



Home Office

Country Policy and Information Note

Sudan: Security Situation

Version 2.0

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Executive summary

On 15 April 2023, following weeks of tensions, fighting broke out between the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF), led by Lieutenant General Abdelfattah al-Burhan, and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), a paramilitary force led by Mohamed 'Hemedti' Hamdan Dagalo, in multiple cities across the country. Despite attempts by international actors to broker ceasefires, the fighting continues.

Fighting has been reported in all of Sudan's 18 States, the nature and severity of which varies. Overall, significant clashes were reported in Khartoum, Al Jazirah, North Darfur, South Darfur, Sennar, Kordofan region, and White Nile. River Nile, Blue Nile, East and West Darfur reported minimal political violence while Gedaref, Red Sea, Kassala and Northern reported insignificant number incidents of political violence suggesting relative stability in these areas.

Estimates of fatalities from the conflict vary. One source reported 30,000 direct fatalities while another estimated 61,202 all-cause deaths with 26,024 due to intentional injuries in Khartoum state alone. The US envoy on Sudan said in May 2024 that up to 150,000 people may have died, without providing information how this figure was arrived at. Some of the violence has been ethnically motivated, there has been a resurgence of conflict related sexual violence and children have been the subject of grave violations. Widespread arrests and detentions of civilians have been documented, an estimated 8.8 million people have been displaced internally and 3.3 million externally as of 31 December 2024 and civilian infrastructure including water, electricity installations, homes, schools, health, and agricultural production have been destroyed.

In general, at present:

- The level of indiscriminate violence in Khartoum and its hinterlands, Darfur, Kordofan, Al Jazira, Sennar and White Nile is such a high level to mean that, within the meaning of paragraphs 339C and 339CA(iv) of the Immigration Rules, there are substantial grounds for believing there is a real risk of serious harm solely by being present there.
- The level of indiscriminate violence in Kassala, Red Sea, Northern, Blue Nile, Gedaref and River Nile, is not at such a level to mean that there is a general risk of serious harm by being present there.

The situation in Sudan remains volatile and the intensity and spread of the conflict prone to change. Even where there is not in general a real risk of serious harm due to indiscriminate violence, a person may still face a real risk.

Internal relocation to areas where there is not a generalised risk of serious harm may be possible in some circumstances. Travel by road is severely affected by fighting and numerous checkpoints. Air travel is possible through Port Sudan but Khartoum international airport remains closed.

All cases must be considered on their individual facts, with the onus on the person to demonstrate they face persecution or serious harm.

Where a claim is refused, it is unlikely to be certifiable as 'clearly unfounded' under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002.

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Assessment

Section updated: 16 January 2025

About the assessment

This section considers the evidence relevant to this note – that is the [country information](#), refugee/human rights laws and policies, and applicable caselaw – and provides an assessment of whether, **in general**:

- the security situation is such that there are substantial grounds for believing there is a real risk of serious harm because there exists a serious and individual threat to a civilian’s life or person by reason of indiscriminate violence in a situation of international or internal armed conflict as within [paragraphs 339C and 339CA\(iv\) of the Immigration Rules](#)
- internal relocation is possible to avoid persecution/serious harm.
- if a claim is refused, it is likely to be certified as ‘clearly unfounded’ under [section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002](#).

Decision makers **must**, however, consider all claims on an individual basis, taking into account each case’s specific facts.

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1. Material facts, credibility and other checks/referrals

1.1 Credibility

- 1.1.1 For information on assessing credibility, see the instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#)
- 1.1.2 Decision makers must also check if there has been a previous application for a UK visa or another form of leave. Asylum applications matched to visas should be investigated prior to the asylum interview (see the [Asylum Instruction on Visa Matches, Asylum Claims from UK Visa Applicants](#)).
- 1.1.3 Decision makers must also consider making an international biometric data-sharing check (see [Biometric data-sharing process \(Migration 5 biometric data-sharing process\)](#)).
- 1.1.4 In cases where there are doubts surrounding a person’s claimed place of origin, decision makers should also consider language analysis testing, where available (see the [Asylum Instruction on Language Analysis](#)).

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1.2 Exclusion

- 1.2.1 The 2 main conflict parties, the Sudanese Armed Forces and Rapid Support Forces, and their allies have been responsible for serious human rights violations and abuses some of which may amount to crimes against humanity and/or war crimes. Decision makers must consider whether there are serious reasons for considering whether one (or more) of the exclusion clauses is applicable. Each case must be considered on its individual facts.
- 1.2.2 If the person is excluded from the Refugee Convention, they will also be excluded from a grant of humanitarian protection (which has a wider range of exclusions than refugee status).
- 1.2.3 For guidance on exclusion and restricted leave, see the Asylum Instruction on [Exclusion under Articles 1F and 33\(2\) of the Refugee Convention](#), [Humanitarian Protection](#) and the instruction on [Restricted Leave](#).

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2. Convention reason(s)

- 2.1.1 A state of civil instability and/or where law and order has broken down, which might exist in some places outside of government control, do not of themselves give rise to a well-founded fear of persecution for a Refugee Convention reason.
- 2.1.2 In the absence of a link to one of the 5 Refugee Convention grounds necessary to be recognised as a refugee, the question to address is whether the person will face a real risk of serious harm in order to qualify for Humanitarian Protection (HP).
- 2.1.3 However, before considering whether a person requires protection because of the general security situation, decision makers must consider if the person faces persecution for a Refugee Convention reason. Where the person qualifies for protection under the Refugee Convention, decision makers do not need to consider if there are substantial grounds for believing the person faces a real risk of serious harm meriting a grant of HP.
- 2.1.4 For further guidance on the 5 Refugee Convention grounds, see the Asylum Instruction, [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

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3. Risk

- 3.1.1 The armed conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF), which began on 15 April 2023,

continues across Sudan. The situation varies significantly by region and within regions. In general:

- The level of indiscriminate violence in Khartoum and its hinterlands, Darfur, Kordofan, Al Jazira, Sennar and White Nile is such a high level to mean that, within the meaning of paragraphs 339C and 339CA(iv) of the Immigration Rules, there are substantial grounds for believing there is a real risk of serious harm solely by being present there.
- The level of indiscriminate violence in Kassala, Red Sea, Northern, Blue Nile, Gedaref and River Nile, is not at such a level to mean that there is a general risk of serious harm by being present there.

- 3.1.2 The situation in Sudan remains volatile and the intensity and spread of the conflict may change. Each case will need to be considered on its facts.
- 3.1.3 Even where there is not in general a real risk of serious harm by reason of indiscriminate violence in a situation of armed conflict, decision makers must consider whether there are particular factors relevant to the person's circumstances which might nevertheless place them at risk. The more a person is able to show that they are specifically affected by factors particular to their personal circumstances, the lower the level of indiscriminate violence required for them to be at a real risk of serious harm.
- 3.1.4 Paragraphs 339C and 339CA (iv) of the Immigration Rules only apply to civilians who must be non-combatants. This could include former combatants who have genuinely and permanently renounced armed activity.
- 3.1.5 On 15 April 2023, longstanding tensions between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), commanded by General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), led by former Janjaweed leader Lieutenant General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, also known as Hemedti, escalated into armed conflict. Initially the fighting was centred on Khartoum, Omdurman, Bahri, Central Darfur and West Darfur but has spread to encompass all of the Darfur region, Al Jazirah, Blue Nile, Kordofan and Sennar (see [Geographic scope of the violence](#)).
- 3.1.6 Repeated attempts to broker ceasefires have failed and hostilities continue (see [Ceasefires](#)).
- 3.1.7 Military control is divided between the SAF, RSF, and up to 70 other militia and armed groups, but is shifting as the combatants battle for outright dominance. In broad terms:
- the SAF controls eastern and northern parts of the country including River Nile, Northern, Gedaref, Kassala, and Red Sea states. It also controls parts of Khartoum, Omdurman and Umm Bada, Sennar, Kordofan and El Fasher, the capital of North Darfur.
 - The RSF control western, southern and central Sudan, including the Darfur region (except El Fasher), most of Khartoum, portions of Omdurman and Umm Bada, most of Al Jazira and Sennar, and parts of Blue Nile, South Kordofan and North Kordofan.
 - The Sudanese People's Liberation Army-North (SPLA-N) rebel group controls large parts of the Nuba Mountains region in South Kordofan.

- The ‘Joint Force’ of non-Arab Darfuri rebel groups that include the Sudan Liberation Army Minni Minawi faction (SPLA -MM), the Justice and Equality Movement Jibril Ibrahim faction (JEM) and other rebel groups which have allied themselves with the SAF control northern parts of Darfur including El-Fasher (see [Geographic scope of the conflict](#) and [Territorial control](#)).
- 3.1.8 However, the RSF and to a lesser extent the SAF are not coherent and do not exercise full control over their forces and often rely upon or ally themselves with other armed groups. The motives of the armed groups may vary: the Economist described the RSF ‘as a sprawling network of business interests underwritten by plunder’ (see [Protagonists](#)).
- 3.1.9 Both SAF and RSF have used explosive weapons in civilian areas across Sudan, indiscriminately shelled, and in the case of SAF, used airstrikes on civilian neighbourhoods and against essential infrastructure. Both parties are reported to have also targeted civilians with the RSF accused of perpetuating massacres against civilians. Additionally, civilians have been caught in the crossfire of battles (see [Civilian deaths](#)). Sources reported some of the violence has been ethnically motivated (see [Ethnically motivated violence](#)), a resurgence of conflict related sexual violence primary targeting women and girls (see [Conflict-related sexual violence](#)).
- 3.1.10 Accurate and reliable information about the scale and extent of violence, and the number of casualties is limited given restrictions on reporting by media or other organisations, while existing information about, for example the size and location of populations, is often poor quality. However, several sources have tried to document the number of violent events in the conflict and estimate its impact on civilians. The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED), which documents reported information about organised violence events which include battles, remote violence/explosions and violence against recorded 9,454 organised violence events in Sudan’s 18 states (excluding Abyei special Administration region). These consisted of 4,190 (44%) battles, 2,962 (31%) explosions and or remote violence and 2,302 (24%) violence against civilians (see [Number of organised violence events](#)). ACLED also recorded 3,107 civilian targeting events, that is, civilians were the main or only targets of the violent event (see [Targeting of civilians](#)).
- 3.1.11 Organized violence varied from state to state. Significant violence was recorded in Khartoum, Al Jazirah, North Darfur, Sennar, North Kordofan, South Kordofan, West Kordofan and South Darfur, West Darfur, Central Darfur, and White Nile also experienced violence but to lower extent. Gedaref, Kassala, Red Sea, and Northern had consistently the least levels of violence (see [Geographic scope of the conflict](#), [Number of organised violence events](#) and [Targeting of civilians](#)).
- 3.1.12 There is no exact count of the number of fatalities and injuries due to the conflict and estimates vary. Dahab and others estimated that there were over 61,202 all-cause deaths in Khartoum state of which 26,024 were due to intentional injuries between April 2023 and June 2024. Dahab and others noted that intentional-injury deaths were disproportionately high in Kordofan and Darfur regions. Tom Pernello, the US special envoy for Sudan,

reportedly said in May 2024 that up to 150,000 people had been killed in the conflict. There were no details about sources or methodologies used to arrive at this estimate or the proportion of civilians killed. ACLED recorded 30,813 conflict fatalities from 15 April 2023 to 31 December 2024. According to ACLED, the vast majority of fatalities were reported in Khartoum state (30% of all fatalities) and the least were recorded in Kassala (2) representing 0% respectively of all fatalities from 15 April 2023 to 13 December 2024 (see [Conflict fatalities](#)).

- 3.1.13 Sources noted a rise of lawlessness in conflict areas with reports of looting, carjackings and gender-based violence including by combatants. The conflict has led to the shutdown of justice institutions in some areas and overall, the domestic justice system lacks the capacity to conduct prompt, independent, and credible investigations or to prosecute persons (see [Criminality and the rule of law](#)).
- 3.1.14 The conflict has caused damage to civilian infrastructure including schools, health facilities, electricity, water, and homes. The conflict has destroyed an estimated 70% of healthcare facilities, triggered and aggravated water scarcity, led to the closure of over 10,400 schools (see [Damage to infrastructure](#)).
- 3.1.15 The conflict has led to significant population displacements. The International Organization for Migration estimated that as of 3 December 2024 an estimated 8.8 million people had been displaced internally and around 3.3 million had crossed borders into neighbouring countries. The displacement occurred in all 18 States, however, most of the internally displaced persons originated from Khartoum (32%), followed by South Darfur (18%), and North Darfur (14%). Sources reported that IDP camps had been attacked and residents confined and unable to leave the camps ([Population displacement](#)).
- 3.1.16 For guidance on considering serious harm where there is a situation of indiscriminate violence in an armed conflict, including consideration of enhanced risk factors, see the Asylum Instruction, [Humanitarian Protection](#).
- 3.1.17 For information and guidance on whether living conditions amount to a breach of Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights, see the [Sudan, Country Policy and Information Note: Humanitarian situation](#).
- 3.1.18 For further guidance on assessing risk, see the Asylum Instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

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4. Internal relocation

- 4.1.1 A person may be able to return to areas in eastern Sudan, such as Port Sudan in Red Sea state, where there is not a general risk of indiscriminate violence, which are largely controlled by the SAF. Whether this is possible will depend on the person's individual circumstances, including any affiliation with armed groups in opposition to the SAF and ethnic origin (see [Geographic scope of the violence](#)).
- 4.1.2 The only functional civilian airport operating international flights is Port Sudan Airport. Land travel is restricted by insecurity, road closures and

checkpoints. Overland travel from, into or across areas where there is ongoing conflict and in which there is a general risk of serious harm – namely Khartoum, Darfur, Kordofan, Al Jazira and Sennar - is unlikely to be safe. Each case will need to be considered on its facts, taking into account the person's background and living conditions in the area of relocation (see [Freedom of movement](#)).

- 4.1.3 For information and guidance on whether in general living conditions amount to a breach of Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights, see the Country Policy and Information Note, [Sudan: Humanitarian situation](#).
- 4.1.4 For further guidance on considering internal relocation and factors to be taken into account see the Asylum Instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

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5. Certification

- 5.1.1 Where a claim is refused, it is unlikely to be certifiable as 'clearly unfounded' under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002.
- 5.1.2 For further guidance on certification, see [Certification of Protection and Human Rights claims under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 \(clearly unfounded claims\)](#).

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Country information

About the country information

This section contains publicly available or disclosable country of origin information (COI) which has been gathered, collated and analysed in line with the [research methodology](#). It provides the evidence base for the assessment.

The structure and content follow a [terms of reference](#) which sets out the general and specific topics relevant to the scope of this note.

This document is intended to be comprehensive but not exhaustive. If a particular event, person or organisation is not mentioned this does not mean that the event did or did not take place or that the person or organisation does or does not exist.

The COI included was published or made publicly available on or before **16 January 2025**. Any event taking place or report published after this date will not be included.

Decision makers must use relevant COI as the evidential basis for decisions.

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6. Note on limits of information

6.1.1 Accurate and reliable information about the scale and extent of violence, and the number of casualties is limited given restrictions on reporting by media or other organisations, while existing information about, for example the size and location of populations, is often poor quality. However, a number of sources have tried to document the number of violent events in the conflict and estimate its impact on civilians.

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7. Geographic context

7.1 Location, size and administrative division

7.1.1 Sudan is situated in north-eastern Africa and is bordered by 7 countries: Central African Republic, Chad, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Libya and South Sudan. Khartoum is the country's capital city. According to the CIA World Factbook, Sudan covers a total area of 1.9 million square kilometres¹ approximately 8 times larger than the UK².

7.1.2 The CIA WFB noted that Sudan is divided into 18 States (wilayat, singular - wilayah) excluding Abyei Special Administration Region (SAR) which is claimed by both Sudan and South Sudan. These are: Blue Nile, Central Darfur, East Darfur, Gedaref, Gezira (Al Jazirah), Kassala, Khartoum, North Darfur, North Kordofan, Northern, Red Sea, River Nile, Sennar, South Darfur, South Kordofan, West Darfur, West Kordofan, White Nile³.

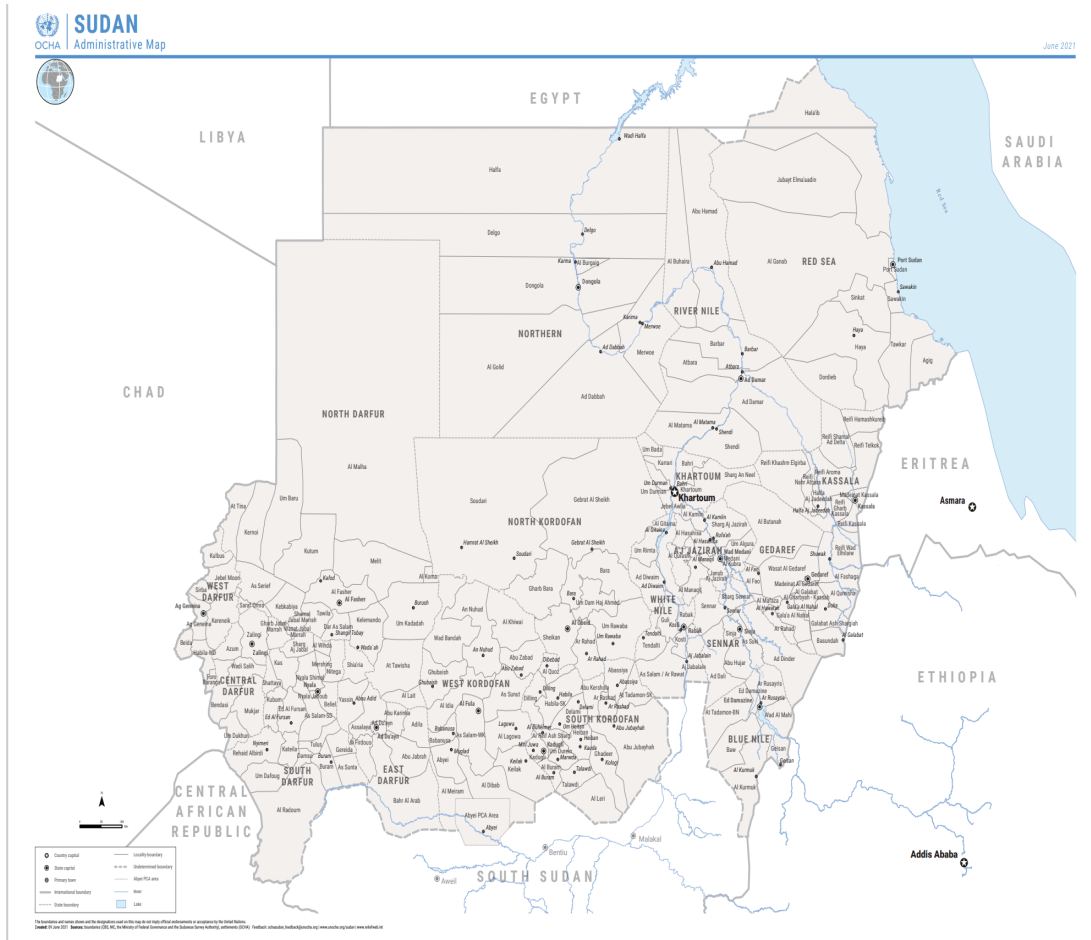
7.1.3 The UN Office for Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has provided below administrative map of Sudan showing international and state boundaries, state capital and primary towns⁴.

¹ US CIA World Factbook, '[Sudan](#)' (Geography), last updated 17 September 2024

² US CIA World Factbook, '[United Kingdom](#)' (Geography), last updated 7 August 2024

³ US CIA World Factbook, '[Sudan](#)' (Geography), last updated 17 September 2024

⁴ OCHA, '[Sudan: Administrative map](#)', June 2021



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7.2 Demography

- 7.2.1 The CIA WFB also noted that Sudan has over 500 ethnic groups, with Sudanese Arabs making up approximately 70% of the population. Arabic and English are the official languages and most of the population is Sunni Muslim with a small Christian minority⁵.
- 7.2.2 The UN Population Division estimated the population to be 48 million⁶, while the CIA World Factbook (CIA WFB) estimated 50 million in 2024⁷. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Humanitarian Data Exchange, (OCHA HDX), an open platform for sharing data across crises and organisations which is managed by (OCHA HDX) estimated the Population of Sudan to be 47.5 million in 2024.⁸
- 7.2.3 CPIT has produced the table below showing Sudan’s population breakdown per state based on OCHA HDX data.

⁵ US CIA World Factbook, ‘[Sudan](#)’ (People and society), last updated 17 September 2024

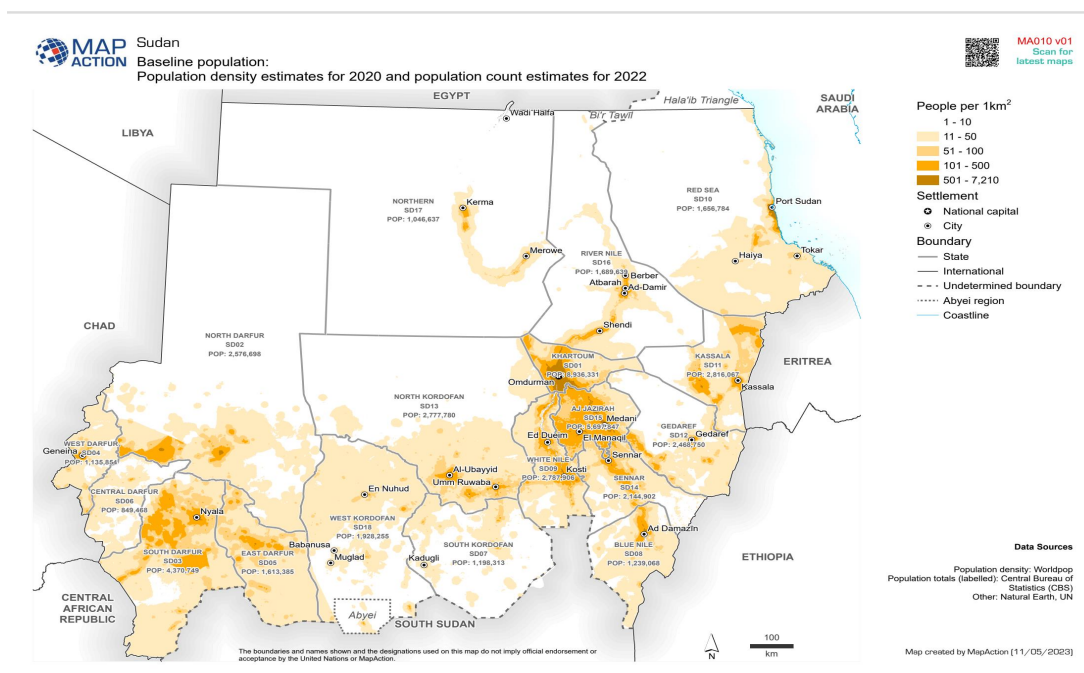
⁶ UN Population Division, ‘[World Population prospects 2022](#)’ (Sudan), 2022

⁷ US CIA World Factbook, ‘[Sudan](#)’ (Geography), last updated 17 September 2024

⁸ OCHA HDX, ‘[Sudan - Subnational Population Statistics](#)’ 2024

State	Total	As % of total
Al Jazirah	5,124,749	11%
Blue Nile	813,930	2%
Central Darfur	943,721	2%
East Darfur	2,390,080	5%
Gedaref	3,091,393	7%
Kassala	2,718,540	6%
Khartoum	5,941,286	13%
North Darfur	3,461,818	7%
North Kordofan	3,444,769	7%
Northern	1,446,861	3%
Red Sea	2,035,582	4%
River Nile	1,862,303	4%
Sennar	2,532,326	5%
South Darfur	3,895,007	8%
South Kordofan	1,156,469	2%
West Darfur	618,178	1%
West Kordofan	2,612,654	6%
White Nile	3,392,274	7%
Total	47,481,940	100%

7.2.4 Map Action, a non-profit organisation that specialises in mapping humanitarian emergencies⁹ has provided below baseline population map showing population density for 2020 and population count estimates for 2022¹⁰.



⁹ Map Action, '[About us](#)' no date

¹⁰ Map Action, '[Sudan - Baseline population: Population density estimates for 2020 ...](#)', 11 May 2023

8. Political context

8.1 Ousting of Al-Bashir and establishment of Transitional Sovereign Council

8.1.1 In April 2019, President Omar Al-Bashir, who had been in power since 1989, was ousted in a military coup following months of pro-democracy protests that began in mid-December 2018. The protests were led by the Forces for Freedom and Change (FFC), an umbrella alliance of opposition groups¹¹.

8.1.2 Freedom House (FH) noted in its 2021 World report:

‘After initially attempting to crack down on the protests, the military leadership held negotiations with an opposition alliance, the Forces of Freedom and Change (FFC), and reached a power-sharing deal in August of that year. The pact created the 11-member [Transitional Sovereign Council] TSC, which was to govern Sudan until elections could be held after a 39-month interim period, with the military and the FFC each naming five members and agreeing on the final member, a civilian. General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan was named as the TSC’s chair for a 21-month term, after which a civilian would lead the council for 18 months.’¹²

8.1.3 The same source added:

‘Military and security organizations that used force to oppose the 2019 prodemocracy protests have retained significant power within the TSC. The Rapid Support Forces (RSF), a wing of the military known for human rights abuses during al-Bashir’s era and in the crackdown prior to the power-sharing agreement, was incorporated into the transitional government structure, with its commander, General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo (commonly known as Hemeti), serving as deputy chairman of the TSC.’¹³

8.2 Juba Peace Agreement: 2020

8.2.1 The 17 September 2020 UN Secretary-General’s report on the situation in the Sudan observed:

‘On 29 August [2020], a peace agreement was reached between the transitional Government, the [rebel armed groups] [Sudan Revolutionary Front] SRF alliance and the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA)-Minni Minawi faction, concluding nearly a year of negotiations mediated by the Government of South Sudan. Signatories under the SRF umbrella included the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), the Sudan Liberation Movement/Transitional Council and the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N) Malik Agar faction. The agreement includes a number of protocols and covers key issues related to security arrangements and the integration of combatants into the Sudanese army, land ownership, transitional justice, power-sharing and the return of displaced persons. The SLA-Abdul Wahid al-Nur faction did not participate in the Juba-based

¹¹ USSD, ‘[2019 country report: Sudan](#)’ (Executive summary), 11 March 2020

¹² FH, ‘[Freedom in the World 2021](#)’ (section A1), 3 March 2021

¹³ FH, ‘[Freedom in the World 2021](#)’ (section B3), 3 March 2021

negotiations and has rejected the agreement.’¹⁴

- 8.2.2 The 24 January 2022 final report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan to the UN Security Council covering the period from 13 March to December 2021 (UN Panel of Expert January 2024 report) observed:

‘In accordance with the power-sharing provisions of the Agreement [JPA], the leaders of three major movements (the Sudan Liberation Army-Minni Minawi (SLA/MM,) the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and the Sudan Liberation Army/Transitional Council (SLA/TC)) joined the Government of the Sudan and kept their positions as Ministers and Governors (Walis). For example, Gibril Ibrahim (JEM) became the Minister of Finance, Khamis Abkar (Sudanese Alliance) was appointed Governor of West Darfur and Nimir Mohamed Abdulrahman (SLA/TC) became the Governor of North Darfur. The Government of the Sudan also created the umbrella position of a regional Governor (Hakim) for all five states of Darfur; Minni Arko Minawi was appointed to this post in May 2021 but has mainly stayed in Khartoum’.¹⁵

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8.3 Military takeover: October 2021 coup

- 8.3.1 The US Department of State (USSD) country report on human rights practices covering events in 2022 observed:

‘Sudanese Armed Forces Commander General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and his allies seized control of the government on October 25, 2021. Burhan usurped the authority of a civilian-led transitional government formed in 2019 following a popular revolution that brought the 30-year regime of President Omar al-Bashir to an end. The 2021 takeover not only removed Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok from his position and sent him into house arrest but resulted in the detention of several senior officials, the dissolution of the cabinet, and the declaration of a state of emergency. Burhan suspended implementation of articles of the country’s provisional constitutional declaration, adopted in August 2019, and instituted a military-controlled Sovereign Council to oversee governmental functions. The Sovereign Council comprises Burhan, Rapid Support Forces Commander Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo (aka “Hemedti”), three other general officers, and three signatories to the Juba Peace Agreement ...’¹⁶

- 8.3.2 A 19 November 2021 opinion piece from a policy think-tank in Khartoum, published by Al Jazeera commented: ‘Last month’s coup was orchestrated by four unlikely allies – Head of the Sovereign Council Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, his deputy General Mohamed Hamdan Daglo known as “Hemedti”, Minister of Finance Gibreil Ibrahim, and Governor-General of Darfur Mini Minawi...’¹⁷

- 8.3.3 In an undated analysis piece published after the October 2021 coup, the Sudan Tribune, a France-based news site ‘run by a team of Sudanese and

¹⁴ UNSC, ‘[Situation in the Sudan and the activities of the ...](#)’ (paragraph 8), 17 September 2020

¹⁵ UNSC, ‘[Final Report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan](#)’ (paragraph 4 b), 24 January 2022

¹⁶ USSD ‘[2022 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#)’ (Executive summary), 20 March 2023

¹⁷ Al Jazeera, ‘[Sudan’s coup is on shaky ground](#)’, 19 November 2021

international editors'¹⁸ noted that coup's coalition included 'the Sudanese Armed Forces, RSF, the Islamists/National Congress Party (Bashir's party) and four of the signatories of the Juba Peace Accord (SPLM, JEM & two factions of SLM).'¹⁹ A February 2023 report by CEDOCA, the Belgium Country of Origin Information (COI) research unit, noted that the '[The] military staged a coup supported by the armed rebel groups.'²⁰

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8.4 Outbreak of conflict: April 2023

8.4.1 An April 2023 report by the International Crisis Group, an independent organisation working to prevent wars and promote peace²¹ (ICG report April 2023) observed:

'Fighting broke out on 15 April [2023], after days of escalating armed manoeuvres by the rivalrous forces [Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF)]. Tensions had run high for days amid a dispute related to demands from the army that the RSF dissolve, with its members to be integrated into regular military ranks. It is unclear who fired the first shot, but both sides had clearly prepared for battle. Clashes erupted first in Khartoum, spreading rapidly to major towns to the north, south, east and west. Since then, the momentum has swung back and forth, with the two sides issuing conflicting claims to be in control of key institutions.'²²

8.4.2 The same source explained:

'The roots of this severe and mounting crisis lie in the late years of former President Omar al-Bashir's disastrous 30-year reign. Distrustful of the army, traditionally Sudan's strongest institution and one with a history of staging coups, Bashir fragmented the security forces into competing centres of power, so that none could unseat him. The paramilitary RSF, in particular, grew from a brutal counter-insurgency militia in Darfur into something like a praetorian guard for Bashir. The outsider status of Hemedti, the RSF leader, served as a check on challenges to the former president from the riverine centre, whose elites have ruled the country since independence in 1956. Hemedti rose from humble beginnings in Darfur near the Sudan-Chad border to become an agile, canny operator, expanding into gold mining and mercenary activity, all while building a political base at home and forging ties abroad.

'Thus, when [Sudan's popular uprising](#) ousted Bashir in 2019, the army and RSF needed to collaborate in seizing power. The protests ... toppled Bashir in a matter of months but then struggled to also sweep away his generals. Hemedti became Burhan's number two, first in a Transitional Military Council, and then as deputy chair of a Sovereign Council, after the generals agreed to a power-sharing deal with the country's civilian opposition, which had been protesting the military takeover for months after Bashir's downfall.

'The Burhan-Hemedti partnership was [shaky from the start](#).... It grew

¹⁸ Sudan Tribune, '[About us](#)' no date

¹⁹ Sudan Tribune, '[Sudan democratic transition: the path forward](#)', no date

²⁰ CEDOCA, '[Sudan: Security situation in Darfur and the Two Areas](#)' (page 14), 23 February 2023

²¹ ICG, '[Who we are](#)', no date

²² ICG, '[Stopping Sudan's Descent into Full-Blown Civil War](#)', 20 April 2023

increasingly unstable as military rule persisted, especially as Hemedti's power and ambitions grew along with his paramilitary force, which expanded across the country. The rivalry showed even more signs of strain after Burhan and Hemedti deposed the civilian government in an October 2021 coup. The [coup backfired](#), doing little to assert military authority, and Hemedti started to distance himself from Burhan, whom he saw as increasingly linked to Bashir-era Islamists. Meanwhile, the listless economy, whose woes were a major cause of the 2019 uprising, tipped further into sclerosis, exacerbating social unrest as Sudanese continued to press for restoration of civilian government. Increasingly, the RSF leader tried to align himself with the public's demands, even presenting himself as an unlikely reformer. He cultivated an unofficial partnership with members of Khartoum's civilian elite, who were negotiating in fits and starts with the military to bring the above demands to fruition.

'Subsequently, Hemedti's rift with Burhan grew wider still ... In December 2022, a framework agreement promising to restore civilian rule accentuated their rivalry. While Burhan signed the deal only under heavy external pressure, Hemedti championed it, due to clauses he saw as giving him autonomy from Burhan and the army. The agreement recognised the RSF as a regular entity affiliated with the armed forces but placed it under the direct command of a civilian head of state, rather than the army chief, during a transition period. The deal also required the RSF to integrate into the army but left the timetable open to negotiation. This arrangement only deepened the distrust between Sudan's two military overlords.

'Tensions escalated in February and early March, following intense competition between the army and RSF to recruit new members across Sudan and particularly in Darfur, Hemedti's stronghold. Rumours that the army was re-establishing a border guard historically tied to Hemedti's long-time rival, Musa Hilal, head of a tribal militia that had helped suppress the Darfur revolt in the 2000s, further intensified the animosity between the regular army and its paramilitary foe. Burhan's proposal to dissolve the Sovereign Council and form a new military council also heightened frictions, as it implied that Burhan could strip Hemedti of his formal political position as deputy chair. After an alarming military build-up in the capital, Burhan and Hemedti reached a deal to de-escalate the situation on 11 March. Hemedti agreed to withdraw forces from greater Khartoum, and the two military leaders agreed to form a new joint security committee.

'But the final negotiations to form a new civilian government soon put the country back in the pressure cooker, as the parties missed the early April deadline. Talks about security-sector reform, one of five sticky issues put off for further discussion in December [2022], dragged on, postponing the entire process. While most of the negotiations pitted the civilian elite against the military as a whole, the wrangling over security arrangements pitted Burhan and Hemedti against each other. In particular, the two disagreed over the timetable for merging the RSF into the army and the leadership structure of an integrated force. The civilians and Hemedti rallied around a proposal for a ten-year integration period. Burhan and the army demanded a two-year timetable, unwilling to give the RSF a decade in which to continue extending its influence and entrenching its autonomy outside the army's supervision.

Amid mounting mutual suspicion, Hemedti reportedly accused Burhan of reneging on deals on integration schedules and the chain of command under pressure from other army generals. More generally, it is clear that Burhan faced stiffening resistance inside the army to the December framework agreement as tensions with Hemedti spiked.²³

8.4.3 The Economist in an article of 4 May 2023 noted:

‘At its heart, this is a battle between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF)—the national army, which seized power in 2019—and a paramilitary group known as the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). The RSF is commanded by Muhammad Hamdan Dagalo (better known as Hemedti), a warlord from the Darfur region who has in effect been Sudan’s vice-president since the coup. At first glance this appears to be a narrow fight between two armed factions struggling for power. But it is in fact one which threatens to reshape not just Sudan but the wider region—with the potential to [draw in neighbours](#) such as Egypt or allied countries in the Gulf.’²⁴

8.4.4 In explaining the conflict between the SAF and RSF, Mo Ibrahim, the head of the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, which self describes as an African organisation that provides data and analysis to assess current global challenges at the continental level²⁵ told the 17 April 2023 Financial Times: ‘Neither man was willing to relinquish power and the control of lucrative resources that went with it. “Each of them has so much at stake, not just power but economically and financially.”’²⁶ Similarly, an April 2023 article entitled ‘Sudan crisis explained: What’s behind the latest fighting and how it fits nation’s troubled past’ by Christopher Tounsel, an associate Professor of History, University of Washington²⁷ commented: ‘Some observers are interpreting what is happening in Sudan – correctly, in my opinion – as a battle between two men who are desperate not to be ejected from the corridors of power by means of a transition to an elected government.’²⁸

8.4.5 A June 2024 BBC article noted:

‘After the 2021 coup, a council of generals ran Sudan, led by the two military men at the centre of this dispute [who] ... disagreed on the direction the country was going in and the proposed move towards civilian rule.

‘The main sticking points were plans to include the 100,000-strong RSF into the army, and who would then lead the new force.

‘The suspicions were that both generals wanted to hang on to their positions of power, unwilling to lose wealth and influence.’²⁹

8.4.6 The Economist observed in an article on 29 August 2024: ‘The main belligerents are the conventional military, the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), and a militia called the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). Neither has an ideological goal or a monolithic ethnic identity. Both are commanded by

²³ ICG, ‘[Stopping Sudan's Descent into Full-Blown Civil War](#)’, 20 April 2023

²⁴ The Economist, ‘[Sudan's spiralling war, in maps](#)’, 4 May 2023

²⁵ Mo Ibrahim Foundation, [About us](#), no date

²⁶ FT, ‘[Sudan conflict pitches military leaders into struggle for control](#)’, 17 April 2023

²⁷ The Conversation, ‘[Author Christopher Tounsel](#)’, 17 April 2023

²⁸ Tounsel, C, ‘[Sudan crisis explained: What's behind the latest fighting and how it...](#)’, 17 April 2023

²⁹ BBC News, ‘[Sudan war: A simple guide to what is happening](#)’, 13 June 2024

unscrupulous warlords vying for control of the state and its spoils.³⁰

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8.5 Peace talks

8.5.1 On 16 January 2024 Al Jazeera reported that Sudan suspended its participation in mediation efforts by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) after the bloc invited the RSF leader Mohamed Hamdan Daglo (Hemedti) to a heads of state meeting scheduled for 18 January 2024 in Uganda which it said violated the country's sovereignty and legitimized Hemedti³¹.

8.5.2 An April 2024 article by Manal Fatima, a program assistant with the Scowcroft Middle East Security Initiative, for the Atlantic Council which describes itself as a nonpartisan organization that galvanizes US leadership and engagement in the world³², commented:

'Despite various peace initiatives undertaken by the international community—including efforts by the United States, Arab countries, and other African nations—regional and international responses have thus far failed to produce any meaningful resolution ... Peace efforts have been unsuccessful because mediator Arab countries—like the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Egypt, and Saudi Arabia—are not acting in good faith but are supporting opposing sides ...

'Several peace efforts are in place, but progress remains elusive. The RSF and SAF consistently violate agreements, resulting in brief ceasefires and escalating civilian casualties. Even opportunities flaunted as promising—such as the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)'s meeting on January 18, before Burhan suspended Sudan's membership in the East African bloc—have met persistent challenges. There is pressure from the United Nations as well as the United States for a ceasefire but calls for a Ramadan truce were rejected by Burhan ...'³³

8.5.3 The 30 September 2024 UNSC monthly forecast observed:

'Mediation efforts aimed at resolving the conflict and securing humanitarian access have continued. In a 23 July press statement, the US announced that it had extended invitations to the SAF and the RSF to participate in ceasefire talks in Switzerland, co-hosted by Saudi Arabia, with the African Union (AU), Egypt, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and the UN participating as observers. The talks aimed to reach an agreement on a nationwide cessation of violence and to develop a robust monitoring and verification mechanism to ensure implementation of any agreement. Although the RSF agreed to participate in the meeting, the SAF did not ...

'Following the talks, media reports quoted General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, head of the SAF, as saying during a press conference that the talks in Switzerland aimed to "whitewash" the RSF and countries supporting the paramilitary group. He reiterated the SAF's refusal to negotiate with the RSF

³⁰ The Economist, '[Why Sudan's catastrophic war is the world's problem](#)', 29 August 2024

³¹ Al Jazeera, '[Sudan suspends contacts with IGAD mediating group: Foreign](#)', 16 January 2024

³² Atlantic Council, '[About the Atlantic Council](#)', no date

³³ Fatima, M, Atlantic Council, '[A diplomatic solution in Sudan demands greater ...](#)' 10 April 2024

and objected to the UAE's participation in the talks. (Sudanese authorities have accused the UAE of providing armaments and other material support to the RSF).³⁴

- 8.5.4 On 29 September 2024, the Sudan Tribune, reported: 'The Rapid Support Forces (RSF) said on Sunday it would no longer negotiate with the Sudanese army and would seek a military solution to the conflict' after 'the army offensive launched to regain control of Khartoum from the RSF'.³⁵
- 8.5.5 On 2 October 2024, the BBC News reported: 'A top Sudanese general has said the army will press on with its offensive despite international efforts to broker a ceasefire ... Fresh diplomatic attempts to negotiate a cessation of hostilities have failed to make progress, the US Sudan Envoy Tom Perriello acknowledged this week.'³⁶
- 8.5.6 In a report to the UN Security Council of 21 October 2024, the Secretary General (UNSG report 2024) observed: 'The warring parties in the Sudan have not engaged in face-to-face dialogue since the last round of the Jeddah Declaration talks, and have continued to issue public statements indicating their intention to seek a military victory. Nevertheless, regional and international partners and Member States have intensified their efforts in recent months to seek a negotiated solution to the conflict.'³⁷

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9. Protagonists

9.1 Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) and allied groups

- 9.1.1 A 11 April 2024 Al Jazeera explainer on the war in the Sudan stated: 'The Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) is Sudan's national army, with an estimated 300,000 soldiers. Its military commander, General al-Burhan was a career soldier who climbed the ranks under President al-Bashir.'³⁸
- 9.1.2 A 1 February 2024 article by Sudan War Monitor, a '[c]ollaborative of journalists and open source researchers tracking the events of Sudan's war and the search for solutions'³⁹ stated: 'Fighting alongside SAF are the General Intelligence Service (which has a paramilitary wing), the Central Reserve Police (a paramilitary), civilian volunteers known 'Popular Resistance,' and the faction of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA-N) led by Malik Agar, based in Blue Nile State at ad-Damazin.'⁴⁰
- 9.1.3 The UN Panel of Experts January 2024 report observed that the SAF has forged alliances with traditional chiefs from non-Arab Darfuri communities such as the Fur and Masalit⁴¹.
- 9.1.4 The Economist observed in an article on 29 August 2024 'The regular Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) have enlisted both Islamist militias and

³⁴ UNSC, '[September 2024 UNSC Monthly Forecast](#)', 30 August 2024

³⁵ Sudan Tribune, '[RSF declares end to negotiations with Sudanese army](#)', 29 September 2024

³⁶ BBC News '[Sudan army vows to fight on despite peace efforts](#)' 10 October 2024

³⁷ UNSG, '[Recommendations for the protection of civilians ...](#)' (paragraph 23), 21 October 2024

³⁸ Al Jazeera, '[After a year of war in Sudan, what is the situation now?](#)' 11 April 2024

³⁹ Sudan War Monitor, '[Sudan War Monitor](#)', no date

⁴⁰ Sudan War Monitor, '[Map of the Areas of Control in Sudan](#)' 1 February 2024

⁴¹ UNSC, '[Final report of the Panel of Experts on the ...](#)' (paragraphs 10 to 12, 20), 15 January 2024

voluntary civilian defence units.’ Adding that the SAF did not have complete control over its forces, which had blocked aid and terrorised civilians⁴².

- 9.1.5 Professor Justin Wills of Durham University and Professor Sharath Srinivasan of Cambridge University writing in the Conversation in October 2024 (Wills and Srinivasan October 2024 article) observed that neither the SAF nor RSF is coherent or well disciplined. Further ‘[t]he army has more formal structures – too many, perhaps – but these are also fragmented. Strong on generals and air firepower but weak on fighting forces, the army is adapting the government’s old playbook of mobilising local militias.’⁴³
- 9.1.6 According to ACLED SAF allies included the Darfur Joint Forces, al-Baraa ibn Malik Brigade, and the Popular Resistance. The Darfur Joint Forces include SLM/A-Minnawi and JEM-Gibril Ibrahim. These forces were deployed to battle frontlines in and around Khartoum and, al-Jazirah after al-Jazirah fell to the RSF in December 2023 and Sennar since September 2024 in support of the SAF^{44 45}.

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9.2 Rapid Support Forces (RSF) and allied groups

- 9.2.1 On 23 October 2024, the UN Human Rights Council released a report of a fact-finding mission that looked into violations of international human rights law, international humanitarian law, and related crimes, committed in the Sudan in the context of the conflict that erupted in mid-April 2023 (HRC October 2024 report). It noted: The RSF is led by First Commander Lieutenant-General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo. His older brother, Lieutenant-General Abdelrahim Hamdan Dagalo, is the second in command. The RSF has operated as a highly mobile ground fighting force that combines regular RSF units, its own intelligence service and newly recruited RSF-aligned militias into an alliance under the overall control of Lieutenant-General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo.⁴⁶
- 9.2.2 The CIA WFB noted:
- ‘[T]he RSF is a semi-autonomous paramilitary force formed in 2013 to fight armed rebel groups in Sudan, with Mohammed Hamdan DAGALO (aka Hemeti) as its commander; it was initially placed under the National Intelligence and Security Service, then came under the direct command of former president Omar al-BASHIR, who boosted the RSF as his own personal security force; as a result, the RSF was better funded and equipped than the regular armed forces; the RSF has since recruited from all parts of Sudan beyond its original Darfuri Arab groups but remains under the personal patronage and control of DAGALO; the RSF has participated in combat operations in Yemen and in counterinsurgency operations in Darfur, South Kordofan, and the Blue Nile State; it has also been active along the borders with Libya and the Central African Republic and has been used to respond to anti-regime demonstrations; the RSF has been accused of

⁴² The Economist, [‘Anarchy in Sudan has spawned the world’s worst famine ...’](#), 29 August 2024

⁴³ Wills and Srinivasan, The Conversation, [Sudan’s brutal war ...](#), 14 October 2024

⁴⁴ ACLED, [‘Turning the tide: The SAF’s strategic offensive in Khartoum and the ...’](#) 14 October 2024

⁴⁵ ACLED, [‘Situation Update | May 2024 Sudan: The RSF sets its eyes on North Darfur’](#), 17 May 2024

⁴⁶ UN HRC, [‘Findings of the investigations conducted by the...’](#) (paragraph 91), October 2024

committing human rights abuses against civilians and is reportedly involved in business enterprises, such as gold mining; in 2023, heavy fighting broke out between the SAF and the RSF.⁴⁷

- 9.2.3 An April 2022 article by Jérôme Tubiana, a researcher specializing in conflict and migration across Sudan and published by the United Institute for Peace (USIP) (Tubiana April 2022) observed that: ‘By 2021, the RSF was estimated to number between 75,000 and 100,000 men, compared with the SAF’s 120,000 to 200,000 troops’ adding that ‘in spite of its smaller numbers, the RSF is widely considered to be the more militarily effective force’⁴⁸ Similarly, 11 April 2024 Al Jazeera explainer stated that the RSF has approximately 100,000 well-equipped soldiers positioned across the capital, Khartoum, and the Darfur region, the group’s traditional stronghold.⁴⁹ Neither of the sources has provided the source of their estimates.
- 9.2.4 According to the UN Panel of Experts January 2024 report the RSF has attracted various Arab armed groups and militias which it deployed in its military operations in Darfur and Khartoum⁵⁰.
- 9.2.5 The 29 August 2024 Economist article observed: ‘...Foreign mercenaries and Arab tribal militias work with the RSF, itself best understood as a sprawling network of business interests underwritten by plunder. Though it is the more decentralised of the two sides, neither has complete control over its forces. Both block aid and terrorise civilians’⁵¹. Similarly, Wills and Srinivasan 2024 noted: ‘the RSF, in particular, is a messy constellation of armed men, mostly from western Sudan (and, allegedly, further afield). They share a distinctive style of camouflage dress and a sense of long-term exclusion, but are not under close or effective control.’⁵²

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9.3 Other armed actors

- 9.3.1 A 21 May 2024 ACLED report quoted Nohad Eltayeb, an ACLED Sudanese researcher, saying:

‘In the place of the Sudanese state — and the SAF and RSF — militias have multiplied. Communities are obtaining weapons, armed groups are becoming ethnically based, and alliances are constantly shifting. Although the RSF and SAF are still responsible for by far the biggest share of violent events, they are less in control of the militias’ increasingly independent leaders. Before the war, ACLED was tracking less than 20 of them. Now there are more than 70 of them.’⁵³

- 9.3.2 The same source provided a chart showing the number and type of actors engaged in conflict in Sudan⁵⁴.

⁴⁷ US CIA World Factbook, ‘[Sudan](#)’ (section on military and security), updated 23 February 2023

⁴⁸ Tubiana, J., ‘[Darfur after Bashir: Implications for Sudan’s transition...](#)’ (pages 5 to 6), April 2022

⁴⁹ Al Jazeera, ‘[After a year of war in Sudan, what is the situation now?](#)’ 11 April 2024

⁵⁰ UNSC, [Final report of the Panel of Experts ...](#) (paragraphs 10 to 12, 20), 15 January 2024

⁵¹ The Economist, [Anarchy in Sudan has spawned the world’s worst famine ...](#), 29 August 2024

⁵² Wills and Srinivasan, The Conversation, [Sudan’s brutal war ...](#), 14 October 2024

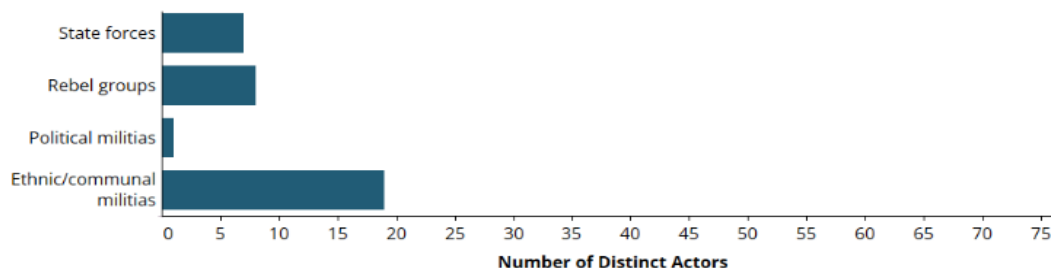
⁵³ ACLED, ‘[Q&A: Sudan’s broken hopes](#)’, 21 May 2024

⁵⁴ ACLED, ‘[Q&A: Sudan’s broken hopes](#)’, 21 May 2024

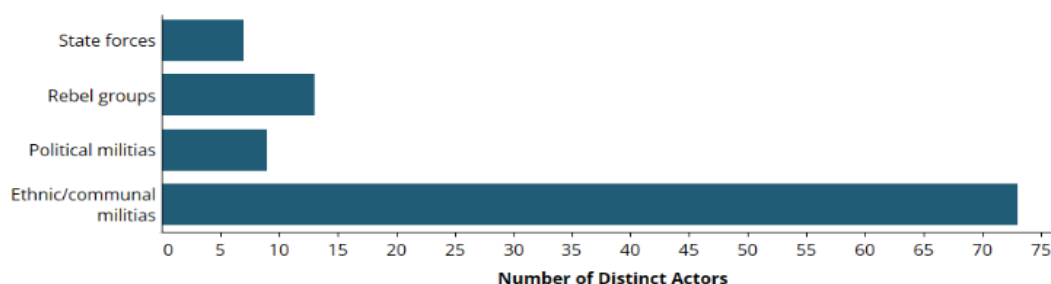
Actors Engaged in Violence

15 April - 15 July 2023

(First 3 months)



16 July 2023 - 10 May 2024



- 9.3.3 The October 2024 UN Human Rights Commission (HRC) FFM report noted that: ‘A number of armed groups assert that they are neither aligned with the SAF nor RSF. These include the factions of the Sudan Liberation Movement of Abdul Wahid Mohammed al-Nur (SLM/Al-Nur) and El Hadi Idriss (SLM/Transitional Council) and the Gathering of the Sudan Liberation Forces of al-Tahir Hajar in Darfur and the SPLM-N/Al-Hilu, which controls parts of South Kordofan State and Blue Nile State.’⁵⁵

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9.4 Non-Sudanese actors

- 9.4.1 Citing multiple sources, the April 2024 European Union Asylum Agency Sudan focus report (EUAA COI Report April 2024) noted:

‘External actors played a role in the conflict providing political and military support to the main warring parties. According to sources, the RSF was provided military supplies – ranging from small weapons to anti-aircraft missiles - by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) ... Reuters reported that, according to the U.S. Treasury Department, the RSF received military support from the Wagner Group, a Russia-linked mercenary force. Other sources indicated that weapons were smuggled in the country from the Wagner’s base in the Central African Republic (CAR). Libya has also ties to the RSF reportedly providing fuel, ammunition and medical and logistical equipment. Iran, according to Bloomberg, has supplied the SAF with weapons and combat drones. 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”, established by Sudanese armed groups

⁵⁵ HRC, [Findings of the investigations conducted by the ...](#) (paragraph 107), October 2024

in Eritrea. Egypt and Saudi Arabia are reportedly supporting the SAF. As indicated by the Wall Street Journal, Ukrainian troops were deployed starting from mid-August 2023 onwards to support SAF operations in Khartoum.⁵⁶

- 9.4.2 The Economist commented in an article of 29 August 2024: ‘Outside powers are fuelling the fighting. The United Arab Emirates (UAE), a hedonists’ playground, supplies bullets and drones to RSF killers. Iran and Egypt arm the SAF. Russia has played both sides and deployed Wagner mercenaries. Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Qatar are competing for influence, too. Each of these actors has narrow goals, from securing food supplies to grabbing gold. Collectively they are helping turn a huge country into a murderous bazaar.’⁵⁷

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10. Geographic scope of the conflict

- 10.1.1 The Economist briefing 2024 commented: ‘At first, fighting was largely confined to Khartoum and Darfur, a region the size of Spain where the RSF has resumed a campaign of ethnic cleansing against black African ethnic groups first initiated by Arab militias 20 years ago. But the conflict has evolved, in the words of Tom Perriello, America’s special envoy to Sudan, into “five or six different wars at the same time”.’⁵⁸
- 10.1.2 The July 2024 UNICEF situation report noted:
‘In July 2024, the conflict in Sudan, particularly in Sennar, North Darfur, Khartoum, and the Kordofan regions, has been marked by intense clashes between SAF and the paramilitary RSF, contributing to a severe humanitarian crisis. North Darfur, particularly the capital El Fasher, remains a hotspot of violence. In Khartoum, the conflict has led to contested control over critical areas, including the city center and strategic infrastructure ... In Sennar and West Kordofan, the RSF has made significant advances, enhancing their strategic positions aiming to secure supply pipelines ...’⁵⁹
- 10.1.3 The August 2024 report by Acaps, which describes itself as an independent analytical voice helping humanitarian workers, influencers, fundraisers, and donors make better-informed decisions and respond more effectively to disasters⁶⁰, citing various sources noted: ‘Originally centred in Central Darfur, Khartoum, and West Darfur, the conflict has spread to encompass Aj [sic] Jazirah, North Darfur, South and West Kordofan, and portions of Sennar and Blue Nile. In Darfur, Khartoum, and Kordofan, intense fighting has persisted without relief for over a year.’⁶¹
- 10.1.4 The September 2024 UNHCR Sudan situation update stated:
‘The security situation across Sudan remained highly volatile, with intense clashes and airstrikes reported in Khartoum, Khartoum North, Omdurman (Khartoum State), Al Jazirah, Sennar, North Kordofan, Nyala in South Darfur and El Fasher in North Darfur state. Continuous artillery exchanges were

⁵⁶ EUAA, ‘[Sudan - Country focus: Security situation in selected areas ...](#)’ (pages 22 to 23), April 2024

⁵⁷ The Economist, ‘[Anarchy in Sudan has spawned the world’s worst famine ...](#)’, 29 August 2024

⁵⁸ The Economist, ‘[Anarchy in Sudan has spawned the world’s worst famine ...](#)’, 29 August 2024

⁵⁹ UNICEF, ‘[Sudan Humanitarian Situation Report No. 21](#)’, 31 July 2024

⁶⁰ Acaps, ‘[Who we are](#)’, no date

⁶¹ Acaps, ‘[Sudan- Food security situation](#)’ (page 1), 7 August 2024

reported, particularly in Omdurman, Al-Muhandisin, and Bahri (Khartoum North). Heavy fighting in Nyala and El Fasher continued, with significant artillery and airstrikes.⁶²

10.1.5 HRC October 2024 report observed with respect to the fighting:

'... RSF forces started to mobilize on 13 April 2023, which led to a series of clashes with the SAF and the capturing by the RSF of Khartoum International Airport, the Presidential Palace and several military bases on 15 April 2023. The fighting quickly spread to the suburbs of Khartoum and neighbouring city Omburdman [sic] ... Heavy fighting continued in Khartoum, Bahr and Omdurman during the first weeks of the conflict.

'The fighting soon expanded to Darfur and Kordofan regions, as the RSF sought to capture and take control of various parts of the country ...

'In the Kordofan region, violence escalated from January 2024 with other armed actors joining the conflict as the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North faction of Abdelaziz al Hilu (SPLM-N/Al-Hilu) clashed with the SAF in South Kordofan. In June 2024, the RSF advanced towards Sennar State, engaging in armed confrontations with the SAF in Sinja town, which triggered the displacement of a significant number of civilians.

'By the time of this report, 14 out of the Sudan's 18 states were affected by the hostilities on the ground, with the RSF controlling a large part of the country, including Khartoum city, though the SAF recently – on 26 September 2024 - launched an offensive against the RSF in Khartoum and Bahri in an attempt to regain control of the city. Clashes are ongoing with serious consequences for the civilian population residing in this area.

'Seven states are experiencing sporadic attacks through airstrikes or shelling: White Nile, East Darfur, South Darfur, Central Darfur, West Darfur, Gedaref, and Blue Nile. Seven states are currently experiencing ongoing hostilities: Khartoum, Gezira, Sennar, North Kordofan, South Kordofan, West Kordofan and North Darfur.

'North Darfur, in particular, remains a hotspot for fighting, with the RSF's continuing attempts to capture the capital, El Fasher. The fighting for control of the city has intensified in September 2024, leading to severe civilian casualties. As the clashes continue, the humanitarian situation in El Fasher also continues to deteriorate...⁶³

10.1.6 A 9 September 2024 news report by the Middle East Eye (MEE), an independent digital news organisation covering events in the Middle East and North Africa⁶⁴ stated:

'As peace talks continue to falter, people in Sudan face daily massacres perpetrated by the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) paramilitary, according to multiple eyewitnesses who spoke to Middle East Eye. The massacres are taking place every day across the country, particularly in Gezira and Sennar states in central Sudan ... The civilian massacres have also been carried out in White Nile state, while the RSF is besieging major cities in Blue Nile,

⁶² UNHCR, '[Sudan Situation: UNHCR External Update #79 13 - 19 ...](#)', 23 September 2024

⁶³ HRC, '[Findings of the investigations conducted by the ...](#)', (paragraphs 56 to 61), 23 October 2024

⁶⁴ MEE, '[About Middle East Eye](#)', no date

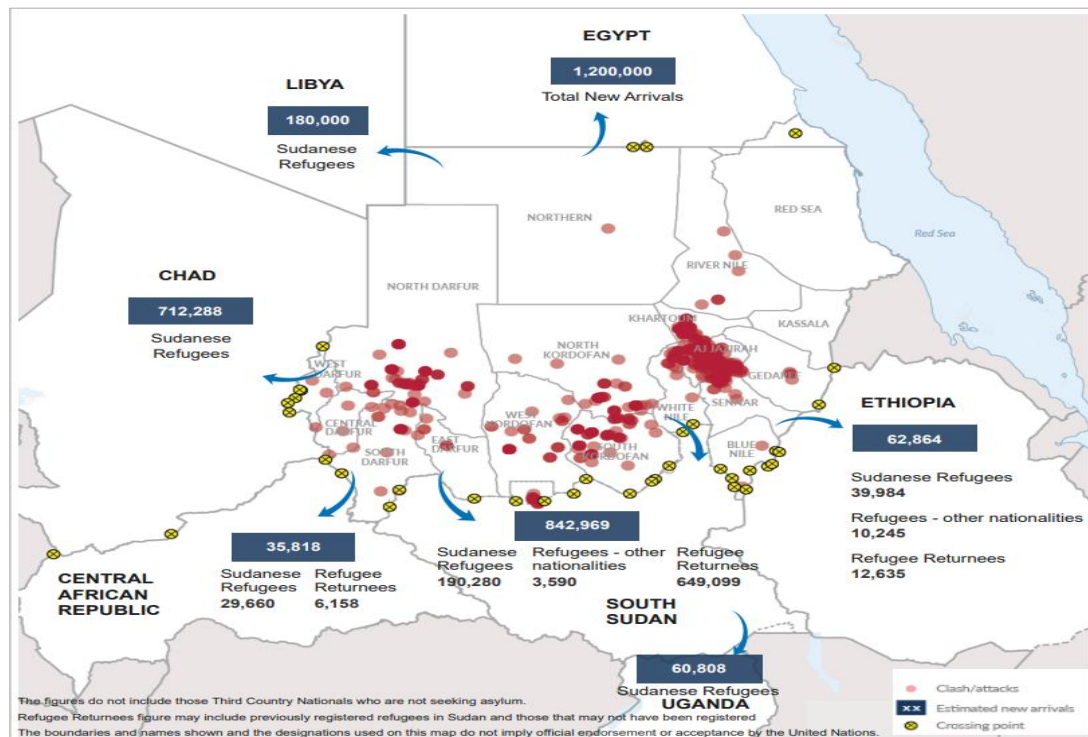
North Kordofan and, more prominently, el-Fasher, the capital of North Darfur... Across several states, the army has intensified air strikes on RSF positions, including in the capital, Khartoum, East Darfur, North Darfur, Gezira and Sennar. These air strikes have resulted in civilian casualties.’⁶⁵

10.1.7 ACLED situation update for 5 October – 8 November 2024 noted:

‘The Sudanese army achieved significant breakthroughs in al-Jazirah and Sennar states, where the SAF launched large-scale offensives in October. In al-Jazirah, the defection of a senior RSF commander was followed by a spate of retaliatory violence that targeted his home region. This violence has killed hundreds and sparked widespread condemnation of the RSF’s targeting of unarmed civilians. The SAF also continued to push forward in southern and eastern Sennar state, where it seized control of several RSF positions and forced the paramilitary group to go on the defensive ...

‘... Heavy clashes broke out on 18 October in the east and south of ... [Sennar] state in parallel with the escalation in neighboring al-Jazirah. In these areas, the SAF advanced and captured several villages and towns.’⁶⁶

10.1.8 UNHCR has provided a map of population movements from Sudan showing locations of clashes as of 11 November 2024⁶⁷.



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11. Territorial control

11.1 RSF

11.1.1 The UN Panel of Experts January 2024 report noted: ‘By mid-December 2023, the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) had secured control of four of five

⁶⁵ MEE, ‘[Sudan: RSF committing massacres on daily basis as peace talks falter](#)’, 9 September 2024

⁶⁶ ACLED, ‘[Defection and violence against civilians in Sudan’s al-Jazirah state](#)’ 18 November 2024

⁶⁷ UNHCR, ‘[Sudan Situation Map Weekly Regional Update](#)’, 11 Nov 2024

Darfur states, including strategic cities, supply routes and border areas.⁶⁸ The UNSC February 2024 report on the situation in Sudan noted that RSF expanded into Al Jazira, took control of Qutaynah in White Nile, and remained in control of most of Khartoum and Darfur⁶⁹.

11.1.2 A February 2024 report by the Sudan War Monitor stated:

‘... RSF ... have eliminated the Sudan Armed Forces throughout Darfur, except the North Darfur capital El Fasher, which is also a stronghold of neutral ex-rebel groups.

‘RSF control nearly all the capital Khartoum ... Furthermore, in December they extended their control south from Khartoum into most of Al Jezira [sic]...

‘Recently, the army lost ground in Kordofan ... The RSF move freely through the region between Darfur and Khartoum, and they overran or cut off several towns and outposts ...’⁷⁰

11.1.3 The September 2024 ACLED situation update reported that the RSF control most of Khartoum, and after capturing Singa the capital of Senar in late June 2024 it expanded its influence in Sennar state [SAF still control Sennar city] and in early August it began extending its reach into Blue Nile⁷¹.

11.1.4 The HRC October 2024 FFM report noted that 14 out of the Sudan’s 18 states were affected by the hostilities on the ground, with the RSF controlling a large part of the country, including Khartoum city, though the SAF on 26 September 2024 launched an offensive against the RSF in Khartoum and Bahri in an attempt to regain control of the city⁷².

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11.2 SAF

11.2.1 The UN Panel of Experts January 2024 report noted in Darfur region SAF retained a presence only in North Darfur particularly its headquarters in El Fasher.⁷³ The UNSC report February 2024 report further noted that SAF controlled eastern and northern states including El Obeid in North Kordofan, Karari and Old Omdurman in Khartoum⁷⁴.

11.2.2 In February 2024 the Sudan War Monitor reported that SAF controlled the eastern and northern regions of the country and that its strongholds included River Nile, Northern, Gedaref, Kassala, and Red Sea. It also controlled about half of Omdurman and although it lost ground in Kordofan it still holds significant garrisons in Kadugli and El Obeid⁷⁵.

11.2.3 Willis and Srinivasan October 2024 article commented: ‘The Sudanese army appears to be [slowly regaining](#) control of the ruined capital, Khartoum, and has recovered some ground it lost [elsewhere in Sudan](#). And the rival Rapid Support Forces (RSF) continues its brutal siege of the western city of [El](#)

⁶⁸ UNSC, ‘[Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan...](#)’ (paragraphs 4 to 5), 15 January 2024

⁶⁹ UNSC, ‘[Situation in the Sudan pursuant to...](#)’ (paragraphs 2, 13, 14, 16, 20), 29 February 2024

⁷⁰ Sudan War Monitor, ‘[Map of the Areas of Control in Sudan](#)’ 1 February 2024

⁷¹ ACLED, ‘[Artillery shelling and airstrikes surge in Sudan](#)’ 16 September 2024

⁷² HRC, ‘[Findings of the investigations conducted by the ...](#)’, (paragraph 59), 23 October 2024

⁷³ UNSC, ‘[Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan...](#)’ (paragraphs 4 to 5), 15 January 2024

⁷⁴ UNSC, ‘[Situation in the Sudan pursuant to...](#)’ (paragraphs 13, 18), 29 February 2024

⁷⁵ Sudan War Monitor, ‘[Map of the Areas of Control in Sudan](#)’ 1 February 2024

[Fasher](#).⁷⁶

11.2.4 In its Regional Overview, published in January 2025, ACLED stated:

‘Sudan’s al-Jazirah state was the site of heavy clashes in December, with both Rapid Support Forces (RSF) and Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) claiming territorial advances in the agriculturally significant region. Contestation over al-Jazirah initially rose one year ago in December 2023, with severe [implications](#) for many internally displaced people and humanitarian aid in the capital of Wad Madani. The SAF have made a renewed push to regain control of al-Jazirah state since the [desertion in October of senior RSF Al Jazirah commander, Abu Aqla Keikel](#), to the SAF. The state capital eventually fell to the SAF in early January [2025]. In 2024, territorial exchanges between conflict parties increased by a third compared to 2023, pointing to the relative mobility of the conflict. These violent exchanges of control were highest in Khartoum in 2024, followed by Sennar and al-Jazirah states.’⁷⁷

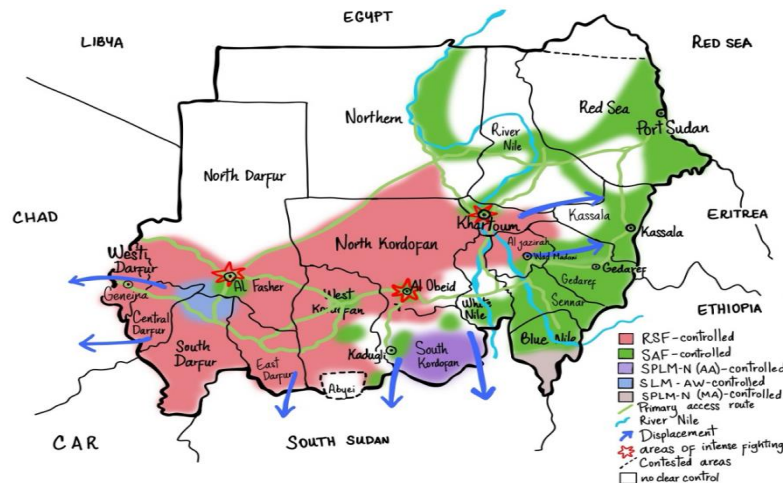
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11.3 Other armed groups

11.3.1 The UNSC report February 2024 report noted that the SPLM-N Abdelaziz Al-Hilu faction controlled Dilling and Habila in South Kordofan⁷⁸. SPLM-North controlled territory in the Nuba Mountains of South Kordofan and the Sudan Liberation Movement Abdel Wahid El Nur faction (SLM-AW) controlled territory in the Jebel Marra Massif of Central Darfur^{79 80}.

11.3.2 Acaps has produced below map showing areas of control in Sudan by 1 June 2024⁸¹.

Map 1. Areas of control in Sudan by 1 June 2024 and new developments, including displacement patterns and fighting hotspots, as envisioned by ACAPS



Source: ACAPS using data from Sudan War Monitor (01/06/2024)

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⁷⁶ Wills and Srinivasan, The Conversation, [Sudan's brutal war has become many ...](#), 14 October 2024

⁷⁷ ACLED, [‘Regional Overview Africa January 2025’](#), 14 January 2025

⁷⁸ UNSC, [‘Situation in the Sudan pursuant to...’](#) (paragraphs 2, 13, 14, 16, 20), 29 February 2024

⁷⁹ Sudan War Monitor, [‘Map of the Areas of Control in Sudan’](#) 31 May 2024

⁸⁰ PoGeoNow, [‘Sudan Control Map & Timeline: Former Rebels Join Fight - June 2023’](#), 11 June 2024

⁸¹ Acaps, [‘Sudan: scenarios. A region-by-region analysis of possible ...’](#) (page 4), October 2024

12. Scale of violence

12.1 Organised violence events

12.1.1 The ACLED database features information on the number of recorded political violence events and fatalities arising therefrom. It defined political violence as ‘the use of force by a group with a political purpose or motivation, or with distinct political effects. A political violence event is a single altercation where force is used by one or more groups toward a political end.’⁸² Political violence consists of battles, explosions/remote violence, protests (excessive force against protesters) and violence against civilians. It also recorded ‘organised violence’ sub category which consist of battles, explosions/remote violence, and violence against civilians⁸³. The data presented below only consist of recorded organised violence events which consist of battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians.

12.1.2 ACLED explained how its information is collected:

‘ACLED researchers systematically collect and review the latest reports from selected local, national and international sources, including media, vetted social media accounts, government and NGO reports, and partner organizations. ACLED researchers work to triangulate reports when and where possible, but they do not independently verify events or gather first-hand information on the ground. ACLED’s [local partners](#) often verify and collect first hand information. ACLED employs [a range of sourcing strategies](#) to ensure the data are timely and reliable.’⁸⁴

12.1.3 ACLED further explained:

‘One or more events can occur in the same location on the same day. If two different types of interactions between the same actors in the same location on the same day are reported, they are typically noted as a single aggregate event ...

‘However, if another event type involving different actors occurs on the same day and in the same location, it is recorded separately. Hence, it is possible to have multiple events – involving distinct actors – occur in the same location on the same day ...’⁸⁵

12.1.4 From 15 April 2023 to 31 December 2024 ACLED recorded 9,454 organised violence events in Sudan’s 18 states (excluding Abyei special Administration region). This consisted of 4,190 (44%) battles, 2,962 (31%) explosions and or remote violence and 2,302 (24%) violence against⁸⁶. The graph below based on the ACLED data⁸⁷ shows monthly trends in political violence in the period under review.

⁸² ACLED, ‘[ACLED Code book](#)’ (page 9) 2023

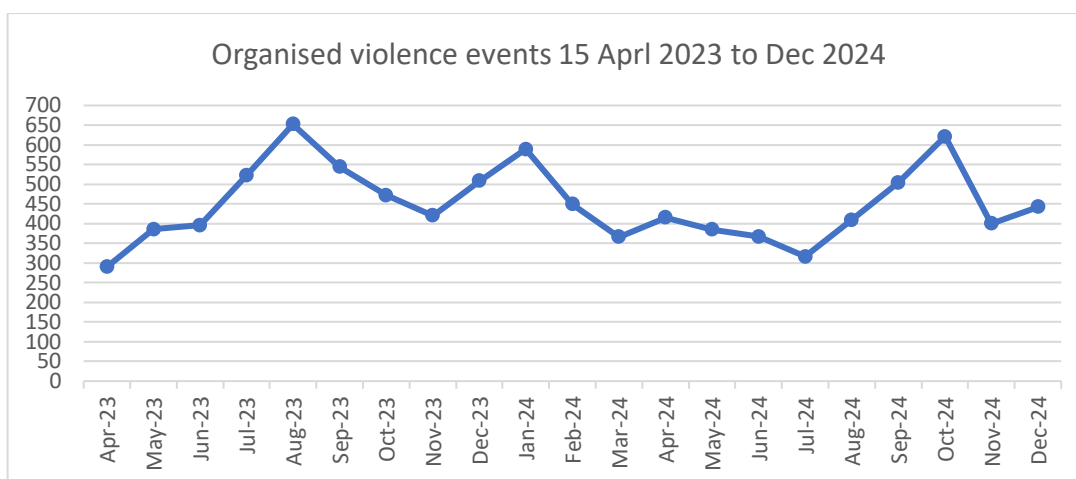
⁸³ ACLED, ‘[ACLED Code book](#)’ (page 11), 2023

⁸⁴ ACLED, ‘[Methodology](#)’ (How is information collected), updated 1 November 2023

⁸⁵ ACLED, ‘[Methodology](#)’ (pages 22 to 23) updated 1 November 2023

⁸⁶ ACLED, ‘[Explorer](#)’ (political violence /Sudan/ event count/), accessed 16 January 2025

⁸⁷ ACLED, ‘[Explorer](#)’ (political violence /Sudan/ event count/), accessed 16 January 2025



12.1.5 ACLED also recorded organised violence events for each of Sudan’s 18 states. This is presented in the table below.

State	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023	Q1 2024	Q2 2024	Q3 2024	Q4 2024	Total	As % of total
Khartoum	659	1267	948	797	367	551	440	5029	53.2%
Al Jazirah	16	28	99	289	241	134	311	1118	11.8%
North Darfur	68	45	28	60	273	205	370	1049	11.1%
South Darfur	68	116	62	12	33	35	62	388	4.1%
North Kordofan	39	61	64	41	74	35	33	347	3.7%
West Darfur	143	34	24	7	3	9	43	263	2.8%
South Kordofan	19	63	40	75	28	18	9	252	2.7%
Sennar	0	0	11	18	36	116	63	244	2.6%
West Kordofan	5	23	30	52	45	22	18	195	2.1%
Central Darfur	23	61	50	7	8	16	15	180	1.9%
White Nile	4	1	11	18	28	30	38	130	1.4%
East Darfur	3	2	13	9	5	21	20	73	0.8%
River Nile	1	5	6	7	9	20	10	58	0.6%
Blue Nile	4	8	3	1	1	7	20	44	0.5%
Gedaref	2	1	4	9	13	6	4	39	0.4%
Northern	11	1	3	0	3	1	5	24	0.3%
Red Sea	6	1	2	0	1	1	3	14	0.1%
Kassala	1	2	2	2	0	2	1	10	0.1%
Sudan	1072	1719	1400	1404	1168	1229	1465	9457	100.0%

12.1.6 The table shows:

- Khartoum consistently reports the highest number of violence events among all states. It experienced a sharp increase in from Q2 to Q3 2023, followed by a decline, with a brief rise in Q3 2024 and then a fall
- Al Jazirah showed a sharp increase starting in Q2 2023 with significant spikes in Q1 and Q4 2024
- North Darfur and South Darfur show significant fluctuations. North Darfur peaked in Q2 and Q4 2024, while South Darfur peaked in Q3 2023 followed by a decline to Q1 2024 and thereafter steady rise to Q4 2024
- West Darfur records a significant drop in violence events after Q2 2023, except for a slight rise in Q4 2024
- Sennar saw a significant increase in reported violent events with initial gradual increase to Q2 2024 before sharply increasing in the next quarter and then falling in Q4 2024.
- White Nile exhibited a gradual but steady increase over the period but the violence remained relatively low
- East Darfur exhibited fluctuations in reported violence events with peaks

in Q4 2023 and Q3 2024. However, the level of violence remained significantly lower compared to the other Darfur states.

- Reported violence events in Blue Nile, River Nile, Red Sea, Northern, Gedaref and Kassala has generally remained low

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12.2 Civilian targeting

12.2.1 The August 2024 ACLED Global Conflict Index, which assesses conflict situations according to 4 indicators – deadliness, danger to civilians, geographic diffusion, and armed group fragmentation – and based on analysis of political violence event data collected for the previous year⁸⁸ categorised the Sudan conflict as ‘extreme’, the 4th deadliest and 10th most dangerous country to civilians globally⁸⁹.

12.2.2 In speech at the Human Rights Council on 1 March 2024, Volker Türk, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights stated that the conflict in Sudan was characterised ‘by an insidious disregard for human life’ and ‘multiple, indiscriminate attacks striking residential areas and buildings.’ Türk further stated: ‘My Office has received disturbing reports of ethnically motivated killings, including beheadings in North Kordofan, and incidents in various areas, including Khartoum State, West Darfur, and Al Jazirah State.’⁹⁰

12.2.3 In a 19 May 2024 statement regarding the fighting in El Fasher, North Darfur the UK Foreign Secretary stated:

‘I am deeply concerned by highly credible reports that some of the violence in Darfur is ethnically motivated. Attacks against Masalit, Fur, Zaghawa, and other non-Arab communities by the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) and allied militias are already taking place around El Fasher. The ongoing pattern of violence in Darfur, including apparent systematic attacks against civilians, may amount to crimes against humanity.

‘I also condemn the indiscriminate shelling and aerial bombing in densely populated areas by the Sudanese Armed Forces, which has led to catastrophic losses of civilian life.’⁹¹

12.2.4 In May 2024, based on ‘over 220 interviews, verification and assessment of 110 photographs and videos, and analysis of satellite imagery and documents shared by humanitarian organizations’, HRW reported on the violence targeted at Masalits in El Geneina over several months in 2023. The report stated:

‘From late April until early November 2023, the RSF and allied militias conducted a systematic campaign to remove, including by killing, ethnic Massalit residents ... from El Geneina, home to an ethnically mixed population of around 540,000 people. Violence began on April 24 and continued in phases over seven weeks, peaking in mid-June, with another surge in November. The massacre ... was just one in a deluge of atrocities that the RSF and allied militias, predominantly from Darfuri Arab groups,

⁸⁸ ACLED, ‘[ACLED conflict index](#)’, updated July 2024

⁸⁹ ACLED ‘[Sudan: Mid-year metrics 2024](#)’ 9 August 2024

⁹⁰ OHCHR, ‘[High Commissioner outlines ‘insidious disregard for human life’ in Sudan](#)’, 1 March 2024

⁹¹ FCDO, ‘[El Fasher, Sudan: Foreign secretary’s statement](#)’, 19 May 2024

have carried out in El Geneina and West Darfur in general since the outbreak of the conflict ... on April 15, 2023... Over the next weeks, and even after Massalit armed groups lost control of their neighborhoods, the RSF and allied militias systematically targeted unarmed civilians, killing them in large numbers. Adolescent boys and men were especially singled out for killings, but among those unlawfully killed were also many children and women... Women and girls were raped, and detainees were tortured and otherwise ill-treated... Many abuses carried out by the RSF and allied militias documented in this report constitute war crimes and crimes against humanity. The targeting of Massalit people and other non-Arab communities with the apparent objective of at least having them permanently leave the region constitutes ethnic cleansing.⁹²

- 12.2.5 A July 2024 report by HRW that focused on conflict-related sexual violence in Khartoum, Bahri and Omdurman noted: 'The parties have used explosive weapons in civilian areas across Khartoum, indiscriminately shelled, and in the case of SAF, used air-dropped bombs in civilian neighborhoods and against essential infrastructure, leaving the capital in ruins.'⁹³
- 12.2.6 A July 2024 report by Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) which draws on medical and operational data collected from 15 April 2023 to 15 May 2024 (MSF report July 2024) observed: 'In Western Darfur, violence has taken an ethnic dimension, targeted against the Masalit tribe, and has included forced displacement, unlawful killing, and other forms of inhuman treatment reportedly by the RSF and affiliated groups. In June 2023, MSF teams in Chad treated over 800 war-wounded patients in three days, most of them Masalit having fled El Geneina city and its surroundings.'⁹⁴
- 12.2.7 Willis and Srinivasan October 2024 article commented: 'But, while the army seems to have the upper hand at present, neither they nor the RSF looks likely to win outright. Instead, the two sides keep up a mutual battering with [ill-aimed barrages](#) of artillery fire and bombs that [destroy markets](#), wreck hospitals, and each day add to [the grim toll](#) of civilian death and misery.'⁹⁵
- 12.2.8 The HRC October 2024 report noted:
- 'In some parts of the country, the violence had an ethnic undertone. This is particularly manifest in the attacks carried out against non-Arab communities, including the Masalit, in West Darfur. In El Geneina, the capital of West Darfur, the current conflict further stretched pre-existing tribal tensions. Between April and November 2023, the conflict in El Geneina pitted the RSF and its predominately Arab allied militias against the SAF and their allies, including the Sudanese Alliance led at the time by the Governor of West Darfur Khamis Abakar, and other Masalit ethnic groups. The ethnic violence that ensued reflects enduring tensions that have been simmering for many years and can be traced back several decades ... In addition to the ethnic undertone, violations targeting the Masalit community were also perpetrated along intersecting gender lines. Masalit men were systematically targeted for killing. The RSF and allied militias went door to door in Masalit

⁹² HRW, "[The Massalit Will Not Come Home](#)" [Ethnic Cleansing and Crimes Against ...](#)', 9 May 2024

⁹³ HRW, '[Khartoum is not safe for women!](#)' [Sexual violence against women and girls ...](#)', 28 July 2024

⁹⁴ MSF, '[A war on people: The human cost of conflict and violence...](#)', (page 4), 22 July 2024

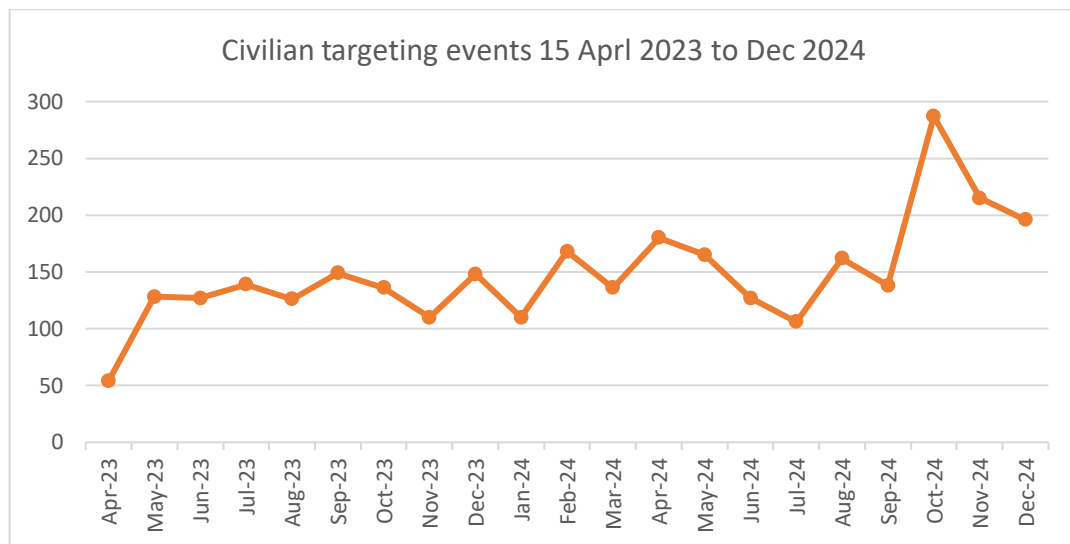
⁹⁵ Willis and Srinivasan, The Conversation, [Sudan's brutal war ...](#), 14 October 2024

neighbourhoods, looking for men and brutally attacking and killing them, sometimes in front of their families... Lawyers, doctors, human rights defenders, academics, community and religious leaders were also specifically targeted... RSF commanders reportedly issued orders to “comb the city” and place checkpoints throughout... Women were assaulted, raped and robbed of their belongings because of their gender and ethnicity. The attackers used derogative terms about the Masalit in the context of rape and other forms of sexual violence... Several women reported that they were explicitly told by the RSF and its allied militias to leave for Chad and not to return or else they would be harmed...⁹⁶

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12.3 ACLED data on civilian targeting events

12.3.1 From 15 April 2023 to 31 December 2024, ACLED recorded 3,107 civilian targeting events⁹⁷ defined as ‘events in which civilians were the main or only target of an event’⁹⁸.



12.3.2 ACLED also recorded civilian targeting events for each of Sudan’s state. Khartoum (31.3%) had the highest number of reported civilian targeting events followed by Al Jazirah (24.5%) and the North Darfur (13.2%). The least civilian targeting events were recorded in Kassala, Northern, Red Sea, Blue Nile, Gedaref and River Nile states⁹⁹. The below table, based on the ACLED Data, shows quarterly trends in civilian targeting in each of Sudan’s 18 states and the proportion of reported events in each state as a proportion of the total.

⁹⁶ HRC, [‘Findings of the investigations conducted ...’](#), (paragraphs 153, 158, 159), 23 October 2024

⁹⁷ ACLED, [‘Explorer’](#) (political violence /Sudan/ event count/), accessed 16 January 2025

⁹⁸ ACLED, [‘ACLED Codebook’](#) (page 23), updated 3 October 2023

⁹⁹ ACLED, [‘Explorer’](#) (political violence /Sudan/ event count/), accessed 16 January 2025

State	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023	Q1 2024	Q2 2024	Q3 2024	Q4 2024	Total	As % of total
Khartoum	153	243	192	83	77	116	109	973	31.3%
Al Jazirah	7	13	64	212	167	80	217	760	24.5%
North Darfur	18	23	10	11	102	51	195	410	13.2%
West Darfur	98	21	17	5	3	2	20	166	5.3%
South Darfur	18	27	25	4	21	23	42	160	5.1%
North Kordofan	3	25	28	19	36	12	12	135	4.3%
Central Darfur	4	22	30	7	5	15	14	97	3.1%
South Kordofan	4	16	7	34	16	12	8	97	3.1%
Sennar	0	0	4	9	9	42	22	86	2.8%
West Kordofan	0	10	6	9	19	8	6	58	1.9%
White Nile	0	1	1	8	6	20	20	56	1.8%
East Darfur	0	2	3	5	2	11	15	38	1.2%
River Nile	0	5	0	5	2	9	4	25	0.8%
Gedaref	2	0	3	2	4	2	2	15	0.5%
Blue Nile	0	4	1	1	0	1	7	14	0.2%
Red Sea	2	0	2	0	1	0	2	7	0.2%
Northern	0	1	0	0	2	1	3	7	0.2%
Kassala	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	3	0.1%
Total	309	414	394	414	472	406	698	3107	100%

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12.4 Conflict casualties

12.4.1 The OHCHR reported that from June to August 2024, it documented over 864 civilian deaths in attacks on residential areas across Sudan¹⁰⁰.

According to the June 2024 UN Secretary General's report on children in armed conflict covering January to December 2023 (UNSG June 2024 report), the conflict has killed 480 and maimed 764 children. The report noted that 'child casualties resulted mainly from crossfire (813), shelling (146), aerial bombardment (129) and shooting (83).'¹⁰¹

12.4.2 A September 2024 World Health Organization report noted:

'More than 18800 people are reported to have been killed and over 33 000 injured since the conflict broke out in April 2023 according to humanitarian partners. Most civilian deaths have been the result of the use of heavy weaponry in densely populated areas, with women and children constituting a significant proportion of the casualties reported. Violence against civilians was reported at particularly alarming rates in Al Jazirah and North Darfur states.

'Estimates for the total number of people injured or killed during the war vary; but Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), which works in eight states across Sudan, revealed that in just one of the hospitals it supports, Al Nao hospital in Omdurman, Khartoum state, 6 776 patients were treated for injuries caused by violence between 15 August 2023 and 30 April 2024, an average of 26 people per day. Furthermore, MSF has treated thousands of patients for conflict related injuries across the country, most for injuries caused by explosions, gunshots and stabbings.'¹⁰²

12.4.3 A 25 September 2024 Guardian (UK) article stated: 'The World Health Organization said this month at least 20,000 people had been killed in the

¹⁰⁰ UN OHCHR, '[Sudan: This tragedy needs to end, now, urges Deputy High ...](#)' 10 September 2024

¹⁰¹ UNGA, '[Children and armed conflict : Report of the Secretary...](#)' (paragraph 192), 3 June 2024

¹⁰² WHO, '[Public Health Situation Analysis \(PHSA\)](#)' (page 12), 1 September 2024

conflict. But some estimates are far higher, with the US envoy on Sudan, Tom Perriello, saying that up to 150,000 people may have died.¹⁰³

- 12.4.4 On 12 November 2024, the Social Research Network (SSRN), a repository for preprints [early-stage research papers that have not been peer-reviewed] and research papers¹⁰⁴ posted a preprint paper by Masyssoon Dahab, Riaf AbuKoura and Francesco Checchi, of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, and others, based on a study of wartime all-cause and intentional-injury mortality in Sudan between 15 April 2023 and June 2024 (Dahab and others 2024). Methodologically, the study employed:

‘[A] retrospective observational study collecting individual decedent lists from three sources: 1) a survey disseminated through public social media, 2) a survey disseminated through private key informant networks and 3) public social media obituaries. We matched decedent records to merge duplicates within lists and decedents across lists. We describe patterns of mortality observed nationally and estimate mortality for Khartoum State using capture-recapture analysis.’¹⁰⁵

- 12.4.5 Dahab and others 2024 noted:

‘Intentional-injury deaths were disproportionately high in Kordofan and Darfur regions. We estimate that 61,202 all-cause deaths occurred in Khartoum state ... of which 26,024 ...[were] due to intentional injuries.

‘... The estimated intentional-injury deaths in Khartoum alone are significantly higher than killings reported for the entire country during the same period, highlighting substantial underreporting. Our findings suggest contrasting mortality patterns across Sudan, with a predominance of intentional injuries in Darfur and Kordofan regions.’¹⁰⁶

- 12.4.6 The same source added: ‘Outside Khartoum, in historically conflict-affected regions, the exceptionally high proportions of intentional-injury deaths may reflect large-scale ethnically targeted violence, much of which is invisible.’¹⁰⁷
- 12.4.7 The UNICEF Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa made a statement in January 2025 observing that: “As the conflict spread into new areas between June and December 2024, more than 600 incidents of grave violations against children were reported. A staggering 80 per cent of them were accounts of killing and maiming, primarily in Darfur, Kordofan and Khartoum States...”¹⁰⁸

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12.5 ACLED conflict fatalities

- 12.5.1 ACLED has documented reported fatalities resulting from political violence and civilian targeting events. ACLED does not collect data on injuries, therefore the term fatalities always refer to reported deaths¹⁰⁹. ACLED

¹⁰³ Guardian, ‘[US announces \\$424m in Sudan aid amid pleas to stop ...](#)’ 24 September 2024

¹⁰⁴ SSRN, ‘[About SSRN](#)’, no date

¹⁰⁵ Dahab and others, ‘[War-Time Mortality in Sudan ...](#)’ (Abstract), 12 November 2024

¹⁰⁶ Dahab and others, ‘[War-Time Mortality in Sudan ...](#)’ (Abstract), 12 November 2024

¹⁰⁷ Dahab and others, ‘[War-Time Mortality in Sudan: A Capture ...](#)’ (page 11), November 2024

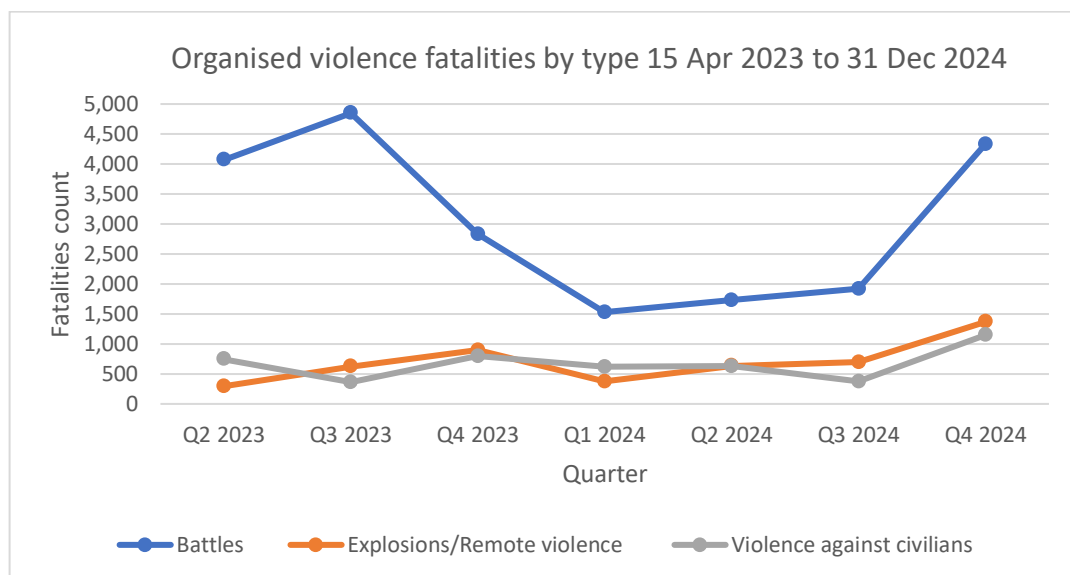
¹⁰⁸ UNICEF, ‘[Children bear the brunt of escalating conflict and famine in Sudan](#)’, 15 January 2025

¹⁰⁹ ACLED, ‘[Core methodology](#)’ (Fatalities), last updated 7 May 2024

explained:

‘... ACLED only records estimated fatalities when reported by the source material. When and where possible, ACLED researchers seek out information to triangulate the fatality numbers reported by sources, but ACLED does not independently verify reported fatality estimates. Additionally, ACLED is a living dataset, so all fatality figures are revised and corrected — upward or downward — if new or better information becomes available ... Fatality data are typically the most biased, and least accurate, component of conflict reporting. They are particularly prone to manipulation by armed groups, and occasionally the media, which may overstate or underreport fatalities for political purposes. These figures should therefore be understood as indicative estimates of reported fatalities, rather than definitive fatality counts.’¹¹⁰

12.5.2 From 15 April 2023 to 31 December 2024, ACLED recorded 30,813 reported fatalities of which 21,255 (69%) resulted from battles, 4,884 (16%) from explosions/remote violence, and 4,674 (15%) from violence against civilians¹¹¹. The graph below shows trends in fatalities by type during the period under review.



12.5.3 CPIT has produced below table based on ACLED data¹¹² showing quarterly trends in reported fatalities in each of Sudan’s 18 states. The table also shows the proportion of reported fatalities in each state as a percentage of the total fatalities reported.

¹¹⁰ ACLED, ‘[ACLED Codebook](#)’ (page 38), updated 13 October 2024

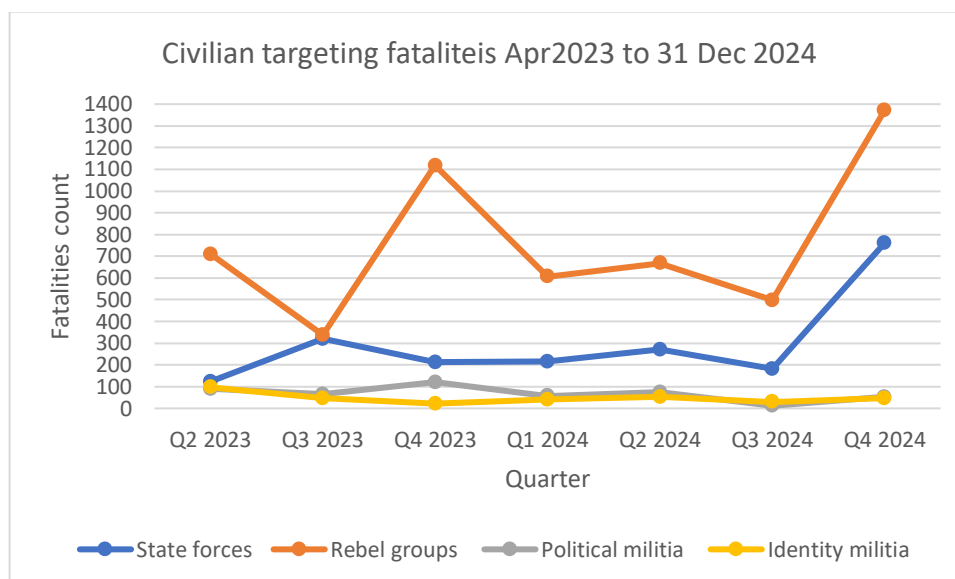
¹¹¹ ACLED, ‘[Explorer](#)’ (political violence /Sudan/ event count/, accessed 16 January 2025)

¹¹² ACLED, ‘[Explorer](#)’ (political violence /Sudan/ event count/, accessed 16 January 2025)

State	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023	Q1 2024	Q2 2024	Q3 2024	Q4 2024	Total	As % of total
Khartoum	941	3618	1559	943	464	763	614	8902	28.9%
North Darfur	343	91	60	151	1088	1057	2981	5771	18.7%
West Darfur	2895	302	1670	13	0	29	122	5031	16.3%
Al Jazirah	12	123	202	438	620	384	1999	3778	12.3%
South Darfur	297	892	381	39	58	34	173	1874	6.1%
North Kordofan	350	231	177	173	280	103	166	1480	4.8%
South Kordofan	66	192	190	328	150	39	29	994	3.2%
West Kordofan	34	109	92	244	128	179	87	873	2.8%
Sennar	0	0	8	100	109	214	344	775	2.5%
Central Darfur	82	239	112	4	9	9	10	465	1.5%
Blue Nile	9	34	5	0	1	43	165	257	0.8%
White Nile	29	0	17	15	49	49	82	241	0.8%
East Darfur	4	0	32	29	6	38	29	138	0.4%
River Nile	0	0	16	29	13	33	15	106	0.3%
Gedaref	0	1	1	18	17	4	28	69	0.2%
Northern	44	0	1	0	1	0	4	50	0.2%
Red Sea	1	0	0	0	0	6	0	7	0.0%
Kassala	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	2	0.0%
Sudan	5107	5833	4523	2524	2993	2985	6848	30813	100.0%

12.5.4 Regarding civilian targeting, ACLED recorded 8,193 fatalities of which 2,083 (25%) resulted from state forces, 5,305 (65%) from rebel groups, 471 (6%) from political militia and 334 (4%) from identity militia during the period under review ¹¹³.

12.5.5 CPIT has produced graph below showing trends in civilian targeting fatalities based on the ACLED data. The graph shows civilian targeting fatalities more than from 202 in July 2024 to 726 in December 2024 with those from state actors showing a steady rise.



12.5.6 The table below table based on ACLED data¹¹⁴ shows quarterly fatalities from civilian targeting for each state.

¹¹³ ACLED, 'Explorer' (political violence /Sudan/ event count/, accessed 16 January 2025

¹¹⁴ ACLED, 'Explorer' (political violence /Sudan/ event count/, accessed 13 December 2024

State	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023	Q1 2024	Q2 2024	Q3 2024	Q4 2024	Total	As % of total
Khartoum	213	476	628	163	268	257	413	2418	29.5%
Al Jazirah	12	18	174	364	363	149	615	1695	20.7%
West Darfur	710	105	454	2	0	2	10	1283	15.7%
North Darfur	35	19	13	23	202	33	579	904	11.0%
North Kordofan	16	19	80	80	97	14	80	386	4.7%
Sennar	0	0	6	45	28	124	183	386	4.7%
South Kordofan	4	24	12	143	33	28	26	270	3.3%
South Darfur	24	41	47	5	27	11	100	255	3.1%
West Kordofan	0	32	3	41	25	32	20	153	1.9%
Blue Nile	0	14	0	0	0	3	125	142	1.7%
Central Darfur	5	20	52	4	5	9	8	103	1.3%
White Nile	0	0	2	6	9	16	56	89	1.1%
East Darfur	0	0	0	29	6	31	8	74	0.9%
River Nile	0	0	0	13	0	6	2	21	0.3%
Gedaref	1	0	1	1	1	3	5	12	0.1%
Kassala	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	2	0.0%
Northern	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0.0%
Red Sea	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1020	769	1472	919	1065	719	2230	8194	100.0%

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12.1 ACLED's conflict exposure estimates

12.1.1 ACLED and WorldPop, based at the University of Southampton that maps populations across the globe¹¹⁵, have developed the conflict exposure tool to measure how people are affected by conflict. ACLED has defined conflict exposure as:

'[A] measure of the number of people living within 1 kilometer, 2 km, and 5 km of each conflict incident or demonstration.

'To be exposed to conflict means that the population is living in an area of active disorder or unrest. People are harmed by this exposure in different ways: they may be directly injured; they may find themselves in active conflict; they and their group may be targeted; or they may be affected by the destruction of their village, neighborhood, or town.'¹¹⁶

12.1.2 ACCORD, the Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation which provide independently and neutrally researched information on countries of origin of asylum seekers in order to contribute to fair and efficient asylum procedures for determining international protection¹¹⁷ considered the methodology, including its limitations, used in the conflict exposure tool in a blog post dated 14 August 2024. It concluded:

'... we consider the new measure of conflict exposure is a valuable addition to the ACLED figures on the number of incidents, the targeting of civilians, and general (not only civilian) fatalities. Particularly in the context of quantitative descriptions of the security situation, conflict exposure can provide a useful add-on to [country of origin information] COI reports on security-related issues, as it allows a better understanding of the varying effects of different conflict types and actors on civilian populations.

'In the context of COI research, we, however, encourage to keep in mind the

¹¹⁵ WorldPop, '[About us](#)', no date

¹¹⁶ ACLED '[Conflict exposure: A new measure of the impact of conflict on civilians](#)' (overview), no date

¹¹⁷ ACCORD, '[About ACCORD](#)', no date

limitations of the measure. These include ... the lack of accounting for dynamic population movements, the implications of efforts to avoid double-counting, and the risk of over- or underestimation due to the varying levels of geographic precision in conflict event data. When incorporating the conflict exposure measure into COI products, we propose that comparing equivalent time periods for the same location/area is the most suitable approach.¹¹⁸

12.1.3 According to the ACLED 13,511,319 people were exposed to organised violence between January and 31 December 2024. The number of people exposed in each state is presented in below ACLED table. The table shows the estimated population exposed to organised violence events within 1, 2 and 5 kilometres. The best column represents best estimate of exposed populations based on event type and intensity as calculated by ACLED conflict exposure calculator tool.¹¹⁹

State	1km	2km	5km	Best	Total Events
Al Jazirah	1,124,270	1,914,077	2,994,844	2,859,601	974
Blue Nile	48,547	117,287	278,618	270,644	29
Central Darfu	20,613	49,819	74,390	64,022	46
East Darfur	79,624	222,522	399,672	384,786	55
Gedaref	65,557	150,957	346,212	313,283	32
Kassala	24,111	82,321	289,955	289,955	5
Khartoum	1,312,832	2,690,138	4,555,016	4,517,546	2,154
North Darfur	190,615	456,039	998,645	922,089	908
North Kordof	80,535	203,178	617,599	607,642	183
Northern	9,982	35,238	109,717	83,496	9
Red Sea	11,015	50,051	168,550	50,134	5
River Nile	65,578	171,808	433,709	399,390	46
Sennar	205,607	424,492	819,948	798,895	233
South Darfur	138,459	318,756	707,059	663,232	142
South Kordof	44,914	99,816	204,390	185,287	130
West Darfur	52,963	111,309	172,375	160,548	62
West Kordofa	54,576	122,575	195,891	195,152	136
White Nile	111,867	307,865	761,091	745,617	114

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13. Impact of the conflict

13.1 Damage to civilian infrastructure

13.1.1 The 14 August 2024 Acaps situation update, citing sources, noted with respect to Khartoum: ‘The hostilities, especially involving the use of heavy weaponry, have damaged or destroyed civilian infrastructure in Khartoum. By 25 October 2023, six months of fighting had destroyed an estimated 33,000 buildings in Khartoum state. The warring parties have targeted roads and bridges, impeding the ease and freedom of movement of people and supplies within and out of the state.’¹²⁰

13.1.2 The 14 May 2024 UN Secretary-General’s report to the Security Council on protection of civilians in armed conflict noted: ‘In the Sudan, extensive damage to water, sanitation and electricity networks, as well as hospitals and clinics, was reported across the country.’¹²¹ The same source added,

¹¹⁸ ACCORD, [ACLED's Conflict Exposure – One Measure to Describe a Conflict](#), 14 August 2024

¹¹⁹ ACLED, [Conflict exposure calculator](#) (organised violence/Sudan/Adm level 1/..., 16 January 2025)

¹²⁰ Acaps, [‘Situational update: Khartoum state’](#) 14 August 2024

¹²¹ UNSC, [‘Protection of civilians in armed conflict Report of the ...’](#) (paragraph 10), 14 May 2024

'less than one third of medical facilities in conflict-affected areas were functioning at the end of 2023'¹²² and that the 'conflict triggered and aggravated water scarcity.'¹²³

- 13.1.3 An April 2024 report by the International Rescue Committee (IRC), an organisation that works in more than 50 countries to help people affected by humanitarian crises¹²⁴ (IRC report April 2024) noted:

'Multiple attacks on healthcare facilities and workers, and the occupation of medical facilities by armed groups, has resulted in the destruction of medical infrastructure and the closure of hospitals. At least 284 such attacks have been recorded since April 2023. By the end of 2023, 70% of health care facilities in Sudan's conflict-affected areas are either not operating or are only partially functional. The result is an estimated 11 million Sudanese in need of urgent health assistance.'¹²⁵

- 13.1.4 The UNSG June 2024 report noted:

'A total of 85 attacks on schools (8) and hospitals (77) were verified, including attacks on protected personnel (17). Violations were attributed to unidentified perpetrators (34), including to crossfire between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces (21), and to attacks carried out by the Rapid Support Forces (37), the Sudanese Armed Forces (11), the Sudanese Police Force (1), the Joint Security-Keeping Force (1) and SLA/MM (1). In addition, the military use of 38 schools (27) and hospitals (11) by the Rapid Support Forces (24), the Sudanese Armed Forces (11), SLA/AW (1), the Central Reserve Police (1) and unidentified perpetrators (1) was verified.'¹²⁶

- 13.1.5 The July 2024 UNICEF situation report noted: 'The airstrikes and artillery exchanges have resulted in power outages, water shortages, and severe disruptions to daily life. The humanitarian situation is dire, with hospitals operating at reduced capacity and widespread displacement.'¹²⁷

- 13.1.6 The MSF July 2024 report observed regarding health:

'Destruction, looting, and the presence of weapons in medical facilities have been a consistent feature of the conflict, making hospitals and healthcare centres unsafe environments, and limiting access to care for patients in conflict zones. An estimated 70–80% of hospitals in conflict-affected areas are no longer functional, and more than 65% of the population lacks access to healthcare ... Our teams have reported no less than 60 incidents of SAF and RSF violence and attacks on MSF staff, assets and infrastructure ...'¹²⁸

- 13.1.7 The HRC October 2024 report stated:

'...[T]he Fact-Finding Mission finds that the RSF and its allied militias engaged in a pattern of destruction of objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population, including through intentionally directing attacks

¹²² UNSC, '[Protection of civilians in armed conflict Report of the ...](#)' (paragraph 17), 14 May 2024

¹²³ UNSC, '[Protection of civilians in armed conflict Report of the ...](#)' (paragraph 23), 14 May 2024

¹²⁴ IRC, '[Who we are](#)' no date

¹²⁵ IRC, '[Sudan crisis report: One year of conflict](#)' (page 3), April 2024

¹²⁶ UNGA '[Children and armed conflict: Report of the Secretary ...](#)' (paragraph 193), 3 June 2024

¹²⁷ UNICEF, '[Sudan humanitarian situation report No. 21](#)', 31 July 2024

¹²⁸ MSF, '[A war on people: The human cost of conflict and violence in Sudan](#)', (page 12), 22 July 2024

against specially protected objects, in violation of international humanitarian law. Under international human rights law, it finds that these acts violate the economic, social and cultural rights of the civilian population, in particular their rights to physical and mental health and to food, water and housing.¹²⁹

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13.2 Livelihoods and humanitarian access

13.2.1 For detailed discussion of livelihoods and humanitarian access see [Sudan Country policy and information note: humanitarian situation](#).

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14. Population displacement

14.1 Internally displaced persons (IDPs)

14.1.1 The January 2025 IOM DTM Sudan Mobility Overview noted:

‘As of 31 December 2024, Sudan hosted an estimated 11,559,970 IDPs. Of these, an estimated 8,823,862 were displaced since the onset of the conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) on 15 April 2023. The total number of IDPs increased by 27 per cent during 2024, from 9,052,822 IDPs in December 2023 to 11,559,970 IDPs in December 2024. Over 30 per cent of the population in Sudan has been displaced.

‘IDPs originated from locations across all 18 states in Sudan and were displaced to 10,119 locations, in 184 localities, across all 18 states. The top states of origin were Khartoum (32%), South Darfur (18%), and North Darfur (15%), while the states hosting the most IDPs were South Darfur (16%), North Darfur (15%), and Gedaref (9%). Of all IDPs, an estimated 1 per cent (119,355 IDPs) were non-Sudanese nationals. Approximately 54 per cent were female, while 46 per cent were male. Over half of IDPs (53%) were children under the age of 18-years-old.’¹³⁰

14.1.2 With respect to the causes of displacement the same source the January 2025 IOM DTM Sudan Mobility Overview noted: ‘The majority of IDP households were displaced due to armed conflict, violence, or attacks (93%), followed by inter-communal clashes (6%). Approximately 1 per cent were initially displaced due to natural hazards (fires or floods), and less than 1 per cent were displaced due to economic reasons.’¹³¹ Similarly, IOM January 2025 report ‘A Year in Review: Displacement in Sudan (2024)’ stated: ‘The increase in total IDPs during 2024 primarily reflected specific waves of intensified conflict which led to increased displacement. DTM reported on 389 specific events that triggered sudden displacement in 2024, including incidents of armed conflict, attacks, and intercommunal conflict, as well as natural hazard events, including floods and fires.’¹³²

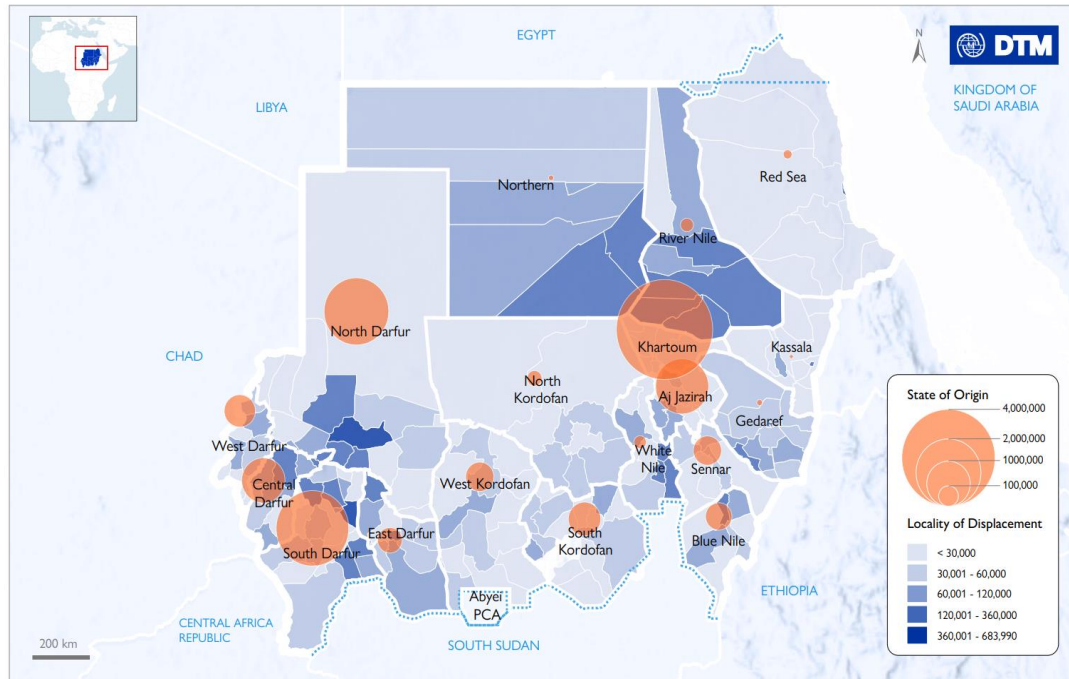
14.1.3 IOM has produced below map showing estimated IDPs across Sudan as of 17 December 2024.

¹²⁹ HRC, ‘[Findings of the investigations conducted by the ...](#)’, (paragraph 145), 23 October 2024

¹³⁰ IOM DTM, ‘[Sudan Mobility Overview \(4\)](#)’, (page 2), 9 January 2025

¹³¹ IOM DTM, ‘[Sudan Mobility Overview \(4\)](#)’, (page 7), 9 January 2025

¹³² IOM) DTM, ‘[A Year in Review: Displacement in Sudan \(2024\)](#)’ (pages 4), 5 January 2025



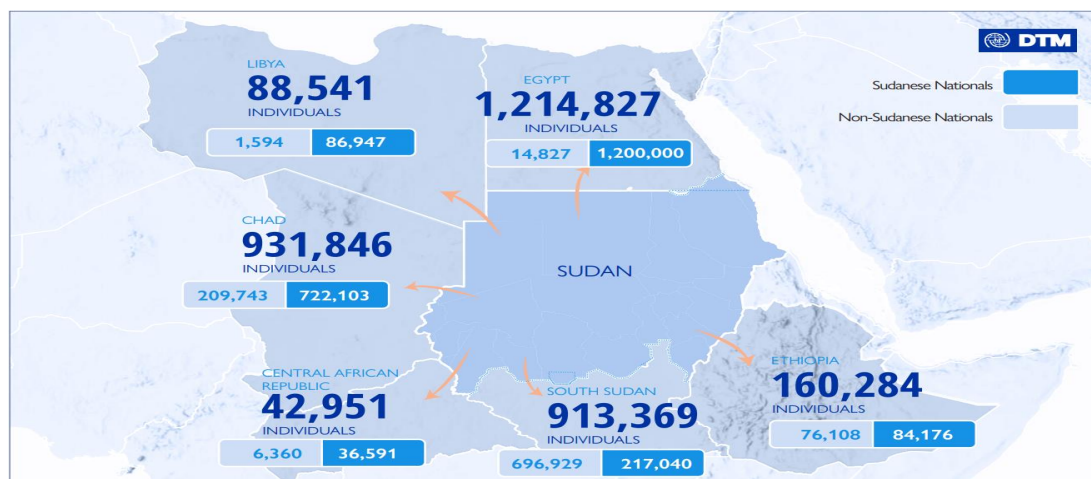
This map is for illustration purposes only. Names and boundaries do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM.
 Map 3: Total Estimated IDPs Across Sudan, 17 December 2024

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14.2 External displacement

14.2.1 The January 2025 IOM DTM Sudan Mobility Overview noted: ‘Since the outbreak of the conflict on 15 April 2023, an estimated 3,352,418 individuals crossed borders into neighbouring countries. The majority reportedly crossed into Egypt (36%), Chad (28%), and South Sudan (27%). Of these individuals, an estimated 70 per cent were Sudanese nationals, while 30 per cent were foreign nationals or returnees IOM has produced below map showing external displacement.



This map is for illustration purposes only. Names and boundaries do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM. Map represents IDPs displaced both before and after 15 April 2023.
 Map 9: Mixed Cross-Border Movements from Sudan into Neighbouring Countries Since 15 April 2023

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¹³³ IOM) DTM, ‘[A Year in Review: Displacement in Sudan \(2024\)](#)’ (page 6), 5 January 2025

¹³⁴ IOM DTM, ‘[Sudan Mobility Overview \(4\)](#)’, 9 January 2025

15. Criminality and the rule of law

15.1 Lawlessness

15.1.1 A 29 February 2024 report by Acaps observed:

‘The security situation has deteriorated across most of the country. Lawlessness has expanded in urban centres, exposing civilian populations to violence, assault, theft, and looting. At the same time, proponents of the warring parties have been reported to promote criminality in areas under their control, including instances of looting, assaults of civilians, abductions, and enforced disappearances. Worsening this situation are the mobilisation and arming of civilians by both parties of the conflict and part of the civilian population arming themselves for protection from armed violence, heightening protection risks among the public.’¹³⁵

15.1.2 A February 2024 UN OHCHR report noted: ‘In Khartoum State, Darfur and Kordofan regions, attacks and looting targeting the judiciary and courts impacted the administration of justice and the rule of law.’¹³⁶ The same source added:

‘The departure or displacement of judicial personnel due to the conflict contributed to the shutdown of justice institutions in some areas. Many judges, prosecutors and other judicial staff fled Khartoum to other States, including the Chief Justice ...

‘In the current circumstances, the domestic justice system does not have the means or capacity to conduct prompt, independent, and credible investigations or to prosecute persons in a manner consistent with international human rights norms and standards. Challenges include the high number of allegations of violations and abuses, lack of protection for judicial actors, victims and witnesses, limitations in the legal framework and the capacities of the judicial system.’¹³⁷

15.1.3 MSF report July 2024 report observed:

‘MSF patients describe fighters targeting civilians in their homes – forcing thousands to flee out of fear of attacks. Incidents shared with MSF include armed groups storming into homes, committing arson, looting property and cattle, and forcibly displacing households ...

‘Civilians fleeing conflict areas describe widespread harassment and abuse at checkpoints. Theft of belongings – particularly money and phones – are commonly reported in patients’ accounts. Refugees from Darfur described how ‘Arab soldiers’ stole their belonging and assaulted them on their way to Chad ...

‘MSF staff and patients have reported concerning accounts of both SAF and RSF abducting and arresting people without justification. Motivation included mere suspicion of victims pertaining to enemy groups, extortion, attempts to

¹³⁵ Acaps, [‘Protection concerns: ten months into the war’](#), 29 February 2024

¹³⁶ OHCHR, [‘Annual report of the United Nations....’](#), (paragraph 87), 22 February 2024

¹³⁷ OHCHR, [‘Annual report of the United Nations High...’](#) (paragraphs 90, 93), 22 February 2024

forcibly recruit individuals into armed groups, and other forms of exploitation.¹³⁸

- 15.1.4 The UN OCHA on the armed violence in Al Jazirah date 28 October 2024 noted:

‘Initial field reports indicate that between 20 and 25 October the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) launched a major attack across eastern Aj [sic] Jazirah. Armed men reportedly shot at civilians indiscriminately and committed acts of sexual violence against women and girls, along with widespread looting of markets, homes, and torching farms, leading to widespread devastation. Residents from at least 30 villages and towns were reportedly subjected to physical assaults, humiliation, and threats resulting in thousands of civilians fleeing their homes for safety. Those who remain face severe threats, including potential sexual assault and loss of life ...’¹³⁹

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15.1 Sexual violence

- 15.1.1 A July 2024 report by Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) which draws on medical and operational data collected from 15 April 2023 to 15 May 2024 (MSF report July 2024) observed:

‘In Sudan, cases of sexual and gender-based violence [SGBV] disclosed to MSF teams and treated in our facilities remain limited and most likely underreported. Due to stigma and security concerns around incidents of sexual and gender-based violence survivors are often unable to seek care safely. Survivors of, and healthcare providers for, conflict-related sexual violence face risks of retaliation from armed groups and perpetrators, and fear speaking out due to fear or stigma. Shrinking protection services and safe spaces have drastically reduced the opportunities for survivors to break the silence. Confidential identification spaces, safe shelters, specialised case management and mental health follow up remain limited, dysfunctional or non-existent in the areas where MSF operates. ... Data from MSF facilities supporting Sudanese refugees in Chad, however, hints at the widespread and large-scale use of sexual violence as a feature of the conflict, particularly targeting women and girls.

‘In MSF’s hospital at the Chadian border, 135 cases of SGBV, most of them occurring in Sudan during the conflict, were disclosed to staff between July and December 2023 ...’¹⁴⁰

- 15.1.2 In a speech at the 57th session of the Human Rights Council on 10 September 2024, Nada Al-Nashif, the United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights said:

‘Our Office is particularly alarmed by the use, since the beginning of the conflict, of sexual violence as a weapon of war. We have documented 97 incidents involving 172 victims, predominantly women and girls – which is a gross under-representation of the reality. Responsibility for 81 per cent of incidents was attributed to men in RSF uniform and affiliated armed men.

¹³⁸ MSF, ‘[A war on people: The human cost of conflict and violence...](#)’, (pages 16 to 19), 22 July 2024

¹³⁹ OCHA, ‘[Sudan: Humanitarian impact of Armed Violence in Aj Jazirah ...](#)’, 28 October 2024

¹⁴⁰ MSF, ‘[A war on people: The human cost of conflict and violence in Sudan](#)’ (page 21), 22 July 2024

We also received credible reports of sexual violence attributed to SAF troops and the allied armed movements ...¹⁴¹

15.1.3 The HRC October 2024 report noted:

‘The ongoing conflict between the SAF and the RSF has seen a resurgence of sexual violence. Especially rape and gang-rape are widespread and continue to occur on a large scale, in particular during invasions of cities, attacks on IDP sites and against individuals fleeing conflict-affected areas, as well as prolonged occupation of urban residential areas by armed men...

‘A large majority of rape cases and other forms of sexual violence documented in this report have been attributed to men wearing RSF uniforms and, in the context of Darfur, armed men allied to the RSF -the Janjaweed-, wearing traditional attire... While women and girls between 17 and 35 years old constitute the majority of the victims in the evidence reviewed by the Fact-Finding Mission, first-hand sources informed of rape of girls as young as eight years and women as old as 75 years... Men and boys were not spared, although the number of reported cases is substantially lower...¹⁴²

15.1.4 The same report observed that:

‘Based on a review of credible open and confidential sources, the Fact-Finding Mission estimates that at least 400 survivors of conflict-related sexual violence, almost exclusively women and girls, were registered by hospitals and/or service providers and referred to some form of support in the Sudan from the start of the conflict to July 2024 ... These figures only account for cases that could be verified through referral, most of the time for the provision of medical and psychological support. While some of the data may overlap, it is safe to assume that this figure only represents the tip of the iceberg with most cases going unreported and the total figure being significantly higher... The Fact-Finding Mission found that men and boys were exposed to sexual violence in detention, including the use of rape, rape threats, forced nudity and beatings on their genitals as a form of ill-treatment or torture...¹⁴³

15.1.5 A HRW report of December 2024, based on in person and remote interviews with 93 people, ‘including 70 in informal settlements for displaced people in the Nuba Mountains region of South Kordofan state’, of which 7 were survivors of rape, reported that:

‘In total, the survivors [of rape] and other witnesses provided information about 79 girls and women, between the ages of 7 and 50, who reported being raped. Most incidents documented were gang rapes that occurred since December 31, 2023, in and around the town of Habila, and at an RSF base, also involving victims from the town of Fayu, approximately 17 kilometers south of Habila, in South Kordofan.¹⁴⁴

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¹⁴¹ OHCHR, ‘[Sudan: This tragedy needs to end, now, urges Deputy High ...](#)’, 10 September 2024

¹⁴² HRC, ‘[Findings of the investigations conducted...](#)’, (paragraphs 166 to 167, 171), 23 October 2024

¹⁴³ HRC, ‘[Findings of the investigations conducted...](#)’, (paragraphs 175, 176, 198), 23 October 2024

¹⁴⁴ HRW, ‘[Sudan: Fighters Rape Women and Girls, Hold Sex Slaves](#)’, 16 December 2024

16. Freedom of movement

16.1.1 The 2024 USSD human rights report covering events in 2023 noted:

'The OHCHR reported that both the RSF and SAF denied civilians safe passage to flee the fighting or to evacuate the injured in Khartoum and Omdurman. In El Geneina, the RSF and allied militias targeted members of the Massalit community as they attempted to flee violence in Darfur. Amnesty International and HRW reported that hundreds, including women and children, were killed as they attempted to cross the border.

'Armed opposition groups reportedly restricted the movement of citizens in conflict areas.

Internal movement was generally unhindered for citizens outside conflict areas prior to April 15 [2023] ...'¹⁴⁵

16.1.2 The UN Panel of Experts January 2024 report noted that IDP camps in West, South and Central Darfur were attacked and confined, aggravating the lack of access to medical care, water, and food. Young men were stopped at RSF-controlled checkpoints and denied access to other areas because they were suspected of joining SAF. During the RSF attacks on El Geneina in West Darfur between 24 April and 19 June 2023, the RSF and allied militias established checkpoints to confine the population and strategically placed snipers throughout the city to limit people's movement. The RSF harassed, searched, robbed, physically assaulted, and indiscriminately shot in the legs people who attempted to flee. Furthermore, the armed groups, extorted payments for safe passage and protection from convoys and vehicles passing through their areas of control in Darfur¹⁴⁶.

16.1.3 A 29 February 2024 Acaps report, citing sources, noted:

'Both the SAF and the RSF have imposed movement restrictions in their areas of control, precipitating increased protection concerns for both civilians and humanitarian aid workers. In Omdurman city, parts of which have been besieged since April 2023 ... the civilian population entrapped continues to experience restricted movement, exposing them to violence and the lack of access to safety. As at 8 January 2024, an access route from Sharg An Neel, Khartoum, into Aj Jazirah state was closed.'¹⁴⁷

16.1.4 The European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) conflict zone information bulletin (CZIB) issued on 31 July 2024 and valid until 31 January 2025 noted:

'Due to the current volatile situation in Sudan caused by on-going armed clashes ... there is a continued possible threat to civil aviation.

The primary threat to civil aviation stems from military operations with the availability for use in the conflict of air assets, anti-aircraft artillery (AAA) systems, [man-portable air defence system] MANPADS and [surface to air missiles] SAM systems. Aircraft on the ground are also at risk given military operations affecting airports. Based on the existing security situation, there is

¹⁴⁵ USSD, '[2023 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Sudan](#)' (section D), 23 April 2024

¹⁴⁶ UNSC, '[Final Report of the Panel of Experts ...](#)' (paragraphs 58 to 59, 69 to 70), 24 January 2022

¹⁴⁷ Acaps, '[Protection concerns: ten months into the war](#)' (page 4) 29 February 2024

continuous risk to aviation due to potential misidentification, miscalculation or collateral damage by the parties engaged, when using anti-aircraft weaponry. The presence and possible use of a wide range of weapon systems poses a HIGH risk for civil flights operating at all altitudes and flight levels.

'In view of the existing risk posed by military activities with the use of air assets and air-defence capabilities of the parties engaged in the conflict, EASA recommends not to fly within the airspace over Sudan at all altitudes and flight levels.'¹⁴⁸

- 16.1.5 Acaps update on Sudan situation dated 30 October 2024 noted that 'the RSF imposed a siege on the displaced people in Branko and Wad Al Fadi villages of Al Jazirah preventing people's movement... The report noted that with respect to Al Seriha village where RSF killed 124 civilians and looted or destroyed property 'insecurity is limiting the movement of humanitarian staff, hindering their access to the affected areas and constraining people's access to essential services.'¹⁴⁹

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¹⁴⁸ EASA, '[Airspace of Sudan CZIB-2023-01R4](#)', 31 July 2024

¹⁴⁹ Acaps, '[Sudan: Latest updates on Country situation](#)' 20 October 2024

Research methodology

The country of origin information (COI) in this note has been carefully selected in accordance with the general principles of COI research as set out in the [Common EU \[European Union\] Guidelines for Processing Country of Origin Information \(COI\)](#), April 2008, and the Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation's (ACCORD), [Researching Country Origin Information – Training Manual](#), 2024. Namely, taking into account the COI's relevance, reliability, accuracy, balance, currency, transparency and traceability.

Sources and the information they provide are carefully considered before inclusion. Factors relevant to the assessment of the reliability of sources and information include:

- the motivation, purpose, knowledge and experience of the source
- how the information was obtained, including specific methodologies used
- the currency and detail of information
- whether the COI is consistent with and/or corroborated by other sources

Commentary may be provided on source(s) and information to help readers understand the meaning and limits of the COI.

Wherever possible, multiple sourcing is used, and the COI compared to ensure that it is accurate and balanced and provides a comprehensive and up-to-date picture of the issues relevant to this note at the time of publication.

The inclusion of a source is not, however, an endorsement of it or any view(s) expressed.

Each piece of information is referenced in a footnote.

Full details of all sources cited and consulted in compiling the note are listed alphabetically in the [bibliography](#).

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Terms of Reference

The 'Terms of Reference' (ToR) provides a broad outline of the issues relevant to the scope of this note and forms the basis for the [country information](#).

The following topics were identified prior to drafting as relevant and on which research was undertaken:

- Geographic context
- Political context
 - Overthrow of President Omer al Bashir and establishment of transitional civilian led government
 - Juba agreement
 - October 2021 coup
- What has happened and where, who controls the territory?
 - Outbreak of conflict
 - geographic scope of the conflict
 - scale of the violence including attacks and fatalities
 - territorial control
- Impact of the conflict
 - Targeting of civilians
 - Numbers of civilian casualties (fatalities / injuries)
 - Damage to civilian infrastructure
 - Livelihoods
 - Population displacement – internally and externally
 - Lawlessness
- Freedom of movement including by land and air

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Version control and feedback

Clearance

Below is information on when this note was cleared:

- version **2.0**
- valid from **16 January 2025**

Official – sensitive: Not for disclosure – Start of section

The information in this section has been removed as it is restricted for internal Home office use only.

Official – sensitive: Not for disclosure – End of section

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Changes from last version of this note

Updated COI and assessment

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Feedback to the Home Office

Our goal is to provide accurate, reliable and up-to-date COI and clear guidance. We welcome feedback on how to improve our products. If you would like to comment on this note, please email the Country Policy and Information Team.

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Independent Advisory Group on Country Information

The [Independent Advisory Group on Country Information](#) (IAGCI) was set up in March 2009 by the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration to support them in reviewing the efficiency, effectiveness and consistency of approach of COI produced by the Home Office.

The IAGCI welcomes feedback on the Home Office's COI material. It is not the function of the IAGCI to endorse any Home Office material, procedures or policy. The IAGCI may be contacted at:

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Information about the IAGCI's work and a list of the documents which have been reviewed by the IAGCI can be found on the Independent Chief Inspector's pages of the [gov.uk website](#).

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