

# ↓↑ Sudan Crisis: Cross-Border Assessment

Area of Origin: Reports on the situation in settlements in Khartoum State

23 May 2023

South Sudan

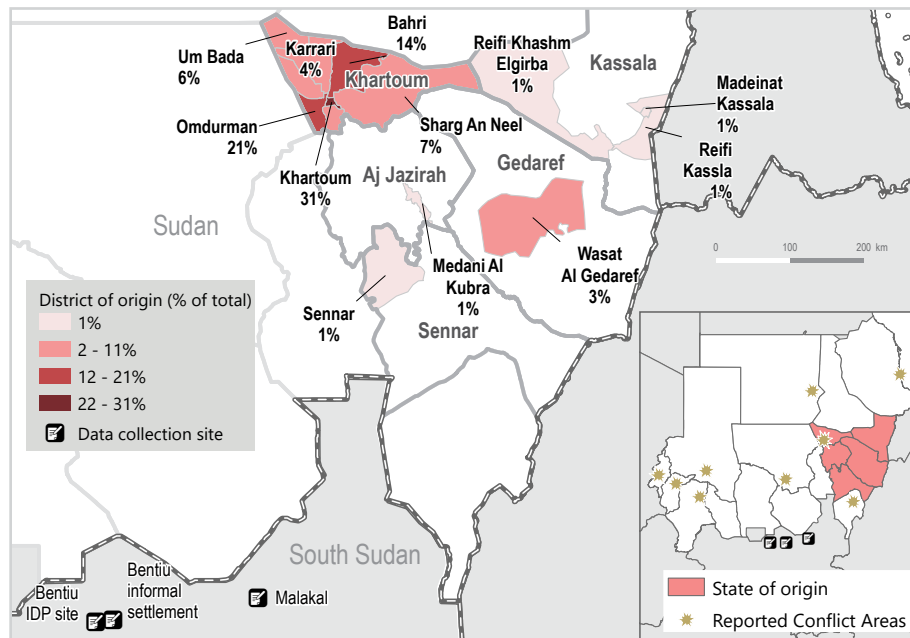
## KEY MESSAGES

- **Findings seem to corroborate accounts of mass displacement out of conflict-affected urban areas in Khartoum state.** Over one-third of respondents reported no one remained in their settlement of origin, indicating (near-total) displacement in some urban areas. However, according to key informants, not everyone who wanted to leave was able to leave, **indicating the presence of populations in vulnerable positions who remain trapped in conflict-affected areas.**
- **For those who remain, findings indicate access to water, food, and critical services has worsened to a degree that people in some areas reportedly rely on, or have already exhausted, negative coping strategies.** According to key informants, education and health facilities, electricity networks, markets, and water and sanitation infrastructure have sustained heavy damage, with services also being suspended due to persisting insecurity.
- As more information becomes available, close monitoring of the quickly evolving situation and the impact of the conflict on humanitarian needs is critical to support the response in affected areas.

**89%** of households interviewed reported coming from districts in Khartoum State. Findings presented in this overview therefore refer to the situation in Khartoum.

### Map 1: Reported districts of origin in Sudan

Reported districts of origin of households interviewed for the cross-border assessment (conflict data source: [ACLED](#))



## CONTEXT & RATIONALE

Conflict erupted in Sudan on the 15<sup>th</sup> of April 2023, leading to displacement of hundreds of thousands of Sudanese nationals into neighbouring countries. The conflict, subsequent displacement, and anticipated macroeconomic consequences are likely to exacerbate the already severe humanitarian situation in Sudan and its neighbouring countries.

Given the rapidly changing humanitarian context, REACH conducted a cross-border monitoring assessment 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 situation overview presents indicative findings on the humanitarian situation in communities of origin, as recalled by individuals from those communities who crossed the border into South Sudan.** Additional data and analysis from the cross-border and other assessments on the Sudan Crisis can be accessed via the [Sudan Crisis Thread](#).

## ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

REACH enumerators conducted structured household interviews with refugees and returnees entering South Sudan at relevant border crossing points and in reception centers between **17-19 May 2023**.

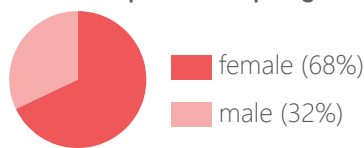
In addition to participating in the household survey on the conditions in area of displacement, household survey interviewees were asked to act as key informants (KIs) and report on the situation of the communities in their area of origin. **Only those individuals who had been in contact with people remaining in their area of origin since the eruption of conflict (15 April) were selected for this second component, leaving a final sample of 20 KIs.** Findings are indicative and cannot be generalised with a known level of precision. Given the volatile nature of the erupting 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 3.

## DEMOGRAPHICS\*

Household-level findings

Total number of interviews: **73**

% of respondents per gender



% of respondents per nationality

1. South Sudan (95%)

2. Sudan (3%)

3. Ethiopia (1%)

3. Eritrea (1%)

\* Findings relate to the **total sample of interviews** conducted for the cross-border assessment. Findings presented here focus on the demographics and displacement of interviewed households (HHs) who crossed the border into South Sudan. For more information, see the Methodology Overview on p3.

## REMAINING POPULATION\*

Household-level findings

**Displacement out of Khartoum Findings seem to corroborate accounts of mass displacement out of neighbourhoods in Khartoum State.** Of all 73 households, only 41 reported that at least some people had remained in their neighbourhood of origin since conflict broke out, while **28 households reported that there was no one remaining** in their neighbourhood, indicating largescale or (near-)total displacement out of some urban areas in Khartoum.

Among those households who reported people were remaining in their area of origin, 20 perceived themselves knowledgeable on the situation in their neighbourhood since conflict broke out on the 15th of April. These household survey respondents were selected as key informants (KIs) and were asked the follow up questions presented below.

### Involuntary immobility

Area of origin - KI findings

Among those 20 KIs, only 3 reported perceiving that all people who remained had made the decision to stay in the area, while most KIs reported that several of those who remained were likely still planning to leave.

However, according to 13 KIs, **not everyone who wanted to leave was able to leave**, with KIs mostly citing persons with disabilities and older people as populations who

## MOVEMENT\*

Household-level findings

Top 3 most reported regions of origin

1. Khartoum, Khartoum (31%)

2. Omdurman, Khartoum (21%)

3. Khartoum Bahri, Khartoum (14%)

Most reported push factors	% of HHs
Active conflict in settlement	70%
Loss of livelihoods	36%
Threat of imminent escalation of conflict	25%
Desire to reunify with family	21%

were likely unable to move out of the neighbourhood even if they would like to.

According to KIs, safety and **security considerations** (14/20 KIs) and **road closures** (11/20) were the main barriers to movement for everyone trying to move out of the area, with the planning and logistics of displacement reportedly being further constrained [by a lack of credible information](#).

In addition to the uncertainty faced by those remaining in the area, **people being "too weak to travel"** (3 KIs) and/or **unable to afford transportation costs or checkpoint taxation** (5 KIs) were also reported.

Together, these findings suggest the presence of **populations in vulnerable positions** including those who are less mobile and/or too poor to flee from the violence and **who thus remain trapped in conflict-affected areas in Khartoum**.

## IMPACT ON ACCESS TO BASIC NEEDS & SERVICES

Area of origin - KI findings

For those who remained, findings seem to suggest the situation is rapidly worsening, in line with initial information reported elsewhere. Most interviewed KIs indeed reported perceiving that **access to water and food had worsened** in their area of origin since the conflict broke out on April 15.

As of 23 May

# 1,042,114

people [are estimated to be displaced](#) inside Sudan

# 319,194

people [are estimated to have displaced](#) to neighbouring countries, among whom an

estimated **69,000** [crossed the border into South Sudan](#).

### Access to water

**13 out of all 20 KIs reported that access to water had worsened.** Those KIs commonly reported that people in the area coped with reductions in access to water by relying on surface water for drinking (5 KIs), or using unimproved sources for cooking and washing (5 KIs) or drinking (3 KIs). Some KIs also reported that people reduced their water consumption in the hope of preserving enough water to survive.

**The most reported main water sources used since the 15th of April highlight the vulnerability of remaining populations**, both in terms of **health risks** as well as **immediate water shortages**. Surface water was the main reported drinking water source (5 KIs), which indicates a risk for water-borne diseases in affected settlements, which is particularly concerning considering the [destruction of health facilities](#) and [limited access to healthcare reported in conflict-affected areas in Khartoum](#). Other reported sources, including bottled water (4 KIs), water kiosk (2), signify risks of supply shortages in light of constrained access due to insecurity and infrastructure damage, while piped connections or public taps (3 KIs each) [are also vulnerable to \(further\) damage](#).

### Access to food

**16 of all 20 KIs reported that access to food had worsened since the conflict broke out.** Reportedly, people remaining in settlements of origin coped with a reduction in access to

food by borrowing food from others (according to 5 KIs) and asking non-relatives for food. Indicative of extremely limited access to food in some areas, **some KIs reported that at least some people in their settlements of origin had exhausted coping strategies**, including selling home assets and borrowing food from relatives or non-relatives alike.

Findings from a [rapid market analysis](#) conducted by Mercy Corps indicate access to markets is limited in Khartoum due to looting and violence, while prices of food have increased drastically due to supply constraints and fuel shortages. In some areas of active fighting, banks have closed and alternatives, such as mobile banking applications, are reportedly only available in some areas of the city due to spotty network coverage.

#### Access to basic services

Questions on access to basic services after the eruption of conflict were only answered by 5 KIs, but their answers corroborate news reports and initial damage assessments suggesting [critical damage to basic services and infrastructure in conflict-affected areas](#).

All 5 KIs reported that education services had been interrupted by the conflict. Other basic services that were reported to no longer be available to remaining populations were electricity networks (4 KIs) and healthcare (4 KIs), followed by markets and shops (3 KIs), water supply (2 KIs) and sanitation services (2 KIs). According to KIs, **services had sustained major damage due to conflict and/or services had been suspended as a result of insecurity**.

## SAFETY & SECURITY

Area of origin - KI findings

### Killings and armed robberies

Active conflict and fighting in Sudan has reportedly led to [at least 700 civilian deaths and over 5,200 people injured](#) as of the 16th of May.

In addition to the direct threat of being caught in the crossfire, [armed robberies have reportedly been on the rise](#) in urban districts of Khartoum, amid a breakdown of law and order, widespread availability of guns, and rapidly increasing prices of basic goods.

In line with such reports, 9 KIs reported that people in their area of origin have been facing **an increase in safety and security concerns** since the conflict broke out on April 15th. According to these KIs, **the main concerns facing people remaining are the threat of being killed (5 KIs) and being robbed (4 KIs)**, with some KIs also mentioning the risk of getting injured by explosive hazards, as well as physical harassment, violence, and detainment.

### Gender based violence

While not commonly reported by KIs, potentially due to the sensitive nature of the question, **service providers have reportedly observed a rapid surge in reporting of cases of sexual and gender based violence (GBV) and domestic abuse**, particularly among displaced people and people sheltering in temporary shelters and public spaces. Against the background of active conflict and displacement, risks of GBV and sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) are likely further exacerbated by movement restrictions and deprivation of basic needs, which have been indicated by findings of this assessment.

## METHODOLOGY OVERVIEW

**Time of data collection:** 17-19 May 2023

In the absence of a comprehensive needs assessment on the situation in Sudan and neighbouring countries, the assessment 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.

The first component consisted of a structured household survey with returnees and refugees crossing the Sudan-South Sudan border. In total, **73 households** were interviewed about their current situation and movement intentions for this first round of data collection. Household-level findings are indicated in this factsheet with an **\***. More detailed findings for this component are presented separately and can be accessed [here](#).

For the second component, household survey interviewees were asked to act as a key informant (KI) and report on behalf of their community in their settlement of origin about the situation. Respondents were selected for the KI component if they 1) reported that there were still people living in their settlement of origin and 2) confirmed that they felt knowledgeable on the situation in their settlement of origin since the 15th of April. In total, enumerators interviewed **20 KIs** among those households. All interviews were conducted at border crossing points and in reception centers by trained enumerators.

Due to the purposive sampling, findings for both components are not generalisable with a known level of precision and should be considered indicative only. 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 Detailed 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.

## 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).