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City limits: urbanisation and vulnerability in Sudan

Nyala case study

**Margie Buchanan-Smith and Helen McElhinney, with Hussein Bagadi,
Mohammed Abdul Rahman, Amira Dawalbeit, Awatif Dawalbeit,
Mawya Khalil and Badr El Din Abdalla**

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About the authors

Margie Buchanan-Smith is a Senior Research Associate at ODI. She led the study team.

Helen McElhinney is a Research Officer at ODI.

Hussein Bagadi is with UNAMID, the African Union/UN hybrid operation in Darfur.

Mohammed Abdul Rahman is a researcher at the Agricultural Research Centre, based in Nyala.

Awatif Dawalbeit and Badr El Din Abdalla work for the Ministry of Finance, Development and Planning, South Darfur.

Amira Dawalbeit is a sociologist and independent consultant.

Mawya Khalil is an economist and independent consultant.

El Tayeb Abdul Rahman was seconded to the research team from the Ministry of Physical Planning and Public Utilities (MPPPU).

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Humanitarian Policy Group
Overseas Development Institute
111 Westminster Bridge Road
London
SE1 7JD
United Kingdom

Tel: +44(0) 20 7922 0300
Fax: +44(0) 20 7922 0399
Website: www.odi.org.uk/hpg
Email: hpgadmin@odi.org.uk

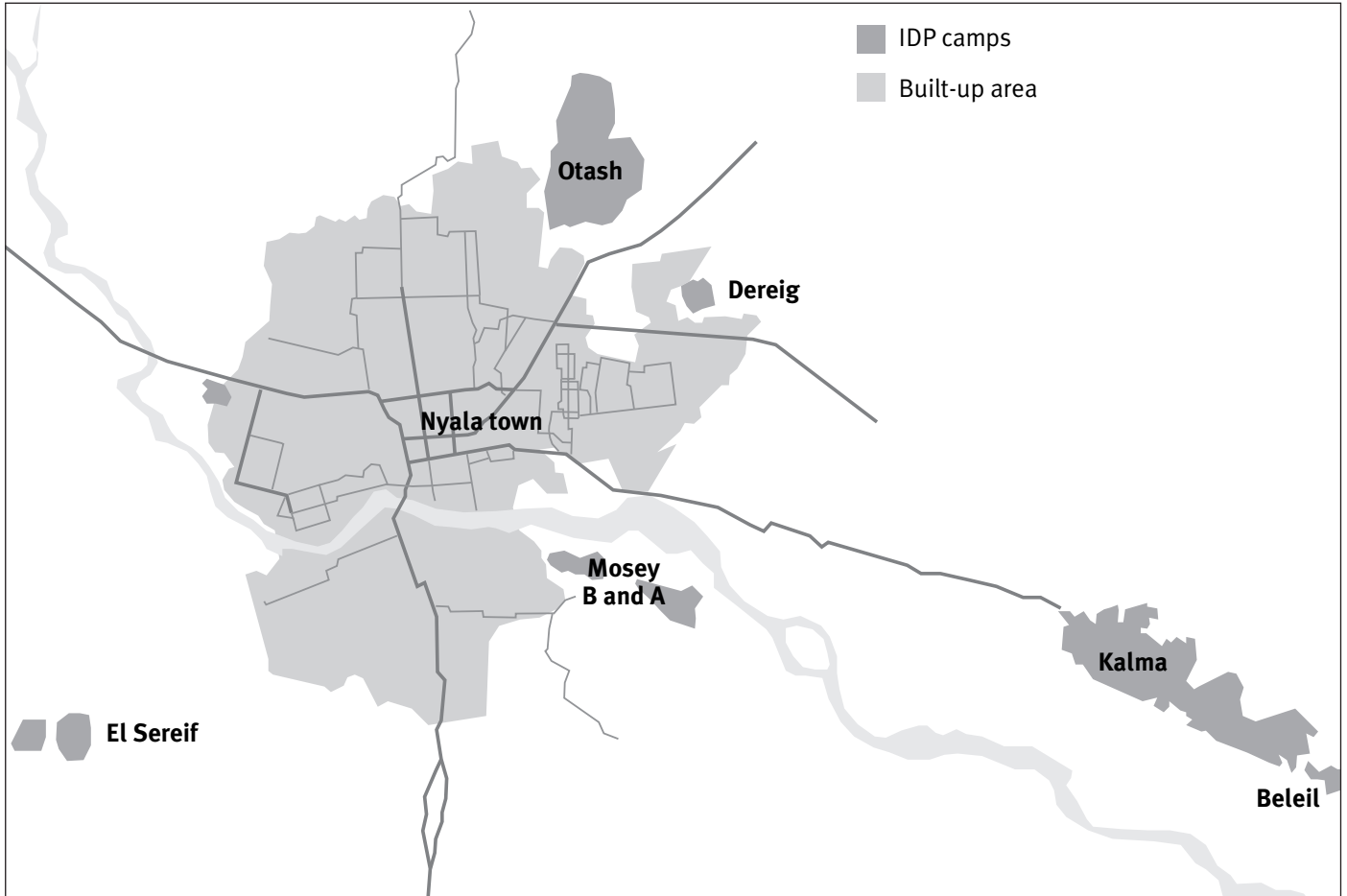
Contents

Acronyms/abbreviations	iii
Chapter 1 Introduction	1
1.1 Study details and methodology	1
Chapter 2 History, drivers and patterns of urbanisation in Nyala	3
2.1 Context and history	3
Chapter 3 The policy context	5
3.1 Federalism, financial flows and revenue-raising powers	5
3.2 The Nyala Master Plan	5
3.3 Government policy on IDPs and return	6
Chapter 4 Governance and leadership in Nyala	7
Chapter 5 The urban economy and livelihoods	9
5.1 The growth of Nyala's economy	9
5.2 The impact of the conflict on Nyala's economy	9
5.3 Urban livelihoods and the impact of the conflict	12
Chapter 6 Land and housing	15
6.1 Urban residential land: legal frameworks, policies and procedures	15
6.2 The impact of the Darfur conflict on land in Nyala	16
6.3 IDPs and land in Nyala	17
Chapter 7 Infrastructure, services and the environment	19
7.1 Education	19
7.2 Health	20
7.3 Water and sanitation	20
7.4 Electricity	21
7.5 Roads	22
7.6 The environmental consequences of urbanisation and conflict	22
Chapter 8 Social consequences of rapid urbanisation and urban vulnerability	23
8.1 Positive and negative social consequences of urbanization	23
8.2 Urban vulnerability	23
Chapter 9 International responses	25
Chapter 10 Conclusions and recommendations	27
10.1 Recommendations	27
References	29
Annex 1 List of fieldwork locations	31
Annex 2 List of key informants	33
Annex 3 Timeline of Nyala's history and related events	35

Acronyms/abbreviations

AED	Academy for Educational Development
AU	African Union
AUPD	African Union High Level Panel on Darfur
CAR	Central African Republic
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
CSB	corn-soya blend
DFID	Department for International Development
DJAM	Darfur Joint Assessment Mission
FGM	female genital mutilation
FNC	Forestry National Corporation
GAM	Global Acute Malnutrition
GoS	Government of Sudan
HAC	Humanitarian Aid Commission
IDP	internally displaced person
ILO	International Labour Organisation
JMST	Joint Mediation Support Team
LPG	liquid petroleum gas
MPPPU	Ministry of Physical Planning and Public Utilities
NCP	National Congress Party
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
QUIPs	Quick Impact Projects
SSB	stabilised soil block
UNIDO	UN Industrial Development Organisation
WES	Water and Environmental Sanitation Programme (Public Water Corporation)
WSDC	Western Savannah Development Corporation

Figure 1: Map of Nyala



Chapter 1

Introduction

This case study of urbanisation in Nyala is part of a wider study on urbanisation in Sudan, commissioned by the Department for International Development (DFID). The study aims to explore the growing phenomenon of urbanisation in the country, focusing in particular on Nyala, Khartoum, Port Sudan and Juba. The overall aims of the study are as follows:

- To deepen understanding of the drivers of urbanisation in different parts of the country, in relation to the broader economic, political and security context.
- To analyse the consequences of rapid urbanisation, socially, economically (paying particular attention to urban livelihoods) and environmentally, and in terms of urban infrastructure and the provision of services.
- To assess the implications of rapid urbanisation in terms of the vulnerability of urban populations to future hazards and shocks, as well as development opportunities.
- To identify how the international aid community can best engage with changing settlement patterns in Sudan, and the implications for humanitarian and development programming in the future.

Sudan is rapidly urbanising. Although the trend is not new (and is consistent with a trend towards greater urbanisation across Sub-Saharan Africa),¹ the pace in Sudan appears to be accelerating. For a country of its size, Sudan has relatively few cities, which means that the population drift from rural areas is focused on a small number of urban centres.

This case study begins with an overview of urbanisation in Nyala from a historical perspective, exploring the main drivers and describing overall settlement patterns. Chapter 3 describes the current policy context of urbanisation in Nyala, and Chapter 4 explores issues of governance and leadership, ranging from formal governance mechanisms to the native administration and more informal leadership within IDP communities. Chapter 5 explores the urban economy, how it is changing and what this means for urban livelihoods. Rapid urbanisation often gives rise to fraught land issues – these are explored in Chapter 6. Section 7 describes the current state of the urban infrastructure and service provision in Nyala, and Chapter 8 looks at the social consequences of urbanisation, and people’s vulnerability to threats and hazards. Chapter 9 assesses how the international community has responded to urbanisation in Nyala. The final chapter draws out overall conclusions from the case study, and makes a series of recommendations for international engagement and for state and federal government.

¹ It is estimated that within two decades more than half of the population of Sub-Saharan Africa (currently the world’s most rural region) will be living in urban areas.

1.1 Study details and methodology

The adapted livelihoods framework is the conceptual framework (see Annex 1 of the Synthesis Report) underpinning this study, particularly in relation to urban livelihoods. The methodology for the case study combined a literature review with fieldwork in Nyala in March and April 2010, carried out by a team of international and national researchers, some seconded by state government ministries. The fieldwork was carried out in a series of steps, as follows:

- A profile of the different quarters of the city was created (including nearby IDP camps), according to when the area was settled and why, the current socio-economic status of residents in the area and its residential classification.² From this profile a number of locations were selected for detailed fieldwork. The criteria for selecting sample locations in Nyala were:
 - History of the arrival of the population (crisis-driven/drought-driven).
 - Official categorisation of the area (residential classes 1–3).
 - The socio-economic status of residents.
 - The principal hazards and threats faced.
 - Geographical coverage within Nyala.

The sample selected is presented in Annex 1, although some substitutions had to be made due to security constraints.

- Stakeholder mapping was carried out by the research team, first of the formal institutions (e.g. government departments, the chamber of commerce) with responsibility for aspects of urbanisation such as urban planning, economic development and service provision; and second of informal and community-based institutions. These were mapped using Venn diagrams to indicate the relationships between institutions, with the size of the circles representing the relative power of different institutions. These were subsequently used to identify key informants for interviews.
- Secondary data and information were collected by the team during the fieldwork, from state government departments and international and national humanitarian and development organisations. This included policy-related documents, other studies relating to urbanisation and data on service provision.

² Following the practice introduced in Sudan by the British colonial administration, Nyala is sub-divided into three classes of residential land. This classification determines the type of housing that can be constructed in different areas (e.g. plot size, lease terms, land fees and taxes, quality and permanence of building materials), and service provision. See Chapter 6 for further explanation.

- Key informant interviews, guided by a series of checklists, were conducted with government officers, private sector organisations and entrepreneurs, union representatives and representatives of national and international agencies. For a list of interviewees, see Annex 2.
- Group interviews were carried out in the sample locations, where possible with men, women and young people separately, and with different population groups (e.g. IDPs and residents). These were conducted according to a checklist of questions.
- Team analysis: when most of the fieldwork had been completed, the team spent two days in Nyala carrying out a collective analysis of the main findings from the research. This provides the core of this report.

Chapter 2

History, drivers and patterns of urbanisation in Nyala

2.1 Context and history

Nyala's history as a town begins in the late nineteenth century. Favourably located on Wadi Nyala, and therefore with plentiful water supplies, the first area to be settled was Hai El Wadi, in 1880 – now a neighbourhood in the centre of the town. With the fall of Sultan Ali Dinar in 1916 and the extension into Darfur of the Anglo-Egyptian condominium, the first brick house (still standing) was constructed by the British in 1917. Nyala's evolution from a nomadic camp in the 1920s to an administrative and service centre³ in the 1930s was slow and gradual.⁴ The establishment of the first Magdumate court in Nyala in the early 1930s, following the legal recognition of the Native Administration, was a further boost to the town. Nevertheless, by the mid-1950s Nyala's population was still only about 14,000. The arrival of the railway in the 1950s brought with it a substantial increase in commercial activity and attracted traders from Khartoum and Medani. It also provided an important means of transport for pilgrims to the Hajj from West Africa. By the mid-1960s the population had almost doubled, to around 26,000. By the early 1970s, the population had doubled again, to 60,000.

The droughts of the early 1970s and especially the mid-1980s triggered much more rapid growth as the rural displaced moved into the town, and as the population in Darfur drifted southwards to areas of higher rainfall. These periods of drought-induced growth were followed by an unprecedented influx of displaced people with the onset of conflict in Darfur in 2003. Estimates of Nyala's population today vary widely. De Waal (2009) puts it at 1.3 million, or around 1.6m if IDPs in neighbouring camps are included. The Ministry of Physical Planning and Public Utilities (MPPPU) also quotes a figure of 1.3m for Nyala town. UN-Habitat's estimates are much lower, at 600,000 or so, with around 100,000 IDPs in neighbouring camps and thousands more in the town (UN-Habitat, 2009).

³ In 1921 Nyala became the district headquarters of western Baggara, for the Habbaniya, Ta'aisha and BeniHalba. The British Commissioner for South Darfur moved from Buram to Nyala in 1931.

⁴ The first primary school was established in 1922.

While there has been no systematic study of IDP intentions, experience elsewhere in Sudan suggests that the majority will not return home.⁵ The prospect of IDPs becoming long-term urban residents in Darfur is acknowledged by the African Union (AU) High Level Panel on Darfur (AUPD, 2009), by many government officials and state ministers in Darfur and by commentators and analysts on Darfur,⁶ but not in official documents or in official policy.⁷ Focus groups for this study indicate that the younger generation in particular want to stay in town to complete their education and because they now aspire to a more urbanised lifestyle and source of livelihood. Other commentators and researchers on Darfur confirm that the majority of IDPs are likely to remain. According to de Waal (2009): 'Even if there were a peace agreement tomorrow it is likely that the majority of the IDPs would not return home'. A study by Tufts University concluded that: 'Given the transitional and "multi-nodal" nature of their urbanized livelihoods, IDPs will almost certainly not return directly to their rural homes. We think it more likely that IDPs will continue to foster their increasingly urbanized and transnational livelihoods' (Young et al., 2009: 4). As such, many IDP camps will become part of Nyala in the future, and must be taken into account in urban planning.

Although newly settled neighbourhoods are given official names, they are also given unofficial monikers that enter into everyday language, and which reflect key events in world history that coincided with the neighbourhood's establishment. Thus, Karari, settled in the 1960s, was nicknamed 'Texas' to mark the assassination of US President John F. Kennedy in Dallas. An area in the north of Nyala, recently settled by several nomadic tribes, has been nicknamed 'Fallujah' after the battle of Fallujah in Iraq.

⁵ See Pantuliano et al., 2007. The pattern of rapid and permanent urbanisation associated with conflict-related displacement can be seen in other African countries, including Sierra Leone, Angola and Mozambique.

⁶ See de Waal, 2009; and Young et al., 2009.

⁷ See, for example, the Government of Sudan's recent strategy on Darfur (GoS, 2010).

Chapter 3

The policy context

Most policies and directives emanate from the office of the *Wali* (Governor – see Chapter 4), usually from the cabinet of state ministers. The role of the Ministry of Finance is to set the budget for the state ministries, and to receive and prioritise their project proposals, including urban infrastructure projects. However, with the imposition of emergency laws in Darfur the *Wali's* office often overrides many of these planning decisions, usually prioritising security issues over the provision of services and infrastructure improvements. Emergency law also means that decisions tend to be imposed rather than discussed and debated. This has weakened the role of the Ministry of Finance and undermined its accountability and control mechanisms. Whether policy decisions will benefit the majority of the population (in Nyala and in South Darfur more generally) is highly dependent on the priorities and interests of the incumbent *Wali*.

Inconsistent policy is a consequence of this confusing and politicised policy-making context, in which roles overlap and are often unclear. One example is the inconsistent policy guiding the allocation of residential land between the MPPPU and the Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC), described in Chapter 6.2. Another is taxation policy in Nyala town, as the municipality and the Ministry of Finance compete to raise revenue. Where policies have been adopted at the national level, their implementation at the state level is far from guaranteed. An oft-quoted example is the provision in the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) of 2006 exempting Darfuri students from university fees and guaranteeing a quota of places on some university courses – a concession in recognition of the long-term marginalisation of Darfur. This policy has not yet been implemented.

3.1 Federalism, financial flows and revenue-raising powers

The impact of federalism on Darfur has been profound. In theory, the states remain heavily dependent on financial resources from Khartoum to pay the salaries of most public servants, and for the development budget, which includes large-scale infrastructure projects. This is known as Chapter 1 funding. In practice federal funds cover salaries but are inadequate for almost everything else.⁸ Thus, by default, the burden of providing infrastructure projects falls on the state. For example, the federal government budget should cover the building of secondary schools, but the municipality has had to step in by constructing additional classrooms when federal funds have proved inadequate to meet the needs of Nyala's swollen population. (As described in Chapter 7, the municipality's efforts still fall far short of what

8 The largest proportion of the salary bill is spent on constitutional posts (e.g. Commissioners, state ministers and legislative council members – fewer than 100 people in South Darfur, of whom around two-thirds are based in Nyala). This diverts financial resources away from the civil service.

is needed.) Common problems include the delayed transfer of federal funds and a lack of information from the central government about how much the state can expect to receive, both of which inhibit planning at the state and locality level. In 2008 the actual state budget for South Darfur was only 59% of the planned budget (UN Sudan, 2010).

Once again, the influence of the incumbent *Wali* is a key factor in determining the size and timeliness of federal flows to each Darfur state. Thus, during the tenure of El Haj Ata Elmannan Idris El Haj in South Darfur between 2004 and 2007, larger and more regular flows of federal resources were received because of his close links with the ruling National Congress Party (NCP) and his political power in Khartoum. This benefited Nyala as he secured funding for many infrastructure projects, including road construction and a new hospital.⁹

Service provision is mainly funded by revenue raised by state ministries and at the locality level through taxation. The state must also pay for the running costs associated with infrastructure projects. The challenge in Nyala (as in other Darfur towns) is the large influx of people during the conflict, which has placed unprecedented pressure on urban services and infrastructure, yet few newcomers are contributing significantly to revenues, mostly because they are IDPs living in camps and often in poverty, and therefore are not paying state taxes. This situation is exacerbated by the fact that many better-off residents and businessmen from Nyala have left the town, usually for Central Sudan (see Chapter 5.3). This creates a fundamental imbalance between the demand for urban services and the state's ability to fund them. It is indicative of a wider problem in Darfur – declining revenues as the economy contracts during the conflict,¹⁰ combined with inadequate federal flows from Khartoum, both of which have seriously weakened the financial capacity of the state government and its ability to provide basic services. The Ministry of Finance in South Darfur reports that approximately 70% of government expenditure in the state is spent in Nyala; rural areas are particularly poorly served.

3.2 The Nyala Master Plan

The Government of Sudan (GoS) published a Master Plan for Nyala in March 2008. Preparations began in the mid-1990s, but progress was very slow. Funding to complete the plan was

9 El Haj also has a range of commercial interests and facilitated the construction of some of this infrastructure. He masterminded the creation of Sunni Company – a public company which has implemented some government construction projects.

10 At the state level there are two principal forms of taxation: taxes imposed on trade, which is the responsibility of the *borsa* or tax chamber, and local taxes imposed on property, for example on livestock. The majority of taxation comes from the latter.

provided by El Haj (South Darfur's governor between 2004 and 2007), and the Master Plan was given a major boost during his tenure as *Wali*. Badia Company was commissioned to lead the planning process. The Master Plan covers a 15-year period, from 2006 to 2021.

The Master Plan has now been passed into law by the South Darfur State Legislative Council and is formally recognised by the federal government. This makes it compulsory for all state ministries to follow the plan, and for all infrastructure development to be consistent with the plan. The MPPPU is the lead ministry for the Master Plan. State ministers are currently seeking funding to implement it.

The Master Plan is highly ambitious. It aspires to turn a town that has grown organically, based on the expanding rural economy of South Darfur, into a thoroughly modern city with multi-storey office blocks, shopping malls and a ring road. The main focus of the Master Plan is the centre of Nyala, which is destined to become the business and commercial heart of the town, supported by improved infrastructure and services, including power, transport and water. The market areas are to be modified and some moved outside the centre. However, the Master Plan appears to have been drawn up by urban planners and engineers with very little consultation with local people and institutions. During the fieldwork for this case study few residents of Nyala were familiar with the Master Plan, and it remains very much a government planning document. There is no sense in the Master Plan of preserving Nyala's heritage in the quest to create a modern city; this is a concern for some of Nyala's older residents.

The most striking omission in the Master Plan is the lack of any reference to the impact of the Darfur conflict on the town. As tens of thousands of IDPs now live in and around Nyala, many of whom are likely to stay as urban residents when peace and stability are eventually restored, the Master Plan makes for a somewhat hypothetical document. For example, it anticipates growth of 6.3% per annum, which translates into a population of 601,000 in 2008 and 804,000 in 2013. In fact the population is already around 1.3m, according to many estimates, and the evidence from elsewhere in Sudan and in Africa more generally is that Nyala will continue to grow even after the current phase of conflict in Darfur ends. It is currently unclear if or how the Master Plan will be updated and adapted to take account of the impact of the conflict.

3.3 Government policy on IDPs and return

From an early stage in the conflict the government has wanted to see IDPs return home. In response to forced relocations in 2004, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed in August 2004 between the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), the Sudanese government and the DSRSG/HC/RC.¹¹ This provided a clear and formal legal commitment by the government not to undertake forced returns in Darfur, and provided for IOM monitoring. In November 2004 this was extended to cover relocations between camps. In October 2009 a new joint verification mechanism was established involving IOM and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), endorsed by the High Level Committee.¹² However, verification has been beset by administrative impediments and obstruction and access has been severely restricted. The GoS's draft strategy on Darfur, released in September/October 2010, prioritises the return and resettlement of IDPs in their original home areas, and encourages the re-orientation of humanitarian activity to this end (GoS, 2010). There is no acknowledgement in the strategy that the majority of IDPs may want to remain in urban areas.

In practice, the state authorities have given IDPs two longer-term options: to return to rural areas or to integrate locally by becoming 'urbanised' and letting go of their IDP status.¹³ In reality, the picture is much more complex. Most displaced people in Nyala live a relatively short distance from their villages of origin (one or two days' travel). This proximity allows them to maintain links with their home areas, including seasonal farming. Insecurity is another major disincentive to return. Many IDPs said that disarming militias and providing services is a key precondition to any durable solution to displacement. The reality is that sustainable, appropriate and voluntary returns have not taken place on any significant scale.

¹¹ UNHCR played this role in West Darfur under a Letter of Understanding that was similar to IOM's MOU, signed in 2005.

¹² The High Level Committee is co-chaired by the Minister for Humanitarian Affairs and the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator. It brings together government officials and members of the international community to discuss and coordinate humanitarian affairs.

¹³ There have been reports across Darfur of the authorities forcing IDPs to choose between these two options (Khan, 2008). There have also been cases of forced relocation of some IDPs from one camp to another over which government has more control – for example, forced relocation from Kalma camp.

Chapter 4

Governance and leadership in Nyala

The main formal governance bodies in Nyala are the state government ministries, the Governor or *Wali* of South Darfur, the municipality office headed by the Commissioner of Nyala, the state legislative council and the locality legislative council. While federalism has attempted to devolve many of the roles and responsibilities of government from the national to the state level, in reality there has been a tendency towards ‘centralisation within decentralisation’. In other words, within the state political power and decision-making authority are heavily concentrated within the governor’s office. In the case of Darfur this is even more pronounced because of the imposition of emergency laws in 2004, which has given the *Wali* high levels of discretionary power.

The South Darfur State Legislative Council is dominated by the NCP, though it is judged to have become more representative in recent years of the different geographical areas of South Darfur, including Nyala, and is lobbying on their behalf, for example on service provision. However, this does not extend to representing the interests of IDPs in and around Nyala.¹⁴ The State Legislative Council can initiate and pass legislation, but laws must be ratified by the *Wali*’s office.

The judiciary should provide legal protection for civilians, and should operate independently, according to the constitution. In practice however it appears to have been seriously compromised. UN-Habitat (2009) reports the arbitrary dismissal of judges, attorneys-general and law officers, and interference from political and security actors. The judiciary is responsible for legally registering land tenure within Nyala through its Land Registry Office – see Chapter 6.1.

In 1994 Nyala was designated a single administrative unit – first termed a province and then termed a locality. In 2008 Nyala was upgraded from a locality to a municipality, becoming one of only four in Northern Sudan (the others are Khartoum, Port Sudan and Wad Medani). The criteria for becoming a municipality include population density, whether the town is in a strategic location and of significance to government, the level of economic activity, the urban infrastructure and levels of education and cultural awareness. The Nyala Commissioner is the head of the municipality, which is divided into four administrative units: North, South, East and Central Nyala. In practice, the upgrading of Nyala to municipality status does not appear to have made a significant difference, aside from introducing confusion and competition between the municipality and the state ministries. Competition is most evident in the area of

¹⁴ Many IDPs in Darfur boycotted the census in 2008 and very few voted in the elections in 2009.

revenue-raising between the municipality and the South Darfur Ministry of Finance, a competition that the municipality appears to be winning within Nyala town, where it has taken over certain taxation powers from the Ministry of Finance, for example the taxation of truck parks.

In 2010, the *Wali* for South Darfur split Nyala into two localities – South Nyala, which is the municipality, and a new locality, North Nyala, which is more rural. The full implications of this are not yet clear, although there is some sharing of revenue between the two localities: 40% of the revenue raised in each locality is to be shared with the other, which implies some cross-subsidisation. There is concern that this new administrative arrangement has introduced yet another layer of government, another constitutional post as a new Commissioner will be appointed, and that it may contribute to further confusion and overlaps in roles and responsibilities.

Of the state ministries, the MPPPU plays the most significant role in Nyala, especially in relation to land. Its land administration department allocates residential plots and awards land leases (see Chapter 6.1). The Ministry of Finance plays a key role in allocating budgets.

At the local level the Popular Committees are the most relevant to the lives of Nyala’s residents. Popular Committees were set up in the 1970s to serve the population of each neighbourhood. The members of the Committee are elected by a neighbourhood’s residents, and then have to be approved by the government. Although they are supposed to be representative of local concerns, in practice they operate as the lowest level in the government administrative hierarchy. Their main responsibilities relate to the provision of services, in particular health, education and power. Their impact on their local neighbourhoods varies according to how politicised the Committee is, and how active it is. Although women are often represented on these Committees, they rarely play an equal role with their male counterparts.

The Native Administration is in theory weak as formal institutions dominate in the town. In practice however it can play an important role, for example in helping rural people who move to the town access government institutions and services. Indeed, when the more formal governance mechanisms fail, people living in Nyala town are increasingly turning to the Native Administration. Thus, for example, the Executive Office of the Native Administration in South Darfur, based in Nyala, may play a mediation role when formal justice and other systems fail or are deemed inappropriate; it successfully brokered and mediated the end of a strike by teachers and doctors in Nyala in 2005/06, and it manages

the blood money (*dia*) and compensation arrangements for settling disputes.¹⁵

Many IDP camps have no government presence and are self-administering (with informal rule of law and militia systems in place) and self-taxing. A new generation of urban IDP leaders has emerged, and is challenging traditional authority structures and the Native Administration. The authority of these new leaders

¹⁵ Fragmentation of the Native Administration in South Darfur is also a driver of the conflict. During the 1990s the *Wali* in South Darfur created numerous new positions in rural areas around the Nyala *Magdoumate*, especially in Fur and BirgidDars. As these positions were often awarded to members from the abala tribes as a form of political patronage this created great tension and conflict within the traditional Dars. See Takana, 2008.

derives from their control over aid resources and other assets, such as land, commerce and security; various camp committees have been created in collaboration with aid agencies to manage service provision. IDPs are highly dependent on these (invariably male) representatives to negotiate on their behalf with service providers including international actors. The process is rarely transparent, with reports of sheikhs often being co-opted with money and privileges. At the same time, they have also been effective in organising resistance to government policies that are not seen to be in the interests of IDPs. This was the case in El Sereif, when the sheikhs wrote to government and UN officials rejecting the land allocation process proposed by HAC, which they perceived as being politically led.

Chapter 5

The urban economy and livelihoods

5.1 The growth of Nyala's economy

The urban economy of Nyala has been strongly associated with the rural economy of South Darfur, the most productive of the three Darfur states. As a trading centre it has also benefited from its strategic location, close to the borders with the Central African Republic (CAR) and Chad, and as the only Darfuri town served by a railway and an international airport.

Groundnuts, millet, sorghum, gum Arabic, sesame and kerkadeh are South Darfur's main agricultural products. Along with livestock these have been its main exports, and also the base for much of Nyala's manufacturing industry, for example the processing of oil from groundnuts and sesame and the production of agricultural tools. Indeed, Darfur was one of the most industrialised regions of Sudan in the 1970s and 1980s when ranked by number of manufacturing establishments; in 2003 there were more than 4,000 manufacturing establishments in South Darfur (second only to Khartoum State), many of them in Nyala. Most were on a very small scale – often little more than workshops – and there were few large manufacturers (World Bank, 2007). Even before the conflict began the industrial sector in Nyala (and in Darfur more generally) was under pressure due to lack of investment, in infrastructure and training. At the same time, domestic goods faced competition from Chinese-manufactured products. This has particularly affected carpenters and the furniture business.

In terms of international trade there have been three periods of growth in Nyala's recent history, each closely associated with the drivers of urbanisation. The first, between the mid-1970s and late 1980s, saw the opening of the trade route from Darfur to Libya, making Nyala the second market in Darfur after Mellit for electronic, household and other manufactured goods imported from Libya. During the second phase, from the early 1980s to the mid-1990s, trade from CAR (in coffee, timber and foodstuffs) boosted Nyala's economy as the war in Southern Sudan effectively closed transport and trade routes through Southern Sudan, Kenya and Ethiopia. More recently, from the late 1990s until the early 2000s, Nyala became a key market for electronic and other goods imported by air from the Gulf. Customs duties in Nyala were reduced to compete with Khartoum, although this has not been maintained during the conflict years.

5.2 The impact of the conflict on Nyala's economy

A visitor to Nyala could easily be misled by the buzzing economic activity in the town. While some sectors of the economy are indeed booming, not everybody is benefiting, and there is not enough work to fully employ the swelled ranks of unskilled labour. Indeed, the government estimates

an unemployment rate of 20% in South Darfur in 2009. The conflict has distorted Nyala's economy, depressing commercial activity in some areas and artificially stimulating it in others.

5.2.1 Collapse of trade in South Darfur's agricultural and livestock products

Plummeting production of agriculture and livestock in South Darfur has had a corresponding impact on trade in these products. Officials in Nyala's *borsa* estimate that the number of trucks entering the town each day with agricultural produce has fallen from 150 to 200 before the conflict to around 50 a day by 2010. The same crops are being traded but in much smaller quantities. Whereas there used to be more than 50 groundnut traders operating out of Nyala, now there are just five or so.¹⁶ Most of the long-distance livestock trade routes in Darfur, to Libya, Egypt and Omdurman, have been affected by insecurity and even closure (Buchanan-Smith and Fadul, 2008). Livestock trading in Nyala has declined dramatically; many animals in the market are now sold for local consumption.

5.2.2 Reversal in trade with Central Sudan

According to the Nyala *borsa*, the trajectory of trade between Nyala and Khartoum has reversed, and Nyala has become a net importer. As exports from South Darfur have fallen, demand in Nyala for construction materials such as cement and iron rods, and foodstuffs like sugar, biscuits, flour and soft drinks from Central Sudan, has soared. This is strongly related to the presence of international agencies and their high purchasing power (see below), evident when a number of international NGOs were expelled in 2009 and the demand for soft drinks, for example, fell markedly. Whereas 2,000 to 3,000 trucks per month plied between Omdurman and Nyala before the conflict, now just 900 make the trip monthly.¹⁷ Associated with this reversal in trade is the changing profile of truckers and traders, as Darfuri traders are replaced by traders from Central Sudan.

5.2.3 Declining international trade

Insecurity and banditry on the roads have depressed trade between Nyala and neighbouring countries. One carpenter in Nyala reported that his main market for furniture used to be Chad and the CAR; now he trades much more locally, within Nyala. The Nyala abattoir stopped exporting meat to neighbouring countries such as Libya in 2004 (Young et al., 2005).¹⁸

¹⁶ See Buchanan-Smith and Fadul, 2008. Data updated by officials from the Nyala *borsa*.

¹⁷ These have to now travel in convoys, of 250 to 300 trucks per convoy. There are usually three convoys per month.

¹⁸ Between 2004 and 2006 the Nyala abattoir stopped functioning. In 2006 it was rehabilitated by Shiryay Ashamal Company from North Sudan, supported by a loan from the federal government. Since 2006 its market has been domestic, including international peacekeeping troops (Buchanan-Smith and Fadul, 2008).

5.2.4 *The presence of the international community boosts but also distorts the urban economy*

The large and unprecedented international presence in Nyala is fuelling a construction boom, principally through demand for high-quality housing for rent. This has offered an attractive investment opportunity for Darfuris with cash at a time when livestock – the normal form of holding wealth – has become a high-risk form of capital due to the conflict. The extent of the construction boom has been well-documented: for example, the number of brick kilns in Nyala had more than doubled by 2008 compared with the pre-conflict number (UNEP, 2008). Contractors interviewed for this study report that UNAMID has replaced the government as their main client. Owners of vehicles rented to international agencies are also benefiting.

The overwhelming impact of the international presence on the Nyala economy is evident in two indicators. In February 2010, the price of cement in Nyala rose by almost 40%, mainly due to UNAMID buying large quantities that month and triggering a shortage. Second, following the NGO expulsions in 2009 the Chamber of Commerce estimates that wage rates for casual labour fell as the multiplier effect of the international aid presence was weakened. The boost that the international community provides to the Nyala economy at a time when Darfur's wider economy is contracting is welcomed by many in the private sector and beyond, but it is also cause for serious concern, not least to state Ministers of Finance,¹⁹ because of its temporary and artificial nature.

5.2.5 *Hike in taxes*

As Darfur's economy has contracted, so have government revenues.²⁰ Although the urban economy is still buoyant, it cannot compensate for the reduction in economic activity in rural areas. The government's response has been to increase taxes in a desperate attempt to shore up revenue from a much smaller economic base. Many of these tax hikes fall heavily on urban enterprises and businesses. Taxes have at least doubled; some have risen by 400% (Buchanan-Smith and Fadul, 2008). One consequence is that many large traders have moved their taxation files from Nyala to Khartoum, further depriving the state government of revenue.

5.2.6 *Growing shadow and war economies*

As the tax burden imposed on the private sector in Nyala becomes heavier, the incentive to trade in the shadow or parallel economy has grown. Markets in most IDP camps, which are beyond the reach of government officers, provide the ideal location. There is evidence of some trade moving from Nyala to the camps (Buchanan-Smith and Fadul, 2008). War economies are used to fund conflict; in Nyala there is an active war economy in four-wheel-drive vehicles and other

humanitarian assets such as satellite telephones looted from international agencies and Nyala residents.²¹

5.2.7 *Deteriorating services*

Services have deteriorated, further constraining economic development. The Chamber of Commerce highlights the erratic and inadequate power supply, affecting artisans such as blacksmiths, welders and carpenters. Indeed, although the government has demarcated an industrial area on the Nyala–El Fasher road for artisan workshops, artisans are refusing to move there because of inadequate services, especially electricity.²² Some small and medium-sized enterprises, including bakeries, are using liquid petroleum gas (LPG), but there are frequent shortages in Nyala due to travel disruption and a reported restrictive monopoly on train tankers (Hansen and Khojali, 2010).

5.2.8 *Some Darfuri traders face bankruptcy and losses, while business booms for others*

Bankruptcies among Darfuri traders were at their highest in the early years of the conflict, especially affecting traders of cash crops, many of whom are based in Nyala. It is estimated that around 20%–30% of urban traders went bankrupt.²³ Small-scale enterprises may have fared even worse. The World Bank (2007) estimates that only 10%–20% of the more than 5,000 enterprises measured in the Industrial Survey in Darfur in 2003 were operational in late 2006; those enterprises that have remained open are operating at around 30% of capacity, according to the Nyala Chamber of Commerce. Banditry on the roads has had a devastating impact on many traders. Between 2006 and 2009 the Chamber of Commerce estimates that at least SDG 30m in assets were looted, particularly trucks.

While membership of the Chamber of Commerce has fallen, from around 400 pre-conflict to 300 now, some guilds in Nyala have experienced a rise in membership during the conflict years. This includes the Artisans' Union, which now has around 1,500 members. Whereas many businesses in the formal sector have folded, other sectors are growing. One example is trade related to the construction industry. Metalworkers for instance have experienced a boom. One metalworker in Nyala reported that NGOs are now his main source of custom, more than compensating for falling demand from rural areas and from neighbouring countries. There has been a shift in the labour market during the conflict years. Overall, demand for unskilled casual labour has risen (although still outstrips supply – see below), whereas formal industrial employment

²¹ Despite the international community's preoccupation with the looting of its own vehicles, many private owners of four-wheel-drive vehicles were also subject to car-jacking in Nyala, although most people responded to this threat faster than aid agencies, for example by downgrading their vehicles.

²² Quoting the World Bank's Country Economic Memorandum of 2009, Khojali and Hansen report that, outside Khartoum, electricity is one of the most serious constraints to doing business, with many enterprises having to rely on diesel generators.

²³ This was the estimate of the trade and migration team of the Darfur Joint Assessment Mission (DJAM) in 2006, corroborated by Buchanan-Smith and Fadul, 2008.

¹⁹ Personal communication at the UN Climate Change conference in El Fasher, March 2010.

²⁰ Staff at Nyala's *borsa* confirmed that their revenue has fallen during the conflict years.

appears to have declined. According to World Bank estimates, the formal industrial sector in Nyala employed around 10,000 people in 2007 – less than 1% of the population.

5.2.9 Increased engagement of businesses from Central Sudan in Nyala

One controversial consequence of the conflict on the urban economy in Nyala has been the penetration of business interests from Central Sudan. A number of large companies have started operating in Nyala for the first time, often in relation to major infrastructure projects. For example, the Shiryani Ashamal Company from Central Sudan is now a significant player: in 2006 it bought shares in Nyala's abattoir, received a loan from the federal government and rehabilitated the abattoir (Buchanan-Smith and Fadul, 2008). The Nyala Chamber of Commerce sees this trend as positive, but others in Nyala have serious concerns. As it has become more politically risky for Darfuris to run their own businesses they are increasingly working as agents for large companies from Central Sudan, for example Sayga Flour. The danger is that the Darfuri private sector is being gradually weakened and squeezed out by more favoured commercial interests from Central Sudan, undermining Darfur's capacity to recover from the conflict once peace is restored. The international community may be unwittingly reinforcing this trend. UNAMID advertises many of its tenders in Khartoum rather than locally, and Darfuri contractors are unable to compete with their stronger and better connected competitors in Central Sudan, who have access to cheaper materials. This issue deserves greater attention and exploration by UNAMID and its donors.

5.2.10 The growth of urban and peri-urban agriculture

During the conflict years there has been remarkable growth in urban and peri-urban agriculture to service the burgeoning urban population, and as farmers (including government officials and salaried national aid workers) move their assets from insecure rural areas to the more secure peripheries of town. Most striking is the emergence of a major dairy industry. One informant, himself a dairy farmer, estimated that around 2,000 households are engaged in dairy farming in Nyala, in areas such as Karari. Most farms have an average of about ten cattle, which are zero-grazed on sorghum stalks, groundnut cake, wheat and millet bran and food aid CSB.²⁴ This mitigates the risk of looting by avoiding grazing outside the town. Many of the cattle are improved breeds, usually Friesian. Most farmers are long-term residents of Nyala. IDPs are employed as labourers, and there are reports of share-cropping with IDPs, whereby the farmer provides the running costs and the IDPs provide the labour. This thriving dairy industry is predicted to grow beyond the conflict, although there is competition for land between the dairy farms and government plans for new residential areas. Poultry farming in Nyala has also flourished. UN-Habitat (2009) estimates that

²⁴ Corn-soya blend (CSB) is the preferred feed of many dairy farmers because it is much cheaper than sorghum. An 80kg sack costs SDG 50, compared with SDG 140 for an 80kg sack of sorghum.

approximately 5,000 *feddans* around Nyala town are given over to farming.

5.2.11 Increased organisation within the private sector

An unexpected impact of the conflict is the incentive it has provided to individual traders to join associations and guilds. In addition to the Artisans' Union, examples encountered by the research team include a contractors' association with a membership of over 70. Such organisations are intended to strengthen collective negotiating power with the government in the face of steep tax rises, and to protect their members from poor business practices. The Artisans' Union, for example, has argued that its members should not be subject to heavy taxes as long as they receive poor services from the government and little or no investment in training. Large contractors have faced problems of severely delayed payments on government contracts. Some of those interviewed were owed more than \$500,000; others have gone bankrupt and some are in jail for their debts.

5.2.12 Security institutions and personnel engaged in economic activity

The presence of state security forces in Darfur has increased substantially since the conflict began. Many of these security institutions have engaged in economic activity, much of it in Nyala. UNEP (2008) documents the involvement of military and security personnel in timber trading – in valuable hardwoods such as mahogany – as well as in the sale of firewood. Security institutions are also involved in the groundnut trade and in the processing of groundnuts in Nyala, capitalising on their trading links with Central Sudan, and are active in the trucking business. Security institutions have privileged access to government departments and services, are exempt from taxes and have access to finance and subsidised transport to rural areas.

5.2.13 Growth of financial institutions, but poor access to credit

One indication of the booming urban economy is the growth of financial institutions in Nyala. By March 2010 there were 20 banks, compared with only seven before the conflict, five insurance companies and three foreign exchange bureaus. However, most Darfuri traders still find it very difficult to access loans in the formal sector and there is a ceiling on the amount of credit available. Only two of Nyala's 20 banks provide micro-finance in any volume, and there is a general tendency to 'over-collateralise' loans using guarantees such as insurance and conventional physical collateral, despite encouragement from the Central Bank of Sudan to consider non-traditional collateral (Hansen and Khojali, 2010). Instead, most credit is provided informally by *hawaldars* (personal financial intermediaries), at rates of 12%–18% (*ibid.*).

5.1.14 Summary

Table 1 summarises the effects of the conflict on various economic sectors in Nyala.

Table 1: Conflict and the urban economy

Negatively affected	Positively affected
Livestock – previously Nyala considered a major site for gathering livestock before travelling on the hoof to Omdurman. Trade affected by looting/attacks. One of the worst-hit sectors	Retail trade e.g. consumer goods
Cash crops – falling production and looting of trucks running between rural and urban areas	Artisans e.g. carpenters and metalworkers
Traditional agriculture – collapse of the rural economy because of insecurity and displacement and knock-on effect on the urban economy	Construction industry – traders in building materials, most brought from Khartoum; brick kiln operators
Leather tanning of hides as the livestock sector declines	Traders in electronic goods
Trade within South Darfur: the number of traders has fallen and many now invest in property rather than trading	Market gardening Dairy industry Poultry-raising Trade from Khartoum

Most informed commentators in Nyala believe that the urban economy has expanded overall during the conflict years, and many have benefited from this growth. However, there are a number of concerns, including:

- The increasing domination of traders from Central Sudan, and the extent to which Nyala's economic surplus is extracted and subsequently invested in Central Sudan.
- The artificial and temporary boost to the economy provided by the international community, which cannot last and for which a strategy of economic transition must be developed to prepare for the eventual withdrawal of international actors.
- The close links between economic activity and the political power of the NCP.

Nevertheless, many private sector operators and entrepreneurs interviewed for this study emphasised Nyala's potential as a trading centre once peace is restored. In the words of a senior member of the Chamber of Commerce: 'South Darfur should be one of the richest states in Sudan'. The same interviewee believed that it would take five to seven years for the economy to recover. High levels of capital investment will be needed, in infrastructure, including roads and the power supply, as well as support to the rural economy.

5.3 Urban livelihoods and the impact of the conflict

5.3.1 Nyala residents – middle to high income-earners

In better-off neighbourhoods of Nyala the majority of households run their own businesses, usually as traders, or are salaried. In Hai El Wadi, the Popular Committee estimates that 40% of the working population are traders, 40% are salaried employees working for the government or international agencies and the remaining 20% are farmers. The proportion farming was much higher before the drought of the mid-1980s; the shift to commerce may also reflect

the growth of Nyala's economy in the last 15 years. In contrast, nearer the edge of town a higher proportion of households are dependent on farming: around half in Karari, a neighbourhood across Wadi Nyala. Yet even there, approximately 40% are salaried government employees and 10% work in the private sector. In Hai Elwohda ('Texas'), also across Wadi Nyala, the majority of households are dependent on trading and only 20% on farming. This is no surprise as Hai Elwohda hosts Suq Elshaabi, Nyala's second-largest market. Thus, livelihoods are determined both by socio-economic status and by geographical location within Nyala town.

Many of the better-off have left Nyala since the conflict began. A group of women interviewed for this study in Hai El Wadi estimated that around half of the households in the area were depleted as many of the economically active, and children of secondary-school age, had left Darfur, usually for Central Sudan. Poor education facilities in Nyala are a major reason for moving. Most households that can afford to relocate ensure that their children are educated in Khartoum at secondary-school level. This is a new and alarming trend associated entirely with the conflict years, causing many professionals to leave Darfur. Many households dependent on employment with international NGOs were badly affected by the NGO expulsions in 2009, and have struggled to find work since. Although UNAMID has been actively recruiting, this has not compensated for the loss of employment.

5.3.2 The urban poor and IDPs

During the conflict years the livelihood strategies of poor urban households and IDP households living in or close to Nyala appear to have converged. They are mostly dependent on daily labouring as their main source of income. In Direij, for example, this is the main source of livelihood for around 70% of the population; the remaining 30% work for the government or for NGOs. The influx of IDPs has increased

the supply of unskilled labour significantly. A common pattern is for IDPs and poor residents to travel into the centre of Nyala to search for work each day. IDPs report that they usually find work only for two to four days a week. This option is more difficult for IDPs in camps further from Nyala, such as Kalma and El Sereif, where IDPs are more likely to face government restrictions on movement. In the first half of 2010, for example, IDPs in Kalma camp reported that government restrictions on movement to Nyala town, intimidation and fear of arrest prevented them from trading between the two markets.²⁵

Initially IDPs suffered discrimination and exploitation in the labour market. This has declined as they have become accepted as 'residents', and have become better integrated into the labour market. Wage rate differences between the urban poor and IDPs appear to have equalised, albeit at a low level. The types of daily labouring available to the urban poor and IDPs include washing clothes (women), construction activities such as carrying bricks and stone-breaking (men and women), domestic work (women) and labouring on peri-urban farms (men and women). Daily wage rates have increased in the last four years, but have not kept pace with the rising cost of living in Nyala. The pattern in Nyala appears similar to the findings of research into IDP livelihoods conducted by Tufts University in Kebkabiya and Zalingei, which concludes: 'IDPs pursue semi-urbanized livelihood strategies that are inadequate, insecure and maladaptive. Most are relatively marginal and do not contribute sufficient food and income' (Young et al., 2009: 3).

Water and food (despite the general food distribution organised by WFP) are the main items of expenditure for IDP households. IDP women in Direij camp ranked their main expenditures, by value, as follows:

1. Water – SDG 3 per day for an average household, purchased from donkey carts which bring water from the *wadi*.
2. Sorghum.
3. Oil.
4. Meat.
5. Sugar.
6. Soap.
7. Okra and dried tomatoes.

Although livelihoods have become less dependent on rainfed farming since the conflict began, and there is now a year-round safety net in place in the form of internationally provided food aid, the experience of erratic and inadequate rainfall in 2009

²⁵ This was reported to the JMST by the Civil Society Forum in 2010. Intimidation of IDPs and fear of arrest have frequently prevented them from travelling into Nyala. Government restrictions on IDP movement began early on. Between May and December 2005, for example, the government banned commercial vehicles from carrying passengers from Kalma camp to Nyala and from engaging in trade in Kalma in an apparent attempt to discourage permanent settlement in the camp, and to discourage market activity in the camp.

Box 1: Farming near Nyala: IDPs in Direij camp

A number of households rent farmland in Baba and Gad El Haboob (east of the airport), about half an hour on foot from Direij. This is a temporary arrangement that has to be renegotiated each year. The landowners (still farmers themselves) prefer to be paid in cash, but if this is not feasible then they may accept payment in kind at harvest time. In 2009/10 the rental price was SDG 50 per *feddan* for groundnuts, and SDG 30 per *feddan* for sorghum. The harvest in 2008/09 was good; women interviewed for this study reported that they had produced enough food to last three to four months. The harvest in 2009/10 was, however, very poor.

demonstrates the impact that a poor harvest still has on food prices. Both millet and sorghum prices soared, putting further pressure on limited household budgets.

A number of IDP households have resumed farming, but rarely on their original farms. Instead, they rent farmland close to Nyala. See Box 1 for the experience of IDPs from Direij camp. Some younger IDPs, usually men, have also acquired new artisan skills in Nyala, for example in metalwork and carpentry. Approximately 40% of semi-skilled labourers are IDPs. Training IDPs has been one of the functions of the Artisans' Union, but there is strong competition for work even in this semi-skilled labour market.

De Waal (2009) outlines how IDP camps have become a 'pillar of livelihoods' in Darfur for many otherwise rural households. Where possible households have chosen to place some family members in the camps to benefit from food aid rations and as an insurance mechanism, while retaining a rural or urban livelihood base elsewhere:

This pattern of displacement is not the destruction of the old order, but Darfurians' adjustment to the new order. The new Darfur is constructed around urban economies and the rents of aid, and less around the complementary farming and pastoral livelihoods of the past.

Young et al. (2009: 4) report a similar pattern in Zalingei and Kebkabiya:

The livelihoods domain has expanded to incorporate multiple settings that span local urban, rural and transnational environments. Our research suggests that IDPs are caught in a transitional mode and that their livelihoods are increasingly multi-nodal.

Table 2 (page 14) summarises the main livelihood sources of residents in Nyala, and of IDPs and the urban poor.

Table 2: Main urban livelihoods in Nyala

Residents – middle- to high-income	IDPs/urban poor
Trading	High dependence on daily labouring e.g. domestic work, construction, loading and unloading
Government employment (civilian, military/security)	Informal petty trading
Shift from extensive farming to more intensive farming in dairy, poultry and horticulture – involvement in urban farming increased	Some IDPs renting land to farm seasonally
Employment with international and national NGOs, UN agencies and UNAMID	Firewood collection and charcoal making
Drivers and transportation (4,000 licensed <i>tuktuks</i> , 3,000 licensed taxis)	Handicrafts e.g. making bedframes
Private sector manufacturing	Collecting stones for building and stone-breaking to create gravel
Employment with financial institutions e.g. banks	Donkeys and water carts – owners and drivers
Teaching	Teaching Semi-skilled labour e.g. artisanal work Some youth – military/police (especially during elections)

Chapter 6

Land and housing

6.1 Urban residential land: legal frameworks, policies and procedures

Whereas customary law governs many transactions and aspects of land tenure in rural areas in Darfur, in urban areas land allocation and land tenure is governed by statutory law. Like all cities in Sudan, urban residential land in Nyala has been categorised in three classes, a legacy from the colonial period. Table 3 describes these classes.

As pressure on urban land increased, plot sizes were reduced in the early 1990s. For example Class 1 plot sizes were reduced from 600–1,000m² to 500–600m². A number of IDP camps in and around Nyala are in Class 3 areas, for example Otash camp, Direij camp and Sakali.

The MPPPU is responsible for allocating residential land. Its Land Planning and Housing Department identifies and decides upon land use, the Survey Department provides the technical and engineering skills to demarcate plots and the Land Administration Department oversees the allocation of plots. Thus, the Land Administration Department provides the main interface with the population. It issues the first documentation and produces leases and contracts. These must then be signed off by the Land Registrar in order to become legal documents providing security of tenure.

A number of criteria guide the allocation of new residential land, including size of household, level of income/economic status and position (if any) within the government. The system thus tends to favour the better-off and government employees. A committee comprising the MPPPU and representatives of the community, including tribal leaders, meets to oversee the

scoring of applications against these criteria, and to decide on the subsequent allocation of plots. The cost of acquiring a plot through this process is determined by another committee that includes the Ministry of Finance, MPPPU and the Chamber of Commerce. The MPPPU thus generates its own revenue through registering and allocating urban land.

As demand for urban land has consistently outstripped the availability of new residential land allocated by the MPPPU, there is an active market in land – see Section 6.2 below. There is also a long tradition in Nyala of informal squatting on unplanned land. This is particularly the case when there has been an influx of people from rural areas, for example during the drought in the mid-1980s and since the start of the conflict in 2003. In the past, much of this squatting has eventually been regularised as the government has demarcated and registered the unplanned area, albeit some years after the squatters' arrival. This can encourage speculative squatting; indeed, on the peripheries of Nyala an informal payment is often made by the squatting household to the sheikh for the area. See Box 3 (page 16) for an illustration of how squatters are eventually allocated residential land, based on the Direij area of the town.

Policy on compensation for urban land appropriated by the government is unclear, and the practice inconsistent. According to the Land Acquisition Act of 1930, compensation should be paid for land acquired for public purposes. However, according to the 1970 Unregistered Land Act, all unregistered land belongs to the government. This has important implications for states like Darfur, where customary law predominates in rural areas and very few farmers have legally registered land documents. In Nyala no compensation was paid for land

Table 3: Classes of urban residential land in Nyala

	Plot size and permitted building	Period of lease	Service provision
Class 1	500–600m ² Multi-storey building permitted	50 years	High quality – roads, water, electricity etc
Class 2	300–400m ² 2-storey building permitted	40 years	Moderate quality
Class 3	300m ² 1-storey building permitted	30 years	Lower quality of services
Class 4	There is no class 4 residential land in Nyala, only in the villages of South Darfur. The plot size for class 4 is 200m ²		

Source: MPPPU, Nyala

Box 2: Squatters in Direij, 1980s–1990s

Direij, on the road to Nyala’s international airport, became a site for squatters in the 1980s. Approximately half of the squatting households had been driven to Nyala by the devastating drought of the mid-1980s; the other half were rural households seeking a better life. In 1992 Direij was transformed from a squatter settlement into a Class 3 planned area. Plots were allocated by the MPPPU according to criteria such as household size, years of residence in the area and whether the household was still present. Around 90% of the squatter households were settled in this way. However, the provision of services by the government has been sorely inadequate. There is no electricity and only a few hand pumps. Most residents purchase their water from donkey carts or private boreholes. There are three primary schools and two health centres, but these are overwhelmed by the large neighbouring IDP population in Direij camp.

Source: Focus group discussion, Direij.

appropriated by the government for Nyala Airport or for the university compound.

6.2 The impact of the Darfur conflict on land in Nyala

Seven years of conflict in Darfur have had a major impact on land in Nyala, principally as a result of the massive influx of IDPs and the large international presence.

Increased demand for land is an obvious consequence of the rapidly expanding population in Nyala. Over a ten-year period, between 1970 and 1980, there were reportedly 5,000–6,000 applications to the MPPPU for new residential plots; since the conflict the number of applications exceeded this figure in just one year. The MPPPU reports that there were 7,500 applications for residential plots in 2008, but only 4,000 plots were allocated. In 2009 there were 9,000 applications. Approximately half are from Nyala residents and approximately half from IDPs. Table 4 indicates how the MPPPU is attempting to meet this rising demand, with a plan to allocate 10,000 new residential plots in one year, 2009/10, compared with an

earlier plan to allocate 11,000 residential plots over a 13-year timeframe between 1995 and 2008. The table also shows the rising cost of residential land. As the MPPPU struggles to meet increased demand, several key informants warned of a potential dispute brewing as agricultural land on the periphery of Nyala, currently used for dairy farming and market gardening, is considered for residential use. Although a legislative framework is in place for the allocation of urban land, it cannot cope with the rapid pace of change in Nyala, encouraging the commercialisation of land and increased activity in the private sector. Despite these pressures and the incentives for land speculation, it is worth noting that land is still being allocated predominantly to Darfuris; there is little evidence of speculation involving outsiders from elsewhere in Sudan or from neighbouring countries.

The price of residential land increased immediately the conflict-displaced arrived in Nyala. In Direij residential area (on the edge of Direij camp) prices have more than doubled since the conflict began, from SDG 750 in the early 2000s to SDG 1,500 per plot in 2010. In Hai Al Matar, prices have risen ten-fold since 2002, from SDG 15,000 for 500m² to around SDG 150,000 in 2010, and this appears to be a common pattern. A number of Nyala residents observed that land prices in the town were on a par with prices in Khartoum and Omdurman. Those already owning or leasing residential land, and those who could afford to buy land in the first few years of the conflict (often employees of international agencies) are the beneficiaries of these price hikes; those wishing to buy and newly arrived households in Nyala are unable to afford land for housing. Rapidly rising land prices have also created an incentive for the government to sell strategically located land privately, for example close to major roads, in order to raise revenue.

There has been an associated and rapid rise in house rental prices, fuelled by the influx of IDPs and by the large international presence. Rents increased by 1,200% between 2002/03 and 2008 for high-quality housing, for example in Hai El Matar, a favoured location for international agency guest houses. Table 5 shows this, as well as the dramatic impact of the NGO expulsions in 2009, which caused rents of high-quality housing to plummet. For many residents, rents are by far their biggest expenditure.

Table 4: MPPPU plans to allocate new residential plots

Category of land	1995–2008 Residential Plan		2009–2010 Residential Plan	
	No. of allocated plots	Cost of acquiring a plot of land from MPPPU	No. of allocated plots	Cost of acquiring a plot of land from MPPPU
Class 1	3,000	SDG 306	2,000	SDG 638
Class 2	3,000	SDG 224	2,500	SDG 365
Class 3	5,000	SDG 180	5,500	SDG 288

Source: MPPPU.

Table 5: House rents in Nyala pre- and during the conflict

Type of house	Pre-conflict rent (before 2004)	Rent during the conflict (2008)	Rent following the NGO expulsion in March 2009
Small 2-room house	SDG 150 per month	SDG 250–300 per month	SDG 300 per month
Moderate house in Nyala centre	SDG 500–1,000 per month	SDG 2,000 per month in 2004–2006	SDG 1,000 per month
Sophisticated house e.g. in Hai El Matar	SDG 1,000 per month	SDG 13,000 per month in 2008	SDG 3,000–4,000 per month

Source: Nyala research team.

Table 6: MPPPU revenue from the licences for new commercial construction

Year	Number of licences issued by MPPPU	Value of licences (SDG)	Additional information
2002	0	0	
2003	7	4,698	Petrol station & multi-storey buildings
2004	1	1,633	
2005	1	450	
2006	2	2,600	Flats
2007	5	3,677	
2008	22	14,015	Multi-storey building & petrol stations
2009	23	19,121	Multi-storey buildings
2010 (to March)	3	1,316	Multi-storey buildings

Source: MPPPU.

The state government prioritises business development in its allocation of land.²⁶ It is encouraging the construction of multi-storey buildings, of which there are now around 25 in Nyala. Table 6 illustrates this trend, and how it has intensified since 2008. The government often has a share in these business developments, for example in the new five-star hotel being built in Hai El Matar, the Deman Ijtimai. Prioritising business development in the centre of Nyala is also consistent with the Master Plan.

There are also problems with the mechanisms that are supposed to compensate people for the loss of their land. For example, owners/users of land that has become part of IDP camps have not been compensated, nor have owners/users of land allocated to UNAMID for its camps. However, IDPs report that some of the owners of the land now used for camps are being paid by the IDPs ‘in kind’, in food aid. Women in Sakali Camp expressed their concern about gender inequalities in relation to land registration, reporting that it was harder for women to secure land rights; as a result, many separated women have become homeless.

²⁶ For example, the MAN Company has been given 15,000m² for the first phase of construction of a new business development, and 17,000m² for the second phase.

6.3 IDPs and land in Nyala

Most IDPs live in camps in and around Nyala, although there are also numerous IDP households squatting, for example in open spaces along the *wadi*, and living with host families in Nyala. As discussed in Chapter 2, it appears that a large proportion of IDPs wish to remain in Nyala and acquire a residential plot.

In 2008, HAC introduced a policy offering IDPs in some areas residential plots. Implementation of this policy is most advanced in Sakali, where 1,200 plots had been distributed to IDPs, exempt from the standard fees, over an 18-month period up to March 2010. IDPs then have to construct their own houses; they are given temporary documentation with the promise that, if they have built a house on the plot and are living there in two years’ time, they will be given a lease of 50 years. However, to be given a residential plot a household has to give up its IDP status and its ration card for general food distribution, although there is no indication that services will be provided to them by the government (and the government’s track record in this area is not good; for example, people displaced by drought who were given land in the Direij area of Nyala in the early 1990s still do not receive the full complement of services).

This *ad hoc* policy is disliked by many IDPs, not least because it runs in parallel to the normal procedures for allocating residential land, raising suspicions about the political motivations behind the policy (a special committee has been appointed by the *Walī*'s office to organise the process). The sheikhs in EsSereif camp have rejected the offer of residential plots, stating that any process must be organised through the MPPPU. The process also offers little security of tenure, and many IDP households may struggle to meet the costs of building a permanent dwelling in the two-year timeframe stipulated. Nonetheless, according to staff in the MPPPU there are plans to allocate a further 6,000 plots to IDPs south of Sakali, and around 10,000 plots to IDPs in Assalam, Kalma and Otash camps.

The state government's other approach to settling IDPs is through the controversial Model Village programme. Eight such villages have been constructed close to Nyala, mostly funded by the Arab League. The latest public commitment of funds comes from the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) for \$600m following donations by the Arab League, Qatar and China, with the stated aim of securing 'the voluntary return of displaced people in camps in various parts of the territory'.²⁷ However, the extent to which return to the Model Villages is truly 'voluntary' is in question, as is their sustainability (Khan, 2008).

²⁷ See <http://arabnews.com/saudiArabia/article24710.ece>.

Chapter 7

Infrastructure, services and the environment

Nyala's infrastructure is creaking under the strain of rapid urbanisation. Areas of the city associated with the recent population surge are mostly beyond the reach of the limited water pipeline network and the minimal electricity grid; these populations live with little or no infrastructure. Nyala has never had high levels of service provision in key sectors such as water, health and education. Before the conflict, residents were poorly served and there was no consistency in service provision across the town. Extending the infrastructure and services has been included in previous master plans (e.g. in 1985), but implementation has been poor. Only 10,000 of the pre-conflict population had access to piped water.

There is a hierarchy of access. Those benefiting from the existing slim resources fall into a higher-income bracket or have political connections. Further distinctions can be drawn between the middle class, the urban poor and displaced communities in official camps, self-settled populations and people hosted or newly integrated within the town. Larger IDP camps remain far from the town limits, yet many have become integrated into Nyala so that boundaries are indeterminable. Populations move to and fro with relative ease, and services within the camps are widely used by town residents. Services in camps are often provided free of charge, while those in the town carry fees.

The MPPPU is the key ministry with responsibility for utilities such as water, electricity and road management. In addition there is the Water and Environmental Sanitation (WES) Programme of the Public Water Corporation, which was set up jointly by UNICEF and the government before the conflict. WES is the main institution with which international agencies work, especially for the provision of water and sanitation in IDP camps. The municipality is responsible for waste management. Despite restricted and fluctuating budgetary resources and political will, many government officials are keen to provide services where they can. But service provision is heavily dependent on the localities raising adequate revenues; in Nyala the demand for services appears to have far outstripped the ability of the urban population (including IDPs) to pay for them. Local community leaders, the private sector and community initiatives have stepped in to supplement inadequate government provision, particularly in water and education. Most water is purchased from young traders who fill jerry cans at central water points and deliver it by donkey carts throughout the town. There has been a noticeable increase in water-laden donkeys journeying along the streets of Nyala, in direct correlation to the increasing population.

Theoretically, the responsibility for providing services in the camps and settlements around Nyala lies with the state, but in practice international agencies and national NGOs routinely meet most needs, in conditions characterised by overcrowding and water and food shortages. Those squatting or living with host families in the town put more pressure on already limited resources. Within IDP camps, access to key resources such as water is often dependent on external inputs – cash and fuel – which have on occasion been deliberately restricted by the government on security grounds, highlighting the fragile and often politicised nature of service provision to IDPs. The risks of high dependence on international help were laid bare following the NGO expulsions in 2009, which reportedly cut humanitarian response capacity in half. Although the impact of the expulsions has yet to be thoroughly researched, anecdotal evidence suggests significant reductions in access to basic services in the camps and in rural areas, and UNICEF has drawn attention to the unsustainability of gap-filling arrangements.

7.1 Education

There have been primary schools in Nyala since the early 1920s, and the first secondary school opened in 1947. In 2010 there were 308 primary schools and 106 secondary schools, compared with 135 and 58 respectively in 2000. In other words the number of schools has more than doubled, alongside many private initiatives and the camp-based services provided by international agencies.

The primary concern of most actors in the education sector is the quality rather than quantity of teachers. Nyala has over 3,000 teaching staff, of which almost 2,000 are primary school teachers. Teachers are very poorly paid (SDG 500/month for a secondary school teacher, SDG 300/month for a primary school teacher) and most are unqualified. The new Faculty of Teacher Training at the university was compared unfavourably with the old Teacher Training Institute. Municipality officials indicated that education is not prioritised by the locality due to lack of resources. Schools, particularly those in or close to IDP camps, are invariably overcrowded and lack resources, with 70 to over 100 children to a class. The location of schools determines whether IDPs attend them. Overall, IDPs account for less than half of all pupils. Many children, particularly girls, are taken out of school to work and support the household.

Although the Ministry of Education is meant to pay for cleaners, guards and furniture, this burden often falls to the school, which in turn passes on these costs in fees to parents. While

officially primary education is free, in practice even government schools charge fees from parents in lieu of state support. In some IDP camps, it was reported that teachers and school guards had not been paid for several months. Parents also have to buy textbooks, for teachers as well as pupils (this is usually organised by the Parent Teacher Association (PTA)). Thanks to funds from Saudi Arabia and Indonesia some secondary schools now have large numbers of computers, creating an additional burden in terms of generators and fans.

7.2 Health

Nyala has had a hospital since the 1940s, and has for decades provided treatment services for rural communities. However, funding does not match the health needs generated by recent population growth. The Ministry of Health reported that, in the first quarter of 2009, federal funding met 82% of the monies requested by the state government, including running costs and employee salaries as well as direct costs. However, this is heavily dependent on international assistance, which provides around 20% of funding. Without this international support the health system would collapse.

Table 7: Ministry of Health expenditure 1st quarter, 2009 (SDG)

Direct expenses	3,461,182	39%
Physical infrastructure	5,000,000	45%
Salaries Incentives	227,000	2%
Running costs	17,000	0%
Salaries	2,321,544	21%

The strength of the relationship with the international community was evident in a partnership conference on Darfur held in Nyala in early 2010, where a technical agreement was reached between the Ministry of Health and the key UN agencies (UNICEF, the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the UN Population Fund (UNFPA)). The agreement underpins a five-year health plan for South Darfur, including Nyala, which has been coordinated and agreed with the Ministry of Finance. However, funding is precarious and directly related to the government's priorities regarding the conflict. This affects both providers and budget holders. Many health staff employed by international agencies are Sudanese nationals (90%), often seconded by the Ministry of Health. While this provides opportunities for capacity-building and ensures that staff are paid regularly, it also drains expertise from public posts and means that many individuals are dependent on international aid flows for their livelihood.

The accepted standard ratio for primary health care provision is 10,000 people per Primary Health Care Centre. According to this ratio, UNICEF reports that coverage in Nyala is 166%. While this appears positive, geographical coverage is highly

concentrated (all facilities are in the centre of town) and access is a problem for many, particularly vulnerable individuals with mobility difficulties, such as the elderly and chronically ill. In general, facilities are poor-quality and supplementary fees are often charged for services such as tests and X-rays.

The number of hospitals in Nyala has increased in the last decade, with two additions (the military and police hospitals) funded directly by the central government. Nyala hospital is supported by UNICEF in the form of supplies and technical assistance. Early in 2010, the Turkish Red Crescent opened a hospital on the main airport road, and a cardiac hospital is reportedly under construction, funded by the Italian government.

Prior to the 2009 expulsions, one INGO had been undertaking six-monthly assessments to determine nutrition rates, but these have now stopped outside of rural areas and in some camps, where assessments have continued under UNICEF. At the time of writing, the most recent available data from South Darfur covers the period October 2009 to January 2010, and suggests that Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rates are above the 15% humanitarian emergency threshold in six out of seven surveys, regardless of whether the survey was conducted during or after the hunger gap (UNICEF, 2010). In Otash camp a GAM of 19.5% was reported. Severe malnutrition in under-fives in Nyala is treated in a nutritional centre provided by the Ministry of Health in Karori. Twenty per cent of the caseload of South Darfur is handled there. Other serious health concerns include cholera outbreaks, though officials are reluctant to admit the problem and insist on using the term 'watery diarrhoea'. Careful monitoring and preventive measures by UNICEF and WHO in close collaboration with the government have ensured there has been no outbreak since 2006, but the threat remains. Meanwhile, HIV/AIDS is becoming more prevalent and there has been an upsurge in pregnancies among young street girls. A lack of midwives was reported, particularly in poor urban areas and IDP camps, with a negative impact on maternal neo-natal mortality rates.

7.3 Water and sanitation

Darfur suffers from frequent droughts, and access to clean, safe water has been a long-standing problem. UNEP has drawn attention to the risk of drought for Darfur's urban communities, including camps and settlements (UNEP, 2008b). Kalma, Dereig and Otash camps are particularly vulnerable to ground water depletion because of their geological position and high dependence on water from Wadi Nyala. In Direij camp, UNEP reports that the water level fell by 7 metres over the 18 months to December 2008, at which point a new water source had to be found some 3km from the camp.

Before 2000, only 50% of the population of South Darfur had access to clean water. Yet technical reports cited by UN-Habitat (2009) indicate that the Nyala aquifers have adequate resources to provide water to at least meet current demands.

The Nyala Water Corporation admits that the current piped water system is woefully inadequate, asbestos-ridden and reaches only 10,000 customers. Plans are in hand to replace it, and a contract has been signed with a Nyala-based company, Napta, to deliver 317km of new pipes, but this work is still in the early stage. Seasonal variance also plays a part in the availability of water in Nyala. The key resource is surface water, with the water table dropping during the dry months of April, May and June before being replenished with the onset of the rains, usually in August. While much has been made of plans to pump an additional 40,000m³ a day from the Gereida Baggara basin through a pipeline to Nyala – seen by many as the answer to Nyala’s water problems – the scheme has been beset with delays and disputes and was halted while the study team were in the field. Even if the pipeline were completed within the proposed three-year timeframe, running costs are likely to be considerable, and the existing pipeline system will be unable to distribute the additional water adequately.

One consequence of increased demand has been a reduction in water quality in Nyala town. A recent study carried out by academics working with the state Ministry of Health analysed Nyala’s drinking water (Abdelrahman and Eltahir, 2010). In all 240 water samples the scientists looked at, the bacteria count was above permissible limits for drinking water.²⁸ The Water Corporation acknowledges the problem, but says that it cannot cover all the town’s boreholes with its chlorination scheme. There are currently 29 boreholes in Nyala, 24 of which were working at the time of this study.

While domestic water use has escalated as Nyala’s population has risen, demand for water for livelihood practices such as brick-making within the camps, peri-urban farming and livestock raising has risen even more dramatically, fuelling tensions and competition for resources. The huge presence of the international community, particularly the deployment of UNAMID, and the presence of the Sudanese armed forces is

an additional burden. Although water prices vary according to the source and use, they are generally rising.

The municipality office believes that environmental hygiene should be the locality’s responsibility, though currently the locality is able to meet just 20% of the demand for environmental services. Increased levels of sewage and poor solid waste management lead to environmental pollution. The lack of systematic waste disposal has led to the creation of dumping grounds close to the town. Although some have been moved further away to accommodate urban growth, a new dump on the south side of town is encroaching on nearby settlements, with consequent risks to public health.

There are no official garbage disposal trucks in Nyala, although a monthly tax of SDG25 is imposed. Most people use informal methods: labourers dispose of waste for residents in the centre of town; in other areas rubbish is frequently burnt. The drainage system is inadequate and dangerous in the rainy season. Due to the lack of land within the town, people occupy hazardous sites at risk of flooding. In some IDP camps, sanitation has deteriorated following the NGO expulsions in March 2009. The disposal of human excreta encourages the spread of disease and renders already limited water supplies dangerous.

7.4 Electricity

Electricity has been available in Nyala town since 1976, and Nyala has had its own power station since 1985. Although considered adequate ten years ago, it is now unable to meet rising demand, and supplies are erratic and inadequate. In 2008 an additional station was brought online, stabilising power supplies for those already on the electricity grid. Coverage is estimated at 20%. For many of those on the grid, prices are prohibitively high. Up-front payments of at least SDG 220 are required for installation, which means that poorer neighbourhoods are effectively excluded. Table 8 shows the distribution of demand for electricity in recent years.

Table 8: Electricity demand in Nyala, 2006–2009

	2006 (%)	2009 (%)	Change	Reason
Household	40	53	Up 13%	Population increase
Commercial	13	21	Up 7%	Increase in market activity
Industrial	10	3	Down 7%	Falling industrial production
Government institutions	29	20	Down 9%	A pre-paid system was installed
National Electricity Corporation’s own needs	8	3	Down 5%	Staff salaries were previously paid in kind for part of the salary, now paid entirely in cash

Source: National Electricity Corporation.

²⁸ The highest contamination of water sources was observed in household storage containers (20%), followed by boreholes (11.25%), reservoirs (6.24%), hand pumps (5.42%) and dug wells (2.49%). Contamination varied from season to season, with the highest levels in autumn (18.33%) followed by winter (13.75%) and summer (13.32%).

Nyala's electricity grid is limited both in reach and capacity. Plans for a new electricity grid throughout the city and up to Majok have been passed by the South Darfur State Legislative Council, pending funding from the federal government. The provision of electricity received attention at the federal level during the pre-election period in early 2010, with promises that Darfur's future energy needs would be met by thermal energy from the new Al Fulla power station in Northern Kordofan. In addition, funding was promised for three new power plants in Darfur, but the state electricity corporation did not know when this funding would arrive.

7.5 Roads

Nyala is the only town in South Darfur with a paved road network. The current extent is 50km, with a further 30km planned. The MPPPU reports that each kilometre of new road costs SDG 1m, excluding the cost of the feasibility study, and there are no funds for road maintenance.

In 2009 the road south-east from Nyala was extended to the outskirts of Kalma camp (approximately 12km from the town). Its arrival caused tension in the camp, with rumours that the government intended to destroy part of the camp to make way for the road. At present the road is unfinished, and no contracts had been signed at the time of writing, although the stated intention is that it should continue to Beliel Locality, south of Kalma camp.

Traffic congestion is increasing in Nyala as the town expands. One indication of growing traffic volume is the increase in the number of petrol stations in the town, from three or four before the conflict to 18 in 2009. There are an estimated 4,000 rickshaws in Nyala. Recent moves to ban them from using the main tarmac roads in the centre of town have created a parallel system of dust roads alongside the tarmac entry points, creating dust pollution and increasing the number of traffic accidents. The Nyala Master Plan proposes building a ring road and relocating main parking areas for buses and other vehicles away from the city centre to address congestion problems.

The large international presence in Nyala is putting further pressure on the limited road network. The road between the city centre and the new UNAMID base is in poor condition due to the large volume of heavy vehicles taking this route. There is little indication that international agencies are contributing to maintenance or repair.

7.6 The environmental consequences of urbanisation and conflict

The negative environmental consequences of the conflict more generally, and of the establishment of massive IDP camps specifically, are well recognised (see e.g. TearFund, 2007). The devastating impact of Darfur's swollen urban population on forest resources has been documented by UNEP (2008a), with brick-making identified as the major cause of deforestation around Darfur's main towns. UNEP estimates that at least 52,000 trees were needed in 2008 just to fuel the brick kilns around Geneina, Zalingei and El Fasher, let alone Nyala. IDPs from Kalma camp had to travel 75km to find firewood in 2008, compared to only 15km in the early years of the conflict. According to an INGO staff member, travel time increased by 45 minutes over just four months, between January and April 2008. Despite these alarming indicators of environmental degradation, and the contribution of the international community in fuelling the construction boom in Darfur's main towns, action to prevent it has been painfully slow. UN-Habitat has promoted the use of alternative construction technology, including stabilised soil blocks (SSBs) rather than fired bricks, but uptake has been very limited.

In an environment of lawlessness and impunity there has also been opportunistic felling of hardwoods. UNEP (2008a) has documented the destruction of Nyala's majestic Kunduwa mahogany forest, originally planted in colonial times and supposedly protected by the Forestry National Corporation (FNC) as a forest reserve. Although IDPs from nearby Kalma camp have been blamed, there is strong evidence of the involvement of military and security personnel.

Chapter 8

Social consequences of rapid urbanisation and urban vulnerability

8.1 Positive and negative social consequences of urbanisation

Urbanisation has had profound social consequences, both positive and negative, many exacerbated by the conflict. Social support mechanisms have eroded, especially amongst recent arrivals in Nyala. A group of women from Direij camp recounted how they all knew each other from before they became displaced. They are still living close to each other and try to support each other, but life is very different from what it was in their home village. The rhythm of urban life means that they only get together on relief distribution days. This is indicative of a more individualistic culture accompanying urban life, as IDPs compete for work in a saturated labour market and have little time as they struggle to make ends meet.

The weakening of family ties and in some cases family disintegration is another consequence of urbanisation and displacement. Some families are split across different camps, and as IDP children and young people struggle to find work they spend longer periods away from their families each day. Longstanding forms of social authority are being dismantled in the camps and young people are becoming independent of the control of their elders (de Waal, 2009). Meanwhile, according to UNICEF there has been a significant rise in the number of street children in Nyala. Many are girls. In this more fragmented society, where many of the traditional rules and norms have broken down, the threat of HIV/ AIDS has increased.

The threats, harassment, restriction of movement and discrimination routinely faced by many IDPs risk creating an underclass increasingly resentful towards the established residents of Nyala, who generally enjoy better infrastructure and other benefits from the government. Marginalisation of such a large group, which in this case has also become more politicised since the conflict began, creates conditions ripe for political instability and manipulation.

Urbanisation has also had important positive social benefits, including the exposure of newcomers to Nyala – IDPs from rural areas – to different social practices and improved services. Increased awareness of reproductive health issues has encouraged IDPs to abandon harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation (FGM).²⁹ Town life has also raised awareness of the value of education, especially for girls.

²⁹ Having been lobbied by several women from Nyala, the South Darfur Legislative Council recently passed a Child Act which includes measures outlawing FGM.

Gender relations too have improved as a result of the upheaval associated with the conflict. Where women have taken over increased responsibilities, for example in providing for their family, they are more likely to be treated as equals with men in some aspects of decision-making. De Waal (2009) notes that having ration cards in the camps has given women a measure of independence from their menfolk. That said, the vulnerability associated with being displaced has left many women fearful of losing, or being abandoned by, their husbands.

Despite the shattering of Darfuri society during the conflict, there are indications of ethnic co-habitation in urban areas, and different ethnic groups appear to have learned to live alongside each other. Some 36 tribes are reportedly represented in Sakali camp and the surrounding area, with women stating that: 'we are as one now after seven years living together'. There is also evidence of the integration of some *abala* (camel-herding) groups in town, with *abala* women selling produce and trading in Nyala. This too increases contact between ethnic groups.

Finally, the expanding mobile phone network and improving internet connectivity in Nyala make it easier for friends and family to stay in touch and for information to be shared rapidly, whether in relation to insecurity, work opportunities or for purely social purposes.

8.2 Urban vulnerability

The biggest threat to Nyala's people – IDPs and residents alike – is insecurity. This is closely related to the conflict. Insecurity affects all sectors of society and all locations in Nyala. Even in better-off neighbourhoods in the centre of town, such as Hai El Wadi, residents experience levels of violence and crime unheard of before the conflict: businesses have been looted, including the Shiraz supermarket; businesspeople have been shot; private four-wheel-drive vehicles carjacked, prompting many to change to smaller vehicles; and women have had bags and mobile phones snatched in the street. This has generated a pervading sense of fear, and many people are reluctant to leave their homes in the evening, the traditional time for visiting friends and relatives. Peripheral parts of Nyala such as Karari are even more vulnerable to increased crime, and the police presence is inadequate. The political will to address crime and insecurity in the town is lacking, causing some to speculate that the security forces may be implicated, especially in crimes perpetrated after curfew, or simply uninterested in fulfilling their duties. There has been a disturbing increase in armed robbery in Nyala during 2010. Some but not all of the rise in insecurity

is associated with the war economy. A culture of impunity has developed during the conflict years.

Security in IDP camps is worse still. IDPs in Direij camp reported frequent incidents of theft and violence, usually at night and frequently resulting in fatalities. The police do not have access to the camps and so can do little to restore law and order. Instead, IDPs are dependent on the protection of UNAMID. Regular patrols have reportedly reduced violence, but patrols were stepped up only shortly before the fieldwork for this study. In the early years of the conflict IDP women were particularly vulnerable to sexual attack in their pursuit of livelihood activities such as peri-urban farming and firewood collection (Women's Commission, 2006). Recent data on current patterns and levels of gender-based violence is hard to

obtain. Many IDPs also face the constant threat of relocation by the government and the dismantling of camps, sometimes violently. This sense of vulnerability has been heightened since the NGO expulsions and the imposition of restrictions on the monitoring and verification of returns by international agencies still working in Darfur.

With the conflict has come suspicion and distrust. Even in established neighbourhoods like Hai El Wadi residents are unwilling to go to the assistance of their neighbours, especially at night, for fear of putting themselves at risk. Limited movement after dark has reduced social contact, and newcomers are often treated with particular distrust. Community networks, which were traditionally an important part of collective protection, have been weakened.

Chapter 9

International responses

Before the conflict, international aid to South Darfur was mainly targeted at the rural population, and was associated with agriculture and livestock. Western Savannah Development Corporation (WSDC) was one of the main conduits for multilateral and bilateral aid funding, with donors working in close collaboration with the government. However, much of this funding dried up during the 1990s, a decade when, for political reasons, little international assistance was provided to Northern Sudan.

When the conflict intensified in Darfur in 2003/04 the flow of international aid increased dramatically, almost all of it humanitarian. In 2002 three INGOs and a handful of UN agencies were operating in the three Darfur states. By the end of 2004 hundreds of international agencies were present and Darfur had become the recipient of the world's largest humanitarian food aid operation.

The international humanitarian response began with a focus on Darfur's IDP camps and international agencies have remained the main service providers to this group. Indeed, this is the primary way in which the international community has engaged with the rapid process of urbanisation in Darfur during the conflict years, although its capacity to provide services and to monitor the welfare of IDPs and other conflict-affected groups has been hampered by fluctuating government support, and by the periodic expulsions of international staff and agencies by government. The most severe blow was the expulsion of 13 INGOs in March 2009. This, combined with increasingly strained relations between the international community and the government and deteriorating security for aid workers, have meant that there is little monitoring and engagement on the part of international agencies of issues such as attempts to 'settle' IDPs in Nyala. As the international aid community has been weakened in Nyala, it has also suffered from a loss of leadership, felt more acutely because of the challenging political context.

Hansen and Khojali (2010) report some small micro-finance projects targeted at IDPs, for example through UNDP's livelihoods programme in Nyala. Support to Nyala's residents is most evident in the health sector, for example through UNICEF and WHO's work, and INGO support to PHCs. Much of this assistance is focused on crisis prevention, such as preventing outbreaks of cholera and responding to acute

malnutrition. UNICEF is also involved in child protection work with the Ministry of Social Affairs, and in programmes to help the growing number of street children. 'Quick Impact Projects' (QUIPs) have been implemented in Nyala by UNAMID, mainly intended to address immediate needs in the service sector and build relations with the local community. These are usually small-scale projects of around \$25,000, often targeted at schools, hospitals and the prison. During the fieldwork the team came across only one example of an international agency working to support the private sector in Nyala, the Academy for Educational Development (AED), which is working with the vocational training centre and technical school.

This overview of the international response indicates how little the traditional donors and the majority of international agencies have engaged with the implications of Darfur's irreversibly changing settlement patterns. 'Non-traditional' donors, such as the Chinese government and the Arab League, have engaged in major infrastructure projects like the Baggara basin water project and the building of Model Villages, but have not been closely involved in the planning behind them or with issues of sustainability. The international community has not engaged in debates within government or with civil society about urban planning and policies, and few were aware of the new Nyala Master Plan in early 2010. This is partly a consequence of the humanitarian-development divide around which Western aid is organised, which has discouraged engagement with longer-term issues. This may be justified as adhering to humanitarian principles, but it implies a narrow and unhelpful interpretation of those principles as implying limited or no engagement with the government. In a protracted conflict which has major implications for the future of Darfur, this is a missed opportunity.

There is evidence that this polarised stance between short-term humanitarianism and longer-term development may be beginning to change. UN Sudan published a report in 2010 entitled 'Beyond Emergency Relief', which encourages international engagement with longer-term trends (UN Sudan, 2010). Identifying urbanisation as one of the critical demographic shifts taking place in Darfur during the conflict years, the document promotes mid- and longer-term planning among UN agencies, including support to urban livelihoods, promoting urban planning and private sector development.

Chapter 10

Conclusions and recommendations

For most of its history Nyala has grown gradually and organically from a small nomadic camp to become Darfur's largest city and commercial centre. Its expansion has been closely linked to its growing importance as a trading centre, which is in turn related to the development of South Darfur's agricultural and livestock wealth and Nyala's strategic location at the end of the railway and close to the Central African Republic and Chad. Periods of expansion are also linked to episodes of severe drought, which triggered population influxes from rural areas. The greater Darfur region has long suffered from political and economic marginalisation and limited investment. Despite this, Nyala had a flourishing economy before the conflict, based on agriculture and livestock processing.

The beginning of the twenty-first century has been marked by a very different and dramatic phase of urbanisation. In just seven years Nyala's population has expanded by 250%. This rapid urbanisation has been entirely triggered by widespread conflict in Darfur. This has been a highly distorted process, associated with large-scale displacement from rural areas and the massive presence of the international community: international humanitarian agencies and thousands of peacekeeping troops. The rate of population growth in Nyala quickly overwhelmed services and urban infrastructure, and the availability of residential land. Responding to such a rapid pace of urbanisation would be challenging in any context. In Nyala's case it was exacerbated by a lack of resources and investment, especially from federal government, but also from state government in part due to a declining revenue base but also because security concerns have been prioritised over meeting the population's needs. Government policy is confusing and inconsistent, with overlapping roles and mandates between ministries and other public bodies. Above all, the government (and parts of the international community) are in denial that Darfur's settlement pattern has changed irreversibly.

In many ways Nyala's economy has boomed during the conflict years, especially sectors such as construction, some artisan professions, transportation and peri-urban farming, benefiting many entrepreneurs and businesspeople. But the economy has also undergone some major transformations, not all of them positive. One of the most striking is the switch from being a net exporter to a net importer. The large international presence has stimulated much of this growth, but somewhat artificially due to its inevitably temporary presence. The penetration of business interests from Central Sudan is also new, as is the engagement of security bodies in economic activity. Although there is a buoyant labour

market, demand for casual labour has not kept up with the burgeoning supply from IDPs and the urban poor. The superficial impression of a booming urban economy should not be interpreted as meaning booming livelihoods for everyone. While some are benefiting, many others are struggling to make ends meet.

The 'brain drain' from Nyala since the conflict began is concerning as many better-off households move to Khartoum for secondary education for their children and for greater peace and stability. This is a sharp reminder of how rapidly education services have deteriorated in Nyala during the conflict years. Darfur's rapidly changing settlement pattern is associated with social upheaval and transformation. Social networks are weakening as households shift from a community-oriented rural way of life to a more individualised urban way of life where all are competing for limited work opportunities. Family influence is also declining as children spend longer periods away from their parents, and there has been a rise in the number of street children. Leadership structures are changing as new leaders emerge, especially in IDP camps, a process often associated with generational tensions.

So far the international community's engagement with urbanisation has been predominantly humanitarian, focusing on immediate and emergency service provision. UNAMID has also engaged to a limited extent, mainly through QUIPs in the service sector and some protection work in and around IDP camps. However, it is fair to say that the political context and strained relations between international agencies and the government have not been conducive to deeper engagement. While the conflict continues in Darfur and humanitarian needs persist, the international humanitarian response must also continue, but there are signs that some agencies at least are beginning to take a longer-term approach. Meanwhile, the Government of National Unity is developing a vision for Nyala's future, articulated in the new Nyala Master Plan. The Master Plan has however been driven by planners and technicians, with little community involvement, and relates more to pre-conflict Nyala than to the radically changed city of today.

Given all of these factors, the time may be ripe for the international community to enter into a dialogue with the government about developing Nyala as a major trading centre and thriving city, and the role of international aid in this process. Such a dialogue should seek to make urban planning more consultative and participatory, and to ensure that urban growth is inclusive and does not deepen existing inequalities. It must also address the long-term implications of a large and disenfranchised IDP population.

10.1 Recommendations

The government and the international community

- The immediate priority, both for the government and the international community, is to recognise and engage with the reality of urbanisation in Nyala and its longer-term implications, in particular the fact that the majority of IDPs are unlikely to return to rural areas when the conflict ends. This is the starting point for developing a vision for the post-conflict future of South Darfur, and of Nyala.
- A review of government policies that impact on urbanisation in Nyala is recommended as a first step to developing a more coherent policy that addresses overlapping roles and mandates between public bodies, and is consistent with a longer-term vision for the city. Ideally this would be a study jointly funded and implemented by the government and donors as part of the dialogue recommended above.
- A conference on urbanisation should be held in Nyala in the next six to nine months, jointly convened by the government and the international community (for example the UN), and involving civil society organisations, to make a start in addressing recommendations 1 and 2, and to begin a dialogue on the future of Nyala in the wider context of the future of South Darfur.
- Despite the pressure to find durable long-term solutions for the displaced in and around Nyala, as long as the conflict continues access to humanitarian aid must be prioritised according to need, as well as safety and security. The principle of the voluntary nature of return must be upheld, and full and transparent information made available to IDPs about their long-term options.

Federal and state government

- Reversing the decline in education in Darfur, including in Nyala, should be a high priority, both for primary and secondary education. Improving secondary education standards will help to stem the 'brain drain' from Darfur's cities to Khartoum.

International community

- The international humanitarian community has mostly been engaged in service provision for IDPs in and around Nyala. However, the wider service infrastructure for Nyala residents is also under great pressure. Ways of supporting this should be explored. Education, health and water are the priorities. International aid should not substitute for government investment and government responsibility, but should complement it and could be conditional on certain levels of government funding also being made available.
- International agencies should explore ways of engaging with and supporting the private sector in Nyala, for example through vocational training, the provision of micro-credit and support to emerging sectors like the dairy industry. A thriving and buoyant private sector in Nyala will be critical to the eventual recovery of South Darfur, and to ensure that the local private sector is not squeezed out by business interests from Central Sudan. This implies a role for UN agencies not currently present in Darfur, for example the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the UN Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) and UNESCO. Supporting professional associations and local organisations will be key to taking this recommendation forward.
- Despite political pressure for IDPs to return home, the international community must uphold the principles of voluntary return, and continue to monitor security, access to land and availability of services in areas of origin. Strong leadership and consistency of approach on these issues is essential.
- This study has indicated a number of ways in which the large presence of the international community has impacted on the process of urbanisation in Nyala, particularly the urban economy – both positively and negatively. Yet this has been given little attention and is poorly understood. This should be assessed and monitored much more closely, so that action can be taken to mitigate negative impacts. UNAMID, in particular, should review the impact of its contracting procedures on the private sector in Darfur.

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Annex 1

List of fieldwork locations

Neighbourhood name and location in Nyala town	Socio-economic status of the population	History of arrival	Zoning category
Gharb El Ezaa <i>South</i>	A – residents	Drought 1980s (population movement from west and south of Nyala)	3/4
Dereig – residential area and IDP camp <i>North-east</i>	A – residents and IDPs in camp	Drought 1980s (current residents moved from north/east of Nyala) IDPs displaced by current conflict	4
Fallujah (not covered for security reasons) <i>North</i>	A – predominantly settled pastoralists	Pastoralists displaced by current conflict	3/4
Kariri <i>South</i>	A – predominantly displaced but without IDP status	Displaced by current conflict and squatting	2
Sakali <i>South</i>	A – IDPs, who are being offered opportunity to settle	Displaced by current conflict	4
Otash (replaced by El Sereif camp for security reasons) <i>North</i>	A – IDPs in camp	Displaced by current conflict	Mostly an industrial area
Hai El Wadi <i>Central</i>	B/C	Settled in 1940s	Special case of freehold lease (typical of older areas)
El Wahida (Texas) <i>South</i>	A/B	Economic migrants from 1970s	3/4

Key to socio-economic status:

- A IDP/urban poor
- B middle class (*al tabaga al wasta*)
- C well-off

Annex 2

List of key informants

Government offices in Nyala

Electricity Corporation
HAC, South Darfur
Ministry of Education, South Darfur
Ministry of Finance – *borsa*, Nyala
Ministry of Finance – Department of Planning and Development, South Darfur
Ministry of Health, South Darfur
Ministry of Local Government, South Darfur
Ministry of Physical Planning and Public Utilities, South Darfur
Ministry of Social Affairs (Zakat Department), South Darfur
Municipality office, Nyala
Native Administration
Nyala Commissioner's Office
Popular Committees
South Darfur State Legislative Council
Urban Water Corporation, Nyala
WES, South Darfur
Women's Union

Private sector organisations

Artisans' Union
Business Union
Chamber of Commerce
Members of the Contractors' Association
Traders

International organisations

AED, Nyala
FAO, South Darfur
IOM, South Darfur
Merlin, Nyala
OCHA, South Darfur
Samaritans Purse, Nyala
UNAMID, Nyala
UNDP, South Darfur
UNEP, Khartoum
UNICEF, South Darfur
WFP, South Darfur

Annex 3

Timeline of Nyala's history and related events

19th century

- Historically few trade/caravan routes south of Darfur (El Fasher, Kobbe, Kebkabiya dominated in 18th/19th centuries) therefore no towns as the economy is too poor to support them.
- 1880s – Hai El Wadi (Nyala's oldest area) first settled.

20th Century

- 1916 Fall of Ali Dinar and effective extension of Anglo-Egyptian rule to Western Sudan after First World War.
- 1 January 1917 Darfur annexed by the British.
- 1917 First brick house constructed in Nyala.

1920s

- Nyala starts life as a nomadic camp (Wadi Nyala water source)
- 1921 becomes district headquarters of western Baggara – Habbaniya, Ta'aisha, BeniHalba.
- 1922 First primary school established.
- 1922–28 Native Administration laws concluded. Colonial administration demarcates tribal Dars and the Native Administration takes over from the Magdumates.

1930s

- 1931 First Commissioner functions (British Assistant District Commissioner for Southern Darfur) moved to Nyala from Buram and consequent increased commercial activity.
- 1932 First Magdumate court established, boosting Nyala's growth.

1940s

- Nyala hospital established.
- 1945 First land survey.
- 1947 First secondary school established.

1950s

- 1952 Residential houses start to be built in brick.
- 1950s Wildlife still observed around Nyala town.
- 1955/56 First population census counts 13,986 individuals.
- Late 1950s – Railway line extended to Nyala. This boosts the economy, and provides an important means of transport for pilgrims from West Africa en route to the Hajj. Also brings incomers from Khartoum and Medani.

1960s

- 1964/5 Second population census: 26,160 individuals.
- 1964/65–1973 Annual rate of population growth in Nyala is 16%, one of the highest in Sudan (outstripped only by Juba).

- 1963 First piped water in Nyala.
- 1960s Football stadium and cinema constructed.
- 1967/68 Drought-associated population movements from north to south of Darfur.

1970s

- 1973 Proportion of Darfur's population living in towns only 9% compared to 18.5% national average.
- 1973 Third population census: 59,583 individuals (overtakes El Fasher to become the most populous city in Darfur).
- 1974 Administrative reorganisation of Darfur's provinces – Nyala upgraded to provincial capital (9 provinces of Sudan were re-organised into 18, El Fasher becomes capital of North Darfur).
- 1970s Mechanised farming cuts across baggara migration routes and prevents them using Nyala as a key market.
- 1973 Drought – massive human and animal movements to South Darfur. Tribal conflicts over grazing land intensify.
- 1976 Electricity first introduced.
- 1978 WSDC established. Fully funded in early 1980s.

1980s

- 1983 Population census.
- 1983 First (and still only) bridge constructed across Wadi Nyala.
- Early 1980s Roads constructed to Zalingei-Kass (1983) and El Fasher.
- Mid-1980s Severe drought and significant population movement into Nyala. Allocation of land plots follows.
- 1985 Town plan for Nyala.
- 1985 Nyala's first power station opens.
- Late 1980s Conflict-driven population movements.
- 1989 National Salvation Revolution takes power in military coup.

1990s

- Early 1990s Parts of El Fasher–Nyala road metalled.
- 1993 Population census: 227,000 people (projected figure).
- 1991 Plan for land allocation to expand Nyala.
- 1993 University of Nyala established.
- 1994 Revolution Command Council dissolved and Omar Al Bashir declared President.
- 1994 NCP leadership divides Darfur from one region into three.
- 1994 Nyala has its own military headquarters.
- 1997 Plan for land allocation to expand Nyala.

- 1997 First auto-rickshaws appear.
- 1999 Split in NCP leadership leads to departure of many Darfuri Islamists from the ruling party.
- Late 1990s Abattoir built.
- Late 1990s New international airport opened.

21st century

- 2003 Fighting breaks out in Darfur between government forces and rebels from the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM).
- 2003/04 Nyala residents originating from Central and Northern Sudan start to leave.
- 2003/04 First large influxes of IDPs into Nyala.
- April 2004 N'djamena Humanitarian Ceasefire Agreement signed by the Sudanese government and the SLM/A. Ceasefire Commission established and access granted for AMIS military observers. Neither fully respected nor renewed.
- 2004 AMIS, international agencies and military and security forces arrive in large numbers.
- 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed between NCP and SPLM/A. Fails to address Darfur issues.
- April 2006 Darfur Peace Agreement signed by Government of Sudan and SLA-Minawi. Fails to include all parties to the conflict and subsequently rejected by large sections of the population.
- 2007 onwards Previously nomadic tribes such as the Abbala settle in Nyala.
- July 2007 UN Resolution 1769 creates the UN–AU Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). AMIS to hand over to UNAMID on 31 December 2007.
- 2008 Fifth population census suggests that over half the population of Darfur living in South Darfur State – Nyala's population put at 1.3m. Results contested.
- 2008 Supplementary power generator brought to Nyala.
- 3 March 2009 Sudanese President Omar Al Bashir indicted by the International Criminal Court (ICC).
- March 2009 13 international NGOs expelled and three national NGOs dissolved.
- 2009 First section of road from Nyala to Beliel Locality completed up to Kalma IDP camp.
- 11–15 April 2010 Sudan holds the first multiparty presidential and parliamentary elections since 1986. NCP claims victory.

