

Seeds of sovereignty reshaping Sudan's food system



**ROSA
LUXEMBURG
STIFTUNG**

شبكة سيادة
SIYADA NETWORK
٥*EE٥ | +٥XCo+



Seeds of sovereignty reshaping Sudan's food system

Author: Abubakr Omer

Translated from Arabic to English:

Olfa Derbel - vice versa Translation services

Design and layout: ozads.org

THIS PUBLICATION OR PARTS OF IT CAN BE QUOTED BY OTHERS FOR FREE AS LONG AS THEY PROVIDE PROPER REFERENCE TO THE ORIGINAL PUBLICATION.

SUPPORTED WITH FUNDS FROM THE ROSA LUXEMBURG FOUNDATION.

THE CONTENT OF THE PUBLICATION IS THE SOLE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE AUTHORS AND DOES NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT A POSITION OF THE ROSA LUXEMBURG STIFTUNG OR THE NORTH AFRICAN NETWORK FOR FOOD SOVEREIGNTY.

CONTENTS

The author	6
INTRODUCTION	7
Preface: "Tropic of Chaos"	7
The breakdown of local food systems	8
General characteristics of the food production sector in Sudan	10
Firearms to structure and establish networks to extract food resources	13
Seconds from Disaster	15
Doomsday scenario	20
Seeds of sovereignty	21
ENDNOTES	24
APPENDIX	28



Abubakr Omer Dafallah Omer

A Sudanese expert in the fields of agriculture and food systems, and interested in issues of transformative change in food systems in order to achieve food sovereignty as a lever to support comprehensive economic development.

INTRODUCTION

This article deals with the story of Sudan's popular struggle that has been going on for more than a century against the system of obedience for food. This article takes the reader on a journey that sheds light on the general features of Sudan's food enablers, as well as the status of its food system and its pre-war performance, and highlights the

profound impact that occurred during the first three months of the conflict. It also addresses some of the structural and historical factors responsible for perpetuating hunger and the fragility of the food system. Finally, the article reviews some of the current popular and grassroots alternatives and efforts to change this reality.

Preface: "Tropic of Chaos"

Located within the borders of the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, Sudan is characterized by diverse landscapes that include the Sahara Desert in the north and the savannah plains and forests in the south. Amid this geographic fabric, however, lies a worrying reality: Sudan is increasingly subject to the violent consequences of climate change, manifested in the form of recurrent droughts and devastating floods. This region, referred to by Christian Parenti to as the "Tropic of Chaos"—a region of newly independent states grappling with severe economic and political crises, all while relying heavily on agriculture, herding and fishing for their livelihood.

These countries have served as proxy battlegrounds since the Cold War, leaving behind a legacy of armed groups, cheap weapons, and smuggling networks. In the late seventies, it was

also forced by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund to restructure its economies by applying neoliberal policies; its economies were over-privatized to such an extent that it included its armies. In his book "Tropic of Chaos, Climate Change and the New Geography of Violence", Christian Parenti explores the view that violent changes in climate exacerbate pre-existing economic and political crises and already existing military interventions, producing what he calls the "catastrophic convergence," which he explained: "I call this collision of political, economic, and environmental disasters the catastrophic convergence. By catastrophic convergence, I do not merely mean that several disasters happen simultaneously, one problem atop another. Rather, I argue that problems compound and amplify each other, one expressing itself through another."¹

The breakdown of local food systems

On September 2, 1898, to maintain control over the southern border of Egypt; an important colony for British trade, the Anglo-Egyptian army used Maxim rifles against the army of the Caliph Abdullah al-Ta'ayshi, who was armed with bayonets, daggers, and rifles. The battle resulted in a heavy loss of lives, with almost 10,000 soldiers from the opposing side killed. The battle of Karary marked the end of a 15-year invasion that had begun in Port Sudan, signifying the fall of the Mahdist state. After the Anglo-Egyptian army led by Kitchener entered Omdurman the capital of the Mahdist state, they found the Caliph had escaped, leaving behind a starving population with no energy to fight. The invading army provided grain in return for the submission of the local, which were brought from Egypt via the railway network he it had established while advancing south.²

Anglo-Egyptian ruler trained its local allies, employing some of them in the operations of securing territory and rewarding its inhabitants with food. In unison, they quashed everyone who refused to comply with that equation and laid roads and railways to transport food to areas in need of food. These areas were strategically chosen for the establishment of military bases.

These locations were later used as centers for the sale of imported food items and the extraction of local crop to reduce the cost of the security project.³ The British-Egyptian government used this logistical network to motivate the population to replace their own food cultivation with crops that were in high demand on the global market. Additionally, Special Forces were deployed to protect this network against rebellious populations, establishing the Unified Grain Market⁴ system. Sudan was not regarded as a significant colony by Great Britain, and thus, the autocratic governor general's priority was security, leading to the emergence of staism with short-term policies. The Governor General was only concerned with the annual budget of his regime, while he and his allies strove to maintain the stability of their privileges.⁵ This resulted in the collapse of local food systems when confronted with the expansion of this centralized, unified system. Consequently, Sudanese communities gradually lost their food sovereignty, and were forced into vicious cycles of famine and food insecurity.

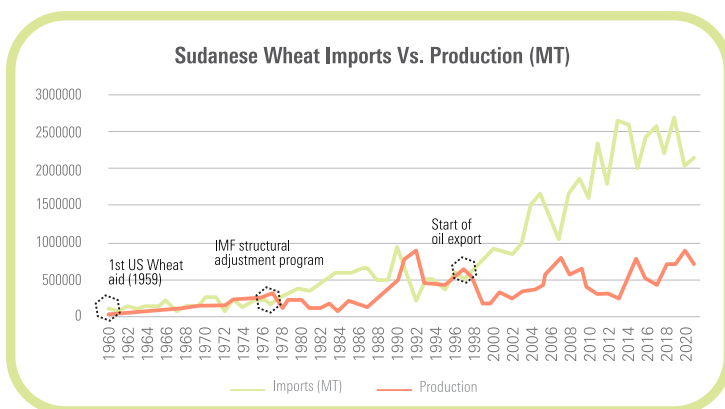
in the 1st of January, the colonial allies inherited the regime, and continued to struggle over everything except the annual budget and maintaining the stability of their privileges.⁶ Just two months after gaining independence, the Sudanese state suppressed a peaceful protest against agricultural policies, leading to the death of over

200 farmers. This was carried out under the guise of the "Gouda Project", which involved locking the farmers in a small non-ventilated warehouse until they died from suffocation. Additionally, the state doubled down on its austerity measures. It abdicated its responsibility in providing food for Sudanese communities. Instead, it resorted to wheat aid, which the state later profited from importing. The government, also, expanded on the semi-mechanized rain-fed farming projects, damaging the soil and negatively affecting pastureland.

In 1978, the Sudanese government officially announced its exit from the management of the economy. This was done by implementing the first set of structural reforms, which aimed to make the economy more suitable for the capitalization of Sudanese harvests. These reforms paved the way for legally infallible institutions such as Faisal Islamic Bank to speculate on food.⁷ The effects of these structural adjustments can be read through impact of the two comparable drought waves of 1972-1975 and 1982-1985. During the later, Sudan exported 691,000 tons of Sorghum to Saudi Arabia while 70% of population suffered from acute hunger.⁸ This hunger mostly affected pastoral communities who, as a social group, had fallen in the market's grip, and as a result lost their wealth to commercial capital. Agricultural workers were also affected, as the commercial capital forced them into working for fixed wages while food.⁹

The export of oil in 1998 represented the moment of separation between the Inqaz regime and the slogans "We eat what we grow" that it imposed in its early days. With the increasing influx of hard currency, the government began importing more consumer goods to the cities and hired rural militias to suppress the rebellion in the countryside (figure1). However, this strategy proved to be unsustainable and by 2011, the regime was facing a southern secession and thus a depletion of the majority of its hard currency resources. In response, it implemented austerity measures and brutally suppressed the popular rebellion of 2013. This led to widespread food distress by the end of 2018. In December of that year, the Sudanese people protested against the increase in the price of bread in Khartoum, calling for the fall of the regime. This was perhaps a call for an end to the Unified Grain Market system. Instead of addressing these demands, the regime declared all-out war, possibly to recreate the same fragile conditions that enabled the alliance of arms with the elite to establish a security state based on the equation of food for obedience.

Figure 1: Wheat imports and consumption (1960-2020)



Source: (United States Department of Agriculture, 2021)

General characteristics of the food production sector in Sudan

Arable land has been estimated at 134 million feddans, or 30% of the total area. It is estimated that only 20-30% of this is farmed, but contrary to popular belief, reports indicate that soil degradation has been inflicted on many uncultivated areas as a result of decades of semi-mechanized farming that has displaced grazing, depriving microbial communities of regeneration, making them unsuitable for both agriculture and grazing. The area of forest and pasture has been estimated at 52 and 118 million acres respectively.¹⁰ There are numerous water sources in Sudan; Nile water, rain, groundwater, and seasonal

rivers, but their continued neglect in policies¹¹ and R&D has turned Sudan today into a water-scarce country, with a per capita share of less than 1000 cubic meters per year.¹²

The food system in general, including crops, livestock, agricultural processing, trade, infrastructure, transport, climate, etc., is the basic ground for the Sudanese economy; the productive sector contributes about 31% of GDP, 55% of exports, and provides livelihoods for 65% of the population.¹³

Sudan's diverse agro-ecological characteristics have enabled the production of a wide range of crops and livestock. The crops grown in Sudan include field crops, cereals, oilseeds, fodder, industrial crops, horticultural crops and non-timber forest products, and are produced through three main systems: irrigated agriculture,

traditional smallholder rain-fed agriculture, and semi-mechanized rain-fed agriculture (Figure 2). The rainy season in Sudan falls in a single season between July and October. During this period, the land is prepared, and millet and sorghum are planted as the primary subsistence crops. The rest of the rain-fed crops are planted between June and July and are harvested between November and December (summer or autumn season). Wheat, on the other hand, is sown as a winter crop in November and harvested in March (Figure 3).

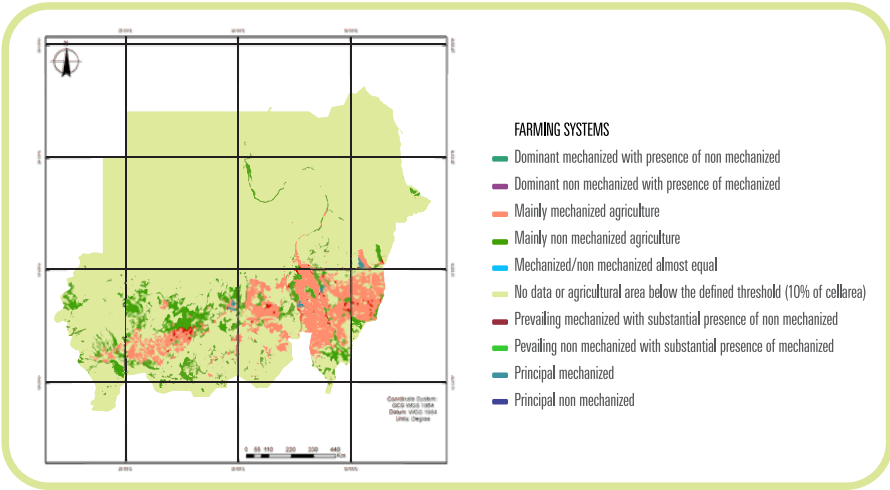
Regarding agriculture, livestock and fish production are the primary focus in Sudan. Livestock production is divided into three categories: natural pastures (nomadic), irrigation systems and river sheep (stable), and commercial systems like cowsheds, dairy farms and poultry. Nomadic tribes own the majority of Sudan's livestock and they raise them on natural pastures located in the states of Kordofan and Darfur (western Sudan). The irrigation in these areas depends on seasonal rivers, wells and excavations. Fish production, on the other hand, is small-scale and mostly serves local markets. The fishing grounds that are important are either overexploited, such as Jabal Awlia dam lake, or virtually unexploited, such as Lake Nubia and the Red Sea.¹⁴

An overview of the economic performance of these different systems shows that between 2009 and 2013,

livestock production contributed 47% of agricultural GDP, followed by large irrigated projects with 28%, traditional rainfed agriculture in smallholdings with 15%, forestry with 7%, and semi-mechanized agriculture with 3%.¹⁵

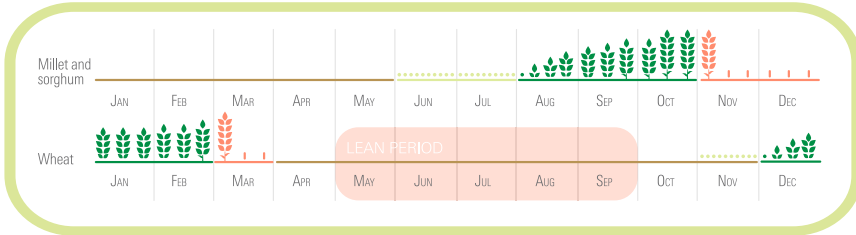
Small farmers produced the bulk of Sudan's food. They constituted 65% of the farmers, and their agriculture, which provided their food, covered 60% of the cultivated land, with an average of 5 acres. Their land and crop residues also provided basic grazing areas that enabled intensive livestock production.¹⁶ Figure 5 illustrates how the different production systems have intertwined creating the livelihoods associated with agriculture in Sudan.

Figure 2: Distribution of Sudanese farming systems



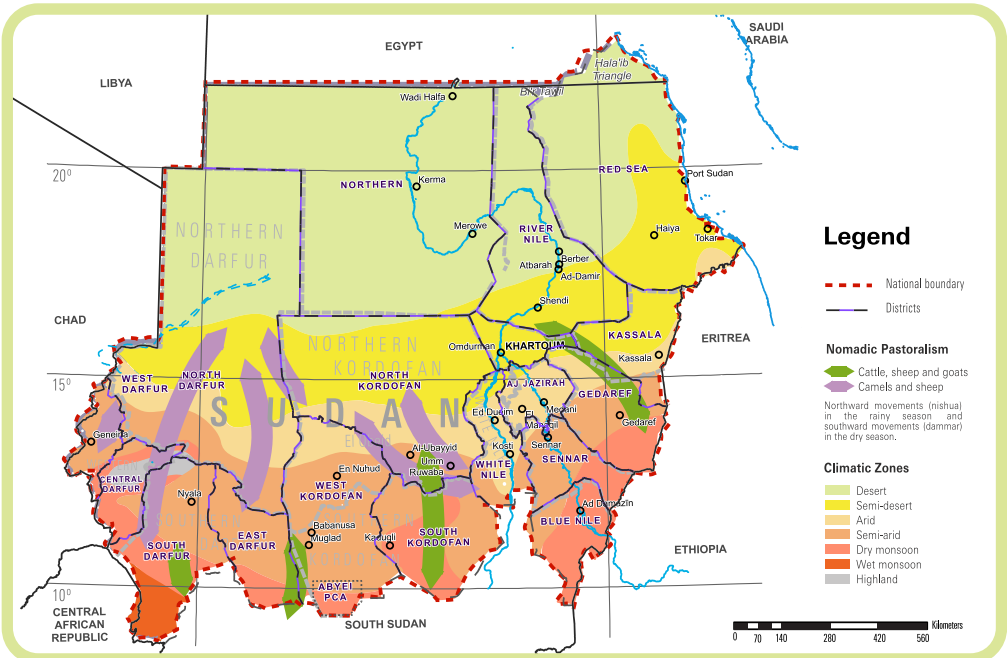
Source: (Sudan Soil Information System, 2022)

Figure 3: Sudanese crop calendar



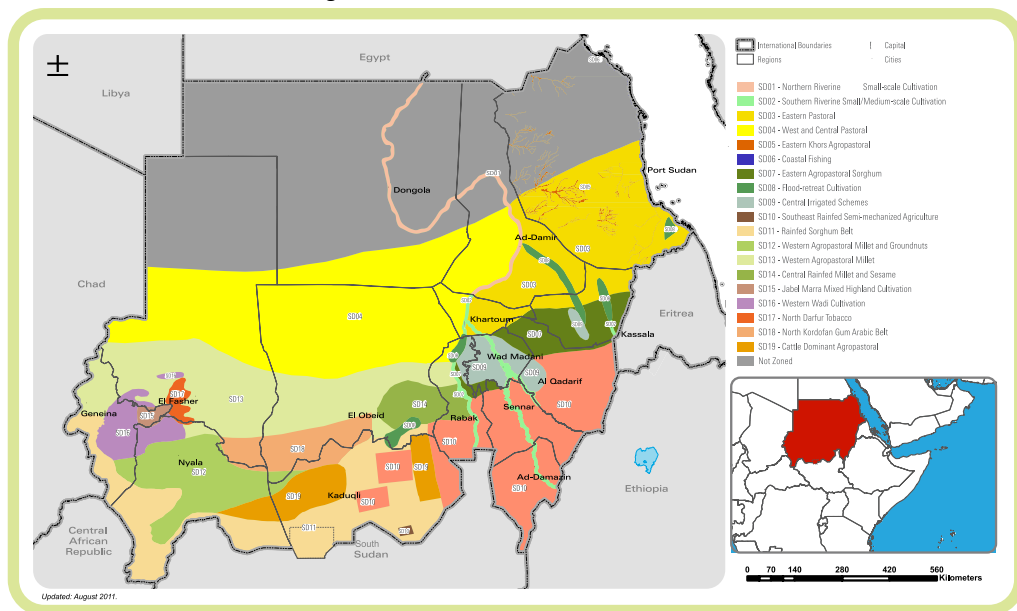
Source: (FAO, 2023)

Figure 4: Seasonal migration of grazing groups



Source: (WFP, 2016)

Figure 5: Distributions of livelihood zones



Source: (FEWS NET, 2014)

Firearms to structure and establish networks to extract food resources

The weakness in organizing bodies that express interests of small food producers; agricultural workers, small farmers, pastoralists, nomadic herders, and small-scale fishermen, left them at the mercy of their large competitors, armies of merchants, militias, middlemen, and speculators who caused the final consumer prices to rise.

During the dry season, also known as the “months of hunger”, as well as during production seasons, small-scale rural food producers had limited options. They had to borrow food, medication, production tools, services, and protection from traders and weapon bearers, and repay those debts in-kind immediately after harvest to avoid imprisonment. These loans came with excessive interest rates, representing the initial stages of withdrawal and consolidation of food production for the benefit of major exporters and manufacturers. In contrast, unlike small producers, these few had access to various approaches to public low-interest financing. On the protection side, the state

gradually withdrew from its roles and small producers in the fields, pastoral routes, and markets, found themselves confronted by armed looting gangs. As a result, carrying weapons for personal protection has become widespread, rural militias have emerged, and producers have increasingly joined them to safeguard their families and economic activities. These militias have fought for control of the country's petroleum wealth in mud pastures, or gold in poor savannahs and deserts, delivering those resources efficiently and at low cost to world markets.¹⁷

The emergence of the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) as a dominant militia, with numerical and military superiority, has brought a certain level of stability, particularly in areas with high conflict between herders over territory. The RSF has been successful in creating partnerships and absorbing smaller militias into its structure without changing their chains of command and loyalty. With its military organization, logistical capabilities, and control of the economic surplus, the RSF has provided social services that are similar to the recommendations of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. The Rapid Support Forces have dug wells, provided healthcare and vaccination campaigns, supervised rural extension, and promoted the development of entrepreneurial skills. In addition, the Sudan's most successful militia, organized patrols to secure harvests, protected

Transhuman routes from Kordofan and Darfur pastures to export markets in Libya and Egypt, absorbed unskilled labor on a permanent and seasonal basis, and provided a gateway for exporting labor in the form of fighters to participate in the wars of kings and emirs of the Arabian Peninsula. Production was extracted from the rural areas through organized chains of people and weapons to reach large merchants, with large storage capacities in major markets connected to manufacturers and exporters, as part of the militarization of rural production in the neoliberal Topic of chaos.¹⁸

Various large markets were established in different regions to serve as collection and connection points for food production in the main towns. El Fasher connected Western Sudan and was connected to both El Geneina on the Western Border with Chad, and Nyala which in turn was connected to both South Sudan and Central African Republic. El Obeid linked western, central, and southern Sudan, while Kadugli linked south Sudan to southern Sudan. Damazin and Gedaref connected central and eastern Sudan with Ethiopia and Eritrea. Port Sudan connected international markets for the export of agricultural and livestock products and the import of wheat and flour. Dongola connected Northern Sudan and was the main market for locally-produced wheat. Khartoum was not only a point for connecting food markets, but also, containing most of the infrastructure

for the food and veterinary treatment industries in Sudan; grain mills, oil, dairy and feed factories, vaccine and vaccine manufacturing plants, and other industries supporting agriculture and food systems such as plastic industries, fuel and gas storage and distribution centers, banks, agricultural companies, Agricultural, livestock and aquatic research and development centers, and federal state institutions.

Seconds from Disaster

The rural areas' production efforts provided Sudan's entire export earnings, half of which was food production; cash crops, forest products, livestock, and the other half of gold and petroleum. These efforts have been unable to pay the bills for imported wheat bread as part of the high-cost consumption patterns that Sudanese governments have relied on for decades to support the urban middle classes in order to ensure continued social stability and political peace. Successive governments have responded to this balance of payments tilt with violent waves of austerity and economic liberalization.¹⁹

Sudan's food system has been severely damaged by several factors in recent years - including austerity shocks, political conflict, the COVID-19 pandemic, local violence and conflicts,

droughts and floods, outbreaks of plant and animal diseases and pests, rising energy costs, and deteriorating security, particularly in Blue Nile, South and West Darfur, and South and West Kordofan. These factors have combined to create record levels of acute hunger, reaching Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC)'s "phase 3" in March 2023. This level of hunger has affected 11.7 million people, or one in four of the population, with 3.1 million people requiring humanitarian relief in Phase 4. The regions most affected by acute hunger are North, Central and West Darfur, Khartoum and Kassala, while White Nile has recorded the highest number of IPC's Phase 3 and Phase 4 cases.²⁰ Over 3 million children under the age of five suffered from wasting in 2022. More than 611 thousand children have experienced severe acute malnutrition and 2.4 million have experienced moderate acute malnutrition, and more than 936 thousand pregnant and nursing women have been severely malnourished and are in need of treatment.²¹

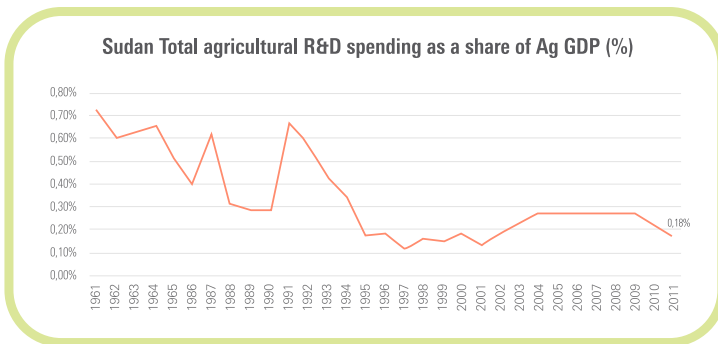
The ongoing collapse of the currency has been followed by a steady rise in the prices of imported goods, including agricultural production inputs. The cost of the food basket increased by about 25% compared to the previous year. The prices of millet and peanuts increased by 71% and 59% respectively, and despite the harvest of the last season at the beginning of the year, the prices of flour increased by 11% compared to the

previous year.²² These increases have tightened household diet, especially during the months of hunger.²³ Farmers in North and Central Darfur, North and West Kordofan, Sennar, Gedarif, Kassala and the northern regions also complained of marketing problems due to high transportation prices, poor infrastructure and insecurity.²⁴ The prices of fuel and agricultural production inputs inflated to 90% in late 2022, eroding the effects of the productivity increase achieved in the same year 2022; the amount produced of millet, corn, and wheat grains reached 7.4 million tons, 13% above the average of the previous five years and 45% increase from 2021 production, but cereal prices remained high.²⁵ The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has predicted that wheat production will decline by 30% from the previous year to about 476,000 tonnes for the March 2023 harvest, and that cotton, sesame and sunflower production will decline in 2023 compared to previous years. FAO attributed this decline to a number of reasons, all of which hindered

agricultural activities, including severe shortages of improved seeds and other inputs such as fertilizers, pesticides and tools, high prices of available ones, scarcity of agricultural financing, high costs of agricultural labor, and deteriorating security.²⁶

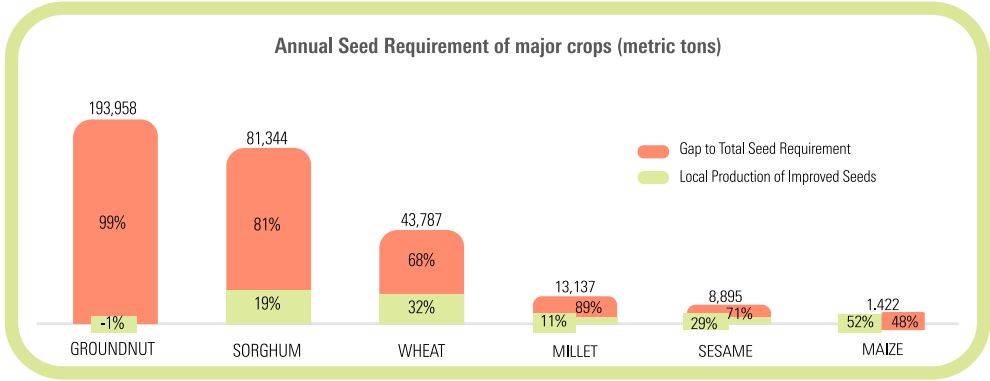
The state has invested less than 1% of the agricultural national product in agricultural R&D, as shown in Figure 6. In 1996, the seed production department was also transformed into a regulator for the private sector, which preferred to invest in activities with short capital cycles, like importing tractors, due to political and economic instability. This left available 11.5% of the country's need for improved seeds (Figure 7).²⁸ Small farmers and pastoralists were unable to receive extension, financing, and agricultural insurance. The Agricultural Bank financed traders and large farmers, providing less than 1% of its financing to small farmers and pastoralists, as shown in Figure 8.²⁹

Figure 6: Total expenditure on agricultural R&D as a percentage of agricultural GDP



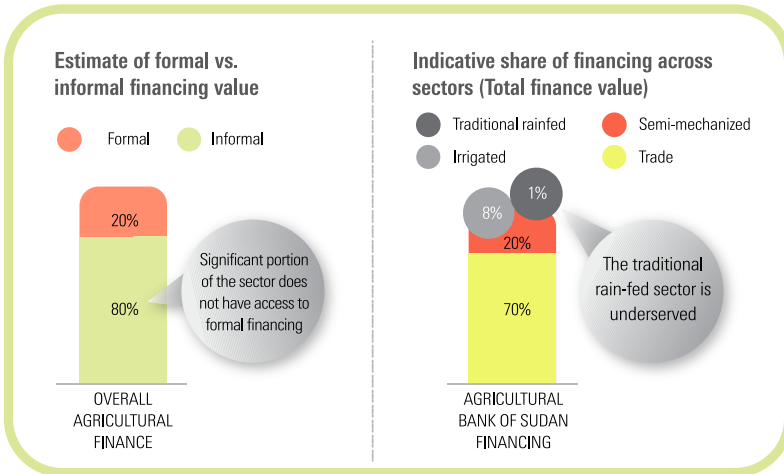
Source:(ASTI, 2022)

Figure 7: Current gap in improved seeds



Source: (ALTA, 2021)

Figure 8: Current gap in agricultural financing

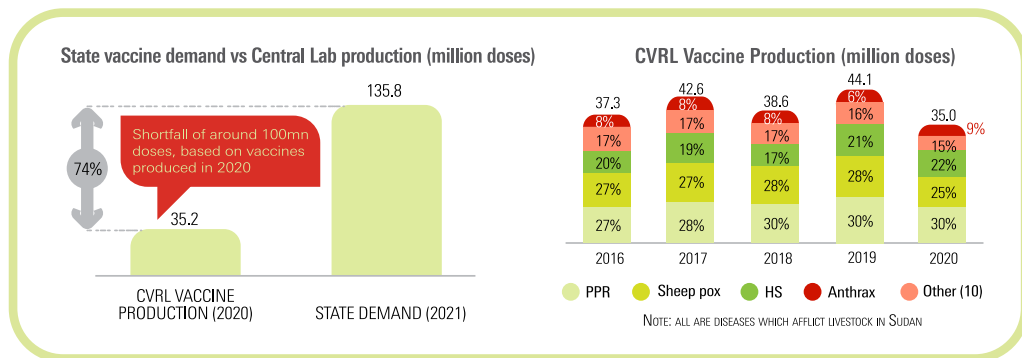


Source: (ALTA, 2021)

Farmers borrowed from local traders at the highest interest rates, and replanted the same seeds on the same land for multiple seasons until their genetic makeup deteriorated, became vulnerable to diseases and pests, and their ability to withstand climate shocks decreased, and as a result their production weakened. As for livestock,

animal epidemics including PPR, sheep and camel pox, African horse disease, and anthrax have spread in light of the deterioration of veterinary services and the scarcity of vaccines and serums; the production of the Central Veterinary Research Laboratory covered only 26% of the country's need for vaccines and serums in 2020 (Figure 9).³⁰

Figure 9: Current gap in the production of serums and types of serums produced



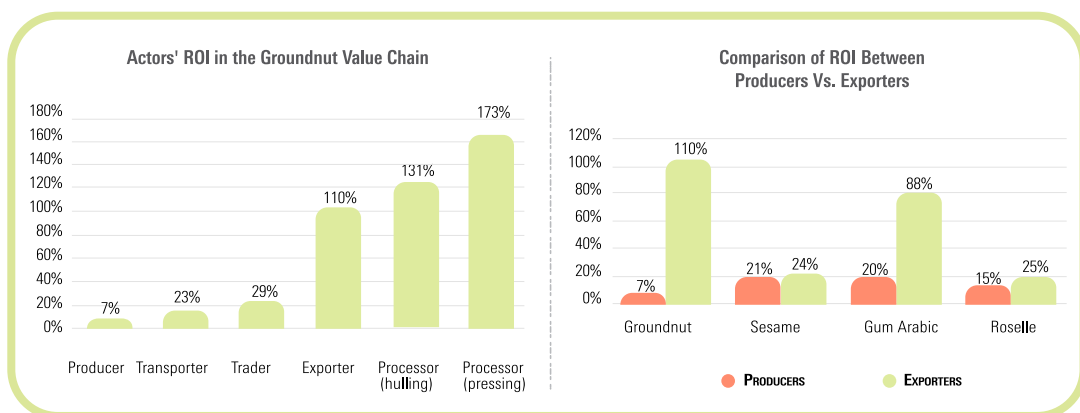
Source: (ALTA, 2021)

The state abdicated its responsibility of constructing grain storage infrastructure to the private mills. These mills built silos in the city of Port Sudan to facilitate the flow of imported wheat. However, these silos only have the capacity to store enough wheat for the country's need for 69 days. On the other hand, the state concentrated its strategic reserve of millet and sorghum in the east of the country, also in the city

of Gedaref, with a capacity sufficient for only 20 days of consumption, most of which lies in the west of the country, where the population density is highest.³¹

The revenues of the agricultural process for small producers decreased to 7% of the production of peanuts in Darfur, compared to 110% for exporters, and 173% for its manufacturers (Figure 10).³²

Figure 10: Percentages of ROI of agricultural value chain actors



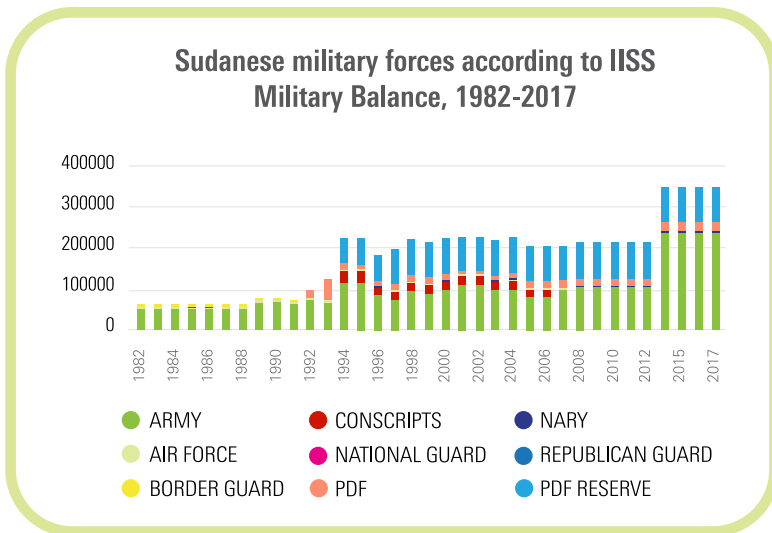
Source: (ILO, 2017).

In order to escape hunger, disease and civil strife, many people in rural areas have left food production behind and moved to other areas. Some have gone to mine gold, while others have migrated outside of Sudan or towards Khartoum. Those who went to Khartoum often took up marginal occupations in exchange for food and basic services. As a result, Khartoum grew to support nearly a third of Sudan's population, providing most of their calories through imported wheat milled in Khartoum. It also expanded flour and sugar distribution networks towards food production extraction points in the rural areas, until there

were many bakeries in remote villages where bread was not part of the table in the recent past. In 2021, approximately 75% of the total wheat consumed in the country was imported.³³

The Sudanese state met the inflationary waves in the currency, which exceeded 400% in 2021, with inflationary waves in rural militias and armed forces, as indicated by the estimates of the Military Balance Bulletin³⁴ (Figure 11), or as Edward Thomas and Majdi al-Jazouli called "the real cost of austerity," illustrates the steady increase in troops that do not include thousands of rebel militia soldiers.

Figure 11: Sudanese military forces by military balance (1982-2017)



Source: (Thomas & El Gizouli, 2021)

Doomsday scenario

On the morning of the 15th of April 2023, the Sudanese state was awakened by the outbreak of armed clashes between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Militia in the center of the capital, Khartoum, and the geography of the fighting quickly spread to include El Geneina in West Darfur, Nyala in South Darfur, Zalingi in Central Darfur, El Fasher in North Darfur, and El Obeid in North Kordofan, and the battlefield is still expanding.

In its first month, the war destroyed most of Khartoum's industrial and food logistics infrastructure. Warplanes bombed residential buildings, hospitals, factories, farms, and warehouses. Infantry soldiers looted warehouses, banks, businesses, farms, and vehicles, and burned markets and government records. The displacement of workers and employees and the disruption of supply chains; manufacturing of food, animal feed and animal medicines is completely discontinued. The attacks also affected United Nations organizations, killing and wounding a number of WFP staff in Kabkabiya, Northern Darfur, while on duty³⁵, and the main program complex in Khartoum was looted.³⁶

The cycle of destruction continued to widen and its spillover effects became

more apparent. In Khartoum, Amer Ali al-Hajj, a resident of the city, recounted scenes from the aftermath of April 15: Most of the city was cut off from water, shops were emptied of food, and energy sources were drastically reduced, prompting people to cut down thirsty trees and use them to cook. Food waste disappeared from the streets; dogs ferocity, sheep dying, and bird migration were observed as hunger and thirst intensified.³⁷

Prices for livestock, poultry and fish feed inputs doubled, and concentrated feed, medicines, and veterinary services disappeared. One month after the start of the war, Mohamed Hemoudi, an egg and poultry producer, lost 75% of his chicken,³⁸ and dairy farmers struggled to find a market for their goods, whose prices had fallen sharply. Warplanes bombed the Muwaileh market, which led to the martyrdom of dozens of market people and the death of hundreds of camels, cows and sheep inside the quarries,³⁹ and the foot soldiers continued to loot herds of cattle from barns and farms, as told by Muhammad Yasser, the owner of a sheep pen, who was forced within a group to deport their herds to Gezira state after the intensification of looting campaigns on them.⁴⁰

Outside Khartoum, the prices of fruits and vegetables produced in the cliffs and rural orchards that usually went to Khartoum markets have plummeted.

Mutasim al-Hajj, a small vegetable farmer in al-Mafaza locality in the Gedaref state, shared his dilemma related to the uncertainty of the fate of his tomato production, especially in the absence of cold storage capacities or means to add value for long-term storage.⁴¹ Farmers in the irrigated sector were also unable to complete their harvest of cotton, wheat, and alfalfa. Abdullah Mahdi, manager of a central pivot irrigation wheat production project in the northern state, described the scene as follows: “The fuel was cut off and the project workers and guards fled for fear of armed raids. The wind, the sun, and the shepherds’ livestock tampered with the crop, and the birds, some of which I hunted, were satisfied”.⁴²

The rest of the Sudanese cities and rural areas could not bear the pressure of the displaced people of Khartoum, so the food program distributed food aid at several points, including for the first time in history, the state of Gazira which is the center of Sudanese wheat production.⁴³ In El-Obeid, warehouses, vehicles and generators of one of WFP’s largest centres in Africa serving Sudan and South Sudan were looted.⁴⁴ Khartoum’s flour and its products continued to decline, and some Darfur farmers were reportedly forced to eat their seeds before the start of the agricultural season! The impact of the war extended beyond borders to include cities in South Sudan such as Follog. Walaa Salah said she

witnessed the consumption of the last sacks of flour in Khartoum while passing through the city on her journey towards Uganda via South Sudan in the third week of the war.⁴⁵ It was also noted that the mahlab crop in the Idlib rural areas, Chad, lost three times its value as a result of the interruption of export networks that pass through Sudan.⁴⁶

The war is currently about to pose an existential threat to the Sudanese people by significantly disrupting the rainy season, which is responsible for producing most of the calories consumed in Sudan. Agricultural workers attended alongside the liquidity crisis, and funding, inputs, tools, and machinery were all absent.⁴⁷ Farmers in the irrigated sector also complained about the problems with fuel availability and water access due to uncleaned irrigation channels.⁴⁸

Seeds of sovereignty

The Sudanese people have long recognized that they need to institutionalize the cooperation that already exists in their culture (such as nafir, khatta, daftar, fazaa, fund, etc.) to fight against colonial organizing. Inspired by cooperative organizations in Egypt, farming communities in the northern region of Sudan established partnerships to provide agricultural

machinery, modern irrigation methods, and chemical fertilizers for their crops. This helped them to improve their agricultural practices and increase their yields even without cash.

The first kick-off was in 1937 with the registration of the first cooperative in the Northern State. Cooperatives then spread and diversified their purposes until consumer and service cooperatives emerged as a result of the pressure of World War II, which faced the inhabitants of cities as a shortage of food commodities. The liberation movement rose at that time and took cooperatives as a vessel of resistance.⁴⁹ The resistance continued to dig into the wall through successive popular uprisings and various organizational forms, until the December revolution came and linked the struggles of the rural areas where production is and cities where consumption is, through the formula of resistance committees.

Today, in the darkness of war, one truth remains undeniable: the seeds of cooperation among the Sudanese people remain intact despite more than a century of oppression and fear under the previous regime. The people of Sudan have been on the front lines for a long time, constantly providing possible and even impossible assistance during emergencies. With the accumulated organizational experience gained during the December revolution and the use of modern technology, emergency rooms

have been set up throughout Sudan to respond to the current war. These emergency rooms have central kitchens that provide food and drink, guarded neighborhoods, hospitals, housing for displaced people, maintained electricity networks, water stations, and published transparent reports.

While there are many official initiatives related to "saving the summer agricultural season", all small food producers know from their previous experience with this description that it is another formula for saving large farmers, traders and companies. At the grassroots level, calls for food to be freed from their grip have increased, agriculture and home self-sufficiency initiatives have spread, and small-producers, transporters and consumers have become more organized in cooperative formats to gain them greater bargaining power in the face of scarce resources and the power of commercial capital.

Dialogues are now taking place in revolutionary circles between different organizations, such as cooperatives, resistance committees, demand-based groups, research centers, other civil society organizations, and even medium and small companies, with the aim of creating a joint platform aimed at freeing the population's food from the clutches of supply and demand forces to achieve food sovereignty. The ongoing process of designing and structuring this platform aims at a

decentralized, cross-border approach, whose responsibilities are managed by technical competencies under the control and guidance of all participants.

The question that arises is whether 125 years are enough to develop a cooperative organizational model that can challenge and overcome the domination of the the Unified Grain Market system. Can such a model also transform the security outlook of the state, making it one that prioritizes meeting the needs of the people and fostering societal peace? Or will it succeed in winning this round as well, and reproduce itself?

ENDNOTES

1. علي أموازي. 2023. تأثير الحرب الروسية-الأوكرانية على صغار منتجي-ات الغذاء بالمغرب. شبكة شمال.
2. Serels. 2013. STARVATION AND THE STATE, Famine, Slavery, and Power in Sudan, 1883-1956
3. علي. تيسير. 1994. زراعة الجوع. مركز الدراسات السودانية. القاهرة.
4. Serels. 2013. STARVATION AND THE STATE, Famine, Slavery, and Power in Sudan, 1883-1956
5. علي. تيسير. 1994. زراعة الجوع. مركز الدراسات السودانية. القاهرة.
6. مجلس السيادة الانتقالي. 2021.
https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=pfbid0m2QVVvsKQDc7VjUMXAz5RB-VESQEsHVTQNSKvbMNRNu9UHa4qeJMdNqSuC1ZcvCZ3el&id=104316004277265&mibextid=Nif5oz
77. علي. عبد القادر. 1990. من التبعية إلى التبعية: صندوق النقد الدولي والاقتصاد السوداني. دار. المستقبل العربي. القاهرة.
8. سليمان. محمد. 2006. السودان حروب الموارد والهوية. دار عزة للنشر. الخرطوم.
9. مجدي. الجزولي. 2023.
https://stillsudan.blogspot.com/2023/03/blog-post.html?m=1&fbclid=IwAR2Y-zMWzW3kHrR27FRqW8YZLFmF2maH8Bte_2NNs7pH5G_a7XoReWdBK-Y
10. World Bank. 2015. Sudan COUNTRY ECONOMIC MEMORANDUM Realizing the Potential for Diversified Development
11. World Bank. 2015. Sudan COUNTRY ECONOMIC MEMORANDUM Realizing the Potential for Diversified Development

12. World Bank. 2015. Sudan COUNTRY ECONOMIC MEMORANDUM Realizing the Potential for Diversified Development
13. FAO. June 2023. The Sudan: DIEM – Data in Emergencies situation overview – Ongoing conflict and emerging issues
14. World Bank. 2015. Sudan COUNTRY ECONOMIC MEMORANDUM Realizing the Potential for Diversified Development
15. World Bank. 2020. Sudan Agriculture Value Chain Analysis
16. Ibid
17. Thomas & El Gizouli. 2021. “Creatures of the Deposed: Connecting Sudan’s Rural and Urban Struggles”. <https://stillsudan.blogspot.com/2021/>
18. Ibid
19. Ibid
20. FSC (Food Security Cluster). 2023. Sudan FSL Sector Meeting presentation. Rome. <https://fscluster.org/sudan/document/sudan-fsl-sector-meeting-presentation>
21. OCHA (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs). 2022. Sudan: Humanitarian
22. FAO. 2023. The Sudan: DIEM – Data in Emergencies Monitoring brief, round 4 – Results and recommendations, April 2023. Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cc5313en>
23. WFP. 2023b. Hunger set to hit record high in Sudan as fighting continues. In: WFP. Rome. <https://www.wfp.org/news/hunger-set-hit-record-high-sudan-fighting-continues>
24. FAO. 2023b. The Sudan: DIEM – Data in Emergencies Monitoring brief, round 4 – Results and recommendations, April 2023. Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cc5313en>

25. FAO. 2023. Special report – 2022 FAO Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission (CFSAM) to the Sudan. CFSAMs Special Reports, March 2023. Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cc5009en>
26. FAO. 2023. The Sudan: DIEM – Data in Emergencies Monitoring brief, round 4 – Results and recommendations, April 2023. Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cc5313en>
27. ASTI. 2022. TOTAL AGRICULTURAL R&D SPENDING (EXCL. PRIVATE FOR-PROFIT SECTOR). <https://www.asti.cgiar.org/sudan?country=SDN>
28. ALTA. 2021. Sudan Agriculture and Livestock Transformation Study - Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. (2019). Sudan Seed Sector Study.
29. ALTA. 2021. Sudan Agriculture and Livestock Transformation Study-(Agriculture Bank of Sudan Annual Report 2017 – 2019, FAO 2019 Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission (CFSAM) to the Sudan)
30. ALTA. 2021. Sudan Agriculture and Livestock Transformation Study – Potential Focus Areas
31. World Bank. 2015. Sudan COUNTRY ECONOMIC MEMORANDUM Realizing the Potential for Diversified Development
32. ILO. 2017. Natural Resource Management Project for Sustainable Livelihoods
33. FAO. 2021. Special Report – 2020 FAO Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission (CFSAM) to the Republic of the Sudan. Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cb4159en>
34. Thomas & El Gizouli. 2021. “Creatures of the Deposed: Connecting Sudan’s Rural and Urban Struggles”. <https://stillsudan.blogspot.com/2021/>
35. WFP. April 2023. <https://www.wfp.org/news/statement-wfp-executive-director-developments-sudan>
36. UN. May 2023. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/05/1136447>
37. Amer Ali Al-Hajj. 2023. <https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story>

38. Interviews. 2023. Mohammed Haimudi, Muhammad Ali. Own a poultry farm
39. Central Resistance Committees. 2023. <https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story>
40. Interview. 2023. Muhammad Yasir. Barn owner in Khartoum
41. Interview. 2023. Moatasem Hajj. Owner of an orchard in Gedaref state, Al-Mafaza locality
42. Interview. 2023. Abdullah Mahdi. Project manager for agricultural hubs in northern Sudan
43. WFP. 2023. https://twitter.com/WFP_Sudan/status/1658002497443692545?t=UQ-sf4cM4QqCVsXsjpl6eA&s=19
44. WFP. June 2023. <https://www.wfp.org/news/statement-looting-humanitarian-warehouses-sudan>
45. Interview. 2023. Walaa Salah. Displaced from the war in Sudan in Uganda via South Sudan
46. Orient-news. 2023. https://orient-news.net/ar/news_show/204095
47. Interview. 2023. Ramy. Noor. A displaced agricultural marketing expert from Khartoum in the city of New Halfa, Kassala State
48. Alquds. 2023. <https://tinyurl.com/4c3d7maf>
49. UNDP. 2020. دليل الشبكة للتثقيف والتوعية في التعاونيات.

APPENDIX

(miscellaneous pictures of the Sudanese diet)

Small farmers - Kalmendo locality - El Fasher countryside - North Darfur State



Muwaileh market, the largest livestock market after being bombed



Displaced people – Khadija camp – Sinja – Sennar State

(talks on integrating IDPs as small new producers in the local production process)



Workers at Siqa Grain Mills, Sudan's largest mill, strike on May 28



Farmers in northern Sudan oppose the increase in electricity tariffs and shut down the export sail with barricades after the October 25, 2021 coup



