THE ECONOMIC EFFECT OF SUPERPOWERS RIVALRY ON THE ECONOMY OF SUDAN

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Abstract: This study explores the economic effects of superpowers rivalry on Sudan, with a focus on the country's efforts to diversify its economy and achieve long-term sustainability. Through qualitative research, this paper examines how the geopolitical competition among global powers—namely China, the United States, and Russia—has shaped Sudan's economic policies, investment patterns, and development strategies. The rivalry has had a dual impact: on one hand, it has provided Sudan with opportunities for infrastructural development and foreign investment, particularly in the oil and mining sectors; on the other hand, it has reinforced the country's dependency on these resource-based industries, limiting its ability to diversify into other sectors like agriculture and manufacturing. The study also discusses how these foreign investments, especially from China's Belt and Road Initiative and Russia's mining sector involvement, have affected Sudan's long-term sustainability. Environmental concerns, fiscal stability, and the implications of foreign debt are also examined as key factors influencing the sustainability of Sudan's economic growth. The research findings suggest that while superpowers' investments contribute to short-term economic growth, they also hinder sustainable diversification and leave Sudan vulnerable to external economic shocks. The study recommends strategic policy adjustments to leverage superpower rivalry for long-term economic stability, with a stronger emphasis on governance reforms, sectoral diversification, and environmental sustainability
Keywords: Superpowers rivalry, Sudan economy, diversification, sustainability, foreign investment, China, Russia, United States, Belt and Road Initiative.

Introduction

Superpower rivalry has historically shaped the political and economic dynamics of many African countries, including Sudan. Since its independence in 1956, Sudan has been a strategic focus for external powers, especially during the Cold War. Both the United States and the Soviet Union, and later China, saw Sudan as a valuable partner due to its geographical position near the Red Sea, its rich oil reserves, and its potential for agricultural development (Khalid, 2020). These interests created a complex environment where Sudan's economy became increasingly influenced by shifting alliances and external pressures from these superpowers (Ahmed & Abdel, 2019). During the Cold War, Sudan's alignment with the United States and, at other times, with the Soviet Union created an economic dependency cycle. Initially, Western nations, including the U.S., provided development aid in exchange for strategic partnership, while the Soviet Union occasionally supported Sudanese socialist movements and left-leaning governments (Hassan & Elhaj, 2021). This shifting allegiance was marked by periods of investment and withdrawal, contributing to economic instability, as Sudan's economy became dependent on external assistance for its development projects (Mustafa, 2023). The discovery of oil in Sudan in the late 1970s and early 1980s shifted the interest of global powers toward the country's natural resources. Oil became central to Sudan's economy, attracting multinational companies and superpowers alike. The U.S. supported Sudan's government as part of a strategy to secure access to oil resources, though civil conflict in oil-rich areas limited these ventures (Ahmed, 2022). Later, China emerged as a major economic partner, investing heavily in Sudan's oil industry, which led to significant revenue generation but also increased the economy's vulnerability to oil price fluctuations (Mohamed, 2020).

As U.S. sanctions against Sudan intensified in the 1990s over alleged links to terrorism, Sudan turned to China as an alternative economically. China's involvement grew rapidly, with Chinese companies dominating the oil sector and Beijing providing development loans and infrastructure support (Hussein & Deng, 2021). This relationship contributed to economic growth but also created a dependency on China, as Sudan's exports became almost entirely oil-based and largely directed toward Chinese markets (Musa, 2022). The imposition of U.S. sanctions in 1997 had a profound impact on Sudan's economy, isolating the country from Western financial institutions and limiting trade (Khalid, 2020). These sanctions exacerbated Sudan's economic woes, leading to currency devaluation, rising inflation, and an increase in national debt. Isolated from Western markets, Sudan relied more heavily on China and Russia for economic support, which came with political strings attached. This isolation further deepened Sudan's economic dependency and reduced its ability to diversify its trade and investment partners (Hassan & Elhaj, 2021). Sudan's shifting alliances and the strategic interests of superpowers fueled political and ethnic divisions, contributing to civil conflicts, particularly between the north and the oil-rich south. The prolonged civil wars drained economic resources, diverting funds from critical development projects to military expenditure, which further weakened the economy (Mustafa, 2023). The international community's focus on Sudan's political stability, driven by superpower interests, often overlooked the economic foundations needed for sustainable growth and peace (Ahmed, 2022).

Following the ousting of President Omar al-Bashir in 2019, Sudan faced renewed challenges in balancing foreign relations with superpowers. The U.S. removed Sudan from its State Sponsors of Terrorism list in 2020, opening up new opportunities for foreign investment (Mohamed, 2020). However, Sudan remains heavily indebted, and recent Western investments are minimal compared to China's ongoing economic influence. This re-engagement with the West has been slow, highlighting the complex legacy of superpower rivalry on Sudan's economy, where dependency on a single power continues to pose risks (Hussein & Deng, 2021). Looking forward, Sudan's economic stability depends on its ability to manage relations with multiple superpowers while reducing its reliance on any single nation. Sudan's efforts to attract diversified investment, including agriculture, mining, and infrastructure, may help reduce its dependency on oil and external powers (Musa, 2022). However, the legacies of superpower rivalry have left structural challenges, and Sudan must navigate a delicate balance to leverage its strategic importance without compromising its economic sovereignty (Ahmed & Abdel, 2019).

Statement of the Problem

The rivalry among superpowers has significantly impacted Sudan's economic stability, development, and dependency on foreign aid. Since the Cold War era, Sudan's economy has been shaped by external influences, initially from the U.S. and the Soviet Union, and more recently from China. These powers sought influence in Sudan due to its strategic location, natural resources, and oil reserves. However, the resulting dependency on foreign assistance and investments has fostered economic instability, with cycles of growth and downturns often dictated by shifts in these alliances rather than sustainable domestic policies (Hassan & Elhaj, 2021). This influence has shaped Sudan's economy in ways that prioritize superpower interests, which frequently overlook the long-term needs of the Sudanese people (Ahmed, 2022).

The imposition of U.S. sanctions in the 1990s and Sudan's subsequent reliance on Chinese investment further complicated Sudan's economic landscape. While China's involvement provided some economic relief by developing oil infrastructure and facilitating exports, it also created a dependency on a single market and limited diversification in Sudan's economy (Hussein & Deng, 2021). This concentration in the oil sector left Sudan vulnerable to global oil price fluctuations, compounding its economic challenges and reducing its capacity for autonomous economic planning. Additionally, Chinese influence has prioritized resource extraction over broader development, which has contributed to the underdevelopment of other economic sectors (Musa, 2022).

This dependency on foreign powers has created a volatile economic environment in Sudan, undermining sustainable growth and resilience. The challenge for Sudan lies in balancing its relationships with competing superpowers to ensure it can leverage foreign investment without compromising its economic autonomy. Today, Sudan faces a pressing need to address the structural weaknesses created by decades of external influence and foster an economic model less reliant on superpower rivalry and more focused on diversified, self-sustaining development (Khalid, 2020). Addressing these issues is essential for Sudan's long-term stability and prosperity.

Objectives of the Study

The general objectives of the study are to examine the economic effect of Superpowers rivalry on the economy of Sudan. The specific objectives are to:

Determine the effect of superpowers rivalry on the diversification of Sudan economy.

Examine the effect of superpowers rivalry on the sustainable growth of Sudan economy.

Research Questions

To what extent do superpowers rivalry affect the diversification of Sudan economy?

To what extent do superpowers rivalry affect the sustainable growth of Sudan economy?

Review of Literature

Overview of Sudan's History: Sudan, located in northeastern Africa, has a complex and tumultuous history marked by colonialism, civil war, and diverse ethnic and cultural dynamics.

Ancient and Medieval Periods: Sudan's history stretches back to ancient civilizations. The Kingdom of Kush, located along the Nile, succeeded Egypt as a powerful kingdom in the region, known for its great cities such as Meroë. The Kushites ruled parts of Egypt during the 25th dynasty, leaving a lasting legacy on the region's cultural and architectural development (Pankhurst, 2019). Following the decline of Kush, Sudan became a part of various Islamic empires, and its culture was deeply influenced by Arab and Islamic traditions from the 7th century onward.

Colonial Era: In the 19th century, Sudan was part of the larger Ottoman-Egyptian Empire until it was effectively colonized by Britain and Egypt in the 1880s. This colonial rule led to the division of Sudanese society and created tensions between the Arab and African populations (Holt, 2017). The British-Egyptian administration promoted infrastructure development but left a legacy of political and social divisions that would affect Sudan for decades after independence.

Independence and Civil Wars: Sudan gained independence in 1956, but its early years were marked by political instability and conflict between the north, dominated by Arab Muslims, and the south, home to a predominantly Christian and animist population. Tensions between these two regions led to the First Sudanese Civil War (1955-1972), which ended with the Addis Ababa Agreement, granting the south autonomy. However, the promise of peace was short-lived, and after a coup in 1989, the country entered the Second Sudanese Civil War (1983-2005), which lasted for over two decades and resulted in an estimated 2 million deaths and widespread displacement (Johnson, 2011). This conflict culminated in the secession of South Sudan in 2011, following a referendum on independence, which created the world's newest nation but also deepened Sudan's regional and ethnic divisions (Young, 2012).

The Darfur Conflict: From the early 2000s, Sudan also faced internal conflicts, notably in the Darfur region, where fighting between Sudanese government forces and rebel groups led to atrocities, including genocide. The Darfur conflict remains a point of international controversy, with Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir indicted by the International Criminal Court for war crimes and crimes against humanity (Mamdani, 2019).

Recent Developments

Sudan has experienced a turbulent recent history, particularly following the ousting of President Omar al-Bashir in 2019 after months of protests against his authoritarian rule. Since Bashir's removal, the country has entered a transitional phase, aiming to establish a democratic government. The process, however, has been marred by challenges, including military coups, ethnic conflicts, and economic hardships, making it difficult for Sudan to achieve lasting stability. In 2023, Sudan again fell into conflict as the military and paramilitary forces clashed, leading to another humanitarian crisis (BBC, 2023).

Sudan’s history is characterized by a complex interplay of ethnic, religious, and political factors, alongside significant external influences. The country continues to grapple with the legacies of colonialism, war, and authoritarianism, which have left deep scars on its social fabric and economic stability. Achieving peace, democratic governance, and sustainable development remains a significant challenge for Sudan today.

The Effect of Superpowers Rivalry on the Diversification of Sudan Economy

Superpower rivalry, particularly involving China, the United States, and Russia, has influenced Sudan’s economic diversification efforts by fostering competition over resources and strategic influence, which affects Sudan’s political and economic stability.

Sudan's critical location in the Horn of Africa and proximity to the oil-rich Gulf have heightened its geostrategic importance, making it a focal point for competing global interests. China has historically been a dominant investor, especially in Sudan's oil sector, but has diversified its investments in mining and infrastructure over recent years. Although the secession of South Sudan in 2011 led to a decline in Sudanese oil production, China continues to maintain a strong economic footprint through investments in non-oil sectors to support its long-term energy and resource security (Patey & Olander, 2021), rivalry extends beyond economic interests, as the U.S. seeks to counter China's influence while fostering political stability in the region. U.S. foreign policy supports Sudan's transition to democracy and offers economic aid aimed at fostering transparent governance. This Western support contrasts with China's approach, which emphasizes infrastructure projects and economic investments without prioritizing political reform. These differing approaches have led to occasional tensions between China and Western nations, as each pursues influence over Sudan's strategic resources and political alignment (World Bank Group, 2016) has also shown interest in Sudan as part of its broader goal to increase influence across Africa. Russian companies have engaged in mining, especially gold, and there are reports of Moscow seeking a naval base in Sudan on the Red Sea. Although Sudan's instability complicates these ambitions, Russia's involvement creates another layer of superpower competition that impacts Sudan's ability to focus on internal economic diversification. The overlapping interests of Russia, China, and the U.S. in Sudan's resources and strategic location limit Sudan's capacity to independently determine its economic policies (Africa Newsroom Press, 2024; Patey & Olander, 2021) reliance on foreign powers to support key economic sectors such as mining, infrastructure, and agriculture illustrates the challenges it faces in reducing its dependency on primary commodities like oil and gold. These industries remain subject to shifts in global demand and political alliances. As a result, Sudan's diversification strategy is impacted by the economic and strategic objectives of external actors, which may not always align with Sudan's long-term economic resilience (Makol, 2023).

Superpowers such as the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt have also increased their influence in Sudan, especially as China reduced its involvement following the split with South Sudan. These regional powers are major markets for Sudan's gold and agriculture exports, providing crucial foreign exchange and creating additional layers of dependency that complicate Sudan's economic independence. Regional alliances, often backed by superpowers, can shape Sudan's economic direction and further inhibit diversification away from traditional sectors (World Bank Group, 2016; Patey & Olander, 2021). challenges, Sudan's economic reform agenda, partly supported by international financial institutions, seeks to build a diversified economy. The World Bank and the IMF have advised Sudan to invest in human capital, diversify agricultural productivity, and strengthen fiscal policies to reduce vulnerability to external shocks. However, implementing these reforms remains difficult amid Sudan's economic volatility, exacerbated by geopolitical tensions (Africa Newsroom Press, 2024; Makol, 2023)

The superpower rivalry has brought foreign investment, it has also introduced constraints that hinder Sudan's capacity for independent economic diversification. The competition between global powers means that Sudan must navigate complex diplomatic relationships that often place strategic interests over sustainable development. This leaves Sudan in a delicate position where it must balance its economic goals with the competing demands of influential international actors (World Bank Group, 2016; Patey & Olander, 2021). Sudan's efforts toward economic diversification are deeply intertwined with the interests of superpowers and regional actors, which influence Sudan's economic policies and limit its ability to pursue autonomous development. Addressing these challenges will require careful management of foreign partnerships and a strengthened focus on building resilient domestic sectors that can withstand external pressures.

The Effect of Superpowers Rivalry on the Sustainable Growth of Sudan Economy

The rivalry among superpowers like the United States, China, and Russia has significant implications for Sudan's sustainable economic growth. Sudan's strategic location, resource wealth, and economic vulnerabilities make it an area of interest for global powers with varied objectives. China's longstanding investments in Sudan focus primarily on energy, infrastructure, and mining, aiming to secure resources while creating vital infrastructure that might contribute to economic growth. However, this has also led to dependency on China and limited Sudan's ability to develop independently sustainable industries, as China's primary interest has been resource extraction rather than local economic empowerment (Patey, 2021). While Chinese investment has brought short-term economic benefits, critics argue it has not fostered sustainable growth in Sudan. China's focus on infrastructure and natural resource sectors often lacks provisions for environmental or social sustainability. These projects can also increase Sudan's debt burden, as many Chinese loans are linked to large-scale projects with high financial commitments, adding to Sudan's economic fragility and limiting budgetary flexibility for sustainable growth initiatives. This dynamic reflects a broader trend in Africa, where China's resource-driven investments can result in economic volatility due to fluctuating global commodity prices (World Bank, 2018).

The United States, on the other hand, aims to promote stability and economic reform in Sudan through development aid and diplomatic support for democratic governance. U.S. policies often prioritize transparency, anti-corruption, and human rights, which align with sustainable economic growth goals. However, U.S. aid is frequently tied to Sudan's political environment, fluctuating in response to Sudan's internal governance and alignment with American strategic interests. This conditionality, while potentially fostering long-term governance improvements, can lead to inconsistency in financial support, leaving gaps in Sudan's ability to implement continuous economic reforms (Ikenberry, 2020). Russia has also entered Sudan with a focus on strategic military and economic partnerships, notably in the mining sector. Russia's interest in Sudan includes a potential naval base on the Red Sea, which would enhance its regional influence but might also draw Sudan into the geopolitical fray. Russian investments have focused on sectors such as gold mining, with limited direct impact on the sustainable development of Sudan's broader economy. While Russia's involvement provides an alternative to Western aid, its influence often exacerbates Sudan's reliance on extractive industries rather than fostering diversified, resilient economic growth (Africa Oil & Power, 2021)

Additionally, superpower rivalry can lead to inconsistent economic policies in Sudan, as each major power pushes different priorities. For example, while the United States promotes governance and institutional reform, China's emphasis is on infrastructure and resource extraction, and Russia seeks strategic access. This clash of agendas complicates Sudan's ability to develop cohesive policies that support sustainable economic growth.

Policy inconsistency, exacerbated by external pressures, undermines local efforts to build resilient economic sectors and develop long-term growth strategies. Sudan's economic reform agenda, partially supported by the World Bank and the IMF, has made strides toward sustainable growth through programs targeting fiscal stability and governance. However, these reforms are hampered by Sudan's political instability and dependency on external funding, often tied to the interests of competing powers. The IMF has highlighted the importance of investing in human capital and non-extractive sectors, such as agriculture and services, to achieve balanced, sustainable growth. These sectors, however, receive limited investment from superpowers focused on Sudan's resource potential (IMF, 2020).

Environmental sustainability is another concern impacted by superpower rivalry. Extractive industries, largely funded by foreign powers, pose environmental risks that Sudan may lack the capacity to mitigate. Chinese and Russian investments in mining, for example, often come with minimal environmental oversight, potentially leading to degradation of arable land and water resources. This environmental strain can diminish agricultural productivity, a key sector for Sudan's sustainable growth, thus reducing resilience to climate shocks and exacerbating food insecurity (Smith, 2018). To address these challenges, Sudan must balance its foreign partnerships while enhancing internal capacities to implement environmentally and economically sustainable policies. Strengthening governance structures, improving regulatory frameworks, and promoting local industry could help Sudan leverage foreign investment in a manner that aligns with its sustainable development goals. Collaborating with multilateral institutions and diversifying foreign partnerships may also reduce dependency on any one superpower and foster a more stable economic environment.

In summary, while superpower rivalry in Sudan brings opportunities for investment, it poses substantial challenges to sustainable economic growth. Sudan's reliance on foreign powers and the resulting focus on resource extraction limit its ability to develop a resilient, diversified economy. Effective governance reforms, supported by multilateral institutions, and a cautious approach to foreign partnerships will be crucial for Sudan to achieve long-term sustainable growth amid global power competition

Theoretical Framework

The dependency theory is a widely applicable framework for explaining the economic effects of superpower rivalry on Sudan's economy. Originally proposed by sociologists and economists like Raúl Prebisch (1950) and Andre Gunder Frank (1966), Dependency Theory suggests that less developed countries (LDCs) are economically dependent on wealthier, more powerful nations. This dependence often results in the exploitation of LDCs' resources, inhibiting their economic autonomy and sustainable growth. Dependency theorists argue that powerful nations drive the economic structures of weaker countries towards dependency, especially through resource extraction and infrastructure projects that prioritize the needs of the powerful states. In Sudan's context, Dependency Theory is relevant due to the influence of major global powers like China, the United States, and Russia. China's significant investments in Sudan's oil sector, for instance, have created economic dependency by aligning Sudan's economy closely with China's demand for resources. This relationship is characteristic of Dependency Theory's core ideas, where foreign investment does not necessarily lead to development but rather to dependency and exploitation. Similarly, Russia's recent interests in Sudan's mineral sector and potential

military base on the Red Sea indicate a strategic hold that could further Sudan's economic reliance on external powers (Patey, 2021; Smith, 2018).
Dependency Theory has evolved to address the modern dynamics of international power. For example, Immanuel Wallerstein's World Systems Theory (1974) extends Dependency Theory by classifying countries as core, semi-periphery, and periphery, with Sudan falling into the periphery category. This framework is useful in analyzing Sudan's economic position as it highlights how superpowers' interests in Sudan's resources maintain it as a periphery state, dependent on external actors for economic opportunities, and constrained by the global capitalist system. Wallerstein's theory illustrates how Sudan's economic growth is stunted by its role as a supplier of raw materials rather than an independent, diversified economy (Wallerstein, 1974; Akpan, 2018). Recent studies on superpower rivalry in Africa continue to utilize Dependency Theory to explain the consequences of foreign investments on economic sovereignty. A 2020 study by the International Crisis Group analyzed China's Belt and Road Initiative in Africa and its implications for national economies, noting how Sudan's reliance on China exacerbates its economic vulnerabilities amid volatile commodity markets. The IMF and World Bank have similarly pointed out that Sudan's economy lacks diversification, which is a common challenge for countries experiencing dependency on foreign investment for specific resources (IMF, 2020; World Bank, 2018).

Research Method

The study used the qualitative research method that relied mostly on secondary data as it sources of data. Historical research design was used to discuss trend analysis making use of past events to explain present occurrences. This way documentations from foreign and local Newsletters, articles and journals and international organizations like World Bank, International Monetary Fund, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Reports, International Crisis Group (ICG) Reports, Government and Central Bank Data, News Articles and Think Tank Publications and Reports from China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) were sourced. The study made use of content analysis as the analytical tool to analyze the results obtained based on the specific issues raised in the research questions

Major Findings

Diversification of Sudan's Economy

Superpower rivalry, especially involving China, the United States, and Russia, has influenced Sudan's economy by reinforcing dependency on resource extraction, particularly oil and minerals, thus hindering diversification efforts. For instance, Chinese investment, predominantly in the oil sector, has provided Sudan with infrastructure and capital but has also locked the economy into oil dependency. Following the secession of South Sudan in 2011, which claimed the majority of Sudan's oil reserves, this dependency led to a substantial economic shock, highlighting the risks associated with limited diversification (Patey, 2021; World Bank, 2018). To counterbalance China's influence, the United States and European powers have aimed to support Sudan's economic diversification by providing aid and technical assistance in sectors like agriculture and manufacturing. However, such assistance is often tied to political conditions, especially regarding democratic reforms, leading to inconsistencies that limit its impact. This inconsistency has made it challenging for Sudan to fully integrate diversified sectors into its economy and has underscored the need for sustained, non-conditional investment for genuine diversification (International Crisis Group, 2020; Akpan, 2018). Furthermore, Russia's recent focus on Sudan's mining sector has added complexity. While Russia's involvement in gold mining has increased Sudan's export options, it has also reinforced an extractive-based economic model that lacks the stability and scalability necessary for long-term growth. This reliance on commodities subject to price volatility makes it difficult for Sudan to establish a robust industrial base or develop sectors less sensitive to external shocks (Smith, 2018; IMF, 2020).

Sustainability of Sudan's Economy

The study found that the sustainability of Sudan's economic growth is heavily influenced by its entanglement in superpower rivalries, as each global power promotes its interests rather than Sudan's long-term economic stability. For example, China's large-scale infrastructure projects, including roads, ports, and oil facilities, are often financed through loans that contribute to Sudan's debt burden. This debt dependency can threaten Sudan's fiscal stability, reducing resources available for other essential services that could drive sustainable development (World Bank, 2018; Akinyemi, 2020). On the other hand, U.S. aid has primarily targeted governance reform, anti-corruption, and human rights initiatives. While these efforts align with long-term sustainability by fostering a stable political environment, their focus on governance rather than direct economic development sometimes limits immediate economic benefits. This approach can delay critical investments in productive sectors necessary for sustainable growth, particularly in agriculture and manufacturing, which are essential to Sudan's economic resilience (Ikenberry, 2020; Ogundipe & Ola-David, 2021). Environmental sustainability also emerges as a concern in Sudan's economic engagement with superpowers. Extractive industries, largely driven by foreign interests, pose environmental risks that Sudan lacks the regulatory capacity to manage effectively. China's and Russia's investments in oil and mining projects are often undertaken with minimal environmental oversight, which can lead to degradation of natural resources, thus jeopardizing agriculture—a vital sector for Sudan's economic stability and food security. This environmental strain further challenges Sudan's capacity to achieve a balanced, sustainable economy (UNDP, 2022; Smith, 2018).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the economic effects of superpower rivalry on Sudan highlight both opportunities and significant challenges to achieving a diversified and sustainable economy. On one hand, the influx of foreign investments, primarily from China, Russia, and to a lesser extent the United States, has provided Sudan with vital infrastructure, access to global markets, and short-term economic gains. However, this involvement has also reinforced Sudan's dependency on extractive industries, such as oil and mining, limiting efforts toward meaningful economic diversification. This dependency leaves Sudan vulnerable to fluctuations in global commodity prices and reduces the economy's ability to withstand external shocks. Additionally, the sustainability of Sudan's economy remains at risk due to environmental degradation linked to foreign-led extractive projects and the country's mounting debt burden, especially from Chinese loans tied to large infrastructure projects. These factors strain Sudan's fiscal resources and limit investments in critical sectors like agriculture and manufacturing, which are essential for long-term resilience and balanced growth. Moreover, the differing agendas of these global powers—China's focus on resource extraction, Russia's strategic positioning, and the U.S.'s emphasis on governance—create policy inconsistencies that hinder Sudan's ability to form a cohesive, long-term economic strategy. Addressing these challenges will require Sudan to adopt a balanced approach to foreign partnerships, prioritize governance reforms, and invest in human capital and environmental protection to foster a diversified and sustainable economy.

Recommendations

Sudan should prioritize developing non-extractive sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing, and services to reduce its dependency on resource-based revenue, which is highly susceptible to global price volatility. Investment in these sectors could be facilitated through policies that incentivize private and foreign investments with diversified outcomes, such as tax breaks for agricultural technology or renewable energy projects. This would decrease the economic vulnerabilities tied to resource dependency and build a more balanced economy resilient to external shocks. Sudan could capitalize on superpower rivalry by strategically engaging with each nation based on its economic needs. For example, while partnering with China for infrastructure projects, Sudan could also work with the United States and Europe to foster governance improvements, promote democratic institutions, and support knowledge transfer in technology and industrial practices. This approach could attract investments that benefit multiple sectors, reducing dependency on any single superpower and promoting more sustainable growth.

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