



# LESSONS LEARNED AND GOOD PRACTICES IN NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

First published in March 2020 by the United Nations Environment Programme  
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Design and layout: Ahmad Reza Amiri

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# ACRONYMS

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<b>ADAPT!</b>	Adapt for Environment and Climate Resilience in Sudan
<b>AFD</b>	French Development Agency
<b>ARC</b>	Agricultural Research Corporation
<b>BIRDP</b>	Butana Integrated Rural Development Project
<b>DFID</b>	United Kingdom's Department for International Development
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
<b>FNC</b>	Forests National Corporation
<b>FOB</b>	Free On-Board
<b>GAPAs</b>	Gum Arabic Producer Associations
<b>GCF</b>	Green Climate Fund
<b>GoS</b>	Government of Sudan
<b>IFAD</b>	International Fund for Agricultural Development
<b>IWRM</b>	Integrated Water Resources Management
<b>MENRPD</b>	Ministry of Environment, Natural Resources and Physical Development
<b>MIS</b>	Market Information System
<b>NCE</b>	National Council for Environment
<b>NRM</b>	Natural Resource Management
<b>OECD</b>	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
<b>RPGD</b>	Range and Pasture General Directorate
<b>SDG</b>	Sudanese Pound
<b>SSGASS</b>	Support in Structuring the Gum Arabic Sector in Sudan Project
<b>UNAMID</b>	United Nations - African Union Hybrid Operation in Darfur
<b>UNEP</b>	United Nations Environment Programme
<b>UoK</b>	University of Khartoum
<b>WEK</b>	Wadi El Ku Catchment Management Project
<b>WSRMP</b>	Western Sudan Rangelands Management Project
<b>ZOA</b>	Dutch Non-Governmental Organisation

## THE ADAPT! PROJECT

Sudan's people and ecosystems are under increasing pressure from rapid population growth, overuse of scarce water resources, deforestation and land-grabbing. Climate change and variability aggravates these stresses.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Government of Sudan (GoS)<sup>1</sup>, in collaboration with the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID), are implementing a project that seeks to influence transformative change for the environment in Sudan.

By elevating the environment as an issue and engaging a wide range of audiences in strategic sectors, the ADAPT! project will have a lasting impact on people's lives in Sudan.

The expected project outcomes are:

1. Integration of good practices for environmental management, governance and climate resilience into humanitarian and development projects.
2. Utilization of country- and sector-specific environmental data by practitioners and policymakers for strategic planning and decision-making.
3. Improvement in policies and institutions.



*Climate change and land degradation are becoming real threats to Sudan. Overgrazing is one of the main factors contributing to environmental degradation in the country. © David Jensen, UNEP*

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1. Sudan's Ministry of Environment, Natural Resources and Physical Development (MENRPD) was UNEP's government counterpart, which has been replaced by the National Council for Environment (NCE) in the ex-political structure of the Government of Sudan (GoS) in 2018.

## INTRODUCTION

Development planners and practitioners in Sudan have supported many projects on better Natural Resource Management (NRM) since the 1960s. However, lessons learned have often not been documented and properly communicated. Project reports tend to get lost and lessons learned are forgotten. Many practitioners shy away from reading lengthy reports (Hamid, 2017).

The lack of learning and communication of good practices undermines the effectiveness of development funding. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Forests National Corporation (FNC), the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, the Range and Pasture General Directorate (RPGD), the Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Wildlife and other partners wish to facilitate the exchange of lessons learned (Abdel Majid, 2017).

The first step of the process was made in May 2017, with the collection of available documents from 16 partners throughout Sudan, mostly for the period 2012–2017.<sup>2</sup> The lessons learned, and good practices published in these documents were then incorporated into four themes. The second step was to distribute four summaries to all partners. The third step, in November 2017, was to organize a workshop for practitioners dealing with lesson learning in their organizations. Finally, comments and recommendations made during the workshop were incorporated and draft themes were reviewed. In 2018, the four themes were translated into Arabic, printed and then disseminated in Sudan to NRM practitioners for further review and later finalised in 2019 by incorporation of comments and suggestions. The four themes are on:

1. Supporting livestock corridor management.
2. Registering and managing forests and rangelands.
3. Providing support to smallholder gum arabic farmers.
4. Developing synergy between Integrated Water Resources Management and Natural Resource Management.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) defines lessons learned as “Generalizations based on evaluation experiences with projects, programs, or policies that abstract from the specific circumstances to broader situations” (OECD, 2002). The four themes mentioned above therefore attempt to generalize location-specific project conditions into the larger Sudan context.

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2. The contributing organizations are (in alphabetical order): the French Development Agency's (AFD) Gum Arabic Sector in Sudan Project (GASS), the Agricultural Research Corporation's (ARC) Forestry Research Division, the Butana Integrated Rural Development Project (BIRD), the East Nile Catchment Water Management Project, the East Darfur Natural Resource Management (NRM) Project, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Forest Carbon Sequestration Project, the Forests National Cooperation, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the Practical Action, the Range and Pasture General Directorate (RPGD), SOS Sahel, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Sudan Sustainable Natural Resource Management Project, the University of Khartoum's (UoK) Forestry Faculty, the Wadi El Ku Catchment Management Project (WEK), the Western Sudan Rangelands Management Project (WSRMP) and ZOA.

## LESSONS LEARNED

The cross-cutting lessons learned apply to the four themes. In fact, many are so general that they may apply to most rural development sectors such as agriculture, water and education.

### 1. ASSESS GOOD PRACTICES

A good practice one year may not be so good years later and may even become a bad practice. One example is the introduction of mesquite trees in the 1960s. It was considered a good practice at the time to combat desertification. This changed in the 1980s when it spread in eastern Sudan and was considered an invasive species to be eradicated. This example shows that what can be considered a good practice somewhere may also be considered a bad practice elsewhere. One project presentation during the November 2017 workshop used mesquite growth as an example of how to fix sand dunes to protect valuable cropland. In another presentation, mesquite was considered a pest. Therefore, the generalization of lessons learned to the whole of Sudan may not always be possible (Abdel Majid, 2017).

Critical evaluation of what works and what does not, under what conditions, is constantly required. For example, livestock corridor management is generally accepted as a good practice to manage pastoral-farmer relations. However, projects rarely take soils into account. Frequent livestock passage on heavy Gardud soils (depleted marginal sandy soils) leads to compaction and soil degradation. It may be impracticable to avoid crossing Gardud soils, but local negative impacts should at least be considered for all good practices. It is therefore important to critically assess good practices under local conditions (SOS Sahel, 2012; RPGD, 2013).



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