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Sudan Doesn't Need Another Solar Mandate. It Needs Jordan's Financing Model.

Jordan's decade-old blended-finance fund shows what Sudan's solar-financing mandate is still missing.

Research Team

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Jordan's decade-old blended-finance fund shows what Sudan's still-toothless solar-financing mandate is missing. 3Bi recommends Sudan and its donors capitalize a similar fund.

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The Ask

Sudan's transitional authorities and international donors should capitalize a dedicated, blended-finance Renewable Energy Fund — combining grants, revolving loans, and pooled donor capital on the model Jordan has run for a decade — to give the Central Bank of Sudan's 2024 solar-financing directive the delivery mechanism it has never had. Without one, that directive will keep producing headlines instead of installed panels.

Why Now

On August 10, 2026, Jordan's Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources launched a "Decade of Achievement" report for its Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Fund (JREEEF), documenting a decade of blended-finance results at national scale (attaqa.net, August 10, 2026). The timing is instructive rather than coincidental: JREEEF is exactly the kind of vehicle that UNDP's own May 2026 study of Sudan's solar sector says Sudan needs and does not have (UNDP Sudan, May 18, 2026). Sudan's Central Bank told commercial banks to finance solar energy systems back in 2024, but two years on, Sudanese solar developers still borrow at 20–35% interest — rates that price out the households, farms, and small businesses UNDP identifies as the sector's core demand (UNDP Sudan/Radio Dabanga/North Africa Post, May 2026, figures consistent with prior 3Bi reporting).

The decision window is narrow and specific. Bilateral and multilateral donors are actively shaping their pre-COP31 finance commitments now, ahead of the Antalya summit (November 9–20, 2026), where closing the climate-finance gap and operationalizing the New Collective Quantified Goal are named priorities (COP31 Presidency; E3G, 2026). A Sudan solar financing vehicle announced or capitalized in this window rides that momentum. Missed, it waits at least another year — a year in which Sudan's $3 billion of war-damaged grid capacity (UNDP, May 2026) continues to push households toward diesel generators costing up to ten times more to run than solar.

The Evidence

Jordan's blended-finance model works at national scale. JREEEF's decade report shows 2,288,646 beneficiaries between 2015 and 2025 — 19.2% of Jordan's population — reached through a financing mix of full and partial grants (10–50% of project cost) layered with revolving loans and partnerships with the European Union and USAID (attaqa.net, August 10, 2026, citing Jordan's Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources). The fund financed 13,748 renewable energy systems and 45,298 household solar water heaters, cut cumulative energy consumption by 817.6 GWh, and reduced CO_2 emissions by roughly 883,000 tonnes — contributing 7.8% of Jordan's entire 2030 emissions-reduction target. Crucially, the model reached households, factories, hospitals, municipalities, and farms alike: it is a general-purpose financing instrument, not a boutique pilot.

UNDP has already told Sudan it needs exactly this, and the gap remains open. UNDP's Solar Energy Value Chains in Sudan report — drawing on Chinese PV export data, an eight-state MSME survey, and importer interviews conducted through 2025 — found solar demand surging since early 2024 as households and businesses flee a collapsing grid, but concluded that "customs bottlenecks, weak quality controls, and limited financing risk undermining its impact" (UNDP Sudan, May 18, 2026). The report's own recommended interventions include an Emergency Solar Access Fund to cover upfront costs, trade credit guarantees to offset currency risk for importers, and a community-based model — reviving a pre-war partnership between the Sudanese Electricity Distribution Company, microfinance institutions, and neighborhood cooperatives — financed through Sharia-compliant instruments and repaid via prepayment metering. More than two years after the Central Bank's directive and three months after UNDP's own proposal, none of these financing vehicles exists at scale.

A mandate without a mechanism does not move the interest rate. The Central Bank of Sudan's 2024 instruction to banks to finance solar systems for agriculture, industry, and households was a genuine policy signal, paired with a 2021 customs exemption for solar equipment (pvknowhow.com, citing Al-Taghyeer, June 2024). But instructing banks to lend is not the same as making that lending affordable: Sudanese solar developers still face domestic borrowing costs of 20–35%, against Sudan's installed capacity of roughly 190 MW — a fraction of the pre-war 3,300 MW-by-2033 target (UNDP/Radio Dabanga/North Africa Post, May 2026). Jordan's evidence suggests why: JREEEF's grant-and-revolving-loan blend exists precisely because a standalone lending mandate, without a mechanism to lower the effective cost of capital, cannot close a gap this wide on its own. UNDP's Sudan report reaches the same conclusion from the supply side: a flood of low-quality, poorly warrantied components has eroded consumer trust even where financing is available, and importers able to meet full-container minimums and 100% down-payments (the traders best placed to survive high interest rates) are precisely the ones least likely to serve household and smallholder demand. A blended fund that prices in quality assurance alongside affordable capital addresses both failures the mandate alone cannot reach.

Addressing the Counter-Case

The strongest objection is that Sudan's active conflict makes the Jordan comparison unrealistic: Jordan built JREEEF in peacetime, with a functioning state bureaucracy to administer it, while Sudan's institutions are fragmented and a government-run fund risks capture or collapse. This is a fair concern, and it points to a design choice rather than a reason not to act. UNDP's own proposed model does not require a strong central government — it is explicitly a donor-and-multilateral-administered instrument built on a pre-existing SEDC–microfinance–cooperative partnership, similar in structure to the pooled humanitarian financing mechanisms (such as Sudan's proximity-grant emergency response rooms) that already move donor capital through decentralized, community-level channels amid the same conflict. If anything, a fragmented grid and an unreliable state utility make decentralized, off-grid solar financing more valuable during conflict, not less — it is the households and clinics cut off from any functioning grid who stand to gain the most from a financing instrument that does not depend on state capacity to deliver power centrally.

What 3Bi Recommends, Specifically

First, international donors already active in Sudan's energy and humanitarian space — the EU, bilateral agencies, the Green Climate Fund, and Gulf climate-finance vehicles — should pool capital into a Sudan Solar Access Fund administered through an existing trusted multilateral or NGO channel, structured with a JREEEF-style blend: grants covering 30–50% of cost for household and MSME-tier systems, and revolving loans for larger commercial and agricultural installations. Second, the Central Bank of Sudan should pair its existing 2024 directive with a partial credit guarantee facility, addressing UNDP's own recommendation directly and giving commercial banks a reason to lend to solar borrowers below the current 20–35% range. Third, donors and the fund's administrators should target an announcement of initial capitalization ahead of or during COP31 in Antalya (November 9–20, 2026), positioning Sudan's case within the summit's finance-gap and NCQG negotiations rather than waiting for a slower bilateral process. Fourth, the fund should pilot first through the community-based SEDC–microfinance–cooperative model UNDP has already validated, before scaling nationally — proving the delivery mechanism at a manageable scale rather than attempting a national rollout amid ongoing conflict.

Sourcing & Contact

Sources: attaqa.net, "[illegible] 216 [illegible] 2.2 ..[illegible]," August 10, 2026; UNDP Sudan, "Solar Power Could Keep Sudan's Farms and Businesses Running as Grid Collapses," May 18, 2026, and the underlying Solar Energy Value Chains in Sudan report; pvknowhow.com, "Sudan Central Bank Mandates Banks Financing for Solar Energy," citing Al-

Taghyeer, June 2024; E3G and the COP31 Presidency on Antalya summit priorities, 2026. For follow-up: research@3bisudan.org.

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