

# **Towards an Integrated and Comprehensive social policy in Sudan**

Khalil A. Al Medani  
Pro. Of Sociology  
Almedani@yahoo.com

## **UN ESCWA**

- The Government of Sudan requested the UNESCWA to help in designing a **Comprehensive Social Policy**. Since then the UNESCWA has been working through a **national focal point** to ensure wide participation of stakeholders and partners in the discussion around social policy in the Sudan.

### **The Beginning**

- An initial draft outline of the Social Policy Profile was the subject of deliberations during two Peer Review Meetings (PRMs), the first was on 26 June 2007 in Khartoum, and second on the 24 of December in Juba.
- Each meeting brought together between 30 to 35 experts from Sudan, UNDP, NGOS , to review the first draft of the report, and provide input and comments prior to its finalization.
- National Conference will be organized on Social Policy during the first half of 2008.

### **Sudan Social Policy Profile:**

- The Sudan Social Policy Country Profile is primarily intended as an analytical think-piece to trigger discussions and deliberation around key strategic policy choices and to provide an overview and quick analysis of the social policy situation in Sudan.
- The Country Profile will highlight the state of social development in the country and will seek to assess the social equity dimensions in public policy, including the processes, tools and instruments available for social policy design, implementation and monitoring.

### **Social Systems and mechanisms provided for human needs**

- Throughout history, people in their collectives or social structures, have created mechanisms, and social systems, of organizing their responses to human needs.
- These systems and mechanism change through time and space.

- They include: **mutual aid, charity-philanthropy, public welfare, social insurance, social services, fiscal support** etc.

### **Human needs**

- **Human needs usually include:**
- 1-Sufficient food, clothing and shelter for physical survival.
- 2-Safe environment and adequate health care for protection from, and treatment for, illness and accidents.
- 3-Relationship with other people that provide a sense of being cared for, loved and belonging.
- 4-Opportunities for emotional, intellectual, and spiritual growth and developments.
- Opportunities for participation in making decisions about the common life of ones own society.

### **Needs are culturally specific**

- Satisfaction of these human needs are variable geographically and changing through time (differ through time and space).
- Thus, any specification of some needs of any particular group of people, **must consider its life-style, culture and value system.** It must also consider the **physical, emotional, cognitive, social and spiritual** attributes of individuals.

### **MDGS and Human Rights**

- The milestones set within the history of the social welfare systems show how they have developed, i.e. the passage of specific social welfare legislations and the development of institutions, agencies, and programs which grow over time.
- The passage of these legislations are the climax of the processes, or movements, towards a new way of defining and providing for human needs.
- Thus **MDGS** and **Human Rights** are praised as a **universal provision for human needs and social welfare.** All countries now moved towards designing Comprehensive and Integrated Social Policy.

## What is Social Policy?

- Social Policy is a complex concept that is difficult to define.
- There are a significant variety of opinions to what Social Policy is, or should be.
- Social policy is interchangeable with terms such as **social programmes, social security system, social welfare policy and the welfare state.**
- Although these terminologies are related, yet, they are not identical.

## Fulfillment of needs

- Intrinsic to Social Policy is **fulfillment of human needs, and the correct ordering of relations in society.**
- Thus, Social Policy is **defined** as:
- The aims and objectives of **social action** concerning **needs**, as well as **structural** patterns, or **arrangements**, through which those **needs** are met.

## Social Policy as principles governing relationship among individuals and between groups:

- Others define Social Policy as the **right ordering** of (social, political and economic) **network of relationships between men and women within principles that govern their activities**, so far as they affect the lives and interests of others.
- Such **ordering** of relationships and **adherence to a certain set of principles, or values**, are bound to create a degree of **social cohesion**, rather than **tension**, among competing interest groups in society.

## Social Policy: dominant ideology or humanitarianism?

- Social Policy is a product of **dominant ideology and commitment rather than a result of humanitarianism.**
- Social **problems** are primarily the product of **conflicts involving economic and power interests. Social Policy** is basically about **choices between conflicting political objectives and goals** and their formulations: **what constitutes the good society.**

### **Social versus economic man**

- AS such, **Social Policy** is concerned with goals and objectives that culturally distinguishes between the needs and aspirations of a **social man**, in contradiction to the needs and aspiration of an **economic man**.

### **Who formulates Social Policy?**

- Social Policy is formulated not only by **government**, but also by **institutions such as voluntary organizations, business, labor, industry, professional groups, public interest groups, Mosque and Church**.
- **Social programmes** are **tools and mechanisms** through which **Social Policy** is implemented (social, political and economic), and transformed into concrete actions that affect the lives and well-being of citizens.

### **Social welfare and social security:**

- **Social welfare** programmes tend to include those programmes carried out and **implemented by voluntary or private agencies**. They also include Government endeavors and programmes run by the State.
- **Social security** refers to income maintenance and social services.
- **Social security** can be divided into **three main components**:

### **Social Security includes:**

- **1-income security** programmes that include, contributory or non-contributory, social insurance, and public assistance programmes such as employment and health insurance.
- **2- welfare services** that include counseling ( legal and social), childcare, day-care and curative or rehabilitative services.
- **3-environmental services** such as health, education, training programmes and housing.

### **Trade-off between efficiency and equity**

- Social development perspective integrates economic with **Social Policy**, following the precept that: **economic growth could benefits every citizen**.

- **Social Policy** holds that: **economic development and social progress go hand in hand**, and that there is **no contradiction** between the two.

### **New Vision: Better World for all**

- Representatives of the International Community **declared that:**
- **Poverty, in all its forms, is the greatest challenge to international community.**
- **1.2 billion** people live in less than **\$1 a day**, in addition of **1.6 billion** people live on less than **\$2 a day**.
- Setting goals to **reduce poverty is an essential** part of the way forward.
- **Dignity and honor** are the pillars of strength. All citizens have the right to a decent and honorable life, to basic human needs and to receive recognition .

### **Sudan: Huge and diversified natural resources, but:**

- Although **Sudan** has always been characterized as one of the countries in Africa that is **full of economic and social resources**, yet it is one of the **poorest** countries in the world.
- The per capita income at the dawn of independence in 1956, was **US\$78**. While:
- The per capita GDP for the **Southern Sudan** was **\$39**.
- By the end of the 1990s, the per capita income was **US\$ 341**.

### **Poor economic performance**

- Thus , over the period of **43 years** ,the country was able to grow, in nominal terms, by about **2.89 percent per annum in per capita terms**.
- Why, despite the rich and diversified resources of the Sudan, the overall economic performance is so poor?

### **Dual economy**

- Moreover, Sudan at independence, like most of sub-Saharan African countries, inherited a **dual economy**: a **large agriculturally based rural and traditional sector**,

**and a small non-agricultural based ,urban modern sector.**

- Up to the dawn of **oil export**, Sudan remained a dual economy with agriculture contributing about **55%** of the GDP, and employment about **60%** of the labor force.
- In the Southern Sudan, **80%** of the population depend for their living on **cattle raising and traditional cultivation.**

### **Conflicts and civil wars**

- The long **civil wars** and national disputes which Sudan witnessed caused big social and economic **deformities, such as increase of poverty in absolute ratio, inequality, social injustice, great number of refugees and displaced persons, and the rising of political ethnicity and tribalism.**

### **The Comprehensive Peace Agreement CPA**

The signing of the historic **Comprehensive Peace Agreement** in January 2005, has opened an **unprecedented opportunities** to turn the devastation of years of war, displacement, and underdevelopment, into a new era of peace and prosperity.

Sudan vast natural resource endowments and significant human capital, offer enormous development potentials.

### **Social Policy to achieve welfare society**

- Sudan now stands at a historic moment. After decades of civil war, which wrought enormous costs for the people of Sudan, particularly people of the **Southern Sudan**, and **other war affected areas**, the CPA represents a unique opportunity for the Sudanese people to make change of their own future, break the circle of conflict, and embark on a journey of peace and prosperity leading to the welfare society.
- **Comprehensive and Integrated Social Policy** is looked upon for achieving these goals.

### **Efforts Started**

- The National Unity Government of Sudan (NUGOS) embarked on achieving the objectives of the CPA, and the MDGS, by:

- Designing an ambitious and Strategic Five Years Plan starting 2007-2012.
- Approaching UNESCWA to help in formulating a **Comprehensive integrated Social Policy**

### **The Five-year Plan 2007-2011 objectives**

The Five-years Plan is prepared to form a social base to achieving the **nations aspirations**.

**The objectives** of the Plan are said to be:

1-Spreading the **culture of peace**, social integration, making the **values and freedoms** a reality, **filling the gaps in the different services**, attempting to achieve balanced development, practicing transparency, justice and the rule of law.

### **The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) stated that:**

- The Government of Southern Sudan (GOSS) shall:
- 1-Discharge its obligations and exercise such rights and powers in regard to administration, security, financial and development issues, etc.
- 2-Development of infrastructures, human resources, sustainable economic development and the capacity to **meet human needs** .

### **The challenges are great but hopes are greater.**

- The GOS has a golden opportunity to draw lessons from other experiences.
- 1-economic growth **without social policy** is a *limb approach*. Small strata of the population will reap the benefits, while the majority will suffer. The gap between the rich and the poor will escalate.

### **The trickle-down approach is insufficient**

- 2- **Top-bottom and trickle-down** approaches proved to escalate disparities and social unjust, which encourage instability and conflicts.
- Alternative **bottom-up and participation** approaches are recommended.

### **Poverty focused strategy**

- Higher levels of **per capita income** are no grantee of lower levels of **poverty**.

- Therefore, it is **not sufficient simply to focus on raising growth rates of GNP** in the expectation or hope that this will **trickle-down** to improve living standards for the poor.
- Direct attacks on poverty by means of **poverty-focused policies** and plans, is more effective in short and long terms.

### **GNP maximization**

- Does the pursuit of economic growth along traditional GNP maximizing lines, tend to **improve, worsen, or have no perceptible effect on distribution of income and extent of poverty in the country?**

### **Challenges of peace**

- **The CPA protocol ends the civil war between the North and the South.** But the biggest challenge is how to establish sustainable peace and security in the society.
- **Peace and security in a society** can only be established through a **Comprehensive and Integrated Social policy.**

### **From economy of war to economy of peace?**

- The big move from the **state of war** to the **state of peace**, necessitates another big move, that is, the re-allocation of economic resources to **build the welfare society.**
- **Welfare society is the save-guard of peace and security.**

### **What are the priorities?**

- 1-Policies depend on reliable and valid data base. It is top priority for the GOS to start building up a **complete data base.**
- 2- statistical data on demography, health care, education, poverty levels, un-employment, rural urban migration as well as out- country immigration, etc.

### **Oil revenues to create the big cake or to create the well-fare society?**

- Lessons learned from some African oil producers, clearly indicate that **oil** can be **a blessing or a curse** to the society.
- It is a **curse** when **few people reap** its revenues and become richer, while the majority of people become

poorer. When the **gap between the rich and poor widen**, conflicts and civil tensions escalate, and society shattered.

### **Lessons to draw**

- Real example of how oil is a curse to the society are many, in African continent as well as in other continent.
- Successful stories of how social policies are part and parcel of socioeconomic planning are vivid in Norway, Malaysia Indonesia etc.

### **The harsh reality**

- 1- Conflicts become more or less violent, more or less manifest or latent, but they seldom stop together (World Bank 2004).
- In 44 percent of all post conflict situations, war resumes in the first five years after the violence has stopped.
- 50 percent of post conflict countries revert back to war in the first decade of peace (Collier et al 2003).

### **Determinant of conflict**

- One crucial determinant of whether conflict start again is the degree of **economic and social development achieved** and the **fair distribution of its fruits to different group of the population.**
- **Pervasive poverty makes societies more vulnerable to violent conflict.**

### **Fairness and equity**

- An **interesting job** is not only an alternative to fighting, but could also give rise to a new **professional identity.**
- It is **not just economic growth** that is important, but a specific economic development that **addresses the grievances of different groups in the society.**

### **What development is about?**

- **Therefore, development is about improving the standard of living for all people, and improving health, environment, education and political participation.**
- **But what social polices could achieve these goals?**

### **Empowering individuals and communities:**

- Through **decentralization of political power and accountability**, individuals and communities will have

more control over their lives as well as creating better conditions for service delivery. Thus each locality will:

- 1-provide security of persons and property, which entails secure access to land, thereby contributing to enhanced equity.
- **2-development priorities** are set at the **local level** by the local populace.
- Reforming existing situations can be at times more difficult than starting largely new. As might be expected:
- The nature of the challenges is quite different in the North and the South. In the North the needs are for major reforms of existing system and institutions,. In the South, the human resource base is much more severely limited, some institutions are almost non-existent, and much of the key infrastructure has to be build almost from scratch. The nature of the challenge is different, but not necessarily the magnitude.

#### **UNDP Human Development Index:**

- **The UNDPs Human Development Index, represents a good tool to measure progress in this respect.**
- 3-identification of source income ( from farming or off-farm activities), and also identifying the need to develop local infrastructures such as power, water, transport to markets in towns, finance and purchasing of other inputs.
- 4-identifying access to basic education, and a package of basic health services along with water and sanitation facilities.

#### **Gender**

- The war has meant that women have carried double burden or more in the absence of husbands, brothers and fathers, thus they are under extremely difficult conditions.
- The peace represents a new opportunities and challenges for the role of women in the Sudanese society
- It calls for appropriate policies and programs and monitoring systems to ensure full participation of women in key positions.