Beyond the Conflict: Charting a Path to Sustainable Growth and Development in Sudan

Sudan Rising Scenario

Enoch Randy Aikins

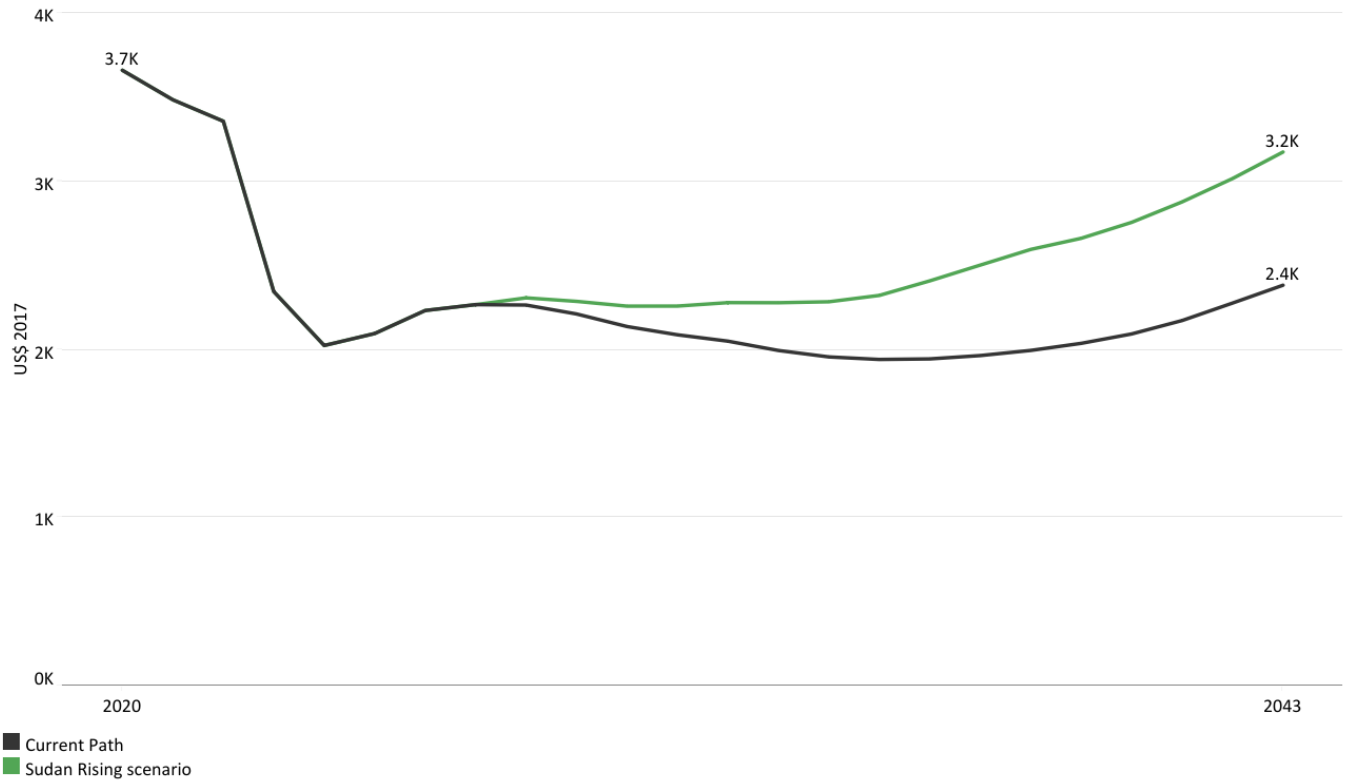
Last updated 13 April 2026 using IFs v7.45

Sudan Rising Scenario

This section discusses the impact of the Sudan Rising scenario relative to the Current Path. The Sudan Rising scenario combines all eight sectoral scenarios: Governance, Demographics and Health, Education, Large Infrastructure and Leapfrogging, Agriculture, Manufacturing, AfCFTA and Financial Flows. In the Sudan Rising scenario, Sudan's GDP will increase to US$58.2 billion by 2043, up US$19.3 billion from the Current Path. In the Sudan Rising scenario, the economy is expected to grow at an average of 5.0%, compared with the 2.4% projected in the Current Path.

In the Sudan Rising scenario, the GDP per capita will increase to US$3 176 by 2043. This will be US$792 higher than the Current Path projection of US$2 384, suggesting that the materialisation of the Sudan Rising scenario could significantly improve the living standards of the Sudanese population. The projected GDP per capita in this scenario will be US$178 more than the Current Path average for low-income countries in Africa by 2043. The results reflect the importance of a multisectoral program of interventions to rapidly improve average incomes in Sudan. The economic growth projected in the Sudan Rising scenario indicates that an integrated development push across sectors is the best way to achieve sustained inclusive growth, increase average incomes and improve living standards in Sudan.

Chart 36: GDP per capita (PPP) in the Current Path and Sudan Rising scenario, 2023-2043

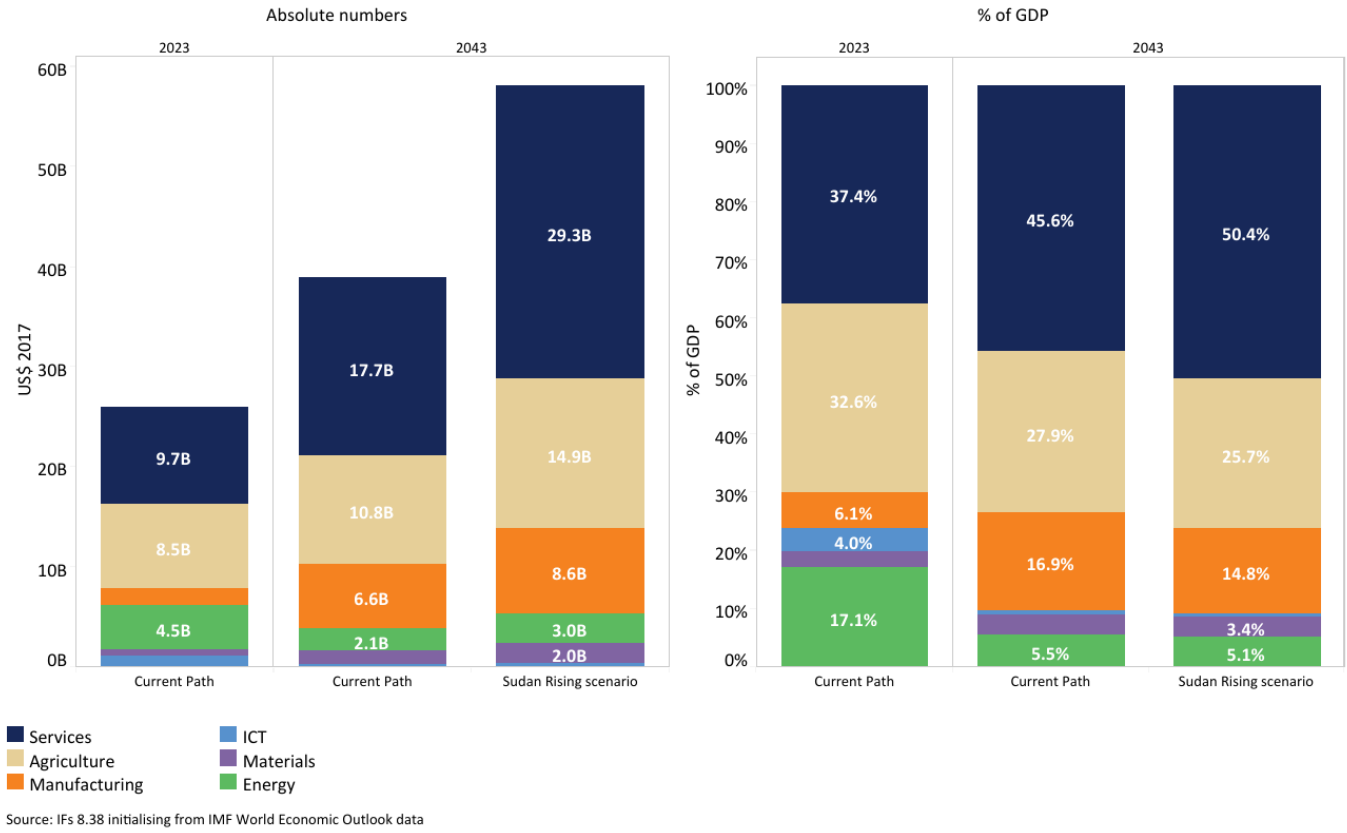


Source: IFs 8.38 initialising from IMF data

The structure of the Sudanese economy will undergo a significant transformation in the Sudan Rising scenario. The size of each sector increases in the Sudan Rising scenario (expressed in US$ terms), given the large overall increase in Sudan's economy, but their relative contributions to GDP change. By 2043, the services sector will remain the largest contributor to GDP at 50.4% (valued at US$29.3 billion), higher than the Current Path of 45.6% (valued at US$17.7 billion). The share of the agriculture sector will fall to 25.7% (valued at US$14.9) in the Sudan Rising scenario, compared to 27.9% (valued at

US$10.8) in the Current Path in 2043. The manufacturing sector will be the third-largest contributor to GDP in the scenario by 2043, with a share of 14.8% (equivalent to US$8.6 billion),below the Current Path of 16.7% (US$6.6 billion). In the Sudan Rising scenario, the share of energy, materials and ICT will decline below the Current Path to constitute 5.1%, 3.4% and 0.6%, respectively, although all will be larger in absolute terms.

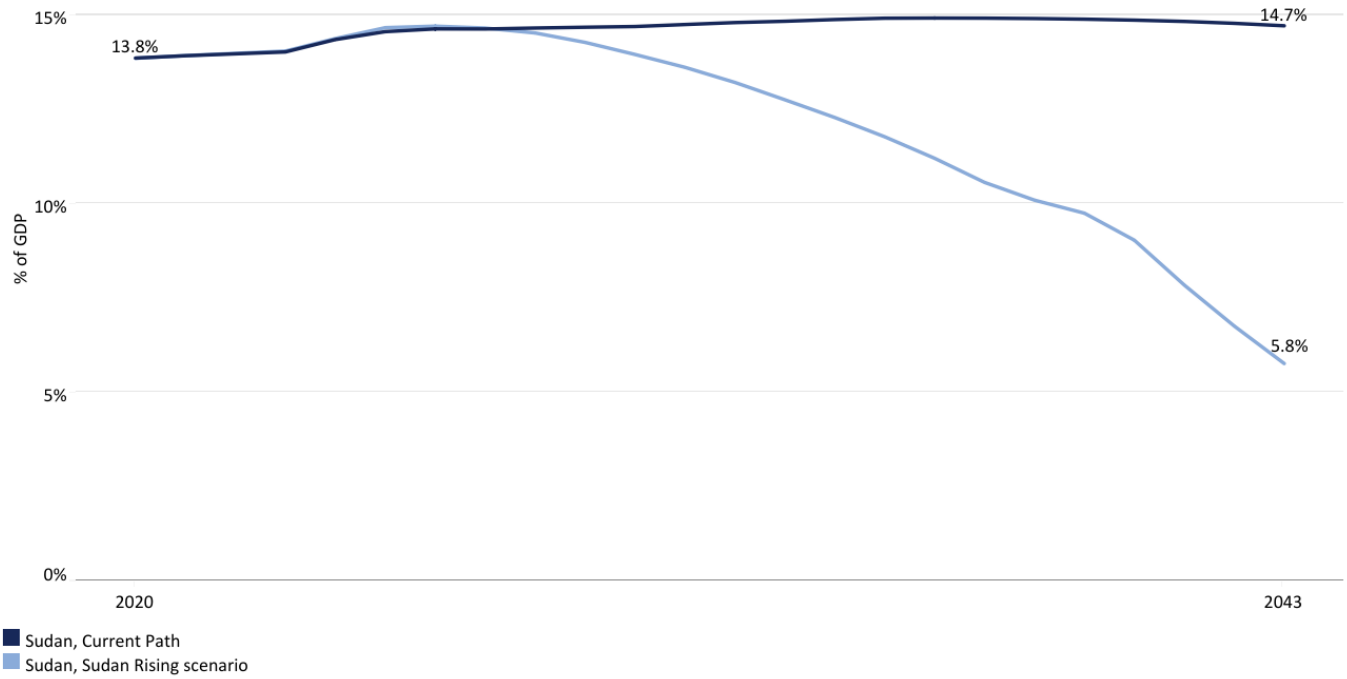
Chart 37: Value added by sector in the Current Path and Sudan Rising scenario, 2023-2043



Source: IFs 8.38 initialising from IMF World Economic Outlook data

By 2043, the size of the informal sector in Sudan will decline to 5.8% of GDP, equivalent to US$3.3 billion in absolute value. At this rate, the contribution of the informal economy will be lower than the 14.7% (valued at US$5.7 billion) on the Current Path and below the average for low-income countries in Africa at 28.0%. Likewise, by 2043, there will be about 2.7 million fewer labourers in the informal sector than under the Current Path. This will correspond to informal labour constituting 5.8% of total labour in the Sudan Rising scenario, rather than 24.1% in the Current Path, reflecting the anticipated improvement in state capacity driven by higher tax revenue. If Sudanese authorities manage to steadily formalise larger portions of the informal sector through digitisation, for example, it could lead to increased productivity, higher GDP and more government revenue. Indeed, this could raise government revenue without aid to 10.3% of GDP in the scenario, instead of the projected 8.5% of GDP by 2043.

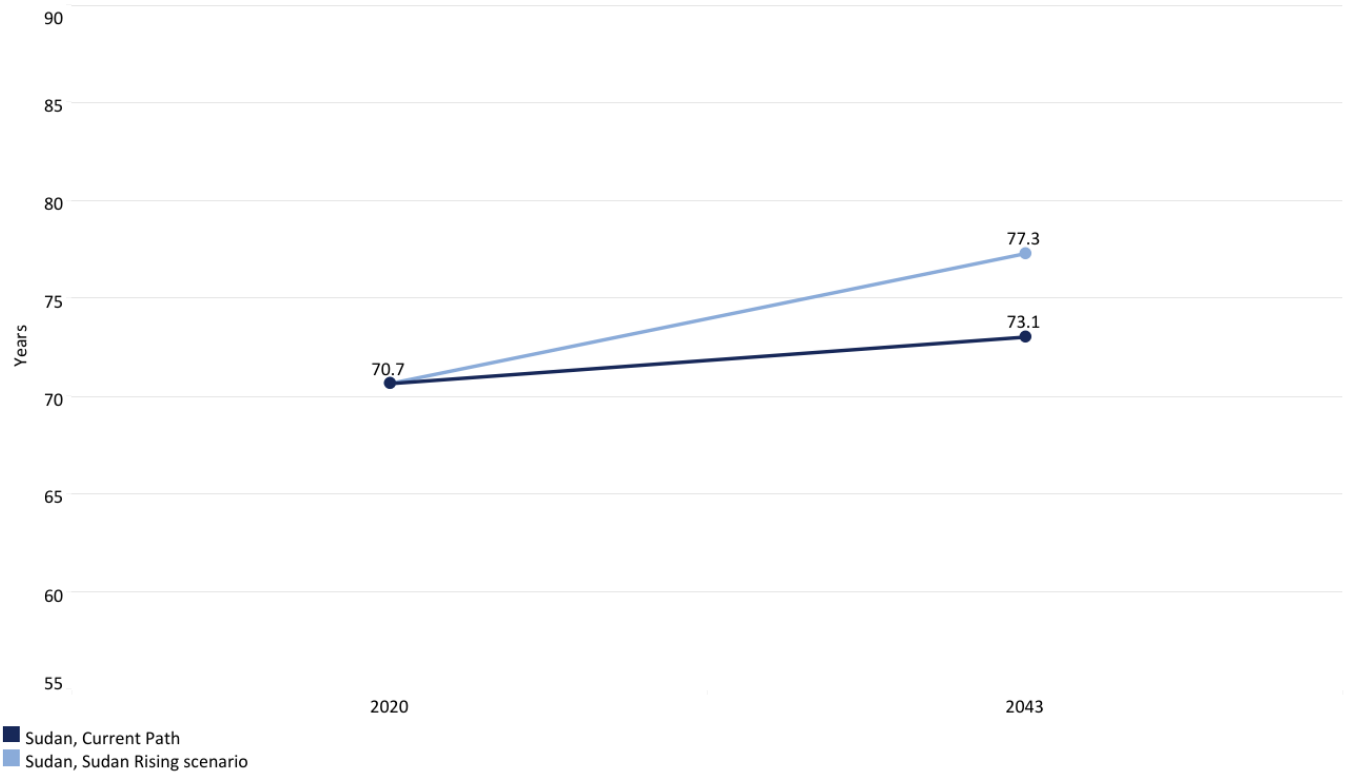
Chart 38: Informal sector in the Current Path and Sudan Rising scenario, 2020-2043



Source: IFs 8.38 initialising from Elgin and Oztunali (2008), and Schneider and Enste (2012) data

In 2023, the average life expectancy at birth in Sudan was 70.3 years, about 6 years higher than the average for peers in the same income group in Africa. On average, women in Sudan (71.9 years) live 3.3 years longer than men (68.6 years). In the Current Path, life expectancy will increase to only 73.1 years by 2043, slightly higher than the average of 71.8 years for low-income African countries. In the Sudan Rising scenario, life expectancy will increase to 77.3 years by 2043, which is 4.2 years higher than the country's Current Path in that year. In both the Sudan Rising scenario and the Current Path, women will be expected to live about two years longer than men by 2043.

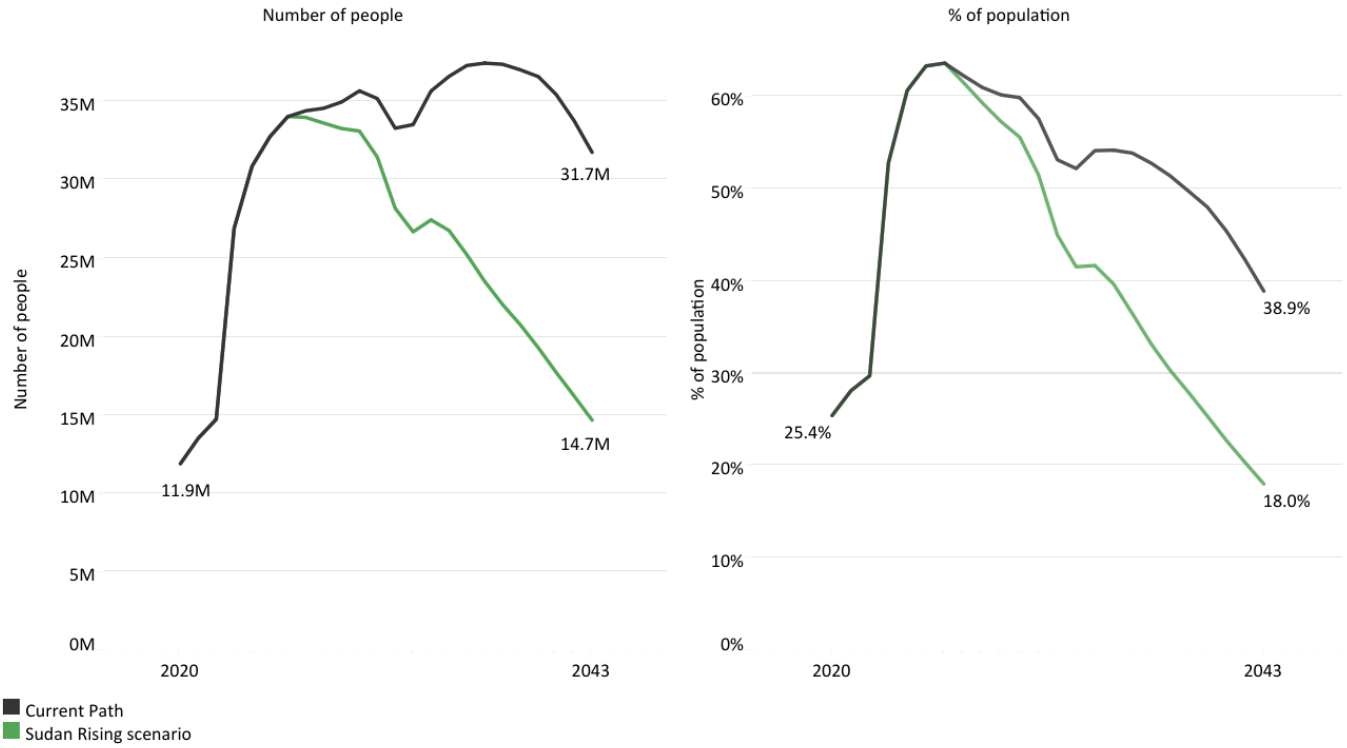
Chart 39: Life expectancy in the Current Path and Sudan Rising scenario, 2020-2043



Source: IFs 8.38 initialising from IHME data

In the Sudan Rising scenario, both the number and proportion of poor people in Sudan will decline significantly. By 2043, about 14.4 million people in the country, equivalent to 18.0% of the population, will be living in extreme poverty. This means that, compared to the Current Path, 17.3 million more people could be lifted out of poverty by 2043 in this scenario—a decline of 20.9 percentage points from the Current Path's 38.9% in 2043. Additionally, the proportion of poor people in Sudan in the scenario will be half the average of 28.3% for low-income African countries by 2043. In the Sudan Rising scenario, inequality in Sudan will fall to 0.26 in 2043, compared to 0.30 in the Current Path, indicating that economic growth will be broadly shared.

Chart 40: Extreme poverty (US$2.15) in the Current Path and Sudan Rising scenario, 2020-2043

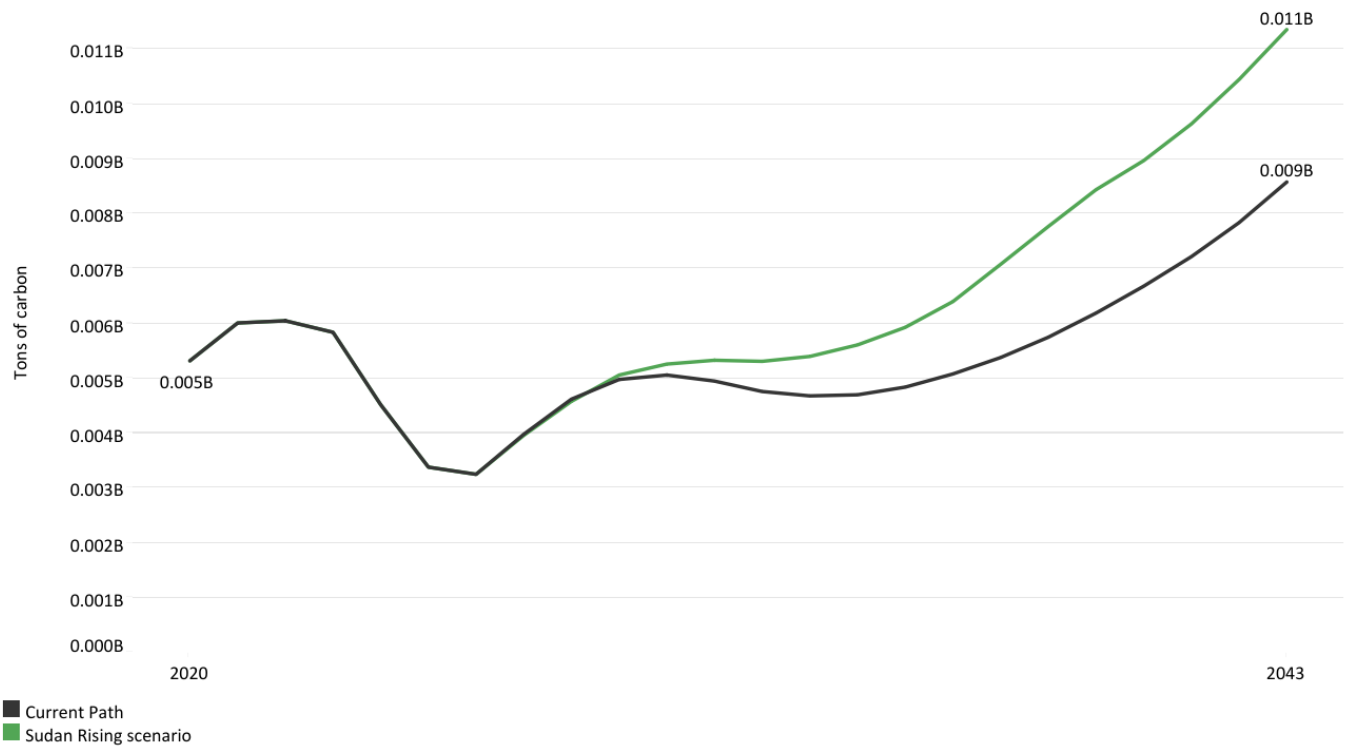


Source: IFs 8.38 initialising from IMF data

However, the materialisation of the Sudan Rising scenario and the achievement of sustainable economic development will come at the cost of increased carbon emissions in Sudan. In the Sudan Rising scenario, Sudan's total carbon emissions will rise to 11.4 million tons,32.6% higher than what is estimated in the Current Path for the same year. Also, energy demand in the Sudan Rising scenario will be higher due to the expected expansion of economic activities, creating a larger energy deficit. In the scenario, energy demand in Sudan will jump to 163 million BOE by 2043, 33.8 million BOE above the Current Path. Although the total energy production of 101.8 million BOE in the Sudan Rising scenario in 2043 will be 17.3 million BOE above the Current Path, it will still fall short of total demand. By 2043, the excess energy demand of 61.3 million BOE will be 36.8% higher than Current Path projections.

Chart 41: Carbon emissions in the Current Path and Sudan Rising scenario, 2020-2043

Million tons of carbon (note, not CO2 equivalent)



Source: IFs 8.38 initialising from Carbon Dioxide Information Analysis Center data

These suggest that while Sudan has the potential to grow, it will come at the cost of more emissions and will require more energy to pursue its development agenda. To achieve this, the country can rely on its huge renewable energy potential, as discussed in the Current Path, to pursue a green development pathway.

Donors and sponsors

Cite this research

Enoch Randy Aikins (2026) Beyond the Conflict: Charting a Path to Sustainable Growth and Development in Sudan. Published online at futures.issafrica.org. Retrieved from https://futures.issafrica.org/special-reports/country/sudan/ [Online Resource] Updated 13 April 2026.

About the authors

Mr Enoch Randy Aikins joined the AFI in May 2021 as a Researcher. Before that, Enoch was a research and programmes officer at the Institute for Democratic Governance in Accra in charge of local governance reforms, poverty and inequality and public sector reforms. He also worked as a research assistant (economic division) with the Institute for Statistical Social and Economic Research at the University of Ghana. Enoch's interests include African politics and governance, economic development, public sector reform, poverty and inequality. Enoch is a Young African Fellow at the School of Transnational Governance, European University Institute in Florence and has an MPhil in economics from the University of Ghana, Legon.

About African Futures & Innovation

Scenarios and forecasting can help Africa identify and respond to opportunities and threats. The work of the African Futures & Innovation (AFI) program at the Institute for Security Studies aims to understand and address a widening gap between indices of wellbeing in Africa and elsewhere in the world. The AFI helps stakeholders understand likely future developments. Research findings and their policy implications are widely disseminated, often in collaboration with in-country partners. Forecasting tools inspire debate and provide insights into possible trajectories that inform planning, prioritisation and effective resource allocation. Africa's future depends on today's choices and actions by governments and their non-governmental and international partners. The AFI provides empirical data that informs short- and medium-term decisions with long-term implications. The AFI enhances Africa's capacity to prepare for and respond to future challenges. The program is headed by Dr Jakkie Cilliers.