

Jack Patton
Upper Arlington High School
Upper Arlington, OH
Sudan, Factor 17: Corruption

Sudan: Political corruption and how to correct it

The global hunger epidemic is becoming a very troubling situation in a great number of countries. 795 million people, or one in nine people, don't have enough to eat and are undernourished (The Hunger Project). Sudan is one of the countries that has fallen victim to this global catastrophe. Sudan is in the middle of a serious dilemma, and is currently faced with countless domestic problems that are weakening the stability of the country. In addition to hunger, Sudan's problems include a weak economy and a corrupt government (CIA World Factbook). It is a very dangerous country to live in, and is growing more dangerous by the day.

Sudan is located in North-East Africa, between Egypt and Eritrea. The climate is hot and dry, with arid deserts and a rainy season that occurs between April and November (CIA World Factbook). It encompasses 1,861,484 sq km and has a population of about 36,729,501 people (CIA World Factbook). It is also in a state of instability when it comes to food with a score of 34.7 on the Global Food Security Index, ranking 99th out of 113 countries scored (Global Food Security Index). Challenges that lowered Sudan's score include political instability, volatility of agricultural production, and low public expenditure on agricultural research and development (Global Food Security Index).

A typical Sudanese family is very large, consisting of the entire extended family from the husband's side, 6-7 children, and anywhere from 2-4 wives, each with their own house (CultureGrams). The Sudanese diet usually includes maize and millet for grains, fruits such as guavas, bananas, and mangoes, and vegetables that are often prepared in a stew (CultureGrams). Sudan is not a particularly well-educated country. Only 75.9% of the population is literate and the average number of years spent in school is 7 (CIA World Factbook). The government is only spending 2.2% of the country's GDP on education (CIA World Factbook). Sudan is also facing health issues. Malnutrition is a very widespread epidemic in Sudan, with more than 90% of the population living with food insecurity (FAO). Only 23.6% of the population has access to sanitation facilities and there are only 0.28 doctors per 1,000 people (CIA World Factbook). This leaves the population susceptible to food and waterborne illnesses like Hepatitis A and E, Typhoid Fever, and bacterial and protozoal Diarrhea (CIA World Factbook).

Sudan is a country dominated by agriculture (CIA World Factbook). Because of the lack of modern farming technologies, the most popular agricultural practice in Sudan is traditional rain-fed farming, with 70% of the population relying on this for its livelihood (UNEP). Sudan produces a variety of crops including cotton, sorghum, millet, peanuts, and wheat being the most prominent (CIA World Factbook). Only 15.7% of it is arable and only 0.2% of it is used for permanent crops, while 84.2% of it is used for pasture (CIA World Factbook). The most common types of livestock that graze on that land are sheep and cattle (Country Studies). Although most of the country is devoted to producing agricultural goods, Sudan has a severe food safety issue (Global Food Security Index). When rated on a food safety scale of 0-100 (0 being a bad score), Sudan received a score of 37.6/100, a low score compared to the world average score of 57.3/100 (CIA World Factbook).

Sudan's society is agriculture-heavy, 80% of the population is engaged in agriculture. While only 33.8% of the population lives in urban areas, this is growing at an 2.54% annual change (CIA World Factbook). There are only 4,320 km of paved roads in the whole country, making the transport of agricultural goods to market a challenge for many farmers (CIA World Factbook).

Sudan's lack of modern infrastructure development is producing a negative effect on the Sudanese people. 46.5% of the population is living in poverty, and the people only have access to 2,346 kcal/capita/day, a relatively small number compared to the world average 2,865.6 kcal/capita/day (CIA World Factbook). Also, most of the country does not even have a consistent source of power, with only 32.56% of the population having access to electricity (The Global Economy). A lack of electricity is a problem for rural farmers because, living in rural areas, that is their only source of power.

However, among all of the issues facing Sudan today, one stands out as a true disaster. The level of government corruption in Sudan is the most pressing issue for this North African country. The Sudanese government is one of the most corrupt in the world (Transparency International). On a scale of 0-100 (0 being extremely corrupt), Sudan received a score of 14, and was ranked 170th out of 176 countries in government stability (Transparency International). There have been few efforts in Sudan to deal with this corruption issue, seeing as the corruption score has remained in the 11-14 range every year since 2011 (Transparency International). Not only is this issue disturbing by itself, but also it is having a negative effect on many essential aspects of the country's operations and functions.

One of these areas being affected is sufficiency of food supply. This statistic measures availability of food through the food supply in kcal/capita/day and levels of food aid. Sudan's score in this category is 36.4; a relatively low score considering the world average score is 57.3 (Global Food Security Index). The estimated amount of food per capita available for human consumption in Sudan is 2,346, a measly amount compared to the world average 2865.6 (Global Food Security Index). This means that Sudan's government does not provide the people with a sufficient supply of food, which in turn leaves them undernourished.

Sudan's issue of corruption is in a severe state. The corruption in the political system is producing a very unstable government. The risk of instability in the Sudanese government is very high (Global Food Security Index). On a scale of 0-100 (100 being a very high stability risk) Sudan received a score of 70, which is extremely high compared to the world average score of 45.8 (Global Food Security Index). This means that Sudan's government is very unstable, which disrupts the country's access to food, sanitation, and medical care.

Sudan's corruption issues, as bad as they are, are only getting worse. The corruption in this country manifests itself in many forms, including widespread financial and political corruption, nepotism, and misuse of power (U4 Expert Answer). Lack of effective government officials leads to poor administrative practices, which in turn leads to citizens being forced to pay bribes in order to access basic public services (U4 Expert Answer). While Sudan has put in place anti-corruption committees, they have failed to adequately address the corruption because of weak administrative set up and wavering political will. This inability to confront the corruption in the government has given it time to root itself deeper in the administrative system, helping it to steadily grow.

If these issues were properly dealt with, it would mean a much more stable, and effective government. Because the government controls the supply of, and access to, food, the levels of malnutrition in Sudan would greatly decrease if the government became less corrupt (Global Food Security Index). Also, since the government controls the incomes of its employees and of many of the country's workers, improvement of government stability in Sudan would raise the incomes of many Sudanese workers, and thereby lower the levels of poverty (U4 Expert Answers). In short, successful efforts to fix the corruption in the Sudanese government would lead to decreases in poverty and malnutrition in the country.

Sudan is also experiencing a plethora of other issues that are worsening the main issue of government corruption. One of these secondary issues is population growth. Sudan's population is growing at 1.69% a year (CIA World Factbook). These increasing numbers of people have very few resources to share.

Sudan's corrupt government is providing only 55.5% of the population with improved drinking water and only 23.6% of the population with access to sanitation facilities (CIA World Factbook).

Another one of these secondary issues is energy demand. Because of the population growth of Sudan, more and more people are flocking to urban areas (Middle East Institute). This urban influx is creating poor living conditions for those who are living in urban areas, including a shortage of power (Middle East Institute). This is an issue for the Sudanese government, considering it only provides 63% of the urban population with electricity (index mundi). Also, the lack of electricity is part of the reason why Sudan has a high rate of food insecurity. Without a proper way to store refrigerated items, the Sudanese people have to either eat spoiled food, or not eat. This poor supply of power is another example of how energy demands are worsening government corruption.

Sudan's corruption is exacerbated by climate change. Sudan's climate has been becoming more arid, and rainfall has become more erratic in pastoral areas (World Resources Report). This has damaged water supplies and sparked conflict over the dwindling natural resources (IFPRI). The government is getting involved in these conflicts, becoming further corrupt as they get deeper into the issues of fighting for resources.

While all of these issues are important, the most important is still the level of corruption in the Sudanese government. Combating the political corruption is a challenge that must be taken on, and there are several essential steps that must be addressed in order for efforts to be successful. One of these steps is to put new laws in place that make the government more transparent and effective. The government should remove as many unnecessary restrictions on political and economic activities as possible while still safeguarding the essential regulatory functions of the state. Excessive regulations on opening new businesses, registering property, engaging in international trade, and a plethora of other activities should be removed in order to make the Sudanese government more transparent and effective, and thereby less corrupt (The World Bank).

Another step is to integrate new technologies into the governing system to create a stronger relationship between officials and civil society (The World Bank). The Internet has been proven to reduce corruption in governments that use it to their advantage (The World Bank). One way to do this is to use online platforms to facilitate the government's interactions with civil society and the business community (The World Bank). This has been particularly successful in the area of tax collection, as seen by the success of Afghanistan's automated tax administration system, which reduced opportunities for corruption in tax collection by logging the information of the taxpayers electronically (The Guardian). Another area of government that can be improved by the use of technology is the purchasing activities of the state (The World Bank). Using the Internet as the platform for government spending can guarantee adequate levels of openness, competition, a level playing field for suppliers, fairly clear bidding procedures, and so on (The World Bank)

A third step to improving Sudan's corruption situation is implementing new governing practices to eliminate corrupt practices. One of these new practices is to pay civil servants better (The World Bank). If employees receive reasonable salaries, they will not be motivated to compensate for their low wages in "unofficial" ways (The World Bank). Another new practice is to improve budget control by disclosing budget information (Transparency International). Implementing this reform would prevent waste and misappropriation of resources (Transparency International). If governments budget well, they can avoid being put in tight money situations, and they do not need to use illegal methods to obtain funds.

A fourth step in dealing with corruption is smart investment; knowing what to put the money into and what to focus government spending on. One smart investment decision that would help eliminate corruption is to steer clear of subsidies (The World Bank). These subsidies often lead to smuggling, to

shortages, and to the emergence of black markets, and are very regressively distributed, with over 60 percent of total benefits accruing to the richest 20 percent of households (The World Bank). If the Sudanese government could pull back on investing in subsidies, and redirect the money into more beneficial targeted cash transfers (wages, sanitation, food distribution, etc.), it would be much less likely to experience corruption. One area in which the funds would be used to their full potential is the area of education (World Economic Forum). By bridging the gap between the younger generation and political institutions that serve their interests, a better relationship between the two could be created, and a brighter political future would be possible as well (The Economic Forum).

The National Commission for Redress of Public Sector Grievances (NCR) is a local project in Sudan aimed at improving the corrupt state of the government (U4 Expert Answer). This project is actively giving recommendations to the Sudanese government for how to get rid of the corruption. However, this project is horribly understaffed, underfunded, and subject to political interference (U4 Expert Answer). The Sudanese government rarely heeds their advice, but if they were to implement some of the NCR's recommendations, the levels of corruption in the government would decrease noticeably (U4 Expert Answer).

The implementation of these recommendations is important to fixing the issue they aim to combat. In order for the problem to be fixed, all levels of society must pitch in. It starts on the local level in the communities of Sudan. These areas must do their part by cooperating with the new technologies introduced by the government to improve tax-collecting, public pronouncements, and other areas of government and local connection (The World Bank). By participating in the use of these technologies, they will be better used to heal the corruption issue in the country. The communities must also do their part by not engaging in "unofficial" dealings with the government (The World Bank). By avoiding illegal government deals and relationships, the community can do their part to reduce the occurrence of these acts all together, thereby making the government less corrupt.

Next is the national government, the source of the issue. The Sudanese government is headed by Omar al-Bashir, the president of Sudan, whose time in office has been accompanied by personal enrichment and violence, relying on corruption, repression, and force to remain in power (enough). It would be beneficial for the country, and the government itself, if Bashir would lead the way and begin to implement some of the earlier recommendations and at least attempt to fix the corruption in the government. If the national government would implement the earlier recommendations of new laws, new technologies, new practices, and smarter investing, it could rid the country of such terrible corruption (The World Bank).

Large organizations can help provide assistance in ending corruption in Sudan. One of these large corporations that have been successful elsewhere is the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, or the EITI, a global activity supported by companies, countries, civil society, and international organizations (United States Institute of Peace). The EITI has improved transparency and accountability in the extractive sector, including; oil, gas, and minerals (United States Institute of Peace). It does this by verifying and publishing both company payments and government revenues from these resources (United States Institute of Peace). By making these government operations more transparent, the EITI could make Sudan's government as a whole more transparent, and thereby less corrupt.

Finally, the highest level of groups able to assist with national issues, and even global issues, are the large international organizations, such as the UN. The UN is doing work in countries across the globe to ensure political stability. One of these operations is known as the United Nations Convention against Corruption. This is a branch of the UN whose sole job is to decrease corruption on a global scale (United States Institute of Peace). This legally binding instrument requires states to develop independent anti-corruption bodies and transparent procurement systems, criminalizes certain offenses, and puts measures in place for states to cooperate more closely with each other on fighting corruption (United States Institute of Peace).

If the UN would enforce these rules on Sudan's government, it would do wonders to eliminate corruption in the country.

Sudan is a struggling country. It is an agriculture-based country that is plagued with malnutrition, poverty, and a weak economy. However, the most pressing issue facing Sudan today is political corruption. The level of corrupt activity in the Sudanese government is one of the worst in the world. The political corruption is not only an issue by itself, but it poses a plethora of other national issues such as poor food supply, lack of sanitation, and limited access to medical care. On top of those problems, the initial issue of political corruption is worsening, as the lack of proper administrative practices leads to misuse of power and an increasingly unstable government. This decline can be attributed to causes such as population growth, lack of energy supply, and dwindling natural resources. While the corruption in the Sudanese government is worsening, it can be dealt with by putting new laws in place that make the government more transparent and effective, implementing new technologies to make government transactions easier, eliminating corrupt government practices, and making smart decisions on how to spend government money. These steps can be implemented by the cooperation of communities to use new technologies, the effort of the national government to follow through on these ideas, the willingness of the EITI to help correct the government practices, and the ability of the UN to deal with these issues on an international scale. By following those steps and having each of those groups do their parts, the corruption in Sudan can be dealt with properly and effectively.

Work Cited

- 20, Mei-Frs © - January. "Urbanization in Sudan: An Overview of International Engagement." MEI-FRS © - January 2011 *Urbanization in Sudan: AN Overview of International Engagement* (2011): n. Pag. *Middle East Institute*. Web. 1 Mar. 2017.
- "3 Key Steps to End Corruption." *World Economic Forum*. World Economic Forum, n.d. Web. 1 Mar. 2017.
- Banning-Lover, Rachel. "Nine Ways to Use Technology to Reduce Corruption." *Best Bits*. Guardian News and Media, 26 May 2016. Web. 02 Mar. 2017.
- Barnaby, W. "Agriculture and the Environment." *Ambio* 15.6 (1986): 364-66. *United Nations Environment Programme*. Web.
- E.V., Transparency International. "How to Stop Corruption: 5 Key Ingredients." www.transparency.org. N.p., n.d. Web. 02 Mar. 2017.
- E.V., Transparency International. "Thank You for Donating To Transparency International!" *Transparency International - Sudan*. N.p., 2016. Web. 02 Mar. 2017
- "The Global Food Security Index." *Global Food Security Index*. Dupont, June 2016. Web. 02 Mar. 2017
- Governance, Corruption and Conflict*. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 2010. *United States Institute of Peace*. Web. 15 Feb. 2017
- Hursh, John. "Hunger in Sudan: Government Policy, Civilian Suffering | Enough Project." *Enough*. N.p., n.d. Web. 02 Mar. 2017.
- "Know Your World: Facts About World Hunger & Poverty." *The Hunger Project*. N.p., n.d. Web. 02 Mar. 2017.
- Lopez-Claros, Augusto. "Six Strategies to Fight Corruption." *Future Development*. The World Bank Group, 14 May 2014. Web. 02 Mar. 2017.
- "Managing Conflict over Natural Resources in Greater Kordofan, Sudan." *IFPRI*. N.p., n.d. Web. 02 Mar. 2017.
- Nimir, Mutasim Bashir, and Ismail A. Elgizouli. "Climate Change Adaptation and Decision Making in the Sudan." *Climate Change Adaptation and Decision Making in the Sudan | World Resources Institute*. World Resources Institute, n.d. Web. 02 Mar. 2017.
- "Nutrition Country Profiles: Sudan Summary." *Nutrition Country Profiles: Sudan Summary*. N.p., N.d. Web. 02 Mar. 2017.
- "Republic of the Sudan." *CultureGrams*. ProQuest, 2017. Web. 02 Mar. 2017.
- "Sudan - Livestock." *Sudan - Livestock*. N.p., n.d. Web. 02 Mar. 2017

“Sudan Access to Electricity - Data, Chart.” *TheGlobalEconomy.com*. N.p., n.d. Web. 02 Mar. 2017.

“The World Factbook: SUDAN.” *Central Intelligence Agency*. Central Intelligence Agency, 12 Jan. 2017. Web. 02 Mar. 2017

[Www.transparencyorg](http://www.transparency.org), and [Www.cmi.no](http://www.cmi.no). “Corruption and Anti-corruption in Sudan.” *Corruption And Anto-corruption in Sudan* (2012): n. Pag. *U4 Expert Answer*. Web. 25 Jan. 2017.