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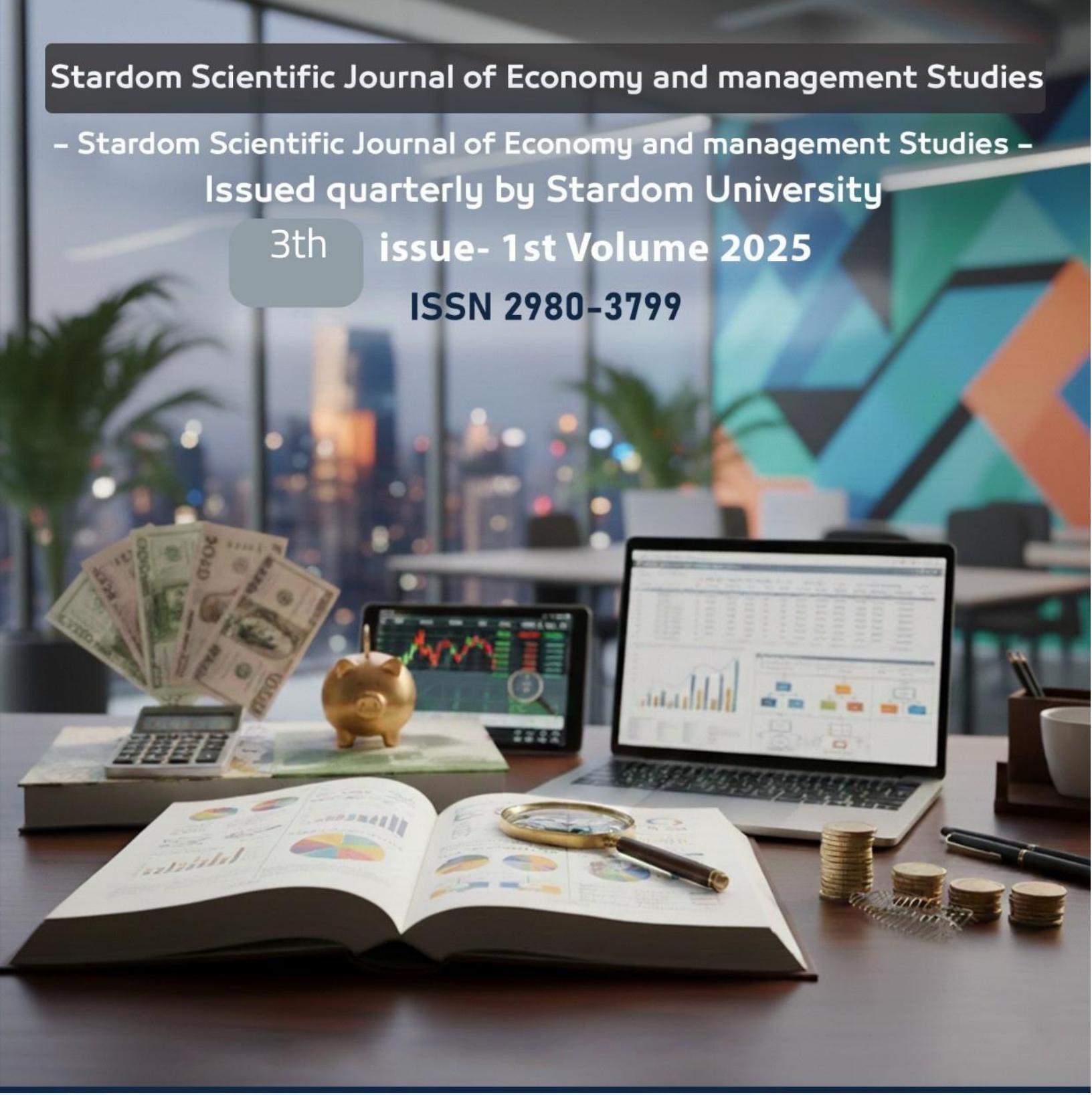


Stardom Scientific Journal of Economy and management Studies

- Stardom Scientific Journal of Economy and management Studies -
Issued quarterly by Stardom University

3th issue- 1st Volume 2025

ISSN 2980-3799





هيئة تحرير مجلة ستاردم العلنية للدراسات"الاقتصادية والإدارية"

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لمجلة ستاردم العلنية للدراسات الاقتصادية والإدارية

From Crisis to Democratic Transformation: How Economic Growth and Development Facilitate Civil and Democratic Transition

(Evidence from Sudan)

By: Dr. Jafar M. Farah

"This paper is an excerpt from the author's book: 'Issues of Development, Growth, and System Reliability in Sudan' (2025), with substantial adaptation for academic publication."

Abstract

This study examines the complex relationship between economic growth, development, and democratic transition, with a particular focus on Sudan's intricate political and economic realities. Building on the analytical model developed by Dr. Farah in his peer-reviewed and published book by the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, entitled *Issues of Development, Growth, and System Reliability: Modeling Sustainable Development Planning*, which integrates the concept of system reliability into development discourse, the paper argues that achieving a sustainable democratic transformation in Sudan requires addressing deep-rooted structural obstacles to economic and institutional reform. The research situates Sudan's current crisis within a historical trajectory marked by authoritarian rule, economic mismanagement, and chronic institutional weakness. It also draws on comparative case studies from Africa, Asia, and Latin America to extract lessons applicable to Sudan's transitional path. The findings emphasize that economic growth must be inclusive, institutionally grounded, and accompanied by broad civic participation to establish a resilient democratic order. The paper concludes with a set of policy recommendations aimed at operationalizing the nexus between development and democratic transformation.

Keywords: Sudan, democratic transition, economic growth, development, system reliability, civil society, institutional reform

الملخص

تتناول هذه الدراسة العلاقة المركبة بين النمو الاقتصادي، والتنمية، والتحول الديمقراطي، مع إيلاء اهتمام خاص لتعقيدات الواقعين السياسي والاقتصادي في السودان. وانطلاقاً من النموذج التحليلي الذي طوره د. فرج في كتابه المنشور والمحمّم من قبل المركز العربي للأبحاث ودراسة السياسات، والمعنون قضايا التنمية والنمو وموثوقية الأنظمة: نمذجة للتخطيط التنموي المستدام، والذي يدمج مفهوم موثوقية النظام ضمن الإطار النظري للتنمية، ترى الورقة أن تحقيق تحول ديمقراطي مستدام في السودان يستلزم معالجة المعوقات البنوية العميقية التي تحول دون الإصلاحين الاقتصادي والمؤسسي. وتضع الدراسة الأزمة الحالية في إطارها التاريخي الممتد، الذي اتسم بالحكم السلطوي، وسوء الإدارة الاقتصادية، والضعف المؤسسي المزمن. كما تستند إلى دراسات حالة مقارنة من إفريقيا وأسيا وأمريكا اللاتينية لاستخلاص دروس قابلة للتطبيق على مسار الانتقال السوداني. وتشير النتائج إلى أن النمو الاقتصادي ينبغي أن يكون شاملًّا، ومرتبطاً بمرتكزات مؤسسيّة راسخة، ومصحوبًا بمشاركة مدنية واسعة، بما يضمن ترسیخ نظام ديمقراطي قادر على الصمود. وتختم الورقة بطرح حزمة من التوصيات السياسية الرامية إلى تفعيل الصلة بين التنمية والتحول الديمقراطي على نحو عملي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: السودان، التحول الديمقراطي، النمو الاقتصادي، التنمية، موثوقية النظم، المجتمع المدني،

الإصلاح المؤسسي.

1. Introduction

Sudan's post-independence trajectory has been defined by a persistent cycle of political instability and economic fragility. Since 1956, the nation has oscillated between civilian and military rule, with each political arrangement facing chronic governance deficits. The discovery of oil in the late 20th century raised hopes for economic renewal, but resource dependence, compounded by institutional corruption and mismanagement, led instead to volatility and rent-seeking.

The 2019 revolution, culminating in the ouster of President Omar al-Bashir, marked a historic turning point, fueled by a popular movement demanding freedom, peace, and justice. Yet, the political opening that followed soon faced severe headwinds: economic collapse, renewed military intervention, and fragmentation of the transitional coalition. The return of violent conflict in 2023 highlighted the fragility of Sudan's democratization process.

This paper's central thesis is that economic growth and development are not only desirable outcomes of democracy but also necessary conditions for its survival. Without tangible economic improvements and credible institutions, democratic openings risk reversal. Drawing extensively on Farah's (2025, p. 45) analytical framework, the study explores the interplay between system reliability, economic reform, and democratic consolidation in Sudan.

2. Problem Statement

Sudan has experienced decades of political instability, economic fragility, and social fragmentation, which have severely hindered its democratic transition. Despite occasional periods of reform and popular uprisings, the country remains trapped in a cycle of military coups, institutional weakness, and economic crises. Economic growth has often been constrained by resource dependence, policy inconsistency, and governance deficits, while social cohesion is undermined by ethnic, tribal, and regional divides. These structural challenges have prevented the consolidation of democratic institutions, making it critical to examine the nexus between economic development and democratic transformation in the Sudanese context.

3. Objectives

The study aims to:

1. Analyze the relationship between economic growth, development, and democratic transition in Sudan.
2. Identify structural barriers that impede sustainable democratic transformation.
3. Examine the role of civil society and popular committees in facilitating civic participation and governance.
4. Draw comparative lessons from international experiences to inform Sudan's transition strategies.
5. Propose actionable policy recommendations that integrate economic development with democratic consolidation.

4. Research Questions

1. How does economic growth influence political stability and democratic consolidation in Sudan?
2. What structural and institutional barriers have historically hindered democratic transformation?
3. How have civil society networks and grassroots movements contributed to democratic progress?
4. Which international experiences provide transferable lessons for Sudan's political and economic transition?
5. What policy interventions are required to align economic development with sustainable democratic governance?

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative and comparative analytical approach, integrating historical, political, and economic perspectives:

- **Historical Analysis:** Examines Sudan's political economy from independence (1956) to 2023, including periods of military and civilian rule, economic reforms, and political upheavals.
- **Documentary Review:** Analyzes government reports, World Bank and UNDP data, peer-reviewed literature, and Farah's (2025, p. 45) conceptual framework on system reliability and sustainable development planning.
- **Comparative Case Studies:** Draws lessons from Ghana, Tunisia, Chile, Botswana, and South Africa to identify effective strategies linking economic growth and democratic transition.
- **Analytical Framework:** Utilizes Farah's (2025, p. 45) system reliability approach to assess institutional performance, governance quality, and civil society engagement in sustaining democratic outcomes.

Data triangulation ensures the validity of findings, while thematic analysis identifies recurring patterns and structural constraints affecting Sudan's democratic prospect

2. Literature Review

The relationship between economic growth and democracy has been a subject of debate for decades. Modernization theory, as articulated by Lipset (1959, p. 70), posits that rising incomes, education, and urbanization foster democratic values and institutions. Empirical work by Acemoglu et al. (2019, p. 52) complicates this narrative, showing that while democracy can foster growth, the reverse is contingent on institutional quality.

2.1 Economic Development as a Driver of Democracy

Economic development provides the material base for democratic stability. When citizens experience improvements in living standards, they are more likely to support the political status quo, reducing incentives for authoritarian regression (Przeworski et al., 2000). In Botswana, diamond revenues were effectively managed to build state capacity and deliver public goods, sustaining a democratic order despite resource dependence (Acemoglu, Johnson, & Robinson, 2003).

2.2 Institutional Reliability as a Mediator

Farah (2025) advances the concept of system reliability — the consistent capacity of political and administrative institutions to deliver on their mandates. In contexts like Sudan, where institutional performance is erratic and often politically manipulated, economic gains fail to translate into democratic stability. This echoes North, Wallis, and Weingast's (2009, p. 112) framework on “limited access orders,” where elites maintain control by restricting political and economic participation.

2.3 Comparative Experiences

- **Ghana:** Economic reforms in the 1980s and 1990s laid the foundation for a peaceful democratic transition in 1992, demonstrating that fiscal stability and institutional reforms can precede democratization.
- **Tunisia:** Post-2011 democratic gains were challenged by economic stagnation, illustrating the dangers of neglecting economic reform during political transitions.
- **Chile:** Gradual economic liberalization in the 1980s helped finance a stable transition to democracy by the early 1990s.
- These cases underline that while economic growth alone is insufficient, its absence makes democratic consolidation far more difficult.

3. Historical and Political Context of Sudan's Crisis

Sudan's political economy has been shaped by a legacy of colonial extraction, post-independence governance failures, and cycles of civil war. From the early years of independence, successive governments, whether civilian or military, struggled to establish a cohesive national identity and effective state apparatus. The centralization of power in Khartoum marginalized peripheral regions such as Darfur, South Kordofan, and the Blue Nile, sowing the seeds of recurring armed conflict.

The long tenure of President Omar al-Bashir (1989–2019) epitomized the fusion of authoritarianism, economic mismanagement, and systemic corruption. Although the early 2000s oil boom generated substantial revenues, these were largely captured by political elites and security institutions. The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) of 2005, which paved the way for South Sudan's independence in 2011, deprived Sudan of three-quarters of its oil production, triggering a fiscal crisis from which the country has yet to recover.

The 2019 revolution was both a political and economic uprising. Inflation had exceeded 60% in 2018, foreign reserves were depleted, and bread and fuel shortages were commonplace. The Transitional Military Council (TMC) and the Forces of Freedom and Change (FFC) negotiated a power-sharing agreement, but fragile

consensus and mutual distrust undermined reform efforts. The October 2021 coup further derailed the process, and by 2023, renewed conflict between rival military factions pushed Sudan to the brink of state collapse.

4. Structural Barriers to Development and Civil Transition

This point outlines the key structural barriers hindering Sudan's sustainable development and civil democratic transition. Drawing on Farah's (2025, p. 45) analytical framework, it highlights how economic dependence on limited exports, institutional fragility, social fragmentation, and deficits in infrastructure and human capital collectively constrain progress. The discussion also emphasizes that while economic growth can support political stability, it must be inclusive and underpinned by reliable institutions to achieve lasting democratic consolidation.

4.1 Economic Structure and Resource Dependence

Sudan's economy is heavily dependent on a narrow range of exports, primarily agricultural products (gum Arabic, sesame, livestock) and, historically, oil. This dependence makes the economy vulnerable to commodity price fluctuations. Resource rents have been poorly managed, fostering rent-seeking behavior and patronage politics rather than productive investment (Farah, 2025).

4.2 Institutional Weakness and Governance Deficits

The reliability of Sudanese state institutions is severely compromised by politicization, corruption, and capacity deficits. Ministries are often staffed based on political loyalty rather than merit, leading to inefficiency and policy inconsistency. The judiciary lacks independence, and law enforcement agencies have been implicated in human rights abuses, further eroding public trust.

4.3 Social and Political Fragmentation

Ethnic, tribal, and regional cleavages have been instrumentalized by political elites to consolidate power. This fragmentation weakens collective national identity and complicates the formation of broad-based coalitions necessary for democratic governance. Civil society organizations, while active, often face legal restrictions and security harassment.

4.4 Infrastructure and Human Capital Deficits

Sudan's infrastructure — from roads to electricity grids — is underdeveloped, particularly in rural areas. The World Bank (2022, p. 9) estimates that only 60% of Sudanese have access to electricity, and less than 40% to safely managed drinking water. Education and health indicators are equally concerning, with literacy rates hovering around 60% and high maternal mortality rates.

5. The Role of Economic Growth in Political Stability

- Economic growth serves as both a stabilizer and a legitimizer of political systems. In contexts of democratic transition, growth can:
- Enhance state capacity by increasing fiscal revenues, enabling the provision of public goods.
- Reduce grievances by improving employment opportunities and living standards.
- Strengthen legitimacy by demonstrating that democratic governance can deliver tangible benefits.

However, growth that is unequal or concentrated among elites can exacerbate tensions, as seen in many resource-rich but politically unstable countries. For Sudan, inclusive growth—driven by diversification, small and medium enterprise (SME) development, and agricultural modernization—is essential.

Farah (2025) emphasizes that without institutional reliability, economic gains are likely to be short-lived. In other words, growth must be accompanied by credible institutions capable of mediating conflict, enforcing contracts, and ensuring equitable distribution of resources.

6. Civil Society and Popular Committees in Democratic Transition

Civil society in Sudan has historically been both a space of resistance and a target of repression. From professional unions in the 1960s to the neighborhood-based Resistance Committees of the 2019 revolution, non-state actors have played a decisive role in challenging authoritarian regimes.

6.1 Resistance Committees as Grassroots Engines of Change

Resistance Committees emerged in response to the deepening economic crisis and political repression of the Bashir era. Organized at the neighborhood level, they coordinated protests, disseminated information, and provided basic services when the state failed to do so. Their horizontal, decentralized structure made them resilient

to state infiltration, but it also posed challenges for centralized negotiation during the transition period (Hassan, 2023).

These committees are not merely protest organizations; they have developed into local governance actors, managing food distribution, public health initiatives, and community dispute resolution in the absence of functioning state institutions.

6.2 Professional Associations and Trade Unions

The Sudanese Professionals Association (SPA) became a symbol of coordinated civil activism, bringing together teachers, doctors, engineers, and other professional groups. Historically, unions in Sudan have been powerful political actors, playing a key role in the October 1964 and April 1985 uprisings. However, their autonomy has often been undermined by state co-optation or dissolution.

6.3 NGOs and Development Actors /

International and local NGOs have been critical in delivering humanitarian aid and development assistance, especially in conflict zones. Yet, restrictive laws such as the 2006 Voluntary and Humanitarian Work Act have limited their operational freedom. The democratic transition would benefit from legal reforms that expand civic space and institutionalize civil society's role in governance.

6.4 Case Study: Civil Society Networks in Sudan (2019–2025)

Between 2019 and 2025, Sudan's civil society experienced both a remarkable expansion and severe challenges. Following the December 2018 revolution and the ousting of the former regime in April 2019, diverse networks of Popular Resistance Committees, professional associations, women's organizations, and humanitarian NGOs emerged as critical actors in driving political change and delivering basic services.

These networks organized grassroots governance structures, coordinated nationwide protests, facilitated relief efforts during floods and the COVID-19 pandemic, and provided community-level mediation during political crises. From mid-2021 onwards, following political instability and military interventions, civic space sharply contracted. Nevertheless, many networks adapted by operating in decentralized formats, strengthening cross-border coordination with the Sudanese diaspora, and leveraging digital platforms for advocacy, humanitarian fundraising, and documentation of human rights violations.

By 2025, despite conflict-induced displacement and resource constraints, civil society networks in Sudan remained a resilient force for community mobilization, humanitarian response, and democratic advocacy, highlighting their long-term role in state–society relations.

7. Preconditions for Sustainable Civil and Democratic Transformation

Based on Sudan's experience and comparative cases, several conditions are essential for a successful transition:

7.1 Security and Stability

No democratic transition can take root in the midst of active armed conflict. Sudan requires a comprehensive security sector reform (SSR) that integrates armed factions into a unified, professional national army under civilian oversight.

7.2 Institutional Reliability

Institutions must be depoliticized and professionalized. This involves merit-based recruitment, judicial independence, and robust anti-corruption measures. Farah (2025) argues that institutional reliability is both the product and the driver of sustainable development.

7.3 National Consensus and Inclusivity

Transitions fail when they are perceived as elite bargains that exclude large segments of society. A national dialogue that includes armed groups, traditional leaders, women's organizations, and youth movements is vital.

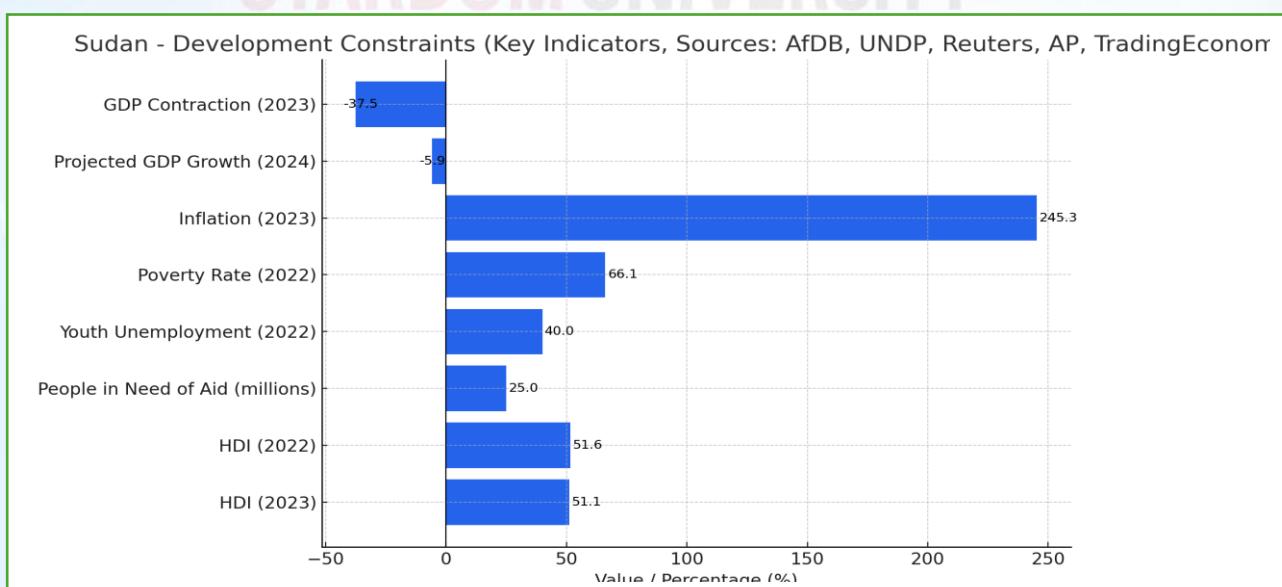
7.4 Economic Stabilization and Growth

Macroeconomic stabilization — through fiscal discipline, exchange rate reform, and inflation control — is a prerequisite for attracting investment. Coupled with targeted social protection programs, economic stability can reinforce public confidence in the democratic process.

7.5 Sudan's Development Constraints: Economic, Social, and Institutional Challenges

The data highlights Sudan's severe development constraints, driven by a combination of economic collapse, social hardship, and institutional fragility. The economy contracted sharply by 37.5% in 2023, with further decline projected in

2024, while inflation soared to 245%, eroding purchasing power. Poverty has engulfed 66% of the population, and youth unemployment remains critically high at 40%, fueling social instability. Around 25 million people—half of Sudan's population—require humanitarian assistance, underscoring the scale of the crisis. Human Development Index (HDI) scores, at 0.516 in 2022 and falling to 0.511 in 2023, rank Sudan near the bottom globally, reflecting setbacks in education, health, and income. These intertwined constraints not only hinder recovery efforts but also jeopardize the country's prospects for long-term stability and democratic transition.



Sources: African Development Bank, UNDP, Reuters, AP, Trading Economics)

8. Political Stability and Economic Growth Theory

The Political Stability and Economic Growth Theory posits that sustainable economic development relies on stable political institutions, consistent policy implementation, and societal consensus. Three core mechanisms underpin this theory:

1. Institutional Predictability – Stability allows governments to implement long-term economic strategies without abrupt disruption.

2. Investor Confidence – Predictable political environments attract both domestic and foreign investment, fostering capital formation and job creation.
3. Policy Continuity and Social Cohesion – Stable systems enable consistent policies aligned with social and economic goals, reinforcing legitimacy and public trust.

In contexts of chronic instability, economic growth is fragile, and democratic institutions struggle to consolidate.

9. Military Coups and Their Economic Impact

Sudan has experienced repeated military interventions (1958, 1969, 1985, 1989, 2019, 2021), which have led to abrupt policy shifts, resource diversion toward security, erosion of institutional capacity, and economic isolation. Civilian governments, although ostensibly more democratic, often failed due to party fragmentation, short-termism, and resistance to reforms that could have strengthened institutional reliability.

10. The Role of Political Parties

Political parties in Sudan have played a dual role:

- Fragmentation and Polarization: Parties often represented narrow regional or ethnic interests, obstructing national consensus.
- Resistance to Institutional Reform: Parties frequently resisted measures that limited access to state resources, undermining long-term stability.
- Clientelism and Short-Termism: Patronage politics and populist policy-making impeded structural economic reforms.
- Failure of Cross-Party Development Agreements: Unlike successful democracies, Sudanese parties failed to establish minimum national programs to ensure continuity of development policies.

Timeline of Political Regimes and Development Impact

Period & Regime Type	Key Political Event	Economic Policy Orientation	Impact on Growth & Development	Analytical Link to Political Stability & Economic Growth Theory
1956–1958 – Civilian	Independence (1956)	Mixed economy, state-led infrastructure investment	Moderate growth; focus on transport, irrigation, and education	Early potential for stability, but party fragmentation began to undermine policy continuity
1958–1964 – Military	Coup by Gen. Abboud (1958)	Centralized state control; limited diversification	Growth slowed; rural neglect and export dependence worsened	Political instability reduced investor confidence; policies lacked regional equity
1964–1969 – Civilian	October Revolution (1964) restoring democracy	Shift toward more open trade; fragmented policy	Frequent government changes led to inconsistent economic direction	Confirms theory's prediction: instability hampers long-term investment
1969–1985 – Military (Nimeiri)	Coup (1969) with socialist orientation; later shift to IMF reforms (1978)	Early nationalization, later structural adjustment	Early 1970s growth from foreign loans; collapse in 1980s due to debt and mismanagement	Policy volatility under authoritarianism destabilized macroeconomic environment
1985–1989 – Civilian	April Uprising (1985)	Attempted economic liberalization	Severe inflation, political infighting, stalled reforms	Party rivalry blocked coherent development agenda, weakening stability
1989–2019 – Military-Islamist	Coup by Bashir (1989)	Economic Islamization, later oil-led	Oil boom (1999–2011) boosted GDP;	Resource dependence created vulnerability; authoritarian stability

		growth (post-1999)	post-secession collapse (2011)	masked deep structural weaknesses
2019–2021 – Transitional Civil-Military	Overthrow of Bashir (2019)	Reform-oriented, IMF re-engagement	Short-lived growth prospects; political deadlock led to October 2021 coup	Transition failed to institutionalize stability before reforms could take root
2021–Present – Military	Coup (2021)	Aid suspension, economic contraction	Severe inflation, humanitarian crisis	Confirms inverse of theory: instability exacerbates economic decline

11. Analytical Interpretation

The timeline demonstrates Sudan's recurring "instability trap," where both military and civilian governments failed to establish a stable foundation for economic transformation. Civilian regimes often fell victim to party fragmentation and short-termism, while military regimes imposed centralized control without inclusiveness. These patterns reinforce the Political Stability and Economic Growth Theory: institutional instability directly undermines economic growth, and weak economic performance perpetuates political instability.

8. Comparative Lessons from Other Countries

11.1 Ghana

Ghana's transition in the early 1990s was facilitated by economic reforms under the Economic Recovery Program (ERP), which restored macroeconomic stability. Coupled with a new constitution and competitive elections, these reforms laid the groundwork for sustained democratic governance.

11.2 South Africa

South Africa's post-apartheid transition demonstrates the importance of inclusive negotiations and strong constitutional guarantees. However, persistent inequality has shown that political transformation must be matched by economic redistribution.

11.3 Tunisia

Tunisia's 2011 revolution was initially hailed as a democratic success story, but economic stagnation and political fragmentation eroded public trust. The lesson for Sudan is that without economic dividends, democratic gains remain fragile.

11.4 Botswana

Botswana offers a rare example of a resource-rich African state that has maintained democratic governance and high economic growth. Transparent institutions, prudent resource management, and a commitment to rule of law have been key.

12. Historical Political Instability and the Role of Political Parties in Sudan

Sudan's post-independence trajectory has been repeatedly disrupted by military coups and ineffective civilian administrations, which have collectively hindered economic growth and democratic consolidation. Understanding these disruptions is critical to situating Sudan's contemporary democratic transition within a broader historical and structural context.

12. Policy Recommendations

Based on the comprehensive analysis of Sudan's political economy and comparative lessons, this paper proposes the following policy recommendations to foster economic growth and support a sustainable civil and democratic transition:

12.1 Macroeconomic Stabilization and Fiscal Reform

- Implement tight fiscal discipline to reduce budget deficits and control inflation, including reforming subsidies and broadening the tax base.
- Strengthen monetary policy autonomy and transparency through an independent central bank to stabilize exchange rates.
- Pursue debt restructuring and engage with international financial institutions for concessional financing.

12.2 Economic Diversification and SME Support

- Develop value chains in agriculture, agro-processing, and renewable energy sectors to reduce commodity dependence.

- Expand access to finance for SMEs through microcredit, guarantees, and venture capital.
- Invest in infrastructure—roads, energy, ICT—to facilitate market access and reduce transaction costs.

12.3 Institutional and Governance Reforms

Professionalize civil service with merit-based recruitment and performance evaluation.

Strengthen anti-corruption agencies and enforce transparency laws, including public financial management reforms.

Reform the judiciary to guarantee independence and enhance legal enforcement mechanisms.

12.4 Civic Engagement and Inclusive Governance

- Legally protect and empower civil society organizations, including neighborhood committees and professional associations.
- Institutionalize public participation in budget planning, monitoring, and policy formulation.
- Promote national dialogue forums that include diverse social, ethnic, and political groups to foster consensus.

12.5 Security Sector Reform and Peacebuilding

- Implement comprehensive disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) programs.
- Restructure security institutions under civilian oversight with clear mandates respecting human rights.
- Engage regional actors and international partners to support peace processes and reconstruction efforts.

Results & Discussion

Structural Barriers: Economic dependence on limited exports, governance deficits, social fragmentation, and infrastructure gaps collectively impede democratic consolidation.

Economic Growth and Stability: Inclusive economic growth supports legitimacy, enhances state capacity, and reduces grievances, whereas unequal growth exacerbates political tensions.

Civil Society and Popular Committees: Grassroots networks, professional associations, and NGOs have acted as critical agents of civic mobilization, governance, and service delivery, demonstrating resilience despite repression.

Comparative Lessons: Countries with institutional reliability, inclusive political processes, and strategic economic management (e.g., Botswana, Ghana) successfully link growth to democratic consolidation, highlighting the importance of aligning economic and political reforms.

Policy Implications: Sustainable democratization in Sudan requires comprehensive economic reform, participatory governance, security sector restructuring, and strengthened institutional reliability.

10. Conclusion

Sudan's journey from crisis towards democratic transformation hinges on the intricate interplay between economic growth, development, and institutional reliability. Drawing from Farah's (2025, p. 45) conceptual framework and comparative experiences worldwide, it is evident that economic growth alone cannot guarantee democratic consolidation. Instead, it must be inclusive, supported by robust institutions and sustained civic participation.

The persistent challenges of economic dependence, institutional fragility, social fragmentation, and security threats underscore the complexity of Sudan's transition. However, the emergence of vibrant civil society networks and the popular demand for democratic governance offer hope. The realization of this transformation requires coordinated policy action targeting economic stabilization, structural reforms, and inclusive governance mechanisms.

Ultimately, Sudan's democratic future depends on the collective commitment of its political leaders, civil society, and international partners to align economic development with democratic aspirations, thus creating a virtuous cycle of growth, stability, and inclusion.

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مجلة ستاردون العلمية المحكمة للدراسات الاقتصادية والإدارية
تصدر بشكل ربع سنوي عن جامعة ستاردون

العدد الثالث، المجلد الأول 2025م

رقم الإيداع الدولي: ISSN 2980-3799

