local governance strengthening. These efforts resonated with the UNDP's strategic focus on inclusive governance and the rule of law, aiming to build resilient societies capable of navigating the complexities of post-conflict recovery and development. By facilitating community dialogues, enhancing local governance capabilities, and implementing peace building activities, the DCPSF project directly contributed to the UNDP's overarching objective of promoting sustainable peace and development.

Additionally, the project's initiatives in economic recovery and livelihood enhancements aligned with the UNDP's sustainable development goals. Through vocational training, agricultural support, and the fostering of small enterprises, the DCPSF project aided in bolstering economic resilience, thereby addressing poverty and promoting economic growth—a fundamental aspect of the UNDP Strategic Framework.

Despite these alignments, the project encountered gaps in fully resonating with the UNDP Strategic Framework. Notably, there is a need for greater emphasis on environmental sustainability and gender equality. While the DCPSF project undertook significant work in

economic and social sectors, incorporating environmental conservation and a gender-inclusive approach across all activities could elevate its coherence with the UNDP's broader strategic aims. The UNDP Framework prioritizes environmental sustainability and gender equality as integral components of development initiatives, suggesting a gap in the DCPSF project's current implementation.

Moreover, the challenge of ensuring the scalability and sustainability of the project's outcomes remains. For the DCPSF project to be fully coherent with the UNDP Strategic Framework, it must ensure that interventions are not only scalable across Darfur's diverse communities but also sustainable beyond the project's immediate timeline. Achieving this requires securing long-term funding and embedding project initiatives within local and national development plans, ensuring continued impact and alignment with the UNDP's strategic objectives.

3.4.4 Alignment with Broader Peace building Strategies

The DCPSF projects demonstrated significant alignment with broader peace building strategies, underscoring its critical role in the complex peace building landscape of Darfur, Sudan. This alignment was manifested through its commitment to community-level interventions aimed at fostering dialogue, enhancing social cohesion, and rebuilding trust among conflicting parties. By prioritizing grassroots peace building initiatives, the DCPSF project aligned with the overarching goal of broader peace building strategies, which emphasize the importance of local ownership and community engagement in sustaining peace.

A key aspect of this alignment is the project's focus on empowering local governance structures and civil society organizations. This approach is in sync with broader peace building strategies that recognize the necessity of strong local institutions and an active civil society in laying the foundations for durable peace. Through capacity-building efforts, the DCPSF project contributed to strengthening the institutional frameworks necessary for effective governance and conflict resolution, crucial components of long-term peace building.

However, despite these strengths, there are gaps in the DCPSF project's alignment with broader peace building strategies. One notable gap is the integration of comprehensive economic recovery programs. While the project supports livelihood improvement, broader peace building strategies often call for more extensive economic development initiatives that address the root causes of conflict, such as poverty, unemployment, and economic disparity. Expanding the project's scope to include more robust economic recovery programs could enhance its alignment with these broader strategies.

Another gap lies in the scalability of peace building initiatives. The DCPSF project has made significant impacts in targeted communities, yet the challenge remains to scale these successes across the wider region of Darfur. Broader peace building strategies emphasize the need for scalable solutions that can be adapted and applied in various contexts to achieve widespread peace and stability. Enhancing the scalability of DCPSF interventions could address this gap, ensuring broader and more sustainable impacts.

3.4.5 Effective Coordination with Implementing Partners and Stakeholders

The DCPSF projects have made notable strides in coordinating efforts with implementing partners and stakeholders, a critical factor in its ability to address the multifaceted challenges of peace building and development in the Darfur region. Effective coordination ensured that the project's initiatives are well-aligned with local needs, avoiding duplication of efforts and maximizing the impact of resources. This collaborative approach was essential for the success of complex, community-based projects in conflict-affected areas.

As mentioned by a stakeholder: *"By fostering strong collaborations between local communities, governmental bodies, and international entities, the DCPSF project has created a symphony of peacebuilding efforts. Its coherence lies not just in shared goals but in the vibrancy of partnerships that drive collective action for peace in Darfur."* The DCPSF project engaged a range of partners, including local NGOs, community organizations, government bodies, and international agencies, facilitating a multi-stakeholder approach that leveraged the strengths and expertise of each partner. This strategy was crucial in implementing peace building initiatives, livelihood programs, and capacity-building activities, ensuring that interventions are comprehensive and tailored to the specific context of Darfur.

However, gaps in coordination and communication among partners and stakeholders have been identified as areas for improvement. While the project has established mechanisms for collaboration, challenges remain in ensuring consistent and effective communication across all levels of implementation. This can lead to inconsistencies in project delivery and impact, hindering the overall effectiveness of the initiatives.

Additionally, the integration of feedback loops and learning processes between the DCPSF project and its partners could be strengthened. Incorporating regular reviews and adjustments based on the feedback from implementing partners and beneficiaries can enhance the adaptability and responsiveness of the project, ensuring that it remains aligned with evolving community needs and priorities.

3.4.6 Integration with Local and State Authorities

The Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF) project made significant efforts to integrate its activities with local and state authorities, recognizing the importance of aligning community-based peace building and development initiatives with governmental strategies and frameworks. This integration was crucial for ensuring that the project's interventions are sustainable, have the endorsement of relevant authorities, and contribute to the broader goals of peace and development in the region.

The DCPSF project's approach to integration has involved collaborating with local and state government bodies to identify community needs, design interventions, and implement activities. This partnership has facilitated access to resources, enhanced the project's legitimacy in the eyes of the communities, and ensured that interventions are in line with national and regional development priorities. By working closely with government representatives, the project has been able to leverage governmental support in facilitating dialogues, mobilizing resources, and ensuring the security and effectiveness of its initiatives. As one respondent mentioned: *"The project was well-coordinated with local government authorities, contributing to its acceptance and support. This alignment with government strategies was key to its success in institutionalizing peacebuilding efforts at*

local levels.”

However, gaps in this integration process have been identified, particularly regarding the consistency and depth of engagement with governmental bodies. Challenges include varying levels of commitment and capacity among local and state authorities, which can impact the effectiveness and sustainability of the project's interventions. Additionally, the dynamic political and security situation in Darfur complicated coordination efforts, leading to delays or adjustments in planned activities. The identified challenges in effectively coordinating with local and state authorities in Darfur, stemming from varying levels of commitment and capacity, also extend to the national level, highlighting a systemic issue in the integration process with governmental bodies. This inconsistency and the dynamic political and security climate not only complicate coordination efforts within Darfur but also at the national scale, affecting the effectiveness and sustainability of the project's interventions. The difficulties in engaging deeply and consistently with governmental entities at all levels underscore the need for strengthened mechanisms for collaboration, ensuring that the project's objectives align with and support broader national peace and development strategies, thereby enhancing the overall impact and sustainability of interventions across the board.

3.4.7 Networking for Peace building

The Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF) project has been a pivotal platform for networking and collaboration in the realm of peace building in Darfur, leveraging the collective strengths and expertise of various stakeholders to foster peace and stability in the region. Networking for peace building is essential, as it brings together a diverse range of actors, including local communities, civil society organizations, government agencies, and international partners, to share knowledge, resources, and best practices in conflict resolution and community development

The project facilitated networking opportunities through workshops, meetings, and joint initiatives, creating a shared space for dialogue and cooperation among peace building actors. This collaborative environment enabled the exchange of innovative ideas and strategies, contributing to more effective and coordinated peace building efforts across Darfur. By fostering strong networks, the project enhanced the capacity of local actors to address conflict and promote social cohesion, demonstrating the power of collective action in achieving sustainable peace

However, there are gaps in the project's networking efforts that need to be addressed to maximize its impact. One significant gap is the insufficient inclusion and engagement of certain key stakeholders, such as youth and women's groups, in the networking and decision-making processes. These groups often bring unique perspectives and solutions to peace building efforts, and their underrepresentation can limit the effectiveness of initiatives.

Another gap lies in the sustainability and depth of the networks formed. While the DCPSF project has been successful in initiating connections among peace building actors, there is a need for mechanisms to ensure these networks are sustained beyond the lifespan of specific projects. Additionally, more focused efforts could be made to deepen these networks, moving beyond surface-level engagement to foster deeper collaboration and

trust among partners.

3.4.8 Contribution to Overall Framework Results

The Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF) project has made significant contributions to the overall framework results aimed at achieving peace, stability, and development in Darfur. By implementing a range of interventions focused on community empowerment, peace building, and economic recovery, the project has addressed key challenges and laid the groundwork for sustainable development in the region. These efforts align with broader strategic goals of peace and development, demonstrating the project's pivotal role in the collective endeavor to transform Darfur.

The project's contribution is particularly notable in its success in fostering community-level peace and reconciliation. Through dialogue initiatives, conflict resolution training, and support for community peace structures, the project has helped reduce tensions and build social cohesion among diverse groups. This has directly contributed to creating a more stable environment conducive to development activities, reflecting positively on overall framework results.

Furthermore, the project's focus on enhancing livelihoods and supporting economic opportunities has contributed to improving the economic resilience of communities. By providing vocational training, agricultural support, and small business development assistance, the DCPSF project has empowered individuals and communities, contributing to poverty reduction and economic stability.

One significant gap is the limited scalability and reach of the interventions. While the project has achieved notable successes in targeted communities, its impact is not sufficiently widespread to address the comprehensive needs across Darfur. This highlights the necessity for expanding the project's scope and enhancing its capacity to reach more communities. Additionally, the sustainability of the project's outcomes remains a challenge. Ensuring that the benefits of the interventions are maintained over the long term requires ongoing support, further integration with government programs, and the establishment of sustainable community-led initiatives.

3.4.9 Overcoming Challenges of Coordination

The Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF) project, operating in a complex and fluid environment, has faced numerous challenges in coordinating its wide range of peace building and development activities. Effective coordination is crucial for the success of such multifaceted initiatives, ensuring that resources are utilized efficiently, efforts are not duplicated, and interventions are coherent and complementary across different stakeholders and sectors.

One of the key strengths of the DCPSF project in overcoming coordination challenges has been its establishment of coordination mechanisms at various levels. This includes regular stakeholder meetings, joint planning sessions, and the creation of platforms for information sharing and collaboration among NGOs, government entities, and community groups. These mechanisms have facilitated better alignment of activities, priorities, and

strategies among all actors involved in the peace building process in Darfur. As a key informant highlighted *'The Peace Building Working Groups facilitated coherence in approaches and messaging among stakeholders. This monthly coordination mechanism was instrumental in aligning efforts and achieving project results.'*

However, gaps remain in the project's coordination efforts. One significant challenge is the harmonization of activities across a broad spectrum of partners with diverse mandates, capacities, and approaches. This diversity, while a strength, can also lead to inconsistencies in implementation and impact assessment, making it difficult to achieve a unified approach to peace building and development. Another gap is the fluctuating security situation in Darfur, which poses logistical challenges to coordination. Security constraints limit access to certain areas, disrupt planned activities, and hinder the ability of partners to work together effectively on the ground.

3.4.10 Addressing Conflict Sensitivities

The Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF) project has been instrumental in addressing conflict sensitivities in Darfur, a region that has experienced prolonged conflict and instability. The project's approach to conflict sensitivity involved understanding the complex dynamics at play in Darfur and designing interventions that not only avoid exacerbating tensions but actively contribute to peace and reconciliation. This commitment was crucial for ensuring that peace building and development efforts are effective and sustainable in such a volatile context.

A key strength of the DCPSF project is its emphasis on community engagement and participation. By involving local communities in the planning and implementation of initiatives, the project ensured that interventions are informed by a deep understanding of local conflict dynamics and cultural sensitivities. This participatory approach helped to build trust and buy-in from the community, which was essential for the success of peace building efforts. Moreover, the project implemented specific activities aimed at addressing root causes of conflict, such as competition over natural resources, ethnic tensions, and governance issues. Initiatives such as dialogue forums, peace committees, and conflict resolution training have played a significant role in mitigating conflict and promoting social cohesion.

While the project undertook efforts to understand conflict dynamics, there is room for improvement in continuously monitoring changes in the conflict landscape and adjusting interventions accordingly. This would ensure that the project remains responsive to emerging challenges and opportunities for peace building. Another gap is in the integration of conflict sensitivity across all project activities. While specific initiatives focus on peace building, ensuring that all aspects of the project, including economic development and capacity building, are designed and implemented with conflict sensitivity in mind is crucial. This would minimize the risk of unintended negative impacts and maximize the project's contribution to peace.

Key Findings:

- **Strong Coherence and Coordination:** The project demonstrated strong coherence with broader peace building strategies and effective coordination with various stakeholders, contributing significantly to its success.
- **Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):** The DCPSF project showed strong coherence with several SDGs, particularly SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions), but also contributed to SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), and SDG 15 (Life on Land). However, gaps were identified in environmental sustainability initiatives and the scalability and sustainability of the project's interventions.
- **Coherence with Government Priorities:** The project aligned with government strategies for peace building, reconciliation, and development, reinforcing national efforts. Challenges included fluctuating political will, bureaucratic hurdles, and the need for enhanced collaboration with government bodies.
- **Coherence within the UNDP Strategic Framework:** The DCPSF project was closely aligned with the UNDP Strategic Framework, focusing on community empowerment and local governance strengthening. However, gaps in environmental sustainability and gender equality were noted, along with challenges in scalability and sustainability.
- **Alignment with Broader Peace building Strategies:** The project was aligned with broader peace building strategies through community-level interventions and empowering local governance. Gaps in comprehensive economic recovery programs and the scalability of peace building initiatives were identified.
- **Effective Coordination with Implementing Partners and Stakeholders:** The project coordinated efforts with a range of partners but faced gaps in coordination and communication, highlighting the need for improved feedback loops and learning processes.
- **Integration with Local and State Authorities:** The project worked to integrate its activities with local and state authorities, though gaps in engagement and the dynamic political and security situation in Darfur presented challenges.
- **Networking for Peace building:** The DCPSF project facilitated networking and collaboration, with gaps noted in the inclusion and engagement of key stakeholders and the sustainability of networks.
- **Contribution to Overall Framework Results:** The project contributed to peace, stability, and development in Darfur, particularly in fostering community-level peace and supporting economic opportunities. Challenges included limited scalability and sustainability of interventions.
- **Overcoming Challenges of Coordination:** The project established coordination mechanisms but faced challenges in harmonizing activities and dealing with the fluctuating security situation.
- **Addressing Conflict Sensitivities:** The DCPSF project focused on community engagement and addressing root causes of conflict. Improvement areas include monitoring changes in the conflict landscape and integrating conflict sensitivity across all activities.

3.5 EFFECTIVENESS AND POTENTIAL IMPACT

With its multifaceted approach, the DCPSF has effectively harnessed the power of community-based initiatives, inclusive participation, and strategic partnerships to address the complex dynamics of conflict and pave the way for sustainable peace. Through its targeted interventions, ranging from economic empowerment, capacity building, to environmental sustainability, the DCPSF has made significant strides in not only reducing conflict but also in laying the groundwork for a resilient and prosperous society. The effectiveness and impact of the DCPSF project are evident in the improved livelihoods, strengthened community cohesion, and increased resilience against future conflicts, marking a transformative shift towards a more peaceful and stable Darfur.

3.5.1 Project Planning and Execution

The DCPSF peace building initiative in Darfur was meticulously structured to address the region's unique challenges, with a strategic framework aimed at tackling the root causes of conflict, fostering sustainable peace, and empowering communities to spearhead their own development. This comprehensive approach was guided by specific objectives, including the establishment and enhancement of community-based conflict resolution mechanisms, the empowerment of women and youth as pivotal agents of change, the promotion of economic interdependence through skills training and income-generating activities, and the development of essential infrastructure to bolster community resilience and improve the quality of life.

The initiative strategically focused on the most conflict-affected areas of Darfur, prioritizing regions where community structures remained intact yet vulnerable. This targeting was informed by an in-depth conflict analysis to identify communities where peace building efforts could yield the most sustainable impact. A wide demographic spectrum was engaged, with a particular focus on women, youth, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and ethnic minorities, recognizing their crucial roles in peace building and community development, as well as their vulnerabilities to conflict impacts.

The Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF) peacebuilding initiative in Darfur strategically engaged a broad demographic spectrum, recognizing the unique contributions and vulnerabilities of various community members towards sustainable peace and development. Women were empowered through the establishment of Women's Peace Committees, which mediated local disputes and championed women's rights, demonstrating significant success in promoting gender-inclusive peace efforts. For example, in North Darfur, these committees resolved over 50 disputes in 2021, evidencing their pivotal role in the local peace landscape ¹⁰.

Youth engagement was another cornerstone of the initiative, with programs like "Youth for Peace" in South Darfur, where over 200 youths were trained in conflict resolution, leadership, and vocational skills. Many of these youths initiated community projects addressing critical local issues, showcasing the project's impact on empowering youth to contribute constructively to their communities.

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) were also a focus, with the project facilitating their

¹⁰ https://mptf.undp.org/sites/default/files/documents/2022-05/2021_annual_narrative_report_dcpsf.pdf
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economic and social integration through livelihood programs. In West Darfur, a microfinance scheme supported over 500 IDP families, offering seed capital for small business ventures, thereby aiding their economic self-reliance and fostering social cohesion

Ethnic minorities participated in inter-ethnic dialogue forums, which served as platforms for reducing tensions and fostering mutual understanding. In Central Darfur, such a forum led to agreements on shared natural resource access between conflicting ethnic groups, setting a precedent for collaborative management of shared resources

These initiatives underline the DCPSF project's comprehensive and inclusive approach to peacebuilding in Darfur, ensuring that women, youth, IDPs, and ethnic minorities are not only beneficiaries but active agents of change, contributing significantly to the overarching goal of fostering durable peace and community resilience.

The planning process was characterized by extensive consultations with a range of local stakeholders, ensuring the project's alignment with the community's needs and priorities. This participatory approach fostered local ownership and enhanced the relevance and effectiveness of the interventions. The project's multifaceted strategy was rooted in the understanding that Darfur's conflict drivers—governance issues, economic deprivation, social inequality, and environmental degradation—were interconnected, necessitating a holistic approach that integrated conflict resolution, economic empowerment, social inclusion, and environmental sustainability.

This initiative was carefully tailored to Darfur's specific context, incorporating local customs, governance structures, and market needs into its activities. Conflict resolution mechanisms were designed to augment traditional dispute resolution forms, while economic initiatives were developed to align with local market dynamics and environmental conditions, addressing the environmental factors contributing to conflict. This nuanced and adaptive approach underscored the project's commitment to creating a reinforcing cycle of peace and development, tailored to the intricate social, economic, and environmental fabric of Darfur.

Community-Based Conflict Resolution Mechanisms

The Community-Based Reconciliation Mechanism (CBRM) Committees were pivotal in addressing local conflicts through a structured, community-driven approach. These committees were formed through a careful selection process that prioritized diversity and representation, ensuring members were respected, neutral, and knowledgeable about local customs. Training methodologies for committee members emphasized conflict resolution skills, mediation techniques, and ethical considerations, employing a mix of workshops, role-playing, and practical exercises tailored to local contexts. CBRM Committees addressed a wide range of conflicts, from land and resource disputes to interpersonal and group conflicts, leveraging their understanding of local dynamics and trust within the community.

The effectiveness of these mechanisms in real-life scenarios was notable. They provided accessible, culturally relevant, and timely resolutions to conflicts, often preventing escalation and fostering a sense of justice and reconciliation within communities. Their success lay in the combination of local legitimacy, tailored conflict resolution approaches,

and the active involvement of community members in the peace process. As one key informant stated: *"The establishment of Community-Based Reconciliation Mechanisms (CBRMs) was pivotal. It addressed the absence of government at the local level, resolving numerous community conflicts. This illustrates the project's relevance and impact in enhancing local governance and peace."* However, their impact was sometimes limited by challenges such as resource constraints, political interference, and the need for greater integration with formal legal systems. Overall, the CBRM Committees represented a critical step towards sustainable peace building by empowering communities to address their conflicts constructively and collaboratively.

Capacity Building and Skill Transfer

The capacity building and skill transfer component of the peace building project in Darfur involved comprehensive training sessions and workshops designed to enhance the capabilities of community members, leaders, and project participants. These educational initiatives covered a broad range of topics, including conflict resolution, leadership, financial management, and vocational skills, tailored to the specific needs and contexts of the communities in Darfur. Attendance was encouraged through community engagement and incentives, ensuring wide participation. The measurable improvement in participants' skills was evidenced by feedback from participants, and the observable application of new skills in community projects and conflict resolution efforts. These capacity-building efforts significantly contributed to sustainable peace building by empowering individuals with the tools and knowledge to lead development and reconciliation efforts within their communities, fostering a sense of ownership and resilience against future conflicts. For example one key informant mentioned that *"The project focused on grassroots level establishing mechanisms, for the local communities to be able to set up their own forums for discussion... ensuring sustainability of the actions that were put in place."*

The capacity building and skill transfer component of the peace building project in Darfur was evaluated through a survey by implementing partners, providing quantifiable evidence of its impact on participants. This assessment revealed high levels of satisfaction among stakeholders, with a significant majority of participants reporting substantial improvements in their abilities to manage conflicts, lead community initiatives, and apply new vocational skills practically. For example 514 people were trained in vocational skills, of these 290 were men and 224 women. In addition, 1251 women were trained in peace building and conflict resolution, One anonymous quote from the survey encapsulates the sentiment of many participants: *"The skills and knowledge gained have not only empowered me personally but have also enabled us to initiate meaningful changes in our community, fostering peace and development where it's most needed."*

The program notably included vulnerable groups and individuals with disabilities among its beneficiaries, ensuring that the capacity-building activities were accessible and relevant to all segments of the community. This inclusive approach underscored the project's commitment to leaving no one behind, aligning with broader peace building and development goals. The feedback from these groups was overwhelmingly positive, with many highlighting how the training had provided them with new opportunities for participation and leadership within their communities, which were previously unattainable.

Challenges and Solutions

Throughout the project's implementation in Darfur, logistical, cultural, and security challenges were encountered, including difficulties in accessing remote areas, resistance to change due to deeply rooted cultural norms, and security concerns in conflict-affected regions. Solutions involved leveraging local networks for logistical support, conducting culturally sensitive awareness sessions to foster community acceptance, and collaborating with local authorities for security assurances. These experiences underscore the importance of adaptability, community engagement, and strategic partnerships in overcoming obstacles and offering valuable lessons for future peace building efforts.

3.5.2 Monitoring and Evaluation Findings

The monitoring and evaluation (M&E) efforts of the project, employing surveys, interviews, and participant observation, underscored its effectiveness in achieving set goals and measuring progress against key performance indicators. Despite achieving many expected outcomes, challenges such as full community engagement and ensuring long-term economic sustainability were identified. To mitigate these, strategies for community engagement were refined, and support for economic initiatives was enhanced to promote broader participation and sustained impact.

However, the conflict posed significant disruptions to M&E activities, notably impeding access to essential reports, records, and documentation, thus hindering the implementation of effective M&E strategies. The shutdown in the communication and internet infrastructure also hindered any possibility of performing remote monitoring and reporting. This resulted in critical data collection and field assessments being compromised, delaying the project evaluation and the accuracy of performance reports. The M&E and reporting system's efficiency was particularly challenged by the conflict, which restricted movement and access to project sites, affecting the timely gathering of information necessary for evaluating outcomes. Despite these challenges, adaptations to the M&E framework, such as the adoption of remote monitoring techniques and digital data collection methods, were pivotal in maintaining oversight. Nonetheless, the conflict's impact on the overall efficiency of the M&E and reporting system significantly affected the project's capacity to make informed decisions and strategic adjustments, highlighting the need for robust contingency planning in conflict-sensitive environments.

3.5.3 Beneficiary participation

a) Inclusive Engagement Strategies

The project employed targeted outreach and engagement strategies to ensure the active participation of women and youth, such as workshops focused on leadership and economic empowerment, and community projects that leveraged their unique perspectives and skills. These activities were designed to foster an environment where women and youth felt valued and empowered to contribute to peace building efforts. The impact of these strategies was significant, leading to increased confidence among participants, greater community involvement, and the emergence of new leaders from these groups, demonstrating the effectiveness of tailored engagement in promoting inclusive peace building. The project's engagement strategies for women and youth had

concrete, positive outcomes, showcasing the power of targeted outreach. Leadership workshops specifically designed for women in underrepresented communities led to their increased involvement in public forums and local governance, demonstrating the workshops' effectiveness in boosting confidence and leadership skills. Similarly, entrepreneurship training and microfinance opportunities for the youth catalyzed the creation of a cooperative business in sustainable agriculture, which not only provided economic benefits to its members but also contributed to community well-being, exemplifying the impact of focusing on youth empowerment.

Another noteworthy initiative was a community beautification project that invited women and youth to contribute ideas that reflect their heritage and aspirations for peace. This project not only enhanced the community's aesthetic but also symbolized unity and a collective vision for the future, strengthening communal bonds. Additionally, mentorship programs linked young entrepreneurs with experienced business owners, fostering skill transfer, and network building. This led to the successful establishment and expansion of new businesses under the guidance of their mentors, underscoring the mentorship program's role in promoting sustainable economic growth.

These activities collectively fostered an environment where women and youth felt empowered to contribute to peacebuilding efforts significantly. The strategies led to tangible outcomes, such as increased participant confidence, greater community engagement, and the emergence of new leaders from these groups. This demonstrated the effectiveness of tailored engagement in fostering inclusive peacebuilding, marking a cultural shift towards recognizing and valuing the contributions of women and youth in the community.

b) Feedback and Adaptation

Beneficiary feedback was collected through various mechanisms, including community meetings, surveys, and focus groups, enabling stakeholders to voice their experiences and suggestions. This feedback was instrumental in adapting project activities to better meet community needs, leading to refinements in program design and implementation. For example, if feedback indicated a particular training approach was not effective, modifications were made to the curriculum or delivery method to enhance learning outcomes. This iterative process ensured the project remained responsive and relevant to the beneficiaries' evolving needs, thereby increasing its overall impact and success.

c) Long-term Engagement and Impact

The project's approach to ensuring long-term engagement and impact involved creating sustainable opportunities and platforms for continued involvement, particularly for women and youth. Follow-up initiatives included advanced training programs, mentorship opportunities, and the establishment of community forums for continuous dialogue and project feedback. Ongoing support mechanisms, such as microfinance for women-led enterprises and youth innovation hubs, were established to maintain momentum and interest in peace building activities. These efforts aimed to embed the project's values and practices within the community, ensuring lasting peace and development.

d) Gaps in Participation

Despite the fact that outcome three of the DCPSF phase II project was dedicated to meaningful participation women, youth and other marginalized groups such as people with disability and targeting female nomads in peacebuilding platform and processes, interviews with key informants and review of the monitoring data had no mention of involvement of such marginalized groups.

3.5.4 Achievement of Expected Results

The overall purpose of the DCPSF programme was to ensure communities in the Darfur states are safe and stabilized, and that trust and confidence among communities are restored, and women including pastoralist women are empowered to participate in peace building efforts at state and local level, thus paving the way towards early recovery.

To achieve these results the DCPSF project intervened in four sub-results areas “outputs”.

Output 1: Community-Based Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation Mechanisms (CBRM) are in use and working effectively to resolve conflict.

Output one interventions were aimed to strengthen Community-based conflict Resolution and Reconciliation Mechanisms (CBRM) also known as “Communal Peace Committees” to effectively resolve conflict. During the project life, about 185 CBRMs were established in more than 136 villages across 27 localities in Darfur states (20 committees were revitalized and 165 newly established CBRMs). The 185 CBRMs members are made up of a cross-section of community members which include; the farmers, youth, women, pastoralists or nomads, settled, returnee and IDPs with representation of women. A perception study conducted in East Darfur by DDRA in 2022 showed that 85% of the population agree that they are represented in all community institutions including the CBRMs.

A total of 4524 members (2595 men and 1975 women) were trained in a range of skills; leadership, conflict resolution, roles and responsibilities of different actors, local conflict prevention and resolution techniques including early warning system to predict and prevent conflict, case management of other social violence and community education on peace building. SOS Sahel and KCSC in particular partnered with El Fasher University in North Darfur to train the CBRM. Over the project life, the CBRM held a total of 1765 meetings to mediate, and sometime to build the capacity of others in conflict resolution. As a conflict preventive measure, the CBRM routinely created awareness during rain harvest seasons among the farmers and pastoralists to avoid clashes over land and water. In a similar vein, DCPSF partners worked with CBRM and communities to establish conflict Early Warning Information Systems (EWIS) and mobile phone were provided to CBRM to support information sharing as part of EWS. The meetings and the awareness session were also avenues to promote women and youth inclusion in peace building initiatives.

Secondary data further shows that the supported CBRM received a total of 7137 cases, resolved 5946 case (83%), forwarded 351 and the unresolved cases were 840. Seventy-three (73%) of the people in East Darfur also agree that the greatest number of cases

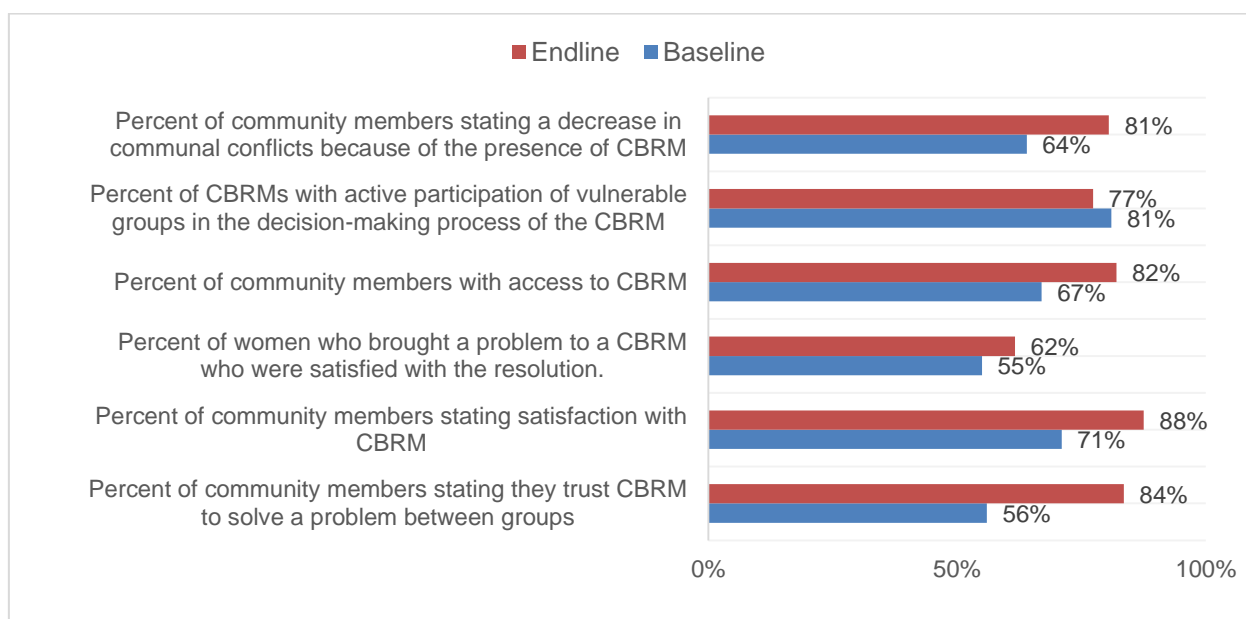
submitted to the CBRMs are successfully resolved. A consolidated report of the DCPSF report of 22 indicated that 46 dialogues were conducted in the targeted localities and villages to mediate violence in the communities – 500 people. These dialogues provided were a forum for CBRM members, communities, and their leaders to discuss issues of peace building, community resilience, social cohesion, women empowerment, human rights, GBV and education including natural resource management. According to DDRA survey, 90% of the community members in East Darfur confirm that the intervention of the DCPSF has enormously contributed to the reduction in violence levels due to the establishment and functionality of the CBRMs. Overall, these levels of results demonstrates that the CBRM established under the project are being used and are effective in conflict resolution, given that 83% of the cases received are resolved.

As shown in the figure one, an endline study conducted by WRS, WHH, PA, WVI, SAHARI, SORD, DDRA and PBA in the five states of Darfur shows that 84% of the community members stated they trust CBRM to solve a problem between groups in the community, compared to 56% at baseline. This finding shows great strides improving community trust and confidence in the CBRM established. Eighty-eight (88%) of the community at endline expressed that they were satisfied with the work of CBRM, compared 71% at baseline. In terms of women participation, 62% of the women at endline reported that they brought a problem to a CBRM who were satisfied with the resolution, compared to only 55% at baseline – this signifies a slight improvement in the level of satisfaction among in CBRM work.

As far as accessibility is concerned, 82% of the community members report at endline that they can easily access CBRM and their services, compared to 67% baseline timeframe, this findings indicates that CBRM coverage is reaches every village targeted by DCPSF project. About 71% of CBRMs established were found to have evidence of active participation of vulnerable groups in the decision-making process of the CBRM – signifying the inclusiveness of the CBRM and their services.

When asked about their perception on cases of communal conflicts at the current time comparison to time before CBRM established, at baseline 64% the community members stated that there is a decrease in communal conflicts at that time, at endline 81% the community members stated that there is a decrease in communal conflicts at time current time with CBRM in place, this findings is indicator of the impact of the CBRM activities at community.

Figure 1: Baseline versus endline values on CBRM effectiveness in conflict resolution



Sources: Baseline and Endline Survey

Output 2: Peace dividends for community interdependence and co-existence delivered.

There are many explanations for the Darfur conflict, among them include the feeling of inequality, economic hardship, unequal exploitation of natural resource, climate change impact on food security and water for farmers and pastoralists, nepotism or political difference as certain ethnic groups feel voiceless and neglected at different levels leadership. As a result, realizing peace dividends for interdependence and co-existence cannot be possible without addressing socio-economic problems, unequal exploitation of natural resources, environmental degradation and unbalanced provision of social services. In response to these, DCPSF phase II implemented a range services, among which include livelihood support, access to education and health social services, water, sanitation and hygiene, demarcation of migratory routes, restoration of communal pasture/fodder and forest including establishment of veterinary centres and markets facilities.

In terms of livelihood support, 117 community saving, and 153 Income Generating Activities (IGA) groups were established by 2022. The saving groups on village saving and loan association The VSL group consisted of 2597 community members (2000 women and 597 men), 2022 these groups had saved a total amount of 22,337,624 Sudanese pounds (approximately USD 37,22). This savings are divided in three components; investment, loans and social funds. The investment and loan savings provide members capital for their business enterprises such as agriculture and micro-business enterprise, while the social fund caters for sudden shocks such as sickness, death or in time for disasters. Community savings does not only stand as the most easily accessible financial services at the grassroots, it is also avenues through which the DCPSF project and the CBRM used to deliver awareness creation on peaceful co-existence.

Under the IGA initiatives, nine DCPSF partners, namely; CRS (Central), WVI (South), SOS Sahel (North), CWW(West), WRS (West), Sahari (North), KSCS (North), SORD (North) and WHH (North) worked closely with 153 IGA groups spread across Darfur region. Through this initiative, 2484 community members (1273 men and 1211 women) were initially trained based on their enterprise choices, trained on financial literacy and business management practices and later provided start-up kits. Some of the common enterprise initiatives supported include animal (goat) fattening and trading, crop trading, agriculture as a business, bookshops and welding for youth, food processing, handicraft making and salon businesses, tea/coffee roadside cafes, cheese making, soap making, Shoe making machine; tea making, Spice Grinding machines; Restaurant/Café; Bakery; seed peeler machine; oil press machine; milling grinding machine, Car washing machine and tire repair, motorbikes for transport business and mobile phone solar charging units. Other youth groups were trained in making energy saving stoves as an eco-based adaptation to reduce carbon footprint, youth sport clubs provided television sets and pottery. The IGAs group start-up kit was more less a recovery incentives for the most vulnerable women, men and youths. Similarly to the saving groups, the IGA groups also served as an avenue through which other peace building activities were delivered. The group approach to economic strengthening coupled with the diverse enterprises initiatives and environmental care initiatives guarantee the continuity of this project livelihood activities.

Darfur being a semi-desert means community members have low access to water source for their domestic use, production and animal. In order to subside this situation, the DCPSF project implemented several activities aimed at improving access to safe water, good sanitation and hygiene. A total of 120 water sources were rehabilitated during the project life; 7 water yards, 10 hand dug shallow well, 2 shallow well, 91 hand pumps, 4 Haffirs, 2 animal water pond, 3 borehole and 1 water dam – these waters sources are reduced time to the nearest water sources and improved access water source for approximately 192,960 individuals, 10,300 households and approximately 27,870 animals. To ensure environmentally friendly management/ use of the water being generated, most of these water sources established especially water yards/boreholes are powered by solar energy and attached with overhead tanks as reservoir and storage.

Establishing the water sources alone were not enough, the water sources have to be maintained and someone should be responsible. In response to this needs, DCPSF project formed and trained 9 water user committees across locations where water points were rehabilitated or newly constructed, the training benefited a total of 108 water user committee members. Seventy (70) pump mechanics (56 male and 14 women) in West and South Darfur were trained to maintain the hand pumps established. During the project life at least 11 pumps mechanics were able to repair 11 hand pumps in West and South Darfur – this demonstrate the potentials of the water user committees and pump mechanics in sustainably maintaining the water sources established by the project.

The project was able to identify areas with limited access to community and social infrastructures such as markets, community centres, clinics or vet centres where people access basic services. In 2022, the DCPSF project partners – mainly CRS, PA, SORD

and WVI constructed 5 markets with 70 market shades and stalls. With the sustainability lens, the DCPSF partners worked with respective in each market location to form market committees, 3 committees were formed with 40 members. The formation of this structure has provided the 5 markets and 70 shades/stalls a guaranteed of proper management of the installations.

Ensuring quality education services is viewed as a peace dividend, therefore, the project constructed the following infrastructures to promote access to education to the children disadvantaged by the Darfur conflict and Sudan civil war; Thirteen (13) schools, 26 classrooms, 6 teacher offices, 2 fences and one latrine was rehabilitated across the region. The buildings were equipped with 72 benches, 72 desks, 66 chairs for teachers, 3 metal cupboards & 12 tables. These infrastructures and equipment helped rekindled learnings for approximately 5155 pupils/students. The classroom provided a good space for community meetings on non-school day, but also a point for building social cohesion.

Eleven (11) Community centres were also constructed across the region, and equipped with plastic chairs, office desks, cupboards, office chairs, barrel of water, plastic carpets, chairs, metallic tables, water containers or water reservoir and large plastic tables for meetings. These centres were constructed for the CBRM, women and youth group meeting, trainings, social events and literacy classes for women and children.

In some parts of Darfur, seasonal migration of pastoralists is known to be one of the major triggers of conflicts over land access and damage, water and grazing. In order to mitigate or resolve such disputes triggered by migration, the DCPSF demarcated and marked migratory routes enable a positive interaction between farmers and pastoralists during the seasonal migration periods when the highest cases of conflict are reported by CBRMs. Over project life, a total of 373 kilometers of migratory routes were demarcated by the demarcation committees with approximately 1023 concrete poles guiding the path for the herders from farms to resting areas and waters – hence reducing the encroaches that triggers tensions between the nomads and the farmers. In order to ensure the demarcated routes are followed, CBRM were tasked with responsibility of patrolling farm areas and protecting nomads' routes to reduce conflicts, especially during rainy seasons where farmland were used. As cited by DCPSF technical secretariate and partners during interviews, migratory routing accounts for more than 80% decrease in the number of incidents and clashes reported between the nomads and farmers, thus, this interventions have contributed significantly to sustaining peace. With CBRM and local leaders taking the roles of patrolling the routes, this mechanism is sustainable even after the closure, hence a sustainable approach. In East Darfur, a study conducted in 2022 indicates that 92% of the people expressed that they did not support the demarcation of a migratory route through their communities –revealing there could be tensions between farmer sand nomads in such areas.

Observations made during phase I of DCPSF project indicated a urgent need to address health infrastructure for 3 health facilities in North and South Darfur; One facility was constructed in Hashaba health centre, Hashaba village in North Darfur. This infrastructure development has improved waiting shade, lavatory, water line and a solar lighting system – serving more than 1000 people in Hashaba and surrounding villages. A Health centre

block was also constructed at the Markundi Health Centre, South Darfur by World Vision. The new contains a maternity unit, a laboratory, and a vaccination room serving approximately 1000 people in the community. Al Garad health facility in South Darfur provided furniture for staff and patients. This interventions have closed the gap in the infrastructure challenges in the 3 villages of the North and South Darfur.

A perception study conducted by DDRA in East Darfur indicated that 52% community members agreed that there was an improvement in equal use of the social services provided. The reason for perception is that the political unrest created a switch in the people's allegiance between those who support the revolution and those who support the coup. The endline study conducted in selected states indicated that 80% of the community members were stating an increase in the number of interactions between diverse communities through basic services such as health initiatives, schools, vocational education and water sources, compared to 78% at baseline. The DDRA study in East Darfur indicated that 39% of the community perceive that there was a recognizable improvement in water services in their community as a results of the water sources established by the project, 26% perceive that education services has improved and 23% asserts that health services has improved owing the project health related activities and infrastructure development. This findings are a strong evidence on the impact of infrastructure developments undertaken in health, education, water sources and social amenities like community centres and markets.

Increasing agricultural productivity was one of the livelihood intervention areas targeted by the DCPSF project given that the main source of livelihood in Darfur is either crop or livestock farming. In order to improve modern agricultural practices among livestock farmers, the DCPSF partnered with the government and trained 16 Community Animal Health Workers (CAHWs) in Central and North Darfur. Following the training, the CAHWs were then provided veterinary kits and vaccination of animal by the CAHWs. Over the project life, approximately the CHAWs have collaborated with animal resources units/ State Ministries and vaccinated 43,500 animals including cows, goats, sheep, camels and donkeys with support of DDRA in East and North. 42,000 animals were vaccinated by DDRA in East, SORD supported vaccination of 1500 animals in North Darfur. In partnership State Ministry of Agriculture & Animal resources, a total of 537 farmers were trained on improved agricultural practices such as soil management, climate smart agriculture, pre/post-harvest handling and agriculture as business not just for subsistence purpose and environmental protection. The farmers trained comprised of 70 youths, 200 farmers trained on Farmer Field Schools and 267 farmers trained in both Farmer Field Schools (FFS) and Pastoralists Field Schools (PFS).

Under environmental care, the project intervened on provision of community seed nurseries and provision of seedlings, this intervention was intended not only address eco-based adaptation issues but also to provide enough pastures and tree shade for the pastoralists. A total of 12 community nurseries were provide tree and crop seedlings. About 2100kgs of pastures seeds were distributed and about 348 acres of and were planted with pasture in addition to 600 seedlings for pastures. A total of 2094kgs of crop seedling were provided to communities for planting during the rainy and winter season. In order to strengthen community awareness and eco-based adaptation actions, 79 Natural

Resources Management committee members were trained with support from El Fasher Forest Corporation. Awareness creations were conducted targeting youth, men and women. Observation from the implementers suggest that eco-based adaptation and nature-based solution interventions were mild and yet it requires immense action in order to address climate change impacts. When asked about the impact of the DCPSF on land use and environment, 46% agreed and strongly agreed that water, grazing land, agricultural practices improved within their communities. Thirty percent (30%) of community members indicate that the establishment of community-based resource management brought improvement in natural resource use – Twenty percent (20%) ascribed the reason for the improvement to the community dialogue, 20% to the capacity of the resources management, and 6% of them referred the improvement to other causes.

In addition to gender inclusion, the Youths were also deliberate targeted under the DCPSF project. About 1051 (560 male, 491female) youths were trained on various vocational skill areas, namely; welding, handicraft making, sewing, soap making, food processing, handbag making, salon business, carpentry and improved farming methods.

DCPSF Partners also promoted social cohesion through cultural and sporting activities, 40 events were held, reaching to promote social cohesion and increase awareness on peace building diversity, and inclusion among 13,156 community members.

The endline survey study conducted by selected partners indicated there was unmet for livelihood strengthening support, only 60% of the community members in the project operation areas perceive the peace dividend initiatives have benefited them. Although there is still perceived low involvement of women in this livelihood activities compared to their male counterparts, the project activities deliberately ensure a near fifty-fifty balance in the beneficiaries' selection and support. Overall, data from East Darfur suggest that 67% of the community members strongly agreed that the provision of basic services has contributed to stability in their communities, and there is overwhelming approval on the contribution brought across by the capacity building of reconciliation mechanisms conflict resolution, 98% of community members attribute peace in the community the work of the CBRM.

Output 3: Women's organizations, including those representing pastoralist women, empowered to meaningfully participate in local and state-level peace building platforms and activities

While women represent about 50% of Darfur population, they are not actively engaged in conflict resolution, peace building, or decision-making activities in their communities. In response to this, the DCPSF project focused under output three was to increase support to women organisation, representation of women including pastoralist women in community peace building and livelihood activities. The first step undertaken to improve women participation was formation o women organisation, and 30 organisations were formed in 2022. These organisations were view intended to be a channel for women inclusion in peace building and other development activities in Darfur. To sustain this groups, they were trained business management along with conflict management and provided small business enterprises such as food processing, handicraft making, oil

press machine, provided startup like cooking oil, flour, and sugar for those interested in bakeries while others received ground nuts (peanuts) for their peanut paste businesses.

Income Generating Activities group targeting were formed, a total of 33 women's IGAs groups were formed with a total of 525 members across Darfur. These groups were spread across Darfur; Nine (9) in South Darfur (ERRADA), twenty (20) in North Darfur (4 -RSD, 2 - SOS Sahel, 6 -KSCS, 8-SORD) and four (4) in Central Darfur (CRS). All the women's IGA groups were trained in small business management, conflict resolution and also received start up materials for food processing or handicraft making depending on their choice of small business.

In order to address harmful social norms against female gender, awareness campaigns, dialogues and women focus workshops were held. A total of 53 awareness sessions on issues that women were held, campaigns on Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV), Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), child rights and protection, forced marriage, other harmful practised that contribute to conflict in the community and the roles of women in the communities. The awareness sessions were structure to provide avenues for discussing, dialoguing and arriving a resolution as a community to denounce harmful social norms. A total of 25 skills training workshop was held on gender mainstreaming and women's inclusion in peace building and governance activities. This training benefited 1502 community members (1251 women and 251 men) on gender issues and the role of women in peace building and development.

All the women organisation formed were strengthened a range of services highlighted above, notably, the balance composition of the women representation in the CBRM structure guarantee a sustained involvement in the women including pastoralist women in peace building and other development activities. In a largely male led society, the involvement of men is considered vital, as such, DCPSF Partner (WVI) trained 30 men selected an GBV ambassadors on gender and harmful practises . It is hoped that these ambassadors lead the way in changing the attitude towards women in their communities.

Output 4: Improved networking, coordination, and learning between local and state level peace building institutions.

Output four reflects DCPSF work towards supporting CBRMs and other peace building forums to build linkages with the higher-level community peace building spaces both at the administration unit, locality, state, and national level. The intention of focusing on improving networking and coordination was to increase trust, provide accountability to stakeholders, identify areas in which stakeholders work can be complimentary and avoid duplication work, and above learn from each other at the community level, the state level and national level through an organised and coordinated platform.

In response to this output, the DCPSF project organized exchange visits between various Community Based Reconciliation Mechanisms (CBRMs). About 21 exchange visits between various CBRMs within the Darfur States, and 525 community members of the CBRM took part in the exchange visits which were aimed at sharing experiences on

conflict resolution, mediation and different issues that are cross cutting in their communities such as the use of migratory routes and water resources. These visits were between neighbouring villages and also included local authorities as part of network building.

The DCPSF partners also revived 2 peace building networks and 2 peace forums, linked them to the CBRM and through which they can approach the State and National level networks. To Activate the coordination and networking, DCPSF implementing partners organized events engaging these different stakeholders as part of the knowledge building, networking and information sharing efforts of the projects. In this platform, the different stakeholders discuss conflict mitigation within the communities. During the project life, 33 peace building forums and meetings were held, with attendance of at least 4901 community members. These forums discussed issues of peace building issues in the community and addressed topics of how to deal with conflict rising from seasonal migration, gender-based violence and how to use the community peace building mechanisms to create long term peace. In this platform, members routinely review, reflect and evaluate the effectiveness of the current approaches – especially agreements on common approaches that addresses the root causes of the conflict. A survey conducted in East Darfur indicates that 74% of the community members agree the exchange of the increasing product among the host communities and nomads due to the diversity of the local products and some of them feel more secure going to the markets. As results of the forums, about 42% of the community members can distinctive identify DCPSF programme work, 99% are aware about the establishment of the CBRMs. There is overwhelming agreements that the peace platform make use of the context analysis to make plan, make program adjustments and sometime inform research areas – evidence of this is demonstrated in the DCPSF proposals received in Call for Proposals rounds from the implementing.

3.5.5 IMPACT STORIES

In this section, we describe selected cases of impact stories from the five states of Darfur, demonstrating the impact of DCPSF project interventions in the four project results areas.

1) Bridging Divides: Ibrahim Adam's Journey as a Catalyst for Peace in Garsilla, Wadi Salih locality in Central Darfur

Ibrahim Adam, a 52-year-old resident of Garsilla, was excited to share his impactful story of conflict resolution and peace building in Central Darfur. In a region plagued by tensions between farmers and pastoralists, Ibrahim recounts the challenges his village faced due to disputes over land, water, and grazing rights. Lacking the knowledge and formal structures to address such conflicts, the community often witnessed violence and destruction.

In May 2021, the DCPSF project under CRS and Trust Rehabilitation & Development Organization (TDO) brought hope to Garsilla. Ibrahim, along with 30 others community members, participated in a training program on conflict resolution, peace building, early warning systems, and natural resource management. This initiative led to the formation of the Community-based Resolution Mechanism.

Armed with newfound skills and knowledge, Ibrahim's group successfully intervened in a critical situation where an accidental killing threatened to escalate into a cycle of revenge. Through dialogue and persuasion, they managed to peacefully resolve the conflict, showcasing the effectiveness of their training. The project empowered Ibrahim and others to handle complex issues in their community, providing a much-needed peace building mechanism in Garsilla, Wadi Salih locality in Central Darfur.

Ibrahim's journey exemplifies the positive impact of investing in Community-Based Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation Mechanisms a peace building structure to foster harmony and coexistence in a region once marred by violence.

2) How Disa and Ghurier Community-Based Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation (CBRM) members Mitigated Disa Market Tension, Kutum locality, North Darfur

Over the last decade, numerous investments have been made in an attempt to restore security and coexistence in Darfur communities. In response, Welthungerhilfe (WHH) and RSD implemented the DCPSF project in Kutum locality, North Darfur. The project supported the formation of CBRMs – composed of diverse community members. After the formation, the CBRM underwent training on mediation, reconciliation, and resource management facilitated by the Peace building Centre in El Fasher University. Equipped with skills, knowledge, and essential materials, the CBRMs aimed to address and prevent conflicts between January and February of 2022, tensions emerged in Disa Market, Kutum locality North Darfur between youths from different tribes escalated, this incident threatened peace and peaceful co-existence in the Disa village and other surrounding villages. When this incident occurred, a member of nearby village CBRM played a crucial role in defusing tensions and facilitating a peaceful resolution. The injured individual was taken to the police station, then to the hospital under the CBRM's bail. Subsequent tensions led to an attack on the market, prompting a 10-day closure. The CBRMs, in collaboration with community leaders, mediated a resolution that included compensations for medical expenses and damages, averting a major security crisis.

This incident showcased the effectiveness of the CBRMs, demonstrating their enhanced abilities in mediation and dialogue. The CBRMs now plan to conduct awareness sessions to prevent similar incidents in the future, this is tenet of hope that CBRM activities will be sustained. This success highlights the vital role of community-driven initiatives in building and maintaining peace in conflict-affected areas.

3) DCPSF Modern Agricultural Training and Market Shelter Construction, A springboard to Fatima's Horticulture Business

Fatima Esmail Adam, a 40-year-old vegetable trader from Girgo village, shares her impactful story of resilience and positive change. Working with selected farmers under DCPSF project, she navigates daily challenges to contribute to her family's well-being. Fatima collects vegetables from three farms weekly, including tomatoes, green peppers, cucumbers, and onions, selling them at the Girgo market.

Despite facing obstacles like transportation difficulties and uncomfortable market conditions under the scorching sun, Fatima perseveres with a beacon of hope, there would light at the end of the tunnel one day. She mainly transports vegetables to three markets, two of the located are between 20 to 25 kilometers away from her village. The lack of shade in the market and the long hours under the sun used to take a toll on her and other women. They felt dehydrated, tired, and the excessive heat affected the quality of their vegetables as well.

Positive change arrives with the intervention of Practical Action in 2022; shelters were built in the markets that Fatima sells her horticulture produce, providing a comfortable space for traders like Fatima. The new setup allows them to sit for long hours without exhaustion or fear of vegetables spoiling. Fatima expresses her gratitude, stating,

"We are so happy and feel comfortable after the shelters have been built by the Practical Action. Now we can sit long hours to sell our vegetables without feeling tired or having our vegetables spoiled.

Fatima's story is just one of the kinds demonstrating the impact of DCPSF project interventions on the lives of individuals and communities.

4) Empowering Futures: How Phone Repair and Maintenance Training Transformed Youth Livelihoods in Dar El slam locality, North Darfur.

Abdallah Mohammad, Nor Aldeen Abdallah Adam, Masajed Ebrahim, Nawal Busharah, Hanan Adam and other youths in *Dar El slam*, North Darfur were faced with economic challenges and the impact of communal conflicts.

In 2021, through the support of SOS Sahel under the DCPSF project, these youth were trained in phone repair and maintenance, and equipped startup kits including solar systems to enable them kickstart their businesses. Today, they have thriving businesses providing not only phone repair services but also serving as a vital energy source for their community, given the break in the energy infrastructure due the civil war and communal conflicts. These inspirational entrepreneurs have not only created economic opportunities but also become community hubs, fostering information exchange among the youth.

3.5.6 UNINTENDED RESULTS

The Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF), while primarily focused on fostering peace, stability, and development in Darfur, the project has also given rise to a range of unintended impacts. These effects, both positive and negative, highlight the complex interplay between humanitarian aid, local dynamics, and broader socio-political contexts. This analysis explores the multifaceted unintended results of the DCPSF projects, shedding light on the broader implications of international interventions in conflict-affected regions.

POSITIVE RESULTS

a). Empowerment of Local NGOs and Civil Society: The DCPSF's reliance on local NGOs and community-based organizations for the implementation of its projects inadvertently led to the strengthening of these entities. As these organizations took on more responsibilities, they gained valuable experience in project management, conflict resolution, and community mobilization. This empowerment contributed to a more vibrant civil society in Darfur, capable of advocating for community needs and rights more effectively.

b). Enhanced Social Cohesion: In aiming to address immediate community needs and support peace building initiatives, DCPSF inadvertently facilitated greater social cohesion among diverse groups. Projects that brought together individuals from different ethnic and tribal backgrounds for common goals, such as community farming projects or infrastructure rehabilitation, fostered a sense of unity and mutual understanding. This reduced tensions and contributed to breaking down long-standing barriers of mistrust and hostility.

c). Economic Diversification: While the primary focus of the DCPSF was on peace and stability, its projects also led to unintended economic benefits. For instance, vocational training programs and support for small enterprises helped diversify local economies that were previously heavily dependent on subsistence agriculture. This diversification not only improved economic resilience but also reduced vulnerability to the drivers of conflict, such as competition over scarce resources.

NEGATIVE RESULTS

a). Dependency Syndrome: One of the critical unintended impacts of the DCPSF project has been the creation of a dependency syndrome among some beneficiary communities. The continuous provision of aid and support services, while necessary, has, in some cases, led to a reliance on external assistance for survival and development. This dependence has potentially hindered the development of self-sufficiency and the motivation for communities to initiate and sustain their development projects.

b). Inequitable Resource Distribution: Despite efforts to ensure equitable distribution of resources and benefits, the DCPSF projects have sometimes inadvertently exacerbated inequalities within and between communities. Factors such as political affiliation, tribal connections, or geographic location have influenced the distribution of aid, leading to perceptions of favoritism and marginalization. This has, at times, intensified grievances and could undermine the very peace and stability the fund aims to promote.

c). Market Distortions: The injection of funds and resources into local economies, though well-intentioned, has occasionally led to unintended market distortions. For example, projects that supplied agricultural inputs or tools at no cost to farmers could undermine local suppliers, affecting the local economy's

natural equilibrium. Similarly, the introduction of new economic activities without a thorough assessment of market demand has sometimes resulted in oversupply, reducing the overall benefit of these initiatives.

REFLECTIVE CONSIDERATIONS

The unintended impacts of the DCPSF underscore the importance of a nuanced understanding of the local context in which international aid projects operate. While the fund has undoubtedly contributed to significant positive changes in Darfur, the aforementioned unintended consequences highlight the need for continuous monitoring, evaluation, and adaptation of strategies. It is crucial for initiatives like the DCPSF to employ a flexible approach that can respond to emerging challenges and unintended outcomes, ensuring that interventions promote long-term sustainability and self-reliance. Moreover, these insights call for enhanced engagement with local communities, ensuring that projects are not only designed to meet their immediate needs but also align with their long-term aspirations and capacities. By fostering a participatory approach that values the input and feedback of all stakeholders, projects can minimize negative unintended impacts while amplifying the positive ones.

Key Findings:

- **Strategic Planning and Execution:** The DCPSF's peace building initiative was designed with a comprehensive approach addressing the root causes of conflict, fostering sustainable peace, and empowering communities. It focused on conflict-affected areas, engaged a wide demographic including women, youth, and internally displaced persons, and integrated conflict resolution, economic empowerment, social inclusion, and environmental sustainability.
- **Community-Based Conflict Resolution Mechanisms:** The project established Community-Based Reconciliation Mechanism (CBRM) Committees, which played a pivotal role in addressing local conflicts through community-driven approaches. Despite their effectiveness, challenges such as resource constraints and political interference were noted.
- **Capacity Building and Skill Transfer:** The project included comprehensive training sessions to enhance community members' capabilities, covering a range of topics relevant to peace building and community development. These efforts significantly contributed to sustainable peace by empowering individuals with necessary skills.
- **Challenges and Solutions:** The project faced logistical, cultural, and security challenges, which were addressed through local networks, culturally sensitive sessions, and collaboration with local authorities.
- **Inclusive Engagement Strategies:** Targeted outreach and engagement strategies ensured the active participation of women and youth, leading to increased confidence, community involvement, and the emergence of new leaders.
- **Feedback and Adaptation:** Beneficiary feedback was instrumental in adapting project activities to meet community needs better, highlighting the importance of responsive and relevant project implementation.

- **Long-term Engagement and Impact:** The project aimed to create sustainable opportunities for continued community involvement, especially for women and youth, through follow-up initiatives and ongoing support mechanisms.
- **Conflict Resolution Outcomes:** The CBRM Committees successfully mediated various local disputes, demonstrating the effectiveness of local, culturally sensitive peace building approaches.
- **Economic and Social Impact:** Economic empowerment initiatives improved socio-economic conditions and strengthened community ties, essential for lasting peace.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation Findings:** While the project achieved many of its goals, gaps in community engagement and long-term economic sustainability were identified.
- **Unintended Impacts:** The DCPSF project had both positive and negative unintended impacts, including the empowerment of local NGOs, enhanced social cohesion, and economic diversification, as well as issues like dependency syndrome, inequitable resource distribution, and market distortions.

3.6 EFFICIENCY

Efficiency in the context of peace building projects, particularly in complex environments like Darfur, is multifaceted. It encompasses the judicious use of resources, the implementation strategy, institutional arrangements, management systems, and the overall impact achieved relative to the inputs. This project demonstrated efficiency in several key areas, aligning its resources and activities to achieve the maximum possible impact in fostering peace and stability.

Implementation Strategy and Institutional Arrangements

The Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF) project's implementation strategy and institutional arrangements have demonstrated a strategic and effective approach to peace building and development in Darfur. The project employed a community-driven strategy that emphasized inclusivity, actively involving women, youth, and other marginalized groups in the peace building process. This approach not only leveraged local knowledge and capacities to address the root causes of conflict but also integrated economic development with peace building initiatives, acknowledging the critical link between economic stability and peace.

Institutionally, the DCPSF project established robust arrangements to facilitate coordination among diverse stakeholders, including local NGOs, community leaders, and government authorities. These arrangements were pivotal in aligning project activities with local needs and priorities, fostering partnerships, and enabling collaborative planning and resource sharing, thereby enhancing the project's overall effectiveness.

Despite successes in targeted communities, the project's reach and impact were occasionally constrained by resource limitations and logistical difficulties, underscoring the need for more flexible and responsive implementation methods. Additionally, coordination efforts sometimes faced obstacles due to bureaucratic hurdles and variability in the commitment and capacity of local and state authorities, highlighting the importance of strengthening engagement and building the capacity of these entities.

The project's efficiency was further underscored by its culturally sensitive and cost-effective use of community-based approaches, which maximized resource utilization by strengthening existing community structures for peace building. Despite these strengths, the project's reliance on local structures sometimes encountered scalability challenges and a lack of expertise in areas with less developed community mechanisms or insufficient trained personnel.

Management and Operational Systems

The Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF) project has established itself as a significant initiative in the realm of peace building and development in Darfur, marked by its management and operational systems designed to navigate the complex dynamics of the region. The efficiency of these systems has been central to the project's ability to deliver on its objectives, despite the challenging environment in which it operates.

The management structure of the DCPSF project is characterized by its hierarchical yet flexible approach, allowing for effective decision-making and rapid response to changing

ground realities. This structure facilitates clear communication channels and delineation of responsibilities among project staff, partners, and stakeholders. Operational systems have been developed to support project implementation, including financial management, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), and logistics management, ensuring that activities are carried out efficiently and in alignment with project goals.

However, gaps in the project's management and operational systems have been identified, impacting its overall efficiency. One notable gap is in the area of M&E systems, which, while robust in design, sometimes fall short in capturing the full impact of interventions due to limited on-ground data collection capacities and challenges in accessing remote or conflict-affected areas. Additionally, financial management systems, though comprehensive, have faced difficulties in ensuring timely disbursement of funds to implementing partners, occasionally hindering the pace of project activities.

The logistical management of the project also presents challenges, particularly in ensuring the timely procurement and delivery of materials and resources necessary for project activities. These challenges are compounded by the logistical constraints and security issues prevalent in Darfur, which can delay project implementation and impact efficiency.

Reporting and oversight

The evaluation and synthesis of reports on the Darfur Community-Based and Stability Fund (DCPSF) projects provide comprehensive insights into the governance, oversight, and decision-making frameworks employed. These insights reveal a strategic commitment to addressing peace, community cohesion, and women's empowerment, highlighting a participatory approach to project management and implementation. Despite the wealth of information on outcomes and participatory nature, detailed aspects of reporting lines, project boards, advisory committees and their operational dynamics are less explicitly detailed.

The involvement of the Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC) and local government authorities underscore a collaborative mechanism ensuring project alignment with broader objectives and standards. Community-Based Reconciliation Mechanisms (CBRMs) were pivotal, reflecting a community-centered decision-making process that directly engaged local communities in peacebuilding efforts. The establishment of committees such as Peace and Reconciliation and Women Committees indicates a structured approach to governance within the projects. The reports emphasize the success of community engagement facilitated by these committees, yet suggest the need for greater transparency and detailed documentation regarding their operation and decision-making impacts.

The World Vision South Darfur project in particular maintained a structured reporting system with biannual and final project reports as per UNDP's requirements. This system ensured a comprehensive overview of progress, challenges, and financial management. The project's efficient management structure, characterized by a small core team and the active involvement of local implementing partners, underscored a lean yet effective approach to strategic planning, monitoring, and reporting.

Efficiency of Resource Allocation

The strategic allocation of budgets within peacebuilding projects reveals a dedicated focus on addressing the multifaceted challenges of fostering peace, community cohesion, and women's empowerment. This evaluation synthesizes findings from an in-depth analysis of budgeting strategies across various initiatives, pinpointing how funds are distributed towards key areas such as staff and personnel costs, direct project implementation, and general administrative support. By delving into these allocations and identifying existing gaps, this report aims to offer actionable recommendations to enhance budget efficacy and amplify project impacts.

A notable commitment across these initiatives is the substantial allocation of resources towards direct project implementation, which consistently account for over half of the total budget. This allocation, ranging from 52% to 62.54%, underscored the projects' commitment to producing tangible outcomes that directly addressed the root causes and manifestations of conflict within communities. The emphasis on direct engagement and interventions reflected an understanding that such strategies can significantly impact targeted communities, particularly in efforts to promote social cohesion and peace.

Staff and personnel costs also represented a significant portion of the budget, underscoring the crucial role of human resources in executing these projects. These costs, constituting approximately 19.96% to 22.14% of total budgets, highlight the necessity for skilled personnel to drive project objectives. However, an identified gap in the detailed breakdown of these costs, particularly concerning the specific roles and contributions of staff members, presents a challenge in assessing the cost-effectiveness of these investments towards achieving project goals.

The strategic budget allocations across the project demonstrate a focused approach to tackling complex social challenges through direct interventions and skilled human resources. However, gaps in the specificity and justification of budget allocations, particularly regarding staff roles and administrative costs, hinder a comprehensive assessment of resource utilization effectiveness. Addressing these gaps through improved transparency, specificity, and justification of expenditures is critical for optimizing budget management practices. By implementing these recommendations, peacebuilding projects can enhance their financial strategies, ensuring every allocated dollar maximally contributes to building sustainable peace and empowering communities. This alignment of financial planning with project objectives is essential for amplifying impact and achieving long-term success in peacebuilding efforts.

Value for Money

The concept of value for money involves optimizing the use of resources to achieve the best possible outcomes and impacts relative to costs. In this context, the DCPSF project has demonstrated efficiency through careful planning, strategic allocation of resources, and targeted interventions that address the root causes of conflict and underdevelopment in the region.

The project has strategically focused on areas and activities where it can make the most

significant impact, such as community-based peace building initiatives, economic empowerment programs, and infrastructure development. By leveraging local knowledge and capacities, the DCPSF project has been able to implement cost-effective solutions that are both sustainable and impactful. Furthermore, the project's emphasis on inclusivity and community ownership has enhanced the sustainability of its interventions, contributing to longer-term value.

However, there are areas where the project could further optimize its value for money. One gap is in the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems, which, while comprehensive, could be enhanced to better capture the long-term value and impact of the project's interventions. Improved M&E would allow for more informed decision-making and resource allocation, ensuring that funds are directed towards the most effective initiatives.

Another gap is the project's adaptability to changing contexts and needs. Greater flexibility in project design and implementation could allow for more efficient use of resources, enabling the project to respond more dynamically to emerging challenges and opportunities in Darfur.

Financial Integrity and Accountability

The comprehensive audit reports for the Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF) projects implemented by different organizations under the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) provide critical insights into the financial and operational performance of these initiatives. Each report, produced by Moore Insight, highlights key aspects of financial management, compliance with agreed-upon accounting standards, and the effectiveness of internal controls. Notably, common issues across the audits include the significant use of cash payments, inadequate oversight of funds transferred to partner organizations, and inconsistencies in the stamping of supporting documents. These findings underscored potential risks of misappropriation, misallocation of project funds, and documentation lapses that could compromise financial integrity and accountability. Additionally, specific audits revealed concerns such as ineligible salary costs, support costs incorrectly calculated, and poor record-keeping practices, which further emphasized the need for stringent financial controls and accurate reporting. Despite these challenges, the audits generally commend the projects for implementing activities timely and efficiently, adhering to the stipulated work plans, budgets, and operational guidelines set forth by UNDP.

To address the audit findings, the reports offer targeted recommendations aimed at enhancing financial reporting accuracy, strengthening internal controls, and ensuring compliance with funding agreement requirements. Suggestions include improving the stamping process for financial documents, enhancing record-keeping quality, limiting cash payments, and instituting robust monitoring mechanisms for funds disbursed to partners. The organizations' management teams have acknowledged the audit findings and expressed commitments to implementing the recommended corrective measures. This proactive stance towards addressing the identified issues is essential for ensuring the continued effectiveness, transparency, and accountability of the DCPSF projects, thereby fulfilling their objectives and contributing to peace and stability in Darfur.

Human Resource Capacities

The comprehensive evaluations of the Darfur Community Peace and Stabilization Fund (DCPSF) projects have provided deep insights into the human resource capacities employed to achieve peacebuilding objectives. The reports detail how each project, through strategic planning, community engagement, and extensive capacity building, managed to foster peaceful co-existence and social cohesion among communities affected by conflict. The projects exhibited a strong focus on leveraging human resources through direct project personnel, local partnerships, and extensive community engagement. Key staff roles included project managers, gender officers, and Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning (MEAL) coordinators, who played pivotal roles in strategic planning, monitoring, reporting, and implementation. The professionalism and contextual understanding of these core team members were crucial for the projects' success.

The DCPSF projects showcased robust human resources capacity, characterized by strategic partnerships, inclusive community engagement, and comprehensive capacity-building initiatives. The success in fostering peaceful co-existence and social cohesion was significantly bolstered by the projects' human resources strategies, which leveraged local knowledge, fostered inclusivity, and built capacities for sustainable peacebuilding. Enhancing transparency, specificity, and justification of expenditures could further optimize budget management practices and contribute to the projects' long-term success. The collaboration between DCPSF, local partners, government entities, and the community itself exemplifies a model for effective human resources utilization in complex peacebuilding contexts.

Sustainable Impact and Inclusivity

By prioritizing long-term solutions to conflict and underdevelopment, and ensuring the active participation of all community segments, the DCPSF has aimed to create a foundation for lasting peace and prosperity.

The project's sustainable impact is evident in its approach to addressing the root causes of conflict through comprehensive community engagement, economic empowerment initiatives, and infrastructure development. These efforts are designed not just for immediate relief but to build resilience and self-sufficiency among communities, ensuring that the benefits of the project endure beyond its lifespan. The emphasis on economic empowerment, particularly through vocational training and support for small enterprises, has been crucial in providing sustainable livelihood options that contribute to the overall stability of the region.

Inclusivity has been another cornerstone of the DCPSF project, with a strong focus on ensuring that women, youth, and other marginalized groups are not just beneficiaries but active participants in the peace building process. This inclusive approach recognizes the diverse impacts of conflict on different community members and the importance of leveraging the unique perspectives and capabilities of all groups to foster comprehensive and lasting peace.

However, gaps remain in fully realizing sustainable impact and inclusivity. One challenge

is ensuring the scalability of successful initiatives to reach a broader segment of the population, thereby maximizing their sustainable impact. Another gap is in the consistent integration of inclusivity principles throughout all project activities, ensuring that the voices of the most marginalized are heard and addressed in planning and implementation phases.

Addressing these gaps requires a continued commitment to adaptive learning and community feedback mechanisms to refine and scale up effective practices. Additionally, strengthening partnerships with local organizations and government bodies can enhance the project's reach and ensure that inclusivity remains at the forefront of all interventions.

Integration of Gender Considerations

The project has made notable strides in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. By incorporating gender-sensitive approaches into its planning and implementation processes, DCPSF has aimed to ensure that both women and men benefit equitably from its interventions and have equal opportunities to participate in decision-making processes. Initiatives specifically designed to empower women, such as vocational training programs and support for women-led enterprises, have been integral to the project's efforts to address economic disparities and promote social inclusion.

However, despite these efforts, gaps remain in the full integration of gender considerations. One such gap is the need for more comprehensive gender analysis and monitoring to ensure that gender-specific impacts of the project's interventions are adequately understood and addressed. Additionally, while the project has made efforts to involve women in peace building and development activities, challenges persist in achieving gender parity in leadership roles within community-based initiatives and decision-making bodies.

Observance of "Do No Harm" Principles

The Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF) project has demonstrated a strong commitment to the "Do No Harm" principles, integrating them into its peace building and development efforts in Darfur through meticulous planning, conflict-sensitive programming, and ongoing monitoring. The project prioritizes understanding the intricate dynamics of the region, engaging in detailed conflict analysis, and consulting with communities to tailor its interventions. This approach aims to prevent exacerbating tensions or causing unintended negative outcomes, with a focus on equitable resource distribution, inclusivity, and respecting local customs and governance structures.

Despite these efforts, challenges in fully adhering to "Do No Harm" principles have emerged, underscoring the difficulty of predicting long-term impacts in a dynamic and often volatile environment. External factors, such as political or economic shifts, can unpredictably alter the operational context, complicating the project's efforts to avoid unintended harm. Additionally, while mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation are in place, there is an identified need for more systematic approaches to detect and address any adverse effects of the project's activities.

To enhance its adherence to "Do No Harm" principles and ensure the sustainability of its impact, the DCPSF project could consider the following improvements:

- Strengthen conflict analysis and monitoring frameworks to more effectively anticipate and mitigate potential negative impacts, ensuring that interventions remain sensitive to the changing dynamics of the region.
- Broaden engagement with a diverse array of community stakeholders, enriching the project's understanding of local dynamics and perspectives to better tailor its interventions.
- Implement more rigorous feedback and grievance redress mechanisms to swiftly identify and rectify any harm caused by the project's activities, thereby reinforcing its commitment to causing no unintended harm.

The project's efficiency is evident in its strategic use of resources, inclusive and participatory implementation strategy, strong management and financial systems, and focus on sustainable impact and value for money. By integrating gender considerations and observing "Do No Harm" principles, the project ensured that its resources were used in a way that maximized peace building outcomes, making it an exemplary model of efficiency in a complex and challenging environment.

The project stands as a model of efficiency in peace building, skillfully navigating the complexities of Darfur through strategic resource use, participatory approaches, and a keen focus on sustainable, inclusive outcomes. Despite facing scalability, coordination, cultural, and operational challenges, its commitment to maximizing peace building outcomes through thoughtful implementation and adherence to ethical principles highlights its potential as a blueprint for similar contexts.

Key Findings:

- **Strategic Implementation and Institutional Coordination:** The DCPSF project showcased efficiency through a community-driven strategy emphasizing inclusivity, leveraging local knowledge, and integrating economic development with peace building.
- **Effective Management and Operational Systems:** With a hierarchical yet flexible management structure, the project facilitated clear communication and responsibilities, developing supportive operational systems including financial management and logistics.
- The DCPSF projects' success in peacebuilding was notably driven by strategic human resource management, emphasizing local partnerships, inclusive community engagement, and comprehensive capacity-building efforts.
- **Efficiency of Resource Allocation:** The substantial allocation of resources towards direct project implementation in peacebuilding projects underscores the importance of direct engagement and interventions as critical strategies for impacting targeted communities and promoting social cohesion and peace.

- **Value for Money:** Demonstrated by focusing on high-impact areas and leveraging local capacities for sustainable and impactful solutions, though gaps in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems and adaptability to changing contexts were noted.
- **Financial Integrity and Accountability:** Comprehensive DCPSF project audits reveal both commendations for accurate financial reporting and adherence to UNDP standards, and concerns over cash payments, fund oversight, and document inconsistencies, urging improved financial practices for enhanced transparency and project integrity.
- **Sustainable Impact and Inclusivity:** Achieved through addressing root causes of conflict and ensuring active participation of marginalized groups, with challenges in scalability and consistent inclusivity integration remaining.
- **Gender Considerations:** Notable strides in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, with gaps in comprehensive gender analysis and achieving gender parity in leadership roles.
- **"Do No Harm" Principles:** Strong commitment to avoiding exacerbating tensions or causing negative outcomes, with challenges in fully predicting long-term impacts and altering operational contexts.

3.7 SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability in peace building projects is crucial, especially in conflict-affected areas like Darfur, where the risk of relapse into violence remains high. A sustainable peace building initiative is one that not only addresses the immediate symptoms of conflict but also tackles the root causes and ensures that the peace achieved is durable and self-sustaining. This project demonstrated sustainability in several key aspects.

Long-Term Solutions and Government Integration

The project's dedication to fostering long-term peace solutions through the integration of Community-Based Conflict Resolution Mechanisms (CBRMs) with formal government and legal frameworks stands out as a critical pillar of its sustainability strategy. This approach not only secured formal recognition and support for these grassroots mechanisms but also significantly bolstered their effectiveness and durability. By aligning these community-driven efforts with established government structures, the project created a robust foundation for the continued success and institutionalization of peace initiatives well beyond its active phase.

This strategic integration has bridged the gap between local, immediate conflict resolution efforts and the broader, systemic approaches to peace building, ensuring a cohesive and comprehensive strategy that leverages the strengths of both community engagement and formal governance systems. However, this integration also presents areas for further development, particularly in enhancing the capacity of government bodies to effectively support and sustain these mechanisms. Strengthening governmental understanding and commitment to community-based approaches, along with providing ongoing training and resources, could further solidify this partnership.

Moreover, while the project has laid significant groundwork, there remains a need to expand these efforts, ensuring that CBRMs are not only recognized within the legal and governmental framework but are also actively supported through policy, funding, and public awareness campaigns. Addressing these gaps will be crucial in not just maintaining but actively expanding the reach and impact of these mechanisms, ensuring that they become a permanent fixture in the landscape of conflict resolution and peace building within the region.

Community Ownership and Networks

The project's focus on fostering community ownership stands as a cornerstone of its sustainability framework. Through active participation of community members in both the design and execution phases of peace building activities, the project not only ensured alignment with local needs and aspirations but also cultivated a deep sense of ownership and accountability among the community. This participatory approach has been instrumental in embedding the peace building initiatives deeply within the social fabric of the community, thereby significantly enhancing the likelihood of their continuation and support well beyond the project's conclusion.

Moreover, the establishment of robust networks for enduring peaceful relations represents another pivotal aspect of the project's strategy. The transformation of Community-Based Conflict Resolution Mechanisms (CBRMs) into Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) and the formation of a Peace building Network have equipped communities with the

necessary infrastructure to autonomously navigate conflicts and sustain peace efforts. These networks, by fostering a culture of collaboration, have enabled the efficient exchange of resources, knowledge, and best practices, creating a resilient ecosystem for peace that is self-sustaining.

However, despite these advances, there remain areas for enhancement. The effectiveness of these networks could be further amplified by integrating advanced digital communication and management tools to streamline the coordination and dissemination of information. Additionally, expanding the reach of these networks to include a broader range of stakeholders, including local businesses, educational institutions, and other civil society entities, could enrich the ecosystem with diverse perspectives and resources. Addressing these gaps will not only solidify the existing foundations for peace but also expand the capacity of these networks to innovate and adapt to future challenges, ensuring the long-term sustainability of peace building efforts in the region.

Capacity Building and Exit Strategies

The project's strategy for sustainability is deeply rooted in its commitment to capacity building and the formulation of robust exit strategies. By investing in the development of local actors, the project has laid a solid foundation for enduring peace and stability. This focus on empowering local stakeholders—ranging from community leaders and peacebuilders to local government officials and civil society organizations—with essential skills and knowledge has been pivotal. Training in conflict resolution, leadership, project management, and sustainable development practices ensures that the fabric of the community is strengthened from within, enabling these actors to independently address challenges and continue peace efforts without reliance on external support.

The introduction of comprehensive exit strategies is a testament to the project's foresight and commitment to lasting impact. These strategies are meticulously designed to ensure a smooth transition of responsibilities and resources to local communities, detailing the steps necessary for maintaining and expanding upon the successes achieved. They encompass a range of considerations, from financial sustainability and ongoing training programs to the establishment of local governance structures that can oversee continued peace building and development activities.

However, gaps in the current capacity building and exit strategy frameworks suggest areas for enhancement. For instance, there is a need for more targeted support for emerging leaders and innovators within communities, who can drive future initiatives. Additionally, the exit strategies could be further refined to include more robust mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation, ensuring that the progress made is sustainable and adaptive to evolving community needs. Strengthening these aspects will not only reinforce the project's achievements but also ensure that the community is well-prepared and resilient in the face of future challenges, thereby securing the long-term sustainability of peace and development efforts in the region.

Economic and Social Development

The project's focus on economic and social development represents a cornerstone of its sustainability strategy, highlighting a comprehensive approach to building long-term stability and peace in the region. Initiatives such as vocational training, income-generating activities, and infrastructure development have been meticulously designed to meet both

the immediate and future needs of the community. These efforts have not only provided essential skills and resources to individuals but have also laid the groundwork for enduring economic resilience and social cohesion.

Particularly noteworthy are the economic interdependence initiatives, including Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs), which have been instrumental in creating sustainable economic opportunities. These programs have not only facilitated access to financial resources but have also promoted a culture of saving and investment among community members. By enabling individuals and groups to embark on entrepreneurial ventures, these initiatives have contributed to a diversified local economy, reducing vulnerability to economic shocks and stresses that can lead to conflict.

However, despite these successes, there remain areas for enhancement to ensure the full potential of economic and social development initiatives is realized. For instance, greater emphasis on linking vocational training programs with actual market demands can ensure that skills acquired by community members are directly applicable and valuable, enhancing employment opportunities. Additionally, expanding the scope of infrastructure development to include not just physical structures but also digital infrastructure can open up new avenues for economic growth and social interaction.

Moreover, while VSLAs have proven effective in fostering community solidarity and economic empowerment, scaling these models to reach more individuals and ensuring their integration with broader financial systems can amplify their impact. Strengthening these aspects of the project's economic and social development initiatives will not only enhance their sustainability but also ensure that the foundation for peace and stability is robust and capable of supporting the community's aspirations for the future.

Environmental Considerations

The integration of environmental sustainability into the project's framework represents a forward-thinking approach to addressing the multifaceted drivers of conflict in resource-dependent communities. Initiatives such as the establishment of nurseries for environmental restoration have underscored the critical link between environmental health and societal stability. Recognizing that environmental degradation can exacerbate tensions over scarce resources, the project aimed to rejuvenate the natural landscape, thereby alleviating one of the primary sources of conflict.

However, to enhance the efficacy and impact of these environmental sustainability efforts, several gaps need to be addressed. First, while nurseries and reforestation efforts are commendable, expanding these initiatives to include comprehensive watershed management and sustainable agricultural practices could further reduce the risk of conflict over natural resources. Implementing such practices would not only restore and protect the environment but also improve agricultural productivity and water availability, directly benefiting the livelihoods of community members.

Second, there is a need for increased community engagement and education regarding the importance of environmental sustainability. Initiatives could be more successful if they are accompanied by awareness campaigns that highlight the connection between environmental health and peace, encouraging community-led conservation efforts. Additionally, engaging communities in the planning and implementation of environmental projects can foster a sense of ownership and responsibility towards the conservation of

their natural resources.

Furthermore, establishing partnerships with environmental organizations and leveraging technical expertise in conservation could enhance the project's capacity to implement effective environmental sustainability measures. Collaboration with experts in the field can introduce innovative practices and technologies tailored to the specific ecological conditions of the region, ensuring that environmental interventions are both effective and sustainable.

By addressing these gaps and building on the initial successes, the project can further solidify the foundation for long-term peace through environmental sustainability. Strengthening the integration of environmental considerations into peace building efforts ensures that initiatives are holistic and address all potential conflict drivers, paving the way for a more resilient and peaceful community.

Gender and Youth Inclusion

The strategic inclusion of women and youth within the project framework marks a significant step towards achieving a holistic and sustainable peace building process. By actively integrating these crucial demographics into the peace building efforts, the project not only amplified its immediate effectiveness but also laid the groundwork for enduring peace and community resilience. The empowerment of women and the engagement of youth serve as pivotal elements in ensuring that peace building initiatives are comprehensive, addressing the diverse needs and harnessing the potential of all community members.

The formation and support of women's organizations have been instrumental in advancing gender equality within the community, promoting women's active participation in peace processes, and decision-making roles. This approach not only challenges and seeks to transform existing gender norms but also positions women as key agents of change, inspiring future generations. However, for the impact to be deeply rooted and widespread, continuous efforts to address systemic barriers to women's full participation are essential. Enhancing access to education, ensuring legal rights, and creating more platforms for women's voices to be heard and acted upon are critical steps towards cementing their roles in sustaining peace.

Similarly, the engagement of youth in peace building initiatives represents a forward-looking approach to cultivating a new generation of peacebuilders. Young people, with their unique perspectives and energies, have the potential to drive innovation and adaptation within peace processes. Yet, their inclusion must move beyond tokenism to meaningful participation, where their ideas and solutions are valued and implemented. Addressing the specific challenges that youth face, such as unemployment, lack of educational opportunities, and political marginalization, is crucial for empowering them as contributors to peace.

To bridge these gaps and fully realize the benefits of gender and youth inclusion, the project must adopt a multi-faceted strategy that encompasses advocacy, capacity building, and policy reform. Strengthening mechanisms for participation, feedback, and leadership development among women and youth can ensure that their contributions are not only recognized but are integral to the project's long-term success. By doing so, the project not only champions inclusivity but also ensures that the peace achieved is

resilient, reflecting the aspirations and capabilities of the entire community.

Monitoring and Evaluation for Continuity

The project's robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms ensured that any challenges to sustainability are identified and addressed promptly. This ongoing assessment allowed for the continuous improvement of strategies and interventions, ensuring that the project remains effective and sustainable in the long term.

Key Findings

- **Strategic Integration Enhances Sustainability:** The integration of community-based conflict resolution mechanisms with formal government and legal frameworks marks a significant advancement in ensuring the sustainability of peace efforts in Darfur. This approach creates a solid foundation for long-term peace by institutionalizing grassroots mechanisms within existing governance structures.
- **Community Ownership and Networks are Crucial:** The emphasis on fostering community ownership through participatory approaches and the development of networks for peaceful relations embeds peace building initiatives deeply within the social fabric, enhancing their longevity and impact.
- **Capacity Building and Comprehensive Exit Strategies:** Investing in the development of local actors and formulating detailed exit strategies ensures that communities are equipped to sustain peace and development efforts independently, marking a pivotal step towards long-term sustainability.
- **Economic and Social Development Initiatives:** Initiatives focused on economic resilience and community solidarity, such as vocational training and Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs), are essential components of a sustainable peace building strategy, contributing to the overall stability and prosperity of the community.
- **Environmental Sustainability:** Addressing environmental degradation as a root cause of conflict through restoration projects and sustainable practices promotes long-term peace and stability, acknowledging the intrinsic link between environmental health and societal well-being.
- **Inclusive Peace building:** The active inclusion of women and youth in peace building processes ensures a comprehensive approach that addresses the needs and harnesses the potential of all community members, fostering a more resilient and inclusive society.
- **Effective Monitoring and Evaluation:** Robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are essential for the ongoing adaptation and refinement of peace building strategies, ensuring their continued relevance and effectiveness in the face of changing circumstances.

3.8 CROSS CUTTING ISSUES

3.8.1 Gender and inclusion

Empowerment of Women in Peace Processes

The project's alignment with the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda underscores a critical understanding of the indispensable role of women in achieving lasting peace. Initiatives aimed at enhancing women's participation in peace building processes have been at the forefront, recognizing that peace is more sustainable when women are involved in its creation. This includes training women in leadership, negotiation, and conflict resolution skills, as well as supporting women-led organizations and initiatives.

However, substantial gaps remain in fully realizing women's empowerment in peace processes. Women continue to be underrepresented in formal peace negotiations and decision-making positions. Barriers such as cultural norms, lack of access to education, and political marginalization hinder their full participation. To bridge these gaps, there is a need for systemic changes that include legal reforms, targeted support for women's political participation, and comprehensive community awareness programs to shift perceptions about women's roles in peace and security.

Addressing Gender-Based Violence and Inequality

The project recognized that addressing gender-based violence (GBV) and inequality is fundamental to building peace. Efforts to combat GBV through awareness campaigns, support services for survivors, and legal advocacy have been critical components. Furthermore, initiatives aimed at promoting gender equality have sought to challenge and change discriminatory practices and norms.

Despite these efforts, GBV and gender inequality persist as significant challenges, exacerbated by conflict and instability. Gaps in legal protection, limited access to justice for survivors, and the persistence of harmful societal norms contribute to the ongoing risk of GBV. Strengthening the legal framework, improving the capacity of law enforcement and judicial systems to address GBV, and continued community engagement to change attitudes towards gender equality are essential steps forward.

Capacity Building and Economic Empowerment of Women

Economic empowerment and capacity building have been identified as key drivers for enhancing women's status and participation in society and peace processes. The project's focus on vocational training, financial literacy, and support for women's entrepreneurship has contributed to improving women's economic independence and empowerment.

However, women still face significant barriers to economic participation, including limited access to credit, property rights issues, and the gender wage gap. Efforts to empower women economically must also address these structural barriers to ensure that women can fully benefit from economic opportunities. This includes advocating for policy

changes, providing targeted support for women in the workforce, and fostering an entrepreneurial ecosystem that supports women-led businesses.

Inclusivity and Diversity in Women's Empowerment

The project's approach to women's empowerment has emphasized the importance of inclusivity and diversity, recognizing the varied experiences and needs of women in conflict-affected regions. Tailoring interventions to account for differences in age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and geography ensured that the benefits of empowerment initiatives reached a broad spectrum of women.

Despite these efforts, more work is needed to ensure that all women, especially those from marginalized communities, can fully participate in and benefit from peace building activities. Enhancing outreach efforts, ensuring programs are accessible and relevant to diverse groups of women, and continuously monitoring and evaluating the inclusiveness of initiatives are critical for achieving comprehensive women's empowerment.

Policy Alignment and Meeting International Standards

The project's commitment to gender-sensitive programming and alignment with international standards such as the PBF's Gender Marker 2 has enhanced its credibility and impact. By adhering to these standards, the project has contributed to the global agenda of promoting women's rights and participation in peace and security.

Moving forward, there is an ongoing need to ensure that project activities not only meet but exceed international standards for gender sensitivity and women's empowerment. This includes continuously updating practices based on the latest research and guidelines, engaging with international bodies to share lessons learned, and advocating for the integration of gender perspectives at all levels of peace building and development work.

While the project has made significant strides towards empowering women and promoting gender equality in peace processes, addressing the remaining gaps is essential for achieving lasting peace. This requires a multifaceted approach that includes legal reforms, economic empowerment, societal attitude shifts, and ensuring inclusivity and diversity. By deepening the commitment to women's empowerment and gender sensitivity, the project can contribute to a more equitable, peaceful, and secure future.

Engagement and Empowerment of Youth in Peace Processes

The project's commitment to the Youth, Peace, and Security (YPS) agenda highlights the innovative approach taken to engage and empower youth in peace building activities in Darfur. Recognizing youth as pivotal agents of change, the project successfully integrated young people into various stages of peace processes, from planning to implementation. Initiatives aimed at enhancing youth participation in community dialogues, decision-making forums, and peace negotiations have been central to this effort.

However, despite these successes, there remain significant gaps in fully harnessing the

potential of youth in peace building. Challenges such as limited access to education and economic opportunities, political marginalization, and the lack of platforms for youth to voice their concerns and solutions continue to impede their full participation. Addressing these gaps requires a concerted effort to create inclusive policies, provide targeted support for youth leadership and entrepreneurship, and foster an environment that values and cultivates the contributions of young people to peace and development.

Vocational Training and Economic Opportunities

The project's focus on providing vocational training and economic opportunities was crucial for addressing one of the root causes of conflict and instability: youth unemployment and disenfranchisement. By equipping young individuals with skills and access to economic resources, the initiative made strides in improving livelihoods and reducing the appeal of engaging in conflict.

Yet, the scalability and sustainability of these economic empowerment efforts faced challenges. There is a need for a more comprehensive strategy that not only provides skills training but also ensures access to markets, financial services, and entrepreneurial mentorship. Enhancing partnerships with the private sector, developing innovative financing models, and supporting youth-led enterprises can further bolster the economic empowerment of young people, making them pivotal contributors to peace and stability.

Promoting Youth Leadership and Decision-Making

Promoting youth leadership and ensuring their participation in decision-making processes have been key objectives of the project. By creating spaces for young people to lead community initiatives, engage in policy dialogues, and contribute to peace building strategies, the project has demonstrated the value of youth leadership in fostering sustainable peace.

However, the representation of youth in formal political and peace building structures remains insufficient. Efforts to empower youth should extend beyond project boundaries to influence national policies and practices, ensuring that young people have a seat at the table in all discussions affecting their futures. Strengthening capacity-building programs that focus on leadership, advocacy, and governance can further amplify the voice and influence of youth in shaping a peaceful and inclusive society.

Addressing Specific Needs and Challenges of Youth

Understanding and addressing the unique needs and challenges faced by youth in conflict-affected areas are critical for the success of peace building initiatives. The project has made notable efforts to tailor its interventions to the specific context of Darfur, recognizing the diverse experiences and aspirations of its youth population.

Nevertheless, more targeted interventions are needed to address the multifaceted challenges youth face, including trauma, displacement, and social exclusion. Developing psychosocial support programs, enhancing access to education and health services, and

creating inclusive community spaces can provide the comprehensive support needed for young people to thrive. Moreover, gender-sensitive approaches are essential to ensure that both young men and women can equally benefit from and contribute to peace building efforts.

Building a Sustainable Peace building Foundation

The engagement of youth is indispensable for laying a sustainable foundation for peace. The project's initiatives have underscored the importance of investing in the development and empowerment of young people as a long-term peace building strategy.

Moving forward, there is a critical need to institutionalize youth participation in peace processes, ensuring that their contributions are not transient but part of a lasting peace building architecture. This involves not only project-level interventions but also systemic changes that embed youth engagement in all aspects of governance, peace, and security. Strengthening the mechanisms for youth participation, from local community structures to national peace negotiations, will ensure that the momentum gained in empowering youth translates into enduring peace and development.

The project's alignment with the Youth, Peace, and Security agenda has set a precedent for inclusive and sustainable peace building in Darfur. To build on this foundation, addressing the gaps in youth engagement, economic empowerment, leadership, and the specific needs of young people is imperative. By doing so, the project can contribute to a resilient, peaceful, and prosperous future, where youth are recognized not just as beneficiaries, but as leaders and partners in peace.

3.8.2 Collaboration and Partnership

Collaboration and Partnership

The project's approach to collaboration and partnership has been foundational in enhancing its impact and reach in the complex field of peace building. By engaging a diverse array of stakeholders, including local communities, government agencies, international organizations, and NGOs, the project has leveraged collective expertise, resources, and networks to drive sustainable peace efforts. This collaborative model has facilitated a more coordinated and comprehensive approach to addressing the multifaceted challenges of the conflict-affected region.

Despite the successes, there are notable gaps in the collaboration and partnership framework that need attention. Challenges such as overlapping mandates, competition for resources, and varying priorities among partners hindered the effectiveness of collaborative efforts. Additionally, there was the gap in ensuring that local communities and civil society organizations have equal partnership and decision-making roles, which is critical for the sustainability of peace initiatives. Enhancing mechanisms for inclusive collaboration, establishing clear communication and coordination platforms, and fostering a culture of mutual respect and shared goals among all stakeholders are essential steps to overcome these challenges.

Strengthening Local and International Partnerships

The project has underscored the importance of both local and international partnerships in

building peace. Locally, partnerships with community organizations, local governments, and civil society have enabled tailored responses to the specific needs and dynamics of conflict-affected areas. Internationally, collaborations with donors, UN agencies, and international NGOs have provided the necessary support and resources to scale and sustain peace building efforts.

Moving forward, it is crucial to further strengthen these partnerships by emphasizing equity and mutual benefit. This includes enhancing the capacity of local partners, ensuring they have the necessary skills and resources to lead peace building efforts, and creating more opportunities for direct funding and support. Internationally, fostering long-term partnerships rather than project-based collaborations can improve continuity and impact. Additionally, leveraging technology and innovation can enhance collaboration, making it more efficient and effective.

Multi-sectoral Partnerships for Comprehensive Peace building

The complexity of modern conflicts requires a multi-sectoral approach to peace building that transcends traditional boundaries. Partnerships that incorporate sectors such as education, health, economic development, and environmental sustainability alongside more traditional security and governance efforts can address the root causes of conflict more effectively. The project's engagement with a variety of sectors has highlighted the potential for creating more resilient and peaceful communities through integrated approaches.

However, integrating these multi-sectoral efforts remains a challenge, with gaps in coordination, expertise, and resource allocation. Developing a more strategic framework for multi-sectoral partnerships, where roles, expectations, and contributions are clearly defined, can enhance the effectiveness of these collaborative efforts. Encouraging cross-sectoral learning and innovation, and establishing shared metrics for success, are also vital for the success of comprehensive peace building initiatives.

Leveraging Technology and Innovation in Partnerships

Technology and innovation have emerged as critical tools in advancing peace building efforts, offering new ways to collaborate, monitor, and implement initiatives. The project has begun to leverage these tools for enhancing communication, data collection, and stakeholder engagement. Digital platforms, social media, and data analytics have provided opportunities for broader participation in peace building processes and improved the efficiency and transparency of projects.

Despite these advancements, there is a significant gap in fully utilizing technology to strengthen partnerships. Challenges include digital divides between different regions and stakeholders, concerns about data security and privacy, and the need for capacity building in technology use. Investing in digital literacy and infrastructure, developing guidelines for ethical technology use in peace building, and fostering partnerships with tech companies can amplify the project's impact and ensure more inclusive and innovative collaboration.

Building Sustainable and Adaptive Partnership Models

Sustainability and adaptability are key to the long-term success of peace building partnerships. The project has recognized the importance of building partnerships that can withstand changes in the political, economic, and social landscape and continue to support peace efforts over the long term. This includes establishing mechanisms for regular review and adaptation of strategies and building mutual capacities for resilience among partners.

Addressing the gaps in sustainability and adaptability requires a commitment to continuous learning, openness to change, and the development of shared visions and goals that transcend individual projects. Encouraging a culture of innovation within partnerships, where new ideas and approaches can be tested and refined, is also crucial for addressing the evolving challenges of peace building.

Some of the key partnerships have been built with the State Universities in El Fasher, Ed Daein, Geneina, Zaliengei and Nyala, particularly their peace and research centres offered their technical expertise to train CBRMs in peace building and conflict resolution methods.

The DCPSF partners also partnered with various Ministries and departments across the states to enable them carry out agricultural activities, water resources rehabilitation and rehabilitation of schools. These include the Ministries of Agriculture and Animal resources, Ministries of Water and irrigation/Sudan Water Corporation, Ministry of Youth and Sports as well as Ministries of Education across the states.

Through partnership with the Humanitarian Aid Coordinator (HAC) Office, DCPSF received technical agreements with government allowing them to implement smoothly implement activities in respective states. In addition, the native administration was included in community level activities, ensuring they are either informed and some/time invited in community activities. This partnership brokered community ownership of the project activities.

The COVID-19 emergency project saw partnerships built with the State Ministry of Health in each of the five states. While all partners worked with Health Ministries, other partners such as Catholic Relief Services (CRS) signed Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) with the State Ministries of Health. This collaboration strengthened working relationship between DCPSF partners and health ministry and ensured sustainability of the project initiatives.

At the state and local level, partnerships were established with CBRMs, Youth and Women's Associations including other local and international NGOs. Through capacity building and support, the CBRM, youth and women organisation are expected to continue carrying on the project activities on peace building, peace dividends and empowerment of women to participate at state and local level peace building efforts.

3.8.3 Best Practices from the DCPSF Project

The Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF) project has established a series of best practices in the realm of peace building and community stabilization, offering valuable insights for similar initiatives globally. These best practices have been instrumental in addressing the complex dynamics of conflict in Darfur and fostering sustainable peace. However, recognizing the project-specific context, there are areas where gaps remain and improvements are necessary to enhance the efficacy and replicability of these practices.

Community-Based Conflict Resolution

A standout best practice from the DCPSF project has been its emphasis on community-based conflict resolution mechanisms. By empowering local leaders and communities to address grievances and disputes through dialogue and negotiation, the project has facilitated the resolution of conflicts at their roots, preventing escalation. This approach has been critical in building local ownership and sustainability of peace efforts. Nonetheless, gaps in capacity building for conflict resolution, the need for more inclusive representation in these mechanisms, and the challenge of scaling these initiatives to wider areas are areas for further development.

Integrating Livelihood and Economic Development

The DCPSF project's integration of livelihood and economic development into its peace building strategy represents a best practice in addressing the economic drivers of conflict. Initiatives such as vocational training, support for agriculture, and microfinance have contributed to economic resilience among communities. While these efforts have shown significant success, challenges in ensuring equitable access to economic opportunities, particularly for marginalized groups, and the need for stronger linkages with broader economic development strategies highlight areas for improvement.

Inclusive Engagement and Gender Sensitivity

The project's commitment to inclusive engagement and gender sensitivity, aligning with the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda, is a critical best practice. Efforts to include women, youth, and marginalized groups in peace building activities have enhanced the inclusivity and effectiveness of interventions. However, continuous efforts are needed to overcome cultural and structural barriers to inclusion, ensure meaningful participation of all community members, and further integrate gender-sensitive approaches across all project activities.

Partnerships and Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration

DCPSF's approach to fostering partnerships and multi-stakeholder collaboration has been essential in leveraging resources, expertise, and legitimacy in peace building efforts. Collaborating with local NGOs, government entities, and international organizations has

enabled a comprehensive approach to addressing the multifaceted challenges in Darfur. Moving forward, strengthening these partnerships requires addressing coordination challenges, enhancing transparency and accountability, and ensuring that collaborations are grounded in mutual respect and shared objectives.

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning

The project's focus on robust monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) mechanisms has been pivotal in capturing impacts, adapting strategies, and sharing lessons learned. This best practice not only ensures accountability but also contributes to the knowledge base on effective peace building strategies. To further enhance this area, there is a need for more innovative MEL approaches that can capture the complex and often intangible outcomes of peace building, as well as increased sharing of findings and best practices with the broader peace building community.

Environmental Considerations in Peace building

Recognizing the link between environmental management and conflict, the DCPSF project has incorporated environmental considerations into its peace building efforts, marking a forward-thinking approach to sustainable peace. Initiatives that address natural resource management and climate resilience as part of conflict prevention are commendable. Enhancing this practice requires a deeper integration of environmental sustainability into all project components and a stronger emphasis on community-based approaches to environmental conservation and management.

Key Findings

- **Empowerment of Women:** The project emphasizes the crucial role of women in achieving sustainable peace, aligned with the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda. Despite efforts to enhance women's participation in peace building, challenges such as underrepresentation in formal negotiations and barriers related to cultural norms and political marginalization persist.
- **Addressing Gender-Based Violence:** Initiatives to combat gender-based violence (GBV) and promote gender equality are fundamental to peace building. Ongoing challenges include gaps in legal protection and the persistence of harmful societal norms.
- **Economic Empowerment:** Economic empowerment and capacity building for women have been identified as key drivers for enhancing their participation in peace processes. Structural barriers such as limited access to credit and the gender wage gap need further attention.
- **Inclusivity and Diversity:** The project's focus on inclusivity and diversity recognizes the varied experiences of women in conflict-affected regions. There's a continued need for outreach and program accessibility to ensure comprehensive empowerment.
- **Youth as Agents of Change:** The project's alignment with the Youth, Peace, and Security (YPS) agenda highlights innovative approaches to engaging youth in peace building. Significant gaps in harnessing youth potential, such as limited access to education and economic opportunities, remain.

- **Vocational Training and Economic Opportunities:** Providing vocational training and economic opportunities addresses root causes of conflict. Challenges include scalability and sustainability of these efforts.
- **Youth Leadership:** Promoting youth leadership and participation in decision-making is key, yet representation of youth in formal structures is insufficient.
- **Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration:** The project's collaborative model with diverse stakeholders has enhanced its impact. Challenges include overlapping mandates and ensuring equal partnership roles for local communities and civil society organizations.
- **Strengthening Partnerships:** Both local and international partnerships are crucial. There's a need to emphasize equity and mutual benefit, as well as leveraging technology and innovation for more effective collaboration.
- **Multi-Sectoral Approach:** A multi-sectoral approach to peace building is required to address modern conflicts effectively. Coordination, expertise, and resource allocation remain challenges.
- **Community-Based Conflict Resolution:** Empowering local communities for conflict resolution is a standout best practice, with areas for further development in capacity building and scaling.
- **Economic Development Integration:** Linking economic development with peace building addresses economic drivers of conflict. Ensuring equitable access to economic opportunities is necessary for improvement.
- **Inclusive Engagement:** The project's commitment to inclusive engagement and gender sensitivity is crucial. Overcoming barriers to inclusion and integrating gender-sensitive approaches is ongoing.
- **Environmental Considerations:** Incorporating environmental sustainability into peace building recognizes the link between environmental management and conflict, requiring deeper integration and community-based approaches.

3.9 Lessons Learned.

These lessons, drawn from various aspects of the peace building project, provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors contributing to effective and sustainable peace building initiatives.

- a) **Holistic Design and Strategic Alignment:** Holistic Design and Strategic Alignment in peace building encompasses a multifaceted approach that aligns comprehensive project design with both global ambitions, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and national development frameworks like the UNDP Strategic Framework. This strategy necessitates a well-constructed theory of change that not only anticipates potential risks but also actively incorporates mechanisms for community-based conflict resolution (CBRM), ensuring the inclusion of diverse and often marginalized groups such as women and youth, alongside key stakeholders like police forces. Such an approach guarantees that peace building initiatives are not only relevant and responsive to the unique challenges of the target communities but are also anchored in broader development goals. By weaving together local needs with global objectives, projects can achieve more sustainable, impactful outcomes, fostering environments where peace is both a foundation and a catalyst for development. This strategic alignment underscores the importance of coherence between project aims and larger peace and development agendas, ensuring that interventions are comprehensive, inclusive, and geared towards long-term stability and prosperity.
- b) **Community-Centric Approach and Inclusive Engagement:** Adopting a community-centric approach in peace building initiatives ensures that interventions are deeply rooted in the specific needs, cultures, and dynamics of the communities they serve. This method prioritizes active and meaningful participation from all community sectors, with a special focus on integrating women, youth, and marginalized groups into the peace building process. Such inclusivity not only enhances the relevance and effectiveness of initiatives but also fosters a sense of ownership and empowerment among community members, laying a strong foundation for sustainable peace. Projects must be designed to be adaptable and conflict-sensitive, recognizing the fluid nature of community dynamics and conflict landscapes. By leveraging the diversity within communities and ensuring broad-based participation, peace building efforts can achieve greater resilience and sustainability, reflecting a broad spectrum of perspectives and needs.
- c) **Economic Empowerment and Environmental Sustainability:** Integrating economic empowerment with environmental sustainability into peace building processes addresses two critical root causes of conflict: economic deprivation and resource scarcity. Initiatives that focus on improving livelihoods through vocational training, support for small enterprises, and access to markets, alongside efforts to conserve the environment and manage natural resources responsibly, contribute to building resilient communities capable of sustaining peace. Such integration ensures that economic development does not come at the expense of environmental degradation, promoting a balanced approach to peace building that

recognizes the interdependence of economic stability and environmental health. By addressing these intertwined issues, peace building efforts can foster communities that are not only economically self-sufficient but also custodians of their natural environment, ensuring long-term stability and peace.

- d) **Effective Collaboration and Multi-Sectoral Partnerships:** The complexity of peace building requires strong, equitable partnerships that span local, national, and international levels, involving a diverse array of stakeholders. Effective collaboration enhances the impact and sustainability of peace efforts by pooling resources, knowledge, and expertise. Projects should strive for coherence among partners, leveraging technology and innovation to improve efficiency and impact. Ensuring that local communities have significant decision-making roles in these partnerships is critical for tailoring interventions to genuine needs and for fostering local ownership of peace building processes. Such collaborative efforts should be characterized by mutual respect, shared goals, and a commitment to equity, ensuring that the contributions of all partners are valued and that the benefits of peace building are widely distributed.
- e) **Flexibility, Adaptability, and Scalability:** In the dynamic contexts in which peace building operates, the ability to remain flexible, adaptable, and scalable is crucial. Projects must be designed with the foresight to adjust to changing political, social, and economic landscapes, ensuring that interventions remain relevant and effective over time. This requires a commitment to continuous monitoring, evaluation, and learning, enabling project teams to refine strategies in response to feedback and emerging challenges. Scalability ensures that successful initiatives can be expanded or adapted to benefit a broader population, maximizing their impact. By building these principles into the fabric of peace building projects, efforts can achieve a lasting impact, contributing to the resilience and stability of communities.
- f) **Capacity Building and Strengthening Local Institutions:** The sustainability of peace efforts heavily depends on the strength and capacity of local communities, institutions, and peace committees. Empowering these local entities through targeted training, provision of resources, and support for enhancing local conflict resolution mechanisms lays the groundwork for enduring peace. Strengthening local institutions not only ensures that peace building efforts are grounded in local realities but also builds a sense of ownership and responsibility among community members. By investing in the capacities of local actors, peace building projects can foster self-reliance and reduce dependency on external support, ensuring that communities possess the skills and resources needed to manage conflicts and sustain peace efforts independently.
- g) **Policy Alignment and Adherence to International Standards:** Ensuring that peace building initiatives align with international standards, such as those set forth by the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda, and incorporating gender sensitivity into programming, significantly enhances the legitimacy and impact of projects. Adherence to these standards demonstrates a commitment to upholding global norms and protecting the rights of all community members, especially women and girls. Continuous updates based on the latest research and guidelines, along with active advocacy for the integration of gender perspectives in all aspects of peace building, are crucial for advancing women's rights and

participation in peace and security efforts. By aligning with international standards, projects not only contribute to the global peace building agenda but also ensure that interventions are informed by best practices and ethical considerations.

- h) **Youth Leadership and Economic Participation:** The active participation and leadership of youth in peace building are vital for addressing the root causes of conflict and building a sustainable future. Institutionalizing youth participation ensures their contributions are recognized and valued, while addressing challenges such as unemployment and lack of economic opportunities is imperative for empowering them. Projects should aim to create an entrepreneurial ecosystem that supports a diversity of businesses and tackles structural barriers to economic participation, fostering an environment where young people can thrive as innovators and leaders in peace. By prioritizing youth empowerment and integrating their perspectives and needs into peace building initiatives, projects can harness the energy, creativity

3.9.1 MAIN CHALLENGES

The DCPSF project faced numerous challenges during its implementation, monitoring and evaluation and the exit phase:

The flashes of insecurity in Darfur region immensely affected the project implementation particularly in the West, south and North Darfur states. Occasionally, specific partners such as World Relief Sudan (WRS), Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Concern Worldwide (CWW) and Sahari organisation experienced a slowdown in activity implementation as implementers could flee the field and wait a number of days before returning to project sites. There were also increased cases of carjacking, in which project cars and hired cars were not spared. The main roads leading to project sites were sometime inaccessible as a result of roadblocks.

The country's high inflation and fluctuations in commodity prices influenced partners to constantly revise their budgets to fit the devaluation and other anticipated adjustment. notably were the high-cost car hire for field activities and procurement of materials for communities. For example, was only able to install only 10 water points for hand washing instead the planned 40. As remedy, most Window 1 partners were able to keep their funds in US dollars until they are ready to go into the market, Window 2 partners manipulated the price changes through booking and signing contracts with suppliers before the market was heavily infested.

The change in the internal financial reporting system in UNDP also contributed to delays in quarterly disbursement of funds to partners, this resulted to delays in implementation and completion of project activities. However, this challenge was addressed by endorsing no-cost extensions for some partners to enable them complete closing activities and final reporting timely.

During COVID19 insurgency, the project inception was delayed. Most activities of the DCPSF projects were impacted by the lockdown and government restrictions on movement due to COVID-19. However, partners who were implementing lifesaving activities such as COVID19 prevention messages and distribution of Personal Protective Equipment were allowed to access the communities, this provided opportunities for

partners such as Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Welthungerhilfe (WHH), Care International Switzerland (CIS), Darfur organization for Peace and development Initiative (DPI) and the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) to implement some activities while observing COVID19 preventive guidelines for community engagement. In some instances, activities such as trainings were implemented with strict observations of COVID19 SOPs.

The start of the rainy season in September 2020 also delayed the onset of some project activities including baseline assessment surveys as some project sites were inaccessible. However, activities were smoothly executed from November 2020 as the volume of rain had subsided.

The partners indicated that the delays in signing off of Technical Agreements (TAs) with the Humanitarian Aid Coordinator (HAC) Office and other relevant ministries also delayed the commencement of the project implementation for most partners. It took some partners two months before receiving their TAs to enable them to start work in the field. However, by the end of the second quarter of year one, all partners had finally received their TAs and project implementation was going on well.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.0 CONCLUSIONS

4.0.1 Project Design

The DCPSF end of project evaluation revealed a well-conceived project design that adeptly aligned with the overarching goals of addressing conflict drivers in the targeted areas. The design incorporated a robust community engagement strategy, ensuring that interventions were both relevant and responsive to the local context. One of the strengths of the project design was its flexibility, allowing it to adapt to changing circumstances and needs without compromising its objectives. However, the evaluation also identified areas for improvement, such as the need for a more thorough initial needs assessment to refine target beneficiary selection and a clearer mechanism for stakeholder feedback incorporation throughout the project lifecycle. Overall, the project design laid a solid foundation for achieving its intended outcomes, with recommendations for enhancing its approach to ensure even greater impact in future initiatives.

4.0.2 Project Relevance

The evaluation underscored the project's high relevance to the needs of the target communities and its alignment with both local and national priorities for peace and development. By focusing on key conflict drivers such as resource scarcity, economic deprivation, and social fragmentation, the project directly addressed the root causes of instability in the region. Its relevance was further amplified by its responsiveness to the community's immediate needs while also working towards long-term resilience building. Despite its strengths, there is room to enhance relevance through deeper engagement with local actors and integrating emerging issues such as climate change impacts into project activities. Moving forward, maintaining relevance will require continuous dialogue with stakeholders and adapting to the evolving socio-political landscape.

4.0.3 Project Coherence

The DCPSF project demonstrated strong coherence with broader peace building and development efforts in the region, effectively complementing other initiatives and avoiding duplication of efforts. Its strategies and activities were well-integrated, creating synergies between different components such as capacity building, livelihood enhancement, and infrastructure development. This coherence maximized the project's overall effectiveness and contributed to building a more cohesive peace building ecosystem. Nevertheless, the evaluation suggested further strengthening coherence by enhancing partnerships with other organizations and government entities, ensuring alignment with national strategies, and fostering better coordination mechanisms. Strengthening these aspects will be crucial for maximizing the project's contribution to sustainable peace and development.

4.0.4 Project Effectiveness

The project's effectiveness and impact were notable, with significant achievements in reducing conflict incidents, enhancing community resilience, and improving livelihoods

among the target populations. Beneficiaries reported improved access to resources, increased income levels, and stronger social cohesion as direct outcomes of the project's interventions. The evaluation also highlighted the project's role in fostering dialogue and reconciliation, which has been pivotal in building trust within and between communities. While these impacts are commendable, the evaluation recommended further efforts to quantify the project's long-term impact on peace and economic stability, as well as to identify and scale successful strategies across similar contexts.

4.0.5 Project Efficiency

The evaluation found that the project was implemented with a high degree of efficiency, making judicious use of resources to achieve desired outcomes. The project team's effective management practices and the strategic use of partnerships contributed to maximizing the impact of available resources. However, there were instances where logistical challenges and external factors, such as security restrictions, affected the timeliness of activity implementation. To improve efficiency in future projects, the evaluation suggests enhancing planning and coordination mechanisms, investing in capacity building for local implementing partners, and exploring innovative solutions to overcome operational hurdles.

4.0.6 Project Sustainability

The sustainability of the project's outcomes emerged as a critical area of success, with several mechanisms put in place to ensure the longevity of its impacts. Community ownership of initiatives, the establishment of local peace committees, and the integration of project activities into local government plans were highlighted as key sustainability drivers. However, the evaluation pointed out the need for a more systematic approach to building local capacities and securing long-term funding to support these initiatives beyond the project's lifespan. Strengthening the sustainability aspect will require ongoing commitment from all stakeholders, including the continuation of support for institutional and policy frameworks that underpin peace and development efforts.

4.0.7 Peace building Approach

The DCPSF project's comprehensive approach to peace building, addressing economic, social, and environmental factors alongside cultural differences, sets a precedent for future initiatives in conflict-affected regions. This multi-faceted strategy acknowledges the complexity of conflicts and the necessity of tackling them from various angles to ensure lasting peace. The project's success in integrating these diverse aspects demonstrates the effectiveness of a holistic approach. However, to enhance this approach, the project must continue to refine its strategies to address gaps in inclusivity, particularly ensuring that marginalized groups have a more significant role in peace building processes. Strengthening community engagement and tailoring interventions to meet the nuanced needs of different segments within the community can further solidify the foundation for sustainable peace. Moreover, scaling these efforts to reach a broader audience and reinforcing the sustainability of initiatives are critical for extending the impact beyond the project's lifespan. Adopting adaptive methodologies to continuously assess and respond to the changing dynamics within Darfur is also essential for maintaining the relevance and effectiveness of peace building activities.

4.0.8 Long-Term Solutions and Government Integration:

The focus on long-term solutions and the strategic integration with government structures underscore the project's commitment to sustainability and institutional support for peace initiatives. By aligning community-based conflict resolution mechanisms with formal legal systems, the project has laid a groundwork for durable peace efforts that can be sustained beyond its direct involvement. However, enhancing this integration requires ongoing dialogue with government entities to ensure that these mechanisms are not only supported but also actively incorporated into national peace building strategies. Strengthening the capacity of local government officials and institutions to manage and support these initiatives can further promote ownership and sustainability. Additionally, expanding these models to other regions within Sudan could amplify their impact, offering scalable and adaptable frameworks for peace building that can be customized to fit different contexts.

4.0.9 Economic and Social Development:

The project's initiatives in economic and social development have made significant strides in addressing the root causes of conflict and fostering community resilience. Vocational training, support for small enterprises, and infrastructure development have not only improved livelihoods but also contributed to social cohesion and stability. To build on these successes, the project must address the scalability of economic interventions to ensure they reach the most marginalized and vulnerable populations. This involves creating more inclusive economic opportunities that are accessible to all community members, regardless of gender, age, or ethnic background. Furthermore, integrating these economic initiatives with broader regional and national economic development plans can enhance their sustainability and impact. Collaborating with the private sector to open up new markets and employment opportunities for project beneficiaries can also drive forward economic empowerment and peace building efforts.

4.0.10 Capacity Building and Exit Strategies:

Capacity building and the development of comprehensive exit strategies are pivotal for ensuring the project's sustainability. Empowering local actors with the skills and knowledge to continue peace building efforts independently ensures that the project's impacts are lasting. To enhance capacity building, the project could focus on more specialized training tailored to the unique challenges and opportunities within different community sectors. Developing clearer, more robust exit strategies that outline the transition of project activities to local ownership can also ensure that initiatives do not end abruptly but continue to grow and evolve. Engaging with community members to co-create these exit strategies can enhance their relevance and effectiveness, ensuring that they are grounded in local realities and capable of addressing future challenges.

4.0.11 Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning:

The project's emphasis on monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) has been crucial for assessing its impact and adapting strategies accordingly. To further enhance the sustainability of peace building efforts, the project could invest in more innovative MEL techniques that capture the complex dynamics of peace and conflict. This includes developing participatory monitoring approaches that involve community members in the

evaluation process, providing valuable insights into the effectiveness of interventions. Enhancing the use of technology in MEL practices can also improve data collection and analysis, offering real-time insights that can guide adaptive management. Sharing lessons learned and best practices with a broader audience, including other peace building initiatives and policymakers, can contribute to a collective understanding of effective peace building strategies.

4.0.12 Comprehensive and Adaptive Project Design:

The DCPSF project represents a paradigm of strategic peace building, characterized by its comprehensive approach that meticulously blends economic development, social cohesion, environmental sustainability, and cultural sensitivity. This design underscores the importance of addressing the multifaceted nature of conflicts by not only mitigating immediate tensions but also tackling the underlying causes that fuel instability. The project's adaptability, demonstrated through its responsiveness to evolving ground realities and community feedback, has been a critical success factor. However, to enhance the impact and reach of such initiatives, future designs must incorporate more robust initial assessments and stakeholder feedback mechanisms. This will ensure targeted interventions that are precisely aligned with the nuanced needs of conflict-affected communities, thereby maximizing the efficacy and sustainability of peace building efforts.

4.0.13 Sustainability Through Local Ownership and Capacity Building:

The sustainability of the DCPSF project's outcomes stands out as a significant achievement, attributed to the emphasis on local ownership, capacity building, and strategic government integration. By empowering communities to lead and sustain peace initiatives, the project has laid a strong foundation for enduring peace and development. The establishment of local peace committees and the integration of project activities into local government plans exemplify a commitment to embedding peace building within the fabric of community governance. However, for these achievements to have lasting impact, there's a critical need for systematic capacity building and securing long-term support. Strengthening local capacities, coupled with ensuring the continuity of funding and institutional backing, will be paramount in maintaining the momentum of peace and resilience in Darfur.

4.0.14 Challenges in Political and Security Instability

Navigating the complex landscape of political and security instability in Darfur presents ongoing challenges for peace building initiatives like the DCPSF project. These challenges underscore the necessity for flexible and adaptive program designs capable of responding to sudden changes in the security situation or political dynamics. To overcome these obstacles, the project must prioritize the development of robust contingency plans and strengthen collaborations with local and national authorities. Enhancing the security protocols for project implementation and exploring innovative solutions to logistical challenges will be crucial in ensuring the safe and effective delivery of peace building interventions. Furthermore, a sustained dialogue with government entities will facilitate a conducive environment for the continuity and scalability of peace efforts.

4.0.15 Inclusivity and Empowerment of Marginalized Groups:

The DCPSF project's focus on inclusivity and the empowerment of marginalized groups, particularly women and youth, marks a pivotal step towards building a more equitable and peaceful society. By integrating these groups into the heart of peace building processes, the project acknowledges their crucial role as agents of change. Despite notable successes, barriers to full participation remain, necessitating continued efforts to dismantle structural and cultural obstacles. Future initiatives must deepen their commitment to inclusivity by expanding outreach, enhancing access to resources, and fostering an environment that nurtures the leadership potential of all community members. Empowering women and youth not only enriches peace building endeavors but also ensures a more vibrant and resilient social fabric capable of withstanding the pressures of conflict.

4.0.16 Environmental Considerations in Conflict Resolution:

Integrating environmental sustainability into the core of peace building strategies, as seen in the DCPSF project, highlights a forward-thinking approach to conflict resolution. Acknowledging the link between environmental degradation and conflict drivers such as resource scarcity, the project has made strides in addressing these issues through community-based natural resource management and sustainable practices. However, the scale of environmental challenges demands more comprehensive and integrated approaches. Strengthening these efforts will require a concerted focus on promoting sustainable agricultural practices, investing in renewable energy, and empowering communities to manage their natural resources effectively. Such environmental considerations are not only crucial for mitigating conflict but also for ensuring the long-term resilience of communities against the backdrop of global climate change.

4.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

To address the challenges and leverage the opportunities presented by the Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF), as well as the broader context of development in Sudan, it's essential to outline specific recommendations tailored to different stakeholders. These recommendations aim to enhance the effectiveness of interventions, ensure sustainability, and foster inclusive development in Darfur and across Sudan. Implementing these recommendations requires a concerted effort from all stakeholders involved in Darfur's development and the broader Sudanese context. Through collaboration, commitment, and a focus on sustainability, it is possible to address the current challenges and build a foundation for lasting peace and development.

4.1.1 DCPSF Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Strategic Enhancement and Collaboration

1. Increase Investment and Collaboration

- **Amplify Funding and Partnerships:** Elevate the project's impact through increased financial investment and strategic partnerships. This involves not only securing more substantial and long-term funding commitments from a diverse array of sources, including international donors, government bodies, and private sector entities, but also expanding the network of collaborative partners. By engaging with a wider range of stakeholders, the project can leverage additional expertise, resources, and support systems, enhancing its reach and effectiveness.
- **Integrate into National Development and Ensure Sustainability:** Align the project's objectives and interventions with broader national development plans and strategies, ensuring that efforts contribute to the country's overall progress and are sustainable over the long term. This requires close collaboration with government agencies to ensure that project activities support and complement national priorities. Additionally, developing strategies to scale successful interventions ensures that the project can have a broader impact, reaching more communities and addressing a wider range of development needs efficiently.

Recommendation 2: Capacity Building and Inclusiveness

1. Strengthen Capacity Building for Local Entities and Communities:

- **Enhance Self-Reliance and Resilience:** Implement targeted training programs and support initiatives aimed at building the capacities of local institutions, community leaders, and civil society organizations. By equipping these local entities with the necessary skills, knowledge, and resources, the project fosters a foundation of self-reliance and resilience that enables communities to address their own development challenges and sustain peace building efforts over the long term.
- **Customize Capacity Building to Local Needs:** Design capacity-building initiatives that are tailored to the specific needs and contexts of each community. This customization ensures that training programs are relevant and effective, addressing the unique challenges faced by different groups. By involving community members in the design and implementation of these programs, the project ensures that capacity-building efforts are grounded in local realities and thereby more likely to be successful and sustainable.

2. Deepen Community Engagement and Address Barriers to Participation:

- **Culturally Sensitive and Inclusive Interventions:** Develop and implement project activities that are respectful of and sensitive to the cultural norms and values of the communities served. By ensuring that interventions are inclusive and designed to actively engage all segments of the community, including marginalized and vulnerable groups, the project promotes broader participation and buy-in, which are critical for the success and sustainability of peace building and development efforts.
- **Overcome Barriers for Marginalized Groups:** Identify and address the specific barriers that prevent marginalized groups from participating fully in project activities. This may involve removing socio-economic, cultural, or logistical obstacles through targeted support measures, such as providing transportation,

childcare, or translation services during community meetings and training sessions. By actively working to include these groups, the project ensures a more equitable and comprehensive approach to community development and peace building.

Recommendation 3: Sustainable Development and Gender Equality

1. Promote Sustainable Economic and Environmental Practices:

- **Support Scalable, Self-Sustaining Business Models:** Encourage the development and implementation of business models that are both environmentally sustainable and economically viable over the long term. This includes providing support for enterprises that utilize local resources in a responsible manner, leverage local markets for growth, and can be scaled up to increase their impact. Initiatives might include promoting sustainable agriculture, renewable energy projects, and eco-friendly small businesses that contribute to the local economy while preserving environmental integrity.
- **Comprehensive Environmental Management:** Integrate environmental conservation and management practices into all project activities to ensure they contribute positively to the local ecosystem. This could involve measures such as implementing water conservation techniques, promoting reforestation, and encouraging the use of sustainable materials and practices. By considering the environmental impact of development initiatives, the project supports the broader goal of achieving ecological sustainability alongside economic growth.

2. Incorporate Gender Equality Measures and Leadership Initiatives:

- **Integrate Gender Equality in Project Design and Implementation:** Ensure that all project activities explicitly consider and address gender disparities. This involves conducting gender analyses to inform project planning, designing interventions that specifically target women's empowerment, and ensuring equal access to resources and opportunities for all genders. By mainstreaming gender considerations, the project aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 5 on gender equality, and fosters a more inclusive and equitable approach to development.
- **Promote Women's Leadership and Participation:** Actively support initiatives that empower women to take on leadership roles within their communities and in the project itself. This could include leadership training programs, mentorship opportunities, and support for women-led enterprises. Encouraging women's active participation and leadership not only contributes to gender equality but also enriches the project with diverse perspectives and approaches, enhancing its overall effectiveness and sustainability.

Recommendation 4: Monitoring, Evaluation, and Adaptation

1. Implement Robust M&E Systems:

- **Establish Dynamic Monitoring and Evaluation Frameworks:** Develop and implement comprehensive M&E systems that are capable of capturing the nuanced impacts of project interventions on communities and the environment. These frameworks should include both quantitative and qualitative metrics to assess progress towards project goals, identify areas for improvement, and measure the effectiveness of different strategies. Incorporating technology, such as digital data collection tools, can enhance the efficiency and accuracy of these processes, providing real-time insights that facilitate timely adjustments.
- **Incorporate Feedback Loops for Strategy Adaptation:** Design the M&E systems to include mechanisms for regular feedback from project beneficiaries, partners, and stakeholders. This feedback should be systematically analyzed and used to inform adjustments to project strategies and activities. By creating a culture of continuous learning and adaptation, the project can remain flexible and responsive to changing community needs, emerging challenges, and evolving market dynamics, ensuring that interventions are always aligned with the goal of maximizing positive impact.

2. Strengthen Conflict Sensitivity and Legal Integration:

- **Enhance Conflict Sensitivity in Project Activities:** Integrate conflict sensitivity into all aspects of the project, from planning through to implementation and evaluation. This involves conducting ongoing conflict analysis to understand the local context and potential impacts of interventions on social dynamics and tensions. Training project staff and partners in conflict-sensitive practices ensures that they are equipped to identify and mitigate any negative effects, thereby contributing to peace building and social cohesion.
- **Improve Legal Integration and Dispute Resolution Mechanisms:** Work closely with local legal institutions and community leaders to strengthen the integration of Community-Based Reconciliation Mechanisms (CBRM) with formal legal systems. This collaboration can enhance the legitimacy and effectiveness of dispute resolution processes, ensuring they are accessible, equitable, and trusted by the community. By addressing legal and conflict-related challenges through a combined approach of traditional and formal mechanisms, the project can more effectively contribute to resolving disputes and building peace.

Recommendation 5: Government Integration and Policy Support

1. Enhance Capacity of Government Bodies:

- **Capacity Building for Government Support:** Implement targeted training and development programs for government officials and agencies at various levels to enhance their understanding and capacity to support community-based initiatives. This includes workshops, seminars, and on-the-job training that focus on the principles of peace building, sustainable development, and effective governance. By equipping government personnel with the necessary skills and knowledge, the project ensures that they can effectively contribute to and sustain the initiatives within their communities.

- **Alignment with National Policies:** Work closely with government partners to ensure that project activities and goals are in harmony with national development plans and policies. This involves regular dialogue and collaboration with policy makers to advocate for the inclusion of project priorities within the broader governmental agenda. Aligning efforts with national policies not only secures governmental support but also ensures coherence and synergy between the project's objectives and the country's long-term development goals.

2. Legal and Governmental Framework Expansion:

- **Support for Legal Framework Enhancements:** Collaborate with legal experts, government authorities, and civil society organizations to identify and address gaps in the current legal and policy frameworks that may hinder peace building efforts. This could involve drafting new legislation, amending existing laws, or developing specific policies that support reconciliation, community development, and the protection of vulnerable groups. By enhancing the legal framework, the project creates a more conducive environment for sustainable peace and development.
- **Comprehensive Governmental Framework Integration:** Advocate for and support the development of integrated governmental frameworks that encompass all aspects of peace building and development, from economic empowerment and environmental sustainability to gender equality and social justice. This comprehensive approach ensures that government strategies are multifaceted and address the complex, interrelated challenges facing communities. Facilitating the integration of these frameworks across different government departments and agencies promotes a unified and effective response to the needs of the population, enhancing the impact and sustainability of peace building efforts.

Recommendation 6: Digital Engagement and Market Alignment

1. Utilize Digital Tools for Coordination and Engagement:

- **Integration of Advanced Digital Platforms:** Adopt cutting-edge digital technologies and platforms to streamline project coordination, communication, and stakeholder engagement. This includes the use of project management software, mobile applications for real-time data collection and sharing, and social media platforms to foster community engagement and disseminate information. Leveraging these tools can enhance the efficiency of project operations and facilitate wider participation from diverse stakeholders, including remote or underserved populations.
- **Enhance Stakeholder Engagement Through Digital Channels:** Employ digital strategies to actively engage with communities, partners, and donors. This could involve virtual town hall meetings, online workshops, and digital feedback mechanisms that allow for broader and more inclusive participation. By using digital channels to gather input and feedback, the project can ensure that its initiatives are responsive to the needs and preferences of the community, thereby increasing their effectiveness and impact.

2. Align Vocational Training and Economic Initiatives with Market Demands:

- **Market-driven Vocational Training:** Design and implement vocational training programs that are closely aligned with current and emerging market demands. This involves conducting thorough market analysis to identify skills gaps and employment opportunities within the local and regional economies. Tailoring training programs to meet these demands ensures that participants gain relevant and valuable skills, significantly improving their employability and contributing to economic growth.
- **Support for Market-aligned Economic Initiatives:** Encourage and support economic initiatives that leverage local market opportunities and address gaps in the supply chain. This can include providing start-up support for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) that respond to market needs, facilitating access to microfinance and credit for entrepreneurs, and offering business development services. By ensuring that economic initiatives are market-aligned, the project can help create sustainable businesses that contribute to the local economy and offer meaningful employment opportunities to community members.

Recommendation 7: Resource Management and Strategic Flexibility

1. Optimize Resource Utilization:

- **Efficient Resource Allocation and Project Management:** Implement strategic planning and resource management practices to ensure optimal use of available resources. This includes adopting tools and methodologies for effective budgeting, resource allocation, and project tracking to maximize efficiency and minimize waste. By carefully managing resources, the project can deliver more impactful outcomes within budgetary constraints and timelines, ensuring that every dollar spent contributes directly to achieving project goals.
- **Capacity Building for Partners:** Strengthen the operational capacities of partnering organizations through targeted training, support systems, and sharing of best practices. Enhancing partner capabilities in project management, financial management, and strategic planning enables them to utilize resources more effectively and deliver on project objectives more efficiently. Building a network of capable and resource-efficient partners amplifies the project's overall impact and sustainability.

2. Maintain Strategic Flexibility and Innovation:

- **Adaptive Project Design and Implementation:** Cultivate an adaptive approach to project design and implementation that allows for rapid response to changing contexts and emerging challenges. This involves regular monitoring of external developments and internal project progress to identify when strategic shifts or tactical adjustments are needed. Encouraging innovation in problem-solving and flexibility in project execution ensures that the initiative remains relevant and effective, even as circumstances evolve.

- **Innovative Solutions to Overcome Challenges:** Leverage creative and innovative solutions to navigate obstacles, whether they are logistical, financial, or contextual. This could involve exploring new technologies, unconventional partnerships, or alternative project delivery mechanisms that can offer novel ways to achieve project aims. By maintaining a commitment to strategic flexibility, the project can adapt its methods and approaches to overcome challenges, capitalize on new opportunities, and continuously align with the evolving needs and priorities of the communities it serves.

Recommendation 8: Comprehensive Peace building and Development

1. Broaden Peace building Collaboration:

- **Expand Networking and Stakeholder Engagement:** Proactively seek to include a diverse array of actors in peace building efforts, from local community groups and civil society organizations to international NGOs, government bodies, and the private sector. This broad-based approach ensures a rich tapestry of perspectives and resources are brought to bear on peace building challenges. By fostering an inclusive environment for dialogue and collaboration, the project can leverage the unique strengths and capabilities of each stakeholder, creating synergies that enhance the overall effectiveness and reach of peace initiatives.
- **Leverage Positive Unintended Impacts:** Identify and capitalize on the positive side effects of peace building activities, such as enhanced social cohesion, increased community resilience, or the empowerment of marginalized groups. By recognizing and amplifying these unintended benefits, the project can strengthen its impact beyond its original scope. This might involve scaling up successful initiatives, replicating them in different contexts, or integrating these positive outcomes into the broader strategy for sustainable development and peace.

2. Develop Flexible Implementation Methods and Enhance Partnerships:

- **Adopt Flexible Implementation Approaches:** Implement adaptive project management practices that allow for rapid adjustment to changing circumstances on the ground. This flexibility enables the project to respond effectively to unforeseen challenges, take advantage of new opportunities, and adjust strategies in real-time based on feedback and evolving community needs. Emphasizing agility in project execution ensures that peace building efforts remain relevant and impactful, even in the face of shifting political landscapes or socio-economic conditions.
- **Strengthen and Diversify Partnerships for Greater Impact:** Forge and nurture strategic partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders, including those from sectors not traditionally associated with peace building, such as the business community, educational institutions, and the tech industry. By diversifying its network of partners, the project can access new resources, ideas, and platforms for peace building work. Collaborating closely with partners to align goals, share knowledge, and coordinate activities amplifies the project's capacity to drive

meaningful change, promoting economic sustainability and equity in the communities it serves.

Recommendation 9: Environment, Equity, and Learning

1. Address Environmental and Social Equity:

- **Promote Comprehensive Resource Management and Conservation:** Implement strategies that encompass sustainable resource management and environmental conservation to protect and enhance natural ecosystems. This includes practices like sustainable agriculture, water resource management, and biodiversity conservation, ensuring that environmental stewardship is integrated into development initiatives. By prioritizing ecological sustainability, the project contributes to long-term environmental health, which is foundational to community well-being and economic resilience.
- **Ensure Equitable Resource Distribution:** Develop mechanisms to guarantee that the benefits of development and conservation efforts are shared equitably among all community members, especially marginalized and vulnerable groups. This may involve community-based management of natural resources, equitable access to clean water and renewable energy sources, and inclusive decision-making processes that give a voice to those often left out of development conversations. By addressing disparities in resource distribution, the project promotes social equity and justice, essential components of sustainable peace and development.

2. Adopt Multifaceted Monitoring and Evaluation Strategies:

- **Leverage Technology for Real-Time Analysis:** Utilize advanced technological tools and data analytics platforms to conduct real-time monitoring and evaluation of project impacts on the environment and community livelihoods. Technologies such as remote sensing, GIS mapping, and mobile data collection can provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of resource management practices and the distribution of development benefits. This real-time data supports agile project management, enabling timely adjustments to enhance outcomes.
- **Facilitate Continuous Learning and Improvement:** Establish a learning-oriented approach to monitoring and evaluation that not only tracks progress and outcomes but also identifies lessons learned, best practices, and areas for improvement. Encourage the sharing of findings and insights among project stakeholders through workshops, reports, and digital platforms. This culture of continuous learning fosters innovation and adaptability within the project, ensuring that peace building and development efforts are always evolving to meet the changing needs of communities and the environment effectively.

Recommendation 10: Inclusive Peacebuilding, Enhancing Disability Inclusion

To ensure the inclusion of people with disabilities in peacebuilding and community stability efforts in Darfur, the Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF) should prioritize the following actionable recommendations:

- **Develop and Implement an Inclusive Policy Framework:** Establish clear, enforceable policies mandating the inclusion of people with disabilities across all programs. This framework should cover all aspects of program design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation, ensuring that every initiative is accessible and inclusive from the outset. Engage disability inclusion experts to advise on these policies and their implementation to guarantee that all activities are truly accessible.
- **Targeted Capacity Building and Empowerment Programs:** Develop and implement capacity building and empowerment programs specifically designed for people with disabilities. These programs should focus on enhancing their leadership and advocacy skills, ensuring their active involvement in decision-making processes, and promoting their economic empowerment through tailored vocational training and employment opportunities. Such initiatives must be developed in consultation with disability-focused organizations and guided by the principles of dignity, autonomy, and respect for the choices of individuals with disabilities.
- **Build Capacity and Foster Partnerships for Inclusion:** Conduct regular training for staff and local partners on disability awareness and inclusion practices. Launch community awareness campaigns to challenge stereotypes and promote the value of inclusion. Collaborate with organizations specializing in disability rights to leverage their expertise and resources. Align programme initiatives with national and regional disability strategies to enhance coherence and impact, ensuring sustainable funding is allocated specifically for inclusion efforts.

By focusing on these key areas, DCPSF can significantly improve the inclusivity of its programs, ensuring that individuals with disabilities are not only accommodated but actively engaged in shaping peacebuilding and community stabilization efforts in Darfur.

4.1.2 Recommendations for the Sudan Government

To support the sustainable peace and development of Darfur, the Sudanese Government should undertake a strategic and integrated approach focusing on governance, economic resilience, environmental stewardship, inclusivity, and technological innovation:

- 1) **Strengthen Governance and Enhance the Rule of Law:** Commit to legal reforms that bolster governance structures, ensuring the legal recognition of community-based conflict resolution mechanisms for their integration into the formal justice system. Improve public service delivery while enhancing accountability and transparency across all government levels.
- 2) **Promote Economic Development through Diversification and Livelihood Opportunities:** Invest in diverse sectors such as agriculture, renewable energy, and technology to create sustainable livelihood opportunities. Focus on scalable economic empowerment efforts, ensuring equitable access for all, particularly marginalized groups. Facilitate private sector investment and entrepreneurship through supportive policies and incentives.
- 3) **Prioritize Environmental Sustainability in National Development and Peace building Strategies:** Incorporate sustainable land and water resource management,

alongside climate adaptation practices, into peace building and development initiatives to address environmental degradation as a conflict catalyst.

- 4) **Advance Gender Inclusion and Empower Women:** Implement comprehensive strategies to integrate women fully into peace building, decision-making processes, and economic empowerment programs. Address gender-based violence and inequality as foundational elements for achieving lasting peace.
- 5) **Empower Youth and Foster Leadership:** Develop initiatives that recognize youth as key agents of change, providing vocational training, entrepreneurship opportunities, and platforms for leadership. Ensure youth participation in decision-making to harness their potential in peace building processes.
- 6) **Improve Coordination and Strengthen Partnerships:** Enhance collaboration with local and international partners, including NGOs and community organizations, to align peace building and development efforts with national priorities. Ensure coherent actions that leverage collective resources and expertise.
- 7) **Adopt Inclusive and Participatory Development Approaches:** Ensure the meaningful involvement of all societal segments, including marginalized and vulnerable groups, in planning, implementation, and evaluation processes. Foster a sense of community ownership over development and peace initiatives.
- 8) **Invest in Capacity Building and Institutional Strengthening:** Focus on enhancing the capabilities of local institutions, leaders, and civil society in governance, sustainable development, and conflict resolution to ensure local ownership and sustainability of peace efforts.
- 9) **Secure Sustainable Funding and Resource Allocation:** Develop innovative financing models and strategically allocate resources to support long-term initiatives, ensuring the scalability and sustainability of development and peace building projects.
- 10) **Leverage Technology and Innovation:** Integrate technology and innovation into peace building and development strategies to enhance efficiency, participation, and transparency. Utilize digital platforms for stakeholder engagement, data collection, and knowledge sharing.

ANNEXES

1) Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference (TORs) for Final Evaluation of the Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF)

A. INTRODUCTION

These Terms of Reference (TORs) seek to engage an experienced evaluation firm in the final evaluation of the Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF).

B. BACKGROUND

Basic project information can also be included in table format as follows:

PROJECT/OUTCOME INFORMATION		
Project/outcome title	Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF)	
Atlas ID		
Corporate outcome and output		
Country	Sudan	
Region	Darfur	
Date project document signed	Yes	
Project dates	Start	Planned end
	February 2021	June 2023
Project budget		
Project expenditure at the time of evaluation		
Funding source	DCPSF Donors/MPTF	
Implementing party ¹¹	UNDP/DCPSF Technical Secretariat	

a. Country context

The Darfur region has been affected by high levels of armed conflict and protracted humanitarian crises since 2003.¹² Conflict dynamics in the region revolve around unresolved disputes over land, livelihoods, and natural resources, prevalence of

¹¹ This is the entity that has overall responsibility for implementation of the project (award), effective use of resources and delivery of outputs in the signed project document and workplan.

¹² <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/acaps-briefing-note-sudan-increased-violence-darfur-region-12-august-2022>

weapons, sexual violence, armed group activities, tensions around IDPs and host communities, as well as between returnees and communities, including new settlers. The drivers of the conflict in Darfur are complex, multi-level, politicized and encompass local, national, regional, and international dimensions simultaneously.

Despite years of international investment in Darfur, notably the presence of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), much of the region remains a conflict-affected setting. Today, the region continues to experience insecurity, inter-communal clashes, human rights violations, sexual and gender-based violence, and high levels of criminality.¹³

With nearly 2.6 million Internally Displaced People (IDP) in Darfur. There's continued stress on scarce natural resources and social services, resulting in tensions between host and displaced communities. Women, including young women, bear the brunt of conflict in Darfur, not only because of widespread sexual and gender-based violence, but also because of their systematic exclusion from peace processes. A lack of livelihood opportunities and exclusion from decision-making has resulted in many young people, especially young men, joining armed groups, contributing to fragility and the volatility of an already unpredictable setting.

At a national level, the revolution that started in December 2018 across Sudan led to the collapse of the 30-year government of Omar al-Bashir in April 2019, with a political agreement and constitutional framework leading to the establishment of a Transitional Government of civilian and military components. This Transitional Government was to govern Sudan for a 39-month transition period, while the Constitutional Declaration envisaged the completion of a fair and comprehensive peace in Sudan no later than six months from its signing.

Throughout 2020 and much of 2021, the Transitional government led by Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok appeared determined to undertake a series of ambitious political reforms and implement key political benchmarks of the Constitutional Declaration. The signature of the Juba Peace Agreement in October 2020 between the Transitional Government, the Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF) and the Sudan Liberation Army – Minni Minawi (SLA-MM) faction on 3 October 2020 provided hope for a meaningful opportunity to bridge the country's long-standing centre-periphery divides and address root drivers of conflict, including in Darfur. In support of the rapidly changing situation in Sudan, including the full departure of UNAMID on 31 December 2020, the UN Security Council mandated the creation of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS). Strategic priorities of the new mission include assisting the political transition, progressing towards democratic governance, and protecting and promoting human rights and sustainable peace. UNITAMS works together with the UN Country Team (UNCT), to support the peace and development agenda in Sudan.

However, a military take-over on 25th October 2021¹⁴ brought the transition to a halt and the political situation has remain in deadlock since. The takeover aggravated both the

¹³ <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/N2234107.pdf>

¹⁴ <https://press.un.org/en/2021/sc14678.doc.htm>

political and economic situation in the country leading to frequent national wide protests calling for a civilian government.

With these changes, the situation in Darfur continued to pose significant challenges as the conflict and humanitarian conditions continued to deteriorate in the region.¹⁵ The situation was compounded by the security vacuum created by the exit of UNAMID¹⁶, all of which has led to gaps in the protection environment in conflict-affected areas. This violence was particularly severe in certain areas, including in those localities targeted by the Darfur Programme, with significant conflicts West Darfur (Jebel Moon, Kreinik, and Geneina localities), killing and displacing several people across the region.¹⁷

The failure of the key parties to the transitional framework to agree led to the breakout of war in the Country. Fighting erupted on 15 April 2023 between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), led by Lieutenant General Abdel-Fattah Al-Burhan, and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), led by Lieutenant General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, leaving hundreds dead and thousands injured.¹⁸

According to the UN OCHA Situation report for April – May 2023, the conflict took on an ethnic dimension in Darfur. This re-ignited violence between various armed groups and tribes with allegiance either to SAF or RSF. Attacks against civilians have left hundreds of civilians dead or injured, armed elements targeting those attempting to escape on foot, villages being looted, and the total destruction of areas where internally displaced people (IDP) had been displaced. In West Darfur, hundreds have been killed and many more injured in reported clashes between members of different communities, including looting and burning of houses as well as an attack on Ag Geneina’s hospital, according to the UN Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect. Partners’ reports indicate a hugely deteriorated humanitarian situation with major insecurity due to attacks by armed groups and criminals and very limited humanitarian response activities.¹⁹

In various parts of Darfur, health facilities as well as humanitarian partners’ premises have been looted. In addition, most services have been interrupted including water, power and telecommunications. Prices for basic goods including food have escalated. On the extreme end, whole villages have fled to Chad to escape the racially motivated attacks by militias.²⁰

Over 2.5 million people have been displaced within and outside Sudan since the onset of the conflict on 15 April 2023. Nearly 2 million of those are internally displaced, the majority of internally displaced people fled their homes in Khartoum (1.3 million people), followed by West Darfur (303,000), South Darfur (143,000), Central Darfur (97,000) and North Darfur (70,000). At least 115,980 Darfuris have been displaced to Chad, 10,393 to Central

¹⁵ <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/sudan-humanitarian-snapshot-june-2022-enar>

¹⁶ The United Nations African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) completed its mandate on 31 December 2020.

¹⁷ See for example: <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/sudan-humanitarian-snapshot-june-2022-enar>.

¹⁸ https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/04/1136187?gclid=EAlaIqobChMIISClqr3_wIVB83VCh3vHg3tEAMYASAAEgIbZPD_BwE

¹⁹ <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/sudan-humanitarian-access-situation-report-april-may-2023>

²⁰ <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/sudan-humanitarian-access-situation-report-april-may-2023>

African Republic and 5,902 to South Sudan.²¹

The conflict has therefore made the entire Darfur region inaccessible and not currently habitable for both natives and aid workers trying to access it. With this in mind, the DCPSF TS has decided to opt for a remote evaluation of the work it has done in the past three years.

b. Programme background

The Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund (DCPSF) was established in late 2007 as a UN Multi-Partnership Trust Fund (MPTF) mechanism that supports community-level peacebuilding activities and fosters social cohesion by drawing diverse communities together through processes of dialogue, mediation, and reconciliation. The rationale of DCPSF is that alongside any progress in the local peace process, there needs to be a community-based, bottom-up approach to the stabilization of Darfur and the creation of conditions for local peace, and equitable and sustainable growth. DCPSF supports initiatives which aim to restore trust and confidence between diverse communities in Darfur and respond to root causes and triggers of conflict.

DCPSF has made significant progress in promoting conflict-sensitive approaches that seek to engage diverse communities in processes of trust and confidence building. Two central elements of this approach have been through supporting the establishment or revitalization of local mechanisms for resolving and through preventing conflicts and providing tangible inputs which respond to and address root causes and triggers of conflict.

Through this approach, DCPSF-funded activities and processes have enabled diverse communities to coalesce around a common agenda towards reconciliation and peaceful coexistence at a local level. In its current phase, DCPSF ensured to put more emphasis on gender mainstreaming and equality in all its activities to ensure that all vulnerable members of the communities including women, men, youth and nomads were actively involved in peacebuilding for more a wholesome peacebuilding process.

c. Programme Scope

In December 2020, the DCPSF Steering committee approved 17 new projects which are implemented by 17 Partners across the five states of Darfur. The current phase, an extension of DCPSF Phase II was built on previous DCPSF efforts to support community peacebuilding in Darfur as well as the 2019/2020 DCPSF Conflict Analysis of the region. The projects and their implementing organisations were selected through a rigorous process that started with a call for proposal process. This was to ensure that all the implementing partners were able to understand and respond to the peacebuilding needs in the region. The projects are structured around a theory of change which forecasts that;

“If Darfuri men, women and youth have access to as access to conflict resolution and reconciliation mechanisms they trust at a community level as well as skills development, learning and training as well as livelihood opportunities; then they will be able to maintain community cohesion leading to sustainable peace in the region.”

²¹ <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/sudan-emergency-population-movement-sudan-15-june-2023>

This is grounded in the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) Outcome 5 which states that:

“By 2021, security and stabilization of communities affected by conflict are improved through utilization of effective conflict management mechanisms, peace dividends and support to peace infrastructures and durable solutions that augment peaceful coexistence and social cohesion.”

DCPSF’s work is also aligned to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) particularly goal 16 on peace, justice, and strong institutions as well as goal 5 on gender equality.

The Fund’s work is implemented through four key outputs, these are;

Output 1: Community-based conflict resolution and reconciliation mechanisms are in use and working effectively to resolve conflict.

Output 2: Peace dividends for community interdependence and coexistence are delivered.

Output 3: Women’s organizations, including those representing pastoralist women, empowered to meaningfully participate in local and state-level peacebuilding platforms.

Output 4: Improved networking, coordination and learning between local and state-level peacebuilding institutions.

DCPSF has two traditional funding windows and one small grants facility which was created as a response to previous recommendations from implementing partners to create an agile facility to respond to emerging conflicts in the Darfur region. A breakdown of each window, eligible organisations, project time frame and funding ceiling is highlighted in the table below;

	Window 1	Window 2	Small Grant Facility
Eligible Organisation	International NGOs; UN organizations	National NGOs	All IPs
Project Timeframe	24 months	24 months	3 months
Funding Ceiling	\$800,000 USD	\$350,000 USD	\$50,000

In the current Phase extension, Window 1 has of seven (7) international Non-Government Organisations (NGOs). As per the CfP requirement, each Window 1 implementing partner works with a sub-grantee (national organisation) to carry out selected activities as well as build their capacity to support their communities in peacebuilding. Window 2 is comprised of ten (10) national Non-Government Organisations (NGOs).

In early 2020, as the COVID19 (Corona Virus Disease 2019) pandemic crossed through every corner of the world. The DCPSF small grants facility was operationalised. It was utilised to support the COVID-19 preparedness response and recovery efforts in the Darfur regions through five (5) implementing organisations who had submitted proposals for COVID19 related quick impact projects. The organisations were required to have been a part of DCPSF’s previous cycles.

→ A list of the all the DCPSF implementing partners including the five which implemented COVID19 small grants projects is included in the annex (annex C).

In addition, a gender specific project was implemented by DCPSF during this Phase. The Gender and Peacebuilding Initiative (GaPI), also known as Sawtahaa (Her Voice) was intended to promote inclusive peacebuilding – ensuring that women can take part in peacebuilding activities in their communities. This was after frequent project evaluations indicated that while most of the CBRMs (Community Based Reconciliation Mechanisms) include women members on their lists, women were still often excluded from the core work of conflict resolution and mediation and their contribution to broader peacebuilding often goes unrecognized. To address this issue a two-step process was used to launch the initiative – the first phase focused on information gathering and analysis, consultations, and project design while the second phase of the process focused on implementation of the phase I recommendations. The 18-month GaPI Phase II project was implemented by CARE International (July 2020 – December 2021). There was a delay in its start due to the COVID19 lock downs.

C. EVALUATION PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the achievements of the DCPSF Phase II extension projects in Darfur. Specifically, it will assess the process of DCPSF projects implementation with the aim of checking the value added to the peacebuilding efforts in the region particularly through its community-based approach.

The evaluation will also identify challenges and constraints that may have been encountered during implementation leading to less effectiveness than planned. It should also highlight lessons learned, provide solutions and make recommendations for any future peacebuilding efforts in Darfur. In this regard, the evaluation will therefore be tool for learning and accountability for the DCPSF projects – making it relevant to the various UN agencies and implementing partners that have participated in the Fund's projects over its course of 15 years.

In summary, the main aim of this evaluation therefore is to determine the relevance and level of achievement of project objectives, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. In detail, the evaluation will;

- Assess the **relevance** and level of achievement of DCPSF's funded projects in terms of addressing peacebuilding issues, meeting the needs of the targeted communities in a relevant and timely manner, ensuring inclusion of women, young men and women and adapting to the changing context in Sudan among others.
- Assess the **effectiveness** of the programme and to what extent the programme has made a concrete contribution to improving peacebuilding efforts at the community level in Darfur.
- Evaluate the programme's **efficiency**, including its implementation strategy, institutional arrangements, management and operational systems, and value for money.

- Assess the programme's **sustainability**, including to what extent the programme considered longer-term solutions, and whether results achieved will continue after the conclusion of the programme.
- Assess the programme's **coherence and coordination**, including to what extent the programme complemented other peacebuilding interventions, and the effectiveness of the DCPSF Technical Secretariat coordination with implementing partners and other stakeholders.
- Assess whether the DCPSF projects promoted the **Women, Peace and Security (WPS)** as well as the **Youth, Peace and Security (YPS)** agendas, especially women and youth participation in peacebuilding processes, and whether it met the PBF's Gender Marker 2 criteria.²²
- Assess whether the Fund and its projects has been implemented in a **conflict-sensitive** manner.
- Document good practices, innovations and **lessons learned** from the programme.
- Provide actionable **recommendations** for future peacebuilding programming in Sudan.
- The completed evaluation will be of great use to different UN agencies as well as other Aid agencies including local and international NGOs as they prepare to return to work in Darfur. Donor governments and organisations will also benefit from this knowledge in their resource planning.

D. SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

This evaluation will cover the entire scope of DCPSF's portfolio, comprising all 17 projects, implemented in 26 localities across the five states of Darfur – as well as the COVID19 small grants projects and the Gender Initiative (GaPI). Ideally, the evaluation should look at peacebuilding results at the project output level (results framework included in the annex). This will cover all the Fund's projects, but findings should be presented as a whole and not for 17 different projects. The evaluation will cover the current DCPSF Phase II extension (February 2021 – June 2023) as well as the small grant projects and GaPI which started in 2019.

E. EVALUATION CRITERIA

This evaluation will examine the Fund's projects implementation and peacebuilding results, informed by the DCPSF results frameworks and monitoring data collected on outputs and related activities. Evaluation questions are based on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) evaluation criteria.

It is important to note that evaluation of *peacebuilding* results is the main line of inquiry. While peacebuilding programmes frequently employ approaches that work through thematic areas that overlap with development or humanitarian goals, an evaluation of peacebuilding programmes must include; reflection on progress within the thematic area but the degree to which such progress may or may not have contributed to *addressing a*

²² Find detailed guidance on PBF Gender Marker here: [pbf_guidance_note_on_gender_marker_scoring_2019.pdf \(un.org\)](https://www.un.org/pbf/guidance-note-on-gender-marker-scoring-2019.pdf)

relevant conflict factor.

RELEVANCE:

- To what extent did the Fund's projects address conflict drivers and factors for peace identified in a conflict analysis?
- Was this current phase (Phase II extension 2021-2023) timely, and did it capitalize on a specific window of opportunity?
- To what extent can the theory of change be considered valid? Did the theory of change clearly articulate assumptions about why the approach was expected to produce the desired change, and the causal linkages between interventions and desired outcomes? Was the theory of change grounded in evidence?
- To what extent did DCPSF respond (or not) to contextual shifts, including COVID-19 (DCPSF supported 5 COVID-19 related projects preceding this phase and they can be included in this evaluation), the changing architecture of the UN in Sudan (including the departure of UNAMID and establishment of UNITAMS), and the military coup of October 2021? In the face of contextual shifts, what were the most affected DCPSF project activities and locations, and how did the programme adjust its goals, approaches, strategies, and coverage?
- To what extent did DCPSF identify, build one and support the existing local peace initiatives and structures in target localities or states in Darfur?
- To what extent did DCPSF respond to the needs and priorities of the target groups/beneficiaries (including women and young people)? Were these groups consulted during development and implementation of the Phase II extension projects, and did their inputs get incorporated into programme design and adjustments?
- How appropriate and clear was the beneficiary targeting? Was targeting equal and/or equitable across tribes and/or was it perceived as such?
- How appropriate was the geographic targeting? To what extent were targeted groups involved in the prioritization of geographic areas?
- To what extent did the DCPSF projects contribute to gender equality, the empowerment of women and the human rights-based approach? Specifically, the evaluation will measure if the gender marker of the project was in line with the achieved results.

EFFICIENCY:

- To what extent was the use of DCPSF funds (including human and financial) planned and implemented appropriately?
- How timely was DCPSF's implementation (including disbursement of funds, procurement of materials, and conduct of programme activities)?
- Overall, did the DCPSF Implementing Partners through their projects provide value for money? Were the implementation modalities through various partnerships with implementing partners able to optimize the cost and value for money of the programme? Were there specific components that provided high value/results for input (or low value for input)? And how effectively was information and updated data used to manage the project?

EFFECTIVENESS:

- To what extent did DCPSF achieve its intended objectives? To what extent did it make progress on desired outcome-level peacebuilding results?
- How well did the Fund collect, manage and use data to monitor results (including sex- and age-disaggregated data)? Was the Fund monitoring system adequately capturing data on peacebuilding results at outcome and output level?
- To what extent was the programme successful in planning and implementing a community-based approach to peacebuilding?
- To what extent did the project's M&E mechanism contribute to meeting project results?
- To what extent did DCPSF substantively mainstream gender and support gender- and youth-responsive peacebuilding?

SUSTAINABILITY AND OWNERSHIP

- To what extent did DCPSF implement an appropriate sustainability and exit strategy (including promoting national/local ownership, use of national capacity etc.) to support positive changes in peacebuilding after the end of the programme?
- How strong is the commitment of the State administrations, communities and other stakeholders to sustain the results of the Fund's projects and continuing initiatives, including with regards to women and youth participation? How well did the programme work with government and community interlocutors to strengthen this commitment?
- Was the programme financially and/or programmatically catalytic? Has the programme helped to attract any additional peacebuilding funding, scale-up other peacebuilding programmes, and/or contributed to unlocking political or peacebuilding processes?
- What are the key lessons derived from the knowledge and experiences provided by the project and that can be used by the evaluation users (UNDP, donor and government) to enhance decision making and programming?

** The ongoing conflict in Sudan particularly in Khartoum and Darfur will make it difficult to carry out a sustainability assessment of both the soft and hard components supported by DCPSF since Darfur remains largely inaccessible to aid organisations. In other areas like West Darfur, large numbers of the population have migrated across the border into Chad, making it even more difficult to reach beneficiaries. This assessment will therefore rely on accounts provided by Implementing Partners (IPs) and selected/available beneficiaries during the remote interviewing process.*

COHERENCE AND COORDINATION:

- To what extent did implementing partners design and implement the programme in a well-coordinated and coherent way?
- What coordination mechanisms were set up to support implementation of the programme, both within and across the different states, and were they effective?
- To what extent did implementing partners complement each other's work and leverage their respective comparative advantages?
- How well did the DCPSF Technical Secretariat team communicate with implementing partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries?

- What other UN agencies and implementing organisations – including those funded by other donors – were active in targeted communities during the programme period?
- To what extent did the implementing partners ensure synergies among these different actors? Were the DCPSF led Peace Building Working Group (PBWG) meetings and gender forums beneficial for building coordination and synergies?
- To what extent did the DCPSF supported projects complement existing or previous peacebuilding interventions, including UNAMID State Liaison Functions and other UN or non-UN projects?

CONFLICT-SENSITIVITY:

- Did the DCPSF have an explicit approach to conflict-sensitivity? To what extent was it implemented?
- To what extent were the capacities of the implementing partners sufficient to ensure that the programme was implemented in a conflict-sensitive manner?
- In the high-risk and volatile context of the region, how well did DCPSF monitor and mitigate risks, especially those identified by the programme documents and the rationale for programme selection? Were there any contingency plans in place?
- Were the Fund's projects responsible for any unintended negative impacts? How were these impacts addressed?
- Was there an ongoing process of context monitoring and a monitoring system that allows for monitoring of unintended impacts established?

GENDER- AND YOUTH-RESPONSIVENESS

- To what extent did the DCPSF programming ensure inclusion of women and young people in its projects and outputs? How did this result in the empowerment of women and young people to meaningfully participate in peacebuilding initiatives and structures in the communities/localities?
- Did the programme consider the different challenges, opportunities, barriers, and capacities of women, men, young women, young men, girls, and boys (including persons with disabilities) in the design, implementation and monitoring of the projects? Did it respond to new obstacles to promoting gender equality as they arose during implementation?

Guiding evaluation questions can be further refined by the evaluator and agreed upon with UNDP and the evaluation stakeholders during the inception phase.

F. METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH

The evaluation will be remote, summative and will employ a participatory approach where key stakeholders will take part in providing information and verification of findings. Proposals submitted by prospective firms should outline a strong mixed method approach to data collection and analysis, incorporating innovative²³ approaches as applicable, and

²³ UNDP encourages evaluators to follow innovative evaluation approaches. Examples on Innovation In Evaluation Approaches can be found in the following links: (“ [Case Studies of Best Practice Evaluations by UN Agencies in Asia and the Pacific](#)”) and ([2022 Evaluation Excellence Award](#))

clearly noting how various forms of evidence will be employed vis-à-vis each other to triangulate gathered information to enhance the validity and utility of the findings. Proposals should also be clear on the specific role each of the various methodological approaches plays in helping to address each of the evaluation questions.

The methodologies for data collection may include but are not necessarily limited to:

- Desk review of key documents, including the DCPSF Call Proposals, project documents, budgets, bi-annual progress reports, the DCPSF conflict analysis report and the Conflict Analysis Update, baseline analysis reports, field mission reports, end of project narrative and evaluation reports etc.
- Key informant interviews and focus group discussions (men, women and young people), as appropriate: While it is important to get as many key informant interviews as possible, the current situation in Darfur may not allow to meet with beneficiaries and various other officials who participated in the DCPSF funded projects. KIIs can however be carried out with available members of the DCPSF Technical Secretariat, the Implementing Partners project managers and staff and available community leaders where possible. The evaluation, where possible should ensure participation of both men and women.
- Data review and analysis: Systematic review of programme monitoring data and internal assessments, including financial data as required for evaluation questions on efficiency, and a review of existing, relevant data at the outcome or country context level. Data review and analysis of monitoring and other data sources and methods. To ensure maximum validity, reliability of data (quality) and promote use, the evaluation team will ensure triangulation of the various data sources, to enhance the validity and utility of the findings

In devising an appropriate evaluation methodology, the evaluators should consider how best to assess both the Fund *as a whole* as well as *project-specific* findings, as relevant.

- It is also important to underline that this evaluation is expected to use a mix of both qualitative and quantitative methods to inform the assessment of the output indicators. This ensure that some of the impact level results are captured. The evaluation methodology needs to employ a gender-sensitive approach and inclusion principle, which needs to be elaborated in the inception report including how data-collection and analysis methods integrate gender considerations, use of sex- and age- disaggregated data and outreach to diverse stakeholders. Innovation in data collection needs to be employed: Remote data collection tool such as kobo toolbox or at google form online for data collection from the projects' beneficiaries, key informants, or project manager, with different questions as required, Data disaggregated (by gender/vulnerable group) to support outreach of diverse stakeholders' groups. **Gender and human rights lens.** All evaluation products need to address gender, disability, and human right issues.

The final methodological approach including interview schedule, and data to be used in the evaluation should be clearly outlined in the inception report and fully discussed and agreed with the DCPSF Technical Secretariat. The findings of the evaluation should lead

to the elaboration of specific, practical, achievable recommendations that should be directed to the intended users and benefit the DCPSF future design.

What is a remote evaluation?

Remote evaluation employs remote data collection methods to achieve its goals. This method of evaluation was adapted during the COVID-19 pandemic as part of measures to meet the UN's do no harm principles.²⁴ This virtual data collection methodology comes with a few downsides especially in the case of Darfur where access to communication technology is currently limited. It's important therefore for evaluators to try and ensure that no one is left behind to avoid biases in data.

G. DELIVERABLES

1. **Inception Report:** The evaluation team will prepare an Inception Report to further refine the evaluation questions and detail the methodological approach, including data collection instruments, in consultation with the DCPSF Technical Secretariat. The inception Report should include an assessment of the programme's evaluability, the results of which should inform any suggested changes to the evaluation questions or evaluation approach. The Inception Report must be approved by the evaluation managers and the DCPSF Technical Secretariat prior to commencement of data collection in the field. The inception report should include the following key elements:
 - Initial findings and identified issues (based on desk review and interviews conducted during inception phase), and any proposed changes to TORs
 - Overall approach and methodology, including how the evaluation will employ a gender-sensitive approach
 - Evaluation framework including key lines of inquiry, linking refined evaluation questions to data collection instruments
 - Data collection instruments and mechanisms, including any plans to pre-test
 - Data analysis approach
 - Proposed list of stakeholders for remote or virtual key informant interviews
Work plan and timelines
 - Internal quality assurance mechanisms and ethical considerations

The evaluators will also be expected to conduct a presentation on the inception report, circulate the report to the Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) and DCPSF for their comments, and incorporate feedback into the final version. As part of the evaluation inception phase, the firm should also support the ethics clearance process (See Evaluation Ethics below).

2. **Validation presentation of preliminary findings** to relevant stakeholders and the DCPSF Technical Secretariat, following the remote data collection. The presentation will be made virtually, led by the evaluation team leader and will cover the main findings of the evaluation to all DCPSF stakeholders.

²⁴ https://erc.undp.org/pdf/evaluation_during_covid/covid_download.pdf

3. **Draft evaluation report:** The evaluators will prepare a draft evaluation report, in English, to be shared with the Evaluation Reference Group, the DCPSF Technical Secretariat team, implementing partners and other stakeholders.
4. **Final evaluation report:** The evaluators will prepare the final evaluation report in English, clearly responding to feedback provided on the draft report. Comments and changes provided in response to the draft evaluation report should be retained by the evaluator to show how these have been addressed (audit trail).

The final accepted version of the report will reflect the ERG's and DCPSF's comments and must be approved by both the evaluation managers and the DCPSF TS. The Final Report must adhere to OECD DAC and UN Evaluation Group standards and address the quality requirements in the [UNDP Evaluation Guidelines](#).

The proposed structure of the final evaluation report should follow UNDP Evaluation Guidelines and include minimum as the following:

- a. Executive Summary (in English, but to be translated into Arabic following finalization of report)
- b. Introduction
- c. Background (country context and programme background)
- d. Evaluation purpose, objectives and scope
- e. Evaluation methodology, including limitations.
- f. Key findings
- g. Conclusions
- h. Lessons learned.
- i. Recommendations
- j. Annexes

The standard templates that need to be followed are provided in the Annexes section.

H. Timeline and Payment Schedule

The assignment period is expected to be approximately 3 months (60 days), which will commence immediately upon the signature of the contract.

Deliverable	Anticipated Timeframe (60 days)	% of Payment	Comments
Inception Report	September 2023	10%	Timeframe is inclusive of desk review of key documents and preliminary interviews with key stakeholders.
Data collection, and presentation of key findings	September - October 2023	20%	Data collection will mostly be through desk reviews and virtual key informant interviews.
Draft evaluation report	October 2023	20%	Draft evaluation report will be reviewed by the ERG and PBF, and detailed comments will be provided which should be integrated into the final report.

Final evaluation report	Oct- Nov 2023	50%	Final report must meet OECD-DAC and UN Evaluation Group standards and UNDP Evaluation Guidelines of a high-quality evaluation report.
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In line with UNDP’s financial regulations, when determined by the Country Office and/or the consultant that a deliverable or service cannot be satisfactorily completed, that deliverable or service will not be paid.

I. Evaluation Experts Profiles and Competencies

UNDP is looking for an international evaluation expert to carry out the DCPSF final/end of project evaluation. Since the evaluation will be remote/virtual, the international evaluation expert will be supported by a national evaluation expert. The experts should have as a minimum the following qualifications:

- At least 5 years of demonstrated experience conducting evaluations in complex and/or conflict-affected situations.
- Demonstrated experience with conducting evaluations on peacebuilding, conflict prevention, or post-conflict interventions as well as gender mainstreaming considerations.
- Familiarity and/or previous work experience in Sudan or similar settings will be a strong asset.

The international team leader must have the following qualifications and expertise:

- Advanced university degree (Master’s degree or higher) in peace and conflict studies, development studies, social sciences, international relations, statistics or a related field.
- At least 10 years of demonstrated relevant work experience with leading, designing and conducting evaluations of peacebuilding and/or development interventions is required.
- Extensive experience in mixed methods research and analysis and participatory gender-sensitive approaches is required.
- Knowledge of and experience with peacebuilding is required. Knowledge of and experience with at least one of the following thematic areas is required: 1) local conflict resolution, 2) gender equality and women inclusion, 3) youth empowerment and inclusion.
- Demonstrated experience with high quality report writing is required.
- Familiarity and/or previous work experience in Sudan or other similar settings is an asset.
- Familiarity with remote evaluation
- Fluency in oral and written English is required. Knowledge of Arabic is an asset.
- Familiarity with the UN system is a strong asset.

The responsibilities of the evaluation team members are generally expected to be as follows.

Evaluation expert & Team Leader (International)	Evaluation expert (National)
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Lead the entire evaluation process, including communicating all required information with the Evaluation Managers, and managing evaluation team members	Support evaluation process, under direction of Evaluation Team Leader, including through contribution of technical, contextual and thematic expertise, as relevant.
Lead the development and finalization of evaluation methodology and research instruments, and act as primary penholder on final inception report, ensuring to incorporate feedback received.	Assist the Evaluation Team Leader in the review, analysis and collation of key programme documents and conduct of inception interviews, and support the development of evaluation methodology and research instruments, in contribution to the inception report
Lead and manage the conduct of data collection and analysis, including desk reviews and key informant interviews, , etc.	Undertake and/or support the conduct of data collection and data analysis, including key informant interviews.
Act as primary penholder on draft and final evaluation reports, overseeing data analysis, draft and final report preparation, consolidation and submission, and presentation of key findings	Support data analysis and drafting of draft and final reports, including collating and integrating feedback received from evaluation stakeholders (ex. ERG, PBF).

The international expert must have the following corporate and functional competencies:

Corporate competencies

- Demonstrates integrity by modelling the UN's values and ethical standards.
- Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability.
- Treats all people fairly without favouritism.
- Ability to work with a multicultural and diverse team.

Functional competencies

- Demonstrated experience in technical issues related to peacebuilding and evaluation.
- Demonstrated ability to analyse large amounts of complex and diversified data related to peacebuilding in post conflict environments.
- Demonstrated strong coordination and facilitation skills.
- Proved strong interpersonal skills and the ability to conduct the trainings.

J. EVALUATION ETHICS

Evaluations in the UN are conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UN Evaluation Group (UNEG) 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation'. The service provider must safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers, interviewees, and stakeholders through measures to ensure compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing collection of data and reporting on data. The service provider must also ensure security of collected information before and after the evaluation and protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of sources of information where that is expected. The information, knowledge, and data gathered in the evaluation process must also be solely used for the evaluation and not for other uses without the express authorization of UNDP and partners. All evaluators will need to sign the pledge of ethical conduct before starting the consultancy.

Consultants may not have been involved in the preparation, formulation, and/or implementation of the project (including the drafting of the Project Document) and must not have a conflict of interest in relation to project activities.

K. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

This Evaluation is commissioned by UNDP Sudan on behalf of the DCPSF Steering Committee. The UNDP Procurement Unit will manage and oversee the recruitment process of the evaluation firm, ensuring adherence to UNDP evaluation policy, and oversee all associated administrative and financial processes.

The evaluation process will be overseen by the Head of the DCPSF Technical Secretariat (TS) with support of the Secretariat team in Khartoum and in the field. They will ensure quality control as well as independence of the entire exercise.

The Implementing Partners heads of Organisations and the project managers both in Khartoum and the field will support the evaluation process by providing to the evaluation team; the needed information, documents, interview participants and other items as required during the process.

Evaluation implementation and management arrangements:

The DCPSF will convene an evaluation reference group, which will review and provide detailed feedback on all evaluation deliverables, including the inception report and draft evaluation report. Comments shall be related to the quality of the proposed evaluation methodology, evidence collected, analysis of available data, and conclusions. The reference group will also advise on the conformity of processes to UNDP, UNEG, and OECD-DAC standards. Detailed comments will be provided to the evaluation team leader in an audit trail within the agreed timeframe. Comments and changes by the evaluation team in response to the draft evaluation report should be retained by the evaluation team leader to show how they have addressed comments.

The evaluators will take responsibility, with assistance from DCPSF TS/UNDP, for conducting all meetings associated with the evaluation, subject to advanced approval of the methodology submitted in the inception report.

The final report will be approved by the DCPSF Steering Committee, the final decision-making organ for the Fund. DCPSF/UNDP, with support of relevant stakeholders, will develop the management response to the evaluation within 2 weeks of report finalization.

L. SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

The evaluation applicants are kindly requested to submit their closed technical and financial applications using the provided templates. The application must consist of the following:

- The evaluators will provide their profiles and previous experience in evaluating similar Peacebuilding programmes, including multi-agency joint programmes, and preferably including experience in Sudan
- Brief description of why they consider themselves as the most suitable for the assignment.
- Technical offer consisting of the following:
 - Proposed methodology in response to this ToR on how to complete the assignment (workplan).
 - Comments or reflections on the ToR.
 - Evaluators CVs (UN P11) indicating their past experience, contact details and at least three (3) professional references.
 - Duly completed Letter of Confirmation of Interest and Availability signed by each member of the evaluation team.

- Example of evaluation reports on at least two similar assignments carried out within the past two years, with the team lead as primary or sole author.
- Financial Proposal using the provided template that indicates the all-inclusive fixed total contract price, supported by a breakdown of costs, as per template provided.

M. EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR EVALUATORS

Criteria	Total points
a. Technical	70
Master's degree in Peacebuilding, Conflict Resolution, or similar qualification.	20
At least 10 years of experience in the area of project evaluations and reviews particularly for UN and/or International NGOs peacebuilding projects in fragile contexts.	30
Extensive experience in action-oriented research/reviews including rapid assessments to distill pertinent issues for intervention to improve project implementation.	20
b. Financial	30

O. DUTY STATION

Home based (remote) evaluation.

P. APPROVAL

This TOR is approved by: (Name and Designation, Signature and Date)

Sammy Odolot, Head of DCPSF Technical Secretariat

Date: _____

2) Evaluation Design Matrix

Data Sources	Evaluation Criteria Versus Data Sources								
	Relevance	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Sustainability	Coherence & Coordination	Inclusion of Women and Youth	Conflict Sensitive Execution	Good Practices, Innovations, Learnings	Challenges
Key Informants									
Peace building platform representatives	√	√		√	√	√	√	√	√
DCPSF technical secretariate lead	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
DCPSF partners representative	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Secondary Sources									
DCPSF GaPI Project Final Report 2020	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
DCPSF COVID19 Emergency Project Final Report 2020	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
DCPSF Annual Reports 2020, 2021 and 2022	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Partner Success Stories	√	√							
DCPSF Best Practices and Lessons Learnt Workshop Report			√		√			√	√
DCPSF Phase II Evaluation Report 2018	√	√							
UN PBF Fund Darfur Programme Evaluation Report 2024	√	√		√	√	√			√
Perception Survey Report 2022 by DDRA	√	√				√			
Conflict Prevention and infrastructure for Peace project Survey 2021	√	√				√			
Peace building Working Group Meeting minutes.		√		√	√	√		√	√

3) Key Informant Interview Guide

Relevance

1. How did the project align with the needs of Darfur people; local context and challenges?
2. How the project adapted its strategies to address the evolving realities in Darfur?
3. How did you target the project beneficiaries?

Effectiveness

4. What tangible outcomes were achieved in terms of; Community-based conflict resolution____ fostering economic interdependencies____; peace dividends____; empowerment of women and youth within the peace building processes____
5. How impactful was the networking and coordination between local and state level peace building institutions.

Efficiency

6. Were the project resources; HR, funds and time adequate to achieve intended its goals.
7. Discuss any innovative approaches or technologies adopted to enhance project delivery?
8. How did the project respond to unforeseen challenges in the operational environment?

Sustainability

9. What mechanisms have been put in place to ensure sustainability of activities and results?
10. What risks or challenges could potentially undermine the sustainability of the project? and how were they addressed?

Coherence and Coordination

11. How did the project align with other peace building frameworks; government, humanitarian response framework, SDG, other UN strategic frameworks?
12. What coordination mechanism existed among stakeholders? And how was the coordination beneficial in achieving project results?

Gender and Youth Responsiveness

13. What strategies did the project employ to ensure active participation of men, women, female and male youth in the peace building processes?
14. How was the inclusivity of men, women, female and male youth beneficial in achieving results?

Conflict-sensitive

15. How did the project maintain conflict sensitivity in its planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation? Did you have mechanisms for risk monitoring? Describe a little more!
16. How were unintended negative impacts on the conflict dynamics identified and mitigated?

Good Practices, Innovations, and Lessons Learned

17. Share key best practices registered during the project execution? How about key innovations?
18. What lessons have you learnt during the project delivery?
19. What recommendations would you give to inform future projects of a similar nature?

Challenges

20. What challenges did you face during the project design, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation phase?
21. Did COVID-19 pandemic impact project delivery? How? And How did to remedy the challenge?
22. What could have been improved about this project; Design, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation?

4) Evaluation Work Plan

		Jan 2024				Feb 2024			
	Activity	Wk1	Wk2	Wk3	Wk4	W1	W2	W3	W4
1).	Draft inception report								
2).	Final inception report								
3).	profiling of interview respondents								
4).	Mobilisation of interview respondents								
5).	Data collection from key informants								
a)	DCPSF technical secretariate lead interview								
b)	DCPSF partners interviews								
c)	Women and youth organisation representative interviews								
d)	Peace building platform representative interviews								
e)	Desk reviews of secondary data								
6).	Cleaning and coding of qualitative data								
7).	Analysis of primary data								
8).	Analysis of secondary data								
9).	Reporting writing								
10).	Draft 0 submission								
11).	Final submission – still pending								

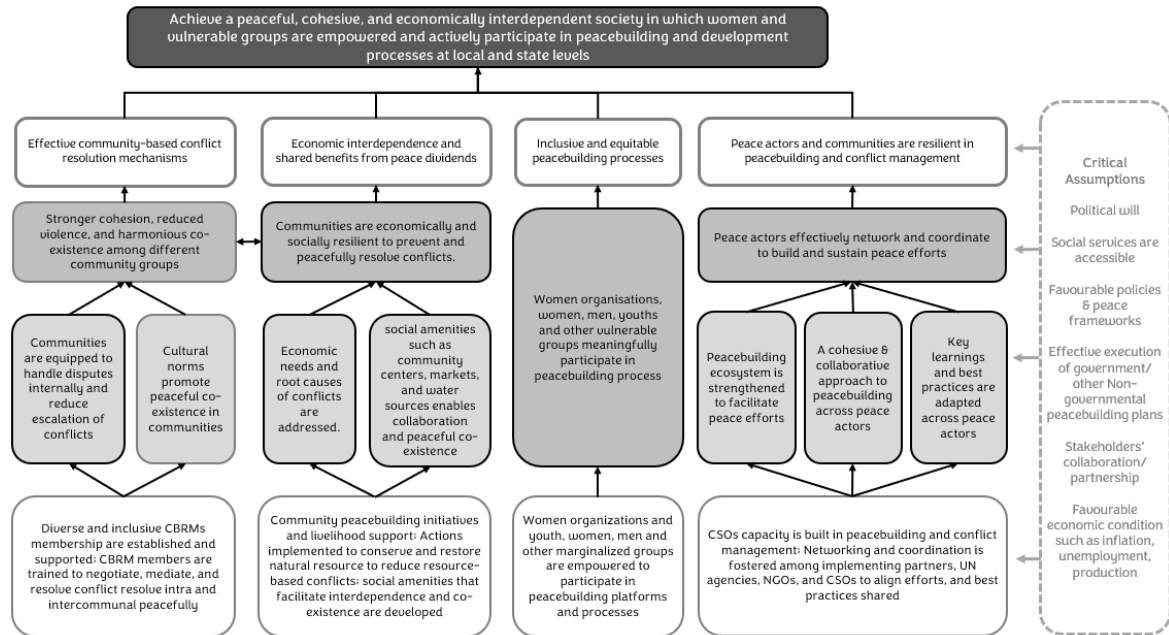
5) Participants Interviewed

Respondents Category	Name	Mobile Contact	Email	Interview language	Mode of interview
DCPSF technical secretariate					
DCPSF team leader	Sammy Odolot	256772672337	sammy.odolot@undp.org	English	Google meet
IPs representative					
1). WR-FP	Stephen Gatimu	(0024)9900998392	Sgatimu@wr.org	English	Google meet
2). WHH	Kenneth Bowen		Kenneth.Bowen@welthungerhilfe.de	English	Google meet
3). WHH	Bahaaeldeen Ahmed	0916359679	bahaaeldeen.ahmed@welthungerhilfe.de	English	Google meet
4). RCDO	Khalid Hassan	(0024)9911122246	alhelokhalid@gmail.com	English	Google meet
5). SOS Sahel	Kamel Moh. Kamel	0919623826	kamel@sahelsudan.org	English	Google meet
6). SAHARI	Mohamed Elmisbah	(0024)9912311785	saharidorg <saharidorg@gmail.com	English	Google meet
7). DDRA	Yousif Altayeb	912734299	yousifeltayeb.hamid58@gmail.com	English	Google meet
Peace building platform representatives.					
1). Zulfa Organization	Ismail El Rasheed	0911135044	ismail.ahmed@undp.org	English	Google meet

6) List Of Documents Reviewed

- 1) DCPSF Darfur Conflict Analysis Report of 2019
- 2) DCPSF Darfur Conflict Analysis Report 2020 and updated version of 2021
- 3) DCPSF 2020 Call for Proposals for Phase II extension (2021-2023)
- 4) Approved project documents for the 17 DCPSF partners funded.
- 5) DCPSF Gender and Peace building Initiative Final Report 2020
- 6) DCPSF COVID19 Emergency Projects Results Final Report 2020
- 7) DCPSF Annual Reports 2020, 2021 and 2022,
- 8) DCPSF Bi-annual Reports and partner Quarterly Progress Reports
- 9) Partner Success Stories
- 10) DCPSF Best Practices and Lessons Learnt Workshop Report
- 11) DCPSF Phase II Evaluation Report 2018,
- 12) UN Peace building Fund Darfur Programme Evaluation Report 2024
- 13) Perception Survey Report 2022 by DDRA
- 14) Local Capacities for Peace Assessment Report 2020 by World Vision
- 15) Conflict Prevention and infrastructure for Peace project Survey 2021
- 16) Peace building Working Group Meeting minutes.
- 17) Women/ Youth Participation Study (Sawtaha HerVoice GAPI) 2019
- 18) UNDP Evaluation Guidelines
- 19) OECD-DAC evaluation criteria
- 20) UNEG norms and standards
- 21) Partner audit reports
- 22) Partner Covid-19 project proposals
- 23) Partner COVID-19 emergency response reports

7) DCPSF Phase II Programme Theory of Change




8) Indicator Matrix

DCPSF Project Results Framework		Baseline	Endline
Output 1: Community-based conflict resolution and reconciliation mechanisms are in use and working effectively to resolve conflict			
Output Indicator			
1.1	% of community members stating they trust CBRM to solve a problem between groups	56%	84%
1.2	% of community members stating satisfaction with CBRM	71%	88%
1.3	% of women who brought a problem to a CBRM who were satisfied with the resolution.	55%	62%
1.4	% of community members with access to CBRM	67%	82%
1.5	% of the most frequent cases that occur within the targeted community	ND	ND
1.6	% of CBRMs with active participation of vulnerable groups in the decision-making process of the CBRM	81%	77%
1.7	% of community members stating a decrease in communal conflicts because of the presence of CBRM	64%	81%
1.8	Number of CBRMs functioning	20	185
1.9.1	Number of cases submitted by women that are successfully addressed	0	5,946
1.9.2	Number of cases submitted by men that are successfully addressed		
1.9.3	Number of CBRMs newly created	0	165
Output 2: Peace dividends for community interdependence and co-existence delivered			
Output Indicator			
2.1	% of community economic interdependency initiatives that benefit sectors where women dominate (women-specific activities, e.g., cheese-making, handcrafts, VSLAs)	66%	ND
2.2	% of community members stating an increase in the number of interactions between diverse communities through basic services (health initiatives, schools, vocational education, water)	78%	80%
2.3	% of community members perceiving benefit from the peace dividends	84%	60%
2.4	% of women group participants who report an increase of income by 25% thanks to the community initiatives delivered	59%	ND
2.5	Total number of initiatives that deliver collaborative livelihoods & income generating opportunities community's	0	8
2.5.1	Number of livelihood opportunities created – including IGA and VSLA groups formed, trained and equipped	0	270
2.5.2	Number of IGA activities created	0	153
2.6.4a	Number of classrooms and/or school offices constructed for Co-education	0	34
2.6.4b	Number of classrooms and/or school offices constructed for Girls	ND	ND
2.6.5	Number of classrooms and/or school offices constructed for Boys	ND	ND
2.6.5a	Number of migratory routes demarcated through communal consensus	0	373
2.6.6	Number of kilometres of migratory routes demarcated		
2.6.4a	Number of areas of restoration of communal pasture/fodder/forests - acres	0	348
2.6.4c	Number of acres of restored communal pasture/fodder/forests -acres		
2.7	Number of Animals vaccinated	0	43500
2.8a	Number of markets constructed	0	5
2.8	Number of market shades/stalls constructed	0	70


2.9	Number of community nurseries constructed	0	12
2.1	Number of water resources (specify which kind) created	0	120
2.11	Number of pit latrines constructed	0	2
Output 3: Women's organisations, including those representing pastoralist women, empowered to meaningfully participate in local and State-level peace building platforms			
Output Indicator			
3.1	Percentage of women's organisations strengthened - received trainings (by training type e.g., financial training, other institutional training).	25%	100%
3.2	Percentage of women leaders supported to strengthen their skills in leadership and representation	0	1251
3.3	Percentage increase of women's networks formed	0	ND
3.4	No of strengthened inclusive women's organisations	ND	ND
3.5	Number of women supported to strengthen their leadership and representation skills	ND	ND
3.6	Number of women's networks formed	ND	ND
3.7	Number of activities that gendered security risk	ND	ND
Output 4: Improved networking, coordination, and learning between local and state level peace building institutions			
Output Indicator			
4.1	% of peacebuilding forum members who used the context and conflict analysis to inform their programming decisions.	ND	70%
4.2	Peace building quality of DCPSF proposals received in Call for Proposals rounds.	ND	ND
4.3	Number of civil society organizations develop capacity to prioritize, plan, design and implement projects leading to equitable and sustainable growth (including peace building skills, livelihoods skills, vocational training, etc.).	ND	ND
4.4	Number of Civil Society organizations implementing and practicing peace building activities.	ND	ND
4.5	Number of collective interactions of conflict resolution mechanisms, peace conferences, exchange visits, or other events linking CBRMs to local or state authorities.	0	21

Source: DCPSF Annual Reports 2020, 2021 and 2022, Perception Survey Report 2022 by DDRA, Women/ Youth Participation Study (Sawtaha HerVoice GAPI) 2019.
ND – No data

9) Pledge of Ethical Conduct



ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR EVALUATION
PLEDGE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT IN EVALUATION



By signing this pledge, I hereby commit to discussing and applying the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation and to adopting the associated ethical behaviours.

<p>INTEGRITY</p> <p>I will actively adhere to the moral values and professional standards of evaluation practice as outlined in the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation and following the values of the United Nations. Specifically, I will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Honest and truthful in my communication and actions. Professional, engaging in credible and trustworthy behaviour, alongside competence, commitment and ongoing reflective practice. Independent, impartial and incorruptible. 	<p>ACCOUNTABILITY</p> <p>I will be answerable for all decisions made and actions taken and responsible for honouring commitments, without qualification or exception; I will report potential or actual harms observed. Specifically, I will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transparent regarding evaluation purpose and actions taken, establishing trust and increasing accountability for performance to the public, particularly those populations affected by the evaluation. Responsive as questions or events arise, adapting plans as required and referring to appropriate channels where corruption, fraud, sexual exploitation or abuse or other misconduct or waste of resources is identified. Responsible for meeting the evaluation purpose and for actions taken and for ensuring redress and recognition as needed. 	<p>RESPECT</p> <p>I will engage with all stakeholders of an evaluation in a way that honours their dignity, well-being, personal agency and characteristics. Specifically, I will ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to the evaluation process and products by all relevant stakeholders – whether powerful or powerful – with due attention to factors that could impede access such as sex, gender, race, language, country of origin, LGBTQ status, age, background, religion, ethnicity and ability. Meaningful participation and equitable treatment of all relevant stakeholders in the evaluation processes, from design to dissemination. This includes engaging various stakeholders, particularly affected people, so they can actively inform the evaluation approach and products rather than being solely a subject of data collection. Fair representation of different voices and perspectives in evaluation products (reports, webinars, etc.). 	<p>BENEFICENCE</p> <p>I will strive to do good for people and planet while minimizing harm arising from evaluation as an intervention. Specifically, I will ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explicit and ongoing consideration of risks and benefits from evaluation processes. Maximum benefits at systemic (including environmental), organizational and programmatic levels. No harm. I will not proceed where harm cannot be mitigated. Evaluation makes an overall positive contribution to human and natural systems and the mission of the United Nations.
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I commit to playing my part in ensuring that evaluations are conducted according to the Charter of the United Nations and the ethical requirements laid down above and contained within the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation. When this is not possible, I will report the situation to my supervisor, designated focal points or channels and will actively seek an appropriate response.

JOSEPHINE LYNN BAZIRA MUHREZA *JL* 1/2/2024 (Signature and Date)