Land has always been central to the outbreak and escalation of conflicts between the different livelihoods groups in Darfur. Most of the community conflicts are, in one way or another, related to issues around land or access to natural resources. The conflict over land and the productive functions of the environment constitute the oldest and most diffused forms of conflict in Darfur, as the livelihoods of the great majority of the people is centered on land and the direct utilization of the environment and natural resources.

UN-Habitat is promoting sustainable return of the internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Darfur in full partnership with Darfur Land Commission (DLC) and Voluntary Return and Resettlement Commission (VRRC) of the DRA, and the relevant ministries in five Darfur States. UN-Habitat has implemented the project in 51 villages in Darfur to secure the land tenure for the returned IDPs.
Strengthening Land Management for Peaceful Co-Existence in Darfur

Project Location: Darfur State, Sudan
Target Population: 150,000 returnees and hosting communities in the five states of Darfur are targeted through the support to 50 return villages.
Project Period: November 2015 – December 2018

Background

Securing land tenure is the fundamental right of every individual. It is particularly important for the poor and vulnerable groups, such as female-headed households. In most cases, the access to land is their only form of security.

Within the overall objective and context of Darfur Development Strategy (DDS), the project intended to address the issue of land in Darfur, which constitutes a considerable challenge to the Darfur peace initiatives and paves the way for sustainable recovery and reconstruction.

Project Purpose

The project aimed to research the specific areas of land tenure, property rights and customary land registration issues. The purpose of the project was to improve current land title system and to contribute in the development of evidence-based land policies, laws and regulations. The project also developed sketch map and settlement plans with demarcation of current and future boundaries and buffer zone for 51 returns villages using participatory approach. The project was conducted in collaboration with the Voluntary Return and Resettlement Commission (VRRC) and Ministries of Physical Planning and Public Utilities (MPPUs).

Project Outputs

Sketch map / settlement plan produced for 51 return village including existing boundary and possible direction(s) of settlement future expansion in order to draw a draft future boundary and grazing buffer zone and land for livelihood.

Community meeting for sketch mapping exercise
The process of conducting mapping exercise using participatory approach contains the following steps:

- **Ground Mapping**
- **Sketch Mapping**
- **Digitize Map with Social Tenure Domain Model (STDM)**
- **Training and Capacity Building**

### Training and capacity building on Ground Mapping
UN-Habitat conducted Ground and sketch mapping exercise that helps community members to draw out their mental maps and enhances trust among the members. The available local materials such as sand, stone and sticks are used for the exercise. It enables the group to focus more on mapping outcome rather than drawing techniques.

### Sketch Mapping exercise with community in 5 states of Darfur
A sketch map indicates the geographical location of important landmarks and/or services in the village, including: boundaries, settlements, resources, both natural and man-made. The community refers the satellite images and GPS to geo-position the location of distinguished features.

### Digitization using STDM
The land tenure system in Darfur is characterized by the fact that land is not formally registered according to the statutory law. User rights predominate and tend to be inclusive rather than exclusive. UN-Habitat used participatory land information system **STDM (Social Tenure Domain Model)** developed by the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN) to provide digitized maps and data bases for the villages. It is a pro-poor, gender responsive tool. With using free and open source, STDM is also cost and time effective.
UN-HABITAT will continuously contribute to land management reform for peaceful co-existence in Sudan.

UN-HABITAT and DLC co-hosted series of Land Conferences in Sudan. The first conference has successfully brought over 120 representatives together those who engaged in different aspect of land issues in Sudan.

The representatives of federal/state ministries, localities, major tribes, native judicial administrations, nomads and farmers association, UN agencies, donors, and international and national NGOs attended to discuss challenges and opportunities on land issues. Key recommendations for the support of land tenure security, land administration and peace and stability in Sudan was developed.

List of Conferences:
1. Land Conference in Sudan (15-16 April 2018)
2. Darfur Land Conference-for Peaceful Co-existence (10-11 December 2018)
3. Dubai Declaration on Land Governance in the Arab States (February 2018)

Women are more capable to achieve peace, as they are sincere, courageous, and dedicated.
Ms. Fatima Mohammed Fadl, Omda (head of native authority)

Land project scope covers a huge geographic area, it empowered us with land management tools.
Mr. Hafiz Hammad, head of voluntary return department, VRRC

Land issue is central in resolving Darfur conflict towards sustainable return of IDPs.
Mr. Mohammed Salih Mango, DLC Commissioner