UNIVERSITAT POLITÈCNICA DE VALÈNCIA

Facultad de Administración
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UNIVERSITAT POLITÈCNICA DE VALÈNCIA

Faculty of Business Administration and Management

Process of strategy change and design of the strategic plan for the organization C-Hub, Co. LTD by Guarantee of Comboni College of Science and Technology in Sudan.

End of Degree Project

Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration and Management

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The necessity of developing a Strategic Plan for the next four years has been identified in C-Hub during the stay in Khartoum, Sudan as part of the Meridies Program. The purpose of this Bachelor Thesis is to give a proposal to change and rearrange the previous strategy. The methodology of gathering data has been observations recorded in Documentation, review of internal documentation, observations expressed in words and interview with open ended questions. Different methods for analyzing this data to understand the complexity of the external and internal environment of C-Hub have been used. A SWOT, a Job Analysis and a Internal Evaluation from a project helped to lay the foundation for the Strategic Plan developed jointly with the Strategic Commission by online meetings. A total of three Strategic Lines collects the objectives and actions to align the C-Hub Team with the mission, vision and values of the company to make growth the identity needed.

1.2 OBJECTIVE

The overall objective of this Bachelor's Thesis (BT) is to develop a concrete Proposal of Strategic Plan in C-Hub Company Limited by Guarantee. This involves a Change in the initial Strategy of the Company, which has not yielded enough profitability and financial independence. Hence a reformulation of the same has been identified as a necessity, to make the company sustainable.

Concrete objectives include to generate a conversation about company's future plans with the actors involved in Strategic Decisions. The priority tasks are to re-define the mission, vision, values and the Objectives of the company in structured lines of strategy in accordance with the Sudanese contextual environment. Thereafter, create awareness for the key set of actions needed to achieve these internal goals while providing a plan for the current and future team, which will ultimately understand and align its objectives with C-Hub. To generate KPI's for each action will be included to evaluate the overall performance of the Strategic Plan

1.3 DESCRIPTION OF THE BT BACKGROUND AND STRUCTURE

1.3.1 The background of the thesis problem.

This BT originated from a program titled *Meridies*. involves a stay in Khartoum, Sudan. The program arose from the cooperation between the Polytechnical University of Valencia (UPV) and the Comboni College of Science and Technology (CCST) based in Sudan.

1.3.2 The BT structure

The thesis is structured in five parts: Introduction, Methodology, Observations recorded in documentation, Proposal and Conclusions. The second section will outline the methodologies. Made up of a mix of both quantitative and qualitative methodologies that were used to collect all the information and data, including all the problems that were expected to affect the validity of the data, together with the remedies. Being a thesis that includes a stay in Sudan, there will be a sub section of personal experience added as a qualitative observation method for the thesis.

The Observations will begin by describing both the Meridies Program and the environmental framework of the company. The purpose of this section is in-depth contextualization of how various factors lead up to the thesis problem.

The fourth section includes an in-depth analysis based on the complex framework of the company, after months of readings and in-person experiences. The SWOT, Job Analysis and Evaluation of a project are the methods of analysis chosen. At the end of this part, there will come up with a set of proposals made in conjunction with the Director of the company, Ihaab Shoully, Br. Abel Duho as part of the C-Hub team and Fr.Dr. Jorge C. Naranjo Secretary of the Board of Directors as Principal of Comboni College of Science and Technology (CCST from now on), which owns the company together with the Comboni College Khartoum (CCK), primary and intermediate studies school from the Combonians. The Strategic Lines have grouped Objectives and Actions that can be evaluated by KPI's

Finally, the thesis will highlight key conclusions from the work done and the full Meridies experience will be made.

2 METHODOLOGY

The methodology section for this bachelor's thesis is organized into two broad sections.

➢ Methods used for gathering data.
➢ Methods of analysis of the gathered data.

2.1 METHODS OF GATHERING DATA

The context of Sudan has greatly affected the performance of C-Hub this contextual complexity calls for a mix of Both Qualitative and Quantitative methods of Data Collection.

2.1.1 Quantitative method used

2.1.1.1 Method 1: Observations recorded in Documentation

The section shall describe the context of C-Hub relied on information that was recorded as numbers. This method is quite appropriate for the research problem, since the information comes from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), which is considered the gold standard in development statistics around the globe.

This method could run into a risk of omitted variable bias. The long war in Sudan means that collection of data would not be accurate. The data could suffer bias because no researcher would want to conduct data from an area affected by guerilla way. However, since the United Nations now includes Sudan itself and most information on Sudan to the UNDP is provided by Sudanese scholas, some who have experienced the war itself.

Also, the information gathered from the United Nations reports is only meant to help in understanding trends, rather than specific facts. Therefore, the anticipated problems will not affect the overall analysis of the problem statement of the research.

2.1.1.2 Method 2: Review of internal documentation

A second source shall be the own internal documents and reports from C-Hub. The meeting proceeding dates back to five years ago, which is two years prior to when the down spiral of profitability began to reduce. Specific permission to access the documentation was granted by the institution head. FR. Naranjo. Given that one of the problems was that the lawfully elected heads of C-Hub does not reside in Sudan, the research could suffer information bias. The depth of the documentation is assumed to be sufficient. The minutes of all management meetings are proposed and seconded by long serving members of the organization. Hence, they are authentic and not manipulated. Also, financial documents are studied by an independent professional body. It was important to look at the meetings proceedings to understand the communication patterns and frequencies of the of the organization. This shall be explained in depth in the analysis section.

2.1.2 Qualitative methods used

2.1.2.1 Method 1: Observations expressed in words

Under this method, the researcher will express her personal experiences. This will include the small chats interacting with Random C-Hub users, with the priest who is second in charge.

While making the observations, the information will be recorded using personal notes. This method is prone to risk of the Hawthorne bias, where people behave differently when they know they are being observed. To counter this possibility the researcher will not write notes openly. Furthermore, she will be involved in group activities and observe while participating, in a covert manner. The other risk is the recall bias, where the researcher is at risk of recalling recall little information at the time of writing the notes. This will be minimal and not the overall weighty data. Social desirability bias will also not be present since the researcher has worked before with other similar types of entities hence neutral and objective in gathering data towards analyzing the findings.

2.1.2.2 Method 2: Interview with open ended questions

The researcher shall interview two girls with open-ended questions. They form a representative sample of the users of C-Hub. The girls were selected at random; the researcher had not sat with any of them before the interview. The complete transcription of the interviews is in Annex II.

Basic expected problems to encounter include expectations; the respondents might expect to be rewarded hence exaggerate in their responses. This will be solved by comparison of records stored in the documentation analyzed as a source of data to monitor any form of inconsistencies and trends that digress from the previous sources of information.

The cultural and religious norms in Sudan might impede female respondents to be open in the open-ended questions. The researcher prepared a safe environment where they felt and understood that their responses would not be public in Sudan. They will be presented to the UPV in Valencia Spain, hence chances of repercussion in their local communities will be null

2.2 METHODS OF ANALYSIS

This research considers that setting up C-Hub in the complex environment must have been a much harder hurdle to overcome than the current problem being researched. The same complexity of environment weakens any mode of theoretical analysis. It would also be a risk to use theories as a strait jacket or one size fits all approach.

On the other hand, an empirical analysis approach is suitable since the researcher will be on the ground and interact with up-to-date data which has been considered consisted and reliable, hence valid.

Therefore, complex methods of analysis like statistical analysis shall not be employed. Two methods of analysis shall be employed:

2.2.1 Method 1: SWOT analysis

The SWOT analysis is a suitable method for a non-profit organization like C-Hub. SWOT will consider all the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. It will also guide the thesis in the establishment of the KPIs for the strategy. These four components will span across financing, operations, internal procedures, and processes, the later three strongly intertwined with internal communications.

The analytical problems are mostly related to accountability for past incorrect actions. This is only viable if there was a code of conduct in place as a criterion to judge on. Also, the threats parts are subjective to the data, therefore its validity might be compromised since no probability math's has been employed in the projections laid out in the analysis.

2.2.2 Method 2: Job organization Analysis

The role distribution and organizational structure has a high impact on high performing teams. This is even more true on vertical top- bottom within the context of a rather male dominated rather than meritocracy. Lack of supervisory and regulatory bodies within the structure also causes zero no checks and balances.

The research will dedicate a whole section diving deeper into both components of analysis. Before diving into conclusions and proposal.

2.2.3 Method 3: Internal Evaluation of a project

The Project with AICS (Italian Agency for Development Cooperation) has been the biggest project, in terms of money and people involved that the company has developed. The learning process during the period of the project from the staff gives the possibility to judge the necessities for next projects.

The in-person interview's objective is to have a direct approach of the impact of the Program in a concrete life. The participants were volunteers, and the only need was to speak fluent English. An email was sent to every participant asking to answer a Questions were previously shared with interviewees in order to get fluent answers. The questions were divided into a short presentation part, their personal opinion about the program and the community created, their own project and how attending the Program has changed their lives. Both interviews took place the week before the Arts in Media Event, which was the last part of the Program, when the entrepreneurs had already finished the Incubation Program.

Finally, these in person interviews were part of the Final Report of *She Designs* Program shared with AICS to Evaluate the Program internally, both interviews can be found in the Annex I.

3 OBSERVATIONS RECORDED IN DOCUMENTATION

3.1 ABOUT THE MERIDIES PROGRAM

3.1.1 Center for Development Cooperation and Meridies program

The Centre for Development Cooperation (CCD) is an academic area from the UPV that provides support and motivation to the university community to participate in several activities of university development cooperation. It has different agreements, to engage the UPV with the set of International Cooperation (Non-Governmental Development Organization (NGDO), public administrations and international agencies).

Apart from grants and scholarship management, the Center provides training courses, organizes events and collaborations with NGDO to push the university community to be committed to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) compliance, defined by the United Nations 2030 Agenda.

Every year they put the Cooperation in the spotlight and give the opportunity to students and employees to have an international cooperation experience with programs like MERIDIES.

MERIDIES-Cooperation, as it's explained in its call, is an international mobility program of the Centre for Development Cooperation (CCD) for the participation of students in development cooperation projects and actions in countries with a medium-low Human Development Index (HDI). In this way, the people selected collaborate with Universities, Non-Governmental Development Organizations, International Organizations, social entities, NGOs, and other actors of the international development cooperation system.

The objectives of MERIDIES-Cooperation are:

- To promote solidarity and the values of development cooperation among students and teaching staff.

- To enable students to put into practice the knowledge acquired during their academic training in collaboration with entities and institutions whose aims are the eradication of poverty and inequality.

3.2 FRAMEWORK OF C-HUB

3.2.1 Environmental framework

To provide a better understanding of the framework it is necessary to go deeper into the context of the country. The Sudan, officially called The Republic of Sudan is in the North-East of Africa. It is the third-largest country in Africa and in the Arab League by area with 1,886,068 square kilometers. The population is estimated to be around 46 million people in 2022 (UN,

2022). Its capital is Khartoum, and its most populated city is Omdurman (part of the metropolitan area of Khartoum).

Figure 1: Sudan (orthographic projection) Source: Wikipedia

Figure 2: Sudan Map Source: WorldAtlas.com

The country is very rich in natural resources such as gold and oil, but the main companies extracting them are not Sudanese. The official languages are Arabic and English, its main religion Islam.

It is a strategic point because in Khartoum, the capital, we find cross-roads of migration routes. In fact, Khartoum Process was created as an initiative of EU and AU to control the migrations coming from Eritrea, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Somalia and Kenya. It is the city where the White Nile and the Blue Nile come together and the core of the political and economic activity.

3.2.1.1 Political, economic and social situation in the country during the development of its activity

It is also important to describe the political, economic and social situation in Sudan in the past few years to get the picture of the complexity environment that C-Hub operates in.

The Human Development Index (HDI) is a summary measure of average achievement in key dimensions of human development. It highlights the basic dimensions of having a long and healthy life, being knowledgeable and having a decent standard of living. (UN, 2022). According to this index, the United Nations considers Sudan a country with a low human development.

The chart below figure shows the evolution of the HDI in Sudan between 1990 and 2021. As we can see, in the overall of the 30 years there has been an increase in the index, which tends to be an improvement of the life conditions in the country, but this is a global tendency.
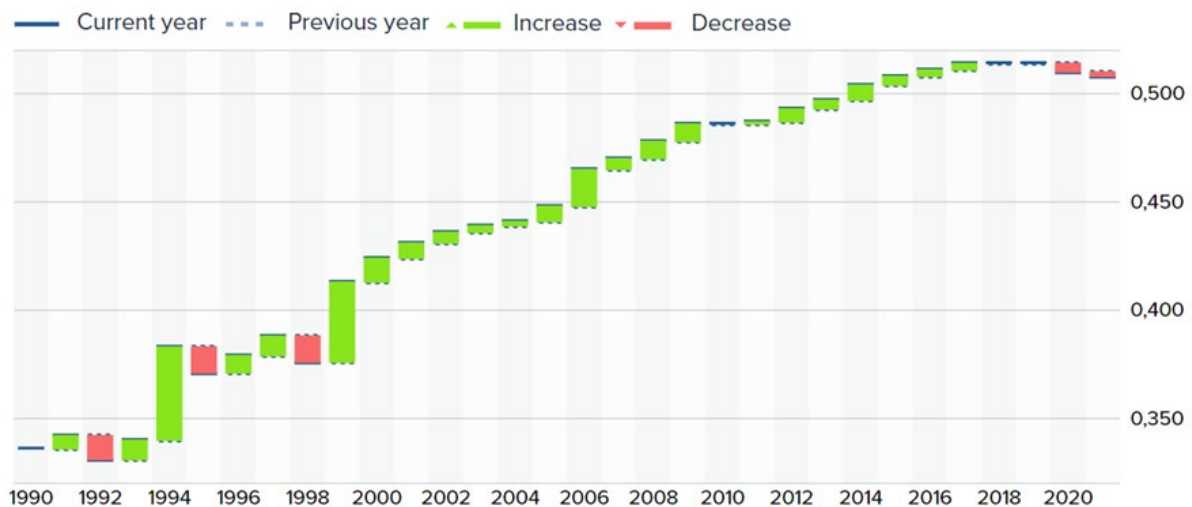
Figure 3: Trends in Sudan's HDI 1990-2021 Source: Human Development Reports

This thesis will focus on the years that concern our analysis. In 2017, 0.509 (168th in the ranking) and in 2018, 0.506 (171st in the ranking). Therefore, the year when the Comboni Innovation and Entrepreneurship Center (CIEC) was founded (2019) Sudan's life expectancy was 65.31 years, its mortality rate 7.12‰ and its per capita income €700. With this data, Sudan was in the 170th position with a 0.51 HDI. Sudan's HDI value for 2021 is 0.508—which puts the country in the Low human development category—positioning it at 172 out of 191 countries and territories, its lowest rate ever.

So, we could notice a decrease during the past years in the development of the country according to the political instability which always tends to presuppose economic instability that shall be analyzed below. According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on June 28, 2021, the Executive Boards of the IMF and World Bank approved debt relief for Sudan

under this initiative—immediately reducing the country's debt from about US$56 billion to US$28 billion. (IMF, Nov 2022).
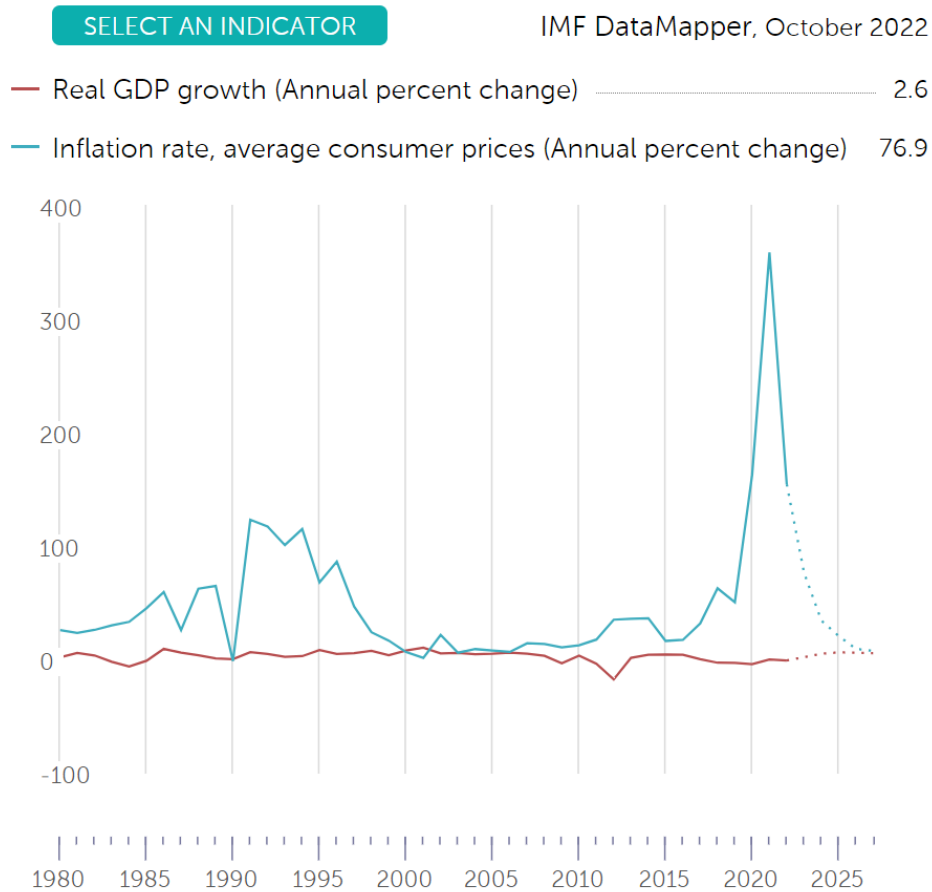
Figure 4: Real GDP growth and Inflation rate, average consumer prices. Source: IMF

In 2018 with 1 US dollar (USD) could buy approximately 30 Sudanese pounds (SDG) in the legal market and around 47 in the black market. Right now, the legal trade and the black market is more unified and you can obtain around 580 SDG for 1 USD, which shows a devaluation of the state currency as never seen before, as Sudanese people and IMF data say. In Figure 4 we can see the considerable increase in the inflation rate by 2020 and so on. Also, prices have increased fast. A loaf of bread was around 5 SDG three years prior to 2023 and right now it costs 50 SDG. Also, petrol prices increased a lot after the South Sudan Independence, where the main oil reserves were found. Moreover, both goods (bread and petrol) were subsided until 2021 by this time, even one liter of water was more expensive than one liter of petrol. When the Government removed these grants, there was an uncontrolled price hike. The IMF was putting pressure on the Government to include the country in the debt relief program, and it was said that the money was going to support social measures such us subsides for families in need, education and health. But the fact was that the rise in prices of food, petrol and electricity were what triggered the revolution because it was affecting the whole population. Apart from the influence of the Arab Spring in neighboring countries. During those days the political situation was very different, the dictatorship Omar al-Bashir was running the country since 1989. Sudan had to face the sanctions for being

included from the US as a country that supports terrorism. These sanctions relapse, for example, into not being able to receive any bank transfer from a European or US bank. Also, this caused struggles with the external commercial activities of the country. In the past years we have seen a negative trade balance, which means Sudan is importing more goods than exporting. This might be a problem of the low national industry level of production as well as the few commercial relations of the country, due to the COVID 19 global recession, or a combination of all these reasons. The main countries where Sudan has been exporting and mainly importing goods are China, EAU, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, India, Ethiopia, Turkey and France. It is also because of a reduced industry (2.6% of GDP) in the country compared with the rest of the economic sectors (agriculture 39.6% and services 57.8% of GDP). Two-thirds of the population lives in rural areas, making Sudan's economy largely dependent on agriculture, as seen on the high GDP percentage of this sector. (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation of Spain, Sudan Country Report)

From 2019, internal and external organizations have struggled to get reliable data as before so what we have since that year are estimations. The population is increasing each year by an estimated percentage of 2.4% and the average age is 19.7 years. The life expectancy at birth is 67.3 years and the mean time of schooling is 4.8 years. Those data are characteristics typical of a developing country. (UNDP, HDI report 2022)

The political situation of the country is not easy to summarize but we are going to try to do so after reading different articles and asking different actors of the Sudanese society.

The longest government was the period of the military dictatorship Omar al-Bashir (1989-2019). This military government suspended the military parties and introduced an Islamic legal code on the national level. He took the executive and legislative power and commanded executions in the upper ranks of the army; imprisonment of leading political figures and journalists were the first stages of a period where citizens lived with few freedoms and without basic human rights. (Britannica, Omar al-Bashir biography)

In 2019 the revolution against the dictatorship Omar al-Bashir provided hope to the Sudanese society which aims for a civil government. Actually, the debt relief mentioned before came during the transition process after this revolution, where all the hopes from Sudanese civilians were deposited. (IMF, Report 2022)

Since the Independence on the 1st of January 1956 from the British, Sudan has been trying to develop a political and economic system finding a lot of difficulties due to external countries pressures and internal problems dealing with the different picture of Sudanese society in each region. After this, different coup d'état and two bloody civil wars (1955-1972 and 1983-2005) between north-south have taken place in the country. The independence of South Sudan, (where the main oil resources were) in 2011 was a blow to the economy. We are not going to focus on the entire Sudanese history because it is not the intention of our research, but all background conflicts would help us to better understand the current conflict. Sudan is a

country that is yet looking for an identity where all the actors are involved and feel themselves represented. For instance, related to racism, during British colonial times, slave traders in Sudan were doing a huge business capturing people from the modern-day Sudanese areas of Blue Nile and the Nuba Mountains, as well as South Sudan and Ethiopia's Oromia region. This is one of the symptoms of the split society that is seen nowadays in Sudan.

Regarding Sudanese society it is also important to mention the conflict between Arabs and Africans. "Sudan has always been dominated by a light-skinned, Arabic-speaking elite, while black Africans in the south and west of the country have faced discrimination and marginalization." was written by Zeinab Mohammed Salih's 'Viewpoint from Sudan – where black people are called slaves' on the BBC. In this article it is explained how even in some newspapers it is common to publish racial slurs.

The revolution in 2019 gave the society hopes of a Sudan with more freedom and rights as was related with the Arab Spring. "Nonetheless, the revolution and unseating al-Bashir was not enough to banish racism, and attitudes persisted, especially in the absence of any law-making by the transitional government to criminalize racism; nor attempts to review, for instance, civil service employment criteria through an equitable nationwide system. Systematic discrimination has continued in this permissive legal vacuum." stated the Waged Peace Report of June 2022. (BBC, Viewpoint of Sudan)

This led to the formation of a Transitional Government in September 2019 that carried out ambitious economic and social reforms and engaged in peace negotiations with armed groups to address conflicts and grievances across the country. This led to the signing of the Juba Peace Agreement with nearly all armed opposition groups in October 2020. (Worldbank, Sudan overview) Moreover, during the year 2020 the crisis of COVID19 pandemic affected the economy of the country in a negative way. On the 25th of October of 2021 there was a military coup where the prime minister Abdalla Hamdok and various political leaders were arrested. The hitherto leader of the sovereign council lieutenant-colonel Abdel Fattah Abdelrahman Burhan declared the dissolution of the government and a state of emergency. UNDP (HDI report 2022)

The Sudanese society felt betrayed, and demonstrations took place all around the country, mainly in Khartoum. More than 60 weeks of violence in the street, after this coup the uncertainty still grips the country with the military in power and weekly demonstrations by the civil society without any agreement and even more splitting among both groups. UNDP (HDI report 2022)

In December 2022, a Political Framework Agreement (PFA) was signed, between the military and number of political parties, in an attempt to relaunch the country's transition to civilian government in two years. A second phase of the political process was launched in January 2023, aim at reaching consensus on key issues and inviting non-signatories to join the

process, by the end of which an agreement would be signed marking the beginning of a new transitional period. (Worldbank, Sudan overview)

In this context of political uncertainty, rates of poverty have increased, unemployment also has risen, and the security of the country has been harmed.

"While the central government dominates official tax collection, a wide range of taxes exist throughout the country as people and regions have learned to get by in the face of unreliable fiscal transfers from the center. West Darfur's unofficial tax and fee system likely differs widely from Red Sea State's." so it's difficult to explain a concrete stream of measures in this field. We can only highlight the centralization of the economy of the country into Khartoum, the capital, where the company of our study is located. (Benson, M & Makawa, R, 2022)

This situation looks unsustainable but Sudanese society is trying to move forward, some of them with two jobs at a time, reducing the meals per day or being part of the informal economy.

During those past years, the employees of C-Hub said that, they had to deal with blackouts, violent demonstrations close by, apart from the individual issues. Some of them even left the country, which makes it even more difficult to build a completely engaged team for several years to continue with projects with the same people.

The difficult entrepreneurship environment in Sudan due to political instability presents significant challenges to entrepreneurs seeking to start and grow their businesses. The constant changes in the political landscape, coupled with economic sanctions and limited access to funding, make it difficult for entrepreneurs to establish a stable and sustainable business environment. (Kumar & Vetrivel, 2019)

Additionally, the lack of a supportive legal and regulatory framework, as well as limited infrastructure, further exacerbates the challenges faced by entrepreneurs in Sudan. As a result, it is imperative for policymakers and stakeholders to prioritize the creation of a stable political environment and implement policies and programs that support entrepreneurship development, including providing access to funding, establishing a supportive legal framework, and improving infrastructure. (Abdelmotalab, 2021)

In conclusion, the non-conducive business policies and the political situation of the country is still a big challenge for the economic activity, including every economic sector, and harming the development of a bright future for the youth. Here is where C-Hub is willing to take part it, by supporting young entrepreneurs in Khartoum.

3.3 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN SUDAN

Regarding the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), Sudan´s performance in most of them is considerably low. According to the Sustainable Development Report 2022 Sudan is ranked 159 out of 163 countries, South Sudan is number 163. With this negative overall performance,

we should also consider the difficulties to get real data on the country since the revolution (2019).

The SDG related to C-Hub activity is mainly number 8, Decent Work and Economic Growth. In more concrete terms, we can highlight the following targets that are related with the company's activity. The target 8.2 (Diversify, innovate and upgrade for economic productivity) includes the technological upgrading that C-Hub is aiming to provide to the entrepreneurship environment. Entrepreneurship is a way of diversifying the economy through innovative ideas that are not in the market. The collaboration with different international cooperation agencies we support the target 8.3 (Promote policies to support job creation and growing enterprises). The decent job creation is a key point for the country's development and the lack of employment in the youth has been one of the main reasons for C-Hub creation. As the First Incubator linked with a university in The Sudan, the opportunities of access to financial services through cooperation programs is higher than individuals have by themselves. C-Hub is a platform for connecting students with difficult situations with public or private institutions. The target 8.5 is about full employment and decent work with equal pay. The company hosted a program including young women with disabilities as their vulnerable situation makes them victims of a system with unequal access to work to this minority. Target 8.6 is oriented to promote youth employment, education and training, which is linked with all the activities that the company does thanks to being linked to the CCST. Trainings and workshops provided are directly focused on the youth. In C-Hub labour rights are protected and the work environment is safe and secure. Some of the employees are migrants and woman which according to target 8.8 have to be particularly taken into account as tend to be the most vulnerable individuals. As a non-profit company, our social orientation in our activity of promoting entrepreneurship is absolutely aligned with the SDGs.

The specific goals outlined within this SDG include achieving higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading, and innovation, promoting development-oriented policies that support job creation, entrepreneurship, and the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises, and striving for full and productive employment, decent work, and equal pay for all individuals, including women, men, young people, and persons with disabilities. The Programs and Workshops hosted by C-Hub directly align with these goals, which explains why the organization is collaborating with International Cooperation Agencies. To be more concrete the last Project (*She Designs*) funded by AICS includes all of these aspects. Additionally, the company emphasizes the concept of Social Cohesion, which is derived from the principles of Decent Work and Economic Growth, as C-Hub aims to foster these ideals in Sudan. Overall, C-Hub's activities and collaborations are strategically geared towards contributing to the achievement of SDG 8 and promoting inclusive and sustainable economic development.

The rest of the SDGs analysis related with this project are explained in the Annex II.

3.3.1 Internal framework

3.3.1.1   What is C-Hub? Where is it?

C-Hub is a non-profit social enterprise established by Comboni College of Science and Technology (CCST), a university college approved by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research of Sudan in 2001. The project started as a College center under the name of Comboni Innovation and Entrepreneurship Center (CIEC) in 2019 and was recently registered as C-Hub Company Limited by Guarantee. This ICT based Start-ups Incubator aims to support the creation of companies by young entrepreneurs in order to foster sustainability and community development by providing potential entrepreneurs with knowledge, co-working spaces and networking opportunities; in short, what they need to shape, implement, sustain and grow their business idea.

C-Hub provides services to young entrepreneurs in Sudan and aims to be a key player in supporting the Sudanese entrepreneurial ecosystem in its three major stages: Pre-Incubation, Incubation and Acceleration. The center provides training in each of them, start-ups business mentoring, incubation services and, on the longer term, acceleration services and opportunities to access capital for the early stages.

It is located in Khartoum, Sudan, as part of the Comboni mission. To understand C-Hub first it is important to know about CCST. About its historical background, as it is explained in College website by November 2022, Saint Daniel Comboni (1831-1881) was a holy priest who sacrificed his life for the good of Sudanese people in the XIX century and the first Catholic Bishop of Khartoum. He believed that Africa was to be regenerated through Africans. But this motto could just become a reality if those Africans were educated. At the beginning of the XX century, his followers founded a Religious Institute made up of Priests and consecrated Brothers who arrived in Sudan to continue Comboni´s work. Education became their main commitment in the country. In 1929 they founded a school, which was called "Comboni College Khartoum (CCK)". The mission of Comboni College of Science and Technology is an international educational community that aims at fostering an inclusive society in which every member contributes to the common good through his/her scientific skills and personal commitment and values. The vision of CCST is a Sudanese and international educational community that considers every human being as a free person capable of building his/her own history, oriented towards excellency, both spiritually and professionally. CCST considers diversity, either ethnic, cultural or religious, as a treasure that enriches the other and opens the mind and the heart. It is a school of collaboration, mutual understanding and scientific research where everyone is called to be "Always More Always Better". (CCST website, 2022)

To keep the mission, vision and values in C-Hub the two partners who own the company are CCST and the Comboni College Khartoum Secondary School. C-Hub is located next to the CCST, which makes it accessible for the students at the College to bring their business ideas inside and to feel that they can be part of it.

3.3.1.2   The emergence of C-Hub

In 2017, after the congress "Innovation in Society and Enhancement of Human Capital: challenges and perspectives for Sudan in the International Scenario" and as a result of the Study of the Labor Market in Sudan, CCST Principal Fr. Jorge Naranjo came out with the necessity of having an Incubator of Digital Start-ups as a continuation of INSO (Innovation in Society) program.

The main problems addressed by labor market studies in Sudan were the following interrelated elements: the dominance of public sector in total employment; the demographic structure and the description of the economic activities of Sudanese people; the problems related to low skill level and brain drain; the phenomenon of youth unemployment; the mismatch between the educational output and the labor market. (Naranjo, 2017)

According to this environment an Incubator of Technological Start-ups was envisioned as the solution of the problems that the Sudanese youth and, in more concrete terms, the CCST students were facing those days. It was the first Incubator linked to a University in Sudan.

From the project proposal of the INSO program we can find the following objectives:

➢ To provide innovative formation for young entrepreneurs who want to develop their own business initiatives.
➢ To consolidate the students' academic formation in order to facilitate their integration into the labor market.
➢ To provide business tools to young entrepreneurs through mentoring and training programs.
➢ To offer entrepreneurs a suitable space to develop their creativity and business ideas.

The mission of the CEIC is an incubator associated with CCST that supports the creation of micro-companies by young entrepreneurs with the goal of fostering sustainable and community development. The vision, CEIC intends to promote peace building and social inclusion through community development of university students and graduates particularly from peripheral and marginalized areas. Values and purpose include social cohesion and integration through human capital enhancement. Diminish unemployment and generate local sustainable development. To propose a concept of entrepreneurship that considers the social and environmental impact of the entrepreneurial activity and is inspired by Circular Economy models and to add a value proposition to the CCST. (Naranjo, 2019)

3.3.1.3   Financing Structure

According to the first proposal the budgeted running expenses can be found in the table below.

Table 1: First Budgeted Running Expenses in the project Source: C-Hub Internal Documentation

RUNNING EXPENSES	Monthly amount	Total per year
Salaries		
Incubator Coordinator - Full time work	12.000,00	144.000,00
Incubator Secretary - Full time Work	10.000,00	120.000,00
Part timers (legal consultancy, lecturers, coaches...)		140.000,00
Part time cleaners and cleaning materials	2.500,00	30.000,00
Upkeeping		
Electricity	3.000,00	36.000,00
Internet + Telephone	3.200,00	38.400,00
Maintenance of the premises and equipments, lamps,..	2.000,00	24.000,00
Water	500,00	6.000,00
Supplies		
Office Material	800,00	9.600,00
Services (tea, water,...)	500,00	6.000,00
Activities		-
Events organization	4.000,00	48.000,00
TOTAL		**602.000,00 SDG**

[1]

The reality during the following years has been that the Incubator is financially depending on the College, it means that the Incubator's financial resources and funding rely on the support and financial backing provided by the College. This shows that the College plays a crucial role in sustaining the operations and activities of the Incubator by providing the necessary financial resources to keep it running. There are not enough constant monthly revenues to cope with the expenses. So, nowadays C-Hub is in debt with the college to attend the payments because of its lack of liquidity.

Moreover, the constant increase in prices (mainly in electricity and Internet) makes more difficult to budget the expenses for a year. One of the important things about income from C-Hub is that revenues are always charge in a different currency than SDG (EUR, USD or CHF) even if they come from projects or from the members (the current price is 25$/month). This protects the company from the currency constant devaluation.

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[1] Thousand separations used (.) and decimal separations (,). Numeric format according to C-Hub Internal Data

Table 2 Running Expenses Estimation Source: Self-made

RUNNING EXPENSES ESTIMATION	
A) Salaries (1+2+3+4+5+6+7+8+9)	**260.000SDG**
1. Director	-
2. Team Leader	60.000SDG
3. Community Manager	52.000SDG
4. Project Manager	52.000SDG
5. Volunteers (Transport allowance)	20.000SDG
6. Cleaner (3 days/week)	12.000SDG
7. Watchmen (contribution)	16.000SDG
8. Social Insurance + Income Tax	48.000SDG
9. Part timers (legal consultancy, lecturers, coaches, trainers, contribution to interns...)	-
B) Up Keeping (10+11+12+13)	**155.000SDG**
10. Electricity and water	20.000SDG
11. Internet + Telephone	75.000SDG
12. Maintenance of premises equipment (lamps, furniture...)	40.000SDG
13. Contribution to taxes (garbage, sewage...)	20.000SDG
C) Supplies (14+15+16)	**30.000SDG**
14. Office Material, Stationeries	10.000SDG
15. Services (tea, water...)	15.000SDG
16. Cleaning materials	5.000SDG
D) Activities (17+18)	**20.000SDG**
17. Workshops and Events	20.000SDG
18. Marketing	-
TOTAL EXPENSES (A+B+C+D)	**465.000SDG**
Estimation in EURO (1€ = 590SDG)	788,14 € [2]

With the information received from the Financial Officer, David Emmanuel, this estimation has been made according to previous monthly expenses. By acknowledging that certain aspects such as the Director's Salary, Part-timers' Salary, and Marketing were not included in the total expenses, it implies that the current calculation does not provide a realistic picture of the financial requirements. To address this, we find necessary making an estimation of 870€/month to provide a more accurate assessment of the expenses. Additionally, we need to consider the fluctuating economic conditions and potential impact on expenses. While the estimated monthly income may serve as a starting point for determining self-sustainability

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[2] Thousand separations used (.) and decimal separations (,). Numeric format according to C-Hub Internal Data

and approaching potential sponsors, it's important to recognize that this number should not be considered a constant due to external factors affecting the currency devaluation and rising prices.

The importance of considering these additional expenses, adjusting for economic fluctuations, and presenting a more accurate estimation of the minimum monthly income is needed to reduce dependence on CCST loans and attract future sponsorship.

3.3.1.4   Organizational Structure and its Impact

C-Hub founding shareholders are the Comboni College of Science and Technology and the Comboni Secondary School. This partnership was made to keep the social values of the incubator, its mission and vision.

The Board of Directors has been chaired by Fr. Jorge Naranjo, CCST Principal, since CEIC was created. Nowadays Ihab Shoully is the Director of the company, Cliff Levain is the Executive Manager, Israa Abdullah is the Program Manager and David Emmanuel is the Financial Officer. Due to the limited financial resources, there has not been the possibility of hiring a Community Manager to complete the desired team.

According to the first set of documents that described the strategy, the permanent staff were planned to be a team formed by a Coordinator and a Secretary, who evolved into Director and Community Manager. The plan was that both would be full time employees in charge of organizing the activities and preparing every 2 months operating reports for the Principal of CCST. These reports provide a summary of the operational and financial characteristics of each tenant and the incubator itself. Careful review by the General Administrator of the College and its Financial Board and its confrontation with the original business plans should be the basis for discussions about potential corrective actions. Yearly reports would also be shared with eventual shareholders and donors. This team was to be supported by part timers as consultants or lecturers. After the initial activities, the conclusion was a need to enlarge the team to handle the tasks, at least one more employee needed to be added.

On the basis of the Sudanese law, the Director of the Company always has to be a Sudanese national, a post currently held by Director Ihab Shoully who happens to be residing in Tanzania. He is therefore not working in person in C-Hub all the time. This is a problem in terms of team leadership. This has led to the de-motivation of the team and visible dis-engagement. The Program Manager, Israa is not at the C-Hub premises on daily basis even though the Incubation Program of She Design was still running. The overdependence on individuals, lack of direct delegation of responsibilities and low grades of internal communication culture decreases the commitment of the employees. This general unsupervised environment generated by absenteeism of persons in charge affects the entire work environment.

This vertical structure provides a clear hierarchical chain of command, with well-defined reporting relationships. This can lead to efficient decision-making and accountability as employees know who they report to and who is responsible for making key decisions. Often,

this type of hierarchy facilitate specialization, where employees can focus on specific roles or functions within the organization. This can lead to increased expertise and efficiency in specific areas. However, it may also result in silos and limited cross-functional collaboration, as employees do not interact with others at all whiles doing their job.

In a small team, like C-Hub, good communication and in person meetings are key points for creating a healthy environment in the workplace. Additionally, collaborative environment tends to make everyone feel important and motivated. The organizational culture does not support this type of environment, which may be due to the vertical structure or the current situation of employees.
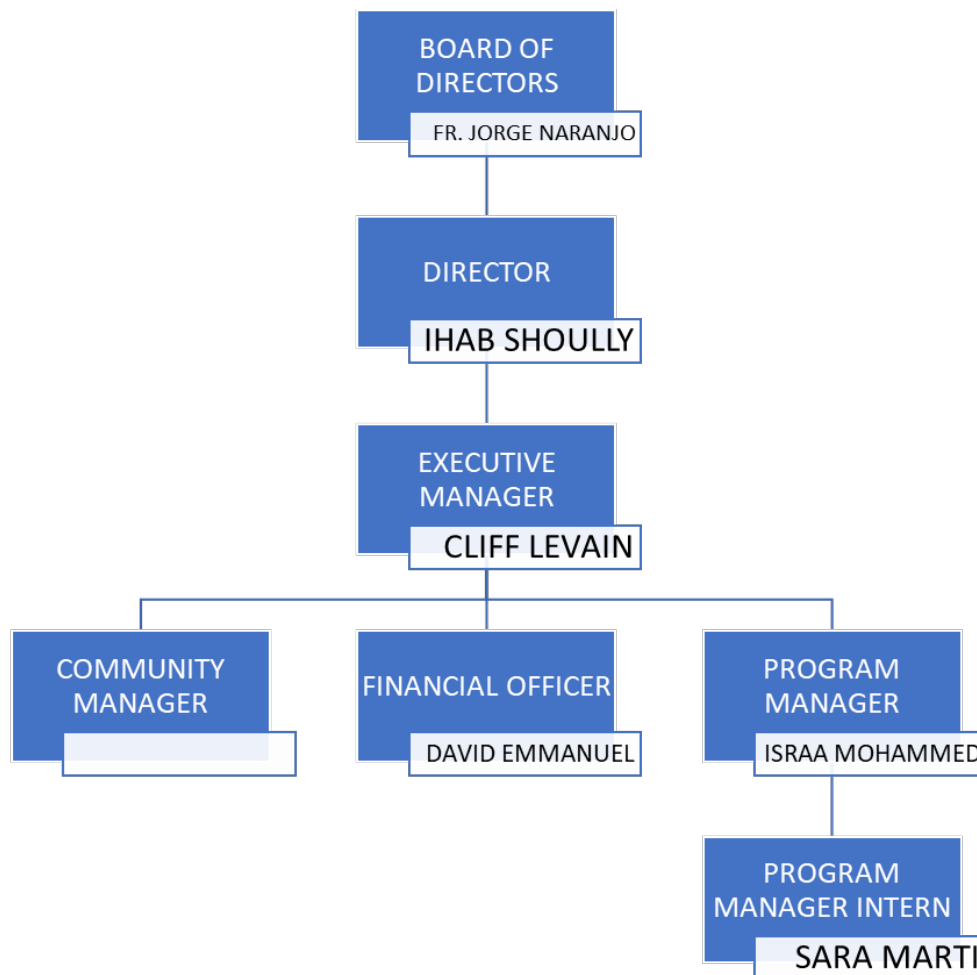
Figure 5: Organizational Chart during September to December 2022. Source: Self-made

3.3.1.5 Initial Strategy of the Company

The thesis writer was granted access to an internal document shared by Fr. Jorge Naranjo which describes the whole project proposal and the initial activities planned for the first 3 years. The plan was to offer a training program in three phases: Pre-incubation (Stand Up), Incubation (Start Up) and Acceleration (Scale Up). The Pre-incubation program consisted of

two modules, Business formation and Stand Up. This first Business formation was free for the CCST students and graduates from previous years. The first beneficiaries of this program were planned to be the 110 yearly graduates of the BSc in Computer Science and the 3-year Diplomas in Information Technology-Accounting and Management.

CEIC was created to support technical oriented projects, which seek real problem solutions and with an economic-social-environmental impact.

On its first Strategy, the company had the previous general objectives that were mentioned from the INSO project, and the impact of the incubator was to be measured by the following indicators:

- ➢ Enterprises created.
- ➢ Survival rate of enterprises.
- ➢ Jobs generated (3 years).
- ➢ Entrepreneurs reached.
- ➢ Replication of "pilot" model
- ➢ Extra-curricular' activities

There were no enterprises created, so the survival rate is not relevant but according to the job generated, in C-Hub there were the following employees: Musa Ali, Ahmed Ali Mekki, Ihab Shoully, Cliff Levai, Israa Mohammed, Susan Keji, David Emmanuel and Sweet Johannes.

The "pilot" model of Pre-Incubation, Incubation and Acceleration has never been fully developed with one start-up, but some extracurricular activities took place such as the Pre-hackathon and Hackathon of the Inclusive Female Graphic Design program funded by AICS (*She Designs*) or Workshops.

3.3.1.6   Summary of the development of its activity from 2019 to 2022

The CIEC value proposal was to support tech projects with these three characteristics: economically viable, socially responsible, and environmentally friendly.

In 2019, in collaboration with Haggar Holding and with the sponsorship of JTI (Japan Tobacco International), the pre-incubation program starts. The Program Director is Musa Ali and the deputy Ahmed Ali Mekki. Workshops took place in the center.

During 2020, the Program Director is Ihab Shoully. Despite of the challenges presented by the COVID lockdown and the revolution, CIEC supports young App developers to introduce their applications in the digital market.

In 2021, the second floor will be built with the support of the Ballano family. CIEC is registered as a Limited Company by Guarantee under the name of C-Hub. The coup on 25 of October forced C-Hub to be closed for 2 months.

Program about Inclusive Entrepreneurship in Graphic Design took place in 2022. The funds were given by AICS with 3 parts: Pre-hackathon, Hackathon and Incubation Program. Internal evaluation about *She Designs* brings conclusions about the necessary strategy change of C-Hub after 4 years without being self-sustainable that will be developed below in this document.

Year 2023 is expected to be crucial in C-Hub's activity. A project, initially called Degrapro, is going to be funded by the Swiss Cooperation. This project is planned to be the key point for self-sustainability. It consists in generating agreements with companies to provide solutions by the students who are doing their Final Projects in CCST. It is budgeted to generate enough revenues to keep working on it for the following years.

2017– INSO PROJECT

After the congress "INNOVATION IN SOCIETY AND ENHANCEMENT OF HUMAN CAPITAL: CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES FOR SUDAN IN THE INTERNATIONAL SCENARIO" and as a result of the study of the labour market in Sudan CCST Principal Jorge Naranjo comes out with the necessity of having an Incubator of Digital Start-ups as a continuation of INSO program.

2018 – CIEC

The Comboni Innovation and Entrepreneurship Center was founded. Feasibility study to support the development of IT based social Start-ups articulated in 3 stages: pre-incubation, incubation and acceleration by Sudanese and refugee young people with the cooperation of Meridies UPV students.

2019 – Pre-incubation

In collaboration with Haggar Holding and with the sponsorship of JTI, the pre-incubation programs starts. The Program Director is Musa Ali and the deputy Ahmed Ali Mekki. Workshops took place in the center. The revolution against al-Bashir brings economic inestability to the country.

2020 – App Developers Incubation

In spite of the challenges presented by the COVID lockdown and the revolution, CIEC supports young App developers to introduce their applications in the digital market. The Program Director is Ihab Shoully.

2021 – C-Hub

Second floor is build with the support of Ballano family. CIEC is registered as a Limited Company by Guarantee under the name of Chub. The coup on 25 of October forces C-Hub to be closed by 2 months.

2022 – She Designs

Programme about Inclusive Entrepreneurship in Graphic Design funds given by AICS with 3 parts: Pre-hackathon, Hackathon and Incubation Programme. Evaluation brings conclusions about the necessary strategy change of C-Hub after 4 years without revenue.

2023 – DEGRAPRO

Strategy change with a new project which will bring contracts to the C-Hub from companies that will serve as final projects for some of the students of CCST.
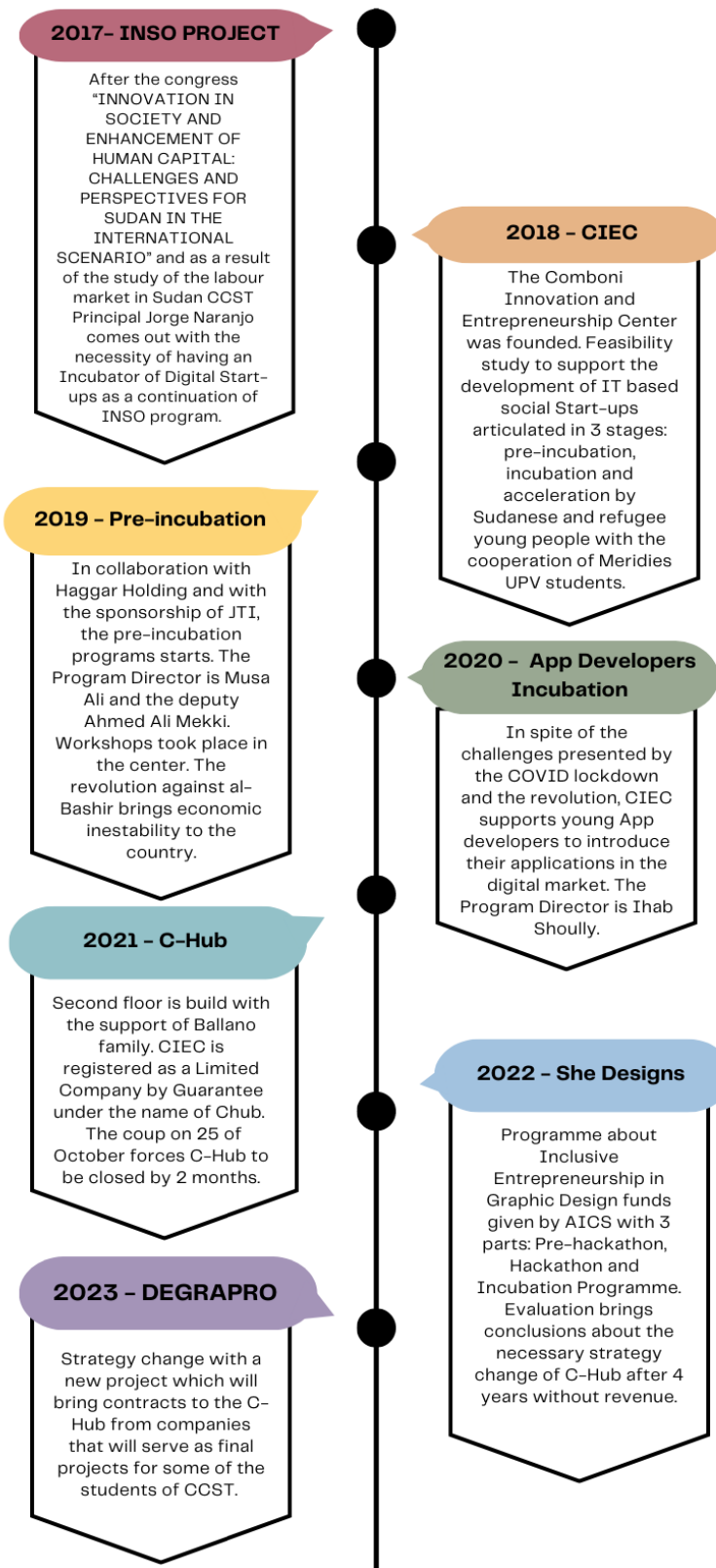
Figure 6: Timeline of Chronological Milestones of the Company. Source: Self-made

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3.3.1.7   Summary of the last project hosted by C-Hub

The proposal of the last project that finally took place in C-Hub during 2022 could be summarized in the following way.

This C-Hub project, "Inclusive Women Entrepreneurship: Graphic Design Incubation Program" aims to provide new opportunities for young female Graphic Design entrepreneurs with priority to candidates with disability or who come from displaced or refugee families from the outskirts of the metropolitan area of Khartoum-Bahri-Omdurman. Our understanding as an Incubation Center is that it is equally important to foster sustainable development as to build social cohesion.

The proposal was to launch a six-month incubation program that offers practical, real-world exercise for 20 female young entrepreneurs interested in starting and developing ventures combining art and technology. The target would be females with a design background and Digital Artists interested in developing an innovative Start-up idea as Graphic Designers at C-Hub, to provide employment opportunities and to reinforce leadership skills in the art community.

The reason of this Project became after studying the Sudanese market, the different government initiatives to introduce e-government and the important role of visual artistry now on the one hand, and the difficulties young entrepreneurs face to start their business on the other hand, we have come to acknowledge the lack of opportunities and resources for female graphic designers. As a center that focuses mainly on supporting digital entrepreneurs and aims to build social cohesion, we consider that is part of our mission to empower female digital designers and disabled, displaced or refugee women.

The execution strategy consisted of 6 stages that shall provide high quality entrepreneurial support. It was planned to be the following program:

    1) Management Preparation and Strategic Consultancy

    2) Space and Smart Technology Services Preparation

    3) Offline Promotion & Online Ideas Registration Platform

    4) Hackathon

    5) Incubation Content Design & Project Activities

    6) Arts in Media Event

The selection criteria included:

    a) Female applicants with artistic skills and a Graphic Design background interested in developing a Start-up business in the field of Digital Media.

b) Female applicants from inside and outside Comboni College of Science and Technology (CCST) with different nationalities, religious and cultural backgrounds with priority for candidates with a disability compatible with the characteristics of the training program and from the displaced and refugee community.

c) Creative, simple and realistic Start-up ideas (ideas that are of good service to the community and that may generate employment opportunities are preferred).

d) Committed and available to enroll in the program for its full duration.

Between the start of the Management Preparation and Strategic Consultancy and the Project Closure was planned to be 12 months. The total budget estimated for the program was 38,694€ and the real expenses were 35,846.61€.

Regarding the expected results through the empowerment of a group of women entrepreneurs and their new start-ups, the project will contribute to:

➢ give visibility to Sudan's digital representation.

➢ grow the national GDP and support innovation.

➢ promote gender equality and inclusivity of disabled women and of women from refugee families.

➢ build social cohesion through the integration and empowerment of women from displaced families.

This is what was proposed to the AICS to get the funds. The evaluation of this project is a part of our proposal for the Strategic Change.

4 PROPOSAL

The purpose of this Strategic Plan is to provide a roadmap for achieving the goals and objectives of our organization over the next few years. This plan is the result of a comprehensive analysis of our internal and external environment, including our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Our organization is committed to creating a sustainable and successful future by leveraging our strengths, addressing our weaknesses, capitalizing on opportunities, and mitigating threats. This plan outlines our vision, mission, and values, as well as our key strategic initiatives, goals, and action plans. It will guide our decision-making and resource allocation and ensure that we remain focused on achieving our desired outcomes. The complete Plan could be found in the Annex III.

4.1 SWOT ANALYSIS

A SWOT Analysis of C-Hub was conducted to decide the strategic approach according to the strengths and weaknesses of the company and the opportunities and threats in the Sudanese environment.

Let us start with the strengths of C-Hub. As the company is linked to CCST, it could benefit from the experience of running a big organization in terms of management. Moreover, contacts from alumni of the College or previous partnerships could open the door for C-Hub sponsorships as Japan Tobacco International (JTI) did in the past. Big companies in Sudan are also interested in Social Company Responsibility and support in different fields can be offered (voluntary trainings, mentorship, or direct investment). In August 2021, the co-working space was inaugurated so the new facilities make C-Hub an attractive place to go working for freelancers and entrepreneurs. Members are young people with interesting and ambitious life projects which make the environment inspiring and motivating. There is Internet, new office tables and chairs, meeting room, a small kitchen with tea and coffee. All those things are offered at an affordable price (25$/monthly membership) which makes possible to have a good number of members to create the desirable environment.

On the other side we have identified some C-Hub weaknesses. The team has little experience running companies and they are young. This also means that the rotation is high without being able to build an engaged complete team for years. Even though there are around 200 students graduating per year, usually the graduation projects are made by teams and only a few numbers of them are ready to be considered as a startup. One of the biggest weaknesses as a company has been the lack of profit generated. It could be related both to costs exceeding and revenues generated. The dependence on CCST has made the liabilities keep increasing and the hosted programs are not enough to have liquidity to pay monthly expenses such as Internet Connection or electricity.

Regarding the C-Hub environment we can identify an Entrepreneurship oriented aid from the International Cooperation agencies which gives the company a perfect place to host Programs and receive funds to do so. One of the biggest opportunities is that C-Hub is the

first Technological Incubator linked into a College in Sudan which provides direct link with students, something that the organizations consider looking for collaborations. Even more, there are few Technological Incubators in Sudan, so the market share is split among few actors nowadays.

Finally, the threats identified are related to the political and economic instability of the country that has been explained with more detail above. The demonstrations close to the hub sometimes make the place difficult to reach as it's the city center. Also, the refugee students plan to go back home, as when the student permit is over it is not easy to stay as an entrepreneur in Sudan due to the residence permit, the increasing costs of living and business creation. Is more usual for the students to try to look for a job instead of being full time startup oriented.

Strenghts

- CCST experience, contacts & partnerships
- New facilities, good co-working space
- Young and supportive environment in C-Hub
- Affordable prices

Weaknesess

- Lack of business experience, young team
- Not enough engaged team
- Few number of graduation projects per year
- Not enough revenues generated

SWOT

Opportunities

- Funds from International Agencies to support entrepreneurship innitiatives in Sudan
- Few Technological Incubators

Threats

- Political and economical innestability
- Lack of long-term students commitment after graduation

Figure 7: SWOT Analysis. Source: Self-made

4.2   JOB ANALYSIS

As the company plans to build a stable project for the next four years, building a team with shared responsibilities is necessary for achieving the strategic goals. That is why the description of each actor in the company is required also to identify the skills needed on each position to make easier the hiring process of a new role. The lack of engagement n of the staff has been identified as a weakness, that is why this analysis take place to redefine the different roles and responsibilities.

4.2.1 Board of Directors

They are the owners of the company. They should provide a clear strategy for the company and try to anticipate changes in the environment of Sudan. The Board of Directors will choose a Director according to the expected activities that are going to be developed in C-Hub. The contract of the Director should not be less than 4 years and there should be an agreement about the strategy provided. The Board of Directors provide the guide to follow to the Director, but the main decisions are going to be delegated to them. They make decisions about the partnerships offered by the Director according to St. Daniel Comboni values. A representative of the Board of Directors has been chosen to have meetings every two months with the Director and Executive Manager.

4.2.2 Director

Links the Boards of Directors with the daily activity of the company. This person receives reports from the executive manager every two weeks, and it is in permanent contact with him/she. Reports to the Board of Directors every 2 months with the help of the 2-week reports of the Executive Manager. Is someone committed with the Comboni values whose intention is to make visibility of the C-Hub mission to get partnerships with key actors in the country's economy. S/he should be able to help with its networking contacts to provide opportunities for C-Hub hosting workshops and events. Its main responsibility is to keep the actions of C-Hub aligned with the strategy and make any changes when needed. Is someone with entrepreneurship skills, confident and an innovator who inspires the community to be encouraged to be an entrepreneur. This person should find partnership with national and international organizations to have project proposals that the Program Manager will completely fill.

4.2.3 Executive Manager

Is someone with leadership skills who brings together as a team the persons who report on him/her (PM, CM, FO). Is responsible for keeping the team engaged and is who is able to demand of them to keep their performances as expected. Keeping the work challenging to each component of the team is its job, as well as giving a right balance of responsibilities and workload for everyone. They have weekly meetings with the whole team, as well as individual ones. Communication with him/her should be easy so it is important to be present every day. As a leader, is the behavioral example for everyone in C-Hub. This person should report every two weeks to the director, having a face-to-face meeting. Moreover, monthly reports will be provided to the Director and the rest of the company in order to share how everything is working and also to give recognition to the good actions and drive improvements for the future. Is someone capable of making day-to-day decisions, even more complex decisions about projects but communications should be fluent with the Director and the Board of Directors to do so. Every decision should be aligned with the C-Hub strategy, not for one's own benefit.

4.2.4 Program Manager

Is the person responsible for all the current and future projects of the company. Is someone able to write project proposals aligned with the vision of C-Hub. The follow- up of the projects is its daily job, is the person in charge of keeping the values of the company as the horizon to reach. Moreover, the program manager should always be creative in his proposals to provide opportunities to the community. The program manager should write reports on the projects weekly to the executive manager. IT skills are expected as the projects should be Technological oriented. Is able to communicate fluently in Arabic and English. Is someone eager to learn, with effort capacity in over workload moments, teamwork skills and self-sufficient are expected. Organization and responsibility to reach the deadlines are also meant to be adjectives of this person.

4.2.5 Community Manager

The person who has to engage the Community of C-Hub should be someone who knows the environment of CCST and is interested in entrepreneurship. Is someone with great communication skills, motivated by the projects and fully engaged with the development of the community. Graphic and visual design skills are needed. The community manager will be responsible for every way of communication the company has with the external actors (website, social media, posters…). Is giving visibility to the company and organizing workshops and courses that will bring benefits for the company attending the estimated budget by the financial officer. The main ability should be proactiveness and will try to make the most profitable things with the company's money. They should work with the program manager every day to know how the projects are developing and giving visibility to the community that is creating.

4.2.6 Financial Officer

Is the person responsible for the accounting of the company. Gives the information daily to the executive manager to keep him/her updated on the needs of C-Hub. The financial officer is the one making the payments and the charges, after consulting the executive manager. According to the previous months and with the information of the program manager about the following months can make a budget plan. This plan should be annually, quarterly, and monthly checked to make changes in the future estimations to prevent a lack of liquidity and avoid suspension of payments. The financial officer is responsible for making the company able to attend to its liabilities always on time.

4.2.7 Interns

Depending on the necessities and the partnerships with universities C-Hub can host interns in the field needed. The internship will last a minimum of 3 months and will give support mainly in one area, although he/she can help in different actions. Giving support to the CM and the PM would be the main responsibility. It should be someone always available, motivated and

with the ability to change. Active listening and fast learning skills would be highly appreciated to be integrated as fast as possible in the community.

This is the organizational chart desired for C-Hub, the hierarchy is clearly seen among the individuals described above.
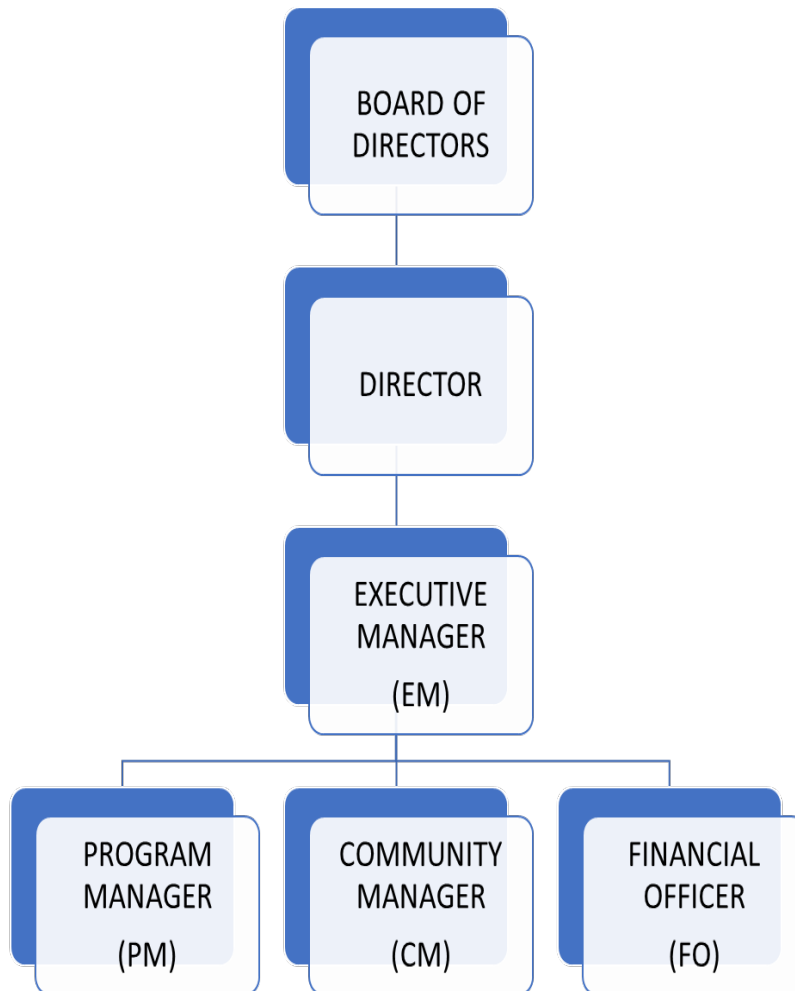

Figure 8: Desired Organizational Chart of C-Hub. Source: Self-made

The necessary skills needed by the team members are described in the following figure.
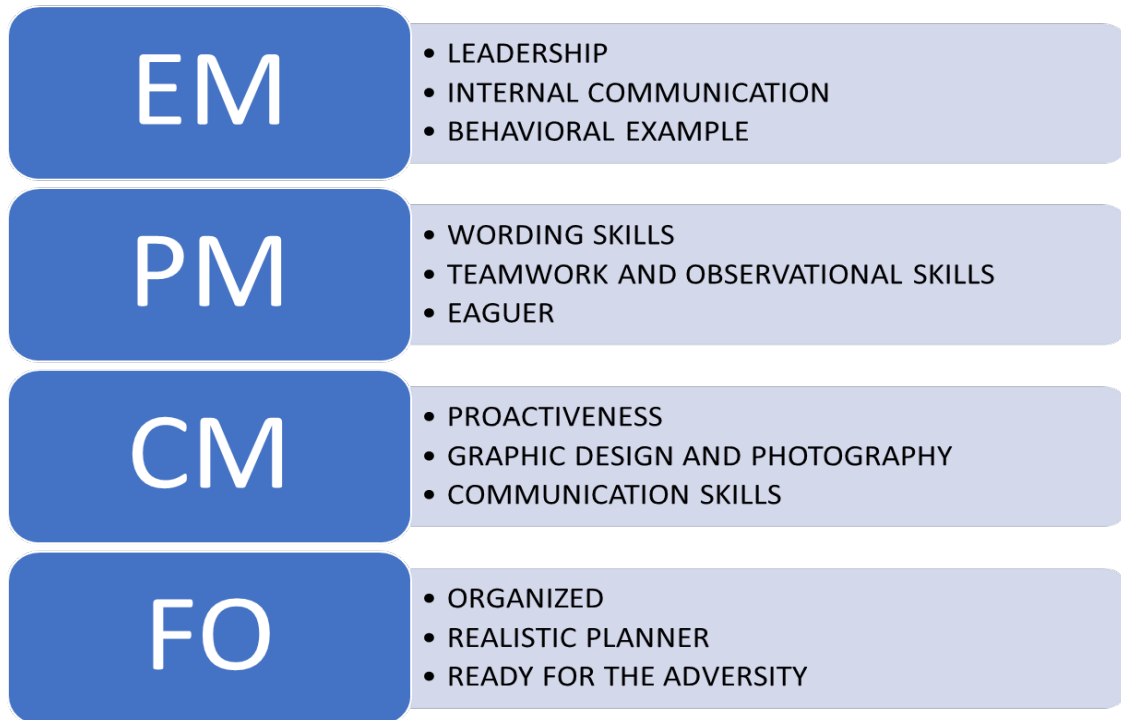

EM
- LEADERSHIP
- INTERNAL COMMUNICATION
- BEHAVIORAL EXAMPLE

PM
- WORDING SKILLS
- TEAMWORK AND OBSERVATIONAL SKILLS
- EAGUER

CM
- PROACTIVENESS
- GRAPHIC DESIGN AND PHOTOGRAPHY
- COMMUNICATION SKILLS

FO
- ORGANIZED
- REALISTIC PLANNER
- READY FOR THE ADVERSITY

Figure 9: Summary of necessary skills of C-Hub team. Source: Self-made

4.3   EVALUATION OF *SHE DESIGNS*

The main purpose of this evaluation is both to analyze the grade of accomplishment of the Graphic Designers Incubation Program and to analyze its impact on the women who participated in it. The methodology used for this analysis consists of combining quantitative and qualitative tools of evaluation involving the actors who took part in the program.

The 20 incubates were selected after a Pre-hackathon and a Hackathon and entered the 2-months Incubation Program with two weekly sessions where different courses took place. The program concluded on the 1st of November with the Arts in Media Event, where the participants presented their projects.

At this point it is worth recalling the objectives of the project on its initial stage: *"Through the empowerment of a group of women entrepreneurs and their new start-ups, the project will contribute to:*

- *give visibility to Sudan's digital representation.*
- *grow the national GDP and support innovation.*
- *promote gender equality and inclusivity of women with disability women and of women from refugee families.*
- *build social cohesion through the integration and empowerment of women from displaced families."*

Moreover, the main objective of the program was that it *"aims to provide new opportunities for young female Graphic Design entrepreneurs with particular priority to candidates with disability or who come from displaced or refugee families from the outskirts of the metropolitan area of Khartoum-Bahri-Omdurman. Our understanding as an Incubation Center is that it is equally important to foster sustainable development as to build social cohesion."*

With this highly ambitious purpose the program was developed with enthusiasm by all the staff and the participants. Just a short time after the project completion, let us evaluate the impact that the project had on the participants' expectations and on their knowledge level or capabilities.

In order to conduct the assessment, the first step was to generate measurable indicators. Data were collected through surveys and interviews with the participants during and after the incubation program that were contrasted with the expected results and the objectives of the program. You find below the achievement indicators we defined.

The answers from the online Evaluation Survey conducted in October 2022 are in the following link:

[Evaluation Survey (Excel File)](#)

There you can find all the questions and answers to the Evaluation Survey, the percentage numbers of the indicators come from the collected data.

We only include the analysis part which is concerning us for the strategy proposal of the company, each objective gives us different measurable indicators.

Table 3: Summary table of Evaluation Survey about She Designs Program. Source: Self-made

OBJECTIVE/EXPECTED RESULTS	INDICATOR	NUMBER ACHIEVED
A. To give visibility to Sudan's digital representation	More than 5 publications in social medial about the program This training helped more that 50% of the participants to have more exposure to the digital arts in Sudan	- 100% achieved. - More than 90% claimed their exposure to digital arts in Sudan increased.
B. To increase Sudan's support of innovation	At least 3 start-ups will be incubated on C-Hub at the end of the program	Not able to give the exact number yet, but more than 3 are expected to be incubated

OBJECTIVE/EXPECTED RESULTS	INDICATOR	NUMBER ACHIEVED
C. To promote gender equality in Sudan	80% of participants increased their entrepreneurship perspective. All the projects are led by women	- More than 90% claim they are ready to run their start-up, 88% are expecting their start-up to enter in the market. 100% achieved
D. To include women with disabilities in the program/ To include projects that employ females with disabilities	At least 15% of candidates with disability At least 35% (7 startups) should provide employment opportunities to females with disabilities. At least 20 applications from candidates with disability	- 11.2% achieved, 2 women with disabilities in the program. - 38.9% Startups employ 1-10 females with disabilities. - 5.6% employ 20-30 disabled females. - 5.6% employ more than 30 females with disability (Alfarouq Centre for Mental Disabilities) - 50% of startups do not employ any disabled women.
E. To include Start-ups that serve women with disabilities	At least 35% (7 startups) should serve females with disabilities	- 11.1% start-ups serve Visually Impaired females. - 44.4% serve Motor disability. - 33.3% serve Mental Disability. - 22.2% serve all types of disabilities. - 11.1% do not serve any type of disabilities. *Which makes the total of projects serving disabled females 88.9%*

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OBJECTIVE/EXPECTED RESULTS	INDICATOR	NUMBER ACHIEVED
F. To include refugee woman in the program/ or include start-ups that serve females refugees	At least 35% of participants who come from displaced or refugee families. At least 40% of applications from candidates who come from displaced or refugee families. At least 35% (7 startups) should provide employment opportunities to female refugees	- None of the participants come from displaced or refugees' families. - 77.8% startup's serves female refugees. - 22.2% do not serve female refugees.
G. To increase the entrepreneurship knowledge of the community	70% of participants without knowledge about entrepreneurship increased their capabilities	- All of the participants increased their knowledge about marketing, business model creation, improving business idea and discover new markets
H. To foster sustainable development and build social cohesion	More than 50% of the projects with sustainable development or social cohesion objective	- Only one participant said her idea is not going to build social cohesion
I. To serve/ Inspire female empowerment	More than 50% of participants that feel that they have inspired other women	- Only one participant said she hasn't felt that she inspired another woman

Even though none of the participants were refugees, almost 65% of the business ideas are going to have a positive impact on this vulnerable group. In general, the participants affirm that their project is going to have a positive impact on social cohesion.

According to the answers about their economic level, more than 40% of the participants were unemployed and almost 60% shared their house with 5 or more persons. Moreover, none of them have their own car. They came by public transport and more than 70% made a journey

of more than 45 minutes which says that they are not living in the city center. There were some participants who didn't own a computer, so they were using those purchased thanks to the project funding. With all this data, we realize that we supported our expected target group with economic needs.

Two participants were interviewed in-person to get first-hand information about the project and the transcription of both interviews is in the Annex II. The interviews were particularly valuable for gaining primary data of the previous context of the participants and how the program had a direct impact in their professional and personal development. Unlike surveys or questionnaires, interviews allow for follow-up questions and the ability to probe further to gain a deeper understanding of the participants' responses. This adaptability allowed to uncover valuable information that may not have been anticipated during the initial planning stages. For example, the high value of the community created by the participants influenced in the choose of Community Growth as a Strategic Line.

Our overall evaluation is positive because we have noticed the direct impact that this program has had on the participants' lives. After the "Arts in Media Event", we were able to feel the empowerment of the community created by the women. Without this opportunity, they would never have the possibility to attend to something similar and to develop themselves and their business ideas.

Although we know that the impact on a community needs years to be measured, we are glad to have been engaged with the participants and witnessed the changes that occurred in their lives as the program progressed.

The Graphic Design part of the program has been highly valued by the participants. This field was chosen because of the possibilities of including disabled people as it's something that can be developed online, and motor disabilities are not a barrier during the training. Moreover, we have seen that is also a part that all companies need nowadays as part of their marketing and communication strategy.

The interviews with both participants gave us the opportunity to feel the engagement with the program and how it has pushed them to increase their personal confidence in a society where a woman is never in the spotlight.

For C-Hub Team it has been an inspiration to include people with disabilities, mainly during the Pre-Hackathon and the Hackathon where the teams formed by different realities and with different disabilities worked together. Maybe this was the first time in Sudan that such different realities were together. It is difficult to measure the impact in terms of awareness with numbers and indicators.

As for the methodology the project used, the incubation stage made of training sessions and mentorship looks the best one to support the creation and development of Start-ups. We realized that the hackathon and pre-hackathon were not so essential in relation to the entrepreneurial journey. Nonetheless the nature of the targeted beneficiaries, particularly those who were supposed to be the main ones, women with disabilities, demanded a longer and more complex process before the incubation that included the creation of awareness

among persons who had never been in close contact with them. A clear sign of this reality was the wrong language used by many of them when speaking about people with disabilities.

Most of the businesses that were selected can be considered social entrepreneurship, which is completely aligned with C-Hub vision and values. The empowerment of each member of the community created by the participants was visible in the Arts in Media event where the graduated women showed the complete project developed during the Incubation Program. This is why we consider that presenting the idea with a public speech is a very powerful experience for all the participants.

One point that should have been considered from the very beginning is the selection of assessment indicators from the project writing stage. This would have facilitated the evaluation of the project impact at the end.

4.4 FINDINGS DURING MERIDIES STAY

During my stay I was involved in the final stage of *She Designs*, which included a complete Evaluation and Impact Report for AICS. I was close to Fr. Dr. Jorge Naranjo, so I had the opportunity to discuss with him, as part of the Boards of Directors of C-Hub, the internal findings of this experience.

Before I joined the team, Iñaki Ballano, a donor who made possible building C-Hub facilities, in a meeting with Fr.Dr. Jorge Naranjo came up with an idea that will rearrange the whole strategy of the company: instead of supporting ideas who may mismatch with the necessities of the market, we should try to connect problems or necessities of concrete companies and people able to solve them by creating a product. This idea came also as a result of the experience of the Pre-Hackathon and Hackathon included in *She Designs*, funded by AICS, where the investment in these activities was high considering the final result.

The gap between the university education and the job skills needed has been detected since C-Hub was created, as was mentioned previously in the report *Educational Needs and Labor Market in Sudan* so this idea instead of the Hackathons proposals seems to be more profitable. Agreements with national or international enterprises will be signed at a cheaper price than usual and mainly students from final year as part of their Final Project or alumni will be part of the team created for the solution. Those agreements will include from Applications to website design or different Software tools development. By linking these different actors of the market, C-Hub will receive enough revenue to support the best working teams without the need to invest in the Pre-Incubation and Incubation process as it will be financed by the company agreement.

Working in Khartoum for three months and the ongoing collaboration with C-Hub for two more months made me feel part of the team and having enough confidence to create a Strategic Commission to help me during my research about the Strategic Change of the company. As it seemed a great turn on the previous strategy, the necessity of documenting this process came up and here is its result. The first part done before the strategic proposal was benchmarking research.

Benchmark, stated by the Forbes magazine, is to evaluate or check by comparison with a standard. In the article *The Importance of Benchmarking* Scott Lenet said that "the collective wisdom of what worked previously is the best our industry currently offers". According to this we did research on three hubs established in Sudan and we compared it with the previous strategy of C-Hub. To know how they are performing and how their strategic plan is giving direction to achieve their objectives is important to focus on their mission, vision, and values. Internal data of the companies were not accessible to us during this research, so we used their websites to collect the information. Impact Hub, 249 Startups and Savannah are the three companies that we are going to focus on because of the proximity with the company of our research in terms of location and market share.

According to a Situation Analysis of Startups in Sudan conducted by 249 Startups stated about the Entrepreneurial Support Organizations (ESOs) such as the mentioned hubs "The more these organizations collaborate with other actors and contribute to the ecosystem, the higher the chance of witnessing successful startups in Sudan." and follows "The growth of the Sudanese ecosystem is slowly picking up speed, and the addition of new entrepreneurial support organizations and hubs are expected to be witnessed in the future.". So we share the idea of the high importance of these organizations for the Business Environment in Sudan.

In Impact Hub Sudan website, we can find the mission, vision and values of the company. The mission is to bring change through social impact and enable socially responsible businesses. The vision is to nurture a vibrant and growing community of change agents, entrepreneurs, and thought leaders who represent the different sectors and areas of enterprise. And its values are Trust, Courage, Collaboration and Equity.

After searching 249 Startups website we found out the mission is to growth hacking the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Sudan, finding innovative solutions, and providing exposure to scalable Sudanese startups through creating opportunities. Their vision seems to be to develop a vibrant entrepreneurship ecosystem that supports the growth and development of new startups in Sudan that will: Support and accelerate potential startups, generate new startups, develop new customized solutions. And according to their approach and description of the company we may say that their values are Passion, Innovation and Collaboration.

Finally, Savannah's mission is to enable the entrepreneurial system in Sudan. The vision is to foster global citizens and responsible leaders by educating, equipping, and empowering competent change makers committed to build a better world. Its values seem to be Responsibility, Commitment, and Inclusion.

In the internal documents of C-Hub the vision is stated as *"We strive to support a community of entrepreneurs; that aspire to achieve their goals through embracing their identity in their work."* Moreover, the mission is listed as follows:

1. Building Communities through knowledge and a working environment.
2. Creating opportunities whether through training programs and providing seed funds.
3. Creating relations between startups founders and investors, partners.

4. Set standards to work with communities, startups, and partners.

5. Expression of identity at work through our events and free online courses.

6. To support at least 33 entrepreneurs, reach their goals in one year through our monitoring programs.

7. CHub separate bank account.

The values are Transparency, Commitment, Professional, Accountable, Appreciation and Harmony.

Table 4: Comparative table between hubs in Sudan. Source: Self-made

COMPANY	MISSION	VISION	VALUES
Impact Hub	To bring change through **social impact** and enable **socially responsible businesses**	To nurture a **vibrant and growing community** of change agents, entrepreneurs, and thought **leaders** who represent the different sectors and areas of enterprise	● Trust ● Courage ● Collaboration ● Equity
249 Startups	To growth hacking the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Sudan, finding **innovative solutions** and providing exposure to scalable Sudanese startups through **creating opportunities**	To develop a **vibrant entrepreneurship ecosystem** that supports the growth and development of new startups in Sudan that will: Support and accelerate potential startups, generate new startups, develop new customized solutions	● Passion ● Innovation ● Collaboration
Savannah	To **enable** the **entrepreneurial system** in Sudan	To foster global citizens and **responsible leaders** by educating, equipping, and empowering competent change makers committed to build a better world	● Responsibility ● Commitment ● Inclusion

COMPANY	MISSION	VISION	VALUES
C-Hub	Building Communities through knowledge and a working environment. Creating opportunities whether through training programs and providing seed funds. Creating relations between startups founders and investors, partners. Set standards to work with communities, startups, and partners. Expression of identity at work through our events and free online courses.	To **support a community of entrepreneurs**; that aspire to achieve their goals through embracing their identity in their work	• Transparency • Commitment • Professional • Accountable • Appreciation • Harmony

4.4.1 Strategy Change Proposal

Nowadays, we are suffering a Strategy Crisis. Many business leaders today question the value of strategy—they say it's too slow or impractical to be of value in this fast-changing business environment. Even though, companies that get strategy right grow faster, are more profitable and make better deals. (PwC, The Strategy Crisis 2022)

That is the reason why we want to focus on Strategy. We are conscious about the complexity of our environment but not being coherent with our strategy makes more challenging our growth. The first question that we must ask as a company is: Who are we? We are key players in the Sudanese entrepreneurial environment. We are the first Sudanese Incubator linked with a College. Our company has been born to fill the gap which are experiencing students between university and labor market in the country.

Giving the skills needed to the young people who want to build their own business. We provide practical learning about entrepreneurship by workshops and mentoring programs. We want to support entrepreneurs, who are willing to achieve their dreams and are committed to it. We want to foster Social Cohesion, that is why we are a non-profit organization, our service is to the society. Another question we can address is why do we exist? We create value to our community by offering the perfect facilities to develop business ideas. Our co-working space is highly valuated by our members because it is a comfortable place to go work in. We offer programs that provide mentorship advisements and lectures in specific

fields. We compete to be funded as a Civil Organization. The capabilities needed to achieve our mission relay on being financially reliable. Also, fostering the digitalization process of the companies and start-ups who ask for our services. As we have a community of skilled developers who come from the college.

After answering the questions from the free tool Strategy Profiler from PwC Strategy we can name C-Hub as a Restless Company. This identifies us like a company that has difficulty focusing because their fear of missing out means they follow too many directions and chase too many opportunities. Moreover, this companies often struggle to translate their strategy into a narrow set of strategic priorities, resulting in a long list of opportunities to pursue and capabilities to build. That is exactly what we have seen in C-Hub. What the Strategy Profiler suggest us to do is to identify the very few things that truly make a difference for customers and that our company is able to do better than anyone else. Then double down on execution: translate the strategy into what it means for every part of the organization; define clear deliverables, timelines, and responsibilities; monitor progress in executing the strategy.

The C-Hub's proximity to disadvantaged communities, facilitated by the CCST students, sets us apart from other Incubators in the country that are often inaccessible to much of the population, catering only to the elites. Our primary focus is on fostering social cohesion, which is the essence of our uniqueness.

Alfred Chandler is a renowned scholar in the field of business strategy, and his work has had a profound impact on our understanding of the role of strategy in organizations. In particular, Chandler's research on the evolution of management practices in large corporations has been widely recognized as a major contribution to the field of business history. Structure follows strategy, meaning that the organizational structure of a company is shaped by its strategic goals and objectives (Chandler, 1962). This insight has significant implications for how companies should approach the development and implementation of their strategic plans, as it highlights the importance of aligning organizational structure with strategic objectives.

To successfully support and promote entrepreneurship, C-Hub strategic plan may prioritize several key objectives. Firstly, it may be important to identify and target the specific needs of entrepreneurs, creating tailored programs, services, and resources to meet those needs. Additionally, fostering an environment of innovation and creativity can be crucial, encouraging experimentation and new ideas. Building a strong entrepreneurial community is another important objective, where entrepreneurs can share knowledge, resources, and collaborate on projects. Facilitating access to funding can be critical, whether through partnerships with investors or other sources of capital. Providing mentorship and coaching can also be valuable, helping entrepreneurs navigate the challenges of starting and growing a business. Prioritizing diversity and inclusivity can foster a supportive environment for entrepreneurs from a range of backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives. Finally, the strategic plan may promote sustainable and socially responsible practices, supporting entrepreneurs who prioritize ethical and responsible business practices. The mapped Strategic Plan is in the Annex III.

First, to develop a Strategic Plan a Strategic Commission with some important actors of the company should be created. The Commission shall consist of Fr.Dr. Jorge Naranjo, as Secretary of Board of Directors, Ihab Shoully, as Director, Cliff Levain, as Team Leader, David Emmanuel as Finance Officer, Br. Abel Duho as Collaborator and Sara Marti as Intern. The Head of the Strategic Commision is Fr.Dr. Jorge Naranjo and the Secretary of it is Sara Marti. The following structure of milestones for the weekly meetings that are taking place in January 2023 is the following one.

- ➢ First Meeting: presentation of the objectives of the Commission, proposal of new mission, vision, and values, brainstorming about strategic lines.

- ➢ Second Meeting: reaffirm mission, vision, and values, decide the strategic lines and state the objectives of each line.

- ➢ Third Meeting: reaffirm objectives and proposal of actions or projects for each objective achievement.

- ➢ Fourth Meeting: reaffirm the conclusions from the previous meetings and make any suggestions.

- ➢ Fifth Meeting: final Strategic Proposal agreed by every Commission Member and pledge of Commitment.

The estimated duration of each meeting is one hour and a half, the presence of each Member would be required, online participation would be possible in case of not being in Sudan. As the objectives of each meeting are shared in advance each member has time to prepare each part. Moreover, a previous review of the past strategic plans will be done to nurture ideas from the C-Hub Team before. Finally, because of internal issues, the Commission consisted of Fr. Dr. Jorge Naranjo, Br. Abel Duho, Director Ihab Shoully and Sara Marti.

The easiest part to agree on regarding the strategy was the list of values that we ultimately decided on: Innovation, Collaboration, Transparency, and Commitment. By embracing innovation as a core value, C-Hub can encourage its members to think creatively, take risks, and develop new and innovative solutions to problems. This can help the incubator stay ahead of the competition and remain relevant in a rapidly changing business landscape. Collaboration is essential for startups to succeed. By promoting collaboration as a core value, C-Hub can encourage its members to work together, share ideas, and leverage each other's strengths. This can lead to more effective problem-solving, improved productivity, and stronger relationships among members. Transparency is important for building trust and credibility with members and stakeholders. By promoting transparency, the team can focus on accountability and proper resource allocation. Commitment is essential for startups to succeed in the long term. By promoting commitment as a core value, the incubator can encourage its members to stay focused on their goals, persevere through challenges, and remain dedicated to their vision. This can lead to greater success for the members and the incubator.

As we can see in the previous section, the mission of C-Hub was stated as a list of objectives more than a concrete mission which should be a statement that includes what the company is doing, why and for whom. We wanted to highlight the importance of the link between CCST and C-Hub that was not mentioned enough, and to say what C-Hub is working for. This was a point of discussion because of different opinions about making it too narrow or too wide. Mentioning the students at the College helps us to say who we are working with as 40% of the students are refugees or displaced people (CCST internal data). So, at the end we rephrase different sentences to finally agree on the following mission.

MISSION

C-Hub is a non-profit company that aims to support entrepreneurs from disadvantaged communities by promoting social cohesion and leveraging ICT as an enabler for businesses.

Let's explain each part of the sentence deeply, Chub is non-profit company means Chub is a company limited by guarantee which is the juridical form of non-profit companies. That aims to support entrepreneurs, Chub welcomes all types of entrepreneurs; students, workers, youth, old, men, women, able or disabled. Promoting ICT, using technology, software, mobile platforms, or any type of digital solution to solve problems and accelerate the digitization process of companies in need. Social Cohesion related to the Comboni's mission, Chub welcomes people coming from different religions, cultures, and countries within and outside Sudan. As enabler for businesses, Social Cohesion and ICT are fundamental dimensions to allow businesses to succeed and accomplish their missions.

For the vision, the previous statement was not clear at all but the point of the identity of the work from the individual took importance in previous discussions as it was the way to express the willingness to face the problem of racism between tribes. This explains why finally we include the term respect and cultural diversity because C-Hub wants to be part of the solution of this big issue in Sudan. The final vision states as follows:

VISION

We support entrepreneurs that commit to achieve their mission in a cultural diversity environment by respecting their own identity in their projects.

As for the mission, the vision could be explained part by part. We support entrepreneurs because we provide space, internet, advice, network, and possible tools that allow entrepreneurs to achieve their mission. That commitment to achieve their mission means that people who are passionate, willing, and motivated to succeed in their project. In a cultural diversity environment, we encourage entrepreneurs to broaden their horizon by considering in their projects the diversity of cultures, religions, and countries. By respecting their own identity, Chub encourages the entrepreneurs to discover their life purpose and to bring into their project an originality that comes from their personal identity. In their projects, Chub encourages all kinds of innovation projects with ICT components.

4.4.2 Strategic Lines

After the discussion of the mission, vision, and values of the company the proposal was to state three Strategic Lines according to those statements. It was necessary to have a look at the actual and coming projects to see what is already working and C-Hub wants to keep putting effort into it and where to frame the future ideas that the team has been working on.

Here came the three Strategic Lines: Open Innovation, Sense of Belonging and Community Growth. All of this information is gathered in the Strategic Plan that you may consult in Annex III.

The choice of three Strategic Lines is due to different reasons. This will give clarity, having a clear focus on three strategic lines helps to simplify the company's priorities and goals. This can make it easier for employees to understand the company's direction and align their efforts with its strategic objectives. By focusing on a limited number of strategic lines, companies can prioritize their resources and allocate them more efficiently. This can help to maximize the impact of the company's efforts and resources. Focusing on three strategic lines can help us to ensure that all the team is aligned with the company's objectives. This can improve collaboration and coordination, leading to more effective and efficient communications.

A) Open Innovation

The Open Innovation term comes out in 2003 from a book with that name written by Henry Chesbrough and it's about combining internal knowledge from the companies with start-ups to collaborate in the development of new solutions. It has benefits for both parts, as the start-up will have a reliable client and the company saves money in Research & Development inside itself.

With this goal of collaborating with companies appears the project *Bridging the youth with the Digital Marke*t, funded on its first stage by the Swiss Agency of Cooperation in Khartoum, but planning to be a sustainable project according to the budgeted revenues and expenses. Planning to connect final projects from IT and Computer Science from the best students of CCST and company necessities to be solved. Creating a group of students able to develop a product which meets a real need will help C-Hub to support those projects as single start-ups and accelerate them. Moreover, it will ensure an important client that will make the Incubation stage part of the company, making it easier than before.

B) Talent Retention and Staff Development

In a fast-changing environment like Sudan where civilians have to live facing many unforeseen events talent retentions is a big challenge. That's why this strategic line is linked with staff development because both things must be together to be realistic.

Retaining talented employees is more cost-effective than hiring new ones. The recruitment and training process can be expensive, and retaining current employees can save the company money. Skilled employees who feel valued and invested in the company are more likely to be productive and contribute to the success of the organization. The projects C-Hub

usually applies for are from one-year minimum, high rotation during this time generates difficulties for the company in following-up properly the project or reorganization of responsibilities.

Moreover, the staff should be attending training sessions to improve their performance and keep their motivation at a high level. Promoting a challenging job to the employee is necessary to keep people in the company. Regarding each individual, an internal career could be a good proposal to engage the best employees with the company strategy. Also, experienced employees can pass on their knowledge and expertise to newer employees, which can improve overall productivity and effectiveness, this will help to contribute to a positive company culture where every employee will feel valuated. Committed staff is always a competitive advantage.

C) Community Growth and Sense of Belonging

With the experience of the Inclusive Females Graphic Designers Program, we have felt the empowerment developed in a group of people who are encouraged to make an effort and how a community helps in dealing with difficulties. We want to keep working with the Community of Graphic Designers because they already feel C-Hub as home and we all had an amazing experience during the past months. Sudanese society needs places to make networking, have an inspiring group of people around and collaboration among them. All these reasons lead us to think about the importance of creating Communities around leaders and experts in specific fields such as Podcasters, Software Developers or Data Analysis.

As an Incubator that belongs to CCST, the students must feel part of it. Open Days will help everyone to know about us and to reach the most curious and innovative people from the College. Helping the students to dream about new business by encouraging creativity and promoting problem-solving skills will foster the community growth and bring quality to the young entrepreneurs' ideas.

In an Incubator the mouth-to-mouth publicity is a key for being reliable as an organization. That's why promoting the sense of belonging will help C-Hub to create a brand that is valuable for our customers. The members need to feel themselves listened to by the team and monthly polls will help us not to forget about this. The member's community is highly valuable for C-Hub and creating a healthy workplace environment will make our nice facilities even more comfortable to work in.

4.4.3 Strategic Objectives and Strategical Actions

The conclusions drawn from the SWOT analysis helped us with the development of strategic objectives with the intention of leverage our organization's strengths, address weaknesses, capitalize on opportunities, and mitigate threats. By aligning strategic objectives with the insights from a SWOT analysis, we can develop a focused and effective strategic plan that drives growth, innovation, and long-term success. According to the three strategic lines where we are going to focus C-Hub Strategy we have agreed on specific objectives regarding each line.

About the Open Innovation the objectives are three:

➢ To develop innovative solutions for companies which are already in the market.

➢ To support and accelerate startups that have a good impact in the society.

➢ To increase the innovation culture helping new ideas development.

To achieve these goals the concrete actions that C-Hub must do are, in first place, to participate in the project *Bridging the youth with the Digital Market*, a proposal of CCST in partnership with the Swiss Embassy. In this project, needs from different Sudanese and non-Sudanese companies have been identified and contracts are signed to solve the problems shown by the enterprises. Students from last year of Computer Science and IT & Accounting will collaborate in teams with the support of a mentor, the final responsible of the quality standards accomplishment. C-Hub will be the meeting point of those student groups and they will have the possibility to replicate the work done for other companies by creating a startup after experiencing teamwork and the quality of their product or service provided. This project is also in partnership with UNHCR (The UN Refugee Agency) so it will be focused on refugees and supporting entrepreneurs from disadvantaged communities fits exactly with the company's mission.

Regarding the potential alliances with some companies, we can provide solutions for them by linking the Final Project of the best students from CCST with real contracts. By connecting the Final Projects of students with real contracts from companies, we create a practical and meaningful learning experience. Students can work on projects that have real-world applications, gaining valuable skills and knowledge in the process. The projects developed by students, linked with real contracts, can serve as a foundation for startups. These startups can offer products or solutions that are aligned with the needs of the market, as they are derived from actual contracts and requirements provided by companies. This alignment with market needs increases the chances of success for these startups. By forging alliances with companies, we promote collaboration between academia and industry. This collaboration fosters innovation as students and professionals work together to address real-world challenges. It also provides companies with access to fresh ideas and talent, potentially leading to the development of new and innovative products or services.

Other concrete action for achieving the mentioned objectives is the collaboration with UNIDO to support the selected startups by their method of Pre-Incubation, Incubation and Acceleration, which they have studied among incubators all around the globe is the best method, with a long and intense process of Incubation they have experienced better results than past C-Hub strategy of only 4 months.

In the Talent Retention and Staff Development line the strategic objectives defined are three:

➢ S.O. B. 1. To create a spirit of teamwork and promote engagement.
➢ S.O. B. 2. To make C-Hub financially self-reliant.
➢ S.O. B. 3. Professional development of Chub staff

The actions needed begin with a monthly poll about the experience working in C-Hub, to identify the problems in the team and make the necessary changes to make everyone feel comfortable in their job. A Code of Behavior will be necessary to have the same requirements to every employee and to ensure a good work environment. This should be accompanied by a gender balanced ad hoc disciplinary commission. Once per week a meeting will take place in C-Hub facilities, employees outside from Sudan will be able to join the meeting online. This will help to improve the internal communication and the engagement of the team. According

to the needs of each employee and company strategic objectives accomplishment ad hoc training will be joined by the staff.

Finally, the last strategic line about Community Growth and Sense of Belonging has these specific objectives:

➢ To support the Graphic Designers Community

➢ To host more communities of entrepreneurs and generate knowledge about specific topics of interest

➢ To engage CCST students in the C-Hub community

➢ To make C-Hub members proud of the work environment

The actions needed are multiple ones because this line involves different communities with the intention to include people from all of them in one culturally diverse C-Hub Community. The first one, regarding the Community created by the 20 females of *She Designs* Project, funded by AICS, it is necessary to work on a follow-up process of the startups and select some of them to start the Acceleration stage. After this selection, a process to reach funds for this stage will be needed to make it possible. Another Community close to C-Hub is CCST students. Events and training activities will take place in C-Hub facilities to present it to every student with entrepreneurship interests as part of Comboni mission during or after their College experience. The whole Strategic Plan is in the Annex of this document.

Table 5: Summary of Strategy Proposal

STRATEGIC LINES	OBJECTIVES	CONCRETE PROJECTS OR ACTIONS
A) **Open Innovation**	• To develop innovative solutions for companies which are already in the market • To support and accelerate startups that have a good impact in the society • To increase the innovation culture helping new ideas development	1. Collaboration in the Project: *Bridging the youth with the Digital Market* (Swiss Embassy) + UNHCR 2. To collaborate with UNIDO to give support to the chosen startups
B) **Talent Retention and Staff Development**	• To create a spirit of teamwork and promote engagement. • To make Chub financially self-reliant. • Professional development of Chub staff	1. Monthly satisfaction polls 2. Code of behaviour 3. Weekly meetings for direct communication 4. To join ad hoc training for the staff

STRATEGIC LINES	OBJECTIVES	CONCRETE PROJECTS OR ACTIONS
C) **Community Growth and Sense of Belonging**	• To support the Graphic Designers Community • To host more communities of entrepreneurs and generate knowledge about specific topics of interest • To engage CCST students in the Chub community • To make the members proud of the work environment	1. To prepare a follow-up plan of the Graphic Designers Community created by AICS program 2. To organize events and training activities for CCST students at Chub 3. Two Open Days during the period of lessons 4. Innovation Workshops in C-Hub for students from every year. 5. To improve online visibility of the company. 6. Easy and professional registration process

4.4.4 KPIs

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are critical elements of a strategic plan because they provide a way to measure progress towards achieving strategic goals and objectives. KPIs are quantifiable measures that allow organizations to track and assess performance against specific targets and benchmarks. By including KPIs in a strategic plan, organizations can ensure that they are monitoring the right metrics and adjusting their activities and resources to achieve their desired outcomes.

Moreover, KPIs provide a basis for decision-making by enabling organizations to identify areas where they are falling short of their goals and take corrective actions in a timely manner. They help organizations to stay focused on what matters most and to allocate resources efficiently and effectively. KPIs also enhance accountability and transparency by making it easier to communicate progress and performance to stakeholders, including investors, customers, and employees.

Overall, a strategic plan with KPIs enables organizations to stay on track, monitor progress, and make data-driven decisions to achieve their desired outcomes. Our Strategic Plan should have indicators to the appropriate monitorization, and evaluation of the strategic actions developed. The following KPIs, will help us to give objectivity during the evaluation process that would be needed every six months to not lose the alignment of the actions and the Strategy.

Each strategic action will have a KPI to be measurable and change the necessary procedures if it has not been achieved. We are going to state them oriented to the time we are proposing

the evaluation process so every indicator should have the reference of six months period. For the projects which are longer than the period of evaluation we assume its own internal evaluation process.

Table 6: KPIs Proposal

CONCRETE ACTIONS	KPIs
A) 1. Collaboration in the Project: *Bridging the youth with the Digital Market* **(Swiss Embassy) + UNHCR**	1. Up to day report on the activities developed. 2. At least three projects are obtaining the requirements expected.
A) 2. To collaborate with UNIDO to give support to the chosen startups	1. Collaboration agreed and planned with one start-up.
B) 1. Monthly satisfaction polls	1. Three satisfaction polls carried out.
B) 2. Code of Behavior	1. Code of Behavior signed by every staff member. 2. Internal Commission of Behavior, membership rotation, created at least one month to guarantee a health workplace environment.
B) 3. Weekly meetings for direct communication	1. At least 20 meetings, with the concerning report each.

CONCRETE ACTIONS	KPIs
B) 4. To join ad hoc training for the staff	1. One training joined from a staff member. 2. Different person joined every two trainings.
C) 1. To prepare a follow-up plan of the Graphic Designers Community created by AICS program	1. Contact made with at least 10 women from the program. 2. At least one meeting took place for further collaboration.
C) 2. To organize events and training activities for CCST students at C-hub	1. One networking event with CCST students took place. 2. One training activity innovation and entrepreneurship oriented took place with CCST students.
C) 3. Two Open Days during the period of lessons	1. One Open Day where CCST students can visit C-Hub facilities and get information about projects and membership options.
C) 4. Innovation Workshops in C-Hub for students from every year	1. One Innovation Workshop for students from one university program chosen.
C) 5. To improve online visibility of the company	1. To publish and keep updated C-Hub website

CONCRETE ACTIONS	KPIs
	2. Active social media, at least two publications made to inform about events and training
C) 6. Easy and professional registration process	1. Every member has its own document with the data needed for registration and the payments done 2. Suggestions from a new registration process will be asked to the new members in a poll

5 CONCLUSIONS

After the stay in Khartoum in C-Hub facilities and the discussion about each part of the strategy the whole process was finished. The result of this project is the Strategic Plan located in Annex III. The Meridies experience has been crucial for the development of the plan and its outcomes from this adventure are much deeper than the academic ones. In this final stage of the BT is important to state the conclusions about the objectives set at the beginning of the process and the methodology used to develop the strategy.

Regarding the objectives outlined in this thesis, we can affirm that they have been achieved in developing a concrete Proposal of Strategy Change for C-Hub Company Limited by Guarantee. The initial strategy's lack of profitability and financial independence necessitated the identification of a reformulation to ensure the company's sustainability. Even though, the company success is linked to the achievement of projects desired and some adaptation of the actions will be needed during the following months due the complexity and unexpected events that may occur in the country. The path is set, and we have concrete goals so the whole company is aligned to achieve the same targets.

The objective of generating a conversation about the company's future plan with the stakeholders involved in Strategic Decisions has been successfully accomplished. Through this process, the mission, vision, values, and objectives of the company have been redefined to align with the Sudanese contextual environment, providing a structured strategic framework. The structure of three Strategic Lines will help to allocate resources depending on the needs of each line. If there is not enough attention in one of them is easier to notice because there are only three parts to check by the top management. The three Strategic Lines are equal of importance and come from the deep analysis of the company's situation. The focus on Innovation, Staff and Community is balanced with the environment needs and ambitious for C-Hub. With this Strategic Plan the Social part of the company keeps in the first place as the core of every action will help to foster Social Cohesion in a direct or indirect way.

Furthermore, the objective of creating awareness for the key set of actions required to achieve these internal goals and providing a plan for the current and future team has been met. This ensures that the team understands and aligns its objectives with those of C-Hub. The inclusion of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for each action will enable the evaluation of the overall performance of the Strategic Plan, ensuring its effectiveness and progress towards the desired outcomes.

The methodology used was accurate for its purpose. As the fast-changing environment could also lead to many changes, it is also important to remark that decisions were made in a concrete moment to a possible future but not all scenarios can be considered. More internal documents about previous plans made by other UPV students could have been considered in the decision-making process about strategic lines. Although, the Strategic Commission Members were up to date with the internal situation and was the reason why it is a realistic plan.

The observations expressed in words by conversations with Members or C-Hub Team provided an opportunity to explore in-depth perspectives, experiences, and opinions of individuals that were relevant for the understanding of the context. This firsthand information can provide unique insights, personal stories, and real-world examples that enhance the depth and authenticity of the findings made. These conversations, enable unique insights, personal stories and real-world examples that enhance the authenticity of the conclusions. Additionally, subjectivity may influence this way of collecting data, that is the reason why it was complementary. The same as with the personal interviews with the participants from *She Designs*. Although they required careful planning, preparation and were time-consuming the opportunity to clarify misunderstandings and get a real overview of an individual makes this method very useful to understand the powerful environment created in C-Hub. A longer stay in C-Hub would absolutely improve the deepness of the analysis as an augment in the data collected by the in-person observations is highly valuable.

Nevertheless, during the writing of the thesis the war had suddenly involved the Sudan. The capital, Khartoum, where C-Hub is located, is now a battlefield where the Sudanese Army and the Rapid Support Forces are attacking indistinctly civil buildings, hospitals and universities all over the city.

With this situation, for obvious reasons, the Strategic Plan of the company is not going to see the light while the current situation remains. The end of the war, stability in both the public institutions and the economy is crucial for any company. Nowadays, is not possible to work in C-Hub, but as some projects might be accessible by developers on remote, the company will try to support the College decisions on developing agreements with companies who need solutions that may be covered by our student's knowledge. This could bring an income for them which is necessary for them and their families in today's situation.

All in all, the objectives have been successfully addressed, leading to the development of a comprehensive Proposal of Strategy Change for C-Hub Company Limited by Guarantee, setting the foundation for a sustainable and successful future. Despite elaborating plans do not ensure success until its proper implementation, the fact of building them and communicating them are of paramount importance to build hope and keep working towards a better future for the Sudan made by Sudanese society, inspired by St. Daniel Comboni. Violence is never a way of solving a conflict. The dialogue is the unique method of reaching the peace in the country that is full of hardworking people who deserve an opportunity to achieve their dreams. The currently uncertain future of C-Hub makes difficult to imagine how to develop a further collaboration with the organization and a following up of its strategic change. Should the situation is resolved, I will cooperate with the next agreements made by the company and the UPV to allow more students to join this life-changing experience.

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ANNEX I. ODS

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Grado de relación del trabajo con los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS).

Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenibles	Alto	Medio	Bajo	No Procede
ODS 1. **Fin de la pobreza.**		x		
ODS 2. **Hambre cero.**				x
ODS 3. **Salud y bienestar.**				x
ODS 4. **Educación de calidad.**		x		
ODS 5. **Igualdad de género.**		x		
ODS 6. **Agua limpia y saneamiento.**				x
ODS 7. **Energía asequible y no contaminante.**				x
ODS 8. **Trabajo decente y crecimiento económico.**	x			
ODS 9. **Industria, innovación e infraestructuras.**		x		
ODS 10. **Reducción de las desigualdades**.	x			
ODS 11. **Ciudades y comunidades sostenibles**.		x		
ODS 12. **Producción y consumo responsables.**				x
ODS 13. **Acción por el clima.**				x
ODS 14. **Vida submarina.**				x
ODS 15. **Vida de ecosistemas terrestres.**				x
ODS 16. **Paz, justicia e instituciones sólidas.**		x		
ODS 17. **Alianzas para lograr objetivos.**	x			

Descripción de la alineación del TFG/TFM con los ODS con un grado de relación más alto.

El ODS 8 es el más relacionado con este Trabajo de Final de Grado. En el presente Trabajo se profundiza en este Objetivo en la sección 3.3 Sustainable Development Goals in Sudan. La estrategia de la compañía apoya la empleabilidad de jóvenes en situaciones vulnerables a través de acuerdos con empresas que necesitan soluciones tecnológicas. De esta forma se consigue que haya estudiantes en contacto con la realidad empresarial y que la preparación para enfrentarse a estos retos sea mejor. Con esto tratamos de reducir el desempleo juvenil que sufren los jóvenes en Sudán al acabar sus estudios. Además, fomentando el emprendimiento y ofreciendo asesoramiento en los primeros pasos de las ideas de negocio se pretende generar microempresas que puedan generar puestos de trabajo decentes y sostenibles en el tiempo. En este asesoramiento no hay distinciones entre hombres y mujeres, el último proyecto realizado por C-Hub estaba destinado para mujeres,

Con los conocimientos tecnológicos del equipo de C-Hub apoyar la digitalización y la innovación en las microempresas creadas (o en aquellas otras empresas más grandes con las que se generan acuerdos) será un aspecto clave en la estrategia debido a que este proceso está en auge en el país.

Los contactos de la compañía para buscar financiación para las mejores ideas de negocio son clave para el desarrollo de estas debido a que las personas a las que apoyamos no tienen recursos para afrontar una inversión tan elevada como es necesaria para constituir una empresa en Sudán.

Las tres líneas estratégicas propuestas en el Plan Estratégico están alineadas con este ODS número 8. La innovación abierta fomenta el empleo juvenil y de calidad, la retención de talento trata de seguir formando al equipo que trabaja en la compañía promoviendo un espíritu de trabajo en equipo y un ambiente seguro y el crecimiento de la comunidad genera un elevado número de posibilidades de compartir ideas y colaborar, sintiendo el respaldo ante nuevas propuestas y disminuyendo los miedos que genera afrontar el riesgo en soledad.

Si nos fijamos en el ODS número 10, que trata de reducir las desigualdades, está muy alineado con la base de la estrategia de C-Hub, donde la misión implica apoyar el emprendimiento de personas que vienen de comunidades necesitadas y de esta forma fomentar la cohesión de la sociedad en la que se encuentra la empresa. De este modo, nuestras acciones están orientadas a trabajar con personas refugiadas o desplazadas, mujeres y jóvenes en situación de vulnerabilidad económica que quieren emprender y se enfrentan a dificultades casi inasumibles por sus propios medios. En una sociedad como la sudanesa, el hombre es el cabeza de familia y las mujeres suelen trabajar en el hogar, con nuestros programas hemos ayudado a que emprender sea una opción para conseguir independencia económica en las mujeres. Estas desigualdades son las que tratamos de reducir con nuestras acciones en la compañía.

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Respecto al ODS número 17, las alianzas para lograr objetivos, nos conciernen debido a que como organización sin ánimo de lucro, las donaciones de la Cooperación Internacional a través de proyectos o patrocinios resultan una fuente de financiación clave para la compañía. Estas alianzas están encajadas en marcos más amplios de entidades internacionales como por ejemplo ACNUR (Alto Comisionado de las Naciones Unidas para los Refugiados). También podemos incluir en este Objetivo los acuerdos de colaboración con diferentes universidades internacionales (tanto españolas como italianas) a través de diferentes programas de Cooperación que permiten hacer un intercambio de conocimientos para ambas partes y generar alianzas de gran valor.

ANNEX II. PERSONAL INTERVIEWS WITH TWO PARTICIPANTS

In order to understand the impact of the last program that took place in C-Hub personal interviews were conducted with two participants. Here is their transcription.

INTERVIEW WITH SABA TAG ALSACE

- What's your name? Where are you from? How old are you? Could you introduce yourself?

    My name is Saba. I'm from Sudan, I'm living here in Khartoum. I'm 21 years old, I'm still in university completing my last year. I'm studying Information Technology.

- Are you studying here at Comboni College?

    No, I'm studying at Garden City University.

- How did you know about the programme?

    One of my friends told me about it, she saw it on Facebook, and she told me: "That would be perfect for you". And then I said: "I will be on it".

- Is it the first entrepreneurship programme you attend?

    Yes, it is my first programme.

- How did you feel in the C-Hub with the environment and the people?

    Actually, the first time I was to be in this programme I was so scared because it was my first time but I felt comfortable with the people who were so kind. And even the place was comfortable to be in.

- Were you able to attend every day of the programme? Why not?

    No, I missed some days. I was having my final exams at my university. So I told Israa (Programme Manager) about it and she told me "it's okay". When I came to the C-Hub, the girls helped me, even Mustafa. The mentor here helped me with what I missed so it wasn't a big problem.

- Have you also built personal relationships during the programme?

    Yes, yes sure. Even though there are girls, we made some business.

    together. We have the same ideas, so we said why not?

- So, there was something about professional relations?

Yes, sure. Even we studied about how to be in a community that would help you to improve yourself, improve your business to see people are going to help you in life. So yes, it was good.

- Do you feel this programme has encouraged you to be more confident about sharing your personal ideas?

Sure, even before I thought I couldn't talk like that, I was not scared but now I have more confidence that I can say what I need to say.

- Could you share any difficulties during the programme?

It was just hard because my university is far away from here so I needed to take transport and that was kind of hard but it's okay.

- Could you explain your business idea?

Sure. My business is called Sava. It's a seek and product. I started it one year ago. It's been like in Covid19 and since I was 18 years old I wanted to have my own business. But it was not easy to have a business so I needed something I could be in. I love it and make it with love. So, when I looked for this product, I didn't find it in Sudan. To get it I had to order it from SHEIN or Amazon so it was like why? So I thought I could make it here in Sudan and improve myself in it and my country name in it. Everyone to whom I showed my product asked, "do you order it from outside?" and I said no, we made it in Sudan. So, it was something that was very good. All the people who work with me are Sudanese people so we are proud that we made something from our country.

- Do you think your idea is going to have a good impact in the community?

Yes, sure. We need anyone in this world to try our product so that the Sudanese people could do this. Sudanese people can make good things.

- Would you encourage other women to participate in a similar programme?

Yes, the programs that we are on give you more confidence, more ideas you don't know about, how to deal with your business, how to deal with life, how to manage yourself. Business is a very good thing, you are going to be independent with a business.

- Have you ever worked with people with disabilities?

Actually not, it was my first time working with them in one place. So it's been like they show you that they are doing great things, really how they are doing those things. They are different from us in some ways. So, things are not as easy as they are for us. The thing I learned was that why could I not do it if they are doing great things and it's more difficult for them. It has given me motivation and power to do great things as they are doing. There is one girl with us that is doing a great thing, handmade products. When I saw her I felt like there was no reason for you not to do it.

- What impact do you think this program had on your personal life? And in your professional life?

The important thing for me was that I didn't know how to deal with my business. So, it helped me in my business plan and how to manage my time, how to manage it in a professional way, how to measure my time even.

- So, if you have to summarize in a few words how this project has helped you?

It helped me see life clearly, life in a positive way, a life where I can build something.

INTERVIEW WITH NOON GHAZI

- What's your name? Where are you from? How old are you? Could you introduce yourself?

My name is Noon. I'm 30 years old. I graduated from the University of Khartoum. I studied IT. I have had experience with entrepreneurship before.

- How did you know about the programme?

A friend told me about it like "This is really good for you, you should definitely apply for it" so I was like "Yes, sure, okay".

- How did you feel in the C-Hub, with the environment and the people?

Actually, right before I came here, I was like… I don't want to say desperate, but I thought "Oh my God that's enough maybe I should give up on all of this" but then I came here, and I started regaining my courage and my confidence. So I really felt very homie, very warm, very encouraging and it's nice to have all of these girls who are probably in a similar position to mine. We all live through the same difficulties every single day so seeing everyone being so determined and involved and trying their best to do something different for themselves and for their communities is very heartwarming and very encouraging. So I just felt like "okay let's do this".

- Did you feel it was something that encouraged you to feel more confident in your personal opinions?

Yes definitely, I have always had strong opinions regarding most of the things basically. But you know, because I was in a very vulnerable position just before I came here I think I started regaining faith and confidence. So yes, just like in the interview that before I was very nervous and now I'm fine.

- Could you summarize what you have learnt during the programme?

Honestly when I came here I thought it was mostly about design but then, even my initial idea I applied with (it was a cultural exchange kind of idea), but then I saw there was a lot of business stuff going on so my idea might have changed a little bit. In summary, when it comes to design I've already had a little experience about design so I kind of checked the marks for me. Like I did this right and this wrong, I can improve in this area a bit more. The same with the business aspects of things. So, I think one of my biggest confidence boosts was the business side of things. I was like "OMG I'm doing super well!".

- Have you built personal relationships during the programme?

Yes, definitely. One of the members is hosting conferences and I think that many of us are already involved in this. I also made really close friendships here.

- Were you able to attend every day of the programme?

Yes, I woke up every day and I was like "OMG when is the next day going to come". So yes, I made it every single day.

- Could you share any difficulties during the programme?

Well, for me, I think the moment where I changed my idea because I didn't know where I was going to go and I was wondering if things that I was doing were relevant or not, so this change was very difficult for me. But now I think I've made a decision about it so it's good now. So it was difficulty but I needed it, I was never determined enough to make the change.

- Could you explain your final business idea?

Well, it's basically a personal brand of myself because I do things in different genres, particularly 3 genres. I had entrepreneurial experiences as I said before. So, I do know a bit of business and some of it has cultural aspects, as I said before about the cultural exchange, and the third one is in arts because it is something where I'm personally involved with. So to sum up, it is something that combines either of them in a way, something like project management, some of these aspects. Or maybe consulting people regarding any of the three topics. Holding my own initiative programs, we are working on a podcast and on a program that I applied with that is the cultural exchange where I'm definitely going to continue working on. It's a kind of mixed brand.

- Do you think your idea is going to have a good impact in the community?

Yes, definitely. Especially when it comes to business. If you are helping other people, you realize difficulties that maybe they are having, and you can encourage them to do things. I think for a girl to have a business here and to make it on its own is something marvelous because busy people suffer every single day but we need to see someone succeed so other people can see how somebody made it before so I can definitely make it. Like it happened to me before coming here, but then I realized I was not alone doing things so I can definitely do it. When it comes to Arts and Culture, because of

the nature of the programs that I want to make, its aim is to support and encourage other people who are in the same situation. So yes, that's the kind of impact.

● Would you encourage other women to participate in a similar programme?

Yes, definitely. I already have a list of women that could benefit from a similar program. So, when the next programme is going to be I can tell them about it.

● Is it your first time working with people with disabilities?

Actually, being a part of a community, we all have experiences with disabled people but for me to be working in a program this is my first program ever. I have never been in such a program, so yes. For me I would rather not keep them in a vulnerable light, when I deal with them is to treat them on a one-to-one basis.

Is not very different working with disabled people in general. Here in Sudan, you see disabled people who seem very independent and people just help them with the small things that they can't deal with. I think the same is here, we just focused on the strengths of them like I didn't know that you were disabled except for this little thing that I can help you with. So that is the case here. It is very inspiring. These people here have another layer of difficulty so it makes me think that I shouldn't feel so disappointed with myself sometimes, I need to keep pushing.

● So if you have to summarize in a few words how this project has impacted you?

For me it was encouraging, very warm and affirming, like I got confirmation on what I have been doing before.

ANNEX III. STRATEGIC PLAN

Strategic Plan

C-hub

CLG

INNOVATION AND
ENTREPRENEURSHIP
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Introduction

C-Hub is a non-profit social enterprise established by Comboni College of Science and Technology (CCST), a university college approved by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research of Sudan in 2001. It is located in Khartoum.

The project started as a College center under the name of Comboni Innovation and Entrepreneurship Center (CIEC) in 2019 and was recently registered as C-Hub Company Limited by Guarantee.

This ICT based Start-ups Incubator aims to support the creation of companies by young entrepreneurs in order to foster sustainability and community development by providing potential entrepreneurs with knowledge, co-working spaces and networking opportunities; in short, what they need to shape, implement, sustain and grow their business idea.

C-Hub provides services to young entrepreneurs in Sudan and aims to be a key player in supporting the Sudanese entrepreneurial ecosystem in its three major stages: Pre-Incubation, Incubation and Acceleration. The center provides training in each of them, start-ups business mentoring, incubation services and, on the longer term, acceleration services and opportunities to access capital for the early stages.

Despite four years of operation, C-Hub has not yet achieved the level of profitability required for self-sustainability. Following discussions with various stakeholders, it has become apparent that a reformulation of the previous strategy is necessary to address this challenge.

Our environment is plenty of unexpected challenges, but a Strategic Plan is needed to have a settled route. Our Mission, Vision & Values are in the first section of the plan because is thought to mantain for future Strategic Plans. Regarding this one, it is meant to be a four years plan and evaluation is needed after each semester.

Summary

A Strategic Commission was created to develop this new Strategic Plan. Director Ihab Shoully, Br. Abel Duho, Fr. Dr. Jorge Naranjo, and Sara Marti were the four members of the Commission.

To explain the procedure of discussion, the first part involved was the Mission, Vision & Values. After the Commission reaching an agreement on that the next step were the Strategic Lines where the Strategic Objectives were combined into three fields: Open Innovation, Talent Retention and Staff Development, and Community Growth and Sense of Belonging. Some future projects and Strategic Actions were complied to set the concrete path to the following years. Finally, to the necessary monitorization of the process, KPI's have been set on each action to make the Plan sucess measurable.

Before the discussion, a SWOT Analysis, a Job Analysis and a Evaluation of a Project were conducted within the organization. This three analysis coupled with the team's self-experience, led to the conclusion that a new path needed to be set for C-Hub.

This plan is the result of meetings that brought together individuals from different parts of the world, with diverse knowledge and experiences, working collaboratively to achieve a consensus with a single goal in mind: to position C-Hub as a reliable company that is ready to tackle future challenges in Sudan. Milestones of the meetings are in the next section.

This document includes each part that may be public to inform the stakeholders about C-Hub Strategy.

Sequencing

MILESTONE	TIMING
Commision objectives Mission, Vision and Values	First Meeting
Deciding Strategic Lines and state objectives for each one	Second Meeting
Actions and projects proposals	Third Meeting
Conclusions from previous stages and suggestions	Fourth Meeting
Final Proposal agreed by the Commision and pledge of Commitment	Fifth Meeting

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Mission

C-Hub is a non-profit company that aims to support entrepreneurs from disadvantaged communities by promoting Social Cohesion and leveraging ICT as an enabler for businesses

Vision

We support entrepreneurs who are committed to the achievement of their own mission in a culturally diverse environment while preserving their own identity in their projects

Values

**Innovation
Collaboration
Transparency
Commitment**

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Structure

The Strategy is organized in 3 (A,B,C,) Strategic Lines (S.L.). On each we can find between three and four Strategic Objectives (S.O.) which are subject to the development of specific projects (S.P.) or actions (S.A.).

A. OPEN INNOVATION

S.O. A. 1.

S.O. A. 2.

S.O. A. 3.

S.P.A.1
S.A.A.2

B. TALENT RETENTION AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

S.O. B. 1.

S.O. B. 2.

S.O. B. 3.

S.A.B.1
S.A.B.2
S.A.B.3
S.A.B.4.

C. COMMUNITY GROWTH AND SENSE OF BELONGING

S.O. C. 1.

S.O. C. 2.

S.O. C. 3.

S.O.C. 4.

S.A.C.1
S.A.C.2
S.A.C.3
S.A.C.4
S.A.C.5
S.A.C.6

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A. OPEN INNOVATION

Combining internal knowledge from the companies with start-ups to collaborate in the development of new solutions. It has benefits for both parts, as the start-up will have a reliable client and the company saves money in Research & Development inside itself.

With this goal of collaborating with companies appears the project Bridging the youth with the Digital Market, funded on its first stage by the Swiss Agency of Cooperation in Khartoum, but planning to be a sustainable project according to the budgeted revenues and expenses. Planning to connect final projects from IT and Computer Science from the best students of CCST and company necessities to be solved. Creating a group of students able to develop a product which meets a real need will help C-Hub to support those projects as single start-ups and accelerate them. Moreover, it will ensure an important client that will make the Incubation stage part of the company, making it easier than before.

Strategic Objectives

S.O. A. 1. To develop innovative solutions for companies which are already in the market

S.O. A. 2. To support and accelerate startups that have a good impact in the society

S.O. A. 3. To increase the innovation culture helping new ideas development

S.O. A. 1. To develop innovative solutions for companies which are already in the market

Regarding the potential alliances with some companies, we can provide solutions for them by linking the Final Project of the best students from CCST with real contracts. By connecting the Final Projects of students with real contracts from companies, we create a practical and meaningful learning experience. Students can work on projects that have real-world applications, gaining valuable skills and knowledge in the process.The projects developed by students, linked with real contracts, can serve as a foundation for startups. These startups can offer products or solutions that are aligned with the needs of the market, as they are derived from actual contracts and requirements provided by companies. This alignment with market needs increases the chances of success for these startups. By forging alliances with companies, we promote collaboration between academia and industry. This collaboration fosters innovation as students and professionals work together to address real-world challenges. It also provides companies with access to fresh ideas and talent, potentially leading to the development of new and innovative products or services.

S.O. A. 2. To support and accelerate startups that have a good impact in the society

As we highlight the importance of Social Cohesion in our Mission we wanto to focus in those startups which are socially oriented. We want to take this agreement to commit ourselves to prioritise this ideas in case we need to choose between two projects. Social entrepreneurship usually needs external support and we want to be part of the Incubation stage of those companies.

S.O. A. 3. To increase the innovation culture helping new ideas development

Collaborating with UNIDO we can reorient our method of Pre-Incubation, Incubation and Acceleration. The Incubation process will be longer than before because it has been proved that only four months is no enough. This will provide success for more ideas and will bring motivation in the community and the desire of start up and innovate. Generating an innovation culture among the students will have benefits for the company better ideas will come to be supported by C-Hub.

B. TALENT RETENTION AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

In a fast-changing environment like Sudan where civilians have to live facing many unforeseen events talent retention is a big challenge. That's why this strategic line is linked with staff development because both things have to be together to be realistic. Retaining talented employees is more cost-effective than hiring new ones. The recruitment and training process can be expensive, and retaining current employees can save the company money. Skilled employees who feel valued and invested in the company are more likely to be productive and contribute to the success of the organization. The projects C-Hub usually applies for are from one-year minimum, high rotation during this time generates difficulties for the company in following-up properly the project or reorganization of responsibilities.

Moreover, the staff should be attending training sessions to improve their performance and keep their motivation at a high level. Promoting a challenging job to the employee is necessary to keep people in the company. Regarding each individual, an internal career could be a good proposal to engage the best employees with the company strategy. Also, experienced employees can pass on their knowledge and expertise to newer employees, which can improve overall productivity and effectiveness, this will help to contribute to a positive company culture where every employee will feel valuated. Committed staff is always a competitive advantage.

Strategic Objectives

S.O. B. 1. To create a spirit of teamwork and promote engagement.

S.O. B. 2.   To make Chub financially self–reliant.

S.O. B. 3. Professional development of Chub staff

S.O. B. 1. To create a spirit of teamwork and promote engagement.

This objective is crucial, as the C-Hub Team is one of the most important parts of our strategy. By creating a good environment in the workplace everyone will feel comfortable and will work in a more collaborative way. It fosters collaboration among employees, allowing them to pool their knowledge and skills to achieve common goals. This collaboration leads to increased productivity and efficiency as tasks are streamlined and resources are optimized. Moreover, a strong team spirit enhances employee satisfaction and morale, resulting in higher motivation and commitment to the company's objectives. Teamwork also stimulates innovation and problem-solving by encouraging diverse perspectives and the sharing of ideas. It cultivates adaptability and resilience, enabling the organization to navigate change and seize new opportunities. In summary, a culture of teamwork and engagement is crucial for the overall success and competitiveness of a company. Monthly polls will be introduced to evaluate the working atmosphere, this can help by introducing fast necessary changes to keep everyone engaged.

S.O. B. 2. To make Chub financially self-reliant.

Being financially self-reliant as a company includes that our employees are talented to make the necessary reports for donors and for internal controlling. This is crucial to our company, because to be financially self-reliant reduces dependence on external sources of funding, such as loans or investments, and provides the company with the freedom to allocate resources according to its own priorities and strategies. It provides a sense of security and enables the company to make long-term plans, invest in growth opportunities, and weather periods of uncertainty. Additionally, financial self-reliance can improve the company's reputation and credibility.

S.O. B. 3. Professional development of Chub staff

Should we want to encourage our employees to stay in the company, it is necessary to offer them a professional development. An internal carrer is always attractive as it gaves a sense of stability for the employee. Making future plans together will foster engagement. It is good for both because it equips our company with more skilled and competent workforce, capable of taking new challenges. This is not also good for retaining top talent, but to make the company more attractive to work in. Offering pathways withing the organization is a win-win investment.

C. COMMUNITY GROWTH AND SENSE OF BELONGING

With the experience of the Inclusive Females Graphic Designers Program we have felt the empowerment developed in a group of people who are encouraged to make an effort and how a community helps in dealing with difficulties. We want to keep working with the Community of Graphic Designers because they already feel C-Hub as home and we all had an amazing experience during the past months.

Sudanese society needs places to make networking, have an inspiring group of people around and collaboration among them. All of these reasons lead us to think about the importance of creating Communities around leaders and experts in specific fields such as Podcasters, Software Developers or Data Analysis.

As an Incubator that belongs to CCST, the students must feel part of it. Open Days will help everyone to know about us and to reach the most curious and innovative people from the College. Helping the students to dream about new business by encouraging creativity and promoting problem-solving skills will foster the community growth and bring quality to the young entrepreneurs' ideas.

In an Incubator the mouth-to-mouth publicity is a key for being reliable as an organization. That's why promoting the sense of belonging will help C-Hub to create a brand that is valuable for our customers.

The members need to feel themselves listened to by the team and monthly polls will help us not to forget about this. The members community is highly valuable for C-Hub and creating a healthy workplace environment will make our nice facilities even more comfortable to work in.

Strategic Objectives

S.O. C. 1. To support the Graphic Designers Community

S.O. C. 2. To host more communities of entrepreneurs and generate knowledge about specific topics of interest

S.O. C. 3. To engage CCST students in the Chub community

S.O. C. 4. To make the members proud of the work environment

S.O. C. 1. To support the Graphic Designers Community

For the continuity of the She Design Programme meetings will take place in C-Hub to know about the results and needs of the entrepreneurs who want to keep in touch with C-Hub. We will offer a consultancy service negociated with each woman and trying our best to help them looking for support when it is needed. By not percieving C-Hub as a one-time place we will help the future of the community and assure its growth.

S.O. C. 2. To host more communities of entrepreneurs and generate knowledge about specific topics of interest

We see our facilities as a potential place to develop a lot of activities. There are people interested in specific topics who look for a Community to grow and share knowledge. C-Hub can host this communities in order to put together people with similar interests and provide mentorship programs if needed. It is necessary to decide in which fields are we focusing our interest and create events regularly inviting experts on desired topics. By doing so we will attract more people who might become C-Hub members and enjoy our co-working space.

S.O. C. 3. To engage CCST students in the Chub community

As we are next to CCST campus we are very accesible for the students. We want to invite them to come around and think of C-Hub as a future option to receive mentorship, funding opportunities and access to business development tools. The Open Days can be an oportunity to have guest speakers sessions that expose students to real-world startup experiences. Encouraging this gatherings creates opportunities for students to interact with local entrepreneurs and gain hands-on experience. Sharing these stories can inspire and motivate other students, showcasing the possibilities and opportunities that exist within the startup community.

S.O. C. 4. To make the members proud of the work environment

By celebrating events, our members will meet new people passionate about their ideas and this can help to create a motivating atmosphere. Everyone will be proud of the work environment of C-Hub and will be a comfortable place to go everyday even more because of the people who is surroundings.

OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS
S.O. A1 S.O. A2 S.O. A3	S.P. A1.　Collaboration in the Project: Bridging the youth with the Digital Market (Swiss Embassy) + UNHCR S.A. A2.　To collaborate with UNIDO to give support to the chosen startups
S.O. B1 S.O. B2 S.O. B3	S.A. B1.　Monthly satisfaction polls S.A. B2.　Code of behaviour S.A. B3.　Weekly meetings for direct communication S.A. B4.To join ad hoc training for the staff
S.O. C1 S.O. C2 S.O. C3 S.O. C4	S.A. C1.　To prepare a follow-up plan of the Graphic Designers Community created by AICS program S.A. C2.　To organize events and training activities for CCST students at Chub S.A. C3.　Two Open Days during the period of lessons S.A. C4.　Innovation Workshops in C-Hub for students from every year. S.A. C5.　To improve online visibility of the company. S.A. C6.　Easy and professional registration process

C-hub

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