



CLIMATE-SENSITIVE HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE SUSTAINABLE WATER SUPPLIES FOR WAR-TORN COMMUNITIES

SUDAN

Human development index: 166/187¹⁰

Climate change vulnerability index (2016):
8/186¹¹

Child population: 18.1 million
(47.8 per cent of population)¹²

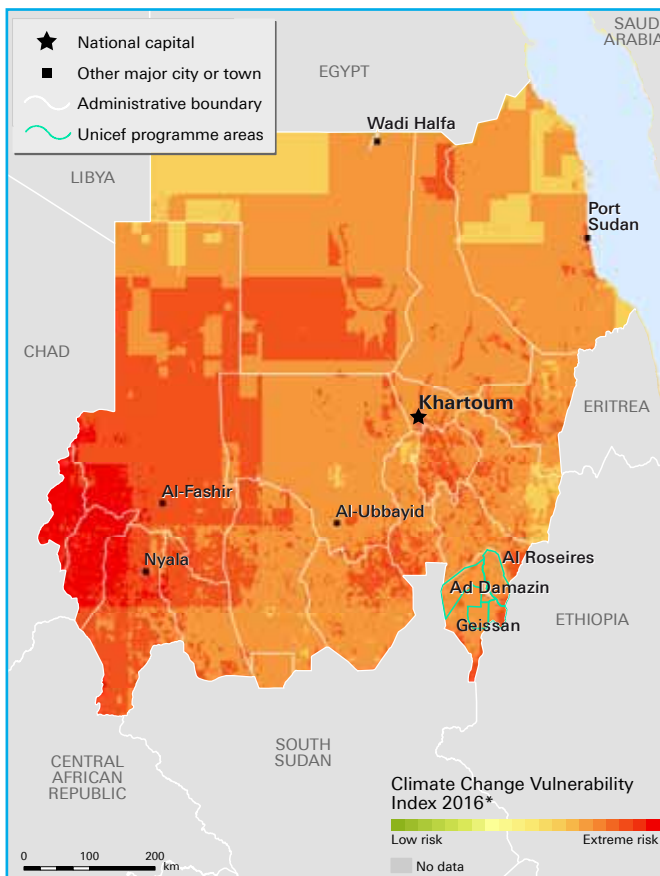
“When the station was constructed, I was at home and heard people shouting happily: *The water is here!* I took my jerry can and ran after them. I got there so quickly out of excitement and soon found myself in front of this tap. I turned it on and water gushed out, white and pure.”

Mariam Omar Eisa, 15, Amara Shazli village, Blue Nile State

CLIMATE CHANGE AND CHILDREN IN SUDAN

Throughout Sudan, from deserts in the north to forests in the south, thousands of children living in villages are suffering as a result of longer dry spells, erratic rainfall patterns, and the most serious natural disaster facing the population: drought. Climate change is intensifying all of these threats. Increasingly frequent extreme temperatures have left devastation in their wake. These climate-related emergencies are also compounding – and exacerbating – the acute dangers, unspeakable violence and misery that millions of children in Sudan face as a result of the protracted conflicts that have engulfed the country for more than a decade.

Coupled with chronic underdevelopment, the outlook for Sudanese children is bleak. In 2015, 4.2 million children are expected to be affected by climate and conflict-related emergencies, contributing to one of the worst crises for children in the world today.¹³ There can be little doubt that drought and widespread desertification – and the increasing pressures on resources, family livelihoods and large-scale migration that these bring – have contributed to undermining stability and security in Sudan.



**CLIMATE CHANGE
VULNERABILITY*
SUDAN**

CLIMATE-SENSITIVE HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

UNICEF'S WORK

Blue Nile State is in south east Sudan, bordering Ethiopia to the east and South Sudan to the west. It is one of the areas most afflicted by conflict and endemic poverty, and it is also highly vulnerable to climate-related shocks and stress. For many communities in Blue Nile State – including more than 500,000 children – meeting their most basic needs is a daily struggle.

UNICEF has introduced a climate-sensitive solution to provide vulnerable communities here with life-saving access to water – powered by abundant energy from the sun. Water from the solar-powered pumps costs communities up to a third less than the alternative diesel systems, while reducing greenhouse gas emissions. By increasing the number of pumps available, UNICEF is also helping to reduce the dangers that women and girls face from sexual violence, when they have to walk long distances to find water, and decreasing the risk of tensions between community members, internally displaced people and refugees in Blue Nile.

In the face of climate change, these solar-powered facilities are also providing a sustainable source of water for livestock and even crops during the intense dry season, supporting livelihoods and providing communities with opportunities to grow food. While the priority remains providing essential access to water for these people, sensitising communities on responsible water management is vital for assuring the long-term sustainability of these groundwater resources. For that reason, local members of the water committee, set up to oversee the operation and maintenance of the system, are provided with training on proper water use and management. This model is being successfully replicated in neighbouring South Kordofan State and demonstrates how a climate-sensitive approach to humanitarian interventions can reap multiple benefits.

A climate-sensitive approach to humanitarian interventions can reap multiple benefits

OUR PROGRAMME

Location: 27 communities in three localities (Damazine, Roseries, Geissan) of Blue Nile State, Sudan

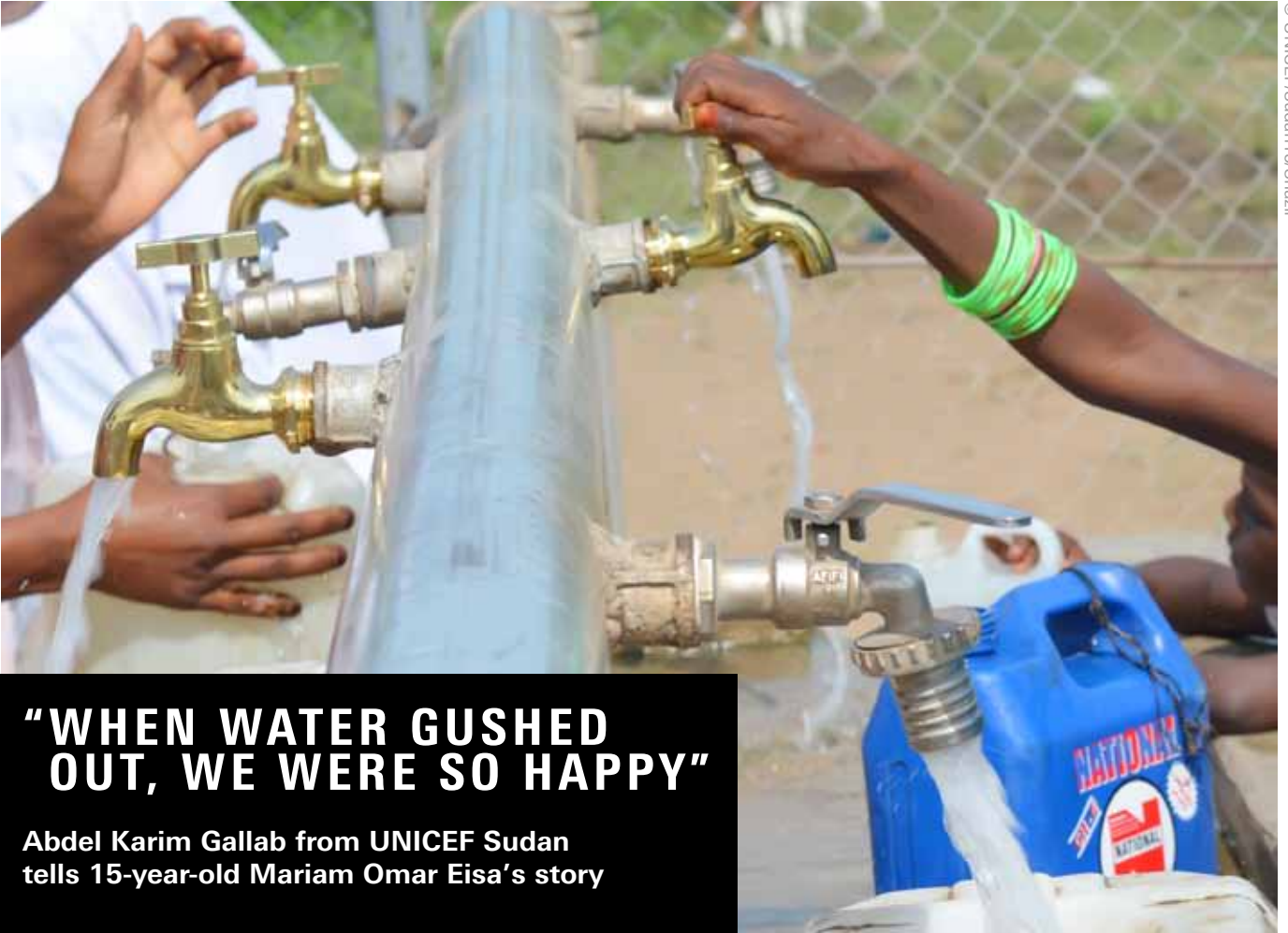
Funding amount: US\$2,322,522 from 2010 to 2013

Partners: Government of the Netherlands, Blue Nile State Rural Water Supply Department, implemented through private sector partners

Number of children helped: 141,300

RESULTS

- 54,000 people, including 7,300 school children, from 27 communities were provided with increased access to water through solar powered water stations in 2013, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and saving communities money.
- Overall, water access has increased by 21 per cent as a further 235,500 people, including 141,300 children, from 62 communities have been provided with access to water supplies in Blue Nile State.
- A 32 per cent reduction in time spent collecting drinking water by women and girls (aged 15 and over) in Blue Nile State between 2010 and 2014.¹⁴
- New stations have been constructed in South Kordofan State, providing water to 10,000 South Sudanese refugees and host communities.



“WHEN WATER GUSHED OUT, WE WERE SO HAPPY”

Abdel Karim Gallab from UNICEF Sudan tells 15-year-old Mariam Omar Eisa’s story

We travelled for 80km on the worst road we had ever seen. Torrential rains and flooding had made ‘Amara Shazli, a remote village in the rural Roseiris Locality of Blue Nile State, almost inaccessible. The rainy season has always been hard on the roads, but now these rains are more erratic, and when they come, they are more intense – they damage crops and the floods bring dirty and dangerous water into people’s homes.

As we finally rolled – or slid – into the village, we saw the large UNICEF water tank, elevated above the ground. Children emerged from houses carrying containers and walking towards the taps. We waited until they approached and saw one of the girls smiling radiantly. Her name was Mariam Omar Eisa.

“How did you get water before the construction of this station?” we asked her. She looked down, as if recollecting painful memories. “Before the water station, I used to go to the Nile, a two and a half hour walk from here. We had to cross thorny forests and hills to go to the eastern Blue Nile bank. It is one of the most dangerous river banks because the edges are often collapsing. We thought of it as

a monster lurking to harm us at any moment. I saw many children drowning in front of my eyes in that spot.”

She was silent and absent minded for a while and we imagined how we would feel to see a little girl drowning before our eyes. She explained that fetching water was a task for younger children – families would not allow older girls to go in case they were attacked and raped. “After I had collected water, I would go to school, but I would worry all day about the long journey I would have to make again after school, to fetch water for drinking, cooking and washing. Sometimes I could not concentrate. It was the same for all my friends and that is why most of them abandoned school.”

We asked: “how are things now?” She opened the tap and filled the container: “This is how it is now, as you can see!” She remembers when people came to build the well: “That was wonderful. We all came out – children, women and men – we couldn’t believe it.”