

Sudan Crisis: Regional Cross-Border Assessments

July 2023 | Sudan - Central African Republic, South Sudan, Chad

CONTEXT & RATIONALE

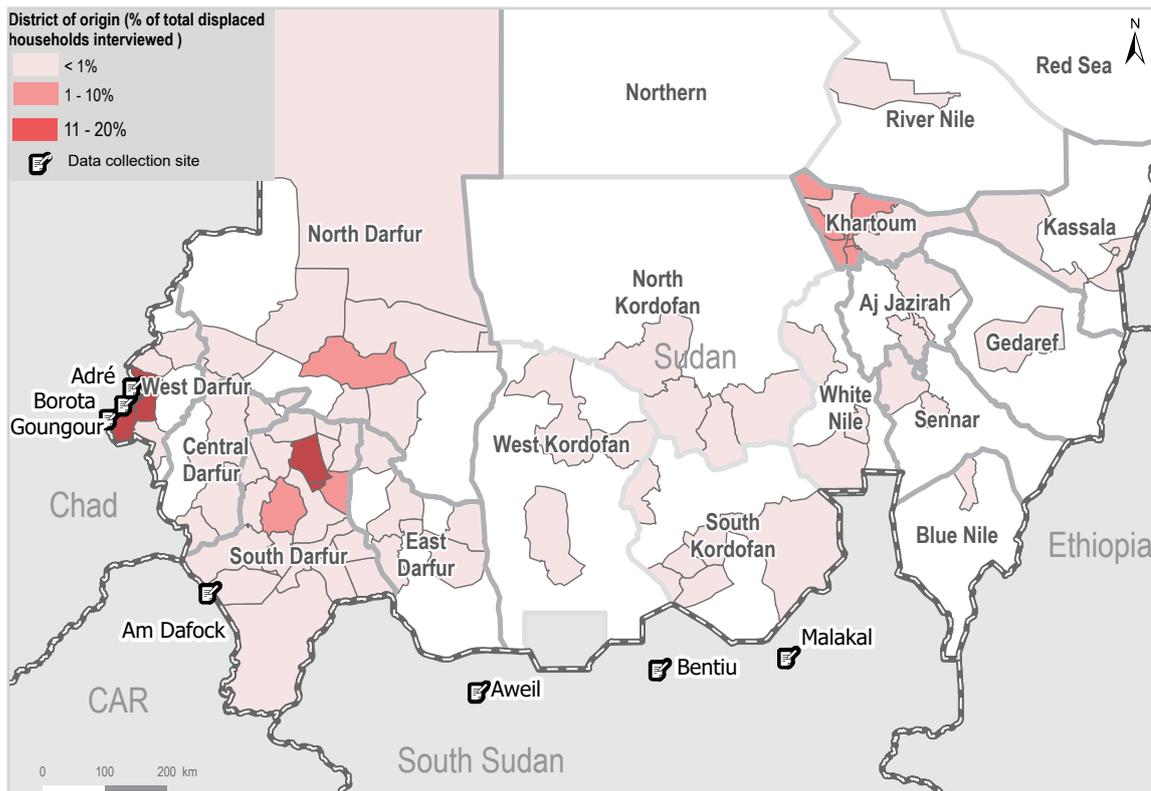
Conflict erupted in Sudan on the **15th of April 2023**, leading to **displacement of over one million Sudanese nationals into neighbouring countries**. The conflict, subsequent displacements, and anticipated macroeconomic consequences are exacerbating the already severe [humanitarian situation](#) in Sudan and its neighbouring countries.

Given the rapidly changing humanitarian context, REACH conducted **cross-border monitoring assessments** to provide humanitarian actors with up-to-date information on the extent of humanitarian needs in shock-affected parts of Sudan and among recent arrivals in neighbouring countries. This regional situation overview presents indicative findings on the humanitarian situation of **households who crossed the border into South Sudan, Central African Republic (CAR), and Chad**, and of the **remaining population in their areas of origin in Sudan**. Additional data and analysis from the cross-border and other assessments on the Sudan Crisis can be accessed via the [Sudan Crisis Thread](#) hosted by IMPACT Initiatives.

KEY MESSAGES

- Key informants (KIs) report that refugee and returnee households in South Sudan, CAR and Chad have left their area of origin (AoO) in Sudan due to **active conflict**. Responses suggest that **displacement experiences vary by state of origin**, with protection concerns being more frequently reported by KIs from West and South Darfur States, and the monetary cost of displacement being more frequently reported by KIs from Khartoum.
- KI responses suggest that risk of **robbery, violence, and kidnapping** are the main safety and security concerns faced by the remaining population in their AoO, in particular in **West Darfur** and **South Darfur** States.
- Findings indicate that access to **food, water** and **basic services** in KIs' AoO in Sudan has been negatively impacted by the conflict across all assessed locations.
- Access to **basic services** such as **health** and **educational facilities** as well as access to **clean drinking water** has reportedly decreased in the KIs' AoO since the beginning of the conflict. As the rainy season continues, flooding combined with reduced access to basic services and clean water could **increase the risk of disease outbreaks**.

Map 1: Respondents' area of origin, in % of households



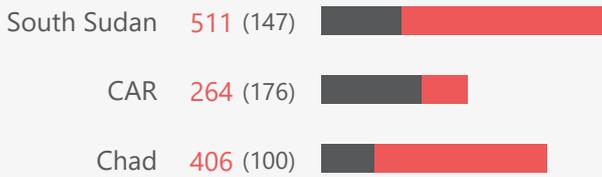


METHODOLOGY OVERVIEW

REACH enumerators conducted structured interviews with refugees and returnees entering **South Sudan, CAR, and Chad**. Four rounds of data collection were conducted at relevant border crossing points and in reception centers, between **17 May-22 June 2023**.

A total of **1 181 households** (HHs) were interviewed about their displacement journeys and priority needs in their current location. Of these 1181 households, **423 were key informants** (KIs) and reported on the situation and needs in their area of origin (AoO) in Sudan.

Number of HH respondents (of whom KIs) interviewed in each country



■ # of household respondents ■ # of key informant respondents as a part of total number HH respondents*

Selection of KIs was based on the following criteria:
1) if they reported that there were still people living in their AoO in Sudan.
2) if they confirmed that they had been present in or in contact with people in their AoO in the 30 days prior to data collection.

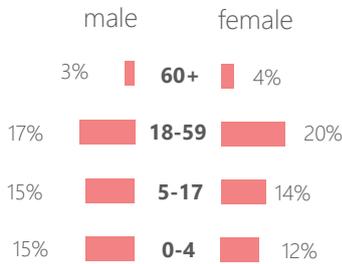
Information on the remaining population in Sudan are listed under KI Responses. Information about displacement journeys in Sudan, and information about the population in settlements in neighbouring countries, are listed under Household Responses.

Findings are **indicative** and cannot be generalised with a known level of precision. In addition, given the volatile nature of the ongoing conflict, the situation in areas of origin might have changed since KIs' departure from their community. Where possible, findings should be triangulated with new information. For more information on the methodology, please refer to page 8.

DEMOGRAPHICS*

Household responses

Age and gender of individuals in respondent households:



6 median number of members in the households interviewed

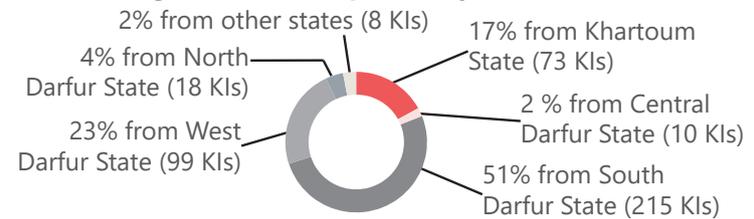
40% of households reported **travelling with a pregnant or nursing woman**

Based on the findings from this assessment, the households that have crossed the borders of Sudan's neighbouring countries are composed of a relatively young population (around 46% were minors). These findings are aligned with [UNHCR reports](#) stating that 48% of new arrivals in neighbouring countries are children.

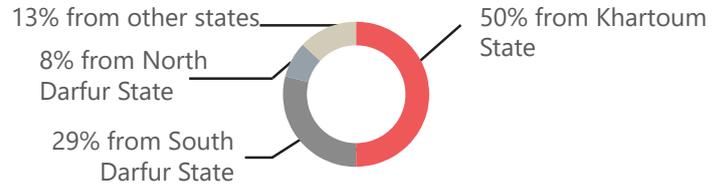
KI responses

With most KI respondents coming from **Khartoum, West Darfur, and South Darfur** States (see figure below), this situation overview provides key findings from KIs coming from these states.**

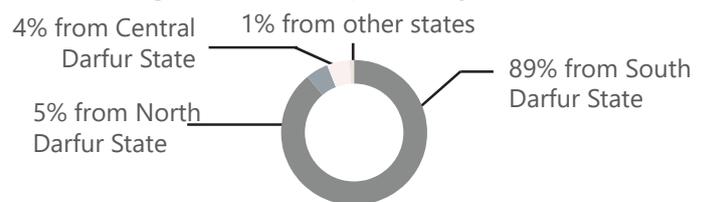
State of origin in Sudan, reported by all KIs:



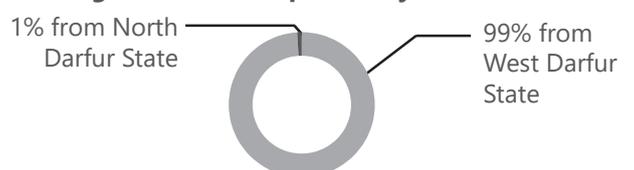
State of origin in Sudan, reported by KIs in South Sudan:



State of origin in Sudan, reported by KIs in CAR:



State of origin in Sudan, reported by KIs in Chad:



* KIs responded to both questionnaire components (household and KI).

**These numbers do not reflect the number of new arrivals in each country. For information about the numbers of arrivals in Chad, South Sudan and CAR see [IOM-DTM reports](#).

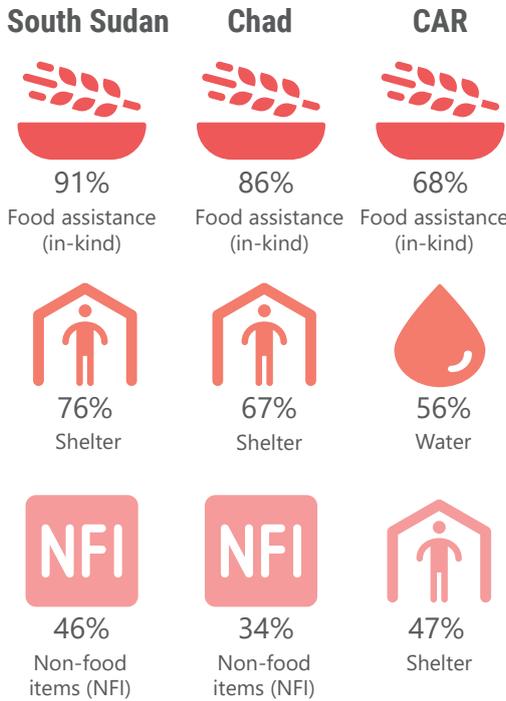
*** Only the responses from states reported on by more than 20KIs are presented separately.



PRIORITY NEEDS AND ASSISTANCE PREFERENCES IN NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES

Household responses

Reported priority needs among displaced households*



Reported preferred modalities to receive assistance*

	South Sudan (511 HHs)	CAR (264 HHs)	Chad (406 HHs)
In-kind	65%	91%	67%
Provision of basic services	49%	12%	10%
Multi-purpose cash	39%	32%	49%
Vouchers	11%	21%	7%

Reported information needs of displaced households*

	South Sudan (511 HHs)	CAR (264 HHs)	Chad (406 HHs)
How to access humanitarian assistance	53%	36%	58%
Where to find accommodation	45%	40%	38%
Respondent's legal status in the destination country	36%	23%	11%
How to claim asylum	2%	20%	14%
How to re-establish contact with separated relatives	22%	35%	5%
How to access medical care	28%	26%	6%
Financial Aid	5%	13%	27%

Across all countries, respondents also mentioned **accessing education** (14% of HHs), **job opportunities** (<10% of HHs), **obtaining documentation and related rights** (<10% of HHs), and **accessing psychological support** (<10% of HHs) as information needs.

Reported preferred channels to receive information*

	South Sudan (511 HHs)	CAR (264 HHs)	Chad (406 HHs)
From community leaders	38%	15%	62%
Directly from NGOs	57%	22%	10%
By phone	23%	29%	7%
From friends	29%	25%	7%
From government agencies	23%	14%	1%
Directly from UN agencies	23%	15%	2%
Written information	8%	23%	4%
In-person information	10%	27%	24%

Less than 10% of all respondents reported **radio** as one of their preferred channel to receive information.

DISPLACEMENT JOURNEYS

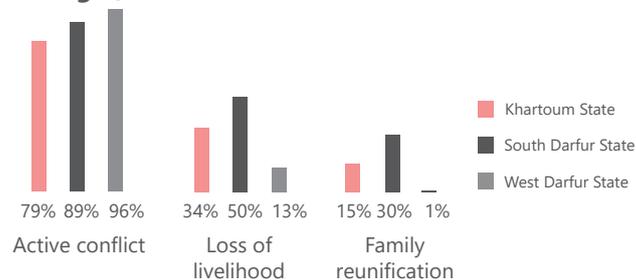
Household responses

Reasons for displacement

Reported reasons for displacement (all respondents)*



Reported reasons for displacement (by reported state of origin)*



According to the IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) [Round 17](#), as of 9 August 2023:

3,433,025

people are estimated to be displaced inside Sudan

1,017,449

people are estimated to have been displaced to neighbouring countries, among whom it is estimated:

220,175 crossed the border into South Sudan.

17,820 crossed the border into CAR.

414,659 crossed the border into Chad.

*These responses add up to more than 100%. This is because respondents could select multiple options.





Coherent with [reports](#) of violence in Khartoum State and Darfur Region during the data collection period (17 May to 22 June 2023), respondents from Khartoum State, West Darfur State and South Darfur State reported active conflict as their reason for displacement. As active conflict has [reportedly](#) continued into July, and is [predicted to continue](#), **displacement from these states is also likely to continue**. This sets the conditions for increasing humanitarian need in border crossing areas, particularly considering reports that destination countries (especially [Chad](#), which has received the highest number of arrivals as of 28 July) are struggling to respond to the needs of new arrivals.

Transportation & journey difficulties

Over half (55%) of all assessed households reported facing difficulties traveling to, or crossing, the Sudanese border. Most commonly reported difficulties were being asked for **bribes** (46% of HHs), experiencing **violence** (29% of HHs) and **lack of documentation** (27% of HHs). These findings align with anecdotal reports from people experiencing violence when traveling [from Khartoum](#), and people traveling from [Darfur](#) experiencing beating, killing, and discrimination. Findings also align with reports of problems with documentation [across the country](#).

Reported difficulties traveling to and crossing the border*

	CAR (120 HHs)	Chad (247 HHs)	South Sudan (283 HHs)
Bribery	80%	61%	19%
Violence	33%	33%	23%
Lack of documentation	75%	11%	20%
Transport difficulties	27%	13%	35%
Racism / discrimination	33%	6%	21%
Looting of property**	NA	43%	51%

Findings on travel difficulties suggest that the assessed households who have displaced to Chad, South Sudan and CAR have faced difficult and dangerous journeys to reach neighbouring countries. Reported experiences of violence among assessed households in Chad align with [media reports](#) of severe protection risks to people fleeing West Darfur towards the Chadian border.

Respondents reported traveling from Sudan to neighbouring countries on **foot** (reported by 40% of HHs), by **public transport** (37% of HHs), by **horse-drawn cart** (14%*** of HHs) and by **private car** (9% of HHs).

Half of the respondents displaced in CAR (50%), and around half in South Sudan (59%) reported having traveled by **public transport**, whereas the majority of households interviewed in Chad reported to have traveled by **foot** (89%).

*These responses add up to more than 100%. This is because respondents could select multiple options.

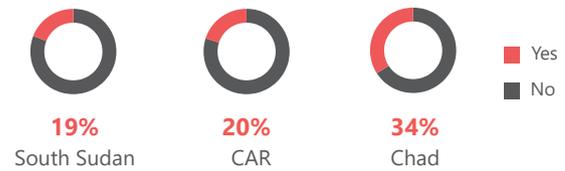
** The option "looting of property" was not included in CAR data collection or South Sudan Round 1. The percentage of respondents displaced in South Sudan who experienced looting of property may therefore be larger than 50%.

*** The option of "horse-drawn cart" was not included in South Sudan Round 1 data collection. The percentage of respondents who traveled by cart may therefore be larger in reality.

25% of all respondents reported that transport was one of the main difficulties faced during their journey, of whom **70%** reported it was **too expensive**.

24% of all respondents reported being asked to pay **illegal or informal taxation or fees** during their journey.

Reported demands for informal / illegal taxation during displacement in Sudan (by destination country)



Reported difficulties with transport*

	CAR (32 HHs)	Chad (31 HHs)	South Sudan (98 HHs)
Transport not available	31%	81%	33%
Transport too expensive	88%	10%	84%
Security issues with transport	81%	10%	17%
Transport too crowded	6%	6%	44%
Lack of fuel for transport	47%	3%	10%
Issues at checkpoints (including illegal taxation)	25%	6%	16%

Echoing [reports](#) of rising transport costs for people fleeing Sudan, findings from this assessment indicate that displaced households have faced additional monetary cost during their displacement journeys. While people arriving in Chad reported facing challenges in the form of demands of **informal/illegal taxation** (61% of all HHs), people arriving in CAR and South Sudan primarily reported additional **costs of transport** as the main challenge (88% and 84% of HHs reporting transport difficulties, respectively).

PROTECTION

Household responses

Missing documentation

58% of households **stated that at least one member of their household has no identification documents at all**.

Documents reported missing or expired*

Birth certificate	46%	<div style="width: 46%;"></div>
Sudan National ID card	36%	<div style="width: 36%;"></div>
Old Sudan National ID card	33%	<div style="width: 33%;"></div>



A higher proportion of respondents displaced in CAR (78% of HHs) reported holding no identification documents at all, compared to South Sudan (50% of HHs) and Chad (56% of HHs).

In addition, there have been [reports](#) that lack of documentation is complicating the ability of Sudanese refugees to leave Sudan and to claim asylum in neighbouring countries, suggesting that people who have fled Sudan without identity documents may be particularly vulnerable.

Respondents displaced in South Sudan reported lacking birth certificates (47%), Sudanese ID cards (20%), South Sudan nationality certificates (16%) and South Sudanese ID cards (15%). This is of particular concern given the [complex nationality and documentation situation](#) after the separation of South Sudan and Sudan.

Separated Households and Children

53% of households reported having been **separated from at least one family member** since their displacement.

28% of households reported that at least **one child from their household was separated** from both parents.**

Echoing the findings above, unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) have been documented at border crossings in [CAR](#), [Chad](#), and [South Sudan](#).

KI responses

Safety & Security

In line with reports of [attacks against civilians](#) in Khartoum, West Darfur and South Darfur States, the majority (74%) of all KIs in this assessment reported that the remaining population in their AoO faces increasing safety and security concerns.

Among the KIs who reported increased safety and security concerns, the most commonly reported risks were **robbery (62% of KIs)**, being **killed (49% of KIs)** or **threatened with violence (39% of KIs)**, and being **kidnapped (35% of KIs)**. The risks mentioned by KIs in this assessment align with reports of [civilian deaths](#), [looting](#), and reported [kidnapping](#) in various states in Sudan.

Reported safety and security concerns for the remaining population in the AoO*

	Khartoum State (33 KIs)	West Darfur State (90 KIs)	South Darfur State (162 KIs)
Being robbed	55%	64%	62%
Being killed	33%	64%	45%
Being threatened with violence	30%	23%	46%
Kidnapping	18%	45%	33%

Among all KIs interviewed in the assessment who reported increased safety and security concerns, risks of **sexual violence or harassment (10% of KIs)**, **explosive hazards (10% of KIs)**, **discrimination (<10% of KIs)**, being **detained (<10% of KIs)** and being **recruited by armed groups (<10% of KIs)** were also reported.

In light of sexual and gender-based violence (GBV) being documented in [country-level reports](#) and due to the sensitivity of the subject, it is likely that respondents under-reported the risk of sexual violence or harassment.

Involuntary Immobility

78% of KIs reported that there were individuals in their AoO who had **planned to leave but were unable to do so**.

	% KIs reporting that the remaining population faces increased safety & security risks	% KIs reporting that some in the remaining population are unable to leave
Khartoum State (73 KI)	45%	74%
West Darfur State (99 KI)	96%	62%
South Darfur State (215 KI)	75%	84%

In line with [reports](#) stating that people in West and South Darfur States are experiencing heavy fighting, a relatively **higher proportion of KIs from West and South Darfur reported safety and security risks** in their AoO.

Reported movement barriers for the remaining population in the AoO*

Fear for safety and/or security	72%	
Road closures	60%	
Physical impairment preventing travel	21%	

KIs also reported that **transportation costs (19% of KIs)**, **fees at checkpoints (18% of KIs)**, **discrimination (<10% of KIs)**, **flooding and natural hazards (<10% of KIs)**, **government-imposed lockdowns (<10% of KIs)** and **lack of appropriate documentation (<10% of KIs)** were preventing the remaining population from leaving their AoO.

KI reports of insecurity and road closures echo the reports from local [media](#) and from [UNHCR](#) of remaining populations being prevented from leaving certain areas of Sudan impacted by the current conflict.

*These responses add up to more than 100%. This is because respondents could select multiple options.

** Some KIs reported informally that some children were separated from their parents, and were staying with other adult family members. This information was not included in the questionnaire and thus it is not known what proportion of separated children this applies to.



Reports of physical impairment, transportation costs and fees at checkpoints as movement barriers for the remaining population suggest that people with physical or financial vulnerabilities may be trapped in Khartoum, West Darfur and South Darfur. As noted by [UNHCR](#), these populations are also the most difficult to access with humanitarian assistance, due to the conflict.

Fewer than 10% of KIs reported that flooding as a main movement barrier to remaining populations. As the rainy season (June - October) continues, West Darfur, South Darfur and Khartoum are [susceptible to flooding](#), and aid agencies have noted that [floods are likely to negatively impact movement](#) across the country in the coming months.

ACCESS TO BASIC SERVICES

KI responses

Service disruption

86% of KIs reported that at least one basic service in their AoO was **unavailable since the start of the conflict**.

Reported reasons for unavailability of basic services in AoO*

Completely destroyed due to conflict	61%	
Closed due to insecurity	61%	
Occupied by armed groups	36%	

Among KIs who reported that services had been disrupted, KIs from Khartoum State (48% of KIs) reported **closures due to insecurity** as the main reason for unavailability of services, as well as KIs from South Darfur State (68% of KIs). KIs from West Darfur State (59% of KIs) reported **destruction of services** as the main reason.

Types of services affected

In line with [reports](#) stating that health and education service provision has been reduced since the beginning of the conflict, and reports of markets being [destroyed](#) and [looted](#), the services most commonly reported as unavailable at the time of the assessment were **education services (76% of KIs)**, **markets and shops (75% of KIs)**, and **health facilities (68% of KIs)**.

Reported unavailability of basic services in the AoO*

	Khartoum State (46 KIs)	West Darfur State* (75 KIs)	South Darfur State (190 KIs)
Health facilities	48%	56%	75%
Educational facilities	72%	49%	87%
Markets & shops	61%	60%	83%
Electricity network	70%	13%	66%
Water supply network or public wells	33%	12%	64%
Sanitation network	22%	0%	46%
Telecomms & internet	13%	45%	53%

Echoing [reports](#) of widespread infrastructure damage, including electricity and internet blackouts and disruption to water supply, KIs also reported that a wide range of basic services have been impacted by the conflict.

ACCESS TO WATER

KI responses

Before 15 April 2023, 68% of the population in Sudan were [estimated](#) to have access to improved drinking water.

86% of KIs reported that since the start of the conflict on April 15, **access to water has worsened in their AoO**.

Among KIs who reported worsened water access, reported coping strategies used by households in their AoO*

	Khartoum State (48 KI)	West Darfur State (90 KI)	South Darfur State (190 KI)
Reducing water consumption	46%	64%	76%
Relying on surface water for drinking water	35%	27%	16%
Relying on surface water for other purposes such as cooking and washing	17%	10%	13%
Fetching water at a source further than the usual one	25%	7%	15%

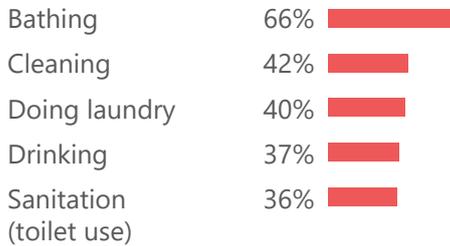
*These responses add up to more than 100%. This is because respondents could select multiple options.

** KIs from West Darfur may report fewer services that have been impacted by the conflict due to the [low availability of basic services before 15th April](#).



Among KIs who reported that people in their AoO were reducing water consumption (252 KIs), over a third reported that people **had reduced water consumption for drinking (37%) and sanitation (36%)**.

Reported water needs for which consumption was reduced in AoO*



At the time of data collection (June 2023), echoing the findings presented above, [UNICEF](#) highlighted a lack of safe water in Sudan. As the rainy season continues, [flooding may further complicate](#) access to clean water. Findings from the most recent [Integrated Phase Classification \(IPC\)](#) analysis including projections for June 2023 to February 2024, also indicate that internal displacement is likely to put pressure on water infrastructure where it does exist.

HEALTH

KI responses

In line with [reports](#) of widespread destruction of healthcare facilities, of the KIs who reported that basic services in their AoO had been impacted by the conflict, 68% reported health facilities being among the services that were no longer available.

The findings suggesting physically impaired individuals being unable to leave their AoO (see Involuntary Mobility, p5) combined with reported dysfunction of health facilities may indicate unmet health needs among already vulnerable population groups in Khartoum, West Darfur and South Darfur States.

Reported strategies to cope with lack of water access, alongside the reported unavailability of health facilities, may be contributing to [disease outbreaks in Sudan, including malaria, measles, acute watery diarrhoea and dengue](#).

*These responses add up to more than 100%. This is because respondents could select multiple options.

FOOD SECURITY

KI responses

Access to food

93%

of KIs reported that **access to food has worsened** since the start of the conflict in their AoO.

The proportion of KIs reporting that access to food had worsened since the start of the conflict in their AoO was highest among KIs from **South Darfur State** (95% of KIs), and **West Darfur State** (93% of KIs), followed by **Khartoum State** (84% of KIs).

According to the [IPC](#) analysis including projections for July to September 2023, West Darfur, South Darfur and Khartoum States are estimated to be facing high acute food insecurity, with around half of the population of these states estimated to be facing high acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above).

Food coping strategies

Reported strategies used by households in the AoO to cope with lack of food or money to buy food*

	Khartoum State (73 KI)	West Darfur State (99 KI)	South Darfur State (215 KI)
Borrow food from a friend or relative	36%	29%	36%
Harvest immature crops or consume seed stock held for next season	3%	48%	31%
Gather wild foods or hunt more than normal	4%	8%	35%
Borrow money or purchase food on credit	22%	8%	29%
Asking non-relatives for food	25%	4%	24%
Collecting firewood in dangerous places	7%	2%	25%
Send children to eat with neighbours	10%	4%	25%
Sell home assets	16%	1%	23%

The most commonly reported strategy to cope with lack of food or money to buy it by KIs from Khartoum State (36% of KIs) and South Darfur State (36% of KIs) was to **borrow food or get help from a friend or relative**. Around half of the KIs (48%) from West Darfur reported that people in their AoO were **harvesting immature crops or consuming seed stock held for next season** as a strategy to cope with lack of food or money to buy food.

The findings indicating use of negative coping strategies combined with reports of worsened access to food, corresponds with the IPC classification for July to October 2023, which estimates that districts in Khartoum, West Darfur and South Darfur States are facing high acute food insecurity (Phase 3 and above).

METHODOLOGY OVERVIEW

In the absence of a comprehensive needs assessment on the situation in Sudan and neighbouring countries, the assessments consisted of two components to cover, as best as possible, the situation in areas of origin in **Sudan** as well as the situation of recent arrivals in **South Sudan**, **Central African Republic**, and **Chad**.

- The first component involved a **structured household survey** with households who had recently crossed the Sudanese border. In total, 1181 households were interviewed about their current situation and movement intentions.
- For the second component, **household survey interviewees were asked to act as key informants (KI)** and report on behalf of their community in their area of origin about the situation. In total, **423** interviewees were selected as KIs.

All interviews were conducted at border crossing points and in reception centres by trained enumerators.

Multiple-choice responses are presented graphically or in tables. Only responses which were given by at least 20% of respondents are included in graphs and tables. Responses which were reported by less than 20% of respondents may be included in text if these options are seen to be particularly relevant to the humanitarian response.

Due to the purposive sampling, for both components, **findings are not generalisable with a known level of precision and should be considered indicative only.** Findings in this situation overview are also based on data collected over a relatively **long period of time** (over one month) in a dynamic conflict context: differences between KI responses may therefore reflect changes in the situation between the first and last rounds of data collection, as well as differences in area of origin. As more information becomes available, it is recommended to triangulate findings with updated information where possible.

For more information on the sampling tools and methods used, please refer to the Research Terms of Reference (ToR) and the Data Analysis Plan (DAP), which will be made available [here](#).

New data, analysis, and outputs from other assessments on the Sudan conflict will be made available on the [Sudan Crisis Thread](#) on the REACH website.

This situation overview reports on four rounds of cross-border data collection:

South Sudan:

- The first round took place on **17-19 May** in reception centres in **Malakal** and **Bentiu**.
- Round 2 data collection in **Malakal**, **Bentiu** and **Aweil** took place on **6-8 June**.

Central African Republic (CAR):

- Data collection took place on **23-26 May** in **Am-Dafock** (Vakaga).

Chad:

- Data collection in **Borota**, **Adré** and **Goungour**, Ouaddai Province took place on **19-22 June**.

Detailed results from each of these data collection rounds can be found on the [REACH website](#).

ABOUT REACH

REACH Initiative facilitates the development of information tools and products that enhance the capacity of aid actors to make evidence-based decisions in emergency, recovery and development contexts. The methodologies used by REACH include primary data collection and in-depth analysis, and all activities are conducted through inter-agency aid coordination mechanisms. REACH is a joint initiative of IMPACT Initiatives, ACTED and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research - Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNITAR-UNOSAT).