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Sudan: A Case for Structural  
Adjustment Policies

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This study has emerged from teaching materials for courses on 'Structural Adjustments In Non-Oil Developing Countries' in Bremen sponsored by UNDP and World Bank. It had been submitted to the Government of Sudan and to the organizers of the National Economic Conference in Khartoum, Sudan (7 - 17 March, 1986) at the event of the Conference; some minor updating took place after the Conference.

## 1. Introduction

The Sudan is faced with a persistent, unviable balance of payments deficit; for 1985 the trade deficit was expected to be \$ 945 mill. (UNIDO 1985, p. 1). This deficit is accompanied by large imbalances between investments and savings and between public revenues and expenditures. The net total domestic savings are currently estimated at zero, while the net private sector savings are negative. The government budget for 1984/85 envisaged a deficit of LS 1,023 mill.

All these imbalances are of a permanent nature and resulted in a high indebtedness. It is estimated to be \$ 9 bn. or more. According to World Bank projections the debt service would be \$ 736 mill. in 1985 in contrast to \$ 144.4 mill. in 1983 (UNIDO 1985, p. 2).

The imbalances reflect a deep development crisis of the country. The long term character of the balance of payments crisis makes economic adjustments inevitable, because financing the deficit is not a sustainable alternative.

Many causes - both internal and external - contributed to the emergence of this crisis (how these factors worked together will be analysed below). While payments deficits in the Sudan and other countries have necessarily counterpart surpluses elsewhere, unfortunately there is up to now no obligation on surplus countries to restore their payments to equilibrium. Thus the burden of adjustment is almost entirely thrown on those countries with deficits. At the same time it is impossible for them collectively to restore their payments to equilibrium so long as other countries remain in surplus. Bearing this serious restriction in mind, we concentrate on domestic adjustment policies supported by certain measures of external support. What is at issue is not the adjustment itself - every deficit country has to accommodate sooner or later, voluntarily or involuntarily. The task of economic policy in our view is to minimize the costs (economic, social, human costs) of adjustment associated with the required strengthening of

the balance of payments.

Up to now the costs of adjustment in Sudan have been rather high, in regard to economic growth, social and regional equity and the other development aims of the nation. In this paper we will try to identify components of a cost-minimizing strategy of structural adjustment which aims to overcome the contrast between stabilization policy and development policy. In this sense it oversteps the boundaries of the traditional concept of structural adjustment policy concentrating on the restoration of a viable balance of payments position. The attainment of this target tends to be purchased by a contraction of the economy. In contrast to that this approach tries to close the balance of payments gap by increasing the production of exports and tradables in general rather than by reduction of imports.

In order to explain the emergence of the crisis we will analyse the inherited structural problems of the economy as evident in the beginning of the 1970s (Part 2). This is the basis for an evaluation of the concept and results of the "Breadbasket Strategy", Sudan's development strategy pursued roughly from 1972-78 (Part 3). This was an offensive attempt of structural adjustment: it was planned to overcome the country's one-sided world market dependence by transforming it to the breadbasket of the Middle East with the help of Arab capital and Western technology. This attempt led to great economic imbalances which forced the government to change to a stabilization policy on the advice of the IMF and the World Bank. This concept is analysed in Part 4 and the outcomes of the government policies since 1978 which followed their prescriptions are examined in Part 5. The next part sketches more fundamental measures as an extension/alternative to the former programmes (Part 6). The final part outlines the key components of structural adjustment (in a table), referring to the main policy problems, the corresponding adjustment measures, the necessary time horizons and the progress achieved so far (Part 7).

## 2. Inherited Sources of the Structural Adjustment Problems

The basic characteristics of the structure of the Sudanese economy are a heritage of the colonial times. Great Britain, the colonial power, had superimposed a system of export production on the indigenous economy. The main economic linkages connected the modern sectors in the Sudan with the economy of Great Britain, via:

1. export of agricultural raw materials, mainly raw cotton,
2. import of consumer goods and capital goods.

This made the Sudanese economy highly dependent on external markets. Neither an internal sector of consumer goods production nor an adequate domestic capital goods sector were existing. The agricultural sector had to earn the foreign exchange necessary for the imports required. Furthermore, this sector was the basis for the generation of state revenues. Altogether, more than 60% of the revenues depend on foreign trade. The foreign trade taxes alone accounted for 38% of the total government revenues over the period 1964-72 (Ali Abdel Gadir Ali 1976, 150).

At the same time, the economic itself was disintegrated: The modern, export-oriented sectors (irrigated and mechanized agriculture, cattle ranches, industry, trade and transportation) were surrounded by the stagnating "traditional" sector of subsistence-oriented agriculture which gave the livelihood to the majority of the population (more than 80%).

The export revenues remained critically dependent on the competitiveness of export production and thus on a low remuneration of agricultural labour. Thus the wages were significant as a cost factor only, not as a source of demand. The development of a broad domestic market for mass consumption goods was prevented by such a wages policy.

This economic structure was not altered fundamentally after independence. The "traditional" sector continued to be neglected by development planning. However, its functions as a supplier of cheap labour and of cash crops were of central importance for Sudan. This fact has been described as a connection between two different modes of production which enables the

price of labour to be extremely low, because the greater part of labour's reproduction costs is borne by the "traditional" subsistence sector itself. This type of sectoral interaction put the last sector into a precarious state: Its labour resources are partially absorbed for the export production (via labour migration and cash crop production), which deprives this sector of its self-sufficiency. But, at the same time, a certain degree of reproduction capability is necessary to keep the whole system functioning. A precarious balance of preservation and destruction of the traditional sector had been maintained until the 1970s.

The organization of labour and the distribution of incomes in the Gezira can illustrate this relation. While the migrants are the main part of the labour force (58% in 1971/72; ILO 1972, Ann. A., 145), their low wages constitute only a small additional income to their main source of income: subsistence agriculture. On the other hand the Gezira tenants have incomes much higher than the national average. In general the incomes from working migration in Sudan do not constitute a substantial "trickle down" effect, transferring incomes to the "traditional" sectors.

The second possibility to take part in the market economy is the production of cash crops. This option offers better conditions for traditional farmers and nomads. However, the structure of marketing in the Sudan is a strong obstacle for a substantial generation of income, which allows adequate consumption and investment. In fact, agricultural producers in the "traditional" sector are not able to realize more than a small part of the consumer/export price for themselves. The most reasonable explanation for this fact points to the imperfection of markets characterized by unequal positions of sellers and buyers (oligopsony on the demand side and competitive conditions on the supply side; cf. Oesterdiekhoff 1983a). State interventions in the 1970s via joint private/public marketing companies have only aggravated this problem.

This structure limits all agricultural policies aiming at raising production and productivity through price incentives. In-

stitutional rigidities blocked the assumed elastic supply responses of the farmers. This structure drains off resources for consumption and investment from the agricultural sector. At the same time it increases the cost of living in urban areas; these are determined by agricultural prices to a great extent. Furthermore, it contributes to the unproportionate and rather unproductive growth of the services sector. Trade, real estate and other tertiary sector activities give higher, quicker and more certain returns to investment than productive activities. Thus the tertiary sector has been the favourite field of private investments. At the same time the government services are characterized by a high quantitative growth and a decline of the overall efficiency. On the whole, the tertiary sector's preponderance was neither reflected in an adequate performance nor was it appropriate to the level of Sudan's economic development in general. The tertiary sector benefitted from the supply rigidities and the scarcities generated during the 1970s.

The industrial sector is characterized by the structural deficiencies typical for the economy of an underdeveloped country:

- the production of capital goods is almost absent;
- the diversification of production is confined to the range of consumer goods.

The post-independence industrialization strategy emphasized branches of import substitution (agricultural non-food-processing, but to an increasing extent also non-agricultural manufacturing). These had insufficient or no basic links at all to the domestic potential of raw materials and other resources. Thus, the intensity of linkages with other sectors on the input side (backward linkages) was very low. The same is true for the intra-sectoral backward linkages. Instead, the pattern of industrialization enforced to a remarkable extent the dependence on imported inputs.

On the whole, a vertical structure of production could hardly be established. In fact, 82.0% of fixed assets were invested in branches of consumer goods production in 1970/71 (Oesterdiekhoff 1983b, p. 177). Within this subsector, it was direc-



ted to the production of commodities for high income groups rather than for the mass consumer goods market. Only a small proportion of the assets was devoted to the production of basic consumption items. The limitations of that market, the lack of international competitiveness and the insecure supply of raw materials contributed to the low capacity utilization. Therefore, the industry was only viable under a high effective protection. In 1970/71 the total value added of the sector at world market prices was only 5.5% of its value added in domestic price (Oesterdiekhoff 1983b, p. 175). In 7 branches the total value added at world market prices was even negative. A highly inefficient structure of industrialization and import substitution had emerged.

Another feature of the industrialization process is its low capacity to create employment: After independence its GDP share rose much faster than its share in employment. This fact has been interpreted as an interdependent relationship between an increasing orientation of industrial production at the demand of higher income groups, more import- and capital-intensive production, declining capacity to absorb labour and rising income disparities (Oesterdiekhoff 1983b).

### 3. The Concept of the Breadbasket Strategy: An offensive attempt of structural adjustment in the Sudan

The analysis of the malformation of the Sudan economy (in Part 2) is the basis for an evaluation of the Breadbasket Strategy implemented in the 1970s. Did it help to overcome the inherited structure? Did it contribute to sustainable structural adjustments?

In fact, this strategy was an attempt to restructure the export sector (by processing food, producing sugar, wheat and textiles for export) and to promote import-substitution in strategic sectors (sugar, wheat). This strategy of structural changes was however implemented in a period of already aggravating macroeconomic imbalances, so that the intended structural change led to further adjustment problems (e.g. inflation, increase of foreign indebtedness, strain on bottleneck factors, like transport), instead of curing the structural weaknesses. The moti-

vations for the strategy were diverse: first, the US threat with a wheat embargo against the Arab countries; second, the cotton marketing problems which led to a reallocation of cultivable land in the Sudan to other crops; third, the favourable world market situation of the breadbasket crops (like cereals and sugar), and fourth, the availability of Arab oil surpluses for the financing of the ambitious strategy.

The Breadbasket strategy was based on a concept of export-led agroindustrialization. This ambitious strategy involved a massive restructuring of production and trade in order to take advantage of a regional Arabic division of labour. Based on Sudan's huge agricultural resources and the financial resources of the oil-rich Arab countries it was planned to make the Arab region more self-sufficient in food. The Six Year Plan (1977/78-1982/83), based on the Arab Fund's Basic Programme for Agricultural Development in the Sudan, reflects these priorities. For this reason, the planned investments concentrated on agriculture and, to a lesser degree, on agro-industries. This should allow the Sudan to export not only a few primary goods, but also processed agricultural products, like meat and sugar, thereby reducing a one-sided dependence on the world market.

While the manufacturing sector had the highest planned growth rate in the Six Year Plan, the intra-sectoral structure of investments followed the same pattern as before. It did not overstep the limits of export- and import-substitution and so the formation of a dynamic structure of specialization was prevented.

Within the agricultural sector, the concentration on modern subsectors was maintained: 88% of total investments of the Six Year Plan (1977/78-1982/83) were planned to go to the modern sectors directly, compared to 3.0% for traditional agriculture (MNP 1977, Vol. 2). Furthermore, the small investments aimed at an expansion of modern cultivation practices - like mechanization of rainfed crop production and establishment of cattle ranches -, instead of modernizing the existing farming systems. This kind of modernization is inaccessible to the small peasants.

The huge production increases envisaged were planned to be arrived at in the way of horizontal (land-consuming) rather than vertical (intensified land use) expansion. The strategy aimed at capital investments from outside the sector. It relied on foreign capital to a high degree: the Six Year Plan states an external resources share of 52% of total investments, while the public share (59% of total investments) was going to be financed to an extent of 39% of the remaining domestic resources share by deficit financing (MNP 1977, Vol. 1, 55). An extremely high inflationary element was implied in these plan figures.

The Breadbasket Strategy did not plan to overcome the regional disparities within the country significantly. Although the Arab investments were directed to mechanized farming and livestock subsectors in the Western Sudan also, the share of the region in the Basic Programme's planned investments amounted to 24% in agriculture, industry and trade only; the Southern Region was expected to receive only 4% (Arab Fund 1976).

The Breadbasket Strategy relies on two main assumptions:

1. the availability of a surplus of "unutilized land" with heavy underpopulation, and
2. the feasibility of an expansion of the mechanized farming sector.

Both assumptions have to be questioned. Concerning the first, traditionally all land had been used extensively by systems of rotational farming and nomadic cattle breeding. Today in many areas there are indications for acute and increasing shortage of land. This is due to intensification of land use, increasing population density and the establishment of modern sector projects which resulted in the expulsion of native peasants and nomads from the ecologically most favourable areas.

The shortage of land is not, of course, absolute, but relative to the present conditions, especially the level of land use practices. To consider most of the land not used by modern sector projects as being unexploited, as the government did, implies a gross misconception, neglecting the high opportunity costs.

The feasibility of mechanized farming systems (producing mostly dura) has to be doubted with regard to technical, economic, ecological and social aspects. They are characterized by extensive cultivation with low yields, a high capital input and seem to be only viable because of external factors: high direct and indirect government subsidies (very favourable land leases, credits and dual exchange rates), the Saudi-Arabian market offering a price premium over the world market level and the fact that many of the farmers act as distributors of their crops as well, and benefit from high trading profits due to highly uncompetitive markets.

These factors make mechanized farming production not only financially feasible, but even profitable, as the continued enthusiasm of merchants for leases indicates. The lessees are almost exclusively merchants in all mechanized farming schemes, which is due to the large fixed capital and liquidity requirements to obtain state credits. Because of these characteristics of mechanized farming schemes the farmers are not interested in long term consolidation and in sustained yields on their farms, but in quick returns on the huge investments. At the same time mechanized farming schemes disrupt the indigenous production systems (which do have the former interest!) and do not compensate this by a sufficient creation of employment. At least for the Western region in the Sudan mechanized farming systems have proved to be ecologically disastrous.

In the contrast to the Breadbasket Strategy the ILO (1976) proposals give main priority to the traditional sector. Its approach offers a more appropriate understanding of "modernizing the traditional sectors" - starting from its own institutional structure and resources and envisaging a gradual reform. However, it is based on the same over-optimistic opinion about the "vast land resources" and its vision of a parallel development of modern and traditional sectors does not account for the specific kind of interdependencies (see above).

In 1978 the implementation of the Breadbasket Strategy was abruptly stopped because of a worsening balance of payments situation and increasing domestic imbalances. The trade ba-

lance had changed from a surplus of LS 6.5 mill. in 1971/72 to a deficit of LS 278.8 mill. in 1978/79 (Nashashibi 1980, p. 34). The external resource gap had risen to LS 292.2 mill. in 1978/79 (IBRD 1983, Vol. 2, p. 19). Government savings had become negative in the same year. The government deficit had increased from LS 11.5 mill. in 1971/72 to LS 171.8 mill. in 1977/78 (Umbadda/Shaaeldin 1983, p. 7).

Diverse factors contributed to create these imbalances. Concerning the trade balance deficit, declining export quantities appear to be the most important single factor, influencing the negative development of export earnings stronger than the price movements (Umbadda/Shaaeldin 1983, p. 8). Despite the oil price explosion, the share of imports in GDP remained constant, while the export share fell from 14% in 1970/71 to 7% in 1977/78 (Nashashibi 1980, p. 34).

The deterioration of the export quantities were due to area reductions of the traditional export crops and, mostly, to falling yields as a result of import shortages (both irrigated and mechanized farming sectors as well as industrial production are highly import-dependent) and the decreasing profitability of cotton for the tenants under the practised Joint Account System.

A serious bottleneck for most export-oriented development projects were labour shortages. However, it can be argued that they are neither of an absolute character nor are they likely to rise in the future, but are caused by the insufficient level of wages (cf. IBRD 1983, p. 41). Nevertheless, the decomposition of subsistence agriculture and a high rate of population increase are likely to raise the pressure to migrate in the future. Thus, many of the existing development projects with a high degree of capital-intensity appear not to be adequate to Sudan's actual relation of production factors (labour, capital).

Concerning the government deficit and the external resource gap, the huge investments planned in the Six-Year-Plan relied on foreign capital to a high degree, both for the public and private sectors: 53% and 49% resp. (MNP 1977, Vol. 1, p. 55).

At the same time there was a failure to raise public savings to a sufficient extent. On the contrary, current revenues as a ratio of GDP fell from 21.6% in 1970/71 to 16.1% in 1977/78, which points to the highly inelastic nature of revenues with respect to income (Umbadda/Shaaeldin 1983, p. 6). Anyway, the imbalance between expenditures and savings would not be a problem as such if the assumptions of the plans would have hold. However, there were inconsistencies resulting in heavy underestimates of the savings-investment and export-import gaps. The rapid expansion of development expenditures is illuminating the development ambitions.

However, the foreign capital did not flow as planned. The Breadbasket Strategy had been based on a main assumption about external financing which proved not to hold: the idea of Arab integration containing a regional food self-sufficiency. This concept implied a long term transfer of Arab capital. However, from 1976 onwards the main Arab donors did not supply any more programme aid (balance of payments and budgetary support) and started to make their disbursements conditional on Sudan's acceptance of IMF/World Bank requests. The political basis for Arab integration had lost momentum.

#### 4. The Involvement of IMF and IBRD: Their analyses and proposed strategies

In 1978 the extent of the created imbalances forced the government to change its economic policy in the direction of IMF/World Bank recommendations which were conditional for the disbursements of their credits.

The analysis of Sudan's economic crisis by the IMF and the World Bank starts from a reflection of the distorted structure of the Sudanese economy as evidenced by the fundamental disequilibrium of the balance of payments and the other imbalances mentioned above. As primary causes internal factors are stated:

- distortions in the allocation of resources resulting from an overvalued currency, restricted trade and payments regimes and inadequate government pricing policies;
- inefficiency of public enterprises;
- overinvolvement of the government and suppression of private sector activities;
- lack of unskilled and skilled labor.

Recently the excessive rates of traders' profits are mentioned which drain away investments from productive sectors and further luxury imports.

Various external factors are stated to aggravate the situation:

- worldwide inflation;
- weak international demand for Sudan's export commodities;
- falling terms of trade.

From this analysis the recommended strategy is deducted. While the IMF's exchange rate and demand-side-oriented policies include as measures devaluations, credit ceilings, budget deficit reductions, consumption restraints and a removal of subsidies, the World Bank provides some supply-oriented policy suggestions:

- price incentives for the production of export goods;
- deferment of all new government projects and rehabilitation of the existing projects ;
- removal of price and cost distortions;
- liberalization of production relations in the state schemes: displacement of the Joint Account System by individual account systems and land and water charges;
- shifting emphasis from large-scale public projects to the support of the small-scale entrepreneur.

While many of these measures - especially the policies to remove the bias against agricultural producers - are steps in the right direction, some misconceptions and inconsistencies

have to be noted. Some of the policy measures do not take into account Sudan's basic structural deficiencies. This helps to explain the poor results of the stabilization policies so far.

For example, the objective to raise the agricultural production by giving incentives to the primary producers does not account for the present marketing structure in the Sudan which prevents that producers receive a reasonable part of the consumer/export prices. Furthermore, for the modern sector agricultural schemes the proposed reform of the account systems leaves out of consideration the actual divorce between tenancy ownership and operation. Besides that, the proposed change will enforce the polari-

zation between the absentee tenants and the landless labourers through the cost recovery system (which favours large units). Because of the crucial role of incentives policies for the success of adjustment, these socioeconomic characteristics have to be regarded.

The term "private sector" seems to reflect a misconception because it does not differentiate between traditional producers and investors in modern sectors. In fact, almost all of the planned measures aim at the second sub-sector affecting the first adversely. The great hope set in private investment seems both to overestimate the capability and willingness of the private capital to invest in productive enterprises and to underestimate the adverse effects of this investment. It seems not to be proved in the Sudanese context that private firms are more capable to do the job parastatals have failed to do. Rather, other factors like lack of spare parts, maintenance facilities and infrastructure are more important. Furthermore, the penetration of foreign capital has often implied disadvantageous conditions for the Sudan (see for example the case study on the Kenana Scheme by Wohlmuth 1983).

However, the main area of conflict with regard to the IMF/World Bank proposals lies in the simultaneous pursuing of the two main objectives: first, the drive to increase export production to relieve the country from the immense debt burden and second, the drive to reduce the imports and the government budget deficit. Because of the high import dependence the export production will inevitably face severe import shortages, if not special measures are taken as a relief. Besides that, the short term objective to restore financial equilibrium as fast as possible and the long term objective of a sustained economic development will be in conflict. For the sake of the short term objective the perspective of basic reforms to overcome the structural deficiencies appear to be sacrificed.

Conflicts between IMF and World Bank structural adjustment policies may arise as far as timing and the emphasis of priority issues are concerned. Although in principle such conflicts are ruled out by institutional cooperation, in reality they



may be relevant in the case of sensitive issues, like public finance and exchange rate policies. The poor results of the 7 devaluations since 1977/78 point to the necessity of a very close coordination between these two institutions, and a synchronization of exchange rate policies with all other incentives policies and supply-side measures (see Part 7 on the various components of a structural adjustment package). As far as public finance is concerned, the IMF policies to regain financial stability as quickly as possible have to consider the fact that a careful revision and selection of public investment programmes and current expenditure budgets by the World Bank needs time, more time than may be left by the IMF negotiators. Some of the conflicts which arose in the Sudan on the subject of measures proposed by the IMF - conflicts on the timing and extent of exchange rate adjustments and conflicts on the extent of cuts of subsidies - could have been avoided by a better coordination and by securing political support for the intended measures. Some of the valuable IMF suggestions for the Sudan - as a supply framework for the exchange rate reform - have not been adequately implemented since 1977/78, so that the adjustment costs proved to be higher than necessary.

All these arguments lead to a main conclusion, that a time horizon of at least 10 years is necessary for structural adjustment policies, and that the IMF adjustment programmes as well as the sectoral and project-specific World Bank adjustment policies have to be worked out within such a long-term framework.

#### 5. Government Responses to the Crisis

Since mid-1978 the Sudanese government has pursued an economic stabilization policy consisting of an exchange rate and trade regime reform programme, a financial stabilization programme and a package for the reconstruction of the agricultural sector to promote export-oriented cultivation. These programmes followed the strategy recommended by the IMF and the World Bank closer and closer.

The Sudanese Pound was devalued seven times, credit ceilings were fixed, the increases of the budget expenditures and the

deficits were restricted, a reduction of the share of consumption was planned, a liberalization of the foreign exchange market was introduced and subsidies on imports were removed step by step. Furthermore, a moratorium on most new projects was set, rehabilitation programmes were implemented, agricultural areas were reallocated to the traditional export crops (cotton, groundnuts) and incentives for export crops were provided (individual and per crop account systems were introduced). Comparing these measures with the IMF/IBRD requests (see above), it can be seen that the government had been willing and successful in introducing some of the crucial policy proposals. However, it may be doubted that this policy has been successful in terms of long term economic development. These doubts are substantiated by the dramatic proportions of the main economic imbalances years after the start of the stabilization policy.

Despite a higher increase of exports (+37.5%) than of imports (+23.0%) between 1978/79 and 1983/84, the trade balance widened by 10.0% (MFEP 1984, p. 39) to LS 659 mill. However, this was a decline compared to 1981/82. During the same period the budget deficit widened by 114% to LS 286 mill. The share of government revenues to GDP declined slightly, from 15.2% to 14.9%. A positive fact is that the share of direct taxes increased (MFEP 1984, p. 35).

The government estimates a cumulative GDP growth of 1.5% p.a. for the whole period and negative growth for the last two years. However, others calculate the real growth rate from 1977/78-1982/83 as negative: -3.9% p.a. (Fadlalla 1983, p. 3). During the same time, the preponderance of the tertiary sector has been enforced. Its share rose from 58.1% in 1978/79 to 61.7% in 1983/84 (MFEP 1984, p. 33). The money supply increased fourfold between 1978-83 and by another 17% in 1983/84 (MFEP 1984, p. 4f.).

The optimistic view of IMF/World Bank representatives is substantiated by the rise of export production which is claimed to be a result of the incentives reform and the technical rehabilitation of projects. However, this statement has to be qualified in four points:

- 1) The higher cotton yields, although remarkable, nonetheless reflect over the long term (1974/75 - 1982/83) an overall decline by 7.7% (IBRD 1983, Vol. 2, p. 117).
- 2) It is not possible to discriminate the reasons for the erratic development of agricultural yields unequivocally.
- 3) From the main crops only cotton and wheat realized significant increases of productivity. The productivity of the other main crops was erratic or declined.

Generally, the evaluation of the agricultural production trends by the Sudanese government, the IMF and the IBRD seems not to be fully consistent with reality but to be biased towards a positive appreciation of their own strategies: While the positive developments in the irrigated subsector are claimed to be a result of the government policies, the production declines in rain-fed agriculture are blamed on the "drought" as a natural disaster. In this way the other main factors restraining the productive potential of both mechanized and traditional subsectors are ignored.

- 4) The rise in modern sector agricultural production (there was no increase of traditional sector agricultural production) was not reflected in a parallel rise in export earnings which was due to weak international demand. Furthermore, the terms of trade were estimated to decline by more than 20% both in 1981/82 and 1982/83 (IBRD 1984, p. 64). This shows clearly the risks of a continuation of this development path which commits the Sudan to the role of a traditional raw materials exporter under weak international demand conditions. The last tendency is enforced by the impact of the devaluation, the credit ceilings and the liberalization of the foreign trade on the Sudanese industry (which is highly import dependent). Currently, its capacity utilization is estimated to be 30% (UNIDO 1985, p. 16). However, in principle these measures may support an industrialization based on the country's own agricultural and non-agricultural resources.

The danger to sacrifice long term objectives for short term ones has become reality in the restriction of the development programme to projects producing "quick results" in terms of foreign exchange earnings - neglecting the sphere of

infrastructure which was identified as a major bottleneck.

This bias seems to have been corrected in PPP III which allocates 17.7% of total public investments to this sector. It is the second priority after agriculture and before regional development, energy & mining and services (MFEP 1984, p. 57).

In the long term perspective major negative side effects of the stabilization policy are the declining standard of living in the rural and urban areas and the redistribution of income depriving the low income groups. The strengthening of the position of the trade capital is alarming because the services sector is inferior in producing tradable goods.

As mentioned above most economic indicators continued to deteriorate after 1978. As a result of reduced outputs and imports and of the rise in money supply the inflationary pressures intensified. This effected a continuation of a negative real interest rate in the country (estimated to be - 10% or more in 1984, IBRD 1984, p. 80). Any attempts to improve the system of resource mobilization are thereby doomed to failure.

On this background the growth targets projected by the government seem to be highly unrealistic. The main planning document 'Prospects, Programmes and Policies for Economic Development 1982/83-1984/85 (PPP I) projected a real growth rate of 5.6% p.a. over the period of 1981/82-1991/92. It was admitted that this target appeared quite optimistic on the background of the past experience. However, it was based on the assumption of a 'significant amount of productive capacity built up during the last decade', waiting to be exploited, and on the hope on Sudan's mineral oil wealth.

The expectation that the economy will improve rapidly after 1984/85 was based on two other important assumptions: the development of the terms of trade and of the workers' remittances. Both assumptions may be questioned. On the basis of the experiences of the stabilization policies since 1978 it is hard to understand the optimism expressed in the documents. Such overoptimistic projections are also presented to the donors' Consultative Group Meetings. In spite of the failures to reach

the targets set at the previous meetings, another number of targets is fixed which are characterised by the same lack of realism. For example, the negative growth rates of the GDP during the last years do not give reason to anticipate the danger of a continuation of this trend in the future, but on the contrary it is envisaged to reach an even higher rate of growth than the planned 6% of PPP II (presented in December 1983).

PPP III, presented in October 1984, noted declines in the two previous years but projected increases by 5.0% and 6.2% for the next two years (1985/86 and 1986/87) resp. (MFEP 1984, p. 10).

None of the stabilization programmes constituted a substantial change in priorities and measures of stabilization policy as well as the expectations on its outcomes. In PPP I there are reflections on an option to rely more on domestic resources and to adopt simple technological innovations requiring only minimal imported capital inputs, but this option does not re-appear in the catalogue of actual measures. Neither PPP I nor PPP II or PPP III are based on a coherent development strategy.

Since the failure of the Breadbasket Strategy and the start of the stabilization policies, the government did not succeed in designing a new concept of development. The government adjusted to the requests of the IMF and the World Bank, but even on this point some reservations have to be made.

The fast expansion of the Military Economic Corporation, for example, undermining the declared policy of promoting the private sector and giving comparative disadvantages to all other economic entities, eroded the investment selection process and the demand management capacity of the country. Another main activity of the previous government, the implementation of Islamic principles in the economy may hamper the resources mobilization policies as envisaged by the IMF and the IBRD, if not made compatible.

The change of government in April 1985 is hoped to be a change for the better. Dissolution of some organisations of the former

regime (parts of the Military Economic Corporation, SSU, security force), the beginning of a political participation process, the investigation of corruption, mismanagement and bad planning in all sectors of the economy will help to promote economic development. The political situation is more open to discussion about economic aims and strategies. However, we are presently not in the position to evaluate the economic impacts of the political changes. The coming National Economic Conference (Khartoum, March 1986) will not only make such an evaluation, but will also give guidelines for Sudan's future development path.

#### 6. More fundamental Structural Adjustment Measures

It may be argued that the stabilization policy failed both in respect to its own targets and, more important, in respect to a solution of Sudan's economic problems in the long-term perspective. Furthermore, it may be argued that this failure is due to an adjustment strategy which aims at improving the debt servicing capacity of the country in the short term, but lacks any consideration of the basic structural deficiencies. During the stabilization period since 1978 the structural malformation of the Sudanese economy was rather enforced than surmounted. It is not a surprise that some members of the Consultative Group realized that another development strategy for the Sudan might be necessary. On the Consultative Group meeting in December 1983 some donors suggested reducing the capital and import intensity of new agricultural investments. This policy may help to allot a new function to the foreign trade sector, which is now almost exclusively determining the course of the economy, but would then play rather a supplementary role. The members of the Consultative Group meetings may be more and more interested to find out the key elements of a viable development strategy for the Sudan rather than to discuss the catalogue of actions presented by the Sudanese Minister of Finance and Planning. Otherwise the support of the donors for the Sudan may fade away soon. All relevant research on the Sudanese economy and its structural problems shows that fundamental reforms are necessary. The package presented here is based on a development strategy of agricultural demand-led industrialization as an alternative to the export-led agroindustrialization strategy pursued during the 1970s. Such a strategy has the following characteristics: It is an

open economy strategy as the other strategy, but the trade and investment incentives are neutral; not biased towards export promotion or import-substitution. The dynamics of the economy is transmitted from the intermediate and final demand linkages that result from productivity increases in agriculture. This is not a new concept, but the objectives of policy and the concrete measures have to be focussed appropriately. The structural adjustment measures (see Part 7) have to be oriented towards such a strategy. Especially the public investment programmes, the sectoral programmes, the pricing and incentives policies, and the trade and investment regimes have to be designed in such a frame. The Three Years Public Investment Programmes of the government may be a main instrument to effect these changes in policy. In so far the Joint Monitoring Committee (of donors and the Sudanese government), which is examining in detail these programmes, has a decisive position for effecting any policy changes. Besides that, an agricultural terms-of-trade policy, an agricultural institutions policy (to eliminate the structural marketing barriers working against the farmers' supply response), a land tenure policy (to ensure land security for smallholders and appropriate land use in the modern sector) and a rural infrastructure programme are essential elements of such a strategy. Such a programme may lead to intermediate and final demand linkages which are the basic requirement for a turnaround of the economy towards a new growth dynamics. Such a development strategy is less risky than the export-led agroindustrialization strategy (Breadbasket Strategy), taking into consideration the weak world market conditions for Sudan's traditional export products and the weak adjustment capacity of the country towards world market changes.

Such a strategy may be a way out of stagnation, may lead to a better income distribution, a viable balance of payments situation, and a higher rate of productive labour absorption. The problem of international migration of skilled and unskilled labour as well as the problem of seasonal labour migration under conditions of extremely low wages could over the long-run be brought under control by such a policy change. The output losses in traditional agriculture in recent years (which are not only due to unfavourable weather conditions) point to the urgent necessity of a new approach, because of the weight

and potential of this sector for food self-sufficiency, for productivity increases and the creation of linkages, for market development and for adjustment as well. The lower import intensity of agriculture (compared to industry) and of the farmers' consumption may be a convincing argument for the government to support such a policy change. On the other hand such a strategy may lead to a sustainable rate of industrialization with adequate levels of capacity utilization.

In order to bring forward such a policy change, a new policy on foreign debts is necessary. The debts are far beyond the capacity to repay, so that a moratorium for all interest and principal payments for several years is necessary. Under such conditions the government can disconnect the aim of sustained economic development from the pressure to repay debts. A more fundamental economic reconstruction policy also includes the following elements:

- a policy to select and coordinate carefully the foreign aid and foreign investment transactions, by revising the investment regulations and improving the machinery to channel foreign aid to the various destinations;
- a wages and incomes policy that considers the causes and consequences of seasonal and international migration and the causes and consequences of the excessive trading profits;
- a policy to promote small-scale agriculture, because of the favourable employment and distribution effects, and the reduced ecological risks of this type of agricultural development;
- a policy to promote capital formation within the agricultural sector, rather than relying on capital injections from outside (merchants, foreign capital);
- a policy to support cooperatives at all levels of production and distribution, in order to counterbalance the impact of the state bureaucracy and of the traders on the economic results of the smallholders' activities;
- a policy to support adequate technologies at the local level, in combination with a policy of support for local crafts and small-scale industries;
- a policy to restructure the industry as regards the scale, the degree of centralization, the structure of outputs and



inputs ;

- a policy to release resources from the services sector;
- a strategy of economic and political decentralization in order to raise the overall allocative efficiency in the country and in order to create a more appropriate machinery for economic decision-making;
- a policy to realize a higher degree of political participation in the country.

#### 7. Key components of a structural adjustment programme for the Sudan

In Table 1 (see below) the key components of a structural adjustment package for the Sudan are outlined, by commenting on the main policy problems, the necessary structural adjustment measures, the time horizon and the progress so far achieved. The Table 1 shows that the structural adjustment problems of this country are extremely complex, require a great number of policy instruments and a much longer time horizon than assumed by the World Bank for their structural adjustment lending (of 5-7 years).

The problems are interrelated and a solution requires therefore not only specific strategies for the key components, but also the design of an overall development strategy as a basis for policy reform. A policy change requires first of all a long-term solution to the debt problem so that the other key components of the adjustment programme can be implemented. Most important are sectoral policies based on an overall development strategy, as well as subsectoral policies (e.g. as far as sectors of mechanized farming and traditional agriculture are concerned). Also of great importance are public sector policies because of the allocative inefficiencies of this sector and the negative repercussions on the private sectors (however, a distinction has to be made between private modern and private traditional sectors!). Trade and investment policies and resource mobilization policies are becoming more and more important as the rehabilitation of the economy is progressing. Institutional and legal instruments can contribute to development and adjustment, by improving the invest-

ment climate and the land security for the traditional producers and the tenants in the modern sector agriculture.

The Table 1 shows that progress is slow and did not take place so far in important policy areas, e.g. in traditional agriculture, services and transport sectors and as regards internal and international migration and land security. With regard to public investment programmes, some progress had been achieved in the field of investment concentration on quick-yielding export-oriented projects, but there was no progress as regards the change of investment priorities towards a long-term viable production structure in the Sudan. Table 1 (see below) illustrates the necessary steps towards such a development path in the Sudan.

Table 1: Key Components of structural adjustment measures in the Sudan

Components	Main Policy Problems	Structural Adjustment Measures	Time Horizon for Measures	Progress achieved so far
1. Trade Policy				
1. Exchange rate policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- high import - intensity of modern sector production</li> <li>- ambiguous effects of devaluations because of import content of export production</li> <li>- weak exchange market</li> <li>- often changing policies on the exchange rate and the organization of the exchange market</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- supply framework for exchange reform</li> <li>- coordination of exchange rate and incentives policies</li> <li>- supply of real inputs to increase the real export capacity</li> <li>- IMF/World Bank coordination on extent, timing and complementary measures of exchange reform</li> </ul>	5-7 years	<p>some progress on coordination of exchange rate policies; parallel exchange rates still existent; foreign exchange allocation system inefficient</p>
2. Tariff reform and import liberalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- very high protection of industry</li> <li>- very inefficient industrial sector and very low capacity utilization</li> <li>- international competitiveness limited to few agricultural export products (e.g. cotton, groundnuts, local cereals, sesame)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- evaluation of the viability of import-substitution industries</li> <li>- policies on textiles and sugar industry (viability checks)</li> <li>- gradual tariff reform and import liberalization to support industries with higher use of local resources</li> </ul>	medium - to long-term	<p>some progress in sugar industry rehabilitation; rehabilitation of textiles industry has started</p>
3. Export Incentives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- weak international demand for Sudan's main agricultural export products</li> <li>- export-led agroindustrial development strategy too risky</li> <li>- inadequate export marketing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- neutral trade and incentives policies to support agricultural demand-led industrialization strategy</li> <li>- elimination of disincentives on use of local raw materials</li> <li>- Improving export marketing</li> </ul>	3-5 years	<p>some progress as far as correcting disincentives for cotton production are concerned</p>
4. Specific programmes for export sectors/saving sectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- disincentives for cotton production</li> <li>- allocative inefficiencies in sugar and textiles industry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- identification of real causes of erratic movement of cotton yields</li> <li>- political decisions on viability of sugar industry (problem of Kenana Sugar Company's high production costs) and of textiles industry</li> </ul>	3-5 years	<p>some progress on cotton export capacity</p>

<p>II. <u>Foreign Investments</u> <u>Regulations</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- lack of policy orientation</li> <li>- administrative weakness</li> <li>- lack of experience in negotiations on mining and oil exploration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- selective and restrictive policies (investment and tax) allowances</li> <li>- excessive rates for land/water and electricity to be introduced</li> <li>- liberal incentives policies to support new development strategy</li> <li>- strengthening negotiating capacity</li> </ul>	<p>3 years</p>	<p>progress very limited; contradictory policy prescriptions</p>
<p>III. <u>Sector Policies</u> 1. <u>Energy</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- export sectors and import-substituting sectors very energy-intensive</li> <li>- retarded adjustment of energy prices</li> <li>- inflationary effects of anticipating mineral oil production in Sudan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- reduction of energy - intensity of modern sector production (conservation)</li> <li>- reorientation of development strategy towards less energy-intensive agriculture and industry/crafts</li> </ul>	<p>long-term</p>	<p>some progress on price adjustment and energy planning (National Energy Plan 1985-2000)</p>
<p>2. <u>Agriculture</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- neglect of traditional rainfed agriculture</li> <li>- neglect of food security policies</li> <li>- neglect of agricultural demand-led industrialization</li> <li>- lack of economic viability and negative macro-economic, social and ecological impacts of mechanized farming</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- change of priorities of public investment programmes</li> <li>- agricultural terms - of - trade policy</li> <li>- agricultural institutions policy</li> <li>- land tenure policy</li> <li>- rural infrastructure policy</li> <li>- support for rural cooperatives</li> <li>- policy on traders' profits</li> <li>- support of rural crafts and small-scale industries</li> <li>- decentralization of political/economic decision-making</li> <li>- reorientation of agricultural mechanization policy</li> </ul>	<p>long-term</p>	<p>no progress on traditional agriculture and mechanized farming sector; some progress on irrigated agriculture</p>
<p>3. <u>Industry</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- shift towards import- and capital - intensive industrial production for high income groups</li> <li>- low capacity - utilization</li> <li>- lack of raw materials, spare parts, infrastructure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- exchange reform, tariff reform and energy price adjustments to support a viable domestic resources - based industry</li> <li>- policy decisions on sugar and textiles industry urgent</li> <li>- industrialization based on agricultural and mass-consumer goods demand to be supported</li> </ul>	<p>medium - long - term</p>	<p>progress limited to some measures in sugar industry and textiles industry</p>
<p>4. <u>Services</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- unproportional growth of services sector</li> <li>- excessive and unproductively used traders' profits</li> <li>- undue expansion of the production of nontradables (e.g. luxury housing)</li> <li>- expansion of highly inefficient government services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- identification of causes for unproportional growth of services and excessive profits of traders</li> <li>- adequate taxation policies</li> <li>- support of cooperatives to counterbalance the dominance of traders and of the state bureaucracy</li> <li>- very strict policy on government consumption expenditures</li> </ul>	<p>medium-term</p>	<p>no significant progress so far; rather aggravation since 1978</p>

<p>5. <u>Transport</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- neglect of the transport sector during the 1970s, thereby inhibiting transport of tradable goods</li> <li>- transport sector development exclusively oriented on modern sector expansion</li> <li>- concentration of public investments on quick-yielding projects at the expense of transport sector</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- improvement of rural transport systems and river transport systems</li> <li>- maintenance of highway Port Sudan - Kartoum and other main roads</li> <li>- rehabilitation of railways</li> <li>- orientation towards transport demands of new development strategy</li> </ul>	<p>medium - long - term</p>	<p>progress very limited</p>
<p>6. <u>Training and Manpower</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- international migration of skilled and unskilled labour</li> <li>- working conditions of seasonal labour, e.g. low wages</li> <li>- regional imbalances of training/education system</li> <li>- high rate of illiteracy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- fundamental policy change necessary towards new development strategy</li> <li>- incomes policies (urban-rural, skilled-unskilled) urgent</li> <li>- active policies on remittances</li> <li>- regional equalization of training/education systems from primary to higher education levels</li> <li>- eradication of illiteracy in the rural and urban areas by integrated rural development programmes</li> </ul>	<p>long - term</p>	<p>progress limited to policies on remittances for balance of payments reasons only</p>
<p>IV. <u>Public Sector Policies</u></p>	<p>1. <u>Public Investment Programmes</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- lack of a coherent development strategy since 1978</li> <li>- concentration on quick-yielding projects, on modern sector agriculture and on East-Central Sudan</li> <li>- heritage of large-scale public sector projects</li> </ul>	<p>long - term</p>	<p>no progress as regards fundamental changes in development policies via Three Years Investment Programmes</p>
<p>2. <u>Public Sector Enterprises</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- public sector enterprises as a source of negative public saving and of unviable overall saving-investment gap</li> <li>- existence of military public corporations (Military Economic Corporation) is counteracting stabilization policies (e.g. public saving targets) and privatization policies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- review and revision of sectoral priorities</li> <li>- priority areas: rural infrastructure, land conservation, food security, local energy systems, rehabilitation of agricultural sector</li> <li>- decentralized decision-making and control of use of public funds via political participation</li> <li>- pricing policies (on outputs and inputs)</li> <li>- very strict policies to control financial performance and institutional efficiency of public sector enterprises</li> <li>- policies to restrain the role of Military Economic Corporations further</li> <li>- strengthening of public sector projects selection</li> <li>- integration of macroeconomic structural adjustment policies, sectoral adjustment policies and project planning</li> </ul>	<p>medium - term</p>	<p>slow progress; limited effects of 'privatization' policy</p>

V. Resource Utilization

- negative real interest rates
- introduction of Islamic banking principles, taxation principles without any sectoral credit allocation; biased against agriculture and small-scale industry and crafts
- inadequate rural credit systems and public credit organizations
- fluctuations of remittances
- capital flight and smuggling
- lack of preconditions for foreign capital acquisition
- investment projects selection process inadequate
- higher return on unproductive investments than
- inadequate government revenues policies and taxation policies
- land insecurity in rural areas affecting productivity of smallholders and tenants
- investor's uncertainty in modern and traditional sectors
- rights on international migration and on remittances inadequate
- rights and institutional support on cooperatives inadequate
- structure of foreign debts very unfavourable
- ad hoc international debt management by Consultative Group creates uncertainties
- inadequate domestic management of foreign debts as regards integration with macroeconomic concerns and perspectives and technical matters
- strict credit ceilings on public sector credit and review of current expenditures
- active policy of sectoral credit allocation to support a fundamental policy change (towards private sector, rainfed agriculture, crafts and small-scale industry)
- policy on traders' profits (e.g. taxation)
- incomes policy (e.g. on government wages and allowances, wages of seasonal labour)
- improving direct taxation on income, land and property and strengthening of tax administration
- restrictive policies on investment incentives, e.g. financial ones
- support of cooperatives for saving and communal investments
- long-run rescheduling of foreign debts and coherent policy on foreign capital
- rational pricing policies on land, electricity and water
- horizontal agricultural expansion strategy to be reviewed
- definition of legal rights and institutional support for smallholders, tenants, seasonal labour and nomads
- legal and institutional measures on international migration and on remittances
- legal and institutional support on cooperatives
- long-term rescheduling required to support a fundamental policy change
- strengthening of institutional capacity to manage external borrowing
- integration with macroeconomic policy
- long-term policy on regional Arab debt rescheduling and financial integration

medium - to long - term

no progress in taxation policies and limited progress in expenditures control; no progress as regards selective credit allocations; no clear policy on Islamic economic principles

VI. Legal and Institutional Measures

medium - term

no progress

VII. Debt Management

- some progress in debt management at the national level, but no progress on design of long-term concept which may be acceptable to donors and conducive to long-term development
- long-term rescheduling required to support a fundamental policy change
- strengthening of institutional capacity to manage external borrowing
- integration with macroeconomic policy
- long-term policy on regional Arab debt rescheduling and financial integration

long - term perspectives on debt rescheduling required; short-term changes in debt management may be possible

some progress in debt management at the national level, but no progress on design of long-term concept which may be acceptable to donors and conducive to long-term development

Abbreviations

GDP	gross domestic product
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank)
ILO	International Labour Office
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LS	Sudanese Pound
MFEP	Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning
MNP	Ministry of National Planning
PPP	Prospects, Programmes and Policies for Economic Development

Currency Exchange Rate:

(Sudanese pound equivalents to \$ 1)

<u>1976</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>Oct./Nov. 1984</u>	<u>Feb. 1985</u>
0,36	0,40	0,50	2,08	2,45

Basic Economic Indicators:

GDP (1981):	\$ 6,461 million
Population (1982):	20.2 million
Labour force (1981):	5.84 million
GDP per capita (1981):	\$ 341

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