

Report on Mission to Khartoum, Sudan  
From 25 to 30 March 2018

**Objective of the mission:**

Official mission to meet partner institutions and strengthen partnership and collaboration with Sudan

Launching of the blue economy initiative starting with the survey and data collection

**Composition of the delegation:**

Lilia Hachem Naas, Director, SRO-NA

Amal Elbeshbishi, Economic Officer,

Alaa Kolkaila, ECA Research Fellow

**Institutions/high level officials met during the mission:**

- Minister of Economy and Finance
- Minister of Minerals
- Minister of State of Foreign Affairs
- Minister of State of Commerce
- Governor of Central Bank
- Ministry of Labor
- Ministry of Industry
- Central Bureau of Statistics
- Director General AOAD
- Director General BADEA

More specifically with regards to the work on the blue economy

- National Council for Strategic Planning
- Ministry of Agriculture and Forests
- Ministry of Environment, Natural Resource and Physical Development
- Sea Ports Cooperation
- Ministry of Transport, Roads and Bridges
- Ministry of Tourism, Antiquities and Wildlife

**General comments:**

With lifting of sanctions, Sudan's technical assistance needs are huge to bridge the 20 years' gap, however it is generally felt that ECA is rather absent and passive versus ESCWA that is more active and brings in more resources. There is a need for ECA to build partnership with MENA departments within donors and development partners entities, as they generally cover North Africa, including Sudan.

Summary of discussions	Follow up action
<p>Minister of Economy and finance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Scattered approach to Sudan without follow up with concrete activities. Two MoUs signed one recently by the previous ES. Latest activities: needs assessment mission conducted by CDD in oct 2017 and discussion with IDEP to strengthen Academic institution within the ministry.</li> <li>- The ministry submitted an official request to the mission, that includes an orientation tour, strengthening the capacity of the staff at the ministry and particularly the PPP Unit, and building training capacity of the academic institute to become a regional hub. The PPP Unit, which is newly established, could also benefit from Advisory services provided by ECA to structure itself effectively based on other countries experience.</li> <li>- The minister expressed keen interest in the work related to the Blue Economy and suggested to build on the strong experience of Sudan in this area, though a lot of additional efforts are still needed in water management, environment protection, energy production using hydraulic power, transportation and logistics infrastructure, etc....</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Follow up and coordinate with IDEP, CDD a common approach in responding to Sudan needs and implementation</li> <li>- For the blue economy, consider doing a regional workshop in Sudan, to present results</li> <li>- Consider concrete actions that can be delivered in the short terms to rebuild credibility</li> <li>- Connect with ESCWA for better coordination and cooperation in the region, to avoid creating unhealthy competition</li> </ul>
<p>Ministry of Foreign Affairs</p> <p>This was a courtesy visit. The Minister of State was very keen to see ECA more involved and more active in Sudan, there are high expectations for UNECA to provide assistance to Sudan, particularly to help Sudan improve its macro-economic policies and build a more conducive environment to attract investment, increase trade and support sustainable economic growth. Focus on Sudan integration within the African continent is a priority. MFA wishes to have the regional workshop on the Blue Economy organized in Sudan</p>	<p>Add focal point contact in our list. Keep Ministry informed of our activities in Sudan</p>
<p>Ministry of Industry and Ministry for Trade:</p> <p>It was a courtesy call. Both ministries emphasized the need for capacity building and advisory services, and strengthening data collection, analysis and dissemination.</p>	<p>Continue discussion to identify more specific needs.</p>
<p>Ministry of Minerals:</p> <p>Mining is an important part of the Sudan economy however it is currently done in an artisanal way with very basic techniques with low productivity. With lifting of US sanctions, Sudan needs technical assistance to upgrade and better integrate mining activities to contribute to inclusive and sustainable development. TA is needed at all steps and in particular in negotiating contracts and promoting small scale mining. Some collaboration has taken place in the past with AMDC. New request for technical assistance will be submitted to ECA for consideration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Follow up with HQ team dealing with mining and mining contracts issues on the possibility to have specific technical assistance project on contracts negotiation, and to have a south-south cooperation between Sudan and Burkina Faso to learn for its experience in promoting small scale mining Units that are effective.</li> </ul>

<p>Central bureau of statistics</p> <p>The Bureau is the SDGs focal point. It is also the host of the national commission on SDGs that involved all key stakeholders.</p> <p>CBS is undertaking a big project to collect all statistics related to the 238 indicators of SDGs.</p> <p>During my visit, there was an ECA consultant working with CBS undertaking an assessment (to check with ACS as SRO-NA was not aware of this mission)</p> <p>ESCWA is working with CBS on producing an annual statistics directory</p> <p>Experts meeting on statistics will take place in Sudan in Nov. 2018</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- get more information about ACS work in Sudan</li> <li>- get more information about upcoming experts workshop on stats</li> <li>- coordinate work with ESCWA</li> <li>- involve CBS in SRO-NA work particularly in the EGM on data revolution</li> </ul>
<p>Ministry of labor:</p> <p>Undertook a survey on employment in Sudan with MEF</p> <p>Defined a new national strategy for employment with support of UNDP.</p> <p>Huge needs: equipment (350 electronic devices) to collect data, training to use mobile technology to collect and analyze data</p> <p>Interested in contributing to our EGM on data revolution.</p> <p>Interested in capacity building in area of statistics and data collection</p> <p>Interested in south-south cooperation particularly to learn from other countries in the sub-region on successful programmes and strategy implementation on employment promotion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Get new employment strategy</li> <li>- Share with ministry EGM report on employment</li> <li>- Ministry to be actively involved in our planned activities and in developing our area of specialisation</li> </ul>
<p>Meeting with UNCT:</p> <p>The monthly meeting of UNCT happened during the time the mission was in Sudan. The UNCT meeting was chaired by the UNRC, and included a large group of UN institutions that are present in Sudan. The team welcomed ECA initiative to connect with the UNCT, as it does not usually happen. The discussion focused on how ECA could better collaborate and work with UNCT. We agreed that the first step is to improve communication in both direction. SRO-NA will share studies and knowledge products produced by ECA. SRO-NA will be included in the mailing list to be informed about activities undertaken by UNCT Sudan. The presentation related to the Roadmap on coordinating implementation of SDGs was shared for possible feedback and ensure better coordination with UN system in Sudan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Share report on implementation of SDGs at regional level</li> <li>- Share the regional profile</li> <li>- Share the country profile of Sudan</li> </ul>
<p>Arab Organisation for Agricultural development</p> <p>The meeting with Dr. El-dukheri, DG AOAD was a follow up to the institution participation in the SRCM North Africa. AOAD built an alliance with FAO working on Palm Dates. AOAD is undertaking a study with CEN-SAD with support of BADEA on agriculture sector. AOAD wishes to strengthen collaboration with UNECA in the area of Agriculture and food security. In this context, AOAD was invited to join FAO in coordinating the inputs to the SRCM Roadmap in the area of Food Security. The need to coordinate our work with ESCWA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Follow up with AOAD on implementation of the roadmap on food security.</li> <li>- Follow up on the organization of the Arab-Africa Summit</li> <li>- Find out more information on AOAD work in the context of G5 Sahel</li> </ul>

<p>was highlighted. Next Arab-Africa Summit will be organized in Saudi Arabia. Given the political situation in the region, there is no certainty that the meeting will actually take place. With regards to the G5 Sahel, AOAD, with support from BADEA, is working on strengthening the fisheries sector.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continue collaboration with AOAD in the context of the Roadmap on implementing SDGs</li> </ul>
<p>DG BADEA:</p> <p>Sharing of know-how, North African countries can be used for knowledge transfer and experience sharing with countries in sub-Saharan Africa. BADEA is considering support to Gambia on GDP rebasing where SRO-NA experience in Mauritania could be used as a model.</p> <p>SRO-NA cooperation with BADEA has to be under the umbrella of tripartite collaboration as BADEA does not provide funding for Arab countries including those in North Africa (seven countries covered by SRO-NA countries to the exception of Sudan in some cases).</p> <p>Areas of interest: youth employment, promoting start-ups/incubation services, renewable energy and blue economy, value chains development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Follow up to identify a concrete project that could be initiated as a pilot case, related to areas of interest. Youth employment and development of regional value chains is a natural fit with area of specialization of SRO-NA, focus on renewable energy and blue economy presents great potential.</li> </ul>

## **Blue Economy:**

### **Background**

Prior to the mission, a qualitative survey was designed and disseminated across member States with the following objectives:

- Investigate the degree of encompassing the concept of "blue economy" (BE) in the concurrent national policy i.e. whether there is an existing framework for the blue economy with focus on the sub-chapters maritime transport and tourism as well as regional integration.
- Assess BE baseline data and highlight its availability.
- Explore concurrent Blue Economy initiatives on national, regional and international level as well as member State willingness to engage in the various initiatives

### **Blue Economy – Sudanese Case Study**

Technically, all objectives of the survey were met and further discussions with the various teams were tackled. Among the main findings

- Sudan has a moderate degree of awareness of the BE across its various ministries. The BE sectors were encompassed individually across the long strategic plan (2007-2031) i.e. on sectorial basis, however the base for national strategy was the Green Economy principles. This was stemmed from food security objective Sudan aimed to achieve, such which have steered investment towards mega-projects aiming to serve this objective and expand the primary sector's contribution to GDP.
- Sudan's long-term plan is divided into 5 plans, each for 5 years. Currently, Sudan is half way through in terms of time and implementation thus the Sudanese government are conducting a process of evaluation and updating the original plan.
  - The National Council for Strategic Planning has presented its interest in BE knowledge base to account for the BE principles in their concurrent update for their long-term plan and their upcoming 5-year strategies.
  - They have also presented their willingness to create a separate document for the various BE sectors and their vision on them so that all BE information can be present in one document.
- BE activities in Sudan centered around both the Red Sea and Nile River which hold geographic and geo-political in the region.
  - Among the main BE activities are aquaculture, maritime transport, river transport, mining and renewable energy as well as tourism, while environmental protection bisects the previous sectors.
- Aquaculture - 70% of aquaculture and fishing activities take place along the Nile River. Several measures have been introduced to enhance and promote aquaculture accounting for environmental measures as well as support small fishermen.
  - Latest policies accounted for the benefiting of the "rain water" via collecting rain water through various techniques either via digging canals and benefiting from it in both agriculture and aquaculture.

- Accounting for the growing importance of the water resources attention is currently directed towards the seen, foreseen resources in the water (particularly mining) that exist behind the economic exclusive zones governance are among the highlighted areas for research.
  - Red Sea and Mining: Sudanese government is currently working with the Saudi government researching the possibility of extracting gas and other resources from the Red Sea.
- The invested attention on the importance of the Red Sea as a resource have been recent and encompassed maritime transport and tourism.
  - Maritime Transport – Sudan is working with the Arab Academy for Science and Technology and Maritime Transport (AASTM) to develop the strategic plan for Sudan transport. In spite that AASTM defined Sudan as a logistical hub, the government envisions the potential of having the Sudanese maritime ports as pivotal ones.
    - Recently the government has implemented several infrastructure investments to increase the capacity of the ports, particularly Port Sudan.
  - Tourism – Sudan has lately invested in promoting its touristic potential on the Red Sea. Prior, tourists were only interested in historical monuments along the river banks while Red Sea touristic activities were associated with pilgrimage and travels to KSA.
    - To support the Red sea touristic policies, infrastructure development has been introduced i.e. further hotels and lounges for tourists.
    - In 2016, Sudan has registered several Marine Protected Areas (MPA) – Sanganeb Atoll and Dunganob Bay and Mukkawar Island - at the UNESCO.
    - Tourism has a limited amount of labor force operating whether in public or private sector. In term of technical skills, labor force acquire further training plans and programs to promote their skills and knowledge.
    - Despite the potential of the Red Sea in attracting divers and more tourists to its coral reefs and MPAs nonetheless yield is considered below its potential. Causes could be attributed due to the lack of infrastructure and outreach.
- River Transport – has been limited the past period due to environmental reasons.
  - Climate change has realized a decline in the water level in the north, thus vast ships could not sail while those that did were relatively smaller in size (scow) mainly transporting food staples. Sailing between Khartoum and Kusti became nearly inexistent however it still mildly exists between Kusti and Juba.
  - Ministry of Transport is working on bringing back the river transport between North and South Sudan. It is expected to increase the upcoming period with the infrastructure implementation to support river transport particularly for livestock transport and trade commodities.
- Environmental measures bisect horizontally across the various BE sectors, have been accounted for theoretically, however in terms of implementation further room for improvement to promote them into implemented policies with measurable goals.
  - There has been a consensus on that among the various policy makers in the different ministries on the defined room of improvement of how to the need for capacity development on how to bring forward aspirations to goals that can be measured and attained.

- BE statistics are limited across the various studied areas and present another remarkable area with room for improvement.
- Sudan has various international treaties and within its efforts to update its long term national strategic plan, is to encompass the African Union 2063 aspirations. It's interest in supporting regional cooperation is rooted in their planning process.
- Port-Sudan could serve as the capital of the blue economy accounting for aquaculture, maritime transport, tourism (air-port) and its connection to infrastructure on the Red Sea State that could allow easy transport of tourists to diving areas.

#### **Way forward:**

- Support the knowledge base for the BE that could aid concurrent National Strategic Council Planning activities.
- Disseminate the Sudanese Case study and the report upon its conclusion.
- Promote capacity development on various levels with respect to the BE activities. This could be tailored to encompass – but not limited to the following areas:
  - BE expert meeting to present the success stories across various countries and highlight the potential held by Sudan.
  - Present the correlation among the various policies implemented with respect to the BE and its translation to activities and coordination among the various parties – emphasis could be maritime transport, tourism and environment as main themes of study.