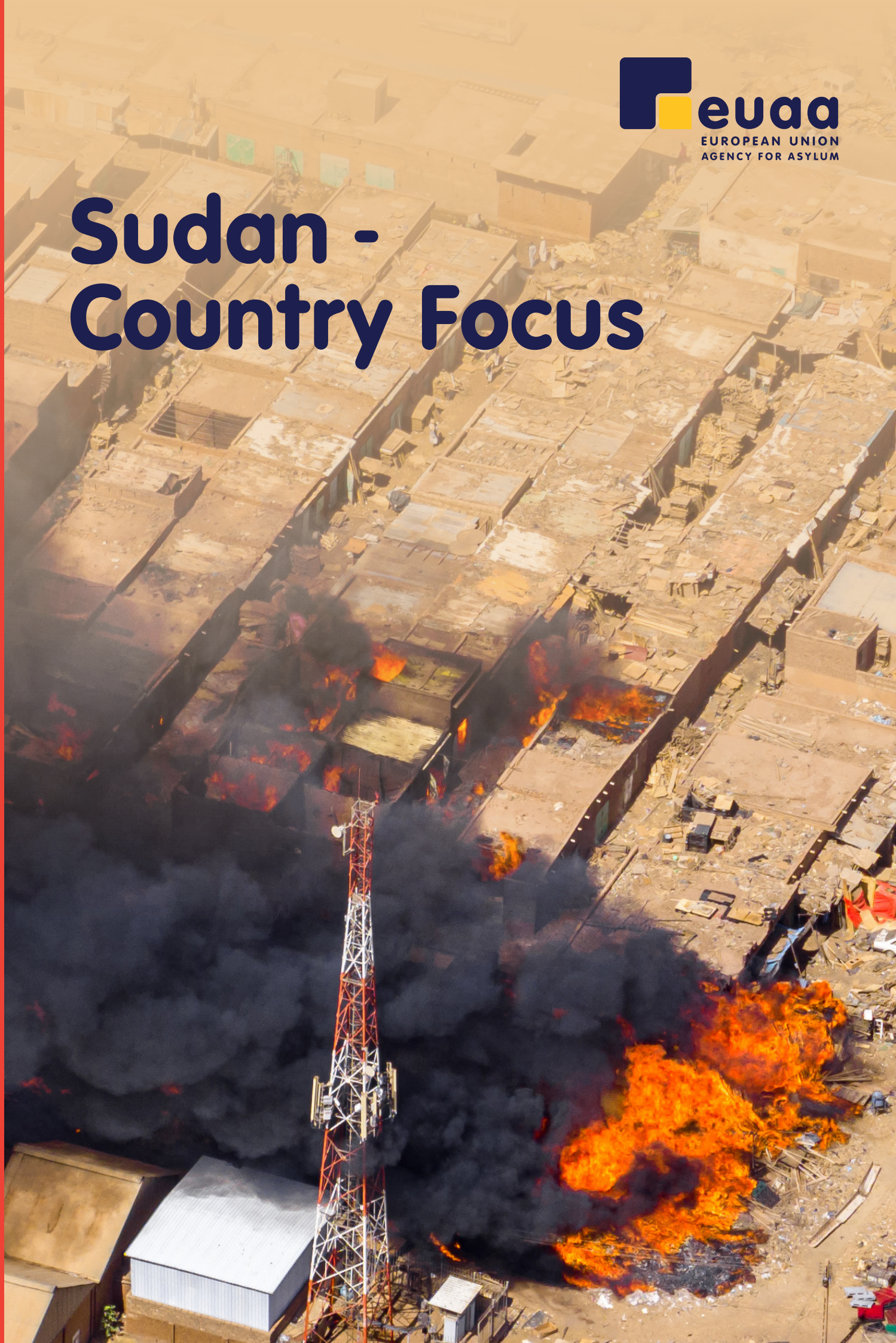


Sudan - Country Focus



Sudan - Country Focus

Security situation in selected areas and selected profiles affected by the conflict

April 2024



Manuscript completed in April 2024

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Cover photo: An aerial photo showing the Sunnah of flames in the market of the Al-Arab neighborhood in the city of Omdurman on June 2, 2023, Abd Almohimen Sayed, ©iStock, 2023, [url](#)

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- Denmark, Danish Immigration Service – DIS, Country of Origin Information
- Eric Reeves, Ph.D., specialised on the politics and human rights situation in Sudan. Since 1999 he has conducted original research and reported on topics relevant for international protection across the whole country, most notably on Darfur.

It must be noted that the review carried out by the mentioned departments, experts or organisations contributes to the overall quality of the report but does not necessarily imply their formal endorsement of the final report, which is the full responsibility of EUAA.





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Disclaimer

This report was written according to the [EUAA COI Report Methodology \(2023\)](#). The report is based on carefully selected sources of information. All sources used are referenced.

The information contained in this report has been researched, evaluated and analysed with utmost care within a limited timeframe. However, this document does not claim to be exhaustive. If a particular event, person or organisation is not mentioned in the report, this does not mean that the event has not taken place or that the person or organisation does not exist. Any event taking place after the finalisation of this report is not included. More information on the reference period for this report can be found in the [Introduction](#).

Furthermore, this report is not conclusive as to the determination or merit of any particular application for international protection. Terminology used should not be regarded as indicative of a particular legal position.

‘Refugee’, ‘risk’ and similar terminology are used as generic terminology and not in the legal sense as applied in the EU Asylum Acquis, the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees.

Neither EUAA nor any person acting on its behalf may be held responsible for the use which may be made of the information contained in this report.

On 19 January 2022, the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) became the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA). All references to EASO, EASO products and bodies should be understood as references to the EUAA.

The drafting of this report was finalised on 22 March 2024. The report covers the period 15 April 2023 – 31 January 2024. Any event taking place after the end date of the reference period is not included in this report, unless specifically indicated in exceptional cases and only to corroborate pre-existing trends. More information on the reference period for this report can be found in the methodology section of the [Introduction](#).



Glossary and abbreviations

Term	Definition
<i>Abid or abed, abeed</i>	Pejorative racial slur
ACJPS	African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies
ACLED	The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project
<i>Al-Fa'a</i>	Ethnically driven civilian recruitment campaigns
AOAV	Action on Armed Violence
AWSD	Aid Workers Security Database
CAR	Central African Republic
CIR	Centre for Information Resilience (UK)
COI	Country of Origin Information
CPJ	Committee to Protect Journalists
CPoS	Communist Party of Sudan
CRP	Central Reserve Police
CRSV	Conflict Related Sexual Violence
CVAW	Combating Violence Against Women
Darfur	Historically refers to the entire Darfur region, which was divided into three states in 1994 and then subsequently into five states in 2011. Sometimes it is also known as Greater Darfur.
DUP	Democratic Unionist Party



Term	Definition
ERRs	Emergency Response Rooms
ETC	Emergency Telecommunication Cluster
EU+ countries	Member States of the European Union and associated countries
EUAA	European Union Agency for Asylum
FEWS NET	The Famine Early Warning Systems Network
FFC-CC	Forces for Freedom and Change – Central Council or Command
FFC-DM	Forces for Freedom and Change – Democratic Block
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GSLF	Gathering of Sudan Liberation Forces
GSJEF	Gathering of the Sudanese Justice and Equality Forces
<i>Hawakir</i>	Territories
HDX	Humanitarian Database Exchange (UNOCHA)
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IDP	Internal Displaced Person
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
IOM	International Organisation for Migrations
IPC	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification
JEM	Justice and Equality Movement
JPA	Juba Peace Agreement



Term	Definition
Kordofans, The	Referring to all Kordofan States or regions, also known as Greater Kordofan
LNA	Libyan National Army (self-styled)
<i>Madhhab</i>	School of thought within Islamic jurisprudence
MiCT	Media in Cooperation and Transition
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières
<i>Mustanfareen</i>	The mobilised, referred to armed popular resistance
NCP	National Congress Party
NNGO	National Non-Governmental Organisation
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
NUP	National Umma Party
OCII	Organisation to Combat Illicit Immigration (Libya)
OHCHR	Office High Commissioner for human Rights
<i>Omda</i>	Leader of a village
RSF	Reporters Sans Frontières, Reporters Without Borders
RSF	Rapid Support Forces
SA	Sudanese Alliance
SAF	Sudan Armed Forces
SCP	Sudan Congress Party
SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse





Term	Definition
SGBV	Sexual Gender Based Violence
SIHA Network	Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa
SJN	Sudanese Journalists Network
SJS	Sudanese Journalism Syndicate
SLM-AW	Sudan Liberation Movement – Abdel Wahid al-Nur
SLM-MM	Sudan Liberation Movement – Minni Minnawi
SLM-Tambour	Sudan Liberation Movement – Mustafa Tambour
SLM-TC	Sudan Liberation Movement the-Transitional Council of Al-Hadi Idris
SLM-Unity	Sudan Liberation Movement-Unity
SPLM-N-Agar	Sudan People’s Liberation Movement-North-Malik Agar
SPLM-N-al-Hilu	Sudan People’s Liberation Movement-North-al-Hilu
SPLM-N-DRM	Sudan People’s Liberation Movement-North–Democratic Revolutionary Movement
SSA	WHO Surveillance System for Attacks on Health Care
Tariqa	Sufi doctrine or path of spiritual learning
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UCAV	Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicles
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees





Term	Definition
UNITAMS	United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
WGSS	Women and Girls Safe Spaces
WHO	World Health Organisation
<i>Zurug</i>	Denoting darkness or Black, derogatory



Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide relevant contextual information in view of the assessment of applications for international protection, including refugee status and subsidiary protection.

The report provides an overview of the situation in Sudan, in the period 15 April 2023 – 31 January 2024, focusing on security issues and selected profiles relevant for international protection, that have been impacted by the conflict. Starting from the outbreak of the hostilities in April 2023, the report focuses first on the disruptive impact on the communication and media situation in the country throughout the reporting period. After highlighting this impact on all aspects addressed in the remainder of the report, notably regarding non-reporting and underreporting issues, the report proceeds to address the humanitarian and the security situation in the country. In line with the terms of reference (ToR) and the main conflict areas as of January 2024, the report focuses on selected regions/states, namely Darfur, the Kordofans (meaning the Kordofan states, also referred to as Greater Kordofan), Khartoum and Al Jazirah.

In the second part, the report focuses on a selection of the main profiles that have been particularly affected. The targeting of these profiles has been widely reported, although intermittently and fragmentarily, by local and international sources alike. The report is complemented by the input of various international experts on the most unreported and underreported aspects of the issues addressed.

Methodology

The present report was written according to the [EUAA COI Report Methodology \(2023\)](#)¹ and the [EUAA COI Writing and Referencing Guide \(2023\)](#).² It is based on carefully selected sources of information. All sources used are referenced.

Defining the terms of reference

The terms of reference of this report are based on the information needs identified by EUAA's target users, and build on internal and external consultations with experts and with EUAA COI Specialist Network members. The terms of reference for this report can be found in [Annex II](#).

Collecting information

The information gathered results from three main sets of sources: extensive desk research, conducted using predominantly public, specialised paper-based, and electronic sources until March 2024; occasional consultation with international experts conducted by EUAA in the

¹ EUAA, COI Report Methodology, February 2023, [url](#)

² EUAA, COI Writing and Referencing Guide, February 2023, [url](#)



period January – April 2024; peer-review process conducted by EU+ national COI experts as well as an international expert on Sudan, until April 2024.

All sources used are referenced in the [Bibliography](#). Wherever information could not be found within the timeframes for drafting this report after carefully consulting a range of sources, this is stated in the report.

Research challenges

The present report has encountered a number of research challenges, including: lack of or limited reporting on the issues covered by the ToR due to the communication outage affecting media coverage and communication opportunities in extensive areas of the country, for extensive time spans during the reference period; targeting of media personnel normally reporting on the issues addressed by the report and that often resulted in self-censorship and relocation; limited or scarce international and national media and other organisations presence in most of Sudan, as a consequence of the on-going hostilities; the sensitivity of the issues at stake, and the documented reluctance of affected survivors to report about incidents or events on safety and security grounds.

Quality control

To ensure adherence to the [EUAA COI Report Methodology \(2023\)](#),³ as well as compliance with the ToR and factual accuracy of the report, a quality review was carried out by COI specialists from the countries and organisations listed as reviewers in the [Acknowledgements](#) section. Moreover, the report benefits from the peer-review of a prominent Sudan expert also mentioned in the [Acknowledgements](#).

All comments made by reviewers were taken into consideration and the vast majority of them were implemented. The quality review phase was carried out up to 12 April 2024. EUAA also performed the final quality review and editing of the text.

The review carried out by the mentioned departments, experts or organisations, contributes to the overall quality of the report, but does not necessarily imply their formal endorsement of the final report, which is the full responsibility of the EUAA.

Sources

This report has relied upon English-language sources. In accordance with [EUAA COI Report Methodology](#), a range of different published documentary sources have been consulted. The information results mainly from desk research of public specialised paper-based, and electronic sources. These include:

- Reports produced by various bodies of the United Nations (UN), including the humanitarian cluster;

³ EUAA, COI Report Methodology, February 2023, [url](#)



- Reports produced by other international and non-governmental organisations active in the humanitarian field;
- Reports produced by international governmental and non-governmental organisations, foundations, and advocacy organisations;
- Academic publications and think tank reports;
- Reports from international, regional and, whenever available, local media sources in English;
- Social media posts by prominent local sources reporting on the situation on the ground, notably on X;
- Reports and datasets by organisations specialised in specific topics or profiles, such as security and conflict monitoring;
- Reports produced by local and grassroot organisations, often from Darfur or reporting specifically on Darfur.

Finally, as far as maps are concerned, the administrative and food security maps were borrowed from UNOCHA and FEWS NET respectively. The map on the security situation and territorial control was developed and tailored to the needs of the report by PolGeoNow, and in coordination with the EUAA.

For additional details see the [Annex 1: Bibliography](#).

Structure and use of the report

The report is divided into two parts. The first part comprises a general introductory part and a section on the security situation in selected regions. In the introductory part the report focuses on the general political and security situation of the country as of January 2024, and then addresses the communication and the humanitarian situation at country level, including their implications in terms of quality and quantity of information available to shed light on the issues addressed in the remainder of the report. The section on the security situation maps actors, conflict dynamics as well as security trends, events and major impacts on the civilian population in following areas: Darfur and the Kordofans, Khartoum and Al Jazirah states.

The second part of the report addresses a selection – non exhaustive – of the main profiles affected by the conflict. More specifically, the report addresses the situation of: journalists and media personnel, humanitarian and health personnel, political opponents, non-Arabs/Africans in Darfur, women and girls, as well as child soldiers.

[illegible]

1. Country security and humanitarian situation

1.1. Country overview

1.1.1. Political situation and crisis background

On 15 April 2023, hostilities broke out in Sudan's capital, Khartoum, between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), led by General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, and a major paramilitary force, designated as the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), led by Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, known as 'Hemedti'.⁵ Both leaders collaborated in 2019 to the ousting of Omar Hassan al-Bashir, Sudan's long-standing dictator,⁶ and then came into office as respectively the president and vice-president of the Transitional Sovereignty Council, the junta that took over the running of the country.⁷ Both leaders also collaborated to topple a 'fragile' civilian-led government in 2021,⁸ which was chaired by prime minister Abdalla Hamdok.⁹

The controversial political process that ensued engendered the signing of a framework agreement in December 2022, which was reportedly 'widely accepted in the country' by various military and civilian parties,¹⁰ including pro-democracy groups and most notably the Forces for Freedom and Change (FFC).¹¹ However, in April 2023, mounting tensions between the two military leaders broke out into an open conflict, which was apparently triggered by disagreements on the integration of the RSF into the military.¹² Reportedly this compromised any concrete possibility to restore a civilian rule in the country in the near future.¹³

What started as a pure 'power struggle' between the two military leaders, as various sources put it,¹⁴ morphed into a full-fledged nationwide war, spanning large portions of the country: most notably, as of January 2024, Khartoum, Darfur, the Kordofans, and Al Jazirah.¹⁵ Both

⁵ Washington Post (The), Behind chaos in Sudan is a broader global power struggle, 18 April 2023, [url](#); BBC, Sudan crisis: Burhan and Hemedti - the two generals at the heart of the conflict, 17 April 2023, [url](#); Hager, A., The War in Sudan: How Weapons and Networks Shattered a Power Struggle, February 2024, [url](#)

⁶ The Washington Post, Behind chaos in Sudan is a broader global power struggle, 18 April 2023, [url](#)

⁷ Prunier, G., Is Sudan still a state?, March 2024, [url](#)

⁸ The Washington Post, Behind chaos in Sudan is a broader global power struggle, 18 April 2023, [url](#); France 24, Sudan's power struggle an 'existential' tussle between two generals, two armies, 17 April 2023, [url](#)

⁹ Al Jazeera, Profile: Abdalla Hamdok, Sudan's outgoing civilian leader, 3 January 2022, [url](#)

¹⁰ France 24, Sudan's power struggle an 'existential' tussle between two generals, two armies, 17 April 2023, [url](#); The Washington Post, Behind chaos in Sudan is a broader global power struggle, 18 April 2023, [url](#)

¹¹ France 24, Sudan's military, civilian factions sign framework deal aimed at ending crisis, 5 December 2022, [url](#)

¹² The Washington Post, Behind chaos in Sudan is a broader global power struggle, 18 April 2023, [url](#)

¹³ de Waal, A., Sudan is collapsing – here's how to stop it, 2 February 2024, [url](#); The Washington Post, Behind chaos in Sudan is a broader global power struggle, 18 April 2023, [url](#)

¹⁴ Hager, A., The War in Sudan: How Weapons and Networks Shattered a Power Struggle, February 2024, [url](#); NYT, Atrocities Mount in Sudan as War Spirals, U.N. Says, 24 February 2024, [url](#); Hager, A., The Sudan crisis: A power struggle by design, 18 May 2023, [url](#); France 24, Sudan's power struggle an 'existential' tussle between two generals, two armies, 17 April 2023, [url](#); The Washington Post, Behind chaos in Sudan is a broader global power struggle, 18 April 2023, [url](#)

¹⁵ Hager, A., The War in Sudan: How Weapons and Networks Shattered a Power Struggle, February 2024, [url](#); NYT, Atrocities Mount in Sudan as War Spirals, U.N. Says, 24 February 2024, [url](#)



sides have been accused of indiscriminate attacks against civilians,¹⁶ as well as of war crimes and crimes against humanity,¹⁷ with the RSF more often identified as the perpetrator.¹⁸

At the same time, ten months into the conflict, the impact on the civilian population had been termed as ‘devastating’ by various sources.¹⁹ As of January 2024, the conflict had caused a humanitarian crisis of ‘unprecedented size’,²⁰ with millions displaced in the largest internal displacement crisis in the world.²¹ Hunger and acute malnutrition were affecting millions of Sudanese across the country, with people already dying from starvation at the beginning of February 2024, notably children.²² Moreover, the civilian population at large was facing a continuously unfolding protection crisis, whereby ‘security concerns’ were not limited to conflict hotspots – with ‘people who want[ed] to leave... trapped in conflict areas’ – but also extended to relatively stable areas.²³

Against this backdrop, the widespread crackdown on media outlets,²⁴ coupled with the repeated communication blackouts experienced during the reference period, had severely affected reporting opportunities and capacities across the country.²⁵

¹⁶ OHCHR, Situation of human rights in the Sudan - Advance unedited version, A/HRC/55/29, 22 February 2024, [url](#), para. 18; de Waal, A., Sudan is collapsing – here’s how to stop it, 2 February 2024, [url](#)

¹⁷ OHCHR, Situation of human rights in the Sudan - Advance unedited version, A/HRC/55/29, 22 February 2024, [url](#), para. 32, 46, 67, 100; UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), p. 2, para. 56; AI, Sudan: War crimes rampant as civilians killed in both deliberate and indiscriminate attacks – new report, 3 August 2023, [url](#); Hager, A., The War in Sudan: How Weapons and Networks Shattered a Power Struggle, February 2024, [url](#)

¹⁸ OHCHR, Situation of human rights in the Sudan - Advance unedited version, A/HRC/55/29, 22 February 2024, [url](#), para. 46; UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), p. 2, para. 57, 61-63; Hager, A., The War in Sudan: How Weapons and Networks Shattered a Power Struggle, February 2024, [url](#); AI, Sudan: War crimes rampant as civilians killed in both deliberate and indiscriminate attacks – new report, 3 August 2023, [url](#);

¹⁹ HRW, Sudan Conflict Fuels World’s Largest Internal Displacement, 31 January 2024, [url](#); de Waal, A., Sudan is collapsing – here’s how to stop it, 2 February 2024, [url](#); Al Jazeera, UNICEF says 700,000 children in Sudan face life-threatening malnutrition, 9 February 2024, [url](#); Middle East Eye, Sudan: Civilians dying of starvation due to warring sides limiting aid access, says WFP, 2 February 2024, [url](#)

²⁰ de Waal, A., Sudan is collapsing – here’s how to stop it, 2 February 2024, [url](#); HRW, Sudan Conflict Fuels World’s Largest Internal Displacement, 31 January 2024, [url](#)

²¹ The Guardian, UN warns of ‘epic suffering’ in Sudan and appeals for \$4bn in aid, 7 February 2024, [url](#)

²² AP, UN food agency says it has reports of people dying from starvation amid the conflict in Sudan, 2 February 2024, [url](#); Middle East Eye, Sudan: Civilians dying of starvation due to warring sides limiting aid access, says WFP, 2 February 2024, [url](#); The Guardian, UN warns of ‘epic suffering’ in Sudan and appeals for \$4bn in aid, 7 February 2024, [url](#); Darfur 24, Amid local and international warnings, Sudan on the verge of hunger disaster, 21 February 2024, [url](#); Middle East Eye, Sudan’s forgotten masses are dying every day of starvation, 29 February 2024, [url](#)

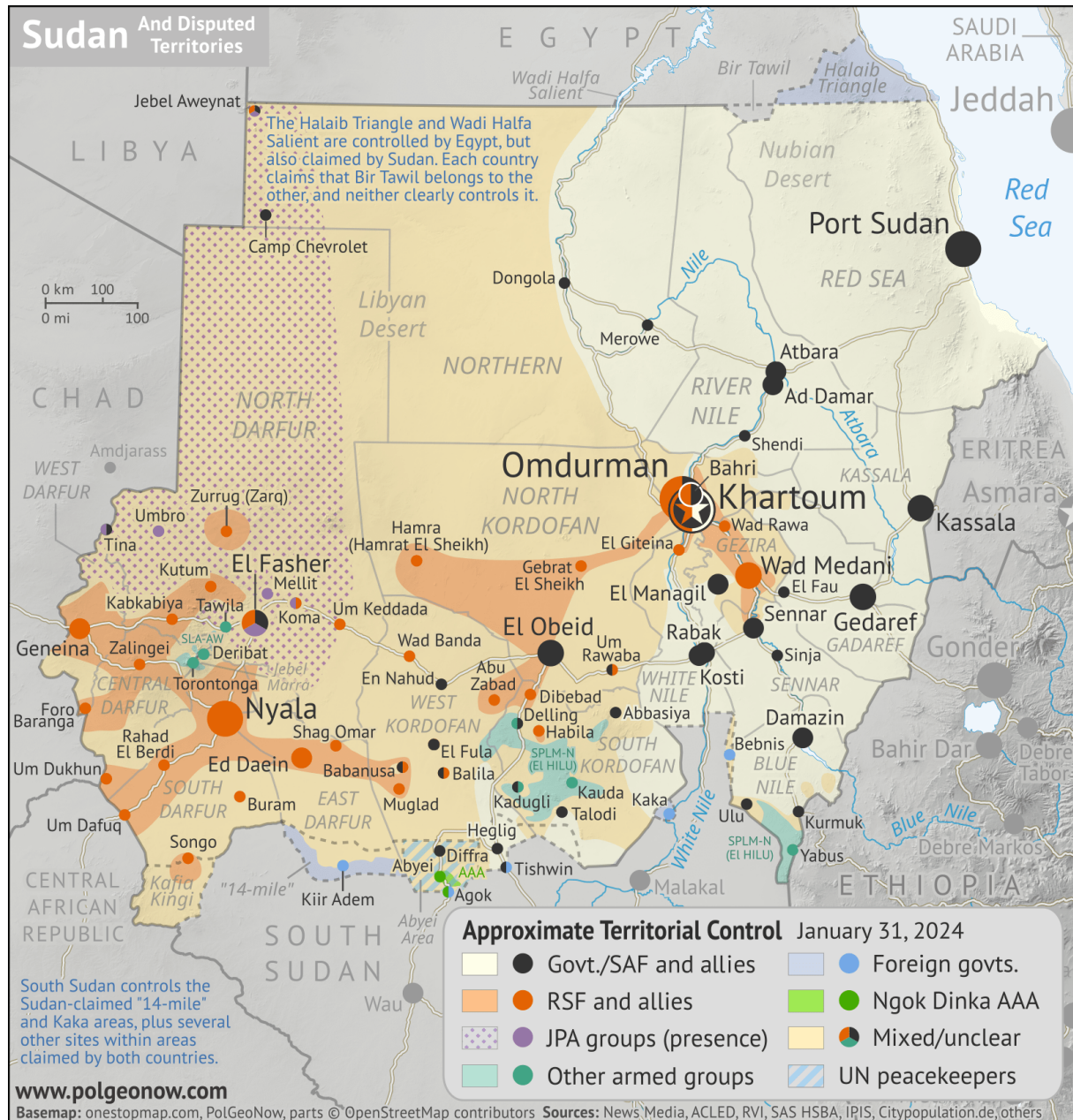
²³ REACH, Sudan conflict: Intensifying violence, systems collapse, and surging humanitarian needs, January 2024, [url](#), p. 2

²⁴ Ayin, Network, The war in Sudan silences journalists, coverage, 21 January 2024, [url](#); Columbia Journalism Review, Q&A: Hiba Morgan on Sudan’s forgotten war, 17 January 2024, [url](#)

²⁵ SIHA Network, Access to telecommunication services is a basic human right and should not be weaponized in Sudan’s conflict, 21 February 2024, [url](#); Tahrir Institute, #KeepItOn in times of war: Sudan’s communications shutdown must be reversed urgently, 9 February 2024, [url](#); CPJ, CPJ alarmed by extended communications blackout in Sudan, 5 February 2024, [url](#); ETC, Sudan, conflict, ETC Situation Report #14, 31 January 2024, [url](#), p. 2



1.1.2. Map on territorial control of Sudan as of 31 January 2024



Map 2. Sudan Approximate Territorial Control as of 31 January 2024, Political Geography Now,
www.polgeonow.com.²⁶

Note: the depictions on this map do not express any stance from the EUAA concerning legal status or effective control over any country, territory, city, or area. Efforts were made to maintain accuracy; however, there is no assurance that its features are spatially or temporally precise or fit for a particular purpose. This map is provided without any form of warranty, whether expressed or implied.

²⁶ PolGeoNow, Sudan Approximate Territorial Control as of 31 January 2024, n.a., non-public source.



1.1.3. Security situation

(a) Territorial control

At the end of January 2024, the country was fragmented into different areas of control. The SAF and the RSF were the primary factions in conflict, alongside local armed groups controlling regional territories.²⁷ The RSF held sway over the western states except for North Darfur, after gaining control of strategic cities like Nyala, Zalingei, El Geneina and Ed Daien in greater Darfur. Sudan's capital city, Khartoum, was mostly controlled by the RSF while the SAF controlled part of Omdurman, Khartoum's sister city.²⁸

The SAF retained control over the eastern and northern regions, including Port Sudan, in the Red Sea state, which served as *de facto* administrative capital and an operation base for the government and humanitarian aid agencies.²⁹ Meanwhile, the RSF continued seizing new territories. In November 2023, Jebel Awlia, a city in the south of Khartoum state fell under RSF control,³⁰ followed by the city of Wad Madani, the Al Jazirah capital, in December 2023.³¹

In South Kordofan, part of the Nuba Mountains region was controlled by the Sudan People's Liberation Movement - North al-Hilu (SPLM-N-al-Hilu). A Joint Force including factions like the Sudan Liberation Movement - Minni Minnawi faction (SLM-MM), the Justice and Equality Movement - Jibril Ibrahim faction (JEM, also JEM-Jibril), alongside other former rebels who signed a peace agreement with the government in 2020, controlled the northern parts of Darfur. These groups exhibited political divisions, with some pledging support to the army and others maintaining neutrality.³² See remainder of this section, [1.1.3 Security situation](#), and [1.2 Security situation](#) in selected regions for more information on the various armed groups.

For further reference on territorial control see **Map 2**.

(b) Major state and non-state armed groups

In the reference period, the primary opposing parties in the conflict were the SAF and the RSF.³³ The JEM, the SLM and the SPLM-N were among the main armed groups operating during the same period.³⁴ See section [1.2 Security situation in selected regions](#) for more information on the presence of armed groups at regional level.

The Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) is the national army and is composed of the Ground Force, Navy, Sudanese Air Force and Border Guards.³⁵ General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan is the

²⁷ Sudan War Monitor, Map of the Areas of Control in Sudan, 1 February 2024, [url](#)

²⁸ Sudan War Monitor, Map of the Areas of Control in Sudan, 1 February 2024, [url](#)

²⁹ Bloomberg, A Red Sea City Becomes a Haven for Refugees From Sudan's Civil War, 20 June 2023, [url](#)

³⁰ Sudan War Monitor, Rapid collapse of SAF defenses in Jebel Aulia, 20 November 2023, [url](#)

³¹ UNOCHA, Sudan: Clashes in Wad Madani between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and Rapid Support Forces (RSF) - Flash Update No: 03 (as of 18 December 2023), [url](#)

³² Sudan War Monitor, Map of the Areas of Control in Sudan, 1 February 2024, [url](#)

³³ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, S/2023/355, 16 May 2023, [url](#), p.1

³⁴ Insecurity Insight, Sudan Situation Report Analysis, September 2023, [url](#), p. 3-4

³⁵ CIA, The World Factbook, Sudan, 13 March 2024, [url](#)



Commander in chief of the SAF and Chairman of the Transitional Sovereignty Council.³⁶ The SAF is estimated to have around 200 000 active personnel,³⁷ an air force and access to heavy weaponry, tanks, and armoured personnel carriers.³⁸ The army oversees a network of national and international companies in a wide range of sectors including defence, agriculture, banking, mining, transport, construction, and private security.³⁹ Armed groups backing the SAF in the conflict during the reference period included:

- the Central Reserve Police (CRP): a militarised police unit falling under the responsibility of the Ministry of Interior and often referred to as ‘Abu Tira’;⁴⁰
- the SPLM-N-Agar: a rebel faction mainly based in the Blue Nile State.⁴¹ See section [1.2.4 The Kordofans](#) for more information;
- the SLM-Tambour: a faction of the Sudanese Liberation Movement (SLM) based in Darfur. See section [1.2.1 Darfur](#) for more information;
- the JEM: an Islamist rebel group based in Darfur. See section [1.2.1 Darfur](#) for more information;
- members of the former Sudanese Alliance (SA), the Gathering of the Sudan Liberation Forces (GSLF) and The Gathering of the Sudanese Justice and Equality Forces (GSJEF) led by Abdallah Banda.⁴² See section [1.2.1 Darfur](#) for more information;
- civilian volunteers known as “Popular Resistance”⁴³ or “national civil resistance”⁴⁴: since June 2023, the SAF encouraged civilian mobilisation and supported armed movements across the country.⁴⁵ See [1.1.3\(e\) Mass mobilisation and forced recruitment](#) for more information.

Some of the above armed groups are also signatories of the Juba Peace Agreement (JPA), a document signed in 2020 after the removal of al-Bashir in 2019 and the formation of a transitional government. Peace negotiations involved representatives of Sudan’s civilian-military transitional government and the leaders of the main armed and civilian opposition groups. The complex negotiations aimed at addressing key topics related to resources and governance.⁴⁶ Tensions related to the JPA implementation have led to violence at regional level in 2022.⁴⁷ Signatories of the agreement included the JEM, the SLM/MM, the Malik Agar faction of the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement–North (SPLM-N-Agar), the Sudan Liberation Movement Transitional Council (SLM-TC), the SA, the GSLF and the Third

³⁶ Sudan War Monitor, Who’s who in Sudan’s new civil war?, 31 August 2023, [url](#)

³⁷ Al Jazeera, The Sudan crisis: A power struggle by design, 18 May 2023, [url](#); MEE, How the UAE kept the Sudan war raging, 25 January 2024, [url](#)

³⁸ Al Jazeera, The Sudan crisis: A power struggle by design, 18 May 2023, [url](#)

³⁹ Clingendael Netherlands Institute of International Relations, Kleptocracy versus Democracy, October 2023, [url](#), pp. 10-11

⁴⁰ REDRESS, Sudan: Central Reserve Police, Briefing (March 2022), [url](#); CIA, The World Factbook, Sudan, 5 March 2024, [url](#)

⁴¹ Sudan War Monitor, Map of the Areas of Control in Sudan, Zones of military control as of 1 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴² Sudan Tribune, Another Darfur faction joins Sudanese army in fight against RSF, 20 November 2023, [url](#)

⁴³ Sudan War Monitor, Map of the Areas of Control in Sudan, 1 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁴ Ayin network, Sudan’s mass arming of civilians, 24 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁵ Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Sudan: Armed Popular Resistance and Widening Civil Unrest, 15 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁶ RVI, Paying For Peace: The Political Economy Of The Juba Peace Agreement, 2023, [url](#), pp. 8-10, 34

⁴⁷ XCEPT, One Year After the Coup: What Next for Sudan’s Juba Peace Agreement?, 16 November 2022, [url](#)



Front/Tamazuj.⁴⁸ Notably, other Sudanese armed groups such as the SPLM-N-al-Hilu and the Sudan Liberation Movement – Abdel Wahid al-Nur (SLM-AW) abstained from signing the agreement.⁴⁹

In April 2023, the Darfur signatory groups of the JPA formed the so-called Joint Forces.⁵⁰ This neutral alliance, initially geared towards facilitating humanitarian assistance and protecting commercial convoys, shifted to supporting military operations by the SAF by November 2023 to, in their words, ‘safeguard civilians’.⁵¹ See section [1.2.1 Darfur](#) for more information on the Joint Forces.

The Rapid Support Forces (RSF) is a paramilitary group formed in 2013 and led by General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, also known as Hemedti.⁵² The group’s origins stem from the Janjaweed,⁵³ a government-backed ethnic militia,⁵⁴ known for its involvement in the Darfur conflict in 2000s; one of its former senior leader was charged for war crimes and crimes against humanity by the International Criminal Court.⁵⁵ The RSF was formally legitimised by the government as regular force in 2017.⁵⁶ According to HRW, the armed group committed serious violations of international human rights and humanitarian law in Darfur in 2014-2015,⁵⁷ as well as in 2003-2004.⁵⁸ The RSF supported both the 2019 coup and the October 2021 coup.⁵⁹ The group was officially dissolved on 18 April 2023 and declared a rebel force.⁶⁰ It is estimated to have between 70 000 and 150 000 active personnel,⁶¹ and the availability of some government-supplied arms and confiscated arms.⁶² As of August 2023, the RSF introduced the use of sophisticated weaponry such as Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicles (UCAVs), howitzers and anti-aircrafts weapons.⁶³ With a complex financial network controlling the gold market and engaging in mercenary operations overseas, the paramilitary group has established its own independent sources of income.⁶⁴ According to sources, these operations

⁴⁸ ConstitutionNet, Juba Agreement for Peace in Sudan, Official English version, 3 October 2020, [url](#), p. 239

⁴⁹ IDEA, The Juba Agreement for Peace in Sudan, 2021, [url](#), p. 12

⁵⁰ Sudan Tribune, Darfur Joint Force deploys more troops to protect civilians, 2 December 2023, [url](#)

⁵¹ Sudan Tribune, Darfur Joint Force deploys more troops to protect civilians, 2 December 2023, [url](#)

⁵² The Washington Post, Who are the Rapid Support Forces clashing with Sudan’s military?, 15 April 2023, [url](#);

FP, The Man Who Terrorized Darfur Is Leading Sudan’s Supposed Transition, 14 May 2019, [url](#)

⁵³ Al, Sudan: Darfur: “Too many people killed for no reason”, 3 February 2004, [url](#)

⁵⁴ Al, Sudan: Darfur: “Too many people killed for no reason”, 3 February 2004, [url](#); ODI, Talking to the other side, Humanitarian engagement with armed non-state actors in Darfur, Sudan, 2003 - 2012, August 2013, [url](#), pp. 21-22;

⁵⁵ ICC, Case Information Sheet, The Prosecutor v. Ali Muhammad Ali Abd-Al-Rahman, 10 July 2023, [url](#); ICC, Darfur, Sudan, ICC-02/05, [url](#)

⁵⁶ Insecurity Insight, Sudan situation report, July 2023, [url](#), p. 3

⁵⁷ Human Rights Watch, “Men with no mercy”, 9 September 2015, [url](#)

⁵⁸ HRW, If We Return, We Will Be Killed: Consolidation of Ethnic Cleansing in Darfur, Sudan, 15 November 2004, [url](#), p. 1

⁵⁹ Reuters, Who are Sudan’s Rapid Support Forces?, 6 September 2023, [url](#)

⁶⁰ Radio Dabanga, Sudan’s Gen El Burhan dissolves Hemedti’s RSF militia as ‘rebel force’, 18 April 2023, [url](#)

⁶¹ Al Jazeera, The Sudan crisis: A power struggle by design, 18 May 2023, [url](#); MEE, How the UAE kept the Sudan war raging, 25 January 2024, [url](#)

⁶² Al Jazeera, The Sudan crisis: A power struggle by design, 18 May 2023, [url](#)

⁶³ UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 39

⁶⁴ UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), p. 2, para. 118, 119, 120



enabled the RSF to offer its troops high salaries⁶⁵ paid in cash,⁶⁶ acquire weapons, fund media campaigns and buy political support.⁶⁷ During the reference period, the RSF was backed by:

- local militia groups, particularly from the Arab communities in Darfur.⁶⁸ In July 2023, according to Insecurity Insight, seven tribal leaders pledged support to the RSF, namely leaders from the ‘Beni Halba, Tarjam, Habaniya, Fellata, Misseriya, Taaisha and Rizeigat tribes’. Misseriya, Hawazma and Rizeigat are Baggara tribes,⁶⁹ with the Rizeigat most implicated in fighting and widely considered to be the backbone of the RSF.⁷⁰ For more information on the Rizeigat and the Baggara, including as opposed to the Abbala identity dimension, see section [2.4.1\(a\) Arab ‘identity’](#) and [2.4.1\(c\) Baggara versus Abbala](#). As reported by the UN Panel of Experts in January 2024, ‘the mobilization of armed members from local Arab communities was facilitated by traditional chiefs’ as in the case of Tarjam, Fellata and Misseriya members.⁷¹ The report indicated how a recruitment campaign was conducted in South Darfur prior to the beginning of the conflict involving hundreds of young people from Tarjam, Beni Halba, Habbaniyah, Taisha, Sa’ada, Misseriya and Fellata local Arab communities. The source indicated that Arab leaders facilitated the recruitment of members of their communities by the RSF, receiving money and goods in return.⁷² According to the UN Panel of Experts, RSF officers called for support from their own communities getting them directly involved in the clashes.⁷³ In ‘Greater Kordofan’, a number of Misseriya leaders expressed in January 2024 their dissent towards the RSF fighting in their areas,⁷⁴ while other showed support for the RSF activities in the region;⁷⁵
- the armed group Third Front known as Tamazuj, which declared its support to the RSF in August 2023.⁷⁶ See section [1.2.1\(b\) Armed actors](#) for more information.

(c) International actors

External actors played a role in the conflict providing political and military support to the main warring parties.⁷⁷ According to sources, the RSF was provided military supplies – ranging from small weapons to anti-aircraft missiles - by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) through the

⁶⁵ Tahrir Institute for Middle East Policy, Money Is Power: Hemedti and the RSF’s Paramilitary Industrial Complex in Sudan, 26 July 2023, [url](#); Global Witness, Exposing the RSF’s secret financial network, 9 December 2019, [url](#)

⁶⁶ UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 121

⁶⁷ UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 116

⁶⁸ Insecurity Insight, Sudan Situation Report Analysis, September 2023, [url](#), p. 3; Radio Dabanga, Public support for the RSF from seven tribal leaders in South Darfur, 4 July 2023, [url](#)

⁶⁹ Insecurity Insight, Sudan Situation Report Analysis, September 2023, [url](#), p.5

⁷⁰ Reeves, E., email exchange, 28 March 2024

⁷¹ UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 108, 109

⁷² UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 105, 106

⁷³ UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 110

⁷⁴ Sudan Tribune, Tension erupts within Misseriya tribe over RSF’s plans to seize West Kordofan, 12 January 2024, [url](#)

⁷⁵ Sudan Tribune, Misseriya leaders warn of invasion, oil damage in RSF assault on W. Kordofan garrisons, 13 January 2024, [url](#)

⁷⁶ PolGeoNow, Sudan War Control Map & Timeline – October 2023, [url](#); Sudan Tribune, Tamazuj group aligns with RSF in Sudan’s ongoing war, 17 August 2023, [url](#)

⁷⁷ Al Sharq strategic research, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Egypt: Complex calculations as the fighting continues in Sudan, 11 May 2023, [url](#)



Amdjarass airport in Chad.⁷⁸ Reuters reported that, according to the U.S. Treasury Department, the RSF received military support from the Wagner Group,⁷⁹ a Russia-linked mercenary force.⁸⁰ Other sources indicated that weapons were smuggled in the country from the Wagner's base in the Central African Republic (CAR).⁸¹ Libya has also ties to the RSF reportedly providing fuel, ammunition and medical and logistical equipment.⁸² Iran, according to Bloomberg, has supplied the SAF with weapons and combat drones.⁸³ Media sources recounted the existence of at least five training camps, mostly 'linked to Burhan's army or to figures from the former Islamist-backed regime',⁸⁴ established by Sudanese armed groups in Eritrea.⁸⁵ Egypt and Saudi Arabia are reportedly supporting the SAF.⁸⁶ As indicated by the Wall Street Journal, Ukrainian troops were deployed starting from mid-August 2023 onwards to support SAF operations in Khartoum.⁸⁷

(d) Main conflict dynamics

According to the Rule of Law in Armed Conflicts project (RULAC), 'the Government of Sudan [SAF] is involved in separate non-international armed conflicts against a number of non-state armed groups', notably the RSF, two factions of the SLM in Darfur, and at least two factions of the SPLM-N in the Kordofans.⁸⁸ According to the analysis by ACAPS, the severity level of the conflict is very high.⁸⁹

The RSF traces its origin to the Arab militias established and armed by Al-Bashir's government to fight non-Arab groups in Darfur. Gradually expanding its capacity over time and securing its own source of income, this group evolved into a rival force against the SAF.⁹⁰ Armed confrontations and violence erupted on 15 April 2023, following days of escalating tensions between the SAF and the RSF. The SAF and the RSF could not find an agreement on the timelines for the integration of the RSF into the national army and the establishment of the command structure.⁹¹ The SAF advocated for a two-year integration timeline, while the RSF supported a ten-year timeframe instead.⁹² Following the outbreak of the conflict, members of

⁷⁸ UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 41; MEE, How the UAE kept the Sudan war raging, 25 January 2024, [url](#); NYT, Talking Peace in Sudan, the U.A.E Secretly Fuels the Fight, 29 September 2023, [url](#)

⁷⁹ Reuters, US warns Wagner Group seeking arms, slaps sanctions on group's head in Mali, 25 May 2023, [url](#)

⁸⁰ BBC, What is Russia's Wagner group, and what has happened to its leader? 6 September 2023, [url](#)

⁸¹ The Wall Street journal, Ukraine Is Now Fighting Russia in Sudan, 6 March 2024, [url](#); The Economist, Evidence mounts that Ukrainian forces are in Sudan, 15 February 2024, [url](#)

⁸² ADF, UAE Role in Sudan's Civil War Draws Criticism, 30 January 2024, [url](#)

⁸³ The National News, Reports on drones used by Sudan's army could be sign of expanding Iranian influence, 25 January 2024, [url](#); The Washington Institute, Iran in Sudan: Fears of a Sudanese Popular Mobilization Forces, 31 January 2024, [url](#)

⁸⁴ VOA, SAF, RSF Conflict Threatens Sudan's Eastern Border, 1 February 2024, [url](#)

⁸⁵ VOA, SAF, RSF Conflict Threatens Sudan's Eastern Border, 1 February 2024, [url](#); Radio Dabanga, Eritrea military training camps raise concerns about security in eastern Sudan, 26 January 2024, [url](#)

⁸⁶ Al Sharq strategic research, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Egypt: Complex calculations as the fighting continues in Sudan, 11 May 2023, [url](#)

⁸⁷ The Wall Street journal, Ukraine Is Now Fighting Russia in Sudan, 6 March 2024, [url](#)

⁸⁸ RULAC, Non-international armed conflicts in Sudan, 15 May 2023, [url](#)

⁸⁹ ACAPS, Current Crises in Sudan, 29 January 2024, [url](#)

⁹⁰ ICG, Sudan's Calamitous Civil War: A Chance to Draw Back from the Abyss, 9 January 2024, [url](#)

⁹¹ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in The Sudan, S/2023/355, 16 May 2023, [url](#), para. 7

⁹² FP, Hemeti's Rise in Sudan Is a Threat to Regional Stability, 24 April 2023, [url](#)



the al-Bashir National Congress Party and the wider Sudan's political Islamic movement have re-emerged to support the national army's military efforts.⁹³

During the initial phase of the conflict, the RSF secured control over the western region of the country while the army retained most of the northern and eastern territories.⁹⁴ The involvement of a number of armed groups engaging with one or both of the primary warring parties added an additional layer of complexity to the conflict.⁹⁵ Both the SAF and the RSF engaged in urban warfare vying for control of strategic locations, particularly around Khartoum, the Darfur region and the Kordofan states.⁹⁶

The city of Khartoum, along with the adjacent cities of Omdurman and Bahri, witnessed a significant portion of the reported security incidents in the country since mid-April 2023.⁹⁷ Between July and September 2023, the SAF intensified airstrikes in response to escalating violence in Khartoum while the RSF increased shelling.⁹⁸ Fighting involved urban areas surrounding military bases in the southeast area of Khartoum with the RSF overtaking the SAF air force base in Jebel Awlia in November 2023.⁹⁹ In January 2024, SAF opposed the RSF regaining control over some areas of the city.¹⁰⁰

In 'Greater Kordofan' the RSF launched an attack in April 2023 on El Obeid, the capital of North Kordofan, damaging the airport facilities.¹⁰¹ The SPLM-N-al-Hilu forces engaged in clashes with the SAF since the end of May 2023 seizing control of six localities in South Kordofan¹⁰² with the conflict focusing around Kadugli, the state capital.¹⁰³ In January 2024, Babanusa, a city in West Kordofan, and its surroundings experienced high level of violence due to confrontations between the SAF and the RSF.¹⁰⁴

In Greater Darfur, the RSF seized four out of five states taking control of SAF headquarters in West Darfur (El Geneina on 15 June), South Darfur (Nyala on 26 October), Central Darfur (Zalingei on 31 October), West Darfur (Ardamata on 4 November) and East Darfur (Ed Daien on 22 November). In the first months of the conflict, the RSF carried out attacks against non-Arab communities in El Geneina, Misterei and other towns in West Darfur, looting and burning down towns.¹⁰⁵ Fighting affected urban areas in the region, such as Nyala in August and September 2023.¹⁰⁶ By mid-December 2023, the RSF asserted control in most areas in the region, including the main border crossings and key cities.¹⁰⁷ By the end of the year, clashes reduced but continued in RSF-controlled areas mainly due to either RSF raids or SAF airstrikes.¹⁰⁸ As of

⁹³ Al Jazeera, What next for Sudan fighting after top Bashir-era officials freed, 28 April 2023, [url](#)

⁹⁴ ICG, Sudan's Calamitous Civil War: A Chance to Draw Back from the Abyss, 9 January 2024, [url](#)

⁹⁵ Insecurity Insight, Sudan Situation Report, September 2023, [url](#), p. 4

⁹⁶ REDRESS, Ruining A Country, Devastating Its People, September 2023, [url](#), p. 17

⁹⁷ ACLED, Sudan: The SAF Breaks the Siege, 16 February 2024, [url](#)

⁹⁸ Al Jazeera, At least 32 civilians killed in Sudan army attacks: Activists, 6 September 2023, [url](#)

⁹⁹ ACLED, Situation Update - Sudan: Unravelling the Conflict Dynamics in Darfur, 1 December 2023, [url](#)

¹⁰⁰ ACLED, Sudan: The SAF Breaks the Siege, 16 February 2024, [url](#)

¹⁰¹ Radio Dabanga, More than 50 dead following Sudan Army-RSF clashes in El Obeid, 18 April 2023, [url](#)

¹⁰² OHCHR, Situation of human rights in the Sudan, A/HRC/55/29, 22 February 2024, [url](#), para. 22

¹⁰³ Insecurity Insight, Sudan Situation Report Analysis, September 2023, [url](#), p. 2

¹⁰⁴ Sudan Tribune, Over 45,000 people flee ruined West Kordofan's city, 28 January 2024, [url](#)

¹⁰⁵ HRW, World report 2024 - Sudan Events of 2023, 11 January 2024, [url](#)

¹⁰⁶ HRW, World report 2024 - Sudan Events of 2023, 11 January 2024, [url](#)

¹⁰⁷ UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 5, 6, 80

¹⁰⁸ ACLED, Situation Update - Sudan: Unravelling the Conflict Dynamics in Darfur, 1 December 2023, [url](#)



January 2024, tensions persisted among the SAF, the RSF and the Joint Forces stationed in El Fasher, capital of North Darfur, the only state in the region not under RSF control.¹⁰⁹

In Al Jazirah, the RSF took control of the capital, Wad Madani, on 15 December 2023.¹¹⁰

(e) Mass mobilisation and forced recruitment

In a speech in June 2023, the head of the SAF called for mass mobilisation against the RSF. Islamist groups close to the government responded favourably to the call whereas the announcement was met with rejection by pro-democracy and civil society organisations.¹¹¹ The army opened dozens of sites – called Pride and Dignity military training camps - in River Nile and Kassala states aiming to provide basic military training to 10 000 young volunteers.¹¹² Media reported that thousands of Sudanese civilians have either armed themselves and formed self-defence groups – as in Al Jazirah after the fall of Wad Madani in December 2023¹¹³ - or have been armed by the SAF, with recount of Islamists agents involved in the distribution of weapons.¹¹⁴

Many combat training sites for women and girls were set up and more than 5 000 female recruits were registered.¹¹⁵ According to a source quoted by MEE, the army has trained 15 000 fighters from the Masalit group at a camp in Gebeit, in eastern Sudan.¹¹⁶ Those recruited to join the army were designated as ‘the mobilised’, *mustanfaren* in Arabic. They were often young men and not accustomed to the use of weapons. A source quoted by Ayin network indicated that they were allowed by the army to set up military posts on roads and in residential neighbourhoods and search and arrest citizens.¹¹⁷ MEE reported that dozens of volunteers have been killed in battle.¹¹⁸

Since the beginning of the conflict, according to Ayin network ‘the RSF mobilised ethnically driven civilian recruitment campaigns, what [was] locally known as “Al-Fa’a”’.¹¹⁹ See on this point also section (b) [Major state and non-state armed groups](#). Further, in areas brought under its control, the RSF ordered inhabitants to provide the paramilitary force with volunteers who would be armed to ‘protect their territory’.¹²⁰ For instance, a CNN investigation published in March 2024, found that in the previous three months almost 700 men and 65 children had been forcibly recruited by the RSF in the recently seized Al Jazirah state alone.¹²¹

¹⁰⁹ Sudan Tribune, Renewed clashes erupt in El Fasher, leaving one dead and four injured, 24 January 2024, [url](#)

¹¹⁰ Le Monde, Au Soudan, les Forces de soutien rapide s’emparent de Wad Madani et aggravent la crise humanitaire, 20 December 2023, [url](#)

¹¹¹ MEE, Sudan Army chief’s mobilisation call divides opinion, 29 June 2023, [url](#)

¹¹² Radio Dabanga, Sudan army mobilisation intensifies with Pride and Dignity training camps for volunteer recruits, 11 July 2023, [url](#)

¹¹³ Al Jazeera, Sudan’s civilians pick up arms, as RSF gains and army stumbles, 24 December 2023, [url](#)

¹¹⁴ MEE, Sudanese take up arms against RSF as army begins to push back, 5 February 2024, [url](#)

¹¹⁵ Sky News, ‘I’m here to defend my daughters and myself’: Inside one of Sudan’s combat training camps for women and girls, 12 February 2024, [url](#)

¹¹⁶ MEE, Sudanese take up arms against RSF as army begins to push back, 5 February 2024, [url](#)

¹¹⁷ Ayin network, Sudan’s mass arming of civilians, 24 February 2024, [url](#)

¹¹⁸ MEE, Sudanese take up arms against RSF as army begins to push back, 5 February 2024, [url](#)

¹¹⁹ Ayin network, Sudan’s mass arming of civilians, 24 February 2024, [url](#)

¹²⁰ The Defense Post, Sudan Civilians Rush for Arms as Paramilitaries Advance, 28 December 2023, [url](#)

¹²¹ CNN, ‘Enlist or die’: Fear, looming famine and a deadly ultimatum swell the ranks of Sudan’s paramilitary forces, 19 March 2024, [url](#)





On 28 May 2023, Minni Minnawi, Governor of Darfur and leader of the SLM-MM called on citizens to pick up arms and “defend themselves”.¹²²

For further information on forced recruitment and the implications for children, see section [2.6 Child soldiers](#).

(f) State protection, rule of law, and administration of justice

The African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies (ACJPS) reported as early as July 2023 that the outbreak of the hostilities in April 2023 had disrupted the work of law enforcement agencies, including police forces and judicial institutions, and ‘exposed civilians to widespread violations and vandalism’. This resulted in the escape of hundreds of convicts from prisons in various Sudanese cities, the transformation of some police stations in detention centres, and the participation of some police units in the fighting.¹²³ In Khartoum alone, OHCHR indicated that around 12 000 prisoners had escaped from various prisons – Al-Huda, Kober, Omdurman, Soba - by 25 April 2023.

In other reports, still ACJPS spoke about ‘total lack of civilian protection’,¹²⁴ with ‘paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) and bandit groups... [taking] advantage of the chaos’,¹²⁵ and of a general situation where ‘law and order ha[d] broken down... with none of the police stations operating across the country’.¹²⁶ OHCHR’s report from February 2024 corroborates this overall picture, notably with regards to the administration of justice and the rule of law in Khartoum, the Kordofans and Darfur regions. While the departure or displacement of judicial personnel contributed to the ‘shutdown of justice institutions’ in some areas across the country, ‘the domestic justice system [did] not have the means or the capacity’ to operate in full respect of international standards.¹²⁷

In its various post April-2023 Protection Briefs, UNHCR had described the situation across Sudan as well as in Darfur in similar terms: collapse of law and order, related widespread surge of criminality, absence of law enforcement actors.¹²⁸ Reporting about the situation in Darfur, UNHCR indicated that at the end of September 2023, 14 law enforcement facilities, including police stations, and 16 governance structures, including ‘line ministry offices’, had been destroyed, looted or occupied across Darfur, among other affected civilian objects. In many parts of the State, ‘rule of law and civilian protection mechanisms ha[d] largely collapsed’.¹²⁹

Within this context, ACJPS indicated that after seizing control of the various regional capitals - notably Nyala in South Darfur, El Geneina in West Darfur, and Zalingei in Central Darfur - the RSF command called on both the police and the judicial institutions to keep carrying out their

¹²² Al Jazeera, What does Minnawi’s call to arms mean for Darfur?, 1 June 2023, [url](#)

¹²³ ACJPS, Sexual Slavery in Khor Jahannam, 13 January 2024, [url](#), p. 4

¹²⁴ ACJPS, Fourteen female IDPs including children sexually violated in South Darfur, 3 January 2024, [url](#), pp. 1-2

¹²⁵ ACJPS, Sudan armed conflict: A war on women, 3 January 2024, [url](#), p. 1

¹²⁶ ACJPS, RSF and allied militia accused of looting vehicles including those carrying humanitarian aid, 9 January 2024, [url](#)

¹²⁷ OHCHR, Situation of human rights in the Sudan - Advance unedited version, A/HRC/55/29, 22 February 2024, [url](#), para. 90, 93

¹²⁸ UNHCR, Protection Brief Sudan, June 2023, [url](#), p. 5; UNHCR, Protection Brief Sudan, July 2023, [url](#), pp. 2-3

¹²⁹ UNHCR, Protection Brief Darfur Region, October 2023, [url](#), p. 4



duties.¹³⁰ However, at the end of January 2024, Reeves and Saeneen indicated that the ‘overall situation in the country, especially in Darfur, [was] getting worse every day. Life for the displaced ha[d] become very difficult, with the constant lurking danger of violence, murder, rape, and displacement’. People had lost confidence in any authority with the police forces either not acting or ‘unable to defend even themselves from the militias’.¹³¹

(g) Overall security statistics

From 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024 ACLED observed 4 690 security incidents at national level for a total estimate of 13 868 fatalities, both combatants and civilians, in all country. However, as reported by sources, including ACLED,¹³² these figures are likely to be underestimates, as incidents and fatalities might not be officially recorded by local and health authorities due to the ongoing conflict.¹³³

Among the 4 690 security events recorded by ACLED, 2 574 (55 %) were coded as battles, 1 312 (28 %) as explosions/remote violence and 804 (17 %) as incidents of violence against civilians.¹³⁴

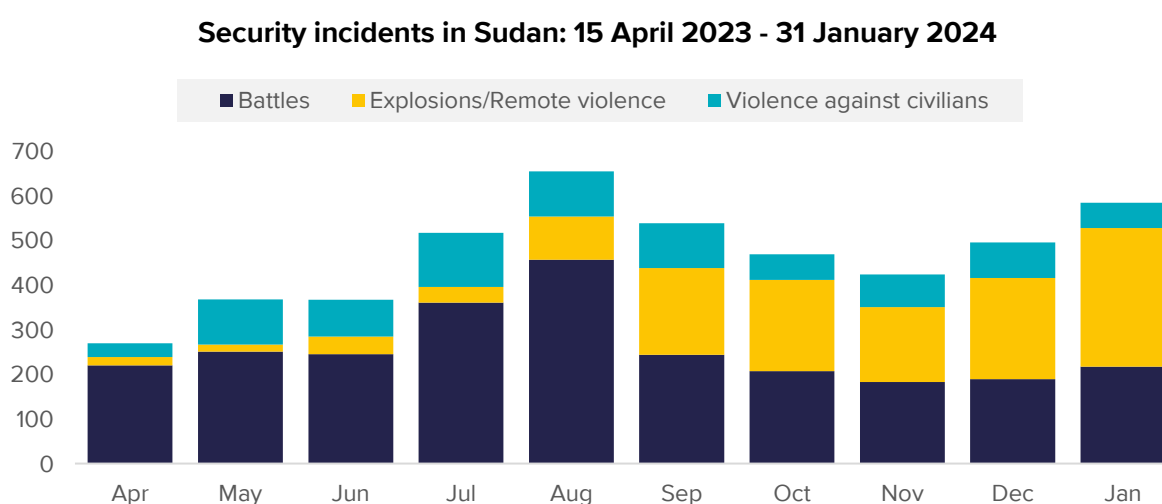


Figure 1. Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians in Sudan, 15 April 2023 - 31 January 2024, based on ACLED data¹³⁵

In 1 129 instances (24 %) civilians were the primary or only target. The overall number of incidents increased steadily until August 2023, fluctuating slightly in the following months.¹³⁶ Security incidents were recorded in all regions, with Khartoum, Darfur, the Kordofans and Al Jazirah registering the highest numbers during the reference period. Khartoum reported the

¹³⁰ ACJPS, The recent political and human rights developments in Darfur, 11 January 2024, [url](#), p. 1

¹³¹ Reeves, E., Project Update, January 28, 2024: Responding to Sexual Violence in Darfur, 28 January 2024, [url](#)

¹³² ACLED, Sudan: Setting the Stage for a Long War, 17 January 2024, [url](#)

¹³³ Reuters, Sudan war's death toll in Khartoum is double official figures, independent tallies show, 28 July 2023, [url](#); The Guardian, Monday briefing: Charting the forgotten crisis in Sudan, 26 February 2024, [url](#)

¹³⁴ EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)

¹³⁵ EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)

¹³⁶ EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)

highest overall number of incidents (3 275, 72 %) and the overall higher number of incidents per month in August (482).¹³⁷ The Darfur region reported 696 (15 %) incidents, the majority of which occurred in South Darfur (250).¹³⁸ The Kordofans registered 431 incidents since the beginning of the conflict, with South Kordofan reaching a peak in July and North Kordofan towards the end of the year. Khartoum state accounted for 47 % of the fatalities followed by Darfur with 36 %, more than half of it in West Darfur alone.¹³⁹

Security incidents by type and region: 15 April 2023 - 31 January 2024

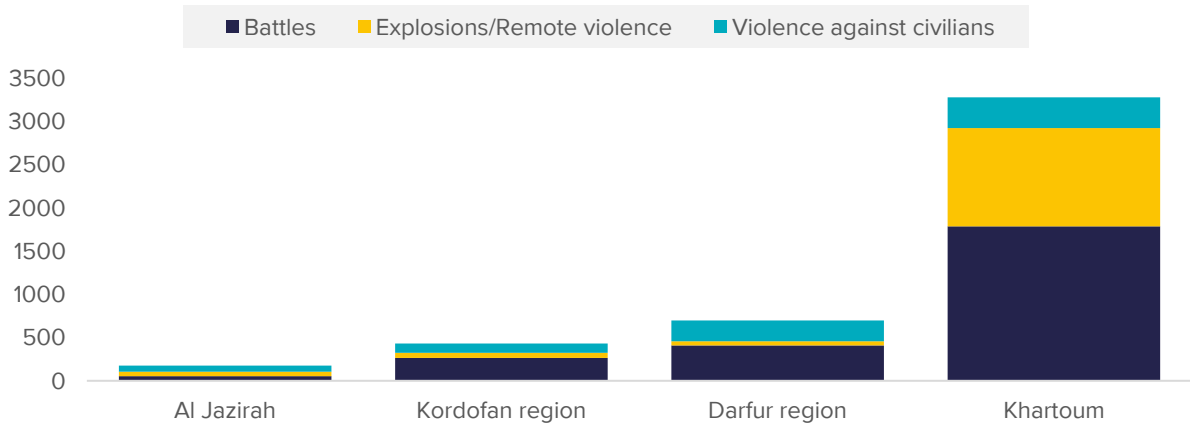


Figure 2. Security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians by region in Sudan between 15 April 2023 and 31 January 2024, based on ACLED data¹⁴⁰

Estimated number of fatalities - 15 April 2023 - 31 January 2024

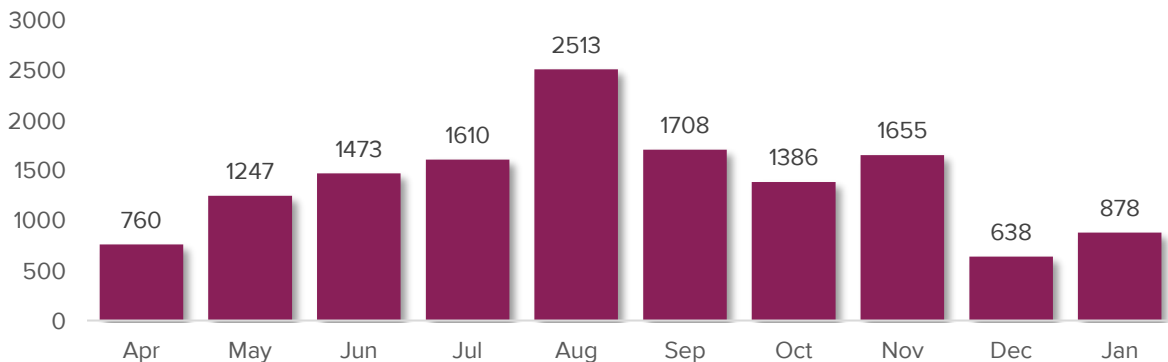


Figure 3. Fatalities as a result of armed conflict in Sudan, 15 April 2023 - 31 January 2024. Monthly breakdown based on ACLED data¹⁴¹

¹³⁷ EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)

¹³⁸ EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)

¹³⁹ EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)

¹⁴⁰ EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)

¹⁴¹ EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)



With regards to casualties due to explosions/remote violence, Action on Armed Violence (AOAV) indicated that 102 incidents and 1 830 civilian casualties have been recorded in Sudan as of October, making 2023 the deadliest year in Sudan since AOAV started recording in 2010.¹⁴² Urban residential areas have been the most impacted locations during this period, accounting for 69 % (70) of recorded incidents, and 51 % (939) of civilian casualties, with attacks on markets being the most injurious, harming on average 39.4 civilians per attack.¹⁴³ Ground-launched weapons have caused the majority of civilian harm, accounting for 75 % (1 368) of civilian casualties across 65 incidents. Non-specific shelling caused 736 reported civilian casualties across 39 incidents, while artillery shells caused 291 civilian casualties, and tank shells 133. With regards to air-launched weapons, air strikes account for 26 of the 27 incidents, and 388 civilian casualties.¹⁴⁴ Between November 2023 and January 2024, 43 incidents of explosive violence were recorded causing 1 267 civilian casualties. In January 2024, civilians accounted for 99 % of the recorded casualties, with 57 % of the incidents occurring in urban residential areas, and 80 % of incidents attributed to airstrikes.¹⁴⁵

1.1.4. Communication blackout and media coverage

(a) Crackdown on media outlets and conflict media coverage

Sources agreed that, as a consequence of the war, many media houses had been looted, and that the majority of media outlets in Sudan were no longer operational during the reference period. Journalists and media workers lived in a dire situation and experienced a growing trend of targeted attacks while reporting on incidents.¹⁴⁶

According to the Sudanese Journalism Syndicate (SJS), quoted by the Ayin network, as of November 2023, 26 Newspapers have stopped publishing, 17 radio stations have shut down, and 6 television stations based in Khartoum have also closed down, while the premises of the National Radio and Television Corporation, which had been taken over by the RSF,¹⁴⁷ have been turned into makeshift detention centres.¹⁴⁸ For more information on the situation of journalists and media personnel see section [2.1 Journalists and treatment of media personnel](#).

At the same time, during the reference period international media attention dwindled because of a number of issues: diverted media attention to other contexts; no presence of international journalists in conflict areas, notably in Khartoum, Darfur and the Kordofans; security concerns, also with respect to anger and tension from civilians; lack of connectivity and electricity. A source stated that many commentators have labelled the war in Sudan a “forgotten war”.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴² AOAV, Sudan: 11 civilians killed, 90 injured by artillery shelling in Omdurman, Khartoum, 12 October 2023, [url](#)

¹⁴³ AOAV, Sudan: 11 civilians killed, 90 injured by artillery shelling in Omdurman, Khartoum, 12 October 2023, [url](#)

¹⁴⁴ AOAV, Sudan: 11 civilians killed, 90 injured by artillery shelling in Omdurman, Khartoum, 12 October 2023, [url](#)

¹⁴⁵ AOAV, Explosive Violence in January 2024, 10 February 2024, [url](#)

¹⁴⁶ Free Press Unlimited, The Sudan war is also a crisis for the safety of journalists, 23 June 2023, [url](#); Columbia Journalism Review, Q&A: Hiba Morgan on Sudan’s forgotten war, 17 January 2024, [url](#)

¹⁴⁷ Ayin, Network, The war in Sudan silences journalists, coverage, 21 January 2024, [url](#)

¹⁴⁸ Sudan Tribune, RSF turned media premises into detention facilities: Sudanese Journalists Union, 7 December 2023, [url](#); Columbia Journalism Review, Q&A: Hiba Morgan on Sudan’s forgotten war, 17 January 2024, [url](#)

¹⁴⁹ Columbia Journalism Review, Q&A: Hiba Morgan on Sudan’s forgotten war, 17 January 2024, [url](#)



(b) Propaganda war

Based on a survey conducted by Ayin network among Sudanese civilians and concerning access to information, ‘most local media houses are now either shuttered or have become mouthpieces for one of the warring parties’.¹⁵⁰

After taking control of West and South Darfur, RSF re-opened the state radio stations in El Geneina and Nyala, using them for their ‘propaganda war’.¹⁵¹ As from beginning of June 2023, after the seizing of the state broadcasters by the RSF, Sudan TV restored its services via satellite, while Omdurman FM, which is the national radio, resumed broadcasting on AM frequencies. The same source indicated that both radio and television stations transmitted primarily ‘SAF news and propaganda’, at times posing risks for the civilian population by spreading false claims.¹⁵²

Reportedly, both warring parties have resorted intensively to social media sites, especially Facebook, with the RSF featuring heavily on Tik-Tok.¹⁵³

(c) Mobile networks, internet access and blackouts

In its country profile on Sudan, the Emergency Telecommunication Cluster (ETC), led by the WFP, indicates that 76 % of the Sudanese population had a mobile-cellular subscription in 2023, while the fixed-wired broadband subscription was less than 1 % (0.07 per 100 inhabitants).¹⁵⁴ According to another source, cellular mobile connections were 32.59 million as of January 2023, corresponding to 68.6 % of the total population, which was 47.49 million at that time.¹⁵⁵ Internet access among the population stood instead at 28.4 %, even in January 2023, with 13.49 million internet users.¹⁵⁶

Against this general backdrop, in its monthly reports for December 2023 and January 2024, the ETC indicated that Sudan’s communication infrastructure remained impacted by the on-going war, ‘with direct damage to the telecommunication towers’, a ‘deteriorated power grid supply’, and ‘extensive looting of communications assets across the country’.¹⁵⁷

At the end of January 2024, the ETC indicated that ‘telecommunications service providers in Sudan continue[d] to be cut off sporadically across the country with large parts of Darfur experiencing months-long blackouts’.¹⁵⁸

At the end of December 2023, the ETC indicated that the three Mobile Network Operators in the country – MTN Sudan, Zain Sudan, and Sudatel Sudan,¹⁵⁹ ‘[were] gradually restoring voice

¹⁵⁰ Ayin, Network, The war in Sudan silences journalists, coverage, 21 January 2024, [url](#)

¹⁵¹ Ayin, Network, The war in Sudan silences journalists, coverage, 21 January 2024, [url](#)

¹⁵² CIPESA, Sudan Conflict Affects Digital Communications and Critical Services Delivery, 5 June 2023, [url](#)

¹⁵³ Ayin, Network, The war in Sudan silences journalists, coverage, 21 January 2024, [url](#)

¹⁵⁴ ETC, Sudan Country ICT Profile, 2023, Communications service providers, 2023, [url](#)

¹⁵⁵ Datareportal, Digital 2023: Sudan, 14 February 2023, [url](#)

¹⁵⁶ Datareportal, Digital 2023: Sudan, 14 February 2023, [url](#)

¹⁵⁷ ETC, Sudan, conflict, ETC Situation Report #14, 31 January 2024, [url](#), p. 2; ETC, Sudan conflict, Situation Report #13, 31 December 2023, [url](#), p. 2

¹⁵⁸ ETC, Sudan, conflict, ETC Situation Report #14, 31 January 2024, [url](#), p. 2

¹⁵⁹ ETC, Sudan Country ICT Profile, 2023, Communications service providers, 2023, [url](#)



services in Port Sudan and [that] the service [was] improving daily in the eastern cities and other locations except in inaccessible locations'.¹⁶⁰ However, most locations in Sudan still relied on Sudatel whose services remained congested because of the high number of people using them,¹⁶¹ and the high 'concentration of internally displaced people (IDPs) in safer areas away from the active fighting', as already noted in June 2023.¹⁶²

In terms of access to internet, ETC reported that two of the major internet providers – among these the ETC lists Canar and Sudatel¹⁶³ – were not fully operational at the end of December 2023, while VSAT – very small aperture terminal – services were unreliable.¹⁶⁴

As mentioned above, internet services were regularly intermittently disrupted since the outbreak of the war in April 2023.¹⁶⁵ The same applied to mobile network operators' services.¹⁶⁶ At the beginning of February 2024, the entire country started to experience a near-total blackout blamed on the RSF,¹⁶⁷ leaving most of the people 'in the dark' in a country where 'smartphone use for most aspects of life was ubiquitous'.¹⁶⁸

(d) Social media and access to information

As pointed out by various sources, internet and telecommunications represented lifeline resources for the average Sudanese.¹⁶⁹ People relied on them 'to wire money, find cash, find out information about safe routes and transportation and to find food and medication',¹⁷⁰ as well as to remain in contact with 'loved ones'.¹⁷¹

In this context, WhatsApp represented a crucial source of information for most people in Sudan,¹⁷² also given the gained prominence in recent years of social media platforms, including Facebook and X.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁰ ETC, Sudan conflict, Situation Report #13, 31 December 2023, [url](#), p. 2

¹⁶¹ ETC, Sudan conflict, Situation Report #13, 31 December 2023, [url](#), p. 2

¹⁶² ETC, Sudan conflict, Situation Report #2, 2 June 2023, [url](#), p. 2

¹⁶³ ETC, Sudan Country ICT Profile, 2023, Communications service providers, 2023, [url](#)

¹⁶⁴ ETC, Sudan conflict, Situation Report #13, 31 December 2023, [url](#), p. 2

¹⁶⁵ ETC, Sudan conflict, Situation Report #14, 31 January 2024, [url](#), p. 2; ETC, Sudan conflict, Situation Report #13, 31 December 2023, [url](#), p. 2; Freedom House, Sudan – Freedom on the net 2023, 2023, [url](#)

¹⁶⁶ Radio Dabanga, Fighting leads to internet cuts, Sudanese protests against the war, 24 April 2023, [url](#); SMEX, Sudan: Internet Shutdowns Fuel Human Rights Abuses, 28 April 2023, [url](#); AfricaNews, Khartoum internet, mobile networks cut as fighting rages, 14 July 2023, [url](#); Radio Dabanga, Phone, internet falters in eastern Sudan, 4 February 2024, [url](#)

¹⁶⁷ Al Jazeera, Network blackout cuts communications for millions in war-torn Sudan, 7 March 2024, [url](#); Reuters, Sudanese left in the dark by RSF-imposed telecoms blackout, 12 February 2024, [url](#); see also Radio Dabanga, Phone, internet falters in eastern Sudan, 4 February 2024, [url](#)

¹⁶⁸ Reuters, Sudanese left in the dark by RSF-imposed telecoms blackout, 12 February 2024, [url](#)

¹⁶⁹ Hassab, A., [@errfnern, X], posted on 7 February 2024, [url](#); Elbagir, Y., [@YousraElbagir, X], posted 8 February 2024, [url](#)

¹⁷⁰ Hassab, A., [@errfnern, X], posted on 7 February 2024, [url](#)

¹⁷¹ Elbagir, Y., [@YousraElbagir, X], posted 8 February 2024, [url](#)

¹⁷² Columbia Journalism Review, Q&A: Hiba Morgan on Sudan's forgotten war, 17 January 2024, [url](#); UNESCO, In the Shadow of Violence: The Pressing Needs of Sudanese Journalists, 8 November 2023, [url](#); Free Press Unlimited, The Sudan war is also a crisis for the safety of journalists, 23 June 2023, [url](#)

¹⁷³ MiCT, In the Shadow of Violence: The Pressing Needs of Sudanese Journalists, October 2023, [url](#), p. 18



However, on the backdrop of the hostilities erupted in April 2023, due to widespread destruction and ‘minimal’ internet connectivity, WhatsApp messaging was limited.¹⁷⁴ Fake messages were another issue of concern whereby they attracted people ‘in search of food’ to areas where they were then ‘violently attacked’.¹⁷⁵ Reportedly, civilians often also relied ‘on phone calls from friends to receive updates since they [could not] rely on the local media anymore’.¹⁷⁶

With phone and internet services disrupted in several areas of the country, and communication severely hindered, particularly in Darfur, because of an already poor communication infrastructure, handwritten letters made a comeback in order to allow people to connect across cities.¹⁷⁷

For information on journalists and media personnel see section [2.1 Journalists and treatment of media personnel](#). For information on implications for the humanitarian situation see section [1.1.5 Humanitarian situation](#), and notably subsection [1.1.5\(d\) Aid delivery](#).

(e) Communication blackouts, perpetrating, and reporting abuses

According to Insecurity Insight, internet access in Sudan was concentrated in key areas such as the capital, Khartoum, which in 2022 accounted for around 70 % of the country’s electricity usage, while most rural areas suffered from unsteady access to electricity: ‘as a result, internet and social media usage [was] heavily biased towards Khartoum’.¹⁷⁸ As the social media space in Sudan is dominated by users who are mostly Khartoum-based and have pro-SAF views, ‘incidents perpetrated by SAF members may be less likely to be reported through such media’, according to Security Insight.¹⁷⁹

Against this backdrop, Social Media Exchange (SMEX), a non-profit organisation that advocates for human rights in digital spaces across West Asia and North Africa, noted as early as April 2023 that internet shutdowns - which had taken place intermittently since the outbreak of the hostilities - were instrumental to concealing evidence of human rights violations and the spreading of war propaganda, with warring parties having in most cases ‘malicious or even criminal motives’.¹⁸⁰ At the beginning of February 2024 a number of grassroots organisations, reunited in the #KeepItOn-coalition, signed a joint *communiqué* asking for the reinstatement of internet access across the country.¹⁸¹ Sudan Tribune, on

¹⁷⁴ Free Press Unlimited, The Sudan war is also a crisis for the safety of journalists, 23 June 2023, [url](#)

¹⁷⁵ Free Press Unlimited, The Sudan war is also a crisis for the safety of journalists, 23 June 2023, [url](#)

¹⁷⁶ Ayin, Network, The war in Sudan silences journalists, coverage, 21 January 2024, [url](#)

¹⁷⁷ AA, In war-stricken Sudan, handwritten letters connect people, 15 September 2023, [url](#)

¹⁷⁸ Insecurity Insight, Designation of MSF Attackers as “Armed Men” Criticised by SAF Supporters in Sudan, September 2023, [url](#), p. 1

¹⁷⁹ Insecurity Insight, Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Sudan, November 2023, [url](#), p. 1

¹⁸⁰ SMEX, Sudan: Internet Shutdowns Fuel Human Rights Abuses, 28 April 2023, [url](#); see also SMEX, Internet and Telecom Shutdowns in Sudan: Who is responsible?, 8 May 2023, [url](#); CIPESA, Sudan Conflict Affects Digital Communications and Critical Services Delivery, 5 June 2023, [url](#)

¹⁸¹ Tahrir Institute, #KeepItOn in times of war: Sudan’s communications shutdown must be reversed urgently, 9 February 2024, [url](#)



various occasions, reported about the RSF taking advantage of the blackouts to attack civilians, notably in Al Jazirah state.¹⁸²

1.1.5. Humanitarian situation

At the end of January 2024, Sudan was experiencing one of the worst humanitarian crises globally.¹⁸³ With an overall estimated population of 48.1 million people,¹⁸⁴ UNOCHA indicated that humanitarian needs across Sudan were at ‘record highs’, with 24.8 million, or every second person, in need of assistance in 2024.¹⁸⁵

Needs across all clusters – food security, health, water and sanitation, protection, education, nutrition, shelter, refugee, common services, telecommunication, logistics - were already at an ‘all-time high’ in April 2023. Nine months into the conflict, out of 18.1 million intended to be ‘targeted’ to receive humanitarian assistance, 7 million had been reached with some form of life-saving assistance by 167 humanitarian partners, according to UNOCHA.¹⁸⁶ Humanitarian Outcomes indicated instead that aid reached only 16 % of those in need, roughly 4 million people.¹⁸⁷

The ‘dire’ internal humanitarian situation, which included ‘unprecedented mass displacement’, acute hunger, limited access to healthcare, and the outbreak of cholera cases,¹⁸⁸ was coupled with the emergency caused by large refugee populations newly arrived in neighbouring countries and also in need of life-saving assistance.¹⁸⁹

A number of challenges, including lack of security, looting, scarce humanitarian presence on the ground, fuel shortages, and poor communication services – see about this section [1.1.4 Communication blackout and media coverage](#) - were still severely affecting the delivery of humanitarian aid in many areas of the country at the end of the reference period.¹⁹⁰

Against this general backdrop the United Nations’ agencies, UNOCHA and UNHCR, jointly launched the Sudan Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan¹⁹¹ and the Regional Refugee Response Plan for 2024¹⁹² at the beginning of February 2024.¹⁹³ Described as the ‘biggest

¹⁸² Sudan Tribune, Sudanese activists report civilian deaths in clashes with RSF, 13 February 2024, [url](#); Sudan Tribune, Resistance Committees report civilians’ murder during RSF armed robberies in Central Sudan, 17 February 2024, [url](#); Sudan Tribune, RSF accused of fresh violations, army intensifies operations in Al-Jazeera state, 3 March 2024, [url](#); Sudan Tribune, Reports emerge of alleged RSF violations in Al-Jazira State, Sudan, 20 February 2024, [url](#)

¹⁸³ UNOCHA, Sudan Situation Report, 4 February 2024, [url](#), p. 3

¹⁸⁴ UNFPA, World Population Dashboard – Sudan, 2023, [url](#)

¹⁸⁵ UNOCHA, Sudan Humanitarian Update, 4 February 2024, [url](#), p. 3

¹⁸⁶ UNOCHA, Humanitarian Response Dashboard as of 31 December 2023, [url](#), p. 1

¹⁸⁷ Humanitarian Outcomes, Humanitarian Access SCORE Report: Sudan, December 2023, [url](#), pp. 3, 6, 13

¹⁸⁸ UNOHCHR, Sudan: 25 million people in dire humanitarian need, say UN experts, 5 February 2024, [url](#)

¹⁸⁹ UNHCR, Sudan Situation External Update no. 46, 31 January 2024, [url](#), p. 2

¹⁹⁰ UNOCHA, Sudan Humanitarian Update, 4 February 2024, [url](#), p. 3; IMMAP, Sudan Crisis – Information Landscape, 19 January 2024, [url](#), pp. 3, 15

¹⁹¹ UNOCHA, Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan Sudan, 21 December 2023, [url](#)

¹⁹² UNHCR, Sudan Regional Refugee Response Plan, January 2024, [url](#); UNHCR, Sudan Regional Refugee Response Plan – At a glance, January 2024, [url](#)

¹⁹³ UN, Joint launch of Sudan Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan and Regional Refugee Response Plan for Sudan for 2024, 2 February 2024, [url](#)





humanitarian operation yet for Sudan',¹⁹⁴ it aimed at reaching nearly 15 million people inside the country, and another 2.7 million people in five neighbouring countries.¹⁹⁵

(a) IDPs and refugees on the move

Internally Displaced Persons

As of January 2024, Sudan was hosting a total estimated IDP population of 10.7 million people, making it the largest global displacement crisis in the world.¹⁹⁶ Prior to the 15 April conflict, Sudan was already hosting an estimated 3.8 million IDPs,¹⁹⁷ with the majority living in camps in Darfur,¹⁹⁸ roughly 80 % according to older estimates.¹⁹⁹

Based on the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) Data by IOM, as of 30 January 2024, an estimated 6 144 363 individuals had been 'recently internally displaced' and were observed in 6 594 locations across all of Sudan's 18 States.²⁰⁰ 54 % of these were below 18 years old of age and 54 % were female.²⁰¹ According to UNICEF, as of 31 December 2023, 3.5 million children had been displaced internally and across borders.²⁰² Of those recently displaced, 37 % or 2 286 285 individuals had relocated to rural areas, of which 140 043 resided in IDP camps, while the remaining 63 % or 3 858 078 individuals had relocated to urban areas, of which 220 455 resided in IDP camps.²⁰³

Khartoum, as a 'state of origin', accounted for 57 % or 3 522 784 people of all recently displaced individuals in Sudan, while Darfur (as a whole) and still as a 'state of origin', accounted for 32,4 % or 1 991 613 people. In order of importance, these areas were followed by Al Jazirah state, with 439 339 individuals or 7,2 %, and the Kordofan states, with 166 698 individuals or 2,7 %. Darfur, as a whole, represented a 'state of destination' as well for almost 2 375 000 individuals, accounting for nearly the 40 % of the entire newly displaced population in Sudan at the end of January 2024.²⁰⁴

¹⁹⁴ Sudan Tribune, UN unveils plans to aid millions impacted by Sudan crisis, 5 February 2024, [url](#)

¹⁹⁵ UN, Joint launch of Sudan Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan and Regional Refugee Response Plan for Sudan for 2024, 2 February 2024, [url](#)

¹⁹⁶ UNOCHA, Sudan Humanitarian Update, 4 February 2024, [url](#), p. 1

¹⁹⁷ IOM, DTM, Monthly Displacement Overview (05), 2 February 2024, [url](#), p. 2; IOM, DTM, Sudan's Internally Displaced Persons - 2023 Estimates, January 2024, [url](#), p. 1

¹⁹⁸ UNHCR, Mid-Year Trends 2023, 25 October 2023, [url](#), p. 8

¹⁹⁹ UN News, Clashes displace thousands in Darfur, where 6.2 million will need assistance next year, 7 December 2021, [url](#)

²⁰⁰ IOM, DTM, Weekly Displacement Snapshot no. 19, 6 February 2024, [url](#), pp. 1-2

²⁰¹ IOM, DTM, Monthly Displacement Overview (05), 2 February 2024, [url](#), p. 3

²⁰² UNICEF, Humanitarian Situation Report no. 14, 30 January 2024, [url](#), p. 1

²⁰³ IOM, DTM, Weekly Displacement Snapshot no. 19, 6 February 2024, [url](#), p. 2

²⁰⁴ IOM, DTM, Weekly Displacement Snapshot no. 19, 6 February 2024, [url](#), p. 2



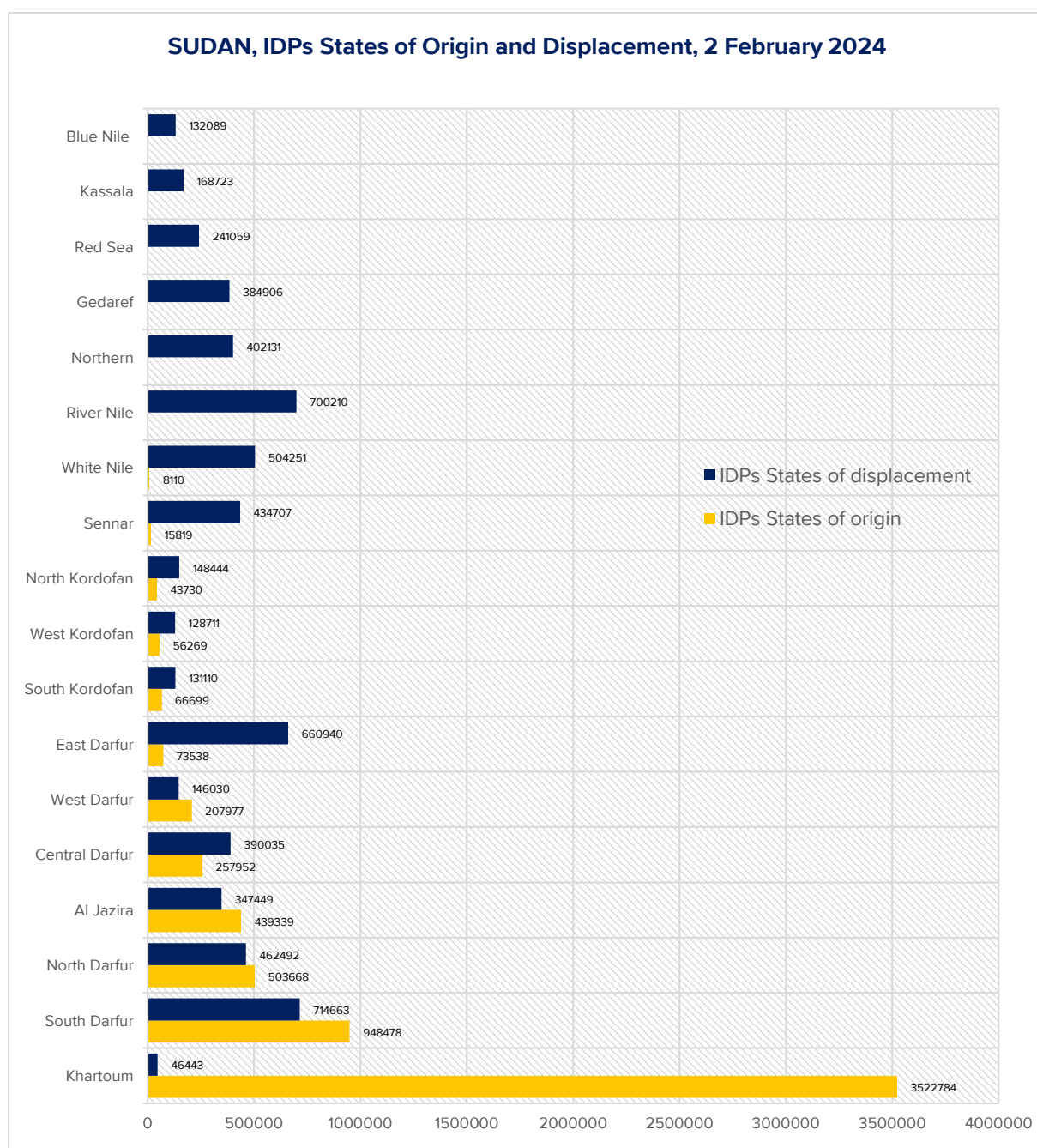


Figure 4. Sudan, IDPs States of Origin and Displacement, 2 February 2024. EUAA elaboration based on IOM DTM DATA²⁰⁵

Reportedly, based on IOM data, the vast majority of newly displaced IDPs were sheltered by hosting communities – 67 % or 823 807 households out of 1 224 269 – while the remaining households had found shelter in schools or other public buildings (13 %), rented accommodations (7 %), and various types of IDP sites: IDP ‘camps’ (6 %), ‘open area informal settlements’ (6 %), ‘improvised/critical shelters’ (1 %).²⁰⁶ Most of those newly displaced who were sheltered in ‘regular’ IDP camps, which were reportedly 72 100 households as of 30

²⁰⁵ IOM, DTM, Weekly Displacement Snapshot no. 19, 6 February 2024, [url](#), p. 2

²⁰⁶ IOM, DTM, Weekly Displacement Snapshot no. 19, 6 February 2024, [url](#), pp. 1-3

January 2024, were located in Darfur (55 318), with the following breakdown: South Darfur, 25 566; North Darfur, 17 903; Central Darfur, 9 247; East Darfur, 2 602.²⁰⁷ The number of households hosted in ‘regular’ IDP camps was 77 274 just two weeks earlier, as of 18 January 2024, with Central Darfur accounting for 14 727 households.²⁰⁸ However, Sudan expert Reeves questioned the precision and the full reliability of this data given the lack of reporting personnel on the ground and the massive scale of displacement in the region.²⁰⁹

Within this context, at the end of January 2024, iMMAP reported that ‘as the majority of IDPs continue to live with the host communities, the initial solidarity is increasingly giving way to economic strains, leading to a gradual erosion of support’. As a result, many IDPs are driven towards collective sites or public buildings, while a small number live in ‘improvised or severely damaged shelters’.²¹⁰ The shelter crisis in Sudan has led to a near tripling of People in Need (PIN) in the course of 2023, rising to 8.6 million people.²¹¹

Against this general backdrop, sources agree that IDP gathering sites and camps were often ‘raided’ or targeted by the RSF and allied militias in Darfur.²¹² For further information on targeting along ethnic lines in IDP sites, among others, see section [2.4 Non-Arabs/Africans in Darfur](#), [2.4.2 Targeting](#). For further information on sexual violence against women and girls in IDP sites see section [2.5 Women and girls](#), and subsection [2.5.2\(c\) Women in IDP sites](#).

Asylum seekers, refugees and returnees

In addition to internal displacement, as of January 2024, the conflict in Sudan had caused mixed cross border movements of 1 780 295 individuals – Sudanese nationals (63 %), returnees and foreign nationals (37 %) - into neighbouring countries, with the following breakdown: 682 499 to Chad, 542 199 to South Sudan, 415 000 to Egypt, 108 121 to Ethiopia, 26 421 to Central African Republic (CAR), and 6 055 to Libya.²¹³

However, these figures are drawn from a combination of different sources – IOM, UNHCR, and national sources of the hosting country - and at times refer to slightly different timeframes between the end of 2023 and 4 February 2024. Data for Egypt, which are provided by the Egypt Ministry of Foreign Affairs, are as of 31 December 2023, data for CAR as of 22 January 2024, and data for Chad as of 28 January 2024.²¹⁴

²⁰⁷ IOM, DTM, Weekly Displacement Snapshot no. 19, 6 February 2024, [url](#), p. 3

²⁰⁸ IOM, DTM, Weekly Displacement Snapshot no. 18, 23 January 2024, [url](#), p. 3

²⁰⁹ Reeves, E., input from external review, 25 March 2024

²¹⁰ iMMAP, Sudan Crisis – Shelter Thematic Report, 31 January 2024, [url](#), p. 3

²¹¹ iMMAP, Sudan Crisis – Shelter Thematic Report, 31 January 2024, [url](#), p. 2

²¹² UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), p. 1, para. 19-20, 24, 40; para. 58-60, 66, 96, 99; ACJPS, Sudan: The continued targeting of Internally Displaced Persons in Darfur Region, 24 December 2023, [url](#), pp. 1-2; Ayin network, Ardamata: One of the deadliest attack yet, 23 November 2023, [url](#);

²¹³ IOM, DTM, Weekly Displacement Snapshot no. 19, 6 February 2024, [url](#), pp. 1, 4-5

²¹⁴ IOM, DTM, Weekly Displacement Snapshot no. 19, 6 February 2024, [url](#), pp. 4-5

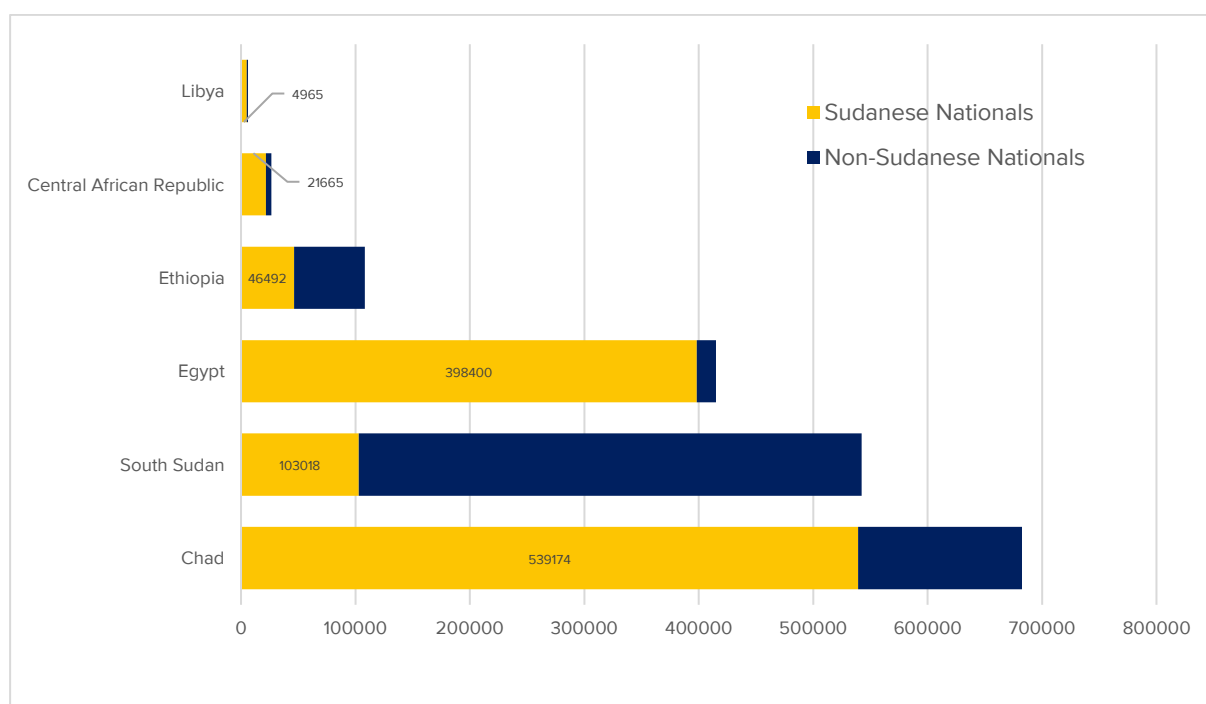


Figure 5. Sudanese nationals and non-nationals displaced by the 2023-2024 conflicts into neighbouring countries. EUAA elaboration based on IOM DTM DATA ²¹⁵

Within this context, data for Libya are particularly contested. At the beginning of February 2024, UNHCR indicated that it had registered 12 090 Sudanese ‘citing their arrival in Libya to be on or after 15 April 2023’.²¹⁶ Still UNHCR quoted the Sudanese General Consul in Libya stating, on 1 February 2024, that the number of Sudanese refugees post April 2023 were around 200 000 individuals, with 250-300 new arrivals a day.²¹⁷ According to a Sudanese community leader based in Kufra - the main crossing point district into Libya from Sudan,²¹⁸ the Sudanese who resided in Kufra town before the war were hosting between two and three families each at the beginning of February 2024, while the Libyan National Army (LNA) was reportedly providing humanitarian aid to 10 000 Sudanese refugees.²¹⁹ The Libyan ‘head of the program to reduce illegal immigration and aid returning Sudanese communities in Libya’ was quoted by Sudan Tribune estimating that over 400 000 refugees were in Kufra district as of February 2024, while reporting that the Libyan Organization to combat illegal immigration (OCII) believed that the actual number could be double that.²²⁰ On this point Tubiana maintained that ‘many more than the few thousands quoted [had] entered Libya’, but that he did not ‘see reliable figures anywhere’.²²¹ Prior to the 15 April 2023 conflict, as of February 2023, the Sudanese population in Libya was 133 979, accounting for 19 % of the total immigrant population in the country, including 21 684 refugees registered with UNHCR.²²²

²¹⁵ IOM, DTM, Weekly Displacement Snapshot no. 19, 6 February 2024, [url](#), pp. 1, 4-5

²¹⁶ UNHCR, Sudan Situation Update, 13 February 2024, n.a., p. 1

²¹⁷ UNHCR, Sudan Situation Update, 13 February 2024, n.a., p. 3

²¹⁸ IOM, Profile of Sudanese Migrants in Libya, May 2023, [url](#), p. 3

²¹⁹ Radio Dabanga, ‘Miserable conditions’ for Sudanese in Libya, 16 February 2024, [url](#)

²²⁰ Sudan Tribune, Surge of Sudanese refugees in Libya raises concerns of sea migration, 18 February 2024, [url](#)

²²¹ Tubiana, J., email exchange, 19 March 2024

²²² IOM, Profile of Sudanese Migrants in Libya, May 2023, [url](#), p. 1

(b) Food and water insecurity

As of January 2024, about 17.7 million people across Sudan, corresponding to about 37 % of the population, were experiencing high levels of acute food insecurity. Of these, about 4.9 million people – or 10 % of the entire population – were experiencing an ‘emergency’ situation.²²³

As detailed by FEWS NET at the beginning of February 2024, the opening of a new military front in the south-east of the country, which constitutes Sudan’s breadbasket, further disrupted trade and agricultural activities, ‘posing a significant threat to national food availability’.²²⁴

At the end of January 2024, according to FEWS NET, acute food insecurity outcomes were widespread across the country, ‘emergency’ outcomes existed in heavily impacted urban areas, including in parts of Khartoum and West Darfur, while households were expected to deteriorate to ‘catastrophe’ outcomes in Omdurman of Khartoum and El Geneina of West Darfur in the upcoming lean season, which was expected to begin as early as March 2024.²²⁵ Similarly, according to WFP mapping, at the end of January 2024, the prevalence of ‘insufficient food consumption ranged between ‘moderately high’ – in Northern, Nile, and Al Jazirah states – and ‘very high’ in Darfur (with the exception of Eastern Darfur), while it was ‘high’ in all other states.²²⁶ As reported by UNOCHA, Darfur ‘has the highest ratio of people with insufficient food consumption’, with more than 40 % of their respective state populations affected in four of five states.²²⁷

At the beginning of February 2024, a nutrition and mortality assessment carried out by MSF revealed that the situation in Zamzam IDP camp in North Darfur was ‘catastrophic’. According to their estimates at least one child was dying every two hours in the camp, while “those with severe malnutrition who have not yet died are at high risk of dying within three to six weeks if they do not get treatment”.²²⁸ Zamzam IDP camp is located about 14 kilometres south of El Fasher town, in North Darfur. Based on a camp overview from the end of 2022, it sheltered more than 450 000 individuals at the time,²²⁹ as also confirmed by Eric Reeves.²³⁰ However, Reeves indicated that ‘there are many new arrivals, with many not able to enter the camp properly but living on the outskirts, the number could be much higher’,²³¹ as also suggested by Radio Tamazuj, which indicated that many found shelter in the Zamzam Secondary Schools.²³²

²²³ UNOCHA, Sudan Situation Report, 4 February 2024, [url](#), p. 3

²²⁴ FEWS NET, Sudan Food Security Alert: Clashes in Sudan’s breadbasket threaten national food availability, 1 February 2024, [url](#), p. 1

²²⁵ FEWS NET, Sudan Food Security Alert: Clashes in Sudan’s breadbasket threaten national food availability, 1 February 2024, [url](#), pp. 1-2

²²⁶ WFP, HungerMap, 2024, [url](#)

²²⁷ UNOCHA, Sudan Humanitarian Update, 4 February 2024, [url](#), p. 2

²²⁸ MSF, Urgent response needed amid high death rates and malnutrition crisis in North Darfur, 5 February 2024, [url](#)

²²⁹ NRC, Zamzam Camp Profile - Al Fasher, North Darfur State, October 2022, [url](#)

²³⁰ Reeves, E., email exchange, 19 January 2024

²³¹ Reeves, E., email exchange, 19 January 2024

²³² Radio Tamazuj, North Darfur: Displaced persons in Zamzam camp face hunger crisis, 19 February 2024, [url](#)



Within this context, water insecurity was also an issue of concern at the end of the reference period. ‘Since this is the dry season, which coincides with the food security “lean season”, clean water is increasingly needed, in too many places desperately needed’ stated Reeves in mid-January 2024.²³³ As indicated in the Humanitarian Response Plan for 2024, Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) coverage in Sudan was insufficient already before the outbreak of the war in April 2023. The on-going hostilities further exacerbated a ‘critical’ situation by causing the ‘destruction of infrastructure, disruptions in the WASH supply chain, and collapse of the revenue system’.²³⁴

As of January 2024, the provision of safe drinking water, water chlorination and water quality campaigns were ongoing in Gedaref, Al Jazirah, White Nile, Kassala, Red Sea, Sennar, and Blue Nile states. This assistance comprised the chlorination of over 3 000 water supply sources and hand-dug wells (HDW), including water storages and distribution points (donkey carts, water tankers), with over 2.5 million people reached.²³⁵ No information about similar activities carried out in western Sudan during the reference period of the report could be found within the time limits of the research.

(c) Access to healthcare and medical supplies

At the beginning of February 2024, as reported by UNOCHA, about 65 % of the Sudanese population lacked access to healthcare,²³⁶ while between 70 and 80 % of hospitals in conflict-affected areas were no longer functional.²³⁷ As reported by Insecurity Insight, based on agency and open-source data, in the reference period a total of 268 incidents of violence or threat of violence against the healthcare sector in Sudan were reported, including 67 health facilities damaged.²³⁸

This, coupled with the inability to access pharmaceutical supplies had left hundreds of thousands of patients vulnerable to further harm, including the outbreak of diseases such as cholera, dengue fever, malaria and measles, which were under control before the eruption of the conflict in 2023.²³⁹ As of 31 January 2024, according to the Sudan Federal Ministry of Health and the WHO, there had been 10 495 cases of Acute Watery Diarrhoea (AWD or Cholera) and 292 associated deaths, reported from 60 localities across 11 states.²⁴⁰

Already in June 2023 the Sudan Federal Ministry of Health stressed the pressing needs for a wide range of medical supplies, which included: medicines for patients with tumours, cancers, and other life-threatening conditions; emergency medicines and anaesthetics/pain killers; medications for heart disease, digestive system diseases, surgeries, organ transplants, blood transfusions, dialysis, and laboratory equipment.²⁴¹ In August 2023, a group of scholars from the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Khartoum, warned about the additional strain that

²³³ Reeves, E., email exchange, 14 January 2024

²³⁴ UNOCHA, Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan Sudan, 21 December 2023, [url](#), pp. 46-47

²³⁵ UNOCHA, Sudan Situation Report, 4 February 2024, [url](#), pp. 6-7

²³⁶ UNOCHA, Sudan Situation Report, 4 February 2024, [url](#), p. 3

²³⁷ UNOCHA, Sudan Situation Report, 4 February 2024, [url](#), p. 3; International Medical Corps, Situation Report no. 15, 1 February 2024, [url](#), p. 1

²³⁸ Insecurity Insight, Attacked and Threatened: Health Care at Risk, 31 January 2024, [url](#)

²³⁹ International Medical Corps, Situation Report no. 15, 1 February 2024, [url](#), p. 1

²⁴⁰ WHO, Sudan Outbreaks Dashboard, 31 January 2024, [url](#)

²⁴¹ Radio Dabanga, Sudan faces acute medical supply shortage, 7 June 2023, [url](#)



the conflict posed on Sudan's already 'weak' health-sector. Power outages put in jeopardy the 40 million supplies of vaccination and insulin stocks, while patients with chronic conditions struggled to receive their prescriptions.²⁴² MSF, with operations in 12 areas in Sudan, including in Khartoum, Al Jazirah and Darfur states,²⁴³ was quoted by Sudan Tribune in October 2023 stating that Sudan suffered from a 'severe shortages of medicines', with those available having become disproportionately expensive, hence leaving many Sudanese with chronic conditions incapable of affording them.²⁴⁴

As of 31 January 2024, according to the Sudan Health Cluster (led by the WHO), the number of people who benefitted from medicine and medical kits in partner-supported health facilities across Sudan numbered 114 807 out of 180 082 outpatient consultations performed. These took place in 24 covered localities out of 189. Most beneficiaries were concentrated in North Darfur and Blue Nile. However, no consulted outpatients could benefit from medicines in Central Darfur, West Darfur, Al Jazirah, and Gedaref. In Khartoum and South Kordofan respectively 1 589 and 1 628 outpatients could benefit from medications. In the previous months the number of medicines beneficiaries had been 327 635 in October 2023, 161 200 in November 2023, 271 531 in December 2023.²⁴⁵

Following the collapse of the state healthcare system, and in the 'vacuum left behind when international humanitarian organizations left', teams of volunteer medical staff, engineers and other emergency experts across the country started addressing part of the unmet civilian needs. They organised in so-called Emergency Response Rooms (ERRs) or just 'emergency rooms', which can be described as community-led initiatives assisting vulnerable civilians with different types of humanitarian and healthcare services.²⁴⁶ However, as reported by Humanitarian Outcomes at the end of December 2023, these voluntary, grassroots efforts were 'overstretched, increasingly exhausted, and lack[ed] resources', while they could not replace the large-scale level of assistance that was needed.²⁴⁷

(d) Aid delivery and humanitarian access

As of 31 January 2024, UNOCHA reported that there were 58 organisations with operational presence in Sudan, with the following breakdown: 27 international non-governmental organisations (INGO), 22 national non-governmental organisations (NNGO), six UN agencies, two government agencies, and the Red Cross.²⁴⁸ In the previous reporting period, as of 31

²⁴² Hemmeda, L., et al, Sudan's armed rivalry: a comment on the vulnerable healthcare system catastrophe, 22 August 2023, [url](#)

²⁴³ MSF, Conflict in Sudan, 9 February 2024, [url](#)

²⁴⁴ Sudan Tribune, Remove obstacles on delivery of medical supplies in Sudan: MSF, 12 October 2023, [url](#)

²⁴⁵ WHO, Health Cluster Sudan, Medicine and Medical Supplies Services as of 31 January 2024, 18 February 2024, [url](#)

²⁴⁶ UN News, Youth-led 'emergency rooms' shine rays of hope in war-torn Sudan, 3 February 2024, [url](#); Al Jazeera, Sudan's healthcare in crisis with hospitals out of service and volunteers stepping in, 30 January 2024, [url](#); Humanitarian Outcomes, Humanitarian Access SCORE Report: Sudan, December 2023, [url](#), pp. 3, 7; UNSG, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, S/2023/644, 31 August 2023, [url](#), para. 40; The New Humanitarian, 'I see it as my duty to help for as long as I can': Sudanese volunteers on supporting hospitals and opposing the war, 2 June 2023, [url](#)

²⁴⁷ Humanitarian Outcomes, Humanitarian Access SCORE Report: Sudan, December 2023, [url](#), p. 3

²⁴⁸ UNOCHA, Sudan Operational Presence (3W) – Post 15 April as of 31 January 2024, 27 February 2024, [url](#)



December 2023, there were 167 organisations, of which 91 NNGO, 58 INGO, 11 UN agencies, six government agencies, and the Red Cross.²⁴⁹

As noted by Humanitarian Outcomes, operational presence did not correspond to actual physical presence. These figures included both the lead agencies and the implementing partners, regardless of actual physical presence.²⁵⁰ Most international aid organisations choose to suspend their activities and evacuate their international staff in the immediate aftermath of the outbreak of the hostilities.²⁵¹

Based on Humanitarian Outcomes' survey on the 'Coverage, Operational Reach, and Effectiveness of Humanitarian Aid', which was carried out in November 2023, aid reached only 16 % of people in need. Of this aid, humanitarian actors accounted for as follows: 26 % by the combined UN agencies, notably WFP, UNICEF and IOM; 24 % by local authorities; 16 % the Sudanese Red Crescent; 12 % INGOs, notably MSF, Plan International, and NRC.²⁵²

The vast majority of aid came in the form of food assistance – mentioned in 116 cases out of 838 surveyed people – followed by medical assistance, which was reported 13 times.²⁵³ Khartoum, Kordofan and Darfur states, where most of the active fighting had taken place, were the states with 'highly constrained' access to aid assistance,²⁵⁴ as also reported by UNITAMS.²⁵⁵ In particular, since November 2023, the situation in Darfur had been aggravated by the cessation of humanitarian and commercial convoys arriving from Wad Madani and Port Sudan under the protection of the Darfur Joint Forces.²⁵⁶

Against this general backdrop, the main constraints to the humanitarian response where widespread insecurity, bureaucratic hurdles, logistics and infrastructures issues, limited humanitarian presence, failure to agree and coordinate unfettered humanitarian access with the warring parties.²⁵⁷ At the end of January 2024, the ETC reported the still unmet need to rebuild the communication infrastructure and to enhance common humanitarian information so as to enable a rapid and coordinated response to the humanitarian crisis.²⁵⁸

As war progressed, sources agree that the blocking of humanitarian aid by the warring parties had become a 'weapon of war'.²⁵⁹ As of mid-January 2024, UN and other aid agencies were struggling to access most of the country. Ever since they had lost access to Wad Madani, in

²⁴⁹ UNOCHA, Sudan Operational Presence (3W) – Post 15 April as of 31 December 2023, 26 January 2024, [url](#)

²⁵⁰ Humanitarian Outcomes, Humanitarian Access SCORE Report: Sudan, December 2023, [url](#), p. 12, and footnote no. 22

²⁵¹ Humanitarian Outcomes, Humanitarian Access SCORE Report: Sudan, December 2023, [url](#), p. 5

²⁵² Humanitarian Outcomes, Humanitarian Access SCORE Report: Sudan, December 2023, [url](#), p. 13

²⁵³ Humanitarian Outcomes, Humanitarian Access SCORE Report: Sudan, December 2023, [url](#), pp. 13-14

²⁵⁴ Humanitarian Outcomes, Humanitarian Access SCORE Report: Sudan, December 2023, [url](#), p. 4

²⁵⁵ UNSG, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, S/2023/861, 13 November 2023, [url](#), para. 40

²⁵⁶ Radio Tamazuj, Halting of humanitarian convoys aggravates suffering of IDPs in El Fasher, 19 February 2024, [url](#)

²⁵⁷ Humanitarian Outcomes, Humanitarian Access SCORE Report: Sudan, December 2023, [url](#), pp. 10-15

²⁵⁸ ETC, Sudan conflict, Situation Report #14, 31 January 2024, [url](#), p. 2; see also ETC, Sudan conflict, Situation Report #13, 31 December 2023, [url](#), p. 2

²⁵⁹ Humanitarian Outcomes, Humanitarian Access SCORE Report: Sudan, December 2023, [url](#), p. 17; Radio Dabanga, Sudanese legal expert: hindering access to aid is crime against humanity, 19 February 2024, [url](#); Hoffmann, A., From Catastrophe to Famine - Immediate action needed in Sudan to contain mass starvation, February 2024, [url](#), p. 4-5, 8



December 2023, following its seizure by the RSF, their operational activities were restricted out of Port Sudan on the Red Sea coast, and on delivering aid from Chad into the western region of Darfur.²⁶⁰ In January 2024, aid agencies were trying to establish cross-border operations from South Sudan into the southern parts of the Kordofan states.²⁶¹ Later in January and February 2024, Sudan authorities loyal to the SAF held up aid into Sudan, both from Port Sudan,²⁶² and at the border with Chad, while prohibiting entry into ‘stricken Darfur’ and obstructing assistance ‘from reaching communities in areas controlled by the RSF’.²⁶³

At the beginning of February 2024, the WFP country director for Sudan stated that they could deliver aid to just one in ten people in the conflict areas - which included Khartoum, Darfur and Al Jazirah state – mentioning lack of security guarantees and bureaucratic hurdles to get clearances.²⁶⁴

Recurring internet and communication blackouts also affected the delivery of humanitarian assistance operations,²⁶⁵ with the situation further exacerbated by the almost nation-wide blackout that started at the beginning of February 2024.²⁶⁶ This made operating impossible for humanitarian groups without ‘satellite equipment’. It also prevented individuals from accessing mobile cash-transfer applications,²⁶⁷ or civilian groups and emergency rooms from relying on on-line tools for donations, banking and coordination purposes.²⁶⁸ Such tools had proved to be a lifeline resource for many following the outbreak of the hostilities in April 2023.²⁶⁹ Within this context, in February 2024, Khartoum North Emergency Room announced the suspension of all community kitchens operating in the city despite multiple deaths in Khartoum state due to hunger in the previous few weeks.²⁷⁰

(e) Road security

Border areas

According to the UN Panel of Experts, the Darfur – CAR border area had been under RSF control since May 2023, when the RSF captured Am Dafok, the main border post with CAR.²⁷¹ In the aftermath of the outbreak of the hostilities, the Chadian authorities closed the long border with Sudan, and reinforced their military presence in the areas, with the Chadian

²⁶⁰ Reuters, Agencies consider new aid route into Sudan as humanitarian crisis worsens, 15 January 2024, [url](#)

²⁶¹ Reuters, Agencies consider new aid route into Sudan as humanitarian crisis worsens, 15 January 2024, [url](#)

²⁶² Arab News, US deplores holdups on aid into Sudan, 1 February 2024, [url](#)

²⁶³ Arab News, Sudan authorities block cross-border aid to stricken Darfur, 26 February 2024, [url](#)

²⁶⁴ Al Jazeera, People ‘dying of starvation’ in Sudan, UN food agency says, 2 February 2024, [url](#)

²⁶⁵ ETC, Sudan conflict, Situation Report #14, 31 January 2024, [url](#), p. 2; ETC, Sudan conflict, Situation Report #13, 31 December 2023, [url](#), p. 2

²⁶⁶ Al Jazeera, Network blackout cuts communications for millions in war-torn Sudan, 7 March 2024, [url](#); Sudan Tribune, Internet outage halts food aid, leading to deaths in Khartoum, 20 February 2024, [url](#); Reuters, Sudanese left in the dark by RSF-imposed telecoms blackout, 12 February 2024, [url](#); see also Radio Dabanga, Phone, internet falters in eastern Sudan, 4 February 2024, [url](#)

²⁶⁷ The Guardian, Inside the Darfur camp where a child dies every two hours, 21 February 2024, [url](#)

²⁶⁸ Sudan Tribune, Internet outage halts food aid, leading to deaths in Khartoum, 20 February 2024, [url](#)

²⁶⁹ Shahad, [@justhayxo, X], posted on 29 February 2024, [url](#); Munchkin, [@BSonblast, X], posted on 26 February 2024, [url](#); Hala Y Alkarib [@Halayalkarib], posted on 18 February 2024, [url](#); Elbagir, Y., [@YousraElbagir, X], posted 8 February 2024, [url](#); Hassab, A., [@errfner, X], posted on 7 February 2024, [url](#)

²⁷⁰ Radio Dabanga, Food kitchens halt in Khartoum North as people die of hunger, 20 February 2024, [url](#)

²⁷¹ UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 143-145



contingent of the joint Chad-Sudan border patrol force²⁷² deployed along the 'line of Tine - Karjari - Tisi-Adde'.²⁷³ Concerning the Sudan – Libya border, Haftar's Libya National Army (LNA) declared its closure on 25 April 2023 and deployed reinforcements.²⁷⁴

However, all this notwithstanding, for military equipment and fuel the RSF could rely on three main supply routes, respectively through Eastern Chad, Libya and South Sudan.²⁷⁵ More in detail: from Eastern Chad through Bao or Kariari and then Zuruk, Um Baru locality in North Darfur;²⁷⁶ from southern Libya, and with the complicity of the LNA, through the Libya - Chad – Sudan tri-border area, often through Amdjarass;²⁷⁷ from South Sudan, from Juba to Wau, and then to RSF controlled areas in South Darfur through Kafia-Kingi.²⁷⁸

Internal routes

In Darfur, several checkpoints and roadblocks were set up on key trade routes, such as the one from El Fasher, in North Darfur, to El Obeid, in North Kordofan, and from Am Dafok to Nyala in South Darfur, where fees were imposed for the safe passage of goods.²⁷⁹ In July 2023, Arab militias established checkpoints along the road between the Chad border and Murnei, which resulted in the restriction of the movement of civilians.²⁸⁰ In July 2023, the RSF imposed protection 'fees' on the civilian population on the Kutum-El Fasher road.²⁸¹ In August 2023, the taking of Mekkah bridge by the RSF and allied militias blocked the road between Nyala and Buram.²⁸² In September 2023, when fighting resumed in IDPs camps near El Fasher, toll gates on the road to the city were set up by local militias.²⁸³ Roads linking North and West Kordofan with Darfur were secured by the Darfur Joint Force,²⁸⁴ until they stopped securing humanitarian convoys from Port Sudan to El Fasher, in February 2024 according to Radio Dabanga,²⁸⁵ or actually earlier, at the end of November 2023, according to Sudan expert Reeves.²⁸⁶

In Khartoum, as of September 2023, fighting centred around key strategic transport routes, notably the Shambat bridge, a key passage for the RSF to move troops and equipment across the river Nile from Omdurman to Khartoum city via Bahri.²⁸⁷ The bridge was then destroyed in November 2023, with the RSF switching to the Jebel Awlia dam bridge as an alternative,

²⁷² Sudan Tribune, Sudan, Chad agree to strengthening operations of joint border force, 29 January 2023, [url](#)

²⁷³ UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 139-140

²⁷⁴ UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 146

²⁷⁵ UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), pp. 2-3; para. 38-49

²⁷⁶ UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 41-42

²⁷⁷ UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 44-47

²⁷⁸ UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 48

²⁷⁹ UN Security Council, Final report of the Panel of Experts, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 122, 145

²⁸⁰ ACLED, Situation Update - Sudan: The SAF Faces Setbacks as Armed Groups Overtake Territory Across the Country, 21 July 2023, [url](#);

²⁸¹ Radio Dabanga, Kidnapping and protection rackets rife in North Darfur, 05 July 2023, [url](#)

²⁸² ACLED, Situation Update, Sudan: deadly reciprocal offensives for strategic locations in Khartoum and Darfur, 8 September 2023, [url](#)

²⁸³ ACLED, Situation Update - Sudan: Ethnic Strife Amid Escalating Power Struggles, 6 October 2023, [url](#)

²⁸⁴ Radio Dabanga, Rebel forces arrive in South Darfur to protect people trapped in Nyala, 29 August 2023, [url](#)

²⁸⁵ Radio Dabanga, Darfur Joint Forces cease aid deliveries amidst 'healthcare collapse' warnings, 28 February 2024, [url](#)

²⁸⁶ Reeves, E., input from external review, 25 March 2024

²⁸⁷ Insecurity Insight, Sudan Situation Report Analysis, September 2023, [url](#)



although longer, route.²⁸⁸ Already in September 2023, SAF officials were allegedly charging for the transit of goods to areas controlled by the RSF in Omdurman.²⁸⁹ As of January 2024, with the RSF still controlling most of Khartoum state, despite recent SAF territorial gains in Omdurman,²⁹⁰ hundreds of checkpoints had been set up in the capital. This had led to a general state of fear preventing people from leaving their houses. Moreover, the RSF had ‘banned civilians from driving vehicles, forcing them to walk or rely on donkey carts to transport daily needs’.²⁹¹

In Al Jazirah, following the capture of Wad Madani and most of the regional state, the RSF set up several checkpoints that prevented civilians from fleeing.²⁹² In January, roads to villages located east of Al Jazirah, including Sharg Al Neel in Khartoum State, had been cut off.²⁹³

In the Kordofans, during the first months of the conflict, the SAF and the RSF attempted to control key roads connecting Omdurman to the Kordofans - notably the Bara-Omdurman road linking North Kordofan to Khartoum – as well as North Kordofan to White Nile state, through the El Obeid-Kosti road.²⁹⁴ A source quoted by Radio Dabanga in August 2023 indicated that ‘most roads between White Nile state and El Obeid, capital of North Kordofan, and El Fula, capital of West Kordofan [were] secured by the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF)’ and that ‘the fees for security convoys for lorries and vehicles [were] very high, ranging between one and two million pounds, which double[ed] the price of goods’. On 22 July 2023, members of the Kababish militia and RSF soldiers clashed in Rehid al-Nuba town and in the areas situated along the road between Omdurman and Bara in North Kordofan. Hostilities between Kababish militia and the RSF, after having broken out in North Kordofan,²⁹⁵ expanded to South Kordofan throughout September 2023, with the SPLM-N-al-Hilu still maintaining a blockade of the Kadugli-Dilling road.²⁹⁶

Circulation on main routes

Against the above general backdrop, FEWS NET reported at the end of January 2024 that, while food availability was impacted by loss of stocks and dysfunctional markets, it was further exacerbated by the ‘disruption of trade and humanitarian aid flows particularly from typically surplus-producing to deficit-producing areas’.²⁹⁷ As shown on the map below by FEWS NET, activities on almost the totality of main roads linking Port Sudan to Khartoum, and the

²⁸⁸ Sudan War Monitor, Sudan army close to breaking Omdurman siege, 4 February 2024, [url](#)

²⁸⁹ Darfur 24, Emergency lawyers accuse army of restricting Residents’ movement in Omdurman, 30 September 2023, [url](#)

²⁹⁰ Sudan War Monitor, Sudan army close to breaking Omdurman siege, 4 February 2024, [url](#)

²⁹¹ Nashed, M., ‘Can’t trust the Janjaweed’: Sudan’s capital ravaged by RSF rule, 20 January 2024, [url](#)

²⁹² Nashed, M., ‘No way to leave’: Sudan paramilitary traps civilians in breadbasket state, 29 December 2023, [url](#)

²⁹³ UNOCHA, SUDAN: Clashes in Wad Medani between the SAF and RSF Flash Update No: 6 (as of 8 January 2024), [url](#)

²⁹⁴ ACLED, Situation Update - Sudan: Heightened Violence in Kordofan Region as More Militia Groups Step Into the Conflict, 11 August 2023, [url](#)

²⁹⁵ Radio Dabanga, RSF and Kababish clash in North Kordofan, 24 July 2023, [url](#)

²⁹⁶ Ayin network, Sudan Conflict Monitor – 4 September 2023, [url](#)

²⁹⁷ FEWS NET, Sudan Food Security Alert: Clashes in Sudan’s breadbasket threaten national food availability, 1 February 2024, [url](#), p. 2



breadbasket area - Al Jazirah, Sennar, Gedaref - to the Kordofans and then Darfur, were either 'significantly disrupted, limited' or with 'minimal, no activity'.²⁹⁸

Within this context, the main routes to 'Greater Darfur' and 'Greater Kordofan', and more specifically the western route - Wad Madani-Kosti-El Obeid-El Fasher, and the southwestern route El Obeid-Dilling-Kadugli – had been significantly affected by rising levels of insecurity and the multiplication of checkpoints. Routes in the east, connecting Port Sudan, Gedaref, and Sennar, while remaining under SAF control, were also further disrupted as a consequence of the attack on Al Jazirah. Activity along these roads was 'limited by the increased number of SAF checkpoints and delayed approvals for convoy movements'.²⁹⁹

Completing this picture, FEWS NET reported, at the end of December 2023, that in central, eastern and western Sudan 'some alternative unpaved routes started to be increasingly used, instead of the tarmac roads, in order to avoid RSF checkpoints'. In particular, this was the case for the road linking Darfur with the Northern state through the Al Malha Al Daba route and the road linking Khartoum to central and eastern Sudan via the Al Butana route.³⁰⁰

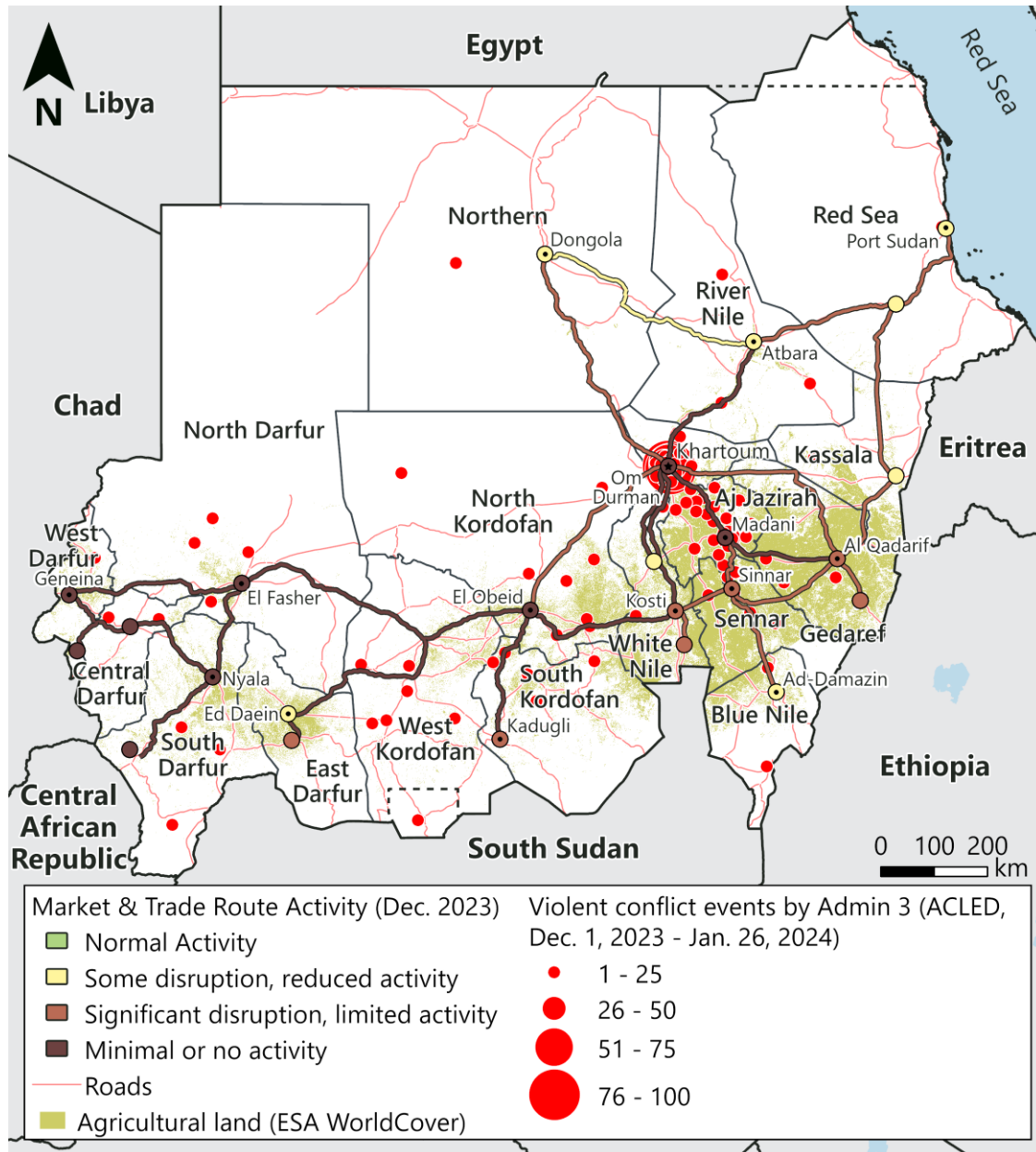
²⁹⁸ EUAA analysis based on FEWS NET, Markets and trade route activity map, cropland, and violent events, December-January 2024, 1 February 2024

²⁹⁹ FEWS NET, Sudan Food Security Alert: Clashes in Sudan's breadbasket threaten national food availability, 1 February 2024, [url](#), p. 2

³⁰⁰ FEWS NET, Sudan - Food Security Outlook Update, December 2023, [url](#), p. 6



1.1.6. Map on route activity as of December-January 2024



Map 3. Markets and trade route activity map, cropland, and violent events, December-January 2024.³⁰¹ Source: FEWS NET using data from USGS and ACLED

³⁰¹ FEWS NET, Sudan Food Security Alert: Clashes in Sudan's breadbasket threaten national food availability, 1 February 2024, [url](#), p. 1



1.2. Security situation in selected regions

1.2.1. Darfur

(a) Background

Darfur is the westernmost region of Sudan extending for an area the size of Spain.³⁰² It borders Libya, Chad, the Central African Republic (CAR) and South Sudan.³⁰³ The region boasts a landscape characterised by a semiarid plateau featuring the prominent Jebel Marra mountains.³⁰⁴ Darfur's overall population is contested, with estimates ranging between 6 million³⁰⁵ and 9.5 million people.³⁰⁶ Sudan expert Reeves leans towards the more conservative estimates, between 6 and 6.5 million people.³⁰⁷ Between thirty and ninety ethnic groups or tribes, depending on their definition, inhabit the area, with ways of life that can be nomadic, semi-nomadic, and sedentary.³⁰⁸ For more details see section [2.4 Non-Arabs/Africans in Darfur](#).

Darfur is divided into five states: North Darfur, South Darfur, West Darfur, East Darfur and Central Darfur. North Darfur occupies more than half of the Darfur territory.³⁰⁹ Located in the northwest of Sudan, it borders Chad and Libya, as well as the states of Central, East, South and West Darfur, North and West Kordofan and Northern State. The state includes parts of the mountainous Jebel Marra region to the south and El Fasher is its capital.³¹⁰ South Darfur, with Nyala as its capital, is in the southwest of Sudan and borders North, Central and East Darfur states, as well as South Sudan and the CAR.³¹¹ West Darfur borders Chad, with Beida, El Geneina – the state capital - and Kereneik the most populated localities.³¹² The main ethnic groups are the Rizeigat and the Masalit.³¹³ East Darfur borders South Darfur, North Darfur, West Kordofan, the Abyei Area and shares an international border with South Sudan. Its state capital is El Daein.³¹⁴ Sixteen per cent of the state's population are Arab nomads and the largest tribe in the area are the Southern Rizeigat.³¹⁵ The main livelihood activities include agriculture, livestock rearing and trading.³¹⁶ Central Darfur is situated in the southwest of Sudan bordering North, West and South Darfur and sharing borders with Chad and the CAR. The state capital is Zalingei. The Fur are the predominant tribe.³¹⁷

³⁰² Reeves, E., input from external review, 25 March 2024

³⁰³ UNSC, Report of the Secretary-General on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, S/2011/244, 14 April 2011, [url](#), para. 6

³⁰⁴ Africapolis, Sudan, accessed on 9 February 2024, [url](#)

³⁰⁵ Yifei, G., A Study of Tribal Composition and Conflict in Darfur, 2020, [url](#), p. 236

³⁰⁶ de Waal, A., The Conflict in Darfur, Sudan: Background and Overview, February 2022, [url](#), para. 6

³⁰⁷ Reeves, E., input from external review, 25 March 2024

³⁰⁸ de Waal, A., The Conflict in Darfur, Sudan: Background and Overview, February 2022, [url](#), para. 37-42

³⁰⁹ UNICEF, State profile North Darfur, [url](#)

³¹⁰ UNICEF, State profile North Darfur, [url](#)

³¹¹ UNOCHA, Sudan: South Darfur State Profile (Updated March 2022), March 2022, [url](#)

³¹² UN Sudan, West Darfur Peacebuilding Assessment, June 2021, [url](#)

³¹³ UN Sudan West Darfur Peacebuilding Assessment, June 2021, [url](#)

³¹⁴ UNOCHA, OCHA Sudan: East Darfur State Profile (March 2023), 29 March 2023, [url](#)

³¹⁵ UNICEF, State profile East Darfur, [url](#)

³¹⁶ UNOCHA, OCHA Sudan: East Darfur State Profile (March 2023), 29 March 2023, [url](#)

³¹⁷ UNICEF, State profile Central Darfur, [url](#)





(b) Armed actors

The Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) or Sudanese Liberation Movement (SLM) is a Darfur-based rebel group officially established in 2003, largely consisting of people from the Fur, Zaghawa and Masalit tribes. In 2005, the SLM split into factions under the lead of its founding leaders:

- SLM-AW, a mostly Fur faction, under the leadership of Abdel Wahid al Nur, controlling parts of the Jebel Marra Mountain range.³¹⁸
- SLM-MM, a group under the leadership of Minni Minnawi mostly supported by the Zaghawa tribe.³¹⁹ Minni Minnawi was appointed Governor of the Greater Darfur in 2021.³²⁰
- SLM-Transitional Council (TC) led by Al-Hadi Idris.³²¹
- SLM-Tambour, led by Mustafa Tambour, separated from the SLM-AW in 2018.³²²

The SLM-AW, unlike the SLM-MM and SLM-Tambour, did not participate in negotiations and did not sign the JPA in 2020.³²³ While the SLM-AW and SLM-MM adopted a position of neutrality in the conflict until November 2023, when the SLM-MM allied with the SAF against the RSF, the SLM-Tambour supported the SAF from the beginning of the conflict.³²⁴

The Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) is an Islamist rebel group established in 2003. Most of its leaders and membership initially came from the Kobe, a Zaghawa sub-group.³²⁵ The group was close to Islamist ideologue Hassan al-Turabi.³²⁶ According to the UN Panels of Experts, the group split into two new groups in August 2023 after the suspension of several key leaders for engaging in a meeting with General Dagalo in July.³²⁷

The Sudanese Alliance (SA) is a group led by West Darfur Governor Khamis Abdallah Abkar.³²⁸ The Governor was killed in June 2023 after he accused the RSF and Arab armed militia of killing civilians in El Geneina and called for international protection.³²⁹

The Gathering of the Sudan Liberation Forces (GLSF) was established in July 2017 after the merger of three Darfur armed factions based in Libya at the time, including the Sudan Liberation Movement for Justice of Tahir Hajar, Sudan Liberation Movement-Unity (SLM-Unity) of Abdallah Yahia and the JEM faction led by Abdallah Bashr Gali (aka Gena). While the Chairman, Tahir Hajar, reiterated the neutrality of group in November 2023, the faction led by GLSF Deputy Charmain Abdallah Yaha declared its support to the SAF.³³⁰

³¹⁸ PolGeoNow, Sudan War Control Map & Timeline - October 2023, [url](#)

³¹⁹ MRG, Fur in South Sudan, June 2018, [url](#)

³²⁰ Sudan War Monitor, Map of the Areas of Control in Sudan, 2 November 2023, [url](#)

³²¹ Radio Tamazuj, Darfur armed movements join army to fight RSF, 19 November 2023, [url](#)

³²² Sudan Tribune, SLM faction joins Sudanese army against RSF in Darfur, 31 July 2023, [url](#)

³²³ IDEA, The Juba Agreement for Peace in Sudan, 2021, [url](#), p.12

³²⁴ UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 7 - 8

³²⁵ Small Arms Survey, Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), August 2013, [url](#)

³²⁶ Sudan Tribune, Rebel groups in Sudan's Darfur, 18 December 2023, [url](#); FP, The Islamist Behind Sudan's Throne, 8 March 2016, [url](#)

³²⁷ UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 9

³²⁸ UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 7

³²⁹ Sudan Tribune, Governor of West Darfur state assassinated after calling for international protection, 14 June 2023, [url](#)

³³⁰ Sudan Tribune, Another Darfur faction joins Sudanese army in fight against RSF, 20 November 2023, [url](#)





The Gathering of the Sudanese Justice and Equality Forces (GSJEF) is a Darfuri armed group based in Libya and led by Abdallah Banda³³¹ supporting the SAF since November 2023.³³²

The Third Front known as Tamazuj is an armed group led by Mohammed Ali Qureshi as wing of the SPLM.³³³ It was a signatory of the JPA agreement in 2020 with forces across the Darfur and the Kordofans border regions. It pledged its support to the RSF on 17 August 2023.³³⁴

On 27 April 2023, JPA-signatory groups in Darfur formed an alliance called the Joint Struggle Armed Movement Forces (JSAMF) also known as Darfur Joint Forces or Joint Forces.³³⁵ According to sources, the alliance declared its neutrality and aimed at ensuring the protection of civilians in Darfur by 'protecting markets and escorting humanitarian and commercial convoys'.³³⁶ According to ACLED, in some instances these forces transitioned from escorting duties to actively engage in military operations.³³⁷ By November 2023, the JEM and the SLM-MM announced the end of the neutrality and confirmed their support to SAF in operations to protect civilians in Darfur. While they did not explicitly state the intention to engage in active combat, the JEM and the SLM-MM initiated troop deployment in North Darfur in December 2023.³³⁸ In January 2024, SLM-TC leader Al-Hadi Idris reaffirmed the neutrality if the alliance and its commitment to non-participation in the fighting.³³⁹

(c) Main conflict dynamics and territorial control

In the reporting period, in Greater Darfur, the main warring parties competed taking control of strategic military bases and territories, with reported use of aerial bombing and heavy shelling by both the SAF and the RSF.³⁴⁰ Notable areas of conflict in the first months of the conflict included SAF headquarters in all capitals of the Darfur's states,³⁴¹ Kutum, Kassab IDP camp,³⁴² and Kabkabiya in North Darfur; El Geneina, Sirba, Murnei and Masteri in West Darfur;³⁴³ Umm Dukhun in Central Darfur.³⁴⁴

In South Darfur, Nyala, the state capital, and its surrounding areas experienced intense confrontations, with the fight for the takeover of the city causing damages to markets and neighbourhoods due to intense bombing and shelling. The RSF took control of the capital on

³³¹ UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 12

³³² Sudan Tribune, Another Darfur faction joins Sudanese army in fight against RSF, 20 November 2023, [url](#)

³³³ IDEA, The Juba Agreement for Peace in Sudan, 2021, [url](#)

³³⁴ Sudan Tribune, Tamazuj group aligns with RSF in Sudan's ongoing war, 17 August 2023, [url](#)

³³⁵ Insecurity Insight, Sudan Situation Report Analysis, September 2023, [url](#), p.4; Sudan Tribune, Minnawi warns against plans to attack Darfur joint force, 9 September 2023, [url](#)

³³⁶ Sudan Tribune, Minnawi warns against plans to attack Darfur joint force, 9 September 2023, [url](#)

³³⁷ ACLED, Situation Update – Sudan: Ethnic Strife Amid Escalating Power Struggles, 6 October 2023, [url](#)

³³⁸ Sudan Tribune, Darfur Joint Force deploys more troops to protect civilians, 2 December 2023, [url](#)

³³⁹ Sudan Tribune, Al-Hadi Idris reiterates neutrality and unity of Darfur joint forces, 8 January 2024, [url](#)

³⁴⁰ UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), p. 2

³⁴¹ UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 4

³⁴² MEE, Sudan: Dozens killed as RSF attacks North Darfur's Kutum, 5 June 2023, [url](#)

³⁴³ The Guardian, Civilians attacked in Darfur region as Sudan fighting escalates, 30 April 2023, [url](#); UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 4

³⁴⁴ ACLED, Situation Update – Sudan: Fighting Rages Amid Ceasefire Talks, 26 May 2023, [url](#)



26 October 2023,³⁴⁵ as well as key border cities such as Um Dafog, a town on the border with CAR, strategic for the region's supply chain.³⁴⁶

In Central Darfur, the RSF claimed control of the capital Zalingei by the end of October 2023. Security concerns extended to the Jebel Marra area.³⁴⁷ Fighting between the main warring parties lasted for two months with intense shelling on IDP camps in the outskirts of the town and a blockade of supplies for several weeks.³⁴⁸

In West Darfur, both prominent political figures and humanitarian staff were impacted by the violence, such as the Masalit Wali of West Darfur and leader of the SA, Khamis Abdullah Abbaker, as well as WFP national staff members.³⁴⁹ For more information on political opponents and humanitarian personnel see [2.2 Humanitarian and health personnel](#) and [2.3 Political opponents](#). Violence in the state has escalated over the first months with El Geneina³⁵⁰ witnessing intense fighting that resulted in significant casualties and injured civilians being displaced to neighbouring areas and to Chad.³⁵¹ In June 2023, the RSF took over the capital, after more than 50 days of sustained attacks.³⁵² Violence exacerbated once again towards the end of the year with the RSF's takeover of the SAF's Division in Ardamata, on the outskirts of El Geneina, on 4 November 2023.³⁵³ As reported by the OHCHR, violence escalated further with reports of mass killing targeting non-Arabs communities, in particular the Masalit, which have occurred since the early stages of the conflict.³⁵⁴ The victims were reportedly killed by the RSF and allied militias during the violence in the area in June.³⁵⁵ For more information on ethnic motivated killings see section [2.4 Non-Arabs/Africans in Darfur](#), notably [2.4.2 Targeting](#).

In East Darfur, the RSF took control of El Daein, the state capital, and Zarga Um Hadid and Shag Omar oilfields by mid-November 2023.³⁵⁶ Since the beginning of the conflict, El Daein has remained unaffected by major incidents due to the intervention of community leaders that mediated with the warring parties ensuring a commitment of non-aggression. A plan was

³⁴⁵ Ayin network, Sudan Conflict monitor, 31 October 2023, [url](#)

³⁴⁶ BBC, Sudan conflict: RSF takes control of Nyala in Darfur, 26 October 2023, [url](#); Sudan War Monitor, RSF take control of army garrison at Um Dafog, 13 June 2023, [url](#)

³⁴⁷ IOM, DTM Sudan Flash Alert: Gharb Jabal Marrah (Nertiti Town), Central Darfur, 13 November 2023, [url](#)

³⁴⁸ Ayin network, Sudan Conflict Monitor, 31 October 2023, [url](#)

³⁴⁹ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, S/2023/644, 31 August 2023, [url](#), para. 20, 23

³⁵⁰ ACLED, Situation Update – Sudan: Conflict Intensifies Following the Breakdown of Jeddah Talks, 23 June 2023, [url](#)

³⁵¹ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, S/2023/644, 31 August 2023, [url](#), para. 20

³⁵² Reuters, How Arab fighters carried out a rolling ethnic massacre in Sudan, 22 September 2023, [url](#)

³⁵³ UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 69

³⁵⁴ OHCHR, Comment by UN Human Rights Spokesperson Ravina Shamdasani, raising alarm on killings of people fleeing El Geneina in West Darfur, Sudan, 24 June 2023, [url](#); The New Humanitarian, 'Every checkpoint could be your last': The perilous road to safety for Darfuri refugees, 15 August 2023, [url](#)

³⁵⁵ OHCHR, Sudan: At least 87 buried in mass grave in Darfur as Rapid Support Forces deny victims decent burials, 13 July 2023, [url](#); ACLED, Situation Update - Sudan: The SAF Faces Setbacks as Armed Groups Overtake Territory Across the Country, 21 July 2023, [url](#); Reuters, At least 87 buried in Sudan mass grave, including women, children, UN says, 13 July 2023, [url](#)

³⁵⁶ Radio Dabanga, RSF secures oilfield in East Darfur, 7 November 2023, [url](#)



negotiated for peaceful withdrawal of the SAF from the town without confrontation with the advancing RSF forces.³⁵⁷

In North Darfur, stronghold of the Darfurian JPA-signatory groups, a ceasefire was negotiated in April 2023, dividing the control of El Fasher between the SAF and the RSF with a buffer zone controlled by the Darfur Joint Forces.³⁵⁸ In August 2023, tensions between the Darfurian armed groups and the RSF escalated due to the involvement of the Joint Forces in escorting humanitarian convoys from Port Sudan to El Fasher. Later, in October 2023, tensions heightened further when the RSF deployed troops around El Fasher, threatening to attack the army.³⁵⁹ As of January 2024, North Darfur remained a contested territory by warring parties.³⁶⁰

Since April 2023, the SLM-AW gained control of large swaths of territory in Darfur region beyond the Jebel Marra complex, the area previously under their control. Other forces intensified their presence on the territory such as the SLM-MM, the GSLF, the SLM-TC, the JEM, and the SA. Several groups also announced their support for either one or the other primary warring faction.³⁶¹ By November 2023, two of the main groups of the Darfur Joint Forces, the SLM-MM and the JEM, declared their commitment to protecting civilians and sided with the army against the RSF.³⁶² They engaged in clashes with the RSF in North Darfur despite the Joint Forces remaining officially neutral in the conflict as reiterated by the SLM-TC leader in January 2024.³⁶³

The escalation of violence, infrastructure destruction, looting and attacks to private properties have led to the displacement of thousands of civilians³⁶⁴ to neighbouring areas and to Chad.³⁶⁵

(d) Security incidents and impact on the civilian population

From 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, ACLED observed 696 security incidents in the Darfur region for a total estimate of 4 997 fatalities.³⁶⁶ However, this is most likely a conservative estimate,³⁶⁷ as also indirectly suggested by intelligence sources cited by the UN Panel of Experts in January 2024, according to whom 'between 10,000 and 15,000 people were killed in El Geneina alone'.³⁶⁸

³⁵⁷ The New Humanitarian, Snapshots: How Sudan's conflict is impacting Darfur, 20 December 2023, [url](#)

³⁵⁸ UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 14

³⁵⁹ UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 17, 18

³⁶⁰ Sudan Tribune, Renewed clashes erupt in El Fasher, leaving one dead and four injured, 24 January 2024, [url](#), accessed 15 March 2024

³⁶¹ ACLED, Situation Update - Sudan: Ethnic Strife Amid Escalating Power Struggles, 6 October 2023, [url](#)

³⁶² Sudan Tribune, Key Darfur groups join Sudanese army in its war against RSF paramilitary forces, 16 November 2023, [url](#); Radio Dabanga, Darfur armed movements renounce neutrality in Sudan war, 17 November 2023, [url](#)

³⁶³ Sudan Tribune, Al-Hadi Idris reiterates neutrality and unity of Darfur joint forces, 8 January 2024, [url](#)

³⁶⁴ ACLED, Situation Update - Sudan: The SAF Faces Setbacks as Armed Groups Overtake Territory Across the Country, 21 July 2023, [url](#)

³⁶⁵ UN Security Council, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, 31 August 2023, [url](#), para. 20

³⁶⁶ EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)

³⁶⁷ ACLED, Sudan: Setting the Stage for a Long War, 17 January 2024, [url](#)

³⁶⁸ UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 54



Among the 696 security events reported by ACLED, 409 were coded as battles, 46 as explosions/remote violence and 241 as incidents of violence against civilians. In 264 instances civilians were the primary or only target. Security incidents were recorded across all Darfur states, with South Darfur accounting for 36 % of the total violence recorded by ACLED.³⁶⁹

The highest number of incidents was reached in August 2023, when the number of occurrences in South Darfur almost doubled compared to the other areas of the region. The number of incidents decreased by half between November and December 2023.³⁷⁰ 80 % of deaths occurred in South and West Darfur, with El Geneina, located in West Darfur, reporting the highest number of casualties (2012).³⁷¹

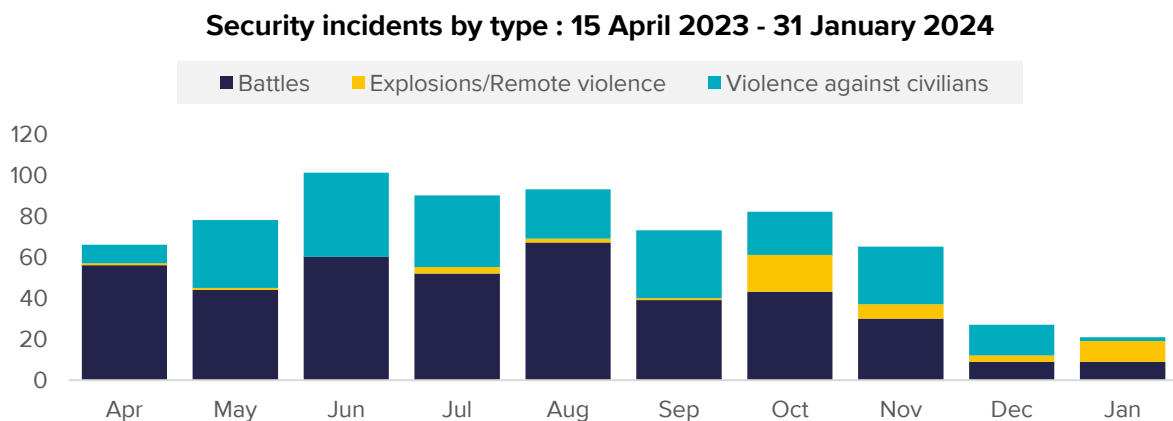


Figure 6. Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians in Darfur, 15 April 2023 - 31 January 2024, based on ACLED data³⁷²

Among main security events, in June 2023, sources reported that at least 200 people were killed and 862 other wounded on the road between El Geneina and Chad borders. Civilians were attacked by the RSF and members of an Arab militia.³⁷³ On 22 August 2023, at least 26 civilians, mostly women and children, were killed while sheltering under a bridge by shells reportedly fired by the SAF. In Zalingei, dozens of IDPs were reportedly killed between 14 and 17 September 2023 when Hasahisa camp was hit by RSF shells.³⁷⁴ On 5 November 2023, the RSF and an Arab-allied militia attacked the Ardamata IDP Camp, resulting in civilian deaths, mostly Masalit men. Reports indicated that between 800 to 2000 people were killed in the city between 3 and 6 November 2023, with 800 fatalities across four events.³⁷⁵ For more information see [2.4 Non-Arabs/Africans in Darfur](#).

³⁶⁹ EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)

³⁷⁰ EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)

³⁷¹ EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)

³⁷² EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)

³⁷³ EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)

³⁷⁴ OHCHR, Situation of human rights in the Sudan, 22 February 2024, [url](#)

³⁷⁵ EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)

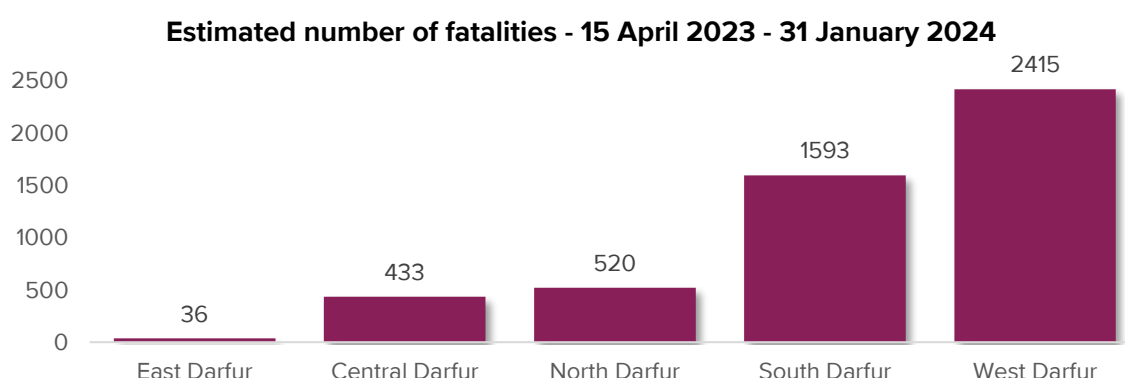


Figure 7. Fatalities as a result of armed conflict in Darfur, 15 April 2023 - 31 January 2024, ACLED data³⁷⁶

1.2.2. Khartoum

(a) Background

Khartoum State is the smallest state of Sudan by area but the most densely inhabited with a population of 9.4 million.³⁷⁷ Located at the confluence of the White Nile and the Blue Nile³⁷⁸ the state capital, Khartoum, consists of three cities connected through ten bridges – Omdurman along the western bank, Bahri (or Khartoum North) on the eastern bank in the north, and Khartoum between the Niles in the south.³⁷⁹ The state borders with Northern, River Nile, Kassala, Gedaref, Al Jazirah, White Nile and North Kordofan states.³⁸⁰

(b) Armed actors

In Khartoum, the two primary warring parties are the SAF and the RSF. Detailed information about these actors can be found in section [1.1.3\(b\) Major state and non-state armed groups](#).

(c) Main conflict dynamics and territorial control

Since the onset of the conflict, the SAF, the RSF, and their allied militia groups have engaged in repeated fighting in Khartoum, Omdurman, and Bahri.³⁸¹ Most events reported in Khartoum involved airstrikes and artillery shelling.³⁸² Since the beginning, the RSF has demonstrated agility in swiftly moving across the capital, gaining control of main roads, and the SAF has responded by mobilising its air force.³⁸³ Strategic sites such as the presidential palace, the army and RSF headquarters, and the bridges that connect Khartoum's various districts have experienced frequent changes in control.³⁸⁴ In April 2023, the RSF deployed forces in the

³⁷⁶ EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)

³⁷⁷ UNOCHA, Khartoum State Profile, March 2023, [url](#), p. 2

³⁷⁸ Africapolis, Sudan, accessed on 9 February 2024, [url](#)

³⁷⁹ IDS and EARF, Khartoum Land Nexus Research Team (2020), The Urban Land Nexus and Inclusive Urbanisation in Khartoum, Briefing Note 3, Brighton, UK, [url](#)

³⁸⁰ UNOCHA, Khartoum State Profile, March 2023, [url](#), p. 1

³⁸¹ Radio Dabanga, Unravelling Sudan's militia matrix: PRF and other emerging forces, 26 September 2023, [url](#)

³⁸² ACLED, Situation Update, Sudan: Conflict Intensifies Following the Breakdown of Jeddah Talks, 23 June 2023, [url](#)

³⁸³ Africa Confidential, How the generals blew up the transition, 27 April 2023, [url](#)

³⁸⁴ ICG, A Race against Time to Halt Sudan's Collapse, 22 June 2023, [url](#)

eastern neighbourhoods of Khartoum, the airport and the city centre. RSF troops were present in Bahri and Omdurman neighbourhoods as well. The SAF had control of the General Command headquarters and Kober Bridge as well as the southwest area and the weapons factories area in Khartoum. In Bahri and Omdurman the SAF has maintained control of their military bases.³⁸⁵ Between April and August 2023, the conflict intensified concentrating on strategic areas, damaging military and civilian properties.³⁸⁶ In September 2023, the SAF began to display a new military capacity, employing kamikaze drones to carry out precision strikes against RSF vehicles.³⁸⁷ Additional strategic locations were involved in the fighting between August and December 2023, including several key bridges³⁸⁸ such as the Shambat bridge that was bombed in November 2023.³⁸⁹ Additionally, the same month, an alternative route to reach the capital, the Jebel Awlia dam, located in south of Khartoum, sustained severe damages.³⁹⁰

The RSF had secured control over most of the city by December 2023. In January 2024, the SAF launched a synchronized offensive across multiple fronts in Omdurman and Bahri, resulting in the recapture of several areas.³⁹¹ Fighting increased in the sites still under the army's control such as the SAF General Command in central Khartoum and the Signal Corps in Bahri.³⁹² Nonetheless, the RSF continues to hold strategic positions in Omdurman,³⁹³ despite the SAF artillery attacks towards RSF targets.³⁹⁴

The warring parties violated ceasefires multiple times,³⁹⁵ resulting in civilians being caught in the crossfire, with attacks on markets and residential areas leading to significant civilian casualties,³⁹⁶ and widespread displacement.³⁹⁷ The use of heavy artillery weapons has caused severe destruction to commercial, governmental and residential buildings as well as damage to critical infrastructure such as power and water stations, hospitals, and communication networks affecting connectivity.³⁹⁸ By June 2023, banks in the capital were not accessible and the movement of goods and people was hindered by checkpoints blocking traffic in any

³⁸⁵ ACLED, Situation update, Sudan: Fighting Rages Amid Ceasefire Talks, 26 May 2023, [url](#)

³⁸⁶ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan Report of the Secretary-General, S/2023/644, 31 August 2023, [url](#), para. 16

³⁸⁷ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan Report of the Secretary-General, S/2023/644, 13 November 2023, [url](#), para. 16

³⁸⁸ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan Report of the Secretary-General, S/2023/644, 13 November 2023, [url](#), para. 16

³⁸⁹ Sudan War Monitor, Shambat Bridge destroyed, bringing new advantage to Sudan's army, 11 November 2023, [url](#)

³⁹⁰ Reuters, Sudanese warring parties trade blame for damaged dam south of Khartoum, 18 November 2023, [url](#)

³⁹¹ ACLED, Sudan: The SAF Breaks the Siege, 5 February 2024, [url](#)

³⁹² Radio Dabanga, Escalated fighting in greater Khartoum persists, prices of fuel and food soar in Sudan, 23 January 2024, [url](#)

³⁹³ ACLED, Sudan: The SAF Breaks the Siege, 5 February 2024, [url](#)

³⁹⁴ Radio Dabanga, Escalated fighting in greater Khartoum persists, prices of fuel and food soar in Sudan, 23 January 2024, [url](#)

³⁹⁵ ACLED, Situation Update, Sudan: Conflict Intensifies Following the Breakdown of Jeddah Talks, 23 June 2023, [url](#)

³⁹⁶ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan Report of the Secretary-General, S/2023/861, 13 November 2023, [url](#), para. 30

³⁹⁷ IOM, DTM Sudan, Weekly Displacement Snapshot 02, 5 September 2023, [url](#)

³⁹⁸ Daily Sabah, 18 killed in Khartoum market attack after army abandons talks, 1 June 2023, [url](#); HRW, Sudan: Explosive weapons harming civilians, 4 May 2023, [url](#); Radio Dabanga, Water supply cut off in Sudan capital as fighting escalates, 6 June 2023, [url](#)



direction.³⁹⁹ By January 2024, the RSF had banned civilians from driving vehicles, alongside the establishment of multiple checkpoints and the enforcement of a curfew.⁴⁰⁰

Reports indicate that health facilities were vandalised and looted, with damages reported in at least 58 incidents, largely attributed to the use of explosive weaponry by the RSF and the SAF with Ibn Sina University Hospital being struck multiple times.⁴⁰¹ The OHCHR reported a pattern of killings involving unarmed individuals who were attempting to protect their properties or female relatives from sexual violence by the RSF.⁴⁰² For information on access to health and medical supplies see section [1.1.5 Humanitarian situation](#).

Prison breaks and the absence of law enforcement actors have contributed to episodes of assaults, looting of markets and private properties, and other violent acts perpetrated against civilians attempting to reach services as well as those escaping security risks.⁴⁰³ Reports have emerged, particularly in Halfaya and Masalma, of women and girls being abducted by the RSF and held in detention camps.⁴⁰⁴ See section [2.5 Women and girls](#) for more information.

(d) Security incidents and impact on the civilian population

From 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, 70 % of all security incidents registered by ACLED in Sudan have occurred in Khartoum state.⁴⁰⁵ During the reference period, ACLED observed 3 275 security incidents in Khartoum state for a total estimate of 6 478 fatalities. However, as reported by sources, including ACLED, these figures are likely to be underestimates.⁴⁰⁶

Among the 3 275 security events reported by ACLED, 1 783 were coded as battles, 1 137 as explosions/remote violence and 355 as incidents of violence against civilians. In 615 instances civilians were the primary or only target. Security incidents were recorded across the whole state, with the city of Khartoum accounting for 40 % of the total.⁴⁰⁷

Among the main security events, national sources reported clashes between the SAF and the RSF at the Armoured Corps base in August 2023, resulting in civilian casualties, extensive damage to civilian properties and displacement.⁴⁰⁸ In September 2023, at least 40 civilians were killed, and dozens injured in an airstrike on a market in southern Khartoum.⁴⁰⁹ According to sources cited by the OHCHR, in April 2023, the RSF used the presence of detained civilians in streets and open areas close to buildings as ‘human shields’ to deter SAF airstrikes in the

³⁹⁹ ICG, A Race against Time to Halt Sudan’s Collapse, 22 June 2023, [url](#)

⁴⁰⁰ Al Jazeera, ‘Can’t trust the Janjaweed’: Sudan’s capital ravaged by RSF rule, 20 January 2023, [url](#)

⁴⁰¹ Insecurity Insight, Attacks on Health Care in Sudan, 6 February 2024, [url](#), p.1

⁴⁰² OHCHR, Situation of human rights in the Sudan, A/HRC/55/29, 22 February 2024, [url](#), para. 36

⁴⁰³ UNHCR Protection Brief – Sudan – June 2023, 4 June 2023, [url](#)

⁴⁰⁴ Al Arabiya, Shadows of unwanted pregnancies loom large before Sudanese rape victims as war rages, 22 June 2023, [url](#)

⁴⁰⁵ EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁰⁶ Reuters, Sudan war’s death toll in Khartoum is double official figures, independent tallies show, 28 July 2023, [url](#); The Guardian, Monday briefing: Charting the forgotten crisis in Sudan, 26 February 2024, [url](#); ACLED, Sudan: Setting the Stage for a Long War, 17 January 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁰⁷ EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁰⁸ EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁰⁹ The Guardian, At least 40 civilians killed in airstrike on Khartoum market in Sudan, 10 September 2023, [url](#)



area of East Khartoum and Bahri.⁴¹⁰ In January 2024, 18 people were killed and 35 were wounded in aerial bombardments on Soba El Mahatta, north of El Kalaklat in southwest Khartoum.⁴¹¹

Security incidents by type: 15 April 2023 - 31 January 2024

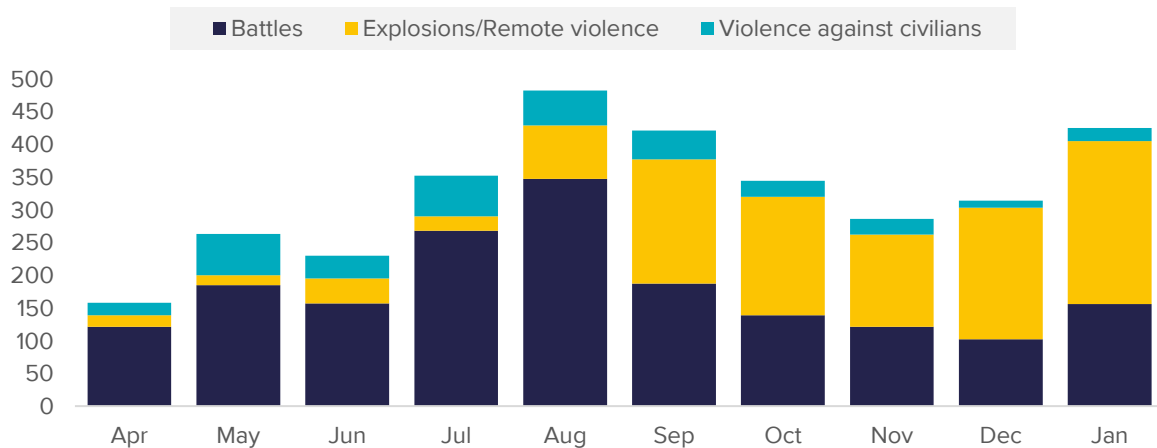


Figure 8. Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians in Khartoum, 15 April 2023 – 31 January 2024, based on ACLED data⁴¹²

Estimated number of fatalities - 15 April 2023 - 31 January 2024

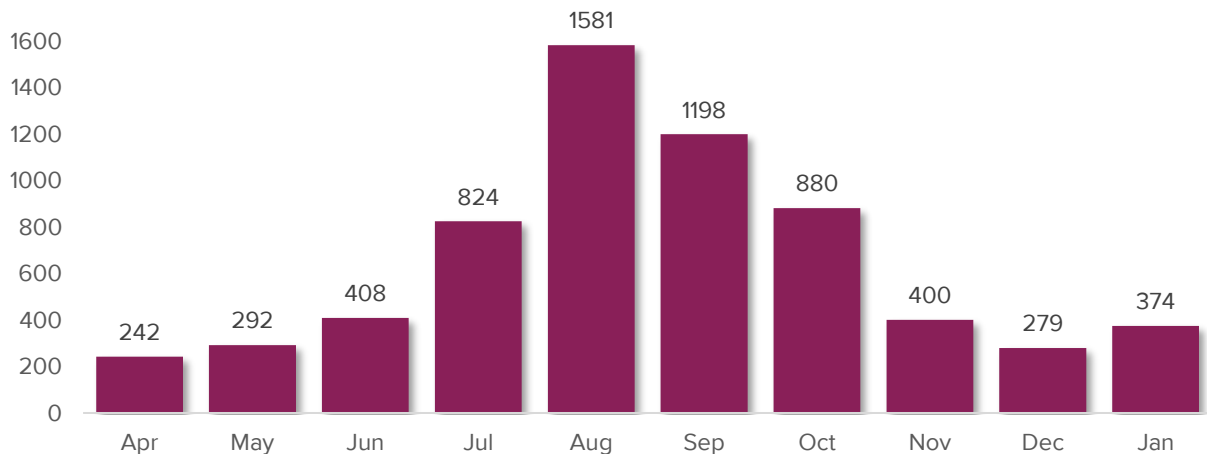


Figure 9. Fatalities as a result of armed conflict in Khartoum, 15 April 2023 - 31 January 2024, monthly breakdown based on ACLED data⁴¹³

⁴¹⁰ OHCHR, Situation of human rights in the Sudan, A/HRC/55/29, 22 February 2024, [url](#), para. 29

⁴¹¹ Radio Dabanga, Sudan Armed Forces advance in Omdurman, politicians detained by RSF and army, 16 January 2023, [url](#)

⁴¹² EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴¹³ EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)



1.2.3. Al Jazirah

(a) Background

Tucked between the Blue and White Nile in the east-central region, Al Jazirah state is home to almost 5.5 million people. The most populated town within the state is Hasahisa with more than 500 000 residents.⁴¹⁴ Al Jazirah state produces half of Sudan's total wheat harvest, alongside significant yields of cotton and peanuts.⁴¹⁵

(b) Armed actors

In Al Jazirah, the two primary warring parties are the SAF and the RSF. See section [1.1.3\(b\) Major state and non-state armed groups](#).

(c) Main conflict dynamics and territorial control

In July 2023, the conflict expanded to the state of Al Jazirah, with air strikes that continued over the following months.⁴¹⁶ Initially, a number of clashes by the warring parties occurred in the north of the state⁴¹⁷ to then persist with a large-scale offensive by the RSF to take control of Wad Madani, the densely populated capital and humanitarian hub, in December 2023.⁴¹⁸ Reports indicated that dozens of civilians, including medical personnel, were killed and many more injured during the offensive.⁴¹⁹ The Sudan Witness project has documented arrests, detention and killings in the capital in the days close to the takeover.⁴²⁰ Food factories in Wad Medani stopped operations after being occupied and looted by RSF fighters.⁴²¹ Humanitarian organisations reported the theft of humanitarian assets,⁴²² including the looting of essential food supplies from the WFP warehouse in December 2023.⁴²³ The SAF withdrawal from the city without resistance has triggered the opening of an internal investigation by the army.⁴²⁴ The capture of the city allowed the RSF to prevent the regular SAF's supply lines to the capital.⁴²⁵ Towards the end of the month, the RSF gained control of other cities and towns in

⁴¹⁴ Sudan 2022 HNO, downloaded on 12 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴¹⁵ Sudan War Monitor, RSF consolidate control over Jezira and reach the gates of Sennar, 22 December 2023, [url](#)

⁴¹⁶ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan Report of the Secretary-General, S/2023/644, 31 August 2023, [url](#), para. 16

⁴¹⁷ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition

Assistance Mission in the Sudan Report of the Secretary-General, S/2023/861, 13 November 2023, [url](#), para. 16

⁴¹⁸ ACLED, Situation Update January 2024 - Sudan: The Rapid Support Forces (RSF) Gains Ground in Sudan, 12 January 2024, [url](#); UNOCHA, Sudan: Clashes in Wad Madani between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and Rapid Support Forces (RSF) - Flash Update No: 03 (as of 18 December 2023), 18 December 2023, [url](#)

⁴¹⁹ OHCHR, Comment by UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk on attacks on civilians in Wad Madani, Sudan, [url](#)

⁴²⁰ CIR, Sudan Witness, Wad Madani, El Gezira: Arrests, detention, and killings in Sudan's second city, 2 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴²¹ Ayin network, Sudan Conflict Monitor #9, 9 January 2023, [url](#)

⁴²² Ayin network, Sudan Conflict Monitor #9, 9 January 2023, [url](#)

⁴²³ WFP, WFP condemns theft of life-saving food from warehouse in Gezira State, 28 December 2023, [url](#)

⁴²⁴ MEE, Sudan: Soldiers accuse army of betrayal after retreat leaves Wad Madani to RSF, 20 December 2023, [url](#)

⁴²⁵ Le Monde, Au Soudan, les Forces de soutien rapide s'emparent de Wad Madani et aggravent la crise humanitaire, 20 December 2023, [url](#)



the state, allegedly obstructing people from leaving.⁴²⁶ Interested localities included Hajj Abdallah and Wad al-Haddad not far from Sennar, and al-Qutaynah in the White Nile state.⁴²⁷

(d) Security incidents and impact on the civilian population

Between 15 April 2023 and 31 January 2024, ACLED observed 174 security incidents in Al Jazirah state for a total estimate of 307 fatalities. However, as reported by sources, these figures are likely to be underestimates.⁴²⁸

Among these, 52 were coded as battles, 52 as explosions/remote violence and 70 as incidents of violence against civilians. In 92 instances civilians were the primary or only target. Security incidents were recorded across the whole state, with Al Kamlin district, between Wad Madani and Khartoum, and Wad Madani accounting for 55 % of the total recorded violence. The number of political violence events raised sharply in December 2023 with over 120 events and over 100 reported fatalities.⁴²⁹

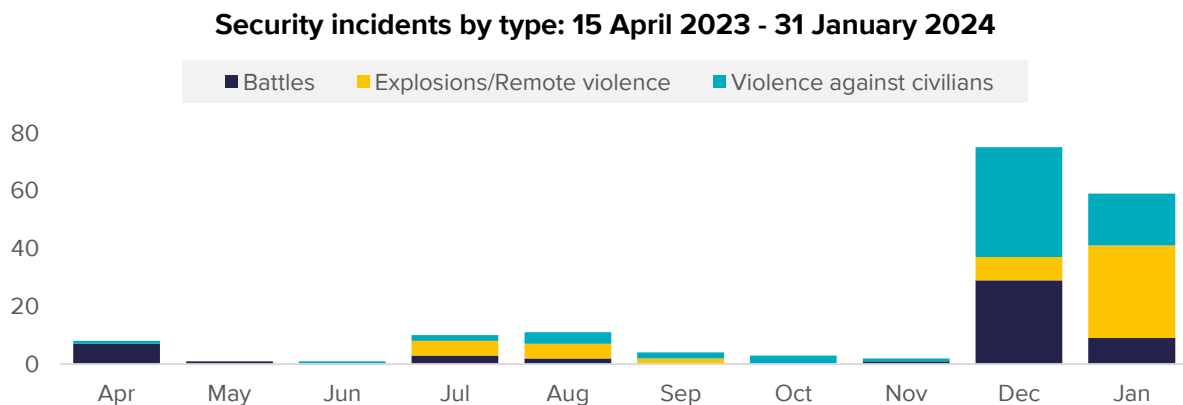


Figure 10. Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians in Al Jazirah, 15 April 2023 - 31 January 2024, based on ACLED data⁴³⁰

During the reference period, the highest number of incidents was recorded in Medani Al Kubra with 57 incidents mainly due to battles and violence against civilians.⁴³¹ The 47 % of deaths occurred in Al Kamlin (138).⁴³² In July 2023, 84 fatalities were recorded in Al Msodiya, Al Kamlin, due to clashed between the SAF and the RSF.⁴³³ Renewed aerial bombardment by

⁴²⁶ Al Jazeera, 'No way to leave': Sudan paramilitary traps civilians in breadbasket state, 29 December 2023, [url](#)

⁴²⁷ Sudan War Monitor, RSF consolidate control over Jezira and reach the gates of Sennar, 22 December 2023, [url](#)

⁴²⁸ The Guardian, Monday briefing: Charting the forgotten crisis in Sudan, 26 February 2024, [url](#); ACLED, Sudan: Setting the Stage for a Long War, 17 January 2024, [url](#)

⁴²⁹ EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴³⁰ EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴³¹ EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴³² ACLED, Situation Update - Sudan: The SAF Faces Setbacks as Armed Groups Overtake Territory Across the Country, 21 July 2023, [url](#);

⁴³³ EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)

the SAF were reported on Wad Madani towards the end of January 2024.⁴³⁴ Additionally, the Sudan Witness project documented incidents targeting farming infrastructure.⁴³⁵

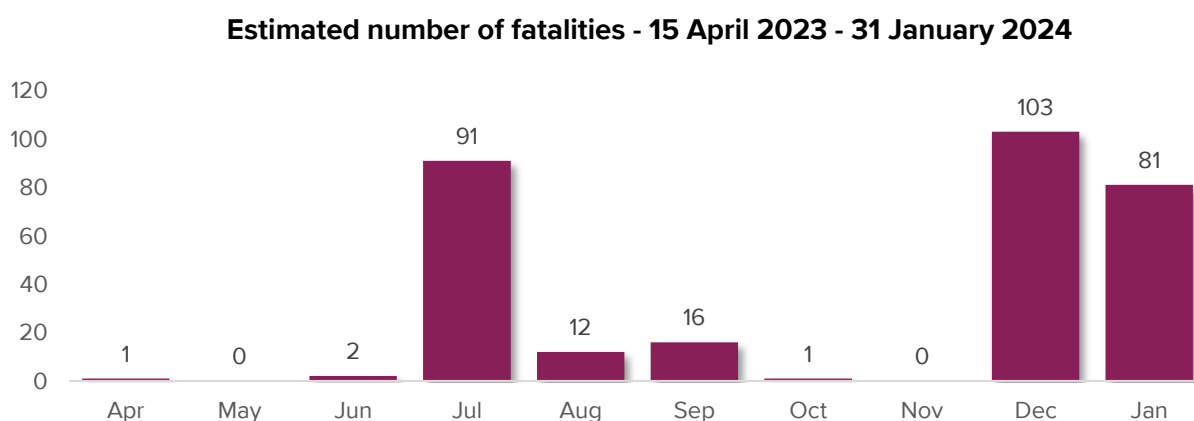


Figure 11. Fatalities as a result of armed conflict in Al Jazirah, 15 April 2023 - 31 January 2024, monthly breakdown based on ACLED data⁴³⁶

1.2.4. The Kordofans

(a) Background

The Kordofans encompass a flat territory between the Blue Nile and the Sahara.⁴³⁷ According to UN sources, the Kordofans' population is estimated around 6 million people, with North Kordofan being the most populous state with more than 2 million residents and the Abyei PCA area having a population of 200 000 people.⁴³⁸

The Kordofans are divided into three states: North Kordofan, South Kordofan and West Kordofan. They include the Abyei PCA area, a disputed territory sitting between Sudan and South Sudan.⁴³⁹ Located centrally within Sudan, North Kordofan state shares borders with six states in the country, including Khartoum and North Darfur. El Obeid, the capital, is considered a major transport and logistical hub – with key roads and a military and civilian airport facilitating connections to the Darfur region and eastern Sudan.⁴⁴⁰ South Kordofan state borders with West Darfur as well as South Sudan. Hostilities have mainly centred in the towns of Kadugli and Dilling, the capital of South Kordofan and one of the most populous towns.⁴⁴¹ The neighbouring West Kordofan is strategically located linking the Darfur region with the

⁴³⁴ Radio Dabanga, Escalated fighting in greater Khartoum persists, prices of fuel and food soar in Sudan, 23 January 2024, [url](#)

⁴³⁵ CIR, Sudan Witness, Destruction and fires at Qurtuba poultry farm, El Gezira, 19 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴³⁶ EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴³⁷ Africapolis, Sudan, accessed on 9 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴³⁸ Sudan 2022 Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO), downloaded on 12 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴³⁹ UNIFSA, Mandate, [url](#)

⁴⁴⁰ ACAPS, Thematic report Sudan North Kordofan: pre-crisis and current situation, 10 October 2023, [url](#)

⁴⁴¹ ACLED, Situation Update - Sudan: Heightened Violence in Kordofan Region as More Militia Groups Step Into the Conflict, 11 August 2023, [url](#); Sudan 2022 Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO), downloaded on 12 February 2024, [url](#)

eastern of the country. It hosts most of Sudan's oil-producing fields (such as Heglig, Difra, Kanar, Neem, El Barasaya, and Balila).⁴⁴²

(b) Armed actors

The two primary warring parties are the SAF and the RSF. See section [1.1.3\(b\) Major state and non-state armed groups](#) for more information. Besides them, another major player in the region is the SPLM-N-al-Hilu.

The **Sudan People's Liberation Movement–North (SPLM-N)** was founded from units of the South Sudanese Sudan People's Liberation Movement in 2011.⁴⁴³ The group, advocating for a democratic and secular Sudan, controls parts of South Kordofan and Blue Nile states.⁴⁴⁴ In 2017 the group split in two factions: one led by Abdelaziz al-Hilu (SPLM-N-al-Hilu), controlling parts of the Nuba Mountain region⁴⁴⁵ and another one led by Malik Agar (SPLM-N-Agar), member of the Ingessana tribe, based in Blue Nile State. The Malik Agar faction signed the JPA while the Abdelaziz al-Hilu faction did not.⁴⁴⁶ In 2022, the two leaders of the SPLM-N-Agar, Malik Agar and Yasir Arman, announced an 'amicable split' between their two factions after cracks over the military coup of 25 October 2021.⁴⁴⁷ Malik Agar was appointed as member of the Transitional Sovereignty Council in 2021⁴⁴⁸ and replaced Hemedti as Deputy Chair of the Sovereignty Council in May 2023.⁴⁴⁹ SPLM-N-al-Hilu views both the SAF and the RSF as rivals.⁴⁵⁰

According to sources quoted by Ayin network, 'hundreds of youths' have been recruited 'from the Al-Hamar community' to fight against the RSF.⁴⁵¹ See section [1.1.3\(b\) Major state and non-state armed groups](#) for more information on local militia groups.

(c) Main conflict dynamics and territorial control

Hostilities between the SAF and the RSF have affected North Kordofan since April 2023, with the involvement of nomadic Arab pastoralist militias.⁴⁵² In June 2023, the RSF along with affiliated militias, mainly composed of Hawazma and Misseriya from South and West Kordofan, initiated efforts to gain control of El Obeid.⁴⁵³ Authorities in North Kordofan imposed several measures to control the violence, including a dusk-to-dawn curfew and a motorcycle ban⁴⁵⁴

⁴⁴² Ayin network, West Kordofan: the battle for Babanusa, 28 January 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁴³ Insecurity Insight, Sudan Situation Report Analysis, September 2023, [url](#), p. 8

⁴⁴⁴ PolGeoNow, Sudan War Control Map & Timeline - October 2023, 10 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁴⁵ Sudan war monitor, Map of the Areas of Control in Sudan, Zones of military control as of February 1, 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁴⁶ IDEA, The Juba Agreement for Peace in Sudan, 2021, [url](#), p. 11

⁴⁴⁷ Sudan Tribune, Agar, Arman agree on "amicable split" of SPLM-N, 18 August 2022, [url](#)

⁴⁴⁸ Radio Dabanga, Rebel leaders join Sudan Sovereignty Council, 8 March 2021, [url](#)

⁴⁴⁹ Radio Dabanga, El Burhan sacks Hemedti as Sudan TSC V-P, appoints Malik Agar, 21 May 2023, [url](#)

⁴⁵⁰ Sudan War Monitor, Map of the Areas of Control in Sudan, 1 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁵¹ Ayin network, Sudan's mass arming of civilians, 24 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁵² Sudan War Monitor, Map of the Areas of Control in Sudan, 1 February 2024, [url](#); The Guardian, Communal violence and civilian deaths in Sudan fuel fears of widening conflict, 12 May 2023, [url](#)

⁴⁵³ Ayin network, The Sudan Conflict Monitor, 19 June update, [url](#)

⁴⁵⁴ Radio Dabanga, Sudan war: dusk to dawn curfew in North Kordofan, 3 August 2023, [url](#); UNITAMS, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan - Report of the Secretary-General, 13 November 2023 [url](#)



while the SAF and the RSF attempted to control key roads.⁴⁵⁵ Other nomadic Arab pastoralist militias - the Dar Hamid and Jawmaa - were involved in the clashes against the RSF.⁴⁵⁶ Looting and attacks on humanitarian offices and assets have been reported.⁴⁵⁷

In South Kordofan, local communities have divided, siding with different factions such as the SAF, RSF or SPLM-N. For instance, the al-Hilu faction of the SPLM-N militarily supports the SAF in the city of Dilling, and some Nuba clans supports the SAF while others are with the SPLM-N.⁴⁵⁸ Members of the SPLM-N-al-Hilu faction attempted to advance in government-controlled territories taking control of four SAF camps around Kadugli.⁴⁵⁹ Fatalities in this area spread across various towns, with Dilling, Kadugli, and Ghadeer being the most affected, reporting 136, 132, and 106 fatalities, respectively.⁴⁶⁰

The SPLM-N-al-Hilu expanded its control over South Kordofan but faced threats from the advance of the RSF. The RSF captured Habila in the Nuba mountains and reports emerged of targeted violence against the Nuba ethnic group. Amid inter-ethnic violence around Dilling, the SPLM-N-al-Hilu joined the SAF to maintain control of the city, leading to continued clashes with the RSF.⁴⁶¹ A surge in mining activities has been reported in the area, including the alleged use of harmful extraction practices exposing the population to lethal risks.⁴⁶²

In West Kordofan, since April 2023 the Misseriya and the Hamar,⁴⁶³ involved in fighting prior to the beginning of the conflict,⁴⁶⁴ have aligned with the RSF and the SAF, respectively.⁴⁶⁵ However, some internal divisions emerged over time among the Misseriya leaders, with some supporting the RSF and others opposing its operations in the area.⁴⁶⁶ Clashes between the SAF and the RSF erupted in Al-Fula and Balila with the airport reportedly being damaged.⁴⁶⁷ During the last weeks of January 2024, intense fighting occurred between the RSF and the SAF in Babanusa with heavy shelling and airstrikes. Dozens of casualties and significant infrastructure damages were reported.⁴⁶⁸

⁴⁵⁵ ACLED, Situation Update - Sudan: Heightened Violence in Kordofan Region as More Militia Groups Step Into the Conflict, 11 August 2023, [url](#)

⁴⁵⁶ ACLED, Situation Update - Sudan: Heightened Violence in Kordofan Region as More Militia Groups Step Into the Conflict, 11 August 2023, [url](#)

⁴⁵⁷ Global Protection cluster, At a glance: protection impacts of the conflict, Update no. 21, 27 November 2023, [url](#)

⁴⁵⁸ ACLED, Situation Update - Sudan: The SAF Breaks the Siege, 5 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁵⁹ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan Report of the Secretary-General, S/2023/644, 31 August 2023, [url](#), para. 22; Ayin network, The Sudan Conflict Monitor, 19 June update, [url](#)

⁴⁶⁰ EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁶¹ ACLED, Situation Update - Sudan: The SAF Breaks the Siege, 5 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁶² Radio Dabanga, South Kordofan mining practices prompt environmental outcry, 12 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁶³ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan - Report of the Secretary-General, S/2023/355, 16 May 2023, [url](#), para. 20

⁴⁶⁴ ACLED, Context Assessment - New Political Deal Amid Rising Disorder in Sudan, 3 March 2023, [url](#)

⁴⁶⁵ Ayin network, Sudan Conflict Monitor – 4 September 2023, [url](#)

⁴⁶⁶ Sudan Tribune, Tension erupts within Misseriya tribe over RSF's plans to seize West Kordofan, 12 January 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁶⁷ UNSC, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan - Report of the Secretary-General, S/2023/861, 13 November 2023, [url](#)

⁴⁶⁸ Sudan Tribune, Heavy fighting erupts between Sudanese army, RFS in West Kordofan's Babanusa, 23 January 2024, [url](#)



The widespread use of conventional weapons including field artillery, mortars, air-dropped weapons and anti-aircraft guns during the clashes have left unexploded ordnances (UXOs) in urban areas such as El Obeid, in North Kordofan, according to the UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS).⁴⁶⁹ Armed attacks were reported in the Abyei PCA area in January 2024.⁴⁷⁰

(d) Security incidents and impact on the civilian population

From 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, ACLED observed 431 security incidents in the Kordofans for a total estimate of 1852 fatalities.⁴⁷¹ However, as reported by sources, these figures are likely to be underestimates.⁴⁷²

Among 431 security events reported by ACLED, 263 were coded as battles, 60 as explosions/remote violence and 108 as incidents of violence against civilians. In 125 instances civilians were the primary or only target. Security incidents were recorded across all states, with North Kordofan accounting for 40 % of the total.⁴⁷³

The highest number of incidents was recorded in North Kordofan (173 incidents), followed by South Kordofan with 138 incidents mainly due to battles and violence against civilians.⁴⁷⁴ July and August 2023 saw the highest number of occurrences across the region, with a total of 60 and 57 incidents respectively.⁴⁷⁵ Abyei PCA, the disputed area between Sudan and South Sudan, reported a consistent low number of incidents throughout the year except for a notable increase in December.⁴⁷⁶

Violence escalated in the region starting from June 2023.⁴⁷⁷ Initially affecting North and South Kordofan, the violence spread to West Kordofan in the summer months. In this area, after a number of fatalities in May 2023 (34), a significant surge in fatalities occurred in August 2023 (90) as violence worsened over the whole Kordofans.⁴⁷⁸ September and October 2023 saw a sustained level of violent incidents marked by an increase in the number of fatalities mostly attributed to battles. Tensions surged once again in November and December 2023.⁴⁷⁹

⁴⁶⁹ UNMAS, Sudan, June 2023, [url](#)

⁴⁷⁰ Radio Dabanga, Sudan-South Sudan border: 52 people killed in Abyei clashes, 30 January 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁷¹ EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁷² The Guardian, Monday briefing: Charting the forgotten crisis in Sudan, 26 February 2024, [url](#); ACLED, Sudan: Setting the Stage for a Long War, 17 January 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁷³ EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁷⁴ EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁷⁵ EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁷⁶ EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁷⁷ EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁷⁸ EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁷⁹ EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)

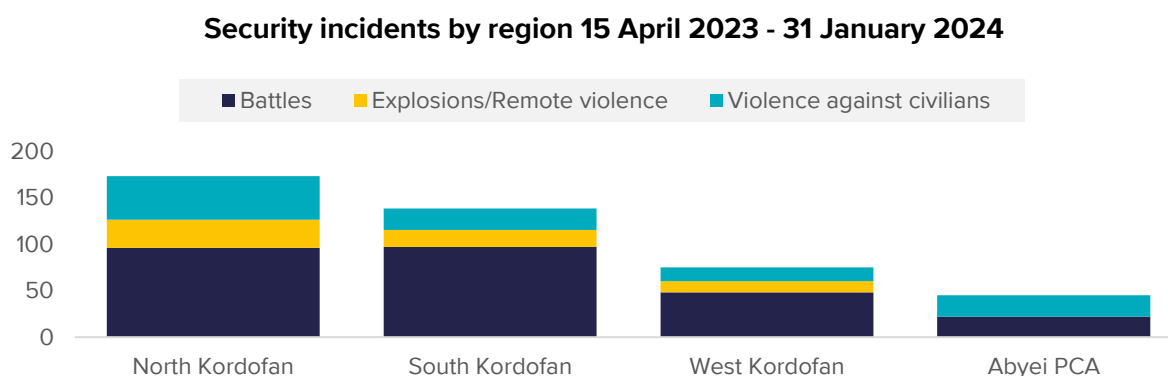


Figure 12. Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians in the Kordofans between 15 April 2023 and 31 January 2024, based on ACLED data⁴⁸⁰

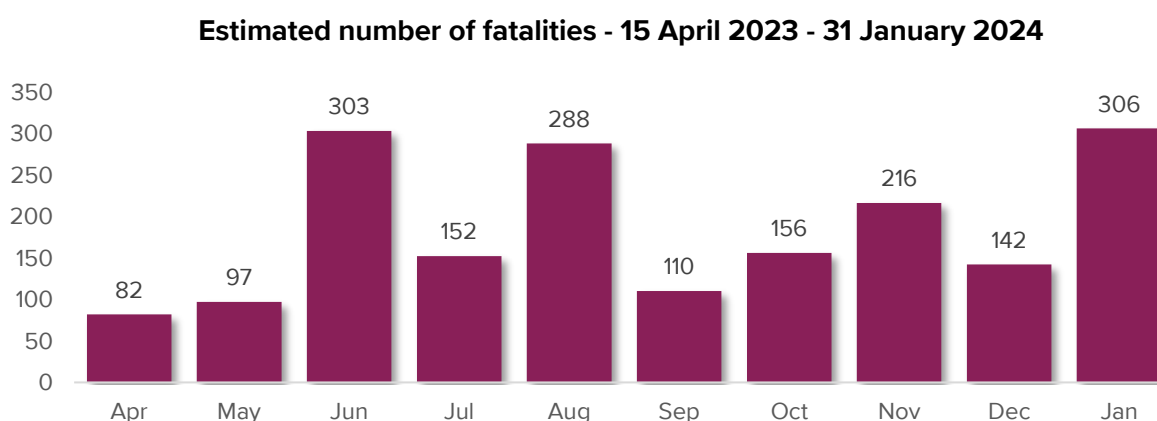


Figure 13. Fatalities as a result of armed conflict in the Kordofans, 15 April 2023 - 31 January 2024, monthly breakdown based on ACLED data⁴⁸¹

The number of fatalities reached its highest point in January 2024 with a total of 306 fatalities reported in the region of which 233 in North Kordofan alone.⁴⁸² The number of fatalities in this state nearly tripled between April and June 2023, largely because of armed conflict.⁴⁸³

According to ACLED data, during the reference period, Sheikan and Um Rawaba, the two most populous towns in the state,⁴⁸⁴ were the most affected areas within North Kordofan, both in terms of number of events and fatalities.⁴⁸⁵ Between June and August 2023, clashes have

⁴⁸⁰ EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁸¹ EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁸² EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁸³ EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁸⁴ Sudan 2022 HNO, downloaded on 12 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁸⁵ EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Data Export Tool, Sudan, data covering 15 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, as of 2 February 2024, [url](#)



mainly centred in El Obeid, Bara Town and Rehid al-Nuba.⁴⁸⁶ 44 % of deaths occurred in North Kordofan, with Sheikan reporting the highest number of casualties (606).

In January 2024, intercommunal clashes between the Neur and the Ngok Dinkas in the Abyei PCA area over control of the border caused 52 casualties among civilians.⁴⁸⁷

⁴⁸⁶ ACLED, Situation Update - Sudan: Heightened Violence in Kordofan Region as More Militia Groups Step Into the Conflict, 11 August 2023, [url](#); UNOCHA, Sudan Humanitarian Update (14 July 2023) last updated 24 July 2023 [url](#)

⁴⁸⁷ Radio Dabanga, Sudan-South Sudan border: 52 people killed in Abyei clashes, 30 January 2024, [url](#)





2. Selected profiles affected by the conflict

In October 2023, the UN Human Rights Council established the Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) on Sudan, which was meant to investigate into human rights and international humanitarian law violations in the context of the ongoing armed conflict.⁴⁸⁸ On 18 January 2024, the FFM began to work.⁴⁸⁹

Against this backdrop, the present report addresses a selection of the main profiles affected by the conflict based on available sources as of 31 January 2024.

2.1. Journalists and treatment of media personnel

Since the outbreak of the hostilities, in April 2023, journalists and media personnel have been targeted by both sides of the conflict, while many media outlets were forced to shut down.⁴⁹⁰ Based on the UN Panel of Experts' Final Report on the Sudan, the targeting of journalists, among other profiles, notably at the hand of RSF and allied militias, was primarily due to the work they had performed before and during the conflict 'as they continued to monitor, report on and advocate against violations committed by the warring parties'.⁴⁹¹

Journalists have been the subject of death threats, forced detention, targeted killings, and defamation campaigns, including the publication of anonymous lists that classified them as working for one of the conflict parties.⁴⁹² As a consequence of this, many journalists have gone into hiding, thus 'creating a void in credible information', or have sided with one party of the conflict as a survival strategy.⁴⁹³

Since April 2023, several violent events - harassment, arbitrary detentions, looting, injuries and killings of journalists - have taken place in the country, notably in Khartoum and in Darfur, at the hands of both warring parties, RSF and SAF, including the General Intelligence

⁴⁸⁸ OHCHR, UN Fact-Finding Mission on Sudan begins work, calls on warring parties to end conflict and respect human rights, 18 January 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁸⁹ OHCHR, UN Fact-Finding Mission on Sudan begins work, calls on warring parties to end conflict and respect human rights, 18 January 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁹⁰ Ayin, Network, The war in Sudan silences journalists, coverage, 21 January 2024, [url](#); Columbia Journalism Review, Q&A: Hiba Morgan on Sudan's forgotten war, 17 January 2024, [url](#); UNESCO, In the Shadow of Violence: The Pressing Needs of Sudanese Journalists, 8 November 2023, [url](#); Free Press Unlimited, The Sudan war is also a crisis for the safety of journalists, 23 June 2023, [url](#)

⁴⁹¹ UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 61-62

⁴⁹² Ayin, Network, The war in Sudan silences journalists, coverage, 21 January 2024, [url](#); SJS, Widespread violations against journalists during the first month of the War, 14 May 2023, [url](#); Free Press Unlimited, The Sudan war is also a crisis for the safety of journalists, 23 June 2023, [url](#); REDRESS, Ruining a country, devastating its people, September 2023, [url](#), p. 21; Middle East Monitor, The War In Sudan Silences Journalists, 26 January 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁹³ Ayin, Network, The war in Sudan silences journalists, coverage, 21 January 2024, [url](#)



Service.⁴⁹⁴ Based on an investigation conducted by the SJS in collaboration with Arab Reporters for Investigative Journalism,⁴⁹⁵ and published by the NGO Media in Cooperation and Transition (MiCT), in the period 15 April – 21 September 2023, Sudanese journalists have suffered 249 such violations.⁴⁹⁶ Middle East Monitor, quoting the same SJS investigation, provided a breakdown of those 249 violations, which included: 71 journalists assaulted at home, 43 detained, 22 beaten and robbed, 18 arrested, 15 shot, 13 threatened, 7 injured, 4 murdered, 2 forcibly disappeared.⁴⁹⁷

Still according to the same source, ‘both parties to the conflict systematically violate[d] international law, which mandates the protection of civilians and journalists as neutral parties not participating in the war’.⁴⁹⁸ Further, Radio Dabanga quoted the Sudanese Journalists Network (SJN) stating that ‘SJN “follows with great concern the systematic targeting of journalists by both warring parties through summons, arbitrary detention without legal justification, and extrajudicial killings”’.⁴⁹⁹ Months before, in July 2023, RSF had already condemned the ‘deliberate targeting of journalists by both of the two rival military factions’.⁵⁰⁰

Journalists were targeted to prevent them from reporting or because of their reporting on various violations, including through lootings, harassment experienced by the displaced, and incidents of rape.⁵⁰¹ As indicated by Insecurity Insight, the majority of conflict-related incidents of sexual violence were reported through news outlets in the period April – September 2023, and as a result, raids and attacks against journalists have risen, especially in Khartoum, during that period. As a consequence, this as well as other areas are turned into “dark spots”, referring to their going unreported.⁵⁰²

⁴⁹⁴ MiCT, *In the Shadow of Violence: The Pressing Needs of Sudanese Journalists*, October 2023, [url](#), pp. 19-21; see also Free Press Unlimited, *The Sudan war is also a crisis for the safety of journalists*, 23 June 2023, [url](#); CPJ, *Journalists shot, beaten, and harassed covering conflict between Sudan’s rival military groups*, 30 May 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁹⁵ ARIJ, *The War In Sudan Silences Journalists*, 30 January 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁹⁶ MiCT, *In the Shadow of Violence: The Pressing Needs of Sudanese Journalists*, October 2023, [url](#), p. 21; see also Ayin network, *The war in Sudan silences journalists*, coverage, 21 January 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁹⁷ Middle East Monitor, *The War In Sudan Silences Journalists*, 26 January 2024, [url](#); see also Ayin network, *The war in Sudan silences journalists*, coverage, 21 January 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁹⁸ Middle East Monitor, *The War In Sudan Silences Journalists*, 26 January 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁹⁹ Radio Dabanga, *Sudanese Journalists Network condemns violence against reporters*, 24 January 2024, [url](#)

⁵⁰⁰ RSF, *Sudan’s belligerents are targeting journalists*, 5 July 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁰¹ Middle East Monitor, *The War In Sudan Silences Journalists*, 26 January 2024, [url](#); see also Ayin network, *The war in Sudan silences journalists*, coverage, 21 January 2024, [url](#)

⁵⁰² Insecurity Insight, *Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Sudan*, November 2023, [url](#), pp. 3-4



Journalists were also subject to social media hate speech or threats, especially on WhatsApp, from unknown entities or other journalists.⁵⁰³ Various sources, including Radio Dabanga,⁵⁰⁴ SJS,⁵⁰⁵ CPJ,⁵⁰⁶ and RSF,⁵⁰⁷ provided detailed accounts of some of these instances.

Within this context, MiCT carried out a needs assessment of the Sudan media personnel based in the country, whereby it interviewed 213 journalists until September 2023,⁵⁰⁸ out of an estimated total of 1 100 media workers based in Sudan before the outbreak of the war.⁵⁰⁹ Among others, the survey found out that: a) two-thirds of the 213 respondents had faced at least one type of threat - physiological (90 %), physical (53 %), or digital (51 %) – and that b) 80 % of these wish[ed] to relocate; c) more than three-quarters of respondents had faced ‘publication restrictions’, with 26 % ‘practising self-censorship’ and 20 % ‘experiencing direct censorship’.⁵¹⁰ As reported by the Ayin network, quoting SJS data, as of November 2023, 56 journalists had moved to Egypt, 10 to Ethiopia and South Sudan, and 20 to Uganda and Kenya.⁵¹¹

For more information about the crackdown on media outlets and on communication in general see section [1.1.4 Communication blackout and media coverage](#).

2.2. Humanitarian and health personnel

As mentioned in the section [1.1.5 Humanitarian situation](#), most notably [1.1.5\(d\) Aid delivery](#), the outbreak of the military conflict in April 2023 severely disrupted the availability and effectiveness of humanitarian actors and assistance in the country, ‘with national aid workers displaced, offices and facilities looted, and international staff evacuated’.⁵¹²

Already in May 2023, the United Nations Secretary-General (UNSG) report on the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS), indicated that the outbreak of the fighting had led to a ‘drastic deterioration of the

⁵⁰³ Middle East Monitor, The War In Sudan Silences Journalists, 26 January 2024, [url](#); see also Ayin network, The war in Sudan silences journalists, coverage, 21 January 2024, [url](#)

⁵⁰⁴ Radio Dabanga, Sudan RSF detain a journalist and a politician in El Gezira, 26 January 2024, [url](#); Radio Dabanga, Sudanese Journalists Network condemns violence against reporters, 24 January 2024, [url](#); Radio Dabanga, Sudan activists denounce RSF’s ‘arbitrary detention’ of El Midan editor-in-chief, 22 January 2024, [url](#); Radio Dabanga, Sudan activists condemn RSF detention and ‘enforced disappearance’ of journalists, 23 November 2023, [url](#); Radio Dabanga, Sudanese journalists demand justice for the killing of Halima Idris on Int’l Day to End Impunity, 3 November 2023, [url](#); Radio Dabanga, Comment: ‘War puts Sudan journalists under disproportionate pressure’, 17 August 2023, [url](#); Radio Dabanga, Sudanese media decry ‘four months of violations’, 15 August 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁰⁵ SJS, Monitoring Report - Widespread violations against journalists during the first month of the war, 14 May 2023, [url](#); SJS, Monitoring report on the conditions of Sudanese female and male journalists - Incidents listed from May 15 to May 31, 5 June 2023, [url](#); SJS, Monitoring Report in the week ending 23 June, 23 June 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁰⁶ CPJ, Sudan, 2024, [url](#); CPJ, Sudan, 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁰⁷ RSF, Sudan, n.d., [url](#)

⁵⁰⁸ UNESCO, In the Shadow of Violence: The Pressing Needs of Sudanese Journalists, 8 November 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁰⁹ Radio Dabanga, Sudanese Journalists Syndicate elects first chair in 33 years, 29 August 2022, [url](#); MiCT, In the Shadow of Violence: The Pressing Needs of Sudanese Journalists, October 2023, [url](#), p. 8

⁵¹⁰ MiCT, In the Shadow of Violence: The Pressing Needs of Sudanese Journalists, October 2023, [url](#), p. 9

⁵¹¹ Ayin network, The war in Sudan silences journalists, coverage, 21 January 2024, [url](#)

⁵¹² Humanitarian Outcomes, Humanitarian Access SCORE Report: Sudan, December 2023, [url](#), pp. 3, 5; see also UNSG, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, S/2023/355, 16 May 2023, [url](#), para. 12



humanitarian situation’, with ‘humanitarian actors [...] working in an extremely dangerous environment’.⁵¹³ In the following reporting period, as of August 2023, the situation had become ‘catastrophic’, with humanitarian activities interrupted due to widespread insecurity.⁵¹⁴ For further information on the treatment of humanitarian and health profiles, see sections below.

2.2.1. Aid workers

The UNSG reported that in the period 15 April – 30 September 2023, 931 incidents impacting humanitarian operations had been reported in Sudan, of which ‘36 per cent were the result of active hostilities’, and ‘26 per cent were the result of violence against humanitarian personnel, assets and facilities’.⁵¹⁵ Against this backdrop, according to the Aid Workers Security Database (AWSDB), since the eruption of hostilities on 15 April 2023 and until January 2024, 53 aid workers have been victims of violent attacks, with the following breakdown: 49 national staff, of which 19 were killed, 26 wounded, and 4 kidnapped.⁵¹⁶ The UNSG reported that in the period 15 April – 30 September, at least 20 humanitarian workers had been killed and 30 injured.⁵¹⁷ Moreover, in the period 15 April – December 2023, Humanitarian Outcomes reported that at least 32 aid workers had been detained.⁵¹⁸

Members of the volunteer-driven emergency response rooms, often abbreviated as ERRs - see section [1.1.5 Humanitarian situation](#) for further details – were also targeted, as reported by various sources throughout the reference period.⁵¹⁹ At the beginning of February 2023, in a UN News article, a Sudanese young activist commenting on the emergency room situation in Omdurman was quoted stating: “‘Young people are targeted, arrested and killed while they work in very difficult conditions’”.⁵²⁰ The New Humanitarian reporting on the growing threats that emergency rooms groups were facing at the hands of both warring parties at the beginning of August 2023, indicated as risks and grounds for targeting: the risk of being arrested by both the RSF and the SAF on grounds of supporting their rivals; the risk of being targeted by military authorities for reasons of a suspected link with the resistance committees, which oppose army rule – see for further info the section [2.3.3 Resistance committees’ members](#); the risk of being bombed by the warring parties, for which reason they tended to operate without permanent offices.⁵²¹

⁵¹³ UNSG, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, S/2023/355, 16 May 2023, [url](#), para. 36, 37

⁵¹⁴ UNSG, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, S/2023/644, 31 August 2023, [url](#), para. 36

⁵¹⁵ UNSG, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, S/2023/861, 13 November 2023, [url](#), para. 40

⁵¹⁶ AWSDB, Sudan – 2023, January 2024, [url](#)

⁵¹⁷ UNSG, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, S/2023/861, 13 November 2023, [url](#), para. 40

⁵¹⁸ Humanitarian Outcomes, Humanitarian Access SCORE Report: Sudan, December 2023, [url](#), p. 10

⁵¹⁹ CMI, Mutual aid & rethinking international humanitarian engagement in Sudan, May 2023, [url](#); The New Humanitarian, How mutual aid networks are powering Sudan’s humanitarian response, 2 August 2023, [url](#); UN News, Youth-led ‘emergency rooms’ shine rays of hope in war-torn Sudan, 3 February 2024, [url](#)

⁵²⁰ UN News, Youth-led ‘emergency rooms’ shine rays of hope in war-torn Sudan, 3 February 2024, [url](#)

⁵²¹ The New Humanitarian, How mutual aid networks are powering Sudan’s humanitarian response, 2 August 2023, [url](#)



2.2.2. Healthcare personnel

The WHO Surveillance System for Attacks on Health Care (SSA) indicates that during the reference period a total of 62 attacks – either ‘confirmed’ or ‘probable’ – affected the health care system in Sudan, while causing 38 deaths and 45 injured people. These attacks included 25 attacks that impacted directly the healthcare personnel.⁵²² However, these were ‘only the attacks that the WHO could verify through its verification system’.⁵²³

Another source, Insecurity Insight, based on agency and open-source data, reported during the reference period 268 incidents of violence or threat of violence against the healthcare sector in Sudan, with the following breakdown: 54 health workers killed, 63 injured, and 28 healthcare workers kidnapped. As shown on the Insight Security’s Attacked and Threatened Health Care at Risk Interactive Map, during the same period the intensity of security events affecting healthcare in Sudan stood out at global level.⁵²⁴

In its January 2024, Incident Monitoring Brief, Insecurity Insight reported that the killings of healthcare workers extended over nine Sudan states, with most of the events taking place in Khartoum, and that healthcare personnel were killed ‘inside their homes, while travelling to and from work and at hospitals and clinics during working hours’.⁵²⁵

Reportedly most of those affected were hit by acts of indiscriminate violence, shelling, and drone strikes, in the context of indiscriminate attacks and raids against the healthcare infrastructure.⁵²⁶ At the same time the active targeting of healthcare personnel, notably at the hands of RSF forces, was systematically reported by various sources and on various grounds, during the reference period. Such grounds included: unspecified reasons,⁵²⁷ receiving or treating members of the opposed armed forces,⁵²⁸ being accused of working for the opposed military intelligence (of both sides).⁵²⁹

⁵²² WHO, Surveillance Systems for Attacks on Health Care, Sudan 15 April 2023 – 31 January 2024, [url](#)

⁵²³ OCHA, Sudan Humanitarian Update, 25 January 2024, [url](#), p. 2

⁵²⁴ Insecurity Insight, Attacked and Threatened: Health Care at Risk, 31 January 2024, [url](#)

⁵²⁵ Insecurity Insight, Attacks on Health Care in Sudan, 10-23 January 2024, [url](#)

⁵²⁶ Insecurity Insight, Attacks on Health Care in Sudan, 10-23 January 2024, [url](#)

⁵²⁷ Insecurity Insight, Attacks on Health Care in Sudan no. 1, 15 -19 April 2023, [url](#), p. 1; Insecurity Insight, Attacks on Health Care in Sudan no. 2, 19 -26 April 2023, [url](#), pp. 1-2; Insecurity Insight, Attacks on Health Care in Sudan no. 3, 27 April – 3 May 2023, [url](#), p. 2; Insecurity Insight, Attacks on Health Care in Sudan no. 5, 14 -27 June 2023, [url](#), p. 2; Insecurity Insight, Attacks on Health Care in Sudan no. 6, 28 June - 11 July 2023, [url](#), p. 1; Insecurity Insight, Attacks on Health Care in Sudan no. 8, 26 July – 8 August 2023, August 2023, [url](#), p. 1; Insecurity Insight, Attacks on Health Care in Sudan no. 11, 6 – 19 September 2023, [url](#), p. 2; Insecurity Insight, Attacks on Health Care in Sudan no. 12, 20 September – 3 October 2023, [url](#), p. 1; Insecurity Insight, Attacks on Health Care in Sudan no. 13, 4 - 17 October 2023, [url](#), p. 2; Insecurity Insight, Attacks on Health Care in Sudan no. 14, 18 - 31 October 2023, [url](#), pp. 1-2; Insecurity Insight, Attacks on Health Care in Sudan no. 17, 29 November – 12 December 2023, [url](#), p. 2; Insecurity Insight, Attacks on Health Care in Sudan no. 18, 13 - 26 December 2023, [url](#), p. 1; Insecurity Insight, Attacks on Health Care in Sudan no. 19, 27 December – 9 January 2024, [url](#), p. 2; Insecurity Insight, Attacks on Health Care in Sudan no. 20, 10 – 23 January 2024, [url](#), p. 1

⁵²⁸ Insecurity Insight, Attacks on Health Care in Sudan no. 4, 17 May – 13 June 2023, [url](#), p. 1; Insecurity Insight, Attacks on Health Care in Sudan no. 14, 18 - 31 October 2023, [url](#), pp. 1-2

⁵²⁹ Insecurity Insight, Attacks on Health Care in Sudan no. 3, 27 April – 3 May 2023, [url](#), p. 2; Insecurity Insight, Attacks on Health Care in Sudan no. 19, 27 December – 9 January 2024, [url](#), p. 2; Insecurity Insight, Attacks on Health Care in Sudan no. 20, 10 – 23 January 2024, [url](#), p. 2



In a brief released in July 2023, Insecurity Insight conducted a social media monitoring research in order to understand the sentiments towards the aid sector and notably the Sudanese healthcare workers represented by the Sudanese Doctors Syndicate, a professional association of Sudanese doctors. The research found that social media account holders supporting the SAF ‘rejected’ the Sudanese Doctors Syndicate neutral position in the armed conflict and: a) accused the organisation of *de facto* siding with the RSF; b) accused it of aiding the RSF and collaborating with the so-called ‘Janjaweed’ militia; c) repeatedly threatened the Doctors Syndicate with violence.⁵³⁰

Patterns of a systematic targeting of MSF personnel and activities also emerged throughout the reference period.⁵³¹ Already in May 2023, MSF, with medical projects in 10 states in Sudan, was ‘shaken and appalled’ by the scale of violent attacks, lootings, and occupations against its premises in various locations in Sudan, notably in Darfur and Khartoum.⁵³² In a brief released in September 2023, Insecurity Insight monitored the social media sentiments expressed towards MSF in the aftermath of the 20 July 2023 incident, whereby an MSF convoy had been stopped by generic “armed men”, according to the wording used by MSF’s reporting. The surveyed sentiments, which reflected mostly the point of view of male supporters of the SAF and the military government, mainly from Khartoum, consisted of: a) resentment for not naming the presumed perpetrators, the RSF; b) belief that MSF “deserved” to be attacked by the RSF; c) belief that MSF collaborated with RSF; d) threats of violence against MSF.⁵³³ Reporting on the 20 July 2023 incident, MSF spoke about beatings, death threats and theft.⁵³⁴

2.3. Political opponents

Various REDRESS and OHCHR reports have documented how in the period following the 25 October 2021 coup, the SAF, the RSF, and other intelligence, security and police forces, had engaged in a systematic campaign to silence political opponents to their rule.⁵³⁵ Under the proclaimed state of emergency, issued on 24 December 2021,⁵³⁶ security forces have resorted to arbitrary arrests and detentions,⁵³⁷ also as a way to ‘punish opponents of the coup and to

⁵³⁰ Insecurity Insight, Sudan’s Doctors Falsely Accused of Siding with the Rapid Support Forces, Social Media Monitoring, July 2023, [url](#), pp. 1-4

⁵³¹ Insecurity Insight, Attacks on Health Care in Sudan no. 1, 15 -19 April 2023, [url](#), p. 2; Insecurity Insight, Attacks on Health Care in Sudan no. 2, 19 -26 April 2023, [url](#), p. 1; Insecurity Insight, Attacks on Health Care in Sudan no. 3, 27 April – 3 May 2023, [url](#), pp. 1-2; Insecurity Insight, Attacks on Health Care in Sudan no. 4, 17 May – 13 June 2023, [url](#), p. 1; Insecurity Insight, Attacks on Health Care in Sudan no. 5, 14 -27 June 2023, [url](#), pp. 1-2; Insecurity Insight, Attacks on Health Care in Sudan no. 7, 12 - 25 July 2023, [url](#), p. 2; Insecurity Insight, Attacks on Health Care in Sudan no. 10, 23 August - 5 September 2023, [url](#), p. 1; Insecurity Insight, Attacks on Health Care in Sudan no. 13, 4 - 17 October 2023, [url](#), p. 1; Insecurity Insight, Attacks on Health Care in Sudan no. 18, 13 - 26 December 2023, [url](#), p. 1

⁵³² MSF, MSF ‘shaken and appalled’ by looting of its premises in Sudan, 8 June 2023, [url](#)

⁵³³ Insecurity Insight, Designation of MSF Attackers as “Armed Men” Criticised by SAF Supporters in Sudan, September 2023, [url](#), pp. 1-3

⁵³⁴ MSF, Khartoum: Aid in jeopardy as MSF staff face beatings, death threats and theft, 21 July 2023, [url](#)

⁵³⁵ REDRESS, Ruining a country, devastating its people, September 2023, [url](#), pp. 20, 22; REDRESS, “Taken from Khartoum’s Streets”, March 2022, [url](#), p. 3; REDRESS, “Your life isn’t worth the price of a bullet”, June 2022, [url](#), pp. 7 ff, 14 ff, 19 ff; OHCHR, Situation of Human Rights in the Sudan, 9 May 2022, [url](#), para. 20-38; OHCHR, Situation of Human Rights in the Sudan, 12 May 2023, [url](#), para. 24-38

⁵³⁶ OHCHR, Situation of Human Rights in the Sudan, 9 May 2022, [url](#), para. 13-14

⁵³⁷ OHCHR, Situation of Human Rights in the Sudan, 9 May 2022, [url](#), para. 26-38; OHCHR, Situation of Human Rights in the Sudan, 12 May 2023, [url](#), para. 32-38



deter others from further activism'.⁵³⁸ The same sources have identified patterns of human rights violations that include the use of excessive, lethal force against protestors and political opponents, ill-treatment and torture while in detention, extra-judicial killings, and enforced disappearances.⁵³⁹

Such practices have continued in the period following the outbreak of the 15-April 2023 war, with SAF and RSF no longer acting in concert, but 'engaged in similar campaigns targeting non-combatants they perceive as their opposition – including doctors, journalists, and humanitarian workers'.⁵⁴⁰ However, in the war circumstances, the targeting of 'political opponents' started to encompass various additional profiles – e.g. community leaders, lawyers, journalists, resistance committee members and human rights activists - perceived as 'opposed' by both warring parties in reason of the monitoring work, against violations, they (had) performed before and during the conflict,⁵⁴¹ as well as on other grounds.⁵⁴²

The OHCHR indicated that RSF detained individuals perceived to be members or supporters of the SAF, or of the National Congress Party, or in some cases based on ethnic grounds. The SAF detained individuals perceived to be members or supporters of the RSF, or of the Political Framework Agreement, or anti-war individuals, as well as based on ethnic affiliation or origin with Arab tribes from Darfur.⁵⁴³ Corroborating this, Mohamed Salah of the Emergency Lawyer, a legal group monitoring abuses in Sudan,⁵⁴⁴ indicated that arbitrary arrests and detentions were justified by each warring party on different grounds: SAF arrested on ethnic grounds – such as members of the Rizeigat, Baggara and other Arab tribes from Darfur – or on political grounds – such as activists and members of the emergency rooms perceived as opposing the Islamists. RSF arrested on political grounds, such as members of the Military Intelligence or of the National Congress Party, on religious grounds, such as Islamists, or on ethnic grounds, such as Nuba people.⁵⁴⁵

For further details relevant to the specific profiles see sections [2.1 Journalists and treatment of media personnel](#), [2.2 Humanitarian and health personnel](#), [2.4 Non-Arabs/Africans in Darfur](#), or the remainder of this chapter for [2.3.2 Community leaders, lawyers, human rights activists](#), [2.3.3 Resistance committees' members](#), [2.3.4 Political party members and other perceived opponents](#).

⁵³⁸ REDRESS, "Taken from Khartoum's Streets", March 2022, [url](#), p. 3

⁵³⁹ REDRESS, "Your life isn't worth the price of a bullet", June 2022, [url](#), pp. 3-4; OHCHR, Situation of Human Rights in the Sudan, 9 May 2022, [url](#), para. 20-38; OHCHR, Situation of Human Rights in the Sudan, 12 May 2023, [url](#), para. 24-38

⁵⁴⁰ REDRESS, Ruining a country, devastating its people, September 2023, [url](#), pp. 20-21

⁵⁴¹ UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 61

⁵⁴² OHCHR, Situation of human rights in the Sudan - Advance unedited version, A/HRC/55/29, 22 February 2024, [url](#), para. 57; The New Arab, In the shadows of Sudan's war, illegal detention sites surge, 25 September 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁴³ OHCHR, Situation of human rights in the Sudan - Advance unedited version, A/HRC/55/29, 22 February 2024, [url](#), para. 57

⁵⁴⁴ Human Rights Defenders, Sudanese Human Rights Defenders risk their lives to document the war, 13 March 2024, [url](#)

⁵⁴⁵ The New Arab, In the shadows of Sudan's war, illegal detention sites surge, 25 September 2023, [url](#)



2.3.1. Arbitrary detentions and enforced disappearances

(a) Detention conditions

In the course of the hostilities, the already scarce and inadequate detention safeguards reportedly ceased to apply all-together, with the situation further exacerbated by both forces using, but especially the RSF, ‘unacknowledged secret detention centres or “ghost houses”’. In these locations, used for arbitrary detentions, the risk of torture and enforced disappearance was ‘heightened’,⁵⁴⁶ especially in the initial period of detention and during interrogations according to OHCHR.⁵⁴⁷

Emergency Lawyers documented at the beginning of September 2023 the presence of at least 55 temporary or permanent detention centres in wider Khartoum only,⁵⁴⁸ of which 52 would have been newly established during the previous five months of conflict.⁵⁴⁹ 47 of these were affiliated with the RSF - 13 in Khartoum, 12 in Khartoum North, 5 in Sharg El Nil (East Nile), and 17 in Omdurman, in addition to temporary interrogation points in police stations and public facilities under RSF control. 8 detention facilities were affiliated with the SAF, 3 in Khartoum and 5 in Omdurman.⁵⁵⁰ Detainees in these centres were exposed to a number of abuses and issues: torture, forced labour, starvation, sexual assault, collective rooms, lack of hygiene and latrines, lack of medical services, overcrowding.⁵⁵¹ Poor detention conditions and medical neglect led in some cases to deaths of inmates.⁵⁵²

Mohamed Salah, as quoted by The New Arab, maintained that by September 2023 there could have been as many as 5 000 detainees in these centres, in wider Khartoum alone.⁵⁵³ Already in July 2024, Reuters quoted human rights organisations stating that, since the outbreak of the hostilities, the RSF had detained more than 5 000 people in the capital alone.⁵⁵⁴ Of these, as of November 2023, over 750 people were held in a single unofficial place run by the RSF in Al-Riyadh area, in Khartoum.⁵⁵⁵

⁵⁴⁶ REDRESS, Ruining a country, devastating its people, September 2023, [url](#), pp. 20-21

⁵⁴⁷ OHCHR, Situation of human rights in the Sudan - Advance unedited version, A/HRC/55/29, 22 February 2024, [url](#), para. 59

⁵⁴⁸ Radio Dabanga, Khartoum ‘one big prison’, people ‘tortured to death’ by Sudan Military Intelligence, 4 September 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁴⁹ The New Arab, In the shadows of Sudan's war, illegal detention sites surge, 25 September 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁵⁰ Radio Dabanga, Khartoum ‘one big prison’, people ‘tortured to death’ by Sudan Military Intelligence, 4 September 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁵¹ The New Arab, In the shadows of Sudan's war, illegal detention sites surge, 25 September 2023, [url](#); Radio Dabanga, Khartoum ‘one big prison’, people ‘tortured to death’ by Sudan Military Intelligence, 4 September 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁵² OHCHR, Situation of human rights in the Sudan - Advance unedited version, A/HRC/55/29, 22 February 2024, [url](#), para. 61

⁵⁵³ The New Arab, In the shadows of Sudan's war, illegal detention sites surge, 25 September 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁵⁴ Reuters, Sudan's paramilitary RSF detained 5,000, some tortured, human-rights groups say, 14 July 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁵⁵ OHCHR, Situation of human rights in the Sudan - Advance unedited version, A/HRC/55/29, 22 February 2024, [url](#), para. 60



(b) Enforced disappearances

While enforced disappearance was common in Sudan for decades, especially as a tool to silence human rights defenders and opposition leaders, the practice skyrocketed since fighting broke out on 15 April 2023.⁵⁵⁶

During the reference period, ACJPS reported about several instances of enforced disappearances on unspecified grounds, and with ‘incommunicado detention significantly [enhancing] vulnerability to torture and other ill-treatment’. ACJPS documented: in June 2023, the ‘missing’ of 91 people since 15 April 2023; in July 2023, the ‘missing’ of 131 people who went missing in the month of May 2023; in November 2023, 34 people who went missing in June 2023 notably from Khartoum and, in some cases from Omdurman; in November 2023, 40 people who went missing in July 2023, notably from Khartoum, and in some cases from Omdurman.⁵⁵⁷

Volker Türk, UN Human Rights chief, in a speech made to the Human Rights Council on 12 September 2023, spoke about 500 people reported to have disappeared in Khartoum alone since fighting broke out.⁵⁵⁸ By October 2023, ACJPS had registered at least 700 cases of enforced disappearance, ‘perpetuated’ by both the SAF and the paramilitary RSF.⁵⁵⁹

2.3.2. Community leaders, lawyers, human rights activists

The UN Panel of Experts indicated, in its January 2024 report, that it had received reports of ‘widespread harassment, physical abuse, arbitrary arrests and detention, torture and killings’ targeting community leaders, lawyers, and human rights activists, among other profiles, such as journalists and resistance committee members, for which see also *ad-hoc* sections [2.1 Journalists and treatment of media personnel](#), and [2.3.3 Resistance committees’ members](#). Such acts took place mostly at the hands of RSF and allied militias, but also SAF. The targeting of community leaders, lawyers, and human rights activists was mainly due to their work, ‘before and during the conflict’, as monitors, advocates, and reporters against violations committed by the warring parties.⁵⁶⁰ The UNSG, reporting on the activities of UNITAMS, reported similar practices – threats, detention, and ill-treatment – at the hands of both warring parties, and against lawyers, human rights defenders, and activists, including anti-war activists, both in Darfur and in eastern Sudan, the Kordofans and Blue Nile regions.⁵⁶¹

Against this backdrop, ACJPS documented in the Blue Nile Region the arrest, detention, and alleged torture of seven human rights defenders and activists by the SAF Military Intelligence

⁵⁵⁶ OHCHR, In war-torn Sudan, a sister’s search for a disappeared brother, 8 November 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁵⁷ ACJPS, Sudan war update: Forty-seven detainees released, hundreds remain in custody, 12 January 2024, [url](#), pp. 1, 3, 5-6

⁵⁵⁸ OHCHR, Sudan: Türk says conflict must stop before it is too late to pull the country back from disaster, 12 September 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁵⁹ ACJPS, Sudan war update: Forty-seven detainees released, hundreds remain in custody, 12 January 2024, [url](#), p. 6

⁵⁶⁰ UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 61, 62, 64

⁵⁶¹ UNSG, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, S/2023/861, 13 November 2023, [url](#), para. 28



Unit in the period 8 December 2023 – 14 January 2024.⁵⁶² In August 2023, in the River Nile state, Radio Dabanga reported on the arrest at the hands of the Military Intelligence of a member of the Emergency Lawyers.⁵⁶³ In Darfur, ACJPS documented various instances: in Zalingei, Central Darfur, between October and November 2023, the detention by the RSF of four Sudanese citizens, including three human rights defenders, with the detainees lacking access to lawyers or family members and likely to undergo torture or ill-treatment;⁵⁶⁴ in Nyala, South Darfur, the killing of ten political activists and business men at the hands of the RSF, between 24 October and 6 November 2023.⁵⁶⁵ Still on Darfur, Sudan War Monitor reported that at the beginning of February 2024 the RSF had launched an arrest campaign in West and Central Darfur targeting young peoples and activists ‘on charges of transmitting reports of RSF violations in the region’.⁵⁶⁶

Seemingly, ethnically motivated incidents were also reported by various sources, including: ACJPS, reporting on Al Jazirah, indicated that at the beginning of January 2024 in Wad Madani ‘Pro-National Congress Party Military Intelligence’ arrested, tortured and allegedly killed 26 Sudanese citizens originating from Darfur and Kordofan states. Allegedly, the plot behind the incident, was to ‘steer the conflict into an ethnic one’;⁵⁶⁷ in August 2023 Radio Dabanga reported about the arrest of a women teacher in Kadugli, South Kordofan, and the crackdown, allegedly ethnically and religiously motivated, over other human rights activists in Kadugli from the African Nuba tribes.⁵⁶⁸ In Darfur, a sharp deterioration of the human rights situation, and the targeting of prominent Masalit community members had been noted already in the August 2023 UNITAMS report.⁵⁶⁹ Lists of ‘prominent Masalit community leaders, human rights activists, lawyers, teachers and journalists’ were used to guide systematic attacks against their homes in the context of ethnically motivated and targeted killings at the hand of RSF and allied militias.⁵⁷⁰ For more details see section [2.4 Non-Arabs/Africans in Darfur](#).

2.3.3. Resistance committees’ members

Sudan’s resistance committees arose in their present form during Sudan’s 2019 revolution and then ‘spearheaded’ the country’s pro-democracy movement and resistance to military rule over the subsequent years.⁵⁷¹ They comprise a ‘diverse collection of Sudanese pro-democracy groups’, which include political parties, university students and staff, professional associations

⁵⁶² ACJPS, Sudan: Seven human rights defenders and activists arrested, detained, and allegedly tortured by the SAF Military Intelligence Unit in the Blue Nile Region, 20 January 2024, [url](#), pp. 1-2

⁵⁶³ Radio Dabanga, Emergency Lawyers to Sudan intelligence: ‘activists are not the enemy’, 11 August 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁶⁴ ACJPS, Central Darfur: Deep concern for the safety and wellbeing of four Sudanese including HRDs detained in Zalingi city, 12 January 2024, [url](#), p. 1

⁵⁶⁵ ACJPS, South Darfur: Urgent call for authorities to investigate the killing of 10 political activists and businessmen in Nyala city, 12 January 2024, [url](#), p. 1

⁵⁶⁶ Sudan War Monitor, RSF arrest civilians in Kreinek, West Darfur, 17 February 2024, [url](#)

⁵⁶⁷ ACJPS, Al-jazeera state: 26 men arbitrarily arrested and allegedly killed by the Military Intelligence Unit in Wad Madani, 11 January 2024, [url](#)

⁵⁶⁸ Radio Dabanga, Emergency Lawyers to Sudan intelligence: ‘activists are not the enemy’, 11 August 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁶⁹ UNSG, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, S/2023/644, 31 August 2023, [url](#), para. 27

⁵⁷⁰ UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 90,

⁵⁷¹ New Internationalist, ‘We are the true voice of the people’: Sudan’s civilian resistance is still alive, 23 May 2023, [url](#); ICG, The Future of Sudan’s Resistance Committees, 26 July 2023, [url](#); Al Jazeera, Sudan ‘resistance’ activists mobilise as crisis escalates, 22 April 2023, [url](#)



and unions, and civil society organisations.⁵⁷² Reportedly, before the starting of the war in April 2023, a network of more than 5 000 resistance committees, organised in neighbourhoods, had been established in Sudan.⁵⁷³ According to El-Battahani, professor of political science at the University of Khartoum, resistance committees are the “only force trusted by the general public”.⁵⁷⁴

With the outbreak of the April 2023 war, these ‘neighbourhood groups’ have emphasised the need to ‘stay neutral’,⁵⁷⁵ and have always insisted on non-violence, thus maintaining ‘their status as citizens and civilians’.⁵⁷⁶ They have played a crucial role in responding to the needs of the citizens, including for: safety and refuge, providing humanitarian and healthcare services, and spreading anti-war messaging.⁵⁷⁷

Targeted already in previous periods,⁵⁷⁸ under the current circumstances resistance committee members reportedly constituted a particularly vulnerable group, for a number of reasons, including: a) their being vocal against the Sudanese authorities since the 2019 coup, and now again, while often opposing the war; b) their playing a crucial role in the coordination and delivery of humanitarian aid, especially during the first phase of the conflict, over which both SAF and RSF then wanted to exert their control; c) their being subject, allegedly, to pre-emptive arrests to prevent them from being forcibly recruited by the RSF.⁵⁷⁹

In its February 2024 report, the OHCHR indicated that resistance committees and emergency rooms members had been detained by both warring parties.⁵⁸⁰ In May 2023 Radio Dabanga had already reported about SAF and RSF crackdown on members of the resistance committees and other volunteers who helped out in the various ‘emergency rooms’: reportedly, while the SAF detained them, the RSF abducted them.⁵⁸¹ Similar instances were reported on various occasions: in northern Khartoum, at the beginning of May 2023, by army intelligence officers;⁵⁸² in Bahri, in May 2023, by uniformed military forces;⁵⁸³ in July 2023 in Khartoum state, at the hands of RSF;⁵⁸⁴ in August 2023, in Damazin, the capital of the Blue Nile State, at the hands of both the General Intelligence Service and the Military Intelligence

⁵⁷² The Conversation, Sudan’s people toppled a dictator – despite the war they’re still working to bring about democratic change, 10 May 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁷³ Peoples Dispatch, War in Sudan engulfs agricultural heartland amid record levels of hunger, 1 January 2024, [url](#)

⁵⁷⁴ New Internationalist, ‘We are the true voice of the people’: Sudan’s civilian resistance is still alive, 23 May 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁷⁵ Al Jazeera, Sudan ‘resistance’ activists mobilise as crisis escalates, 22 April 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁷⁶ The Conversation, Sudan’s people toppled a dictator – despite the war they’re still working to bring about democratic change, 10 May 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁷⁷ The New Humanitarian, ‘I see it as my duty to help for as long as I can’: Sudanese volunteers on supporting hospitals and opposing the war, 2 June 2023, [url](#); New Internationalist, ‘We are the true voice of the people’: Sudan’s civilian resistance is still alive, 23 May 2023, [url](#); The Conversation, Sudan’s people toppled a dictator – despite the war they’re still working to bring about democratic change, 10 May 2023, [url](#); Al Jazeera, Sudan ‘resistance’ activists mobilise as crisis escalates, 22 April 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁷⁸ OHCHR, Situation of Human Rights in the Sudan, 9 May 2022, [url](#), para. 31

⁵⁷⁹ REDRESS, Ruining a country, devastating its people, September 2023, [url](#), pp. 22-23; see also The New Humanitarian, How mutual aid networks are powering Sudan’s humanitarian response, 2 August 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁸⁰ OHCHR, Situation of human rights in the Sudan - Advance unedited version, A/HRC/55/29, 22 February 2024, [url](#), para. 58

⁵⁸¹ Radio Dabanga, Sudan’s warring parties ‘detain activists, hold volunteers incommunicado’, 19 May 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁸² The Guardian, Sudan medical volunteers detained after being seized from ambulance, 8 May 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁸³ Houreld, K., and Haroun H., Sudan’s warring factions target doctors and activists, 17 May 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁸⁴ Insecurity Insight, Attacks on Health Care in Sudan no. 8, 26 July – 8 August 2023, August 2023, [url](#), p. 1



Agency,⁵⁸⁵ in Omdurman, in October 2023, at the hands of SAF,⁵⁸⁶ in Hasahisa, in Al Jazirah state, first in October 2023, at the hands of the Military Intelligence,⁵⁸⁷ and then by RSF on the backdrop of the seizure of Wad Madani.⁵⁸⁸

SAF targeted resistance committees' members on political grounds, often resorting to ill-treatment and tortures, while trying to regain control of humanitarian aid delivery.⁵⁸⁹ Within this context, at the beginning of January 2024 the governor of the River Nile State issued an order disbanding the resistance committees.⁵⁹⁰ Similar decisions were then taken by the governors of Northern State, El Gedaref, Sennar, White Nile and North Kordofan. On 16 January 2024, the Government of Sudan, via the Minister of Federal Governance, issued a decree 'banning all grassroots committees in Sudan that have been set up during the revolution or later, during the war, to help out people in need'. These included: resistance committees, native administration committees, and committees of the Forces for Freedom and Change (FFC).⁵⁹¹ As a reaction to this, the Wad Madani Resistance Committees rejected in a public statement the state governor's decision.⁵⁹²

2.3.4. Political party members and other perceived opponents

According to Sudan Tribune, Sudanese authorities cracked down on part of the FFC and other civilian groups opposed to the war,⁵⁹³ while accusing them of collaborating with the RSF.⁵⁹⁴

The FFC - a coalition of political parties, unions and civil society organisations, reportedly the largest pro-democracy coalition in the country,⁵⁹⁵ was supposed to guide Sudan to democratic governance, together with the SAF and the RSF, after the overthrow of former president Omar al-Bashir.⁵⁹⁶ However, the coalition split in two in the course of 2021-2022,⁵⁹⁷ with:

- The FFC – Central Command or Council (FFC-CC): allegedly siding with the RSF,⁵⁹⁸ and comprising more than 40 parties, movements and professional groups, signatories of the

⁵⁸⁵ Sudan Tribune, Sudanese activists detained following women-led anti-war protest, 30 August 2023, [url](#); ACJPS, Sudan: Seven human rights defenders and activists arrested, detained, and allegedly tortured by the SAF Military Intelligence Unit in the Blue Nile Region, 20 January 2024, [url](#), pp. 1-2

⁵⁸⁶ Al Taghyeer, Sudanese Resistance Committees condemn targeting volunteers by military bodies, 20 October 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁸⁷ Al Taghyeer, Sudanese Resistance Committees condemn targeting volunteers by military bodies, 20 October 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁸⁸ Peoples Dispatch, War in Sudan engulfs agricultural heartland amid record levels of hunger, 1 January 2024, [url](#)

⁵⁸⁹ Al Jazeera, 'They're targeting us': Sudan's army cracks down on democracy activists, 9 January 2024, [url](#); Al Jazeera, Three pro-democracy activists arrested in Sudan, 17 May 2023, [url](#); REDRESS, Ruining a country, devastating its people, September 2023, [url](#), p. 23

⁵⁹⁰ Al Jazeera, 'They're targeting us': Sudan's army cracks down on democracy activists, 9 January 2024, [url](#)

⁵⁹¹ Radio Dabanga, Sudan govt cracks down on grassroots service committees in the entire country, 22 January 2024, [url](#)

⁵⁹² Radio Dabanga, Sudan: Wad Madani Resistance Committees defy dissolution order, 26 January 2024, [url](#)

⁵⁹³ Sudan Tribune, Sudanese authorities arrest anti-war political leaders, 1 January 2024, [url](#); Sudan Tribune, Arrest of Sudanese doctor sparks outrage and concern, 27 May 2023, [url](#); see also Radio Dabanga, Sudan surgeon abducted by armed group in Khartoum, 28 May 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁹⁴ Sudan Tribune, Sudanese authorities arrest anti-war political leaders, 1 January 2024, [url](#)

⁵⁹⁵ New Internationalist, 'We are the true voice of the people': Sudan's civilian resistance is still alive, 23 May 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁹⁶ Al Jazeera, Analysis: Can Sudan's civilian leaders save their country from collapse?, 29 September 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁹⁷ Sudan in the news, FFC Democratic Bloc Briefing: Is Egypt playing divide-and-rule in Sudan?, 26 March 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁹⁸ Al Jazeera, Analysis: Can Sudan's civilian leaders save their country from collapse?, 29 September 2023, [url](#)



political framework agreement with the military junta in December 2022.⁵⁹⁹ On this point, Expert I, a leading Sudan specialist on political transition and democratisation, noted that the FFC-CC was blamed, not only by SAF but by Sudanese civil society generally and Darfur rebels, to be pro-RSF or even the RSF political wing. However, this did not apply to FFC-CC as a whole, since, like many other politicians and civil society in the political centre (Khartoum), they had divided between pro and anti-RSF. Furthermore, FFC-CC as such did not really exist anymore, having been partly replaced by the group called Taqadam, around ex-prime minister Hamdok.⁶⁰⁰ Old FFC-CC members include the National Umma Party (NUP), Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North–Democratic Revolutionary Movement (DRM), Sudanese Congress Party (SCP), and others.⁶⁰¹

- The FFC – Democratic Block (FFC-DB): allegedly siding with the SAF,⁶⁰² and representing a 'coalition of pro-coup armed groups and political party factions who reject the framework agreement'.⁶⁰³ This coalition included, among others: the Reform and Renewal bloc of the Umma Party (NUP), the Jaafar Mirghani-led bloc of the Democratic Unionist Party-Jaafar Mirghani (DUP), the Beja Tribal Council, the Darfur Governor Minni Minnawi's Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM-MM), the Finance Minister Gibril Ibrahim's Justice and Equality Movement (JEM).⁶⁰⁴

Against this general backdrop, in the course of 2023-2024, there have been reports of arbitrary arrests and abuse of political party members and leaders at the hands of both warring parties. Expert I argued that, indeed, beyond FFC-CC leaders - who are now mostly in exile in the UAE – other members could be targeted by both warring parties, including by RSF, irrespective of FFC-CC members potential pro-RSF and anti-SAF stance. In particular, he elaborated that RSF members could target them on various grounds: because they come mostly from the political centre, and they are viewed as enemies by RSF troops coming from the peripheries; because of their past anti-RSF positioning; or because of current individual positioning in the conflict.⁶⁰⁵

At the end of January 2024, Sudan Military Intelligence arrested two members of the Unionist Alliance in Sennar state, while other members had been arrested in previous months in various locations across Sudan - including North Kordofan and Al Jazirah - on the backdrop of a wider arrest campaign against human rights activists and other profiles.⁶⁰⁶ On 23 January 2024, Mohamed Badri, member of the Sudanese Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party, was tortured and then killed in military detention in Khartoum North at the hands of the Military Intelligence.⁶⁰⁷ On 19 January 2024, in eastern Khartoum, the residence of Haisam Dafallah - editor-in-chief of

⁵⁹⁹ Radio Dabanga, Sudan's long-awaited framework agreement signed between military and civilian bodies, 6 December 2022, [url](#)

⁶⁰⁰ Expert I, email exchange, 16 April 2024

⁶⁰¹ Radio Dabanga, Sudan's FFC-CC meet in Cairo, 25 July 2023, [url](#)

⁶⁰² Al Jazeera, Analysis: Can Sudan's civilian leaders save their country from collapse?, 29 September 2023, [url](#)

⁶⁰³ Sudan in the news, FFC Democratic Bloc Briefing: Is Egypt playing divide-and-rule in Sudan?, 26 March 2023, [url](#); Sudan in the news, Will the framework agreement in Sudan lead to democracy?, 25 March 2023, [url](#)

⁶⁰⁴ Sudan in the news, FFC Democratic Bloc Briefing: Is Egypt playing divide-and-rule in Sudan?, 26 March 2023, [url](#); Al Jazeera, Analysis: Can Sudan's civilian leaders save their country from collapse?, 29 September 2023, [url](#)

⁶⁰⁵ Expert I, email exchange, 16 April 2024

⁶⁰⁶ Sudan Tribune, Sudan's Unionist Alliance condemns arbitrary arrest of two of its members, 30 January 2024, [url](#)

⁶⁰⁷ Radio Dabanga, Death of Sudanese politician 'deliberately withheld by Military Intelligence', 24 January 2024, [url](#)





El Midan and spokesperson of the Communist Party of Sudan (CPoS) - was stormed by RSF, who apprehended him and his brother.⁶⁰⁸ Still in mid-January 2024, RSF paramilitaries arrested Abdeljalil El Basha, assistant to the president of the National Umma Party (NUP), in old Omdurman; on the same day Military Intelligence officers detained El Tayeb Mohamed Ahmed, a member of the NUP executive office in White Nile state in Kosti.⁶⁰⁹ On 1 January 2024, the Military Intelligence arrested Sattea al-Haj, the head of the Nasserist Party, upon his arrival in Port Sudan. On 30 December 2024, Military Intelligence arrested two leaders of the Sudanese Congress Party in Port Sudan.⁶¹⁰

2.4. Non-Arabs/Africans in Darfur

2.4.1. Background

Darfur's overall population is contested, with estimates ranging from around 6 million⁶¹¹ to 9.5 million people.⁶¹² According to Sean Ofahey, this population is 'approximately 2/3 to 3/4 "African" and 1/3 to 1/4 "Arab"'. Reportedly everybody in Darfur is Muslim of the Maliki *madhhab* [school of thought], including a high proportion of adherents of the different branches of the Tijaniyya *tariqa* [Sufi doctrine or path of spiritual learning]. According to the same author, 'who is "African" and who "Arab" is ultimately a matter of self-ascription'.⁶¹³

Alex de Waal, an internationally reputed expert on Sudan, maintains that Darfur's complex identities have been radically and traumatically simplified, creating a polarised 'Arab versus African' dichotomy, that has gone hand in hand with the militarisation of Darfur, the creation of militias and the communal violence that ensued.⁶¹⁴

Within this context, according to Sudan expert Reeves, the non-Arab population began to identify as 'African' more decisively after 2003, when the war in Darfur broke out. The Arab population may have felt 'more Arab', but identity was not so dramatically transformed, especially among the Arab tribes that wanted no part of the violence.⁶¹⁵

Approximately 80 different tribes live in Darfur.⁶¹⁶

⁶⁰⁸ Radio Dabanga, Sudan activists denounce RSF's 'arbitrary detention' of El Midan editor-in-chief, 22 January 2024, [url](#)

⁶⁰⁹ Radio Dabanga, Sudan Armed Forces advance in Omdurman, politicians detained by RSF and army, 16 January 2024, [url](#)

⁶¹⁰ Sudan Tribune, Sudanese authorities arrest anti-war political leaders, 1 January 2024, [url](#)

⁶¹¹ Reeves, E., input from external review, 25 March 2024; Yifei, G., A Study of Tribal Composition and Conflict in Darfur, 2020, [url](#), p. 236

⁶¹² de Waal, A., The Conflict in Darfur, Sudan: Background and Overview, February 2022, [url](#), para. 6

⁶¹³ Ofahey, S., Ethnic Identity in Darfur, 7 April 2009, [url](#)

⁶¹⁴ de Waal, A., Who are the Darfurians? Arab and African Identities, Violence and External Engagement, 10 December 2004, [url](#)

⁶¹⁵ Reeves, E., input from external review, 25 March 2024

⁶¹⁶ Yifei, G., A Study of Tribal Composition and Conflict in Darfur, 2020, [url](#), p. 1; University of South Florida, Digital Exhibits, Parties in the Darfur Conflict, 2009, [url](#)





(a) Arab ‘identity’

Almost 30 different tribes in Darfur consider themselves Arab, including the Rizeigat, Beni Halba, Ta’aisha, Habbaniya, Ziyaddiya, Fulbe, Ja’aliyin, Misseriya, Djawama, Beni Helba, Meidob Habania,⁶¹⁷ and Salamat.⁶¹⁸

The Rizeigat is the largest and most powerful among the Arab tribes of Darfur. It comprises two groups: 1) the predominantly camel-herding Northern Rizeigat, based mainly in North Darfur state but with branches in other parts of Darfur; 2) the mainly cattle-herding Southern Rizeigat. The Rizeigat are divided into various branches, with the largest being the Mahamid, Mahariya, and Nawaiba,⁶¹⁹ which are common to both macro-groups.⁶²⁰ Hemedti is a member the Awlad Mansour branch of the Mahariya section of the Northern Rizeigat, resident in South Darfur since the late 1980s.⁶²¹

(b) Non-Arab/African ‘identity’

The largest ‘non-Arab/African’ ethnic/tribal groups in Darfur are the Fur, the Zaghawa and the Masalit.⁶²²

The word “‘Dar’” as in “‘Darfur’” – “‘دار’” in Arabic’ - is translated as “‘homeland’”,⁶²³ or as ‘domain of the Fur’.⁶²⁴ Until 1916 the Fur were ruled by an independent sultanate. The Fur are a Nilo-Saharan speaking, Islamic sedentary-farming people and represent the majority group in Darfur.⁶²⁵ They are the predominant group in Jebel Marra, Wadi Salih, and Zalingei.⁶²⁶

The Masalit, also known as the Massalat, are a non-Arab ethnic tribe predominantly constituted by farmers. They speak Maba languages from the Nilo-Saharan language family.⁶²⁷ The Masalit inhabit large areas of present-day West Darfur, including the capital El Geneina, which is considered their historical homeland, and roughly correspond to the boundaries of ancient Dar Masalit Sultanate.⁶²⁸ Masalit also inhabit part of Southern Darfur.⁶²⁹

The Zaghawa are a semi-nomadic non-Arab ethnic group, speaking Zaghawa and herding cattle, sheep, and camels for their livelihoods.⁶³⁰ As Sudan expert Jérôme Tubiana put it, ‘in many ways, Zaghawa culture is closer to the Abbala Arabs than to the Fur and the Masalit.

⁶¹⁷ University of South Florida, Digital Exhibits, Parties in the Darfur Conflict, 2009, [url](#)

⁶¹⁸ Reeves, E., input from external review, 25 March 2024

⁶¹⁹ de Waal, A., Who are the Darfurians? Arab and African Identities, Violence and External Engagement, 10 December 2004, [url](#)

⁶²⁰ Flint, J., The Other War: Inter-Arab Conflict in Darfur, October 2010, [url](#), p. 14

⁶²¹ Flint, J., The Other War: Inter-Arab Conflict in Darfur, October 2010, [url](#), p. 10; see also ADF, Conflict Enflames Historic Ethnic Tensions in West Darfur, 18 July 2023, [url](#)

⁶²² Reeves, E., email exchange, 12 January 2024

⁶²³ Yifei, G., A Study of Tribal Composition and Conflict in Darfur, 2020, [url](#), p. 236

⁶²⁴ de Waal, A., Who are the Darfurians? Arab and African Identities, Violence and External Engagement, 10 December 2004, [url](#)

⁶²⁵ WFP, Sudan Emergency Safety Nets Project (SESNP) (P178989), August 2022, [url](#), p. 21

⁶²⁶ HRW, Report Sudan 2004 - Background, [url](#)

⁶²⁷ WFP, Sudan Emergency Safety Nets Project (SESNP) (P178989), August 2022, [url](#), p. 21

⁶²⁸ UN Sudan, West Darfur Peace Building Assessment, June 2021, [url](#), p. 4; see also HRW, Report Sudan 2004 - Background, [url](#)

⁶²⁹ WFP, Sudan Emergency Safety Nets Project (SESNP) (P178989), August 2022, [url](#), p. 21

⁶³⁰ WFP, Sudan Emergency Safety Nets Project (SESNP) (P178989), August 2022, [url](#), p. 22



They see themselves primarily as breeders, and traditionally favoured cattle’ although recent developments have ‘led many to favour camels’. However, differently from Abbala, they have traditional land rights: ‘there is a Dar Zaghawa or “Zaghawa country”, which in Zaghawa language is *Beri be* or “house of the Beri”’,⁶³¹ and that for the Sudan part extends from the Chadian border to the rural areas between El-Fasher, Kutum and Mellit.⁶³²

Other significant ‘non-Arab/African’ tribal groups include the Tunjur, Berti, Meidob, Dajo, Bargo, Barno, Gimir, and the Tama.⁶³³ The Fellata (also Fallata) is the name given in Sudan to Pula people, speaking Fulani, originally from West and Central Africa. They are nomadic cattle breeders, in some regions close to Baggara Arab communities, and they are partly Arabised.⁶³⁴

Sudan expert Reeves noted that ‘very few of the non-Arab tribes speak their tribal language as a primary language, rather they speak Arabic, the *lingua franca* of the region. Some non-Arabs have no command of their tribal language’.⁶³⁵

(c) Baggara versus Abbala

Another important identifier in Darfur is the distinction between Baggara and Abbala. Nomads in Darfur are divided between Baggara, cattle-herding pastoralists, and Abbala, camel-herding pastoralists.⁶³⁶ Pastoralist nomads are scattered throughout the Darfur region, but they can be grouped into four main sub-groups.⁶³⁷

- 1) The Baggara of South Darfur is the dominant pastoralist group in South Darfur and occupies what is historically known as Dar Baggara.⁶³⁸
- 2) The Rizeigat Abbala of North Darfur live on the fringe of Northern Darfur and are divided into five subclans: the Mahameed, the Mahriyya, the Iraigat, the Itaifat and Aulad Rashid. They are the only substantial tribe in Darfur that has no Dar.⁶³⁹
- 3) The pastoralist groups of the West Darfur in both Jebel Marra and Dar Masalit, have since time immemorial also included streams of immigrants coming from Darfur’s western border with Chad. These pastoralist groups comprise different tribes; however, they can be generally clustered into two main groups: Reziegat and non Reziegat.⁶⁴⁰
- 4) The Zaghawa Pastoralist reside in North Darfur, along with the Zayadia and Medob tribes.⁶⁴¹

⁶³¹ Tubiana, J., Land and Power: the Case of the Zaghawa, 28 May 2008, [url](#); see also Tubiana, J. et al, Traditional authorities peace-making role in Darfur, [url](#), pp. 15-16

⁶³² Tubiana, J., email exchange, 19 March 2024

⁶³³ Reeves, E., email exchange, 12 January 2024

⁶³⁴ Tubiana, J., email exchange, 19 March 2024

⁶³⁵ Reeves, E., input from external review, 25 March 2024

⁶³⁶ Abbas, R., The War to Take Over West Darfur and its Capital, Al-Geneina, 26 September 2023, [url](#)

⁶³⁷ Takana, Y., Darfur Pastoralists Groups: New Opportunities for Change and Peace Building, 2012, [url](#), p. 4

⁶³⁸ Takana, Y., Darfur Pastoralists Groups: New Opportunities for Change and Peace Building, 2012, [url](#), p. 5

⁶³⁹ Takana, Y., Darfur Pastoralists Groups: New Opportunities for Change and Peace Building, 2012, [url](#), p. 8

⁶⁴⁰ Takana, Y., Darfur Pastoralists Groups: New Opportunities for Change and Peace Building, 2012, [url](#), pp. 9-10

⁶⁴¹ Takana, Y., Darfur Pastoralists Groups: New Opportunities for Change and Peace Building, 2012, [url](#), p. 11



Against this backdrop, the inter-Arab pastoralists fighting opposing Abbala and Baggara has been a common occurrence in Darfur's recent history.⁶⁴²

(d) Conflict drivers

Land and resources disputes have been historically a major conflict driver in Darfur.⁶⁴³ Tubiana noted in 2009 that one of the primary traits of the 2003 Darfur crisis was the split between those members of the population with territories (*hawakir*) - due to traditional, mainly pre-colonial land rights - and those who had none – a split which does not exactly correspond to the ethnic divisions between non-Arabs and Arabs.⁶⁴⁴

However, as noted above, 'by the time non-Arab groups led by the Fur, Zaghawa, and Masalit declared themselves in rebellion against the government in 2003, Darfur's complex identities had been simplified to an 'African' versus 'Arab' dichotomy that itself became a driver of conflict', as Flint put it.⁶⁴⁵

This polarisation was nurtured, among others, by an Arab supremacist ideology, according to sources.⁶⁴⁶ Already in 2004 de Waal noted that such 'Arab supremacism' was manifest in a racist vocabulary and in sexual violence. Examples were: the term *zurug* that had long been used in the casual racism of Arabs in Darfur; the term *abid*, used traditionally by the riverain elites to refer to all Darfurians, and then adopted by some Arab to refer to non-Arab Darfurians; the widespread use of rape as 'means of identity destruction or transformation'.⁶⁴⁷

Within this context the ethnic targeting of the Masalit predates the April 2023 outbreak of the hostilities.⁶⁴⁸

2.4.2. Targeting

Ethnically motivated killings have been perpetrated in Darfur, and notably in West Darfur, ever since the outbreak of the war in April 2023. Non-Arab/African groups, and notably Masalit,

⁶⁴² Flint, J., The Other War: Inter-Arab Conflict in Darfur, October 2010, [url](#), pp. 7, 9-10, 12

⁶⁴³ Abbas, R., The War to Take Over West Darfur and its Capital, Al-Geneina, 26 September 2023, [url](#); Yifei, G., A Study of Tribal Composition and Conflict in Darfur, 2020, [url](#), p. 237; ACAPS, Sudan – West Darfur pre-crisis profile, 18 July 2023, [url](#), p. 7

⁶⁴⁴ Tubiana, J., Land and Power: the Case of the Zaghawa, 28 May 2008, [url](#); see also Tubiana, J. et al, Traditional authorities peace-making role in Darfur, 8 November 2012, [url](#), pp. 15-19; Flint, J., The Other War: Inter-Arab Conflict in Darfur, October 2010, [url](#), p. 11

⁶⁴⁵ Flint, J., The Other War: Inter-Arab Conflict in Darfur, October 2010, [url](#), p. 9

⁶⁴⁶ Eltayeb A. F., Op ed: Sudan's Hemeti, the criminal who's winning the diplomacy war, 23 February 2024, [url](#); de Waal, A., Who are the Darfurians? Arab and African Identities, Violence and External Engagement, 10 December 2004, [url](#); Flint, J., The Other War: Inter-Arab Conflict in Darfur, October 2010, [url](#), p. 9

⁶⁴⁷ de Waal, A., Who are the Darfurians? Arab and African Identities, Violence and External Engagement, 10 December 2004, [url](#)

⁶⁴⁸ Abbas, R., The War to Take Over West Darfur and its Capital, Al-Geneina, 26 September 2023, [url](#)



have been targeted by the RSF and allied Arab militias.⁶⁴⁹ Among others, the Burgo,⁶⁵⁰ the Eringa and the Tama have reportedly been targeted by RSF violence.⁶⁵¹ The main ethnic groups in West Darfur are the Rizeigat - the Arab tribes - and the Masalit, while other ethnic groups in West Darfur include the Dajo, Borgo, Erenga, Fur, Gimir, and Zaghawa.⁶⁵²

El Geneina administration leader, *Omda* Salih Hasan, quoted by various sources, indicated, however, that Masalit were not the only target, rather that “all ethnicities that did not join the Janjaweed are targeted... including Arab tribesmen”.⁶⁵³

Against this general backdrop, the UN Panel of Experts on Sudan reported, in its January 2024 report, that RSF, and ‘sometimes’ the SAF, ‘harassed, arbitrarily arrested, detained and tortured civilians’ in various Darfur capitals ‘upon suspicion’ that they were aligned with the opposing warring party due to their ethnicity. This impacted both African and Arab communities.⁶⁵⁴ ACJPS, reported for instance that in December 2023, in West Darfur, nine Sudanese men - tuk-tuk drivers - were arbitrarily arrested and tortured by the RSF and allied militia in Azrni because they were suspected of working for the SAF.⁶⁵⁵

(a) Major ethnically motivated large-scale killings in West Darfur and elsewhere

The UN Panel of Experts on Sudan reported that in West Darfur, and notably in El Geneina, Sirba, Murnei, and Masteri RSF and allied militias targeted the Masalit community.⁶⁵⁶ While West Darfur has been the epicentre of the violence against non-Arab communities already since 2019,⁶⁵⁷ in the period 15 April 2023 – January 2024, reported major ‘ethnic cleansing’ events took place in:

⁶⁴⁹ HRW, Fighting Devastates Sudan’s West Darfur, 1 May 2023, [url](#); UN News, Sudan: Attacks based on ethnicity may amount to war crimes, 13 June 2023, [url](#); HRW, Sudan: Tackle Spiralling Violence in West Darfur, 21 June 2023, [url](#); Radio Dabanga, ‘Ethnic cleansing’ continues in West Darfur, 5 July 2023, [url](#); HRW, Sudan: Darfur Town Destroyed, 11 July 2023, [url](#); Reuters, Ethnically targeted violence worsens in Sudan’s Darfur, rights monitors say, 11 July 2023, [url](#); ADF, Conflict Enflames Historic Ethnic Tensions in West Darfur, 18 July 2023, [url](#); HRW, Sudan: New Attacks in Darfur, 4 August 2023, [url](#); REDRESS, Ruining a country, devastating its people, September 2023, [url](#), pp. 25-26; BBC, Sudan conflict: Ethnic cleansing committed in Darfur, UK says, 18 October 2023, [url](#); BBC, Sudan conflict: Thousands flee fresh ethnic killings in Darfur, 8 November 2023, [url](#); Reuters, Darfur refugees report new spate of ethnically driven killings, 8 November 2023, [url](#); Politico, UN sounds alarm on Darfur, warns world not to repeat history, 11 November 2023, [url](#); RFI, EU ‘appalled’ by reports of 1,000 killed in Darfur, fearing ethnic cleansing, 13 November 2023, [url](#); HRW, Darfur Civilians in Jeopardy, 13 November 2023, [url](#); People Dispatch, Ethnic cleansing of West Darfur’s El Geneina culminates in largest massacre since onset of war in Sudan, 14 November 2023, [url](#); CNN, ‘They called me a slave’: Witness testimony exposes alleged RSF-led campaign to enslave men and women in Sudan, 20 November 2023, [url](#); Al Jazeera, Fears of all-out ethnic war rise in Sudan’s Darfur, 22 November 2023, [url](#); Ayin network, Ardamata: One of the deadliest attack yet, 23 November 2023, [url](#); HRW, Sudan: New Mass Ethnic Killings, Pillage in Darfur, 26 November 2023, [url](#); see also Tubiana, J. and Craze, J., Darfur: The New Massacres, 10 February 2024, [url](#)

⁶⁵⁰ Sudan Conflict Observatory, Evidence consistent with alleged body disposal in El-Geneina, Report 010, 14 September 2023, [url](#), pp. 4, 6, 9

⁶⁵¹ HRW, Sudan: New Mass Ethnic Killings, Pillage in Darfur, 26 November 2023, [url](#)

⁶⁵² ACAPS, Sudan – West Darfur pre-crisis profile, 18 July 2023, [url](#), p. 4

⁶⁵³ Radio Dabanga, ‘Ethnic cleansing’ continues in West Darfur, 5 July 2023, [url](#); ADF, Conflict Enflames Historic Ethnic Tensions in West Darfur, 18 July 2023, [url](#)

⁶⁵⁴ UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 63

⁶⁵⁵ ACJPS, West Darfur: Nine Sudanese men arbitrarily arrested and tortured by RSF and allied militia in Azrni, 2 February 2024, [url](#), p. 1

⁶⁵⁶ UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), p. 1

⁶⁵⁷ HRW, Sudan: New Attacks in Darfur, 4 August 2023, [url](#)



- El Geneina, as from 24 April 2023 when fighting between the various armed forces first ‘erupted’.⁶⁵⁸ As a consequence of a ‘systematic and coordinated cleansing campaign’ at the hands of RSF and Arab militias that targeted the Masalit for weeks, as of June 2023, the estimated death toll was 4 000 people, with 10 000 injured, and 1,8 square kilometres of destruction. UNHCR estimates, quoted by Reuters, indicated that 290 000 people fled to Chad.⁶⁵⁹ The emergence of ‘new’ mass graves has been documented and reported by various sources,⁶⁶⁰ more than 30 according to community leaders quoted by Radio Dabanga,⁶⁶¹ 13 according to UN reports quoted by Reuters.⁶⁶²
- Misterei, on 28 May 2023, when RSF fighters and Arab militias attacked the town, home to tens of thousands of mainly ethnic Masalit residents;⁶⁶³ according to local officials quoted by HRW, 97 people were later confirmed to have been killed, including at least 40 civilians, and 14 civilians were injured. Thousands of residents fled across the border to Chad.⁶⁶⁴
- Sirba and Murnei, in late July 2023, where extensive residential areas were burned to the ground;⁶⁶⁵ the attack on Sirba, and its almost complete razing to the ground,⁶⁶⁶ led to an estimated death toll of 460 people, with 5 382 people seeking refuge in the Chadian border area in the following days.⁶⁶⁷
- Ardamata, at the beginning of November 2023, when RSF took over the SAF military base in town,⁶⁶⁸ and also attacked local IDP camps and neighbourhoods - Ardamata and Dorti, as well as the Al-Kabri neighbourhood.⁶⁶⁹ These attacks caused scores of civilian deaths: between 1 300 and 2 000 according to local sources,⁶⁷⁰ an estimated 1 335 IDPs according to another source,⁶⁷¹ 800 people, primarily Masalit, according to UNHCR estimates quoted by Ayin network.⁶⁷² Adding to these estimates, Al Jazeera spoke about 2 000 injured and 310 missing.⁶⁷³ Ardamata had previously become an IDP destination for

⁶⁵⁸ HRW, Fighting Devastates Sudan’s West Darfur, 1 May 2023, [url](#); UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 69-72

⁶⁵⁹ Reuters, The Slaughter of El Geneina, How Arab fighters carried out a rolling ethnic massacre in Sudan, 22 September 2023, [url](#)

⁶⁶⁰ Sudan Conflict Observatory, Evidence consistent with alleged body disposal in El-Geneina, Report 010, 14 September 2023, [url](#); Reuters, The Slaughter of El Geneina, How Arab fighters carried out a rolling ethnic massacre in Sudan, 22 September 2023, [url](#); UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 96

⁶⁶¹ Radio Dabanga, More mass graves found in West Darfur, RSF accused of demolishing camps, 14 August 2023, [url](#)

⁶⁶² Reuters, Credible reports of at least 13 mass graves in Darfur, UN says, 14 September 2023, [url](#)

⁶⁶³ HRW, Sudan: Darfur Town Destroyed, 11 July 2023, [url](#)

⁶⁶⁴ HRW, Sudan: Darfur Town Destroyed, 11 July 2023, [url](#)

⁶⁶⁵ HRW, Sudan: New Attacks in Darfur, 4 August 2023, [url](#)

⁶⁶⁶ Sudan Conflict Observatory, Sirba, West Darfur, 24 July - 30 July, 2023, Report 008, 2 August 2023, [url](#), pp. 4, 7

⁶⁶⁷ Radio Dabanga, Tragic stories from Sirba as violence in West Darfur spreads, 1 August 2023, [url](#)

⁶⁶⁸ Reuters, Darfur refugees report new spate of ethnically driven killings, 8 November 2023, [url](#); HRW, Sudan: New Mass Ethnic Killings, Pillage in Darfur, 26 November 2023, [url](#); UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 74-75

⁶⁶⁹ Ayin network, Ardamata: One of the deadliest attack yet, 23 November 2023, [url](#)

⁶⁷⁰ Middle East Eye, Sudan: ‘At least 1,300’ killed in new massacre in West Darfur’s el-Geneina, 12 November 2023, [url](#)

⁶⁷¹ People Dispatch, Ethnic cleansing of West Darfur’s El Geneina culminates in largest massacre since onset of war in Sudan, 14 November 2023, [url](#)

⁶⁷² Ayin network, Ardamata: One of the deadliest attack yet, 23 November 2023, [url](#)

⁶⁷³ Al Jazeera, ‘Corpses on streets’: Sudan’s RSF kills 1,300 in Darfur, monitors say, 10 November 2023, [url](#)



Darfuri fleeing the conflict and ethnic cleansing in El Geneina.⁶⁷⁴ As a consequence of the attack, the UN indicated that about 8 000 people fled into Chad,⁶⁷⁵ as also quoted by Ayin network.⁶⁷⁶ Still Ayin, reporting testimonies from the event, who had then relocated to the André camp in Eastern Chad, spoke about ‘genocide’, arbitrary detentions of hundreds of people, extrajudicial killings, and body mutilations.⁶⁷⁷

Satellite imagery and fire detection data showed that, during the reference period, many other villages and locations in Darfur had been targeted. Such attacks took place on the backdrop of RSF military operations that led to the seizure of key cities such as the Darfuri capitals of El Daein, Nyala, El Geneina, and Zalingei until October 2023.⁶⁷⁸ Based on this, satellite imagery affected locations across Darfur include: a) Molle, Habilla Kanari, Gokor, Mejmerevin West Darfur,⁶⁷⁹ b) 27 ‘population centres’ across Darfur, which have been ‘razed’ and ‘destroyed’ as of December 2023;⁶⁸⁰ c) 68 villages across Darfur, as documented by the Centre for Information Resilience (CIR), a research body partly funded by the British government, as of October 2023.⁶⁸¹

(b) Sudanese movement towards Chad and border challenges

As a consequence of the military operations and ethnically motivated attacks, the number of Sudanese⁶⁸² - notably Masalit from West Darfur -,⁶⁸³ that have fled into Chad is 542 204 as of 29 January 2024 according to UNHCR data.⁶⁸⁴ At the same time, in various accounts Masalit communities have been reported to face difficulties crossing the border into Chad: sources indicate that members of the Masalit ethnic group were prevented by gunmen at the border from leaving the country,⁶⁸⁵ and that their tribal background was inquired.⁶⁸⁶

(c) Official declarations

Various official declarations labelled the events unfolding in Darfur as ‘ethnic cleansing’ campaigns,⁶⁸⁷ sometimes as part of ‘infighting between rival Arab groups, other times [as] Arab

⁶⁷⁴ Ayin network, Ardamata: One of the deadliest attack yet, 23 November 2023, [url](#)

⁶⁷⁵ UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 98

⁶⁷⁶ Ayin network, Ardamata: One of the deadliest attack yet, 23 November 2023, [url](#)

⁶⁷⁷ Ayin network, Stories of survival: Testimonies from RSF detention centres, 21 February 2024, [url](#)

⁶⁷⁸ Sudan Conflict Observatory, Conflict update and observed violence against civilians in Darfur, December 2023, [url](#), p. 4

⁶⁷⁹ HRW, Sudan: Darfur Town Destroyed, 11 July 2023, [url](#)

⁶⁸⁰ Sudan Conflict Observatory, Conflict update and observed violence against civilians in Darfur, December 2023, [url](#), p. 6; Sudan Conflict Observatory, Sirba, West Darfur, 24 July - 30 July, 2023, Report 008, 2 August 2023, [url](#), p.4

⁶⁸¹ BBC, Sudan conflict: Ethnic cleansing committed in Darfur, UK says, 18 October 2023, [url](#)

⁶⁸² Radio Dabanga, ‘Ethnic cleansing’ continues in West Darfur, 5 July 2023, [url](#)

⁶⁸³ HRW, Sudan: Tackle Spiralling Violence in West Darfur, 21 June 2023, [url](#); HRW, Sudan: Darfur Town Destroyed, 11 July 2023, [url](#); Reuters, Ethnically targeted violence worsens in Sudan's Darfur, rights monitors say, 11 July 2023, [url](#); HRW, Sudan: New Attacks in Darfur, 4 August 2023, [url](#)

⁶⁸⁴ UNHCR, Sudan Situation, External update #46, 24-31 January 2024, 2 February 2024, [url](#), p. 2

⁶⁸⁵ ADF, Conflict Enflames Historic Ethnic Tensions in West Darfur, 18 July 2023, [url](#); Radio Dabanga, ‘Ethnic cleansing’ continues in West Darfur, 5 July 2023, [url](#)

⁶⁸⁶ Radio Dabanga, Horrifying testimonies on West Darfur ethnic targeting as other Masalit Sultan relative is killed, 19 June 2023, [url](#)

⁶⁸⁷ BBC, Sudan conflict: Ethnic cleansing committed in Darfur, UK says, 18 October 2023, [url](#); RFI, EU ‘appalled’ by reports of 1,000 killed in Darfur, fearing ethnic cleansing, 13 November 2023, [url](#); EEAS, Sudan: Statement by the



fighters targeting non-Arabs, like the Masalit'.⁶⁸⁸ These declarations included those from the European Union's high representative for foreign affairs and security policy, Josep Borrell,⁶⁸⁹ the UK Minister for Africa, Andrew Mitchell,⁶⁹⁰ and the US Secretary of State, Anthony Blinken, who determined, in a press statement from 6 December 2023, that 'members of the RSF and allied militias have committed crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing'.⁶⁹¹

(d) State protection and rule of law

For information on the level of state protection, rule of law, and the administration of justice at country level and more specifically in Darfur see section [1.1.3\(f\) State protection, rule of law, and administration of justice](#).

2.5. Women and girls

2.5.1. Sexual violence and conflict-related sexual violence in Sudan

A study conducted by UNFPA already in 2020, found that sexual assault and rape were an issue of concern among the study respondents. The study was based on the assessment of 236 focus group discussions that surveyed more than 2 000 respondents across all 18 states.⁶⁹² While prevalence data were missing, the study found that 19 % of the respondents 'perceived sexual violence as the most common incident happening in their community',⁶⁹³ same as for domestic violence, also at 19 %.⁶⁹⁴

Locations reportedly particularly prone to sexual violence included: farming areas, water points, firewood collecting areas, military areas, abandoned or otherwise remote areas, IDP camp settings, and informal workplaces, including domestic ones.⁶⁹⁵ Instances of sexual violence were often triggered by racial or tribal dynamics.⁶⁹⁶ Sources also agree that sexual violence goes unreported in Sudan, mainly due to fear of stigma and shame,⁶⁹⁷ or underreported out of fear of retaliation, low awareness of gender-based violence (GBV) and reporting mechanisms, or difficulties in accessing the services.⁶⁹⁸

High Representative on the atrocities in Ardamta Darfur, 12 November 2023, [url](#); US Department of State, War Crimes, Crimes Against Humanity, and Ethnic Cleansing Determination in Sudan, 6 December 2023, [url](#)

⁶⁸⁸ BBC, Sudan conflict: Ethnic cleansing committed in Darfur, UK says, 18 October 2023, [url](#)

⁶⁸⁹ RFI, EU 'appalled' by reports of 1,000 killed in Darfur, fearing ethnic cleansing, 13 November 2023, [url](#)

⁶⁹⁰ BBC, Sudan conflict: Ethnic cleansing committed in Darfur, UK says, 18 October 2023, [url](#)

⁶⁹¹ US Department of State, War Crimes, Crimes Against Humanity, and Ethnic Cleansing Determination in Sudan, 6 December 2023, [url](#)

⁶⁹² UNFPA, Voices from Sudan 2020, 2 August 2021, [url](#), p. 8

⁶⁹³ UNFPA, Voices from Sudan 2020, 2 August 2021, [url](#), pp. 16-17

⁶⁹⁴ UNFPA, Voices from Sudan 2020, 2 August 2021, [url](#), p. 34

⁶⁹⁵ UNFPA, Voices from Sudan 2020, 2 August 2021, [url](#), pp. 16-17; see also Insecurity Insight, Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Sudan, November 2023, [url](#), p. 7

⁶⁹⁶ UNFPA, Voices from Sudan 2020, 2 August 2021, [url](#), pp. 16-17; see also

⁶⁹⁷ Rights for Peace, Sudan Study on the status of and opportunities for reparations for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence, October 2023, [url](#), p. 21; UNFPA, Voices from Sudan 2020, 2 August 2021, [url](#), p. 17

⁶⁹⁸ UNHCR, Protection Brief Gender Based Violence, Sudan Situation, December 2023, [url](#), pp. 5, 8



Within this context, sexual violence has also been historically used as a ‘weapon of war’ by all parties to the various conflicts in Sudan.⁶⁹⁹ While conflict related sexual violence (CRSV) affects all genders and backgrounds, women and girls are the primary victims in Sudan, with girls below 18 years of age being the majority among them.⁷⁰⁰

Drivers of CRSV are diverse and vary across time and country regions. CRSV can be: a) racially motivated, and used as an ethnic cleansing tool targeting women from “African tribes”, such as Fur, Masalit and Zaghawa in Darfur, or Nubans in the Nuba Mountains in South Kordofan, often at the hands of the Janjaweed or the RSF; b) conflict motivated, and used by government forces, RSF and Janjaweed, against so called ‘rebel groups’ or committed during clashes between non-state armed groups, including on IDP women or around IDP camps; c) politically motivated, and used by government security forces, notably in Khartoum, against political opponents and democracy or human rights activists; d) socio-culturally motivated, and used by police and militia gangs over IDP camps to breed fear and dominance.⁷⁰¹

2.5.2. Conflict-related sexual violence as from April 2023

Against this general backdrop, already in June 2023 the GBV humanitarian Sub-Sector noted trends and patterns of heightened levels of gender-based violence (GBV) and sexual gender-based violence (SGBV) in Sudan.⁷⁰² By then, since the outbreak of the war in April 2023, the number of people in need of GBV services in Sudan had reportedly increased by over 1 million, to reach 4.2 million people in total.⁷⁰³ Among the most pressing concerns for women and girls, the GBV sector indicated: a) increased levels of risk of GBV in conflict affected areas; b) increased levels of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA); c) increased needs for urgent women- and girls-friendly services, with women being the majority of IDPs in many locations across the country; d) lack of safety of the humanitarian response for women and girls.⁷⁰⁴

A few months later, at the end of January 2024, as reported by UNOCHA in its 4 February situation report, the protection of civilians remained a key issue of concern in Sudan, including for women and girls, because of the increased number of reports of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), as well as of enforced disappearances, among other violations.⁷⁰⁵ Such

⁶⁹⁹ ACJPS, SGBV: A Tool Used to Instil Fear in Sudan's Armed Conflict, 12 January 2024, [url](#), p. 1; Rights for Peace, Sudan Study on the status of and opportunities for reparations for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence, October 2023, [url](#), p. 17

⁷⁰⁰ Rights for Peace, Sudan Study on the status of and opportunities for reparations for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence, October 2023, [url](#), p. 17

⁷⁰¹ Rights for Peace, Sudan Study on the status of and opportunities for reparations for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence, October 2023, [url](#), pp. 17-20

⁷⁰² The Gender-Based Violence Area of Responsibility Sudan (GBV Sub-Sector Sudan), with UNFPA as lead agency on GBV in emergencies, is coordinating the humanitarian response to GBV for those in humanitarian need, including internally displaced populations (IDPs), within Sudan.

⁷⁰³ GBV Sub-Sector Sudan, Crisis Continues: Situation Brief Update, 16 June 2023, [url](#), p. 1

⁷⁰⁴ GBV Sub-Sector Sudan, Crisis Continues: Situation Brief Update, 16 June 2023, [url](#), p. 2

⁷⁰⁵ UNOCHA, Sudan Situation Report, 4 February 2024, [url](#), pp. 5, 8, 11



violations included the use of rape as a weapon of war,⁷⁰⁶ as also documented by various media outlets,⁷⁰⁷ including against teenage girls between 12 and 17 years old.⁷⁰⁸

Several studies, which surveyed women's situation in the period following the outbreak of the hostilities in April 2023, agreed in identifying a surge in the number of reported cases of GBV and SGBV across Sudan,⁷⁰⁹ including during women's flight, in transit areas or temporary shelters.⁷¹⁰ The UN Panel of Experts on Sudan reported 262 rape cases over the period April-August 2023.⁷¹¹ SIHA, an indigenous African women's rights network,⁷¹² was able to document and verify 117 instances of sexual assault in the period 15 April - 31 December 2023,⁷¹³ while it had received 96 confirmed cases of rape or gang rape in the period April-early October 2023,⁷¹⁴ which reportedly had raised to 180 a few weeks later.⁷¹⁵ Government sources, quoted by Insecurity Insight, reported 88 verified incidents of CRSV in the period April-July 2023,⁷¹⁶ which increased to 142 in mid-January 2024 as reported by Radio Dabanga.⁷¹⁷ CARE reported an imprecise number of rape cases based on qualitative information gathered across four states, Khartoum, Al Jazirah, East Darfur and South Darfur.⁷¹⁸ OHCHR received 58 credible reports of CRSV in the period 15 April – 15 December 2023.⁷¹⁹

However, sources also agreed that on the backdrop of the on-going hostilities, the historical underreporting of instances of GBV – see section [2.5.1 Sexual violence and conflict-related sexual violence in Sudan](#) for further details – was further exacerbated by various factors,⁷²⁰

⁷⁰⁶ UNOCHA, Sudan Situation Report, 4 February 2024, [url](#), p. 11; CARE, Rapid Gender Analysis, Sudan – Khartoum, Al Gezira, East Darfur, South Darfur, October 2023, [url](#), pp. 23; SIHA Network, Silent weapons, loudest wounds – Addressing the crisis of sexual violence in Sudan, 25 October 2023, [url](#), p. 7; ACJPS, SGBV: A Tool Used to Instil Fear in Sudan's Armed Conflict, 12 January 2024, [url](#), p. 1

⁷⁰⁷ Al Jazeera, 'Don't let the other soldiers watch': Rape as weapon in Sudan war, 14 August 2023, [url](#); The Telegraph, Sexual violence in Sudan conflict becomes as commonplace as the fighting, 10 January 2024, [url](#)

⁷⁰⁸ Save the Children, Sudan: Children as young as 12 raped and assaulted, as sexual violence rips through the country, 7 July 2023, [url](#); Darfur Follow-Ups, Children of war in Sudan...lost dreams and an unknown fate, 14 December 2023, [url](#)

⁷⁰⁹ UN WOMEN, Initial Rapid Gender Assessment, September 2023, [url](#), pp. 2, 25; CARE, Rapid Gender Analysis, Sudan – Khartoum, Al Gezira, East Darfur, South Darfur, October 2023, [url](#), pp. 6, 23-24; UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 65, 85; SIHA Network, Silent weapons, loudest wounds – Addressing the crisis of sexual violence in Sudan, 25 October 2023, [url](#), pp. 3-4, 7-8; UNHCR, Protection Brief Gender Based Violence, Sudan Situation, December 2023, [url](#), pp. 4-5

⁷¹⁰ UNHCR, Protection Brief Gender Based Violence, Sudan Situation, December 2023, [url](#), pp. 4-5; Insecurity Insight, Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Sudan, November 2023, [url](#), p. 2

⁷¹¹ UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 65;

⁷¹² SIHA Network, Our story, n.a., [url](#)

⁷¹³ Fikra for Studies and Development, Unbreakable – Sudanese women struggle against conflict related sexual violence amid the war, 8 March 2024, [url](#), p. 14

⁷¹⁴ SIHA Network, Silent weapons, loudest wounds – Addressing the crisis of sexual violence in Sudan, 25 October 2023, [url](#), p. 7

⁷¹⁵ Sudan Tribune, Sudan conflict fuels sexual violence against women, says SIHA, 1 February 2024, [url](#)

⁷¹⁶ Insecurity Insight, Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Sudan, November 2023, [url](#), p. 1

⁷¹⁷ Radio Dabanga, Sudan: Two new GBV cases in El Gezira, 18 January 2024, [url](#)

⁷¹⁸ CARE, Rapid Gender Analysis, Sudan – Khartoum, Al Gezira, East Darfur, South Darfur, October 2023, [url](#), pp. 8, 23-24

⁷¹⁹ OHCHR, Situation of human rights in the Sudan - Advance unedited version, A/HRC/55/29, 22 February 2024, [url](#), para. 46

⁷²⁰ Fikra, Unbreakable – Sudanese women struggle against conflict related sexual violence amid the war, 8 March 2024, [url](#), p. 20-25; CARE, Rapid Gender Analysis, Sudan – Khartoum, Al Gezira, East Darfur, South Darfur, October 2023, [url](#), p. 24



including limited communications and lack of connectivity,⁷²¹ lack of security,⁷²² targeting of reporting news outlets,⁷²³ fuel or electricity shortages,⁷²⁴ lack of documentation work in rural and remote contexts,⁷²⁵ fear of retribution in areas still controlled by ‘perpetrators’, notably in Darfur, breakdown of the health system.⁷²⁶ For instance, the Sudanese Unit for Combating Violence against Women (CVAW), a government unit, was quoted by various sources stating that the verified cases of rape might represent a tiny portion - around 2 % - of total cases.⁷²⁷ SIHA and Fikra, a Sudanese nonpartisan think-tank,⁷²⁸ expressed similar views at the end of January 2024,⁷²⁹ and beginning of March 2024 respectively.⁷³⁰

While all warring parties have committed violations and acts of sexual violence against women and girls, sources agreed that rape or gang rape committed by RSF and allied militias was particularly widespread.⁷³¹ According to Insecurity Insight, out of the 82 incidents recorded on the UNOCHA HDX Database in the period April – 30 September 2023,⁷³² RSF or affiliated forces were implicated in more than two-thirds of them.⁷³³ SIHA’s study indicated a similar percentage when stating that 73 % of all surveyed survivors pointed to the RSF as their ‘perpetrators’. According to OHCHR, the RSF were identified as perpetrators in 83 % of the

⁷²¹ SIHA Network, Silent weapons, loudest wounds – Addressing the crisis of sexual violence in Sudan, 25 October 2023, [url](#), p. 3; Insecurity Insight, Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Sudan, November 2023, [url](#), pp. 3, 8; UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 65

⁷²² Insecurity Insight, Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Sudan, November 2023, [url](#), p. 4; Fikra for Studies and Development, Unbreakable – Sudanese women struggle against conflict related sexual violence amid the war, 8 March 2024, [url](#), p. 20

⁷²³ Insecurity Insight, Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Sudan, November 2023, [url](#), p. 4

⁷²⁴ SIHA Network, Silent weapons, loudest wounds – Addressing the crisis of sexual violence in Sudan, 25 October 2023, [url](#), p. 3

⁷²⁵ Insecurity Insight, Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Sudan, November 2023, [url](#), p. 3

⁷²⁶ Fikra, Unbreakable – Sudanese women struggle against conflict related sexual violence amid the war, 8 March 2024, [url](#), p. 22

⁷²⁷ Radio Dabanga, Sudan: Two new GBV cases in El Gezira, 18 January 2024, [url](#); UNHCR, Sudan refugee’s emergency in Chad a protection crisis? – GBV perspective, November 2023, [url](#), p. 1; Al Jazeera, Sexual violence still a major threat as Sudan’s conflict grinds on, 6 December 2023, [url](#); Save the Children, Sudan: Children as young as 12 raped and assaulted, as sexual violence rips through the country, 7 July 2023, [url](#)

⁷²⁸ Fikra, About us, n.a, [url](#)

⁷²⁹ Sudan Tribune, Sudan conflict fuels sexual violence against women, says SIHA, 1 February 2024, [url](#)

⁷³⁰ Fikra, Unbreakable – Sudanese women struggle against conflict related sexual violence amid the war, 8 March 2024, [url](#), pp. 13-14, 27

⁷³¹ OHCHR, Situation of human rights in the Sudan - Advance unedited version, A/HRC/55/29, 22 February 2024, [url](#), para. 46; UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 65-67, 85; Fikra, Unbreakable – Sudanese women struggle against conflict related sexual violence amid the war, 8 March 2024, [url](#), pp. 23, 28; ACJPS, Sudan armed conflict: A war on women, 3 January 2024, [url](#), p. 1; Insecurity Insight, Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Sudan, November 2023, [url](#), pp. 1-2; SIHA Network, Silent weapons, loudest wounds – Addressing the crisis of sexual violence in Sudan, 25 October 2023, [url](#), pp. 4, 7; UNOHCHR, UN experts alarmed by reported widespread use of rape and sexual violence against women and girls by RSF in Sudan, 17 August 2023, [url](#); see also UNHCR, Protection Brief Gender Based Violence, Sudan Situation, December 2023, [url](#), p. 3

⁷³² UNOCHA, HDX - Sudan (SDN): Attacks on Aid Operations, Education, Health Care and IDP/Refugee Camps, and Conflict-related Sexual Violence (CRSV) and Explosive Weapons Incident Data, 17 November 2023, [url](#)

⁷³³ Insecurity Insight, Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Sudan, November 2023, [url](#), p. 7



incidents,⁷³⁴ according to Fikra in 84 % of cases.⁷³⁵ Most other cases involved ad-hoc Arab militia forces, according to Sudan expert Reeves.⁷³⁶

Sources agree that areas particularly affected by such violations were Khartoum and Darfur.⁷³⁷ Based on Insecurity Insight analysis, most CRSV incidents were gang rapes, ‘perpetrated by groups’ of combatants,⁷³⁸ as also noted by SIHA as the war progressed.⁷³⁹

According to several sources, women and girls were often raped inside their home, or while fleeing.⁷⁴⁰ Insecurity Insights indicated that with the April-2023 hostilities CRSV ‘has been brought into homes’, among others, with women and girls attacked in their residences in Khartoum, or during house-to-house searches in Darfur.⁷⁴¹ Based on their analysis, locations of reported CRSV incidents in the period April-September 2023 were: unspecified (40 %), inside home (27 %), outside home (23 %), under arrest/captivity (10 %).⁷⁴²

Within this context, the ethnic dimension of acts of sexual-gender based violence was reported by various sources,⁷⁴³ notably against Masalit women,⁷⁴⁴ and other non-Arab communities,⁷⁴⁵ who were reportedly ‘most likely to be sexually assaulted or gang-raped’.⁷⁴⁶ At the same time, SIHA reported about ethnically motivated violence at the hands of Masalit armed groups and addressed at ‘lighter-skinned’ Arab women.⁷⁴⁷

The GBV humanitarian Sub-Sector, in its situational update as from 29 November 2023, reported about: a) significant and long-lasting impact of GBV on physical and mental health -

⁷³⁴ OHCHR, Situation of human rights in the Sudan - Advance unedited version, A/HRC/55/29, 22 February 2024, [url](#), para. 46

⁷³⁵ Fikra, Unbreakable – Sudanese women struggle against conflict related sexual violence amid the war, 8 March 2024, [url](#), p. 28

⁷³⁶ Reeves, E., input from external review, 25 March 2024

⁷³⁷ CARE, Rapid Gender Analysis, Sudan – Khartoum, Al Gezira, East Darfur, South Darfur, October 2023, [url](#), pp. 23-24; SIHA Network, Silent weapons, loudest wounds – Addressing the crisis of sexual violence in Sudan, 25 October 2023, [url](#), p. 8; Insecurity Insight, Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Sudan, November 2023, [url](#), pp. 1-2, 4, 6

⁷³⁸ Insecurity Insight, Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Sudan, November 2023, [url](#), p. 9

⁷³⁹ SIHA Network, Silent weapons, loudest wounds – Addressing the crisis of sexual violence in Sudan, 25 October 2023, [url](#), p. 8

⁷⁴⁰ Fikra, Unbreakable – Sudanese women struggle against conflict related sexual violence amid the war, 8 March 2024, [url](#), pp. 27, 28; SIHA Network, Silent weapons, loudest wounds – Addressing the crisis of sexual violence in Sudan, 25 October 2023, [url](#), p. 8; Insecurity Insight, Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Sudan, November 2023, [url](#), p. 7

⁷⁴¹ Insecurity Insight, Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Sudan, November 2023, [url](#), pp. 2, 6

⁷⁴² Insecurity Insight, Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Sudan, November 2023, [url](#), p. 6

⁷⁴³ UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 65, 85; Sudan War Monitor, Minority women “abducted and held in degrading, slave-like conditions”, 3 November 2023, [url](#); CARE, Rapid Gender Analysis, Sudan – Khartoum, Al Gezira, East Darfur, South Darfur, October 2023, [url](#), p. 2; SIHA Network, Silent weapons, loudest wounds – Addressing the crisis of sexual violence in Sudan, 25 October 2023, [url](#), p. 4

⁷⁴⁴ UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 66, 94; SIHA Network, Silent weapons, loudest wounds – Addressing the crisis of sexual violence in Sudan, 25 October 2023, [url](#), pp. 4, 7; Insecurity Insight, Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Sudan, November 2023, [url](#), pp. 8-9

⁷⁴⁵ UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 65, 85; CARE, Rapid Gender Analysis, Sudan – Khartoum, Al Gezira, East Darfur, South Darfur, October 2023, [url](#), p. 24; Insecurity Insight, Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Sudan, November 2023, [url](#), p. 9

⁷⁴⁶ CARE, Rapid Gender Analysis, Sudan – Khartoum, Al Gezira, East Darfur, South Darfur, October 2023, [url](#), p. 24

⁷⁴⁷ SIHA Network, Silent weapons, loudest wounds – Addressing the crisis of sexual violence in Sudan, 25 October 2023, [url](#), p. 6



including injury, unintended pregnancy and pregnancy complications, including HIV, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder and death; b) increased number of unmarried pregnant women - as the result of rape - displaced from conflict-affected states and seeking GBV and sexual reproductive health services at IDP sites; c) increased cases of child, early and forced marriage; d) increased risks of sexual exploitation and trafficking due to the low response capacity of public services and economic hardships.⁷⁴⁸ Among the complications, Sudan expert Reeves mentioned fistulas as well.⁷⁴⁹

(a) Reporting from Darfur

According to Insecurity Insight's mapping, in the period 15 April – 30 September 2023 CRSV was most frequently reported from Khartoum City and West Darfur, and to a lesser extent from North Darfur (El Fasher), South Darfur (Nyala), and South Kordofan.⁷⁵⁰ However, underreporting from these and other areas was maybe due to lower connectivity and poorer telecommunications infrastructure.⁷⁵¹ Moreover, according to Sudan expert Reeves, other factors contributed to substantial underreporting issues from these areas, such as lack of reporting presence and 'regional government indifference'.⁷⁵²

ACJPS documented or reported about instances of CRSV in various Darfur states. In South Darfur, in the period 15 April– 31 July 2023, they documented the sexual abuse of at least 22 women in areas under the control of RSF.⁷⁵³ On 29 November 2023,⁷⁵⁴ this figure had raised to 43 victims of gang rape, in the period May-August 2023.⁷⁵⁵ Still in South Darfur, ACJPS documented the abduction and the sexual violation of fourteen female IDPs, including children, in the period May-November 2023.⁷⁵⁶ Other cases of abductions and sexual abuse were reported from Nyala, in South Darfur until December 2023.⁷⁵⁷ In West Darfur, ACJPS documented an incident where seven university girls were abducted by the Sudanese Alliance Forces and sexually violated for 14 days in El Geneina, in May-June 2023.⁷⁵⁸ In Central Darfur, ACJPS documented 51 incidents of sexual violence against women and girls in Zalingei and Garsilla localities, between May and November 2023.⁷⁵⁹ In North Darfur, Team Zamzam, which is engaged, among others, with responding to sexual violence at the local Zamzam IDP

⁷⁴⁸ GBV Sub-Sector Sudan, Sudan - The Current Context and Concerning GBV Trends, 6 December 2023, [url](#), pp. 1-2

⁷⁴⁹ Reeves, E., input from external review, 25 March 2024

⁷⁵⁰ Insecurity Insight, Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Sudan, November 2023, [url](#), pp. 1, 6

⁷⁵¹ Insecurity Insight, Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Sudan, November 2023, [url](#), p. 6; SIHA Network, Silent weapons, loudest wounds – Addressing the crisis of sexual violence in Sudan, 25 October 2023, [url](#), p. 3; UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 65; see also Rights for Peace, Sudan Study on the status of and opportunities for reparations for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence, October 2023, [url](#), p. 13;

⁷⁵² Reeves, E., input from external review, 25 March 2024

⁷⁵³ ACJPS, Sudan: A call for justice and accountability for 69 victims of rape and abductions in South Darfur, 12 January 2024, [url](#), p. 3

⁷⁵⁴ ACJPS, Fourteen female IDPs including children sexually violated in South Darfur, 3 January 2024, [url](#), p. 2

⁷⁵⁵ ACJPS, Sudan: A call for justice and accountability for 69 victims of rape and abductions in South Darfur, 12 January 2024, [url](#), pp. 1, 3

⁷⁵⁶ ACJPS, Fourteen female IDPs including children sexually violated in South Darfur, 3 January 2024, [url](#), pp. 1-2

⁷⁵⁷ ACJPS, Sudan armed conflict: A war on women, 3 January 2024, [url](#), pp. 1-2

⁷⁵⁸ ACJPS, West Darfur: Justice for seven university girls abducted and subjected to sexual slavery in Elgenina, 12 January 2024, [url](#), pp. 1-2

⁷⁵⁹ ACJPS, Central Darfur: 51 women and girls sexually abused in Garsilla and Zalingi towns, 12 January 2024, [url](#), pp. 1-2



camp, reported about several recent instances of sexual violence ‘perpetrated’ by the RSF and Janjaweed militias against women and girls on the outskirts of the camp.⁷⁶⁰

Sudan expert Reeves noted however that ‘there are simply no data for areas of Darfur without reporting presence, e.g. around Zamzam IDP camp in North Darfur, most of Central Darfur, and most of South Darfur.’⁷⁶¹

(b) Reporting from Wad Madani and Al Jazirah state

In January 2024, the SIHA network published a report documenting several cases of sexual violence and systematic use of rape at the hands of the RSF in Wad Madani and other locations in Al Jazirah state.⁷⁶² Radio Dabanga, while reporting on other rape cases that occurred in January 2024, quoted the CVAW expressing ‘grave concern about the expansion of RSF control in Al Jazira, which it considered “a direct threat to women and girls who are unable to leave the state, especially given the collapse of the health system”’.⁷⁶³

(c) Women in IDP sites

As mentioned in section [1.1.5\(a\) IDPs and refugees on the move](#), at the beginning of February 2024, based on IOM DTM Data, while the vast majority of recently displaced IDPs were sheltered by hosting communities (67 %), many found shelter in various types of IDP sites: IDP ‘camps’ (6 %), ‘open area informal settlements’ (6 %), ‘improvised/critical shelters’ (1 %).⁷⁶⁴

Most of the newly displaced that were sheltered in ‘regular’ IDP camps - reportedly 72 100 households as of 2 February 2024 - were located in Darfur, or 55 318 households,⁷⁶⁵ with household size close to 7 on average.⁷⁶⁶ The remaining 16 782 households sheltered in ‘regular’ IDP camps were reportedly located in White Nile state instead.⁷⁶⁷

At the same time, still as of 2 February 2024, ‘Open Area Informal Settlements’ accounted for 34 % of IDP shelters for newly displaced people in Central Darfur, 24 % in North Darfur, and 11 % in South Kordofan.⁷⁶⁸ Schools or other public buildings instead accounted for 40 % of the newly displaced IDP shelters in West Darfur, 35 % in South Darfur, 18 % in Central Darfur, 15 % in Al Jazirah, 13 % in East Darfur, 10 % in North Darfur, and 10 % in West Kordofan.⁷⁶⁹

⁷⁶⁰ Reeves, E., Project Update, January 28, 2024: Responding to Sexual Violence in Darfur, 28 January 2024, [url](#); Reeves, E., Project Update, December 28, 2023: Responding to Sexual Violence in Darfur, 28 December 2023, [url](#); Reeves, E., Project Update, November 29, 2023: Responding to Sexual Violence in Darfur, 28 November 2023, [url](#); Reeves, E., ANNEX to November 27, 2023 Update: Responding to Sexual Violence in Darfur, 27 November 2023, [url](#); Reeves, E., Archive – Project Update: Responding to Sexual Violence in Darfur, vv issues, 2024-2023, [url](#)

⁷⁶¹ Reeves, E., input from external review, 25 March 2024

⁷⁶² SIHA Network, Gezira under RSF Control - Report on the period between December 19, 2023 - January 10, 2024, January 2024, [url](#), pp. 5-6

⁷⁶³ Radio Dabanga, Sudan: Two new GBV cases in El Gezira, 18 January 2024, [url](#)

⁷⁶⁴ IOM, DTM, Weekly Displacement Snapshot no. 19, 6 February 2024, [url](#), p. 3

⁷⁶⁵ IOM, DTM, Weekly Displacement Snapshot no. 19, 6 February 2024, [url](#), p. 3

⁷⁶⁶ Reeves, E., email exchange, 28 March 2024

⁷⁶⁷ IOM, DTM, Weekly Displacement Snapshot no. 19, 6 February 2024, [url](#), p. 3

⁷⁶⁸ IOM, DTM, Weekly Displacement Snapshot no. 19, 6 February 2024, [url](#), p. 3

⁷⁶⁹ IOM, DTM, Weekly Displacement Snapshot no. 19, 6 February 2024, [url](#), p. 3



For a full understanding of this rapidly growing IDP population, one must consider the number of people hosted in various IDP sites and camps prior to the outbreak of the war in 2023. Moreover, as noted by Sudan expert Reeves, data pertaining to IDP populations do not necessarily cohere, with different UN agencies often offering different figures or estimates.⁷⁷⁰

Against this overview on shelter distribution, IOM reported that as of 24 January 2024, 54 % of the newly displaced population in Sudan was female,⁷⁷¹ which Sudan expert Reeves considers ‘almost certainly a low figure’.⁷⁷² On this same point, the GBV Sub-Cluster indicated already in June 2023 that in multiple states and localities the majority of IDPs were women and girls.⁷⁷³

Within this context, women on the move and in transition points,⁷⁷⁴ and more in general IDP women and girls in IDP sites, were most vulnerable to GBV threats and exploitation.⁷⁷⁵ The UN Panel of Experts reported that ‘in Nyala, almost all the cases of sexual violence took place in IDP camps and in neighbourhoods inhabited by African communities, while similar patterns were observed in Zalingei and El Fasher’.⁷⁷⁶ ACJPS reported several instances where IDP women and girls were the primary target of sexual violence and abuse in various locations across Darfur.⁷⁷⁷ Team Zamzam reported on instances of sexual violence taking place in the vicinity of Zamzam camp in North Darfur and the ‘grim constant’ near that or other camps: ‘the threat of brutal sexual violence’.⁷⁷⁸

Moreover, the GBV Sub-Sector reported that ‘not all gathering sites [were] supported or known, leaving some of those most in need without humanitarian response services’.⁷⁷⁹ Additionally, the same Sub-Sector reported that, where they existed, ‘humanitarian responses’ were ‘not safe’ for women and girls, for reasons of ‘inadequate lighting, poor layout of shelters, shelter overcrowding, lack of privacy, and poor representation of women and girls in decision-making mechanisms’,⁷⁸⁰ as well as for lack of properly trained service providers.⁷⁸¹ Further exacerbating this situation, many service providers and implementing partners were forced to close their activities as a consequence of lootings and destructions of offices and

⁷⁷⁰ Reeves, E., email exchange, 28 March 2024

⁷⁷¹ IOM, DTM, Monthly Displacement Overview (05), 2 February 2024, [url](#), p. 3

⁷⁷² Reeves, E., input from external review, 25 March 2024

⁷⁷³ GBV Sub-Sector Sudan, Crisis Continues: Situation Brief Update, 16 June 2023, [url](#), p. 2

⁷⁷⁴ UN WOMEN, Initial Rapid Gender Assessment, September 2023, [url](#), pp. 10, 20

⁷⁷⁵ UN WOMEN, Initial Rapid Gender Assessment, September 2023, [url](#), pp. 5, 8, 20, 24-25; CARE, Rapid Gender Analysis, Sudan – Khartoum, Al Gezira, East Darfur, South Darfur, October 2023, [url](#), p. 24; GBV Sub-Sector Sudan, Crisis Continues: Situation Brief Update, 16 June 2023, [url](#), p. 2; see also UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 66

⁷⁷⁶ UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 66, see also para. 58-59

⁷⁷⁷ ACJPS, Fourteen female IDPs including children sexually violated in South Darfur, 3 January 2024, [url](#), pp. 1-2; ACJPS, Central Darfur: 51 women and girls sexually abused in Garsilla and Zalingi towns, 12 January 2024, [url](#), pp. 1-2; ACJPS, Sudan: A call for justice and accountability for 69 victims of rape and abductions in South Darfur, 12 January 2024, [url](#), p. 2; ACJPS, Sudan armed conflict: A war on women, 3 January 2024, [url](#), p. 2

⁷⁷⁸ Reeves, E., Project Update, December 28, 2023: Responding to Sexual Violence in Darfur, 28 December 2023, [url](#)

⁷⁷⁹ GBV Sub-Sector Sudan, Sudan - The Current Context and Concerning GBV Trends, 6 December 2023, [url](#), p. 1

⁷⁸⁰ GBV Sub-Sector Sudan, Crisis Continues: Situation Brief Update, 16 June 2023, [url](#), p. 2

⁷⁸¹ GBV Sub-Sector Sudan, Sudan - The Current Context and Concerning GBV Trends, 6 December 2023, [url](#), p. 1



response spaces, including Women and Girls Safe Spaces (WGSS), confidential corners, and hospitals.⁷⁸²

(d) Intimate partner and domestic violence

Risks of intimate partner and domestic violence were also noted to be on the rise on the backdrop of the on-going hostilities.⁷⁸³ The GBV Sub-Sector, in its situational update from November 2023 noted that ‘survivors are reporting an intensification of [Intimate Partner Violence], sharing that psychological problems among men have increased in IDP sites’.⁷⁸⁴

2.5.3. Kidnapping, abduction, exploitation, slavery, disappearances, and other violations

Reports indicate that along with rape and gang rape, women and girls have been exposed to others risks or a combination of them against the backdrop of the on-going hostilities, including kidnapping for ransom,⁷⁸⁵ abductions,⁷⁸⁶ trafficking,⁷⁸⁷ sexual exploitation, forced marriages - reportedly to RSF soldiers - slavery and sexual slavery.⁷⁸⁸

UN sources, quoted by The Telegraph at the beginning of January 2024, recorded ‘sightings of “chained up women and girls being taken away in pickup trucks and cars”’, detained by RSF in inhuman or degrading conditions, subject to sexual slavery, enforced disappearances and forced marriages.⁷⁸⁹ Corroborating this, ACJPS conducted field research in Darfur over a three-month period, May-July 2023, on sexual slavery. They found out that the RSF practice of stealing cars was linked to the kidnapping of women and girls in Khartoum, and their transportation to Darfur, often ‘tied to chains’ and concealed by ‘cardboard boxes’. The documented victims, subject to detention, sexual exploitation, and forced prostitution, were in the dozens.⁷⁹⁰ Still in Darfur, ACJPS documented several instances of women abductions, including of at least 26 cases in South Darfur perpetuated by the RSF, armed militias, and unknown robbers.⁷⁹¹

⁷⁸² GBV Sub-Sector Sudan, Sudan - The Current Context and Concerning GBV Trends, 6 December 2023, [url](#), p. 1

⁷⁸³ GBV Sub-Sector Sudan, Sudan - The Current Context and Concerning GBV Trends, 6 December 2023, [url](#), p. 2; GBV Sub-Sector Sudan, Crisis Continues: Situation Brief Update, 16 June 2023, [url](#), p. 2; UN WOMEN, Initial Rapid Gender Assessment, September 2023, [url](#), p. 24; CARE, Rapid Gender Analysis, Sudan – Khartoum, Al Gezira, East Darfur, South Darfur, October 2023, [url](#), pp. 6, 23

⁷⁸⁴ GBV Sub-Sector Sudan, Sudan - The Current Context and Concerning GBV Trends, 6 December 2023, [url](#), p. 2

⁷⁸⁵ CARE, Rapid Gender Analysis, Sudan – Khartoum, Al Gezira, East Darfur, South Darfur, October 2023, [url](#), p. 24; Insecurity Insight, Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Sudan, November 2023, [url](#), p. 7;

⁷⁸⁶ Insecurity Insight, Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Sudan, November 2023, [url](#), p. 7; CARE, Rapid Gender Analysis, Sudan – Khartoum, Al Gezira, East Darfur, South Darfur, October 2023, [url](#), p. 24; SIHA Network, Silent weapons, loudest wounds – Addressing the crisis of sexual violence in Sudan, 25 October 2023, [url](#), pp. 9-10

⁷⁸⁷ CARE, Rapid Gender Analysis, Sudan – Khartoum, Al Gezira, East Darfur, South Darfur, October 2023, [url](#), p. 24

⁷⁸⁸ SIHA Network, Silent weapons, loudest wounds – Addressing the crisis of sexual violence in Sudan, 25 October 2023, [url](#), pp. 8-10

⁷⁸⁹ The Telegraph, Sexual violence in Sudan conflict becomes as commonplace as the fighting, 10 January 2024, [url](#)

⁷⁹⁰ ACJPS, Sexual Slavery in Khor Jahannam, 13 January 2024, [url](#), pp. 5-8

⁷⁹¹ ACJPS, Sudan: A call for justice and accountability for 69 victims of rape and abductions in South Darfur, 12 January 2024, [url](#), p. 1



In terms of disappearances, data are often drawn from the Sudanese Group for Victims of Enforced Disappearance, a grass-root initiative that keeps track of such instances.⁷⁹² SIHA Network, while quoting these data, spoke about 637 individuals whose disappearance was confirmed in the period April-early September 2023, among which there were 40 ‘still missing’ women and girls.⁷⁹³ A few months later, in December 2023, these figures had raised to 842 individuals, of which 48 women confirmed as forcibly disappeared.⁷⁹⁴ Still SIHA Network, at the end of January 2024, spoke about over 104 cases of missing women and girls, and the ‘disturbing pattern’ that ‘a significant increase in disappearances coincides with the presence of the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in a particular area’.⁷⁹⁵

Sudan War Monitor indicated that victims – Masalit and Nuba, among others - are often targeted on an ‘ethnic basis’ and in line with ‘the Arab supremacist racial beliefs of many rank-and-file [RSF] fighters’.⁷⁹⁶

2.6. Child soldiers

As reported by various sources, on 16 October 2023, the UN Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, Siobhán Mullally, expressed her concerns about the heightened risk of child recruitment in Sudan since the outbreak of the war between the SAF and the RSF. According to her ‘unaccompanied children and children from poor families [were] allegedly targeted by RSF in the outskirts of Khartoum, as well as in Darfur and West Kordofan, for recruitment into combat roles’.⁷⁹⁷

Similar reports had emerged already earlier, on occasion of the battle for Al Shajara in Khartoum, in August 2023.⁷⁹⁸ As indicated by Radio Dabanga, while quoting a source close to prominent researcher Eric Reeves, “among the dead, there were many children killed fighting with the RSF”.⁷⁹⁹ The same source reported about the Darfur Bar Association releasing a statement to express ‘grave concerns about the presence of minors among army fighters in military operations’ at both SAF and RSF posts.⁸⁰⁰

⁷⁹² ACJPS, Sexual Slavery in Khor Jahannam, 13 January 2024, [url](#), pp. 4-5; SIHA Network, Silent weapons, loudest wounds – Addressing the crisis of sexual violence in Sudan, 25 October 2023, [url](#), pp. 9-10

⁷⁹³ SIHA Network, Silent weapons, loudest wounds – Addressing the crisis of sexual violence in Sudan, 25 October 2023, [url](#), pp. 9-10

⁷⁹⁴ SIHA Network, Sudan women and girls at ongoing risk of abduction and enforced disappearance, 23 January 2023, [url](#)

⁷⁹⁵ Sudan Tribune, Regional group sounds alarm over surge in women-enforced disappearances in Sudan, 28 January 2024, [url](#)

⁷⁹⁶ Sudan War Monitor, Minority women “abducted and held in degrading, slave-like conditions”, 3 November 2023, [url](#)

⁷⁹⁷ OHCHR, Sudan: UN expert warns of child recruitment by armed forces, 16 October 2023, [url](#); AA, UN expert concerned over child recruitment by armed groups in Sudan, 16 October 2023, [url](#); ADF, Witnesses Report Use of Child Soldiers in Sudan’s Conflict, 31 October 2023, [url](#); Radio Dabanga, UN expert warns of child recruitment by armed groups in Sudan, 18 October 2023, [url](#)

⁷⁹⁸ Sudan War Monitor, RSF breach the outer defenses of Armored Corps, 21 August 2023, [url](#); Radio Dabanga, Child soldiers reported in Sudan battles, 22 August 2023, [url](#)

⁷⁹⁹ Radio Dabanga, Child soldiers reported in Sudan battles, 22 August 2023, [url](#)

⁸⁰⁰ Radio Dabanga, Child soldiers reported in Sudan battles, 22 August 2023, [url](#)



An article appeared on Arab News on 1 September 2023, indicated that ‘the scale of recruitment of child soldiers in Sudan is alarming’ and that ‘stories from across various regions reveal a systematic pattern of exploitation transcending both tribal lines and political affiliations’. The same article, that was based on expert and witness testimonies, indicated how children were often forcibly recruited against their will or lured into the conflict with promises of material or monetary gain through a mix of narratives of ‘coercion, fear, and manipulation’.⁸⁰¹ As pointed out in the revised Humanitarian Response Plan for 2024, the unprecedented number of displaced school-aged children coupled with the closure of the school system and the limited access to social services, had further exacerbated children’s vulnerability to recruitment and association with armed groups.⁸⁰²

Various UN reports reported on recruitment and use of children, among other violations, during the reference period.⁸⁰³ These included: a) reports of recruitment at the hands of both warring parties, notably in Darfur, in recruitment camps or centres in various cities, including El Fasher, Zalingei and Nyala;⁸⁰⁴ b) the verification of the recruitment of 13 boys by the RSF in Khartoum and South Darfur in the period May-August 2023;⁸⁰⁵ c) the release from detention of 30 boys that had been used by the RSF as combatants, in the period August-October 2023;⁸⁰⁶ d) unverified reports of abduction of 25 children by warring parties in West Darfur and the Kordofans in early June 2023.⁸⁰⁷

ACJPS, while attributing the forced recruitment of children to both the SAF, and the paramilitary RSF, together with their allied militia,⁸⁰⁸ put forward in one of its reporting on the issue that the most affected areas were the marginalized areas in Darfur and the Kordofans.⁸⁰⁹

Notably on Darfur, the ACJPS documented various instances of child recruitment over the reference period: at the beginning of November 2023, an incident where 66 children were arrested in West Darfur by the RSF amidst allegations of recruitment of child soldiers by the SAF: allegedly the children were coerced and manipulated into accusing SAF of recruiting them;⁸¹⁰ in November 2023, recruitment of child soldiers by RSF in Central Darfur state facilitated by the native administration members affiliated with RSF, a practice that had already

⁸⁰¹ Arab News, Sudan conflict poses threat of long-term societal harm as recruitment of child soldiers surges, 1 September 2023, [url](#)

⁸⁰² UNOCHA, Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan Sudan, 21 December 2023, [url](#), pp. 7, 37, 49

⁸⁰³ UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 68; UNSG, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, S/2023/644, 31 August 2023, [url](#), para. 36; UNSG, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, S/2023/861, 13 November 2023, [url](#), para. 33, 58; UNHCR, Protection Brief Darfur Region, October 2023, [url](#), p. 11; UNHCR, Protection Brief Sudan, July 2023, [url](#), p. 7; UNHCR, Protection Brief Sudan, June 2023, [url](#), p. 8

⁸⁰⁴ UNSC, Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan, S/2024/65, 15 January 2024, [url](#), para. 68

⁸⁰⁵ UNSG, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, S/2023/644, 31 August 2023, [url](#), para. 36

⁸⁰⁶ UNSG, Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan, S/2023/861, 13 November 2023, [url](#), para. 33, 58

⁸⁰⁷ UNHCR, Protection Brief Sudan, July 2023, [url](#), p. 7

⁸⁰⁸ ACJPS, Sudan: Sixty-six children detained and used as pawns by RSF against SAF, 12 January 2024, [url](#), p. 1;

ACJPS, Zalingi, Central Darfur: Urgent call to RSF to end the recruitment of child soldiers, 12 January 2024, [url](#), p. 1;

ACJPS, Stolen innocence: Children forcefully recruited into armed conflict in Sudan, 11 January 2024, [url](#), p. 1

⁸⁰⁹ ACJPS, Stolen innocence: Children forcefully recruited into armed conflict in Sudan, 11 January 2024, [url](#), p. 1

⁸¹⁰ ACJPS, Sudan: Sixty-six children detained and used as pawns by RSF against SAF, 12 January 2024, [url](#), p. 1



started in May 2023;⁸¹¹ other instances documented in South Darfur state involving at least 20 children recruited by the RSF;⁸¹² presence of children in the conflict have been cited in Division 15 in Zalingei in Central Darfur, Division 21 in Ardamata in West Darfur, and Division 20 El Daein in East Darfur, among other states: most of these children had been recruited in South Darfur, starting from June 2023, at the hands of RSF officers and with the help of community leaders, who were paid between 250 000 and 400 000 Sudanese Pounds (approximately between 232 and 357 USD) per child.⁸¹³

At the beginning of February 2024, on the backdrop of the renewed heavy fighting in El Fasher, Darfur, UN Sudan received reports of large-scale recruitment of children between 11 and 17 years of age into the ranks of the warring parties and other armed groups in the city.⁸¹⁴

Reporting on Al Jazirah, a CNN investigation published in March 2024, found that in the previous three months almost 700 men and 65 children had been forcibly recruited by the RSF in the Al Jazirah state alone. The coercive methods employed by the RSF included 'intimidation, torture, summary execution and the withholding of food and medical aid'.⁸¹⁵

For further information on child recruitment in the context of 'mass mobilisation' see section [1.1.3\(e\) Mass mobilisation and forced recruitment](#).

⁸¹¹ ACJPS, Zalingi, Central Darfur: Urgent call to RSF to end the recruitment of child soldiers, 12 January 2024, [url](#), p. 1

⁸¹² ACJPS, Stolen innocence: Children forcefully recruited into armed conflict in Sudan, 11 January 2024, [url](#), p. 1

⁸¹³ ACJPS, Sudan: The continued use of child soldiers in the armed conflict in South Darfur, 3 January 2024, [url](#), p. 1

⁸¹⁴ Harward, T., [@tobyharward, X] posted on 3 February 2024, [url](#)

⁸¹⁵ CNN, 'Enlist or die': Fear, looming famine and a deadly ultimatum swell the ranks of Sudan's paramilitary forces, 19 March 2024, [url](#)



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Annex 2: Terms of Reference

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