



# Health in Sudan: Challenges, Obstacles, and Proposed Solutions

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## Abstract

This paper aims to examine the health sector in Sudan—a critical pillar that affects all other aspects of development, including education, economy, and production. Health is not merely a fundamental right of every citizen [1] but also a cornerstone for the progress and prosperity of nations. Despite its importance, the health sector in Sudan faces numerous interconnected and chronic challenges. This paper outlines the primary issues hindering health system development and offers solutions for short-, medium-, and long-term implementation.

**Keywords:** Health; challenges; Obstacles

## Introduction

Sudan, officially known as the Republic of the Sudan, is a nation located in Northeast Africa. It shares borders with the Central African Republic to the southwest, Chad to the west, Libya to the northwest, Egypt to the north, the Red Sea to the east, Eritrea and Ethiopia to the southeast, and South Sudan to the south [2]. As of 2024, Sudan has a population of 50 million individuals and covers an area of 1,886,068 square kilometres (728,215 square miles), making it the third-largest nation in Africa by land size and the third largest in the Arab League. It was the largest nation by area in both Africa and the Arab League until South Sudan became independent in 2011; since that time, Algeria holds both of those titles. The capital city and the most populated area of Sudan is Khartoum [3].

## Health in Sudan (current situation)

In Sudan, the healthcare system is weak, with health measurement remaining low and significant differences apparent between cities and countryside, as well as between the wealthy and the less fortunate. The absence of funding to

improve the healthcare system threatens more than 8 million children under the age of 5 who cannot receive vital and life-saving services. Every year, 78,000 children under 5 die from avoidable reasons like malaria, and it is predicted that this number will increase threefold if funding for the healthcare sector keeps decreasing [4].

## Key Issues and Challenges

**Financial Resources and Budget Allocation:** Given Sudan's economic difficulties, effective and transparent administration, along with the right priority and distribution of resources, can greatly enhance results. Numerous other issues facing the industry have their roots in a lack of sufficient finance.

**Human Resources:** The foundation of any health system is human capital [5]. In Sudan, Out-dated curricula, insufficient training, and a lack of on-going Healthcare workers' professional development is a crucial concern. For instance: Healthcare professionals and medical graduates lack access to modern teaching techniques and receive insufficient practical training. For different cadres, such as physicians,

nurses, and allied health workers, there are no set standards for ongoing medical education or re-certification. There are also no formal training programs for non-healthcare employees, such as support and administrative staff.

**Infrastructure and Equipment:** The state of healthcare facilities across Sudan is dire, with poor distribution of resources geographically. Urban centres, particularly Khartoum, are overwhelmed due to internal migration, driven partly by the absence of health services in rural areas. Even in cities, facilities are often dilapidated and poorly equipped, with outdated or malfunctioning diagnostic tools. Mismanagement of resources exacerbates the situation.

**Management and Leadership:** Frequent administrative changes, political interference, and lack of professional management expertise have crippled the health system. Stable, competent leadership, free from political agendas, is essential for sustainable progress. Healthcare management requires dedicated training and specialization, which are currently lacking.

**Health Policies and Systems:** A cohesive, evidence-based health policy framework [6] is missing. Critical areas such as financing, service delivery, human resource planning, and quality control lack structured policies. Reliable health data collection and management systems are also inadequate, hindering effective planning and evaluation.

## Proposed Solutions

### Short-term Measures

**Prioritization of Health Budgets:** Allocate a reasonable share of national resources to health. Use these funds effectively to upgrade essential services and infrastructure.

**Human Resource Development:** Launch targeted training programs for all health cadres, focusing on skill-building and modern practices. Ensure periodic re-certification and mandatory continuous education for healthcare professionals.

**Infrastructure Rehabilitation:** Assess existing facilities and prioritize repairs. Optimize resource use to create functional and safe environments for healthcare delivery.

**Strengthen Preventive Care:** Focus on public health campaigns and preventive measures, which are cost-effective and yield long-term benefits.

### Medium-term Measures

**Health Policy Development:** Establish clear, comprehensive health policies that address financing, service delivery, and

quality control. Include marginalized and underserved regions in planning and decision-making.

**Capacity Building in Health Management:** Train healthcare administrators in modern management techniques. Stabilize leadership positions to avoid disruptions from frequent changes.

**Enhance Health Information Systems:** Develop robust systems for data collection, analysis, and reporting to guide evidence-based decision-making.

### Long-term Measures

**Universal Health Coverage (UHC):** Gradually transition toward accessible and affordable healthcare for all [7] through government-funded or insurance-based models.

**Revamp Education and Training Systems:** Modernize the curricula in medical schools and allied health colleges. Ensure adequate facilities for practical training, such as labs and hospitals.

**Promote Research and Innovation:** Encourage research initiatives that address local health challenges.

Implement findings to improve health outcomes and policymaking.

**Community and Intersect oral Collaboration:** Engage citizens in health education and preventive practices [8]. Partner with other sectors, such as education and urban planning, to promote health holistically.

**Concluding Remarks:** Addressing the health challenges in Sudan requires a holistic and systematic approach involving government commitment, professional expertise, and community participation. The outlined solutions, though general, provide a roadmap for tackling the current crisis and building a resilient health system.

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