



Community Health Committees in Kutum Locality receiving training on Social Accountability for Health

GOAL SUDAN HEALTHPRO PROJECT

Strengthening a Decentralized Health System for Universal Health Coverage in North Darfur State

ABOUT GOAL SUDAN

GOAL has responded to a wide range of humanitarian and development needs in Sudan since 1985. Our 274-person staff manages an annual operating budget of €10,000,000, from offices in North Darfur, South Kordofan and Khartoum. Currently operational in North Darfur and South Kordofan, we support conflict-affected populations through integrated programmes in nutrition, health, WASH and food security and livelihoods (FSL), with women’s empowerment and protection mainstreamed throughout our work. GOAL responds to protracted humanitarian needs in Sudan, while planning for and investing in communities’ longer-term development.

PROJECT SUMMARY

With support from the European Union, in 2020 GOAL embarked on a large-scale, nexus project; *Humanitarian Development Peace Nexus: Strengthening a Decentralized Health System for a Protracted Displaced Population (HealthPro) in Sudan*. ‘HealthPro’ aims to contribute to providing universal health coverage in North Darfur State through strengthening the decentralised health system to deliver Primary Health Care to protracted internally displaced persons (IDP) and host communities. The project has been providing support to the State Ministry of Health (SMOH), Locality Health Departments (LHD), the National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF) and the National Medical Supply Fund (NMSF) to provide health services to 10 targeted primary health care facilities with the aim of improving the scope and range of health services they provide.

PROJECT SNAPSHOT

PROJECT DURATION	27 th Dec 2019 – 25 th June 2023
DONOR	European Union (EU)
GEOGRAPHY	Kutum, Umbaro, and Serf Umra - North Darfur State
BUDGET	€4.9 million
SECTOR	Health
PARTNERS	State Ministry of Health, North Darfur (SMOH), National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF), National Medical Supply Fund (NMSF)



PROJECT GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

HealthPro is a pilot health system strengthening (HSS) project borne out of the positive changes in the security and political situation in Sudan that allowed the gradual shift from humanitarian programming to the more strategic long-term approaches to health service delivery in the country. The project is funded by the European Union (EU) and runs from 2020 to 2023. HealthPro is implemented in 10 Primary Health Care (PHC) facilities and one rural hospital across Kutum, Serf Umra, and Umbaro localities of the North Darfur State, serving approximately 600,000 people (including IDP, returnee and host populations).

HealthPro aims to build local capacity, mainly of the Locality Health Department (LHD), for the management and delivery of primary healthcare in the targeted localities. GOAL aims to strengthen the decentralised health system in North Darfur state so that locality health departments can deliver primary health care to protracted IDP and host communities, by:

- **GOVERNANCE:** Building the capacity of LHDs to lead and manage decentralised health services in their locality. This includes creating and strengthening community-based social accountability mechanisms.
- **HUMAN RESOURCES FOR HEALTH:** Supporting the State Ministry of Health (SMOH) to produce, deploy, and motivate healthcare workers in the three targeted localities.
- **HEALTH SYSTEM FINANCING:** Improving health system sustainable finance in targeted localities through increased awareness of and subscriptions to the National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF).
- **HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE:** Upgrading the infrastructure and equipment of targeted health facilities and LHDs.
- **ESSENTIAL MEDICINES:** Improving distribution capacity of National Medical Supplies Fund (NMSF) and capacity building of health workers and managers. In addition to facilitating improved access of medicines to communities seeking health services within the targeted health facilities.
- **HEALTH INFORMATION SYSTEMS:** Strengthening systems for collecting, reporting, and analysing health information through District Health Information System2 (DHIS2).
- **BEHAVIOUR CHANGE:** Improving health knowledge and behaviour amongst target populations.

TECHNICAL APPROACH

GOAL has been working closely with key health system actors in North Darfur, mainly focusing on the six World Health Organization (WHO) health system building blocks of governance, human resource for health (HRH), service delivery, health system financing, essential medicines, and health information systems (HIS).

In the HealthPro model, GOAL supports the six WHO health system building blocks, and facilitates the interaction between SMOH, NHIF, and NMSF to strengthen linkages between these local and permanent health system actors. The aim is to ensure the decentralized health system has the infrastructure base, human resources, and governance needed for an effective and sustainable health service delivery in the target areas. In this arrangement, GOAL provides targeted support to the health facilities, Locality Health Departments, NMSF, and NHIF without any direct involvement in health service delivery. The overall responsibility for managing the health facilities, including allocating budget and staff deployment, lies with the SMOH. NHIF provides social health insurance to finance health care while NMSF is responsible for supplying drugs and get reimbursement from NHIF.

SAMPLE ACTIVITIES

- Constructed a brand new LHD office in Umbaro locality (installing solar power) and rehabilitated LHD offices, including upgraded solar power, in Kutum and Serf Umra localities.
- Provided vehicles to LHDs in Kutum, Serf Umra, and Umbaro localities to strengthen supportive supervision activities.
- Supported Kutum, Serf Umra, and Umbaro LHDs to develop 5 years strategic plans and annual plans and trained their staff on leadership, management and health systems resilience.
- Supported the SMOH to bolster community-based social accountability structures, including facilitating the development of social accountability training materials and guidelines for establishment and monitoring of community health committees.
- Liaised with SMOH to deploy required key staff to health facilities and provided incentives to health facility staff (through reimbursement to NHIF), subsequently transitioning the incentive payment to NHIF for sustainability.
- Assisted community members to access health insurance through organising awareness and enrolment campaigns, provision of drug co-payment subsidies, and establishment and support to savings groups.
- Rehabilitated 10 targeted PHC facilities and 1 rural hospital, improving rooms, fencing, water systems, and sanitation facilities.
- Provided medical equipment and furniture to the 10 targeted health facilities, including supplying cold chain equipment to the three LHDs, and fully equipping the operating theatre of Umbaro Rural Hospital.
- Supported SMOH to expand primary health care packages in the targeted health facilities, including initiating laboratory services in Umbaro Hospital and Kutum PHC Centre.
- Constructed and equipped two drug stores in Kutum and Kabkabiya to improve distribution capacity of NMSF in North Darfur State.

IMPACT



Engaged with the National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF) and introduced insurance services in the **10 facilities** supported by the project.



A total of 125,834 **community** members have been reached through NHIF awareness campaigns helping 14,429 individuals enrol to NHIF as of December 2022.



71,850 individuals, including nearly 20,000 **children under-five** received improved access to health services in 2021 alone.



Provided **22,590 individuals**, including **2,954 IDPs** with phased subsidy for medication co-payments.



Rehabilitated and equipped the **10 targeted health facilities** and Serf Umra Rural Hospital.



Established and supported **303 Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA) groups** helping **9,090 vulnerable households** put aside money for future healthcare expenditures.



Trained **179 health workers** and managers, including on management of medical supplies as part of the work on improving availability and quality of health services



Supported the improvement of District Health Information System 2 (DHIS) data-management practices, with reporting rates of the targeted facilities increasing from 20% at baseline to **90%** in 2022.

LEARNINGS

- Despite the internal and external challenges, a nexus approach focused on building health systems resilience through targeted support to the decentralized health system and strengthening linkages between permanent local health system stakeholders has enabled implementation of a more sustainable model of health service delivery in the humanitarian setting of North Darfur.
- Sensitising communities on benefits of mitigating financial barriers has created a high rate of community acceptance for the VSLAs, as the participants have consistently participated in the groups without external cash provision.
- Community engagement in health service delivery has strengthened through establishment and renewal of Community Health Committees and VSLA associations which will contribute to outcome sustainability.
- Early and effective engagement of communities enabled successful transitioning from free health service delivery to communities accessing healthcare through NHIF insurance.

LOOKING FORWARD

- Continuous strengthening of links and relationships between Community Health Committees, health facilities, and Locality Health Departments for sustainability.
- Regular supportive supervision visits from SMOH, NHIF, NMSF and LHDs to the PHC facilities and with active involvement of Community Health Committees.
- Further strengthening of links between SMOH and LHDs ensuring key interventions are scaled up to other health facilities and communities within the target localities.
- Continued awareness creation of communities on the benefits and functioning of NHIF.
- Close monitoring and continued capacity strengthening for National NGOs for effective implementation of SBCC interventions.

OUR MAJOR FUNDING PARTNER:



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SUPPORT

For more information, please contact:

Headquarters Contact:

GOAL HQ Dublin
Carnegie House, Library Rd.
Dun Laoghaire,
Co. Dublin

info@goal.ie

+353 (0)1 2809779

Programme Manager:

Dr. Mekitew Abuto
HealthPro Project Coordinator

mabuto@sd.goal.ie



goalglobal.org