



The eruption of violent armed clashes between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in the capital Khartoum, the town of Omdurman and city of Merowe in Northern state on 15 April 2023 is plunging the Sudan into a dire humanitarian crisis, with Khartoum and Darfur the worst-affected areas.

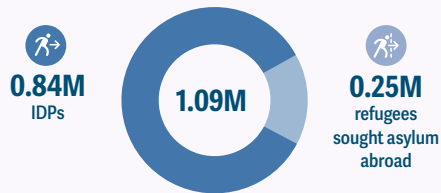
The high-intensity conflict subsequently spread to cities in other states, including North, South and West Darfur and North Kordofan, resulting in the destruction of private houses, assets and critical infrastructures – including hospitals and markets – and severely disrupting humanitarian operations. In West Darfur in particular, the conflict has triggered intercommunal clashes, undermining the security and livelihood activities of the local population (FAO-GIEWS, May 2023).

As of 11 May, at least 676 people had been killed and 5 575 others injured – including civilians (OCHA, May 2023).

High levels of displacement

As of 16 May, about 843 130 people had been internally displaced since the beginning of the conflict, mainly from Khartoum State, followed by West Darfur (IOM DTM, May 2023). In addition, 253 600 Sudanese and foreign nationals, including large numbers of refugees

Number of people forcibly displaced, between mid-April and mid-May 2023



Source: UNHCR; IOM décembre 2022.

and asylum seekers who had previously sought refuge in the country, had fled to South Sudan, Egypt, Ethiopia, Chad and the Central African Republic (UNHCR, May 2023). Some 450 000 children estimated to be among those displaced face an increased risk of malnutrition and protection concerns (UNICEF, May 2023).

According to a rapid assessment conducted by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) in late April 2023 among 3 500 Sudanese people displaced from Khartoum to Madani town, 70 percent reported the extensive use of negative coping strategies and 90 percent reported humanitarian assistance and/or donations as their main source of food (FAO-GIEWS, May 2023).

Blow for an already fragile economy

From an economic standpoint, the conflict is worsening an economy that was already suffering from stagnation and slow economic growth. The heavy fighting is in Khartoum, the main business hub, where banking and customs procedures are centralized, severely obstructing external and internal trade flows. Fiscal challenges, already driven by increasing trade deficits, dwindling reserves of foreign exchange, currency depreciation and high debt levels, are expected to further widen. The ongoing conflict is expected to discourage both bilateral and multilateral donors from releasing funds, which had already been significantly reduced after the October 2021 military coup. This deepening economic crisis and increased scarcity of resources are likely to further impact the delivery of public services and intensify socioeconomic vulnerability (FAO-GIEWS, May 2023).

Deteriorating food insecurity and malnutrition

The convergence of these factors has severely constrained food availability and access and is expected to drive a further rapid deterioration in the food security and nutrition situation in the Sudan, which was already grappling with severe acute food insecurity and concerning levels of malnutrition before the clashes.



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By mid-May 2023, around a quarter of a million people had fled the renewed insecurity and violence in the Sudan, mainly to neighbouring Chad. Those who had been attacked by armed groups in their villages just had time to run for their lives while those who fled preventively took belongings such as bedding and food.

In Darfur, and parts of Greater Kordofan and Nile, where humanitarian assistance was preventing worse outcomes, food consumption gaps are expected to widen due to the disruption of humanitarian activities (OCHA, May 2023). In rural areas, where the clashes have not yet reached, a similar outcome is also anticipated due to trade disruptions and price increases, especially at a time when food stocks from the previous season are declining and reliance on markets is increasing (FEWS NET, April 2023).

The soaring prices and shortages of key inputs, including fuel, seeds, agrochemicals and migrating labour due to the conflict are threatening the main May–July planting season, heightening the risk of acute food insecurity in the months ahead, by constraining the planted

area, which will likely result in a reduced 2023 cereal production and in further food price spikes (FAO-GIEWS, May 2023). If forecasts pointing to below-average June–September rains especially over western cropping areas in the Greater Darfur Region materialise, it will result in reduced yields and cereal production in one of the areas most affected by acute food insecurity (ICPAC, May 2023).

The targeting of hospitals has also resulted in a critical shortage of medical supplies, further straining an already fragile health system and risking an increase in disease burden and prevalence of malnutrition.

According to the recently released 2023 Revised Humanitarian Response Plan, 19.9 million people are

expected to require emergency food and livelihood assistance in the June–September lean season, if the conflict continues, with the highest prevalence expected in West Darfur, West Kordofan, Blue Nile, Red Sea and North Darfur States (HRP, May 2023) – well above the estimate of 11.7 million people estimated to have faced high levels of acute food insecurity during the June–September 2022 lean season (IPC, June 2022). An IPC analysis is planned for June 2023.

An estimated 30 percent increase in the number of children affected by wasting is projected in hotspot areas and a 15 percent increase in IDP-hosting areas. In total, 4.6 million people are in need of nutrition services compared to the estimated 4 million people at the beginning of the year (Revised Sudan HRP, May 2023).

Representatives of the SAF and the RSF signed on 20 May an Agreement on a Short-Term Ceasefire and Humanitarian Arrangements to remain in effect for seven days, which may be extended with the agreement of both parties. The implementation of such agreements and a prompt resolution of the conflict is key for the restoration of rural livelihoods, the country's economy and the food security situation of most affected populations.

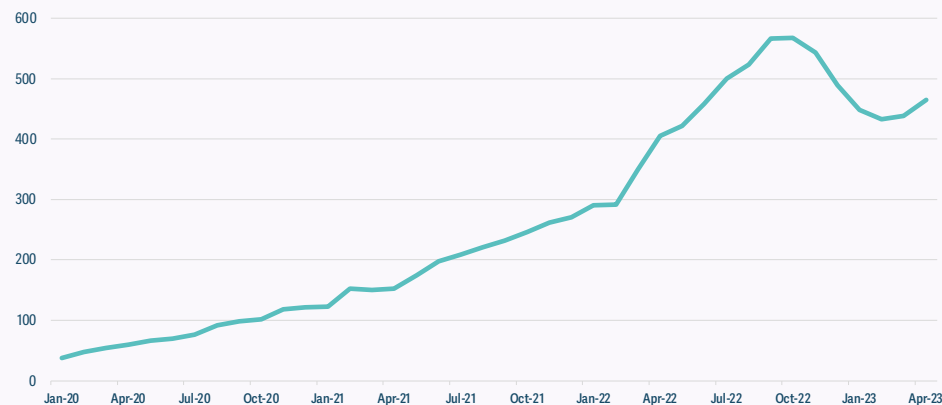
Increasing food prices

Since 2020, food prices in the Sudan have increased drastically, reaching record levels in 2022, primarily due to macroeconomic challenges such as steep inflation and currency depreciation, impacting economic access for many households. Increased fuel prices, affecting the cost of production and transportation, put further upward pressure on food prices. Though more recent price data are not available, the prices of sorghum and wheat in March 2023 were still well above the recent five-year average (WFP, April 2023).

According to UNICEF, in the conflict-affected areas, prices of basic commodities, including bottled water, food staples and fuel, have increased by 40–60 percent since mid-April 2023 (UNICEF, May 2023).

If the current conflict continues, the price of the local food basket (LFB) is projected to increase by a further 25 percent in the next 3–6 months to reach levels similar to those recorded in 2022, resulting in over 18 million people being unable to afford the LFB, according to WFP estimates. There have been reports of shortages of imported goods, such as oil, due to cross-border trade and movement disruptions, and shop closures due to insecurity or lack of stocks, which are exacerbating the situation (WFP, May 2023).

Cost of local food basket and projection, March–December 2023 (SDG)



Source: WFP, 2023.



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The Sudan has had a long record of generously hosting refugees, with the second highest refugee population in Africa. Over the years, several bouts of conflict have forced people to flee within the Sudan and into neighbouring countries. During the latest bout of violence, the most significant cross-border movements have been Sudanese refugees arriving in Chad and Egypt, South Sudanese returning to South Sudan and Chadians returning to Chad (UNHCR, May 2023).