

Sudan Crisis: Cross-Border Assessment

Area of Origin: Reports on the situation in settlements in Darfur

02 June 2023

Central African Republic

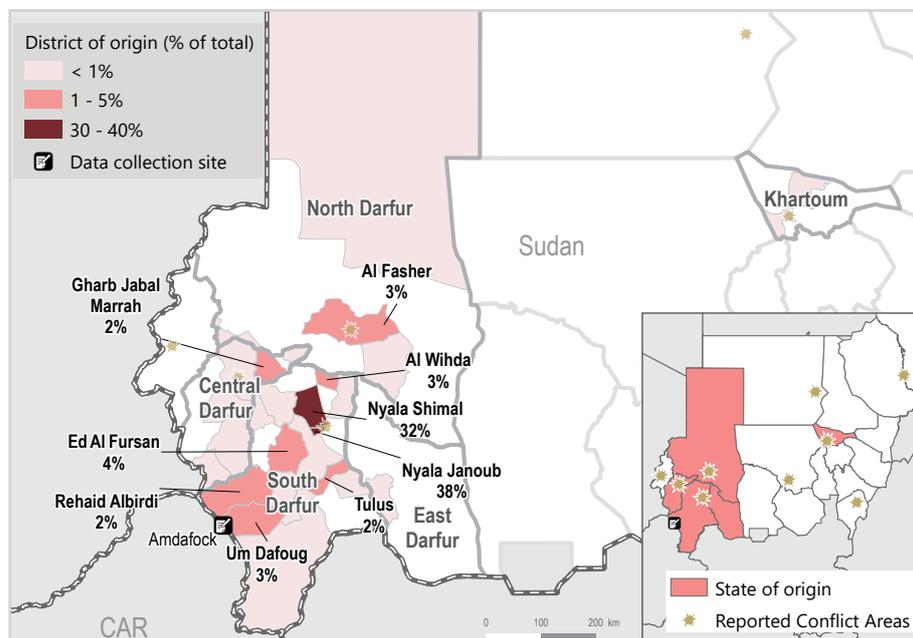
KEY MESSAGES

- **Findings seem to corroborate accounts of mass displacement, particularly out of Nyala Town in South Darfur state.** One quarter of respondents reported no one remained in their settlement of origin, indicating largescale 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, near total collapse of basic services including education and health facilities, electricity networks, markets, and water and sanitation infrastructure has occurred with many services having been completely destroyed, or 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 South Darfur State. Findings are therefore most indicative of the situation in South Darfur state.¹

Map 1: Reported districts of origin in Sudan

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



¹ Very few respondents were from West Darfur as [most cross-border movement from West Darfur was to Chad](#). Therefore, findings may not be indicative of the situation in West Darfur state. However, REACH plans to conduct a cross-border assessment in Chad in the coming weeks.

CONTEXT & RATIONALE

Conflict erupted in Sudan on the 15th 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 Central African Republic (CAR).** 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 264 with refugees and returnees entering CAR at Am-Dafock (Vakaga) border crossing between **23-26 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 176 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: **264**
% of respondents per gender



% of respondents per nationality



* 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 CAR. For more information, see the Methodology Overview on p3.

REMAINING POPULATION*

Household-level findings

Displacement out of Darfur

Findings seem to corroborate accounts of **mass displacement out of South Darfur** due to ongoing clashes and insecurity. Of all 264 households, 66 (25%) reported that **there was no one remaining** in their settlement, indicating largescale displacement out of some areas of the state.

Among those households who reported people were remaining in their area of origin, 176 (89%) perceived themselves knowledgeable on the situation in their neighbourhood since conflict broke out on April 15. 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 the 176 KIs, only 5% reported perceiving that all people who remained had made the decision to stay in the area, while most KIs reported that several or most of those who remained were likely still planning to leave.

However, according to 91% of KIs (n=161), **not everyone who wanted to leave was able to leave**, with KIs citing mostly elderly men and boys under 18 as populations who were likely unable to move out of the neighbourhood even if they would like to. Of those KIs, safety and **security considerations** (89% of KIs) and **road closures** (60% of KIs) were the main barriers to movement for people trying to move out of the area.

In addition, **people being “too weak**

MOVEMENT*

Household-level findings

Top 3 most reported regions of origin

1. Nyala Janoub, South Darfur (31%)
2. Nyala Shimal, South Darfur (21%)
3. Ed Al Fursan, South Darfur (14%)

Most reported push factors	% of HHs
Active conflict in settlement	87%
Loss of livelihoods	58%
Desire to reunify with family	41%

Most frequently reported barriers to move out the area of origin



to travel” (37% of KIs) and/or **unable to afford transport costs** (28% of KIs) were also reported. Together, these findings suggest presence of **populations in vulnerable positions who remain trapped in conflict-affected areas.**

IMPACT ON ACCESS TO BASIC NEEDS & SERVICES

Area of origin - KI findings

For those who remained, findings seem to suggest near total collapse of basic services due to the conflict, whilst most interviewed KIs reported that **access to water and food had worsened** in their area of origin since the conflict broke out on April 15. This aligns with news reports that indicate a **lack of food, water and healthcare** across Darfur.

Access to water

Out of 176 KIs, 98% (n=172) reported that access to water had worsened and that people were using coping strategies to cope with reduced access to water. Of these, KIs most commonly reported people reduced water consumption (88%). A smaller number of these KIs (17%) reported that people rely on unimproved or untreated water sources for cooking and washing, whilst 16% reported that people fetch water from a different source to usual.

These findings highlight the vulnerability of remaining populations

As of 29 May

1,210,214

people are estimated to be displaced inside Sudan

425,482

people are estimated to have displaced to neighbouring countries, among whom an estimated **13,922**

crossed the border into Central African Republic.

in terms of **health risks** and **immediate water shortages**. Unprotected wells were the main reported drinking water source (35% of KIs), indicating a risk for water-borne diseases. This is particularly concerning considering the **destruction and closure of health facilities** in conflict-affected areas in Darfur. Piped connections were the second most widely reported (24% of KIs), which are vulnerable to (further) damage.

Access to food

Out of 176 KIs, 96% (n=169) reported that access to food had worsened since the conflict broke out. All KIs reported people remaining in their area of origin are using coping strategies to cope with a reduction in food access. These include gathering wild food (50% of KIs), consuming seed stocks meant for next season or harvesting crops that are not yet ready (47% of KIs) and purchasing food with borrowed money.

Indicative of extremely limited access to food, **most KIs reported that at least some people in their areas of origin had exhausted coping strategies**, such as consuming seed stock meant for next season or harvesting crops that are not yet ready (64% of all KIs), which could exacerbate food insecurity in the coming months.

Access to basic services

The **vast majority of KIs (97%, n=171) reported that some basic services were no longer available** in their settlement of origin due to the conflict. Their answers corroborate news reports suggesting critical damage to basic services and infrastructure in conflict-affected areas of Darfur.

The majority of those KIs (89%) indicated **markets and shops were no longer available in their settlement of origin**. In addition, findings from a rapid market assessment conducted by Mercy Corps indicate that whilst commodities are available in Nyala, supplies are scarcer in local markets, whilst [many local markets across South Darfur had reportedly closed](#) due to armed clashes.

A report by WFP indicates that prices of basic goods such as bottled water, food and fuel have [increased by 40-60%](#) in conflict-affected areas. In some areas of active fighting including in South Darfur, banks have closed and alternatives, such as mobile banking applications, are reportedly only available in some areas due to spotty network coverage.

Educational facilities were most commonly reported to no longer be available (95% of KIs), followed by **health facilities (85% of KIs)**. Other basic services that were reported to no longer be available to remaining populations were electricity networks (78% of KIs), telecommunication and internet coverage (67% of KIs) and water supply network (67% KIs). Sanitation networks were mentioned by 62% of KIs and community (public) wells

by 57% of KIs. **Basic services had reportedly been completely destroyed due to conflict (73% of KIs) and/or services had been suspended as a result of insecurity (71% of KIs)**, whilst 57% of KIs reported services had been occupied by armed groups.

97% of KIs reported that some basic services were not available in their settlement of origin

Basic services most reported to no longer be available since start of conflict



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 injured](#) as of the 16th of May. In addition to the direct threat of being caught in the crossfire, findings suggest a breakdown of security, with 83% (n=146) of KIs reporting 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, [in line with news reports](#). According to these KIs, **the main concerns facing people remaining are the threat of being robbed (64% of KIs) and being threatened with violence (49% of KIs)**, with some KIs also mentioning the risk of being kidnapped (38%) and being killed (37%).

83% of KIs reported an increase in safety concerns in their area of origin since the conflict broke out

Gender based violence

In addition, 17% of KIs reported concerns over sexual harassment or violence, which is corroborated by **service providers, who 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: 23-26 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 CAR.

The first component consisted of a structured household survey with returnees and refugees crossing the Sudan-CAR border. In total, **264 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 **176 KIs** among those households. All interviews were conducted at Am-Dafock (Vakaga) border

crossing point 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).