

The Sudan Crisis

*Historical causes of the war
Human rights and civilian protection*

Security Studies and Rule of Law Association

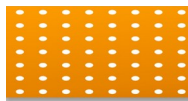
SRL Swiss

Research and assessment report

15 October 2026 | Substantive revision 2.0

This report examines the causes and development of the war in Sudan, assesses documented violations and presents practical recommendations for the protection of civilians.

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Executive summary

The war that began in Sudan on 15 April 2023 arose from the collapse of the partnership between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), which shared the state's military and economic power. Its underlying conditions include the concentration of power at the centre, regional exclusion, militia mobilisation in Darfur and military revenues beyond civilian oversight. The transition launched in 2019 opened space for civilian participation in government without sufficiently altering military control over coercive power and financial resources. The 2021 coup weakened civilian oversight; security reform negotiations in 2022–2023 failed to establish safeguards capable of binding the rival command structures. [1–6,52]

The course of the war has varied by region. Urban warfare in the capital and ethnically targeted violence in Darfur are interconnected processes that require separate examination. SAF advances in central Sudan in 2025, followed by the RSF's capture of El Fasher, brought the struggle over transport and supply routes in Kordofan to the fore in 2026. Executions, detention, explosive remnants and the loss of essential services continue to threaten civilian security after a locality changes hands. [16,18,39–41]

Humanitarian indicators measure different dimensions of the devastation. OCHA's 2026 planning identifies 33.7 million people in need of assistance. IPC's nationwide analysis for February–May 2026 classifies 19.467 million people as facing high levels of acute food insecurity. UNHCR's dashboard of 5 October 2026 records approximately 4.6 million refugees, asylum seekers and returnees arriving from Sudan in neighbouring countries and Uganda. The report distinguishes the definitions and reference periods of these groups. [11,38,56]

Ethnically targeted attacks, sieges and sexual violence by the RSF and its allies in Darfur; airstrikes attributed to SAF; and retaliatory executions attributed to SAF and allied forces are assessed on their respective evidence. The detention practices and humanitarian access restrictions of both parties are also examined. Conduct documented as more severe or more extensive in the sources is given corresponding weight. [14–22,40,41]

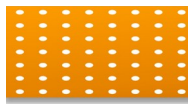
Earlier famine findings for El Fasher and Kadugli must not be obscured by the lack of data in the 2026 analysis. Previous town-level findings cannot be directly compared with the new geographical coverage. The October 2026 alert indicates that deteriorating conditions in Darfur and Kordofan require urgent action. [11,12]

SRL Swiss concludes that civilian protection must advance in three connected areas: reducing attacks and impediments to assistance; scrutinising arms, gold and financial flows; and strengthening Sudanese civilians' decision-making authority and accountability. The report links these priorities to specific addressees, implementation instruments and monitoring criteria. It draws on publicly available sources; no field interviews or independent criminal investigation have been conducted.



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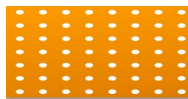


Reader's guide and key terms

The report comprises three main parts. The Introduction sets out the research question and methodology. The Analysis proceeds from historical context and actors to the course of the war, violations, humanitarian consequences, the literature and the law. The Conclusion connects the findings to implementation recommendations. The executive summary provides an overview for international readers. The appendices explain the scope of the data and the source checks undertaken for the revision.

Key terms

Abbreviation or term	Explanation
SAF	Sudanese Armed Forces; Sudan's regular armed forces.
RSF	Rapid Support Forces; a paramilitary force.
Darfur	A region in western Sudan; neither a single city nor a separate country.
Kordofan	The region linking Darfur with central Sudan, comprising North, South and West Kordofan states.
Internally displaced person	A person who has fled their home without crossing an international border.
IPC	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, an international technical framework for classifying the severity of food insecurity.
OHCHR and FFM	The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission for the Sudan. These are separate reporting mechanisms.
ICC and ICJ	The International Criminal Court determines individual criminal responsibility; the International Court of Justice adjudicates disputes between states.



I Introduction

1 Purpose and central question

Understanding the devastation in Sudan first requires an explanation of where and how the war emerged. Sudan lies in north-eastern Africa, in the Nile basin and along the Red Sea coast. South Sudan is a separate state that became independent in 2011. This report concerns the war that began in Sudan in April 2023 and bears the legacy of earlier conflicts, rather than the civil war in South Sudan. [1]

The report addresses the following question: how did a country with prospects of a transition to democratic government become a battlefield for rival armed structures, and why did this process leave civilians unprotected on a mass scale? It examines this question by considering historical exclusion, the structure of security institutions, political decisions and international relations together.

SRL Swiss applies the same assessment irrespective of victims' ethnicity, political views, gender or place of residence. Impartiality does not require obscuring documented conduct or assuming that all parties have committed the same number and types of crimes. Each allegation must be subjected to the same verification standard, specific responsibility distinguished and uncertainty expressly identified.

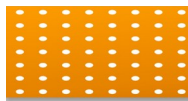
2 Scope and methodology

The information cut-off date is 15 October 2026. The historical background is summarised from 1956 onwards; the principal period of examination extends from the transition in 2019 to October 2026. The report is based on a desk review of publicly available documents. It does not claim that field research or interviews with victims were conducted in Sudan on behalf of SRL Swiss.

Sources are assessed in four groups: UN investigations and humanitarian situation reports; judicial documents and international legal instruments; academic and policy research; and studies by independent human rights and health organisations that explain their methodology. News reports were used, where possible, to locate primary documents; the report's principal evidentiary basis consists of the institutions' own publications.

This study is a purposive, critical review of the literature, rather than a systematic review claiming to cover all publications. Selection criteria are direct relevance, methodological transparency, clarity of dates and geographical scope, proximity to primary data and comparability. The publication of a new report by an organisation does not mean that every figure it contains was measured on its publication date.

Three distinct levels of statement are maintained: facts directly documented by the source, researchers' interpretations and SRL Swiss's assessment. Investigative findings, criminal allegations and final judicial determinations are not presented as having the same legal weight. No ethnic community is assigned collective responsibility.



II Analysis

3 Historical context

3.1 Relations between the centre and excluded regions

Sudan gained independence in 1956. Long periods of military rule subsequently alternated with brief periods of civilian government. The wars in the south, rebellions in Darfur and conflicts elsewhere cannot be reduced to a single cause; they nevertheless share questions of political representation, the distribution of public resources and responsibility for providing security. [1,2]

The distinction between 'centre' and 'periphery' does not imply that everyone at the centre is privileged or that everyone in the periphery shares a political objective. It refers to the concentration of state decision-making and resource allocation within a narrow circle. Where local grievances cannot be addressed through peaceful and effective channels, armed organisations may gain strength by claiming to represent communities. The state's response of creating other armed groups entrenches the conflict. This is an explanatory framework derived from historical research; it does not treat violence as inevitable. [2,5]

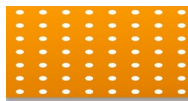
Independence should not be treated as the starting point of these inequalities. Assal's historical framework requires administrative divisions inherited from colonial rule to be considered alongside post-independence relations of central power. Differences in public services, representation and security have progressively sharpened the question of whose interests the state serves. [2]

In this report, the 'centre' denotes political and military circles controlling decisions and access to resources, rather than an entire ethnic community. The transformation of regional inequalities into war must be explained through the political decisions taken within these conditions and the institutions that organise violence.

3.2 Darfur and the growth of militias

As armed rebellion intensified in Darfur in 2003, Omar al-Bashir's government deployed local militias alongside regular forces. Militia networks known as the Janjaweed were associated with grave attacks against civilians. Emerging from this legacy, the RSF was organised as a separate security force in 2013. Over time it developed political and economic weight beyond its initial role as a rural counter-insurgency force. [1,3]

Describing violence in Darfur as a 'natural conflict between Arabs and Africans' is misleading. Identities acquire significance through political mobilisation and exclusion. The terms 'Arab' and 'non-Arab' in human rights reporting help explain the selection of targets in particular attacks; they do not identify an entire population as perpetrators or



supporters. The El Geneina investigation demonstrates, in particular, that Masalit civilians were targeted on account of their identity. [14]

3.3 The expansion of two armed forces

Bashir's creation of rival security structures was a technique of rule that made it harder for any single institution to overthrow him. The same policy, however, created competing centres of power with separate chains of command and economic resources. Verhoeven's research examines institutional concerns within the army and competition between security institutions beyond personal disagreements. [3]

South Sudan's secession in 2011 caused a substantial loss of oil revenues for Sudan. Gold, trade and companies affiliated with armed institutions became more important. Gallopin's pre-war research demonstrates the imbalance between the civilian government's financial weakness and the generals' economic power. Transferring political authority to civilians therefore did not place money and coercive power under civilian control. [1,4]

3.4 Transitional institutions and critical turning points

The violent dispersal of the Khartoum sit-in on 3 June 2019 demonstrated that Bashir's removal had not automatically transformed the security apparatus. Subsequent mass demonstrations maintained pressure against military rule. The August 2019 arrangements were negotiated within this struggle. [5;51]

The 2019 Constitutional Declaration provided for a Sovereignty Council, a cabinet led by a civilian prime minister and a transitional legislative council. The eleven-member Sovereignty Council was to comprise five military members, five civilian members and one civilian selected by mutual agreement. The military held the chair during the initial period and retained significant influence over the selection of the defence and interior ministers. Failure to establish the envisaged legislative council further weakened oversight. [52, pp. 10–15]

The Juba Peace Agreement of 3 October 2020 brought some armed movements into government. The gap between armed representation and social representation nevertheless persisted. Davies's analysis shows that the agreement altered constitutional power sharing and strengthened armed actors' position in government. Broadening participation in peace arrangements and strengthening democratic oversight can produce different outcomes. [52, pp. 17–20]

The coup of 25 October 2021 displaced the civilian component of this fragile arrangement. In Kurtz's assessment, SAF's relations with Islamist circles associated with the former regime and the RSF's search for different political partners intensified competition within the coup coalition. These political networks are not identical; the conduct of each armed unit requires separate investigation. [5]

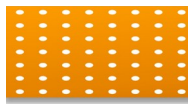


Table 1 Historical milestones on the road to war

Date	Development	Connection with the present crisis
1956	Sudan gained independence.	Questions of representation, regional inequality and the organisation of the state remained unresolved.
1989	Bashir seized power in a military coup.	Military and political power became closely intertwined over a prolonged period.
2003	The Darfur conflict escalated.	Militia mobilisation and identity-based targeting of civilians intensified.
2005 and 2011	The Comprehensive Peace Agreement, followed by South Sudan's independence.	A separate state emerged; Sudan's revenue base and balance of power changed.
2013	The RSF was established.	A powerful, separate armed centre developed alongside the regular army.
2018–April 2019	Protests and Bashir's removal.	Demand for civilian rule strengthened; the security apparatus remained intact.
3 June 2019	Violent dispersal of the Khartoum sit-in.	Protesters' safety and accountability became central issues in the transition.
August 2019	The Constitutional Declaration and Hamdok government.	A civilian–military partnership was established; problems of coercive power and financial oversight persisted.
3 October 2020	The Juba Peace Agreement.	Some armed movements entered government; representation and power-sharing were reconfigured.
25 October 2021	Military intervention interrupted the civilian transition.	SAF and the RSF acted jointly; their rivalry subsequently intensified.
December 2022	A new political framework agreement.	A return to civilian rule was discussed; security sector reform remained unresolved.
15 April 2023	Open warfare began between SAF and the RSF.	The crisis between security institutions became a nationwide armed conflict.

Source: historical synthesis [1–6]. The table is not an exhaustive chronology of all coups and peace initiatives.

4 Principal actors and geographical concentrations of conflict

SAF, led by Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, and the RSF, led by Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, commonly known as Hemedti, are the war's two principal forces. Their surrounding alliances are not uniform. The positions of local armed groups, former rebel movements and political networks may change over time. The war should not be understood as a structure managed seamlessly from just two centres. [5,8]

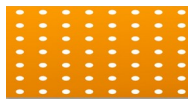
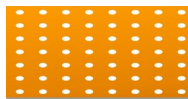


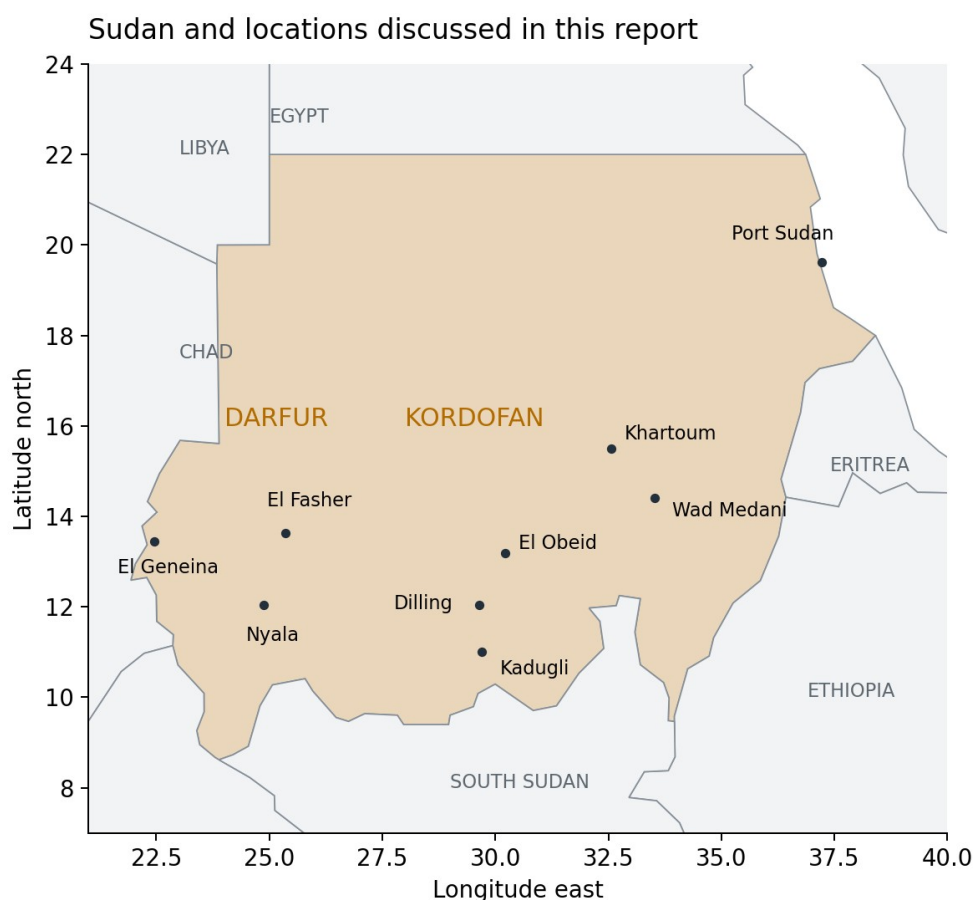
Table 2 Distinguishing the actors

Actor	Position	Issues requiring scrutiny
SAF	The regular army, with strong historical and economic ties to state institutions.	The status of a state army does not render attacks on civilian objects or violations by allies lawful.
RSF	A paramilitary force with separate command and financing networks.	Its political rhetoric and documented conduct on the ground must be assessed separately.
Allied armed groups	Groups fighting alongside SAF or the RSF in different regions.	The unit responsible, chain of command and status of the alliance at the time of the incident must be established.
Civilian political actors	Parties, professional associations, resistance committees, and women's and youth networks.	They do not share a single political position and should not be equated with the armed parties.
Local relief networks	Emergency Response Rooms and other volunteer solidarity networks.	Relief work must not be treated as evidence of collaboration with the opposing party.
External actors	States, companies, intermediaries and transnational networks.	Diplomatic relations, trade, private corporate activity and military support attributable to a state are distinct matters.

Sources and assessment: [3–8,18,19,29]. Actors' positions must be assessed in light of their relationships at the time of the incident.



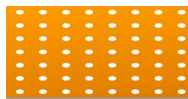
Map 1 Sudan and the principal areas examined



Source: SRL Swiss presentation using Natural Earth boundary data [59]. Points indicate approximate city centres; Darfur and Kordofan labels indicate regional locations. The depiction of boundaries expresses no position on legal status or military control.

Table 3 Understanding the locations

Location	Position and significance	Relevance to this report
Khartoum and surrounding areas	The capital region and a major urban centre.	The outbreak of war, urban fighting, destruction and returns.
Al Jazirah and Wad Medani	Agricultural and residential areas southeast of the capital.	Displacement, lost production and the civilian impact of changing control.
Darfur	An extensive region in western Sudan.	Ethnic targeting, siege, famine and large-scale flight.
El Geneina	A city in West Darfur near the border with Chad.	Attacks against Masalit civilians in 2023.
El Fasher and Zamzam	A city in North Darfur and a nearby displacement camp.	Siege, loss of essential services and the 2025 attacks.



Location	Position and significance	Relevance to this report
Kordofan and El Obeid	The region between western and central Sudan and a major transport hub.	Fighting, drone attacks and access restrictions in 2026.
Port Sudan	A port city on the Red Sea coast.	Its role as an administrative and logistics centre during the war.

Sources: [1,14–16,19,20]. The geographical locations and functions of the settlements are summarised.

5 Why the war began and why it continues

5.1 The civilian transition's failure to control armed forces

The popular movement of 2019 brought Bashir's rule to an end, but the transitional arrangements rested on power sharing between civilian and military components. The army and the RSF retained separate resources and command structures. Their two military leaderships' joint removal of civilian government in October 2021 further weakened democratic oversight. [2,5]

Kurtz explains the path to war through two failures: the failure to institutionalise a democratic transition and the subsequent failure to establish stable military rule after the coup. This approach takes divisions among civilian actors into account without transferring responsibility for the decision to wage war from the armed parties to civilians. [5]

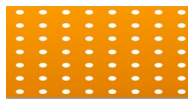
5.2 Security reform becomes a struggle for power

How, on what timetable and under whose command the RSF would be integrated into the army was a central disagreement in the 2022–2023 negotiations. This apparently technical question concerned who would control the weapons and the future state. Where safeguards are weak, one party's restructuring may be perceived by the other as impending elimination. [2,6]

The parties' accounts of who fired first do not explain all the causes of the conflict. Military preparations, mutual mistrust and expectations of a rapid victory must be considered together. Perthes's study of the transition shows that international mediation alone could not prevent armed actors determined to turn to war from doing so. [6]

5.3 Economic resources sustain independent armed power

When armed actors are not dependent on the central budget, civilian government finds it harder to oversee them. Resources obtained through companies, the gold trade and external connections enable the recruitment of fighters and military procurement. Gallopin's research on pre-war financial structures and Soliman and Baldo's study of the gold trade explain this mechanism across different periods. [4,7]



This does not establish that gold is the sole cause of the war. Gold and trading networks provide revenues that facilitate the transformation of political rivalry into prolonged warfare. The institution controlling the revenue and the beneficiaries of its use matter as much as the resource's existence. Ordinary miners should not be placed in the same category as networks financing armed actors.

5.4 Impunity and mobilisation through identity

Inadequate investigation of earlier attacks may reinforce the expectation that violence against civilians is a low-cost means of control. Identity-based accusations can stigmatise an entire neighbourhood or village as 'enemy supporters'. Attacks against Masalit civilians in El Geneina and the findings concerning El Fasher demonstrate the consequences of such targeting. [14,16,17]

5.5 External support and the regional war economy

External support encompasses access to finance, transport, spare parts, training and diplomatic protection as well as weapons deliveries. Each channel may help sustain the war. Identifying the country of manufacture, however, does not by itself establish the actor responsible for delivery or responsibility for a particular attack. Examination must trace the links between the material, intermediary, recipient, date and use. [19,26,27]

Soliman and Baldo examine both the UAE's central role in the gold trade and flows from SAF-controlled areas towards Egypt. Because the same economic hub can serve transactions involving different parties, a simple 'one country–one side' model is inadequate. Financial scrutiny must address export records as well as relationships involving intermediaries and beneficial owners. [7, pp. 2–3,26–40]

Global Witness's 2019 investigation examines off-budget financial power through company and banking documents linked to the RSF, and records the relevant company's response concerning ownership relationships. It considers revenues from military deployments in Yemen in their historical context. These pre-war findings should explain the development of financial autonomy without being treated as evidence of current corporate ownership or every transfer in 2026. [51]

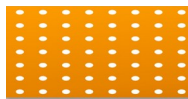


Table 4 External links and the nature of the evidence

Actor or route	Connection identified by the source	Evidentiary status and scope
UAE-linked individuals and entities	Personnel, logistics and military support networks benefiting the RSF.	UN investigative finding; the UAE denies providing support. Attribution to the state requires separate examination. [19, paras. 121–128]
Routes through Chad	Use of the country's territory for cross-border movement and logistics networks benefiting the RSF.	UN finding; Chad reports neutrality and control measures and denies allegations of support. [19, paras. 115–117]
Egypt	Political and economic ties with SAF; patterns in the gold trade.	Policy research; no judicial determination concerning an individual shipment or attack. [7]
Iran	Research describing the supply of drones and other weapons to SAF.	Kurtz's sourced 2024 analysis; it does not cover all transfers in 2026. [5, discussion of external support and note 104]
Türkiye-linked supply	The role of Turkish-made drones in SAF's capabilities; accounts of delivery through Egypt.	Based on the same policy research; the responsibility of manufacturers, intermediaries and states involves separate questions. [5, note 104]
Russia-linked networks	Gold and regional security relationships.	Economic network research; the relevant period and identity of the entity must be retained. [7, section on regional networks]
Recruitment of former Colombian soldiers	Foreign personnel networks benefiting the RSF.	UN investigation and Colombia's investigative and preventive response; this does not establish state support. [19, paras. 118–120]

Sources: [5,7,19,51]. The table distinguishes diplomatic contact, private trade and military support. The report does not invent a state response absent from the source or a final determination of responsibility.

In SRL Swiss's assessment, diplomacy that disregards support channels struggles to alter the parties' assessment of costs. Gold production supporting civilian livelihoods must nevertheless be distinguished from financing armed actors. Targeted scrutiny should consider the beneficiary of the transaction, region of origin, carrier and payment channel together.

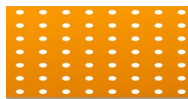
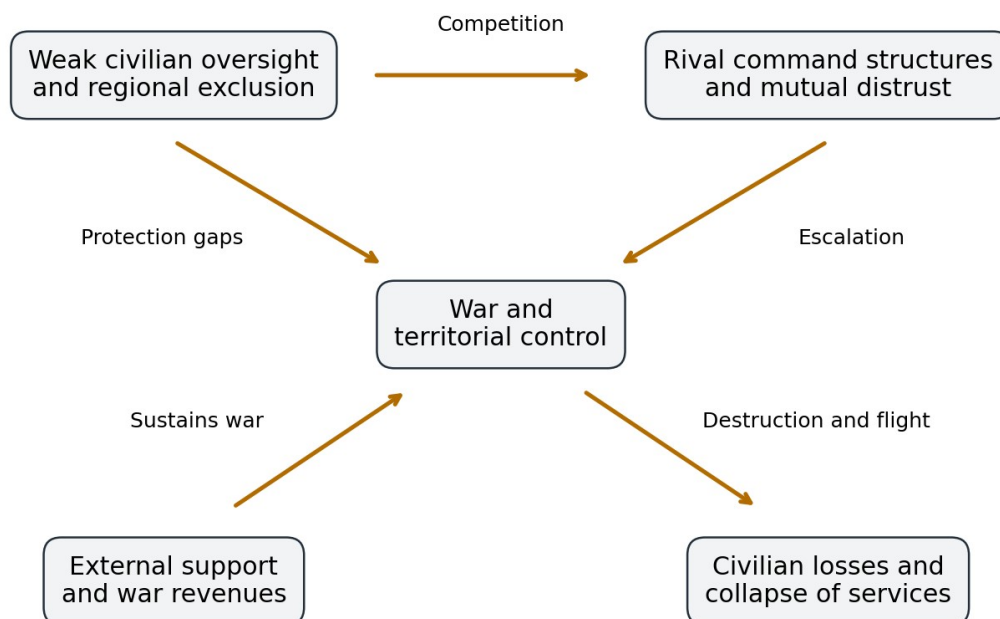


Figure 1 Connections that generate and sustain the crisis



Source: SRL Swiss explanatory synthesis based on [2–8,19,51,52]. Arrow labels identify proposed mechanisms; the relative effect of these relationships has not been quantified.

6 Development of the conflict

6.1 War spreads from the capital across the country

The major fighting that began in Khartoum in April 2023 brought war to the state's political and administrative centre. ACLED's analysis of the initial weeks recorded a marked increase in the concentration of political violence in the capital. Disruption of services and transport networks affected not only people near the front line but also other parts of the country. [13]

In Darfur, war aggravated earlier patterns of identity-based violence and displacement. In central Sudan and Al Jazirah, new flight curtailed economic activity and reduced the areas civilians regarded as safe. A change of territorial control did not automatically establish safety for residents; reprisals and accusations of collaboration generated new risks. [18]

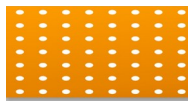


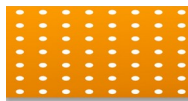
Table 5 Principal developments from April 2023 to October 2026

Period	Principal development	Implications for civilians
April–June 2023	War in Khartoum and severe attacks in El Geneina.	Disruption of urban life, identity-based targeting and flight. [13,14]
Late 2023–2024	Expansion of the conflict; worsening protection concerns in Darfur and Kordofan.	Protracted displacement and declining humanitarian access. [8,18]
2024	Siege of El Fasher; famine finding in Zamzam.	Siege compounded by food and health crises. [28,32]
January–March 2025	Army advances in central Sudan and Khartoum.	Prospects of return alongside reprisals and shortages of essential services. [18]
April 2025	The RSF attack on Zamzam camp.	People already displaced forced to flee again. [15]
July 2025	The RSF and its allies announced a parallel administration.	Deepening political and administrative fragmentation. [18]
October 2025	The RSF captured El Fasher.	Mass killings and violence along escape routes documented by the UN. [16]
Early 2026–September	Siege, supply and displacement dynamics in Kordofan.	Disrupted access to towns and agricultural production. [11,39]
July 2026	WHO warned of a new cholera outbreak.	Urgent need for access to safe water and treatment. [57]
8 October 2026	The UN Security Council renewed the sanctions regime.	Continued oversight; challenges in implementing the existing regime. [55]
12 October 2026	A new IPC alert.	Heightened hunger risk as drought and war combine in Darfur and Kordofan. [12]

6.2 Local improvement does not establish nationwide recovery

Returns to one city may increase while fresh displacement occurs elsewhere. National totals may conceal these simultaneous movements. UNICEF's mid-year assessment for 2026 records new flight from conflict areas alongside returns to Khartoum and Al Jazirah. Numbers of returnees therefore cannot serve as indicators of access to safe housing, clean water, income or an environment free from mines and explosive remnants. [20]

This report does not convert daily changes in military control into a definitive territorial map. It identifies the locations and dates of verified incidents. The decisive civilian protection question is not merely who holds a city, but what dangers its residents face and what services they can access.



6.3 Kordofan and political fragmentation

After El Fasher, Kordofan assumed greater importance in the struggle between the western areas and the country's centre. Routes to Kadugli and Dilling, and El Obeid's commercial and humanitarian supply connections, are as consequential as fighting within the towns. IPC records renewed movement restrictions and route insecurity following temporary improvements in access in early 2026. [11, pp. 8,15]

According to IOM DTM's official summary, approximately 308,179 people displaced from Kordofan between 25 October 2025 and 1 September 2026 were recorded in 1,327 locations across 15 Sudanese states. This figure describes movement originating in a particular region and period; it must not be added to the national displaced population as an additional population. [39]

The RSF and its allies' declaration of a parallel government in 2025 also highlighted the conflict's impact on the future political order. An international joint statement in September 2025 rejected parallel governing structures and supported Sudan's unity and a Sudanese-led civilian transition. The existence of a statement does not demonstrate the establishment of a unified administration or legal order on the ground. [18,58]

In 2026, returns to some parts of the country and flight from others continue simultaneously. A single trajectory of 'progress' or 'deterioration' is therefore insufficient to describe the war. Security assessments must monitor attacks, access, livelihoods and displacement together in each region.

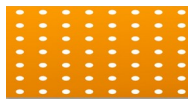
7 Documented patterns of violations

7.1 Ethnic targeting and mass violence

Human Rights Watch's El Geneina investigation assessed the RSF and its allies' 2023 attacks against the Masalit population as a campaign of ethnic cleansing involving war crimes and crimes against humanity. 'Ethnic cleansing' here describes the forcible removal of people from a particular area; the term does not substitute for establishing all the legal elements of an offence. [14]

OHCHR's investigation into El Fasher reported documenting more than 6,000 killings during the first three days of the October 2025 offensive. This figure is confined to the specified period of that attack. The investigation draws on interviews with more than 140 victims and witnesses. Findings on missing persons, abductions and places of detention demonstrate continuing protection needs after the offensive. [16]

The strength of the El Geneina investigation lies in its combination of different types of evidence. HRW assessed interviews with more than 220 people alongside images and other records. The findings connect the targeting of civilians because of their identity to their forcible removal from homes and neighbourhoods. Dependence on security



conditions and escape routes for access to interviewees limits the sample. [14, methodology and main findings]

The April 2025 attack on Zamzam again disrupted previously displaced people's access to shelter and treatment. MSF's findings show both the medical consequences of attacks and the loss of services in the camp. The evidence is limited by records concerning those who reached healthcare and by the organisation's access; clinical records have therefore not been used to derive a definitive death toll for the entire attack. [15]

7.2 Airstrikes and the responsibility of allied forces

HRW assessed SAF airstrikes on Nyala in February 2025 through witness accounts, images and examination of munitions. The presence of a military objective within a city does not turn all surrounding civilian areas into lawful targets. The obligations of distinction, proportionality and feasible precautions continue to apply. [21]

The same organisation reported that at least 26 civilians were killed in an attack on Tayba village on 10 January 2025 by the Sudan Shield Forces, fighting alongside SAF. The incident shows why examination cannot be confined to the principal armies' regular units. The conduct of an allied group and the responsibility of the main command are separate but connected questions for investigation. [22]

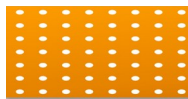
In Nyala, HRW examined the attacks of 3 February 2025 through interviews with 11 victims and witnesses and three healthcare workers, satellite imagery, photographs, videos and munition remnants. The nature of the munitions falling in residential and commercial areas requires investigation of target selection and feasible precautions. This moves the assessment from identifying that an airstrike occurred to a legally meaningful examination of the incident. [21, research methodology]

7.3 Retaliatory executions and identity-based accusations

OHCHR announced that it had verified the killing of at least 18 people in seven incidents attributed to SAF-affiliated fighters and militias around Khartoum North, where SAF regained control on 25 January 2025. The fact that some victims originated from Darfur and Kordofan illustrates the risk of accusations of 'collaboration' combining with ethnic discrimination. [41]

The official summary of the January–June 2025 investigation recorded at least 990 unlawful killings of civilians outside the conduct of hostilities. OHCHR also addressed the rise in retaliatory executions following SAF territorial gains and RSF executions in Omdurman's Al Salha area on 27 April. These examples demonstrate the need to examine the same problem through conduct attributed to different parties. [40]

SRL Swiss considers that an allegation of association with the opposing side cannot justify extrajudicial punishment. The surrender, injury or detention of a person believed to be a fighter also engages protection obligations. Assessments of responsibility must



rest on individual conduct and evidence, rather than identity or neighbourhood of residence.

Table 6 Incident-specific evidence and responsibility

Incident	Actor identified by the source	Evidence and limitations
El Geneina 2023	RSF and allies	HRW research combining witness accounts, imagery and other evidence; not a national total. [14]
Zamzam April 2025	RSF and allies	MSF clinical data, observations and interviews; incomplete representation of those unable to access healthcare. [15]
El Fasher October 2025	RSF and allied militias	OHCHR investigation of a specific attack period; actual total casualties may be higher. [16]
Nyala February 2025	SAF	HRW investigation of specific airstrikes; not a generalisation about every airstrike. [21]
Tayba, Al Jazirah January 2025	Sudan Shield Forces, allied with SAF	HRW finding of civilian targeting; command and control relationships require further investigation. [22]

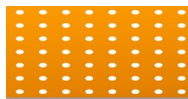
7.4 Sexual violence and abuses in detention

Sexual violence must be examined both as an individual assault and as a means of intimidation and dispersing communities. Stigma, fear of reprisals and the absence of healthcare reduce reporting. UNFPA's September 2026 information note emphasises the scale of the population at risk of gender-based violence. 'Persons at risk', 'persons requiring services' and 'verified victims' are nevertheless different statistical categories. [23]

OHCHR's El Fasher investigation addresses patterns of detention, abduction for ransom and sexual violence together. Assumptions concerning a person's affiliation do not provide a sufficient basis for arrest or punishment in such cases. Humanitarian volunteers and health workers require safe complaints channels, mechanisms for tracing missing persons and independent monitoring. [16,24]

7.5 Impediments to aid and protection of local volunteers

Assistance is interrupted through different mechanisms: siege and exposure to fire, attacks on convoys, looting of facilities, detention of personnel and delays in administrative authorisations. HRW's assessment of 2025 records both parties' obstruction of aid and attacks on local volunteers. Reported visa bottlenecks also



demonstrate the effect of administrative decisions alongside physical attacks. [18, humanitarian assistance section]

Assessing access must therefore extend beyond whether a single border crossing is open. Supplies entering the country do not prove delivery to people in need. Authorisation dates, waiting periods, internal crossing points, completed deliveries and continuity of services must be monitored separately. Monitoring that reveals volunteers' identities or aid routes creates additional danger.

7.6 The United States determination on chemical weapons use

The US official notice of 27 June 2025 records a determination made on 24 April that the Government of Sudan had used chemical weapons, together with associated sanctions measures. This is a formal determination by a state under its own law. As the notice reviewed does not provide an independent criminal investigation file establishing each attack's location, munition and chain of perpetrators, this report does not extrapolate further incident details. [47]

The determination raises a serious accountability issue requiring examination. The substance used, chains of delivery and use, medical findings and verifiable samples require assessment by the relevant specialist mechanisms. Correctly identifying the source's legal nature preserves the limits of the evidence without diminishing the seriousness of the allegation.

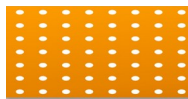
8 Humanitarian devastation and interpretation of the figures

8.1 Humanitarian needs and casualty figures measure different things

Humanitarian planning for 2026 identifies 33.7 million people in need of assistance, including 17.3 million children. This indicator measures service and protection needs. A person may simultaneously need healthcare, nutrition, water, shelter and protection. Populations requiring assistance in different sectors must therefore not be added together to produce a 'total number of victims'. [9,20]

Table 7 Humanitarian indicators and their scope

Indicator	Value and period	Scope and source
People in need of humanitarian assistance	33.7 million; 2026 planning	OCHA needs estimate; needs across different sectors must not be added together. [56]
Children in need of assistance	17.3 million; 2026	UNICEF planning indicator. [20]
High levels of acute food insecurity	19,467,000; February–May 2026	Combined IPC Phases 3, 4 and 5; nationwide analysis. [11, p. 1]



Indicator	Value and period	Scope and source
Internally displaced population	8.58 million; figure reported in the October 2026 alert	IPC stock measure based on IOM data; its coverage of displacement before 2023 differs from the new-displacement indicator. [12]
New internal displacement	Approximately 6.4 million; dashboard of 5 October 2026	UNHCR dashboard category for displacement since April 2023. [38]
Cross-border refugees, asylum seekers and returnees	Approximately 4.6 million; 5 October 2026	Approximately 3.7 million refugees/asylum seekers and 942,100 refugees returning to their own country; rounded figures. [38]
People in need of health assistance	Approximately 21 million; 2026	Healthcare needs; not a count of patients or deaths. [9,23]
Pregnant women	Approximately 805,000; September 2026 factsheet	Planning estimate indicating needs for childbirth and emergency care. [23]

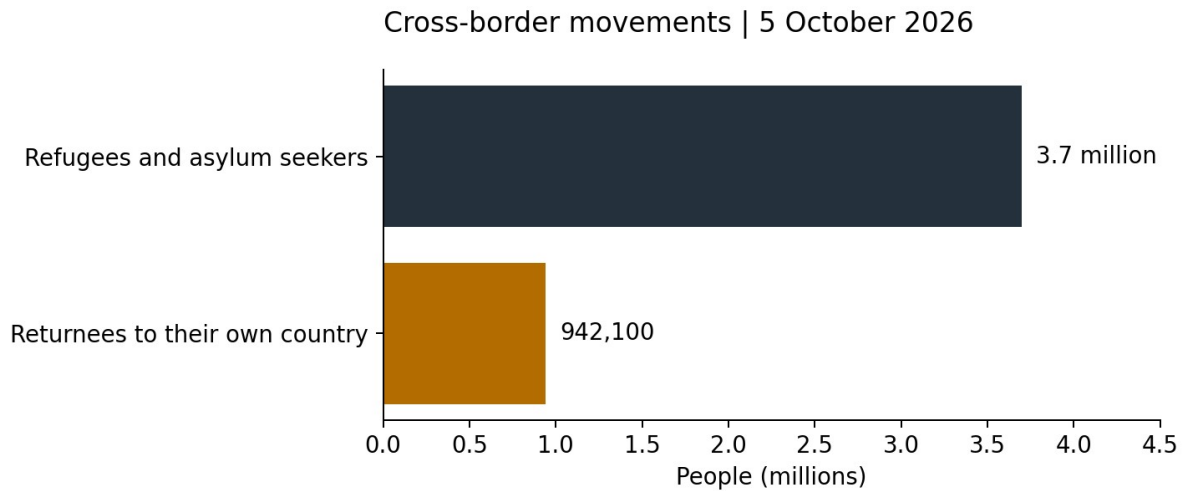
Source note: each row specifies its own period and scope. The difference between 8.58 million and 6.4 million does not, by itself, demonstrate returns or a data error. Definitions, reference dates and methods must be checked together.

8.2 Cross-border displacement and protection

UNHCR's dashboard of 5 October 2026 covers Egypt, Chad, South Sudan, Libya, Uganda, Ethiopia and the Central African Republic. A substantial proportion of those moving to South Sudan are refugees returning to their own country; placing them in the same legal category as Sudanese refugees is misleading. The dashboard's regional total of approximately 4.6 million includes these different groups. [38]

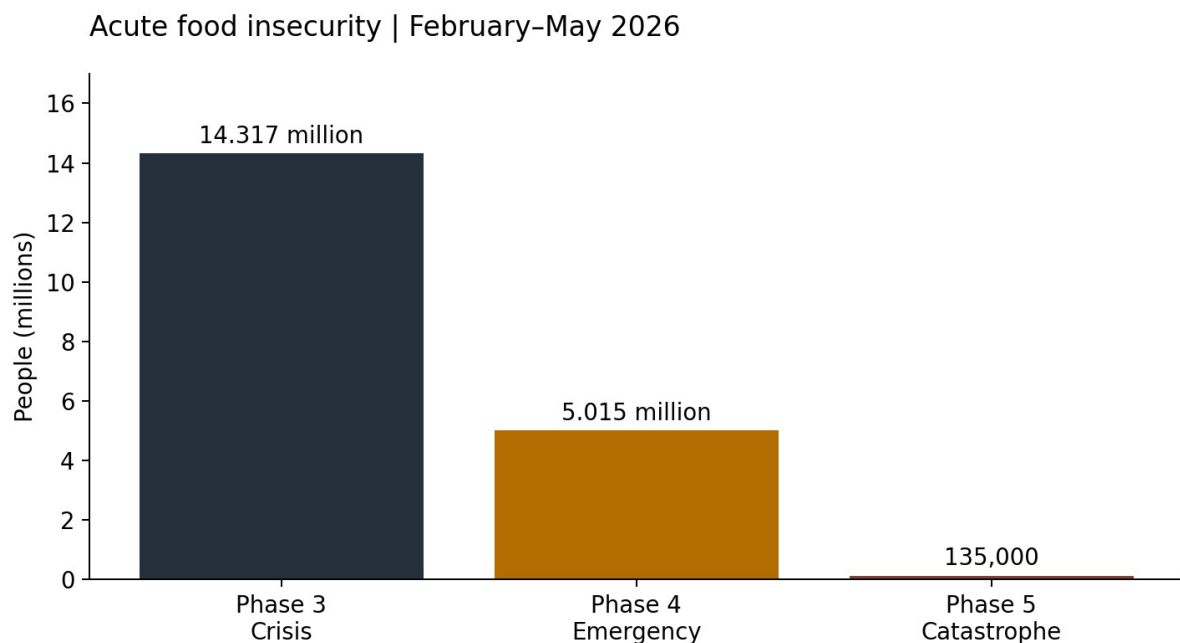
Crossing a border does not automatically secure access to safe housing, documentation, education or healthcare. Family reunification, registration, safe settlement away from borders, child protection and services following sexual violence should be planned together. Return assessments must also monitor livelihoods, property, water and healthcare alongside voluntariness and safety.

Chart 1 Categories of cross-border movements from Sudan



Source: UNHCR regional dashboard, 5 October 2026 [38]. Values are rounded; the apparent difference between the sum of 3.7 million and 942,100 and the stated 4.6 million total reflects rounding precision. The chart excludes internally displaced people.

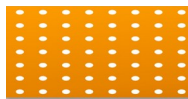
Chart 2 Distribution of acute food insecurity



Source: IPC special report, 3 June 2026, p. 1; assessment period February–May 2026. The chart shows populations in IPC Phases 3, 4 and 5 in the nationwide analysis. The total of 19,467,000 people is rounded to approximately 19.5 million in the source. [11]

8.3 Why drought alone does not explain hunger

Farmers' inability to reach their fields, disrupted market access, looting of stocks and reduced purchasing power restrict access to food through different mechanisms. Food may be present locally without people being able to reach it safely or afford it. The joint



WFP, FAO and UNICEF assessment identifies conflict, displacement and restrictions on humanitarian access as principal factors. [10]

IPC's alert of 12 October 2026 shows this vulnerability combining with drought in Darfur and Kordofan. It reports a 57 per cent funding gap in the national humanitarian response plan and 8.58 million internally displaced people. The alert supplements the earlier classification with new risk indicators. [12]

El Fasher and Kadugli were classified as facing Famine in the previous analysis published in November 2025. The June 2026 special report explains that the available data no longer permit town-level disaggregation. This limits a new town-level determination and direct comparison with the earlier result. Some previously famine-affected people have fled elsewhere; changes in the unit of assessment also affect the results. [11, p. 3]

Both findings must therefore be retained: the earlier famine determination and the uncertainty in the new analysis. The October alert describes the combination of conflict, access constraints and agricultural losses, particularly in Darfur and Kordofan. Decisions on urgent action should not depend solely on awaiting a completed new classification. [12]

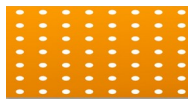
Table 8 Distinguishing famine terminology

Term	Meaning	What it does not establish on its own
IPC Phase 3 Crisis	Serious difficulty meeting food needs and harmful coping strategies.	It does not show that the entire population is experiencing famine.
IPC Phase 4 Emergency	Very large food gaps and severe losses of livelihoods.	It is not ordinary or temporary food price inflation.
IPC Phase 5 Catastrophe	Extremely severe deprivation at household level.	It is not equivalent to the formal classification of an area as experiencing Famine.
Area-level Famine classification	Joint assessment of food consumption, acute malnutrition and mortality criteria.	It is not established solely by deterioration in one indicator.
Risk of Famine	The danger of progression to famine under specified adverse conditions.	It does not mean that famine is confirmed at that time in all locations.

Sources: IPC classification guidance and Sudan assessments [11,12,28,35]. A famine determination from 2024 or 2025 cannot be applied to all of 2026 without specifying its scope and period.

8.4 Health and child protection

The collapse of hospital services can make childbirth complications, chronic diseases and treatable infections fatal, alongside war injuries. WHO's 2026 situation analysis



identifies approximately 21 million people requiring health assistance and notes that low vaccination coverage and poor water and hygiene conditions increase epidemic risks. [9]

Women's health needs extend beyond treatment after violence. Antenatal monitoring, safe delivery, emergency obstetric care and regular access to medicines must also be protected. UNFPA's September 2026 note reports 805,000 pregnant women and severe restrictions on access to essential reproductive health services. This planning estimate should not be interpreted as a verified patient register on a specific date. [23]

For children, the loss of school is more than postponed learning: it weakens safe daily routines, adult support and the environment capable of detecting abuse. UNICEF's 2026 statements indicate that a substantial proportion of school buildings cannot be used for teaching. Education services should be considered alongside protection and psychosocial support. [25]

WHO's July 2026 statement highlighted a new cholera outbreak in Darfur and Kordofan and fragile health capacity in El Obeid. It reported more than 1,330 cases and 114 deaths. These are figures from the July statement, not October totals. The case fatality rate given in the same source is not reproduced here because it is not arithmetically consistent with those two figures. [57]

Epidemic response cannot be separated from food assistance. Malnutrition reduces resistance to disease, while inadequate clean water and treatment limit the effectiveness of nutritional support. Emergency care, water infrastructure and nutrition programmes must be sustained together in the same communities.

School closures also disrupt children's safe daily environments. Displaced children, persons with disabilities and older people face different access barriers. Education and health data should, where possible, be disaggregated by age, sex, disability and settlement type, so that underrepresented groups are not concealed by overall averages.

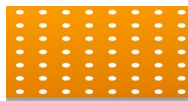
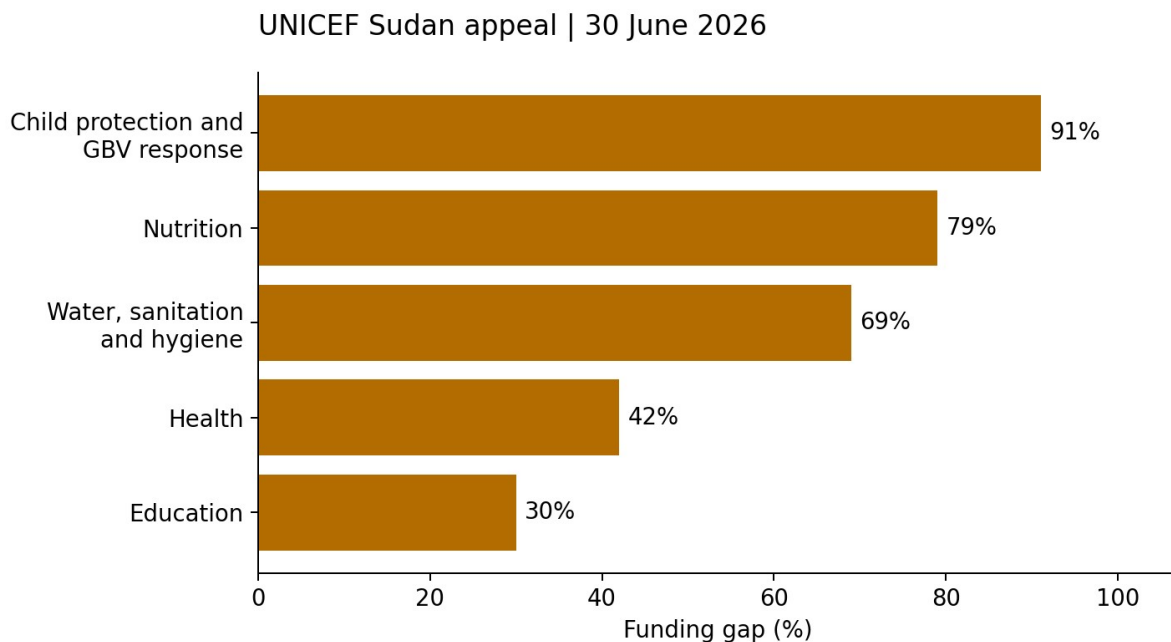


Chart 3 Funding gaps in assistance for children



Source: UNICEF Sudan Humanitarian Mid-Year Situation Report 2026, Annex B, 30 June 2026. Percentages represent sector-specific funding gaps in UNICEF's own appeal, not the entire Sudan response. Available resources include carry-over and other funds. [20]

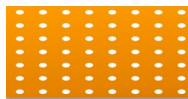
8.5 Uncertainty concerning mortality

The war's total death toll cannot be expressed as a single definitive figure. Event databases principally record reported deaths directly attributable to violence. Population studies may also estimate deaths from indirect causes such as disease and hunger. Under-reporting is especially substantial where registration systems have collapsed.

The study announced by LSHTM researchers in November 2024 estimated more than 61,000 all-cause deaths in Khartoum state alone between April 2023 and June 2024, including more than 26,000 associated with violence. 'All-cause mortality' is not the same as 'excess mortality caused by war'. This finding cannot be directly extrapolated to the entire country or to 2026. Its conclusion on incomplete reporting is important, but its geographical and temporal limits must also be maintained. [30]

As an example of nationwide incident documentation, OHCHR reported documenting at least 3,384 civilian deaths in the first half of 2025. This is not equivalent to the total for the entire war or to a population-based estimate confined to Khartoum. Mortality data should therefore specify the source, location, period and type of mortality measured. [40]

SRL Swiss does not combine these different methods into a lower-to-upper-bound range. Such a range can be established only through comparable studies examining the



same population, period and definition of mortality. The evidence indicates substantial under-recording while requiring caution concerning a definitive national total.

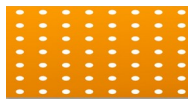
9 Comparative assessment of the literature

9.1 Areas of convergence

The studies reviewed show that the war cannot be explained by a single event or social identity. Common themes include military institutions' enduring political weight, weak civilian oversight and armed actors' control of economic resources. Yet the studies answer different questions: one explains the path to war, while another examines responsibility for a particular attack or the obstacles facing patients.

Table 9 Contributions and limitations of selected studies

Study	Principal contribution	Use and limitations in this report
Assal 2023 [2]	Links the transition, coup and 2023 war to Sudan's longstanding political problems.	Contextual analysis by a Sudanese researcher; not used as a source for subsequent events.
Verhoeven 2023 [3]	Examines SAF's institutional interests and competition between security institutions.	Peer-reviewed academic research; commanders' accounts are not treated as neutral facts on their own.
Gallopín 2020 [4]	Explains the financial imbalance between civilian government and military economic networks.	Shows pre-war mechanisms; not evidence of current corporate ownership.
Kurtz 2024 [5]	Examines the failed civilian transition alongside failed military rule following the coup.	Political process analysis; not a casualty count.
Perthes 2024 [6]	Assesses the opportunities and limits of UN facilitation from an insider's perspective.	Important testimony from a participant in the process; read with regard to his institutional position.
Soliman and Baldo 2025 [7]	Links the gold trade to regional war financing.	Analysis of economic mechanisms; not a determination of criminal responsibility for individual transfers.



Study	Principal contribution	Use and limitations in this report
de Waal 2024 [8]	Explains armed loyalty and external financing through political bargaining.	An explanatory approach; it should not reduce all conduct to material gain.
LSHTM 2024 [30]	Provides a method for estimating mortality from incomplete records.	Limited to Khartoum and a specified period; not a definitive national total.

9.2 Differences between explanations and the report's synthesis

An institutional security approach explains why rival armies perceive each other's strengthening as a threat. Verhoeven's study of SAF is significant in this respect. Institutional rivalry alone, however, does not explain why a particular community is targeted. That requires examining patterns of identity, place and conduct in incident investigations such as El Geneina. [3,14]

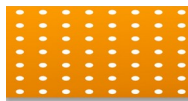
Davies's constitutional analysis focuses on the written design of power sharing and oversight institutions that were never established. Kurtz examines changing political coalitions and the post-coup crisis of government. Read together, they reveal the connection between the constitution's practical effectiveness and the actors' actual sources of power. The former is stronger on institutional design, the latter on struggles within that design. [5,52]

Gallop's analysis of financial networks and Soliman and Baldo's gold research focus on how the war can be financed despite social devastation. An economic-interest approach is incomplete when it reduces every cause of violence to material gain; it should be used alongside political security concerns, historical exclusion and identity-based mobilisation. [4,7]

Perthes offers an insider's view of mediation. This is a significant advantage, but the author is also assessing an institutional process in which he participated. De Waal's political bargaining framework provides a complementary explanation through external resources and relationships of armed allegiance. Both texts help explain diplomatic options without replacing incident-specific investigations of violations. [6,8]

SRL Swiss's synthesis is that exclusion and rival armed institutions created conditions conducive to war; decisions concerning the transition and security reform shaped the path to open conflict; and financial and external connections facilitated its continuation. Civilian harm must be assessed through specific conduct, including attacks, sieges, destruction of resources and breaches of protection obligations, rather than as an automatic consequence of that structure.

An important limitation is that the sources do not have equal access to local and independent data. Sudanese researchers' contextual knowledge and accounts from



local aid networks are included. Nevertheless, the report's review of local Arabic-language publications is not comprehensive; the predominance of accessible institutional and English-language sources remains a limitation.

9.3 Gaps in knowledge

Significant uncertainty remains concerning nationwide mortality, missing persons, the actual prevalence of sexual violence and the full structure of some external support networks. Restricted access, inadequate secure communications and victims' fear of further harm impede data collection. Finding numerous reports of one event does not establish independent corroboration: they may all derive from a single initial account.

Future updates should therefore examine whether the same witness appears in multiple reports, the location and date of images, the scope of figures and the interdependence of sources. An allegation that cannot yet be verified is not necessarily false; it cannot, however, be presented as an established finding.

10 Legal framework and accountability

The basic legal classification of the SAF–RSF conflict is a non-international armed conflict. The ICRC explains the protections of common Article 3, applicable provisions of Additional Protocol II and customary international humanitarian law in the Sudanese context. External support does not automatically transform every relationship in the conflict into a single international armed conflict; any direct state intervention or relevant relationship of control requires separate assessment. [49]

10.1 Fundamental rules applicable to both parties

Armed conflict does not extinguish civilian protection. Parties must distinguish civilians from fighters and civilian objects from military objectives. Indiscriminate attacks are prohibited; expected civilian harm must be assessed against the concrete and direct military advantage anticipated, and feasible precautions must be taken. Torture, sexual violence and the killing of persons hors de combat are also prohibited. [31]

Starvation of civilians as a method of warfare is prohibited. Protecting food and water resources indispensable to survival and facilitating the passage of impartial humanitarian relief are distinct obligations. The presence of civilians under siege does not displace those obligations. Treating wounded fighters in a hospital does not, in itself, make the hospital a military objective. [19,24,31]

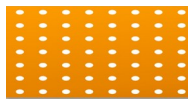


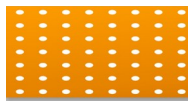
Table 10 Conduct and the applicable legal rules

Conduct examined	Principal legal basis	Matters to investigate
Attacks on civilians or civilian objects	ICRC customary Rules 1 and 7; applicable provisions of Article 8 of the Rome Statute	Nature of the target, perpetrator's knowledge and nexus to the conflict.
Indiscriminate or disproportionate attacks	ICRC Rules 11–15	Effects of the weapon; anticipated civilian harm; concrete and direct military advantage; feasible precautions.
Attacks on medical facilities	ICRC Rules 25 and 28	Protected medical function, alleged misuse and strict conditions governing loss of protection.
Starvation and obstruction of relief	ICRC Rules 53–56	Objects indispensable to civilian survival, nature of the relief, and grounds for and effects of access restrictions.
Executions, torture and sexual violence	Common Article 3; ICRC Rules 89, 90 and 93	Status of the victim, conduct, intent and connection to the relevant perpetrator.
Commander's failure to act	ICRC Rule 153; Article 28 of the Rome Statute	Effective control, knowledge standard, and measures to prevent and punish.

Sources: [31,49,50]. Breach of a protective rule and the elements of an offence and jurisdiction before a particular court must be assessed separately. The applicability of amendments to the Rome Statute also requires examination.

Table 11 Distinguishing legal characterisations

Concept	Essential elements	Considerations in assessing Sudan
War crime	A serious violation linked to an armed conflict, satisfying the required material and mental elements.	Not every civilian casualty automatically constitutes a war crime; the target, methods, knowledge and precautions must be examined.
Crime against humanity	Acts linked to a widespread or systematic attack directed against a civilian population, with the requisite knowledge.	Interconnected patterns of incidents and their organisation must be investigated.



Concept	Essential elements	Considerations in assessing Sudan
Genocide	Acts enumerated in the Convention committed with the specific intent to destroy a protected group, in whole or in part.	Severe losses alone do not establish specific intent; identity-based targeting and context matter.
Command responsibility	Effective control and the applicable legal requirements concerning knowledge and duties to prevent or punish.	Rank or political proximity alone is insufficient.

Sources: ICRC and UN legal guidance [31,33]. The elements of each offence must be assessed against the evidence of the particular incident.

10.2 The legal significance of the El Fasher findings

The UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission's report A/HRC/61/77 assesses mass killings and related acts in El Fasher in terms of the hallmarks of genocide. This is a serious international investigative finding requiring preventive action. It is not equivalent to a final judgment delivered by a criminal court against a particular accused with all procedural safeguards. [17]

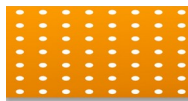
Investigative findings should neither be minimised nor accorded a legal status beyond their own. Waiting for all judicial proceedings to conclude before acting on prevention obligations may defeat the purpose of protection. Evidence preservation, victim protection and independent investigation must therefore proceed together.

Article I of the Genocide Convention and the ICJ's serious-risk approach in *Bosnia and Herzegovina v Serbia and Montenegro* are relevant to the duty to prevent genocide. Paragraphs 430–431 address the state's capacity to influence events alongside its awareness, or what it should normally have known, of the risk. This is an obligation of due diligence requiring the use of reasonably available means, not a guarantee of a particular result. [48]

The US Department of State's genocide determination of 7 January 2025 concerning RSF members and allied militias is also significant. It must be identified as a state's assessment, distinct from the UN Mission's findings and from a judicial judgment. [46]

10.3 Scope and limits of international jurisdiction

The ICC's jurisdiction over Darfur rests on the UN Security Council's 2005 referral. It should not be presented as general jurisdiction automatically covering every act throughout Sudan. The existing mechanism remains important for new allegations concerning Darfur; jurisdiction and available avenues in other regions require separate assessment. [34]



On 5 May 2025, in Sudan's case against the UAE, the ICJ found that it lacked jurisdiction because of the UAE's reservation to Article IX of the Genocide Convention and removed the case from its General List. This does not mean that the allegations were examined on the merits and found to be unfounded. The Court expressly distinguished jurisdiction from states' substantive obligations. [36, paras. 29–36]

10.4 A specific prosecution and other accountability avenues

On 6 October 2025, the ICC convicted Ali Muhammad Ali Abd-Al-Rahman on 27 counts of crimes against humanity and war crimes committed in Darfur between August 2003 and April 2004; on 9 December 2025, it sentenced him to 20 years' imprisonment. The Court's case page also records notices of appeal against the conviction and sentence. The decision must therefore not be presented as a general judgment concerning all perpetrators in the post-2023 war or as a judgment for which the appeal process has concluded. [42]

The case demonstrates that evidence and victim participation can lead to a judicial outcome even many years later. At the same time, the length of proceedings requires separate protective measures against ongoing attacks. Evidence preservation and urgent assistance should not be treated as alternatives.

Sudan's non-party status under the Rome Statute and the scope of the existing Darfur referral preclude assuming automatic ICC jurisdiction over conduct elsewhere in the country. A new Security Council referral, a declaration under Article 12(3) in appropriate circumstances or other jurisdictional links require separate legal assessment. Universal jurisdiction depends on the law of the state concerned, the suspect's presence and procedural requirements. Another case before the ICJ would also require a valid basis of jurisdiction between the parties. [34,36,50]

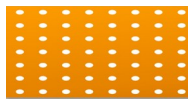
This report does not assert authority to initiate proceedings or act on behalf of a particular victim. The priority is to preserve secure, verifiable records in a form that can be transmitted to competent mechanisms.

11 Instruments and limits of international action

The international response is not a single process. Ceasefire initiatives, humanitarian financing, sanctions and criminal investigations are undertaken by different institutions. Progress in one area does not automatically produce results in another. The question is which conduct these instruments seek to change and whether they reinforce one another.

11.1 Diplomacy and the implementation gap

The Jeddah Declaration of 11 May 2023 recorded commitments to protect civilians. It provides a basis for monitoring obligations accepted by the parties; without effective follow-up when commitments are breached, however, protection remains limited. [37]



On 18 November 2024, Russia's veto prevented adoption of a Security Council draft resolution on civilian protection and humanitarian access. The meeting record contains Russia's objections concerning sovereignty and the role of the competent authorities alongside other members' calls for protection. The episode illustrates how policy disagreement can block collective decision-making. [43]

The Quad statement of 12 September 2025 set out a common framework by Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the UAE and the United States for a humanitarian truce, a permanent ceasefire and civilian transition. The broader co-chairs' statement later that month supported the initiative and rejected parallel governments. Diplomatic support still requires acceptance by the parties and verifiable implementation on the ground. [44,58]

The Berlin conference of April 2026 and continuing initiatives demonstrate sustained international attention. Aid pledges must nevertheless be distinguished from available funding, and attendance at meetings from civilian decision-making authority. In SRL Swiss's assessment, negotiating mechanisms will have limited leverage unless aligned with the conduct of states capable of influencing financial and arms flows. [53,54]

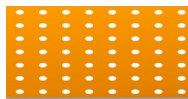
11.2 Arms embargoes and financial measures

The regime developed through UN resolutions 1556 and 1591 includes restrictions on arms and related technical assistance to actors operating in Darfur. End-user documentation also matters for other permissible sales to Sudan. It is inaccurate to describe the regime as a general UN arms embargo covering all of Sudan. The 1591 Committee and Panel of Experts provide institutional channels for implementation and examination of violations. [45]

Resolution 2830, adopted on 8 October 2026, extended the Sudan sanctions regime to 11 December 2026. While this ensured continuity of the oversight mechanism, practical issues concerning shipments and sanctions evasion remained significant. [55]

The EU's country-wide arms restrictions and the UN's Darfur-focused regime are separate legal arrangements. The Council of the EU's statement also records additional July 2026 prohibitions concerning trade in Sudanese-origin gold and the supply of mercury and cyanide to Sudan. This report treats the statement as a policy development; the legality of a particular transaction requires separate examination of the operative rules, exemptions and jurisdiction. [54]

The effectiveness of measures cannot be assessed solely by the number of designated persons. Diversion of risky transactions to other intermediaries or routes, concealment of beneficial ownership and unnecessary obstruction of humanitarian payment channels must also be monitored. Financial scrutiny and the operation of humanitarian exemptions should therefore be designed together.



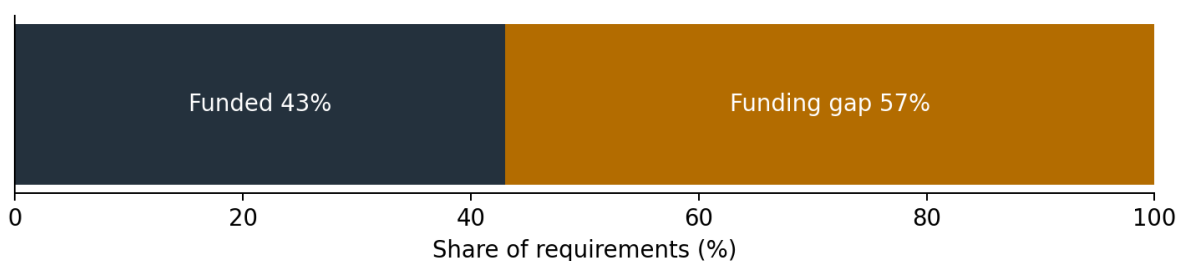
11.3 Local solidarity and international assistance

Emergency Response Rooms are volunteer aid networks developed at neighbourhood level. ERR volunteer Alsanosi Adam's June 2026 account describes the work of hundreds of local structures across the country. This first-hand civil society perspective is valuable; the network's account of its own reach should not be confused with an independent national impact assessment. [29]

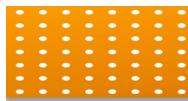
Treating local organisations merely as international agencies' 'last distribution point' understates their knowledge and decision-making capacity. Direct financing must nevertheless operate through simplified but substantive accountability arrangements. Secure financial records and community feedback can be used instead of publicly disclosing volunteers' names or aid routes.

Chart 4 Unfunded share of the humanitarian response plan

Humanitarian response plan | 8 October 2026



Source: OCHA FTS figures cited in the IPC alert of 12 October 2026; funding position as at 8 October 2026. The funded share of 43 per cent is calculated by subtracting the reported 57 per cent gap from 100. A pledge is not equivalent to delivered assistance. This indicator measures a different plan from the UNICEF appeal in Chart 3. [12]



III Conclusion

12 Principal assessment

The war in Sudan is the devastating result of the failure to subject armed power to civilian oversight and of rival institutions retaining their own revenue and support networks. Examining historical exclusion, transitional decisions and war financing together shows why the crisis cannot be explained solely by personal rivalry or a single natural resource.

The incidents examined demonstrate that civilian danger arises from both direct attacks and the destruction of systems sustaining life. Ethnic attacks in Darfur, retaliatory executions in central Sudan, reduced access in Kordofan and epidemic risks form distinct local patterns. Protection policy must rest on a common rights-based approach that recognises these differences.

Judicial decisions and investigative findings can advance accountability in concrete ways. Awaiting the conclusion of proceedings, however, delays urgent protection. Likewise, making humanitarian access conditional on resolving every political disagreement does not meet civilian needs. Diplomacy, financial scrutiny, evidence preservation and continuity of services must proceed simultaneously.

13 Implementation priorities

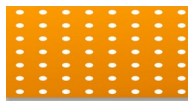
The periods in this section are review intervals proposed by SRL Swiss. They are not presented as commitments accepted by institutions or targets verified on the ground. Obligations must be fulfilled immediately; the timetable structures review of implementation and progress.

13.1 Immediate protection and access

SAF, RSF and allied commands must stop attacks targeting civilians, unlawful executions, torture and sexual violence. Orders to units should be recorded, allegations of violations investigated and protection measures implemented. Issuing an order should not, by itself, count as an indicator of success.

UN humanitarian coordination bodies, relevant local networks and states with influence over the parties should compile a common register of access obstacles for priority localities. Requests for authorisation, waiting periods, actual passage and delivery should be recorded separately. Public information should be aggregated so as not to endanger volunteers or routes.

Secure preservation must begin immediately because of the risk of evidence loss. Original image files, date and location information, transfer history and any medical records should be retained; access to services must not depend on a victim providing



testimony. Secure referral arrangements should be established between competent investigative mechanisms.

13.2 Financing and implementation review in the first thirty days

Donors should disburse funds promptly to accessible areas where services cannot be delivered because of funding shortages. Nutrition, clean water, basic healthcare and child protection should be planned together for the same communities. The speed and continuity of payments to local networks, directly or through suitable intermediaries, should be monitored separately.

Exporting and transit states should strengthen licensing, end-user and re-export controls over arms and related material presenting a risk of serious violations. Specific shipment information should be provided to the 1591 Committee and Panel of Experts under appropriate confidentiality safeguards. Expanding the geographical scope of the UN embargo requires a political decision; that debate should not postpone compliance with existing obligations.

Competent authorities in financial centres and businesses in the gold supply chain should examine beneficial ownership, source regions, payment networks and transit routes. Compliance with existing prohibitions must be distinguished from proposals for new targeted measures. Clear and prompt exemption procedures should operate where humanitarian payments are unnecessarily blocked.

13.3 Political and institutional follow-up within one to three months

The UN, African Union, IGAD and relevant mediators should define the agenda-setting and monitoring roles of Sudanese women's organisations, professional associations, displaced communities and local civilian networks. Participation should not be measured solely through invitations or numbers of representatives. The influence of civilian proposals on decisions, and reasons for rejecting proposals, should be recorded.

Security reform should encompass budget oversight, corporate relationships, command structures, assessment of persons suspected of violations and civilian supervision, as well as integration timetables. These arrangements should be determined through an inclusive Sudanese political process; external actors should avoid agreements that entrench resource sharing between armed leaders.

Return programmes should assess housing, property, explosive remnants, water, healthcare and discrimination risks. Renewed displacement, service access and security complaints should be monitored alongside returnee numbers. All returns must be voluntary, safe and dignified.

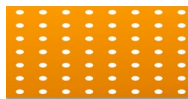
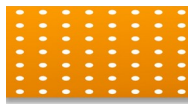


Table 12 Monitoring implementation of the findings

Finding and addressees	Proposed measure and initial follow-up	Measurement and principal obstacle
Executions and attacks on civilians; parties' commands and UN monitoring mechanisms	Explicit orders, violation reporting and independent investigation; immediately	Status of incident investigations; access and risk of reprisals.
Delays in relief; parties, OCHA and states with influence over access	Joint register of obstacles and regular crossing monitoring; first week	Authorisation and delivery times, rejected/delayed requests; changes to front lines and permissions.
Hunger and disease; donors and service providers	Integrated nutrition, water and health budgets by locality; first month	Days of uninterrupted service and population covered; funding and access gaps.
Loss of evidence; investigative mechanisms and documentation actors operating securely	Preservation of original files and transfer history; immediately	Records with preserved integrity and secure referrals; witness safety.
Arms flows; exporting/transit states and the 1591 Committee	Review of high-risk licences and end-user verification; first month	Shipments reviewed, interdictions and investigative outcomes; covert networks and political objections.
War financing; financial centres and competent financial authorities	Beneficial ownership and gold supply chain investigations; first month	Documented transactions and enforcement outcomes; diversion to other routes and obstruction of relief.
Civilian exclusion; UN, AU, IGAD and mediators	Defined civilian authority in agenda-setting and monitoring decisions; 1–3 months	Proposals reflected in decisions and reasoned responses; representation disputes and security.
Unsafe returns; relevant agencies and local communities	Locality-level security and service assessments; before return	Renewed flight and complaints about shelter and services; property disputes and explosive hazards.

Source: SRL Swiss recommendations derived from the preceding findings. Where reliable baseline values are unavailable, measurement is the first step; no numerical performance targets have been invented.



13.4 Monitoring and advocacy by SRL Swiss

SRL Swiss can use this report for evidence-based public information and targeted advocacy towards relevant institutions. Its practical contribution is to monitor new documents with their dates and scope, make corrections to earlier claims visible and record addressees' responses to selected recommendations. It should not imply independent verification in areas where it lacks field access.

The next update should prioritise civilian protection in Kordofan, delivery of assistance to intended recipients, cross-border population movements and new stages in accountability proceedings. This will allow each version to show how earlier findings and recommendations have changed, rather than simply repeating general calls for action.



Appendix A Data notes and reproducibility

Table 13 Data used in the charts

Chart	Values	Date and source
Chart 2 Food insecurity	IPC 3: 14,317,000; IPC 4: 5,015,000; IPC 5: 135,000 people.	February–May 2026; IPC Special Report, p. 1. [11]
Chart 3 UNICEF funding gaps	Health 42%; nutrition 79%; child protection and gender-based violence response 91%; education 30%; water and hygiene 69%.	30 June 2026; UNICEF Annex B. [20]
Chart 1 Cross-border movement categories	Approximately 3.7 million refugees/asylum seekers; 942,100 refugees returning to their own country.	UNHCR dashboard of 5 October 2026. [38]
Chart 4 Overall response plan	Funding gap 57%; funded 43%.	FTS status as at 8 October 2026; IPC alert of 12 October. [12]

Absolute funding gaps in UNICEF Annex B are: health, USD 72,569,495; nutrition, USD 202,261,316; child protection and gender-based violence response, USD 137,068,058; education, USD 23,179,575; and water, sanitation and hygiene, USD 155,238,551. Percentages are rounded in the source. [20]

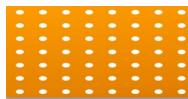
The food insecurity and cross-border movement charts use millions of people; the UNICEF chart uses the funding gap as a percentage. The 43 per cent in the overall response chart is the complement of the reported 57 per cent gap. Population and funding charts use axes starting at zero.

Rules for comparison

Displacement stocks must not be added to new movements during a period. Repeated displacement of the same person may increase the difference between numbers of events and people. Border-crossing data may include Sudanese refugees, asylum seekers and nationals of other countries returning home under different definitions. A single 'refugee total' should not be produced without checking definitions.

IPC's 2026 special report distinguishes the nationwide February–May analysis from projections for later periods with more limited geographical coverage. As the same areas and populations are not covered, the figures do not directly establish a rising or falling trend. [11, p. 1]

Verified minimum deaths, reported incidents, estimated all-cause mortality and excess mortality above expected levels are distinct categories. In relation to sexual violence, service needs and populations at risk are not verified incident counts. Future versions of this report must maintain these distinctions.



Appendix B Source selection and verification record

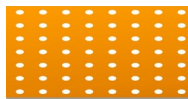
This is a purposive, critical desk review, limited to publicly available sources as at 15 October 2026. It combines historical and analytical research, UN and humanitarian documents, judicial records and human rights investigations explaining their methodology. News reports were used, where possible, to locate the relevant institution's statement or original research.

Searches undertaken for the revision covered the subject groups 'Sudan 2019 constitutional declaration', 'Sudan military economy gold', 'Sudan summary executions Khartoum 2025', 'Sudan Kordofan displacement 2026', 'Sudan IPC famine 2026', 'Sudan Quad September 2025', 'Sudan arms embargo 2026' and 'Abd-Al-Rahman appeal'. These are not presented as an exhaustive systematic search strategy or a complete inventory of publications.

Selection prioritised clarity of incidents and dates, methodological information, proximity to primary data and consistency between the claim and the source's scope. Repeated accounts of the same event were not treated as independent corroboration. Figures whose source, period or population could not be identified were not used to construct national totals. Limited access to local Arabic-language sources and wartime under-reporting are principal limitations.

Table 14 Verification record for key claims

Claim or figure	Supporting material checked	Treatment in this report
IPC Phase 3, 4 and 5 populations	Special Report, p. 1; period and geographical coverage	Total of 19,467,000; nationwide coverage for February–May 2026 retained. [11]
Famine in El Fasher and Kadugli	IPC Special Report, p. 3	Previous classifications and the absence of new town-level data explained together. [11]
UNICEF sector funding	Mid-year report, Annex B	Percentages from the same appeal and date retained; monetary shortfalls added. [20]
Cross-border population movements	UNHCR downloadable dashboard of 5 October 2026	Refugee/asylum seeker and returnee categories distinguished. [38]
Displacement originating in Kordofan	Official summary on IOM's country page	Only the period and figure in the summary used; no implication that the full report was reviewed. [39]
Executions attributed to SAF and allies	Official OHCHR statements of January and September 2025	Verified incidents, attribution and source coverage stated together. [40,41]
ICC conviction	The Court's case page	Conviction, sentence and appeal notices distinguished. [42]



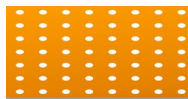
Claim or figure	Supporting material checked	Treatment in this report
Chemical weapons determination	Federal Register notice	Reported as an official US determination; undisclosed attack details were not added. [47]
July 2026 cholera statement	Official WHO/UN Geneva transcript	Case and death figures presented with their periods; a rate inconsistent with the figures was excluded. [57]

Updates should record new incidents, corrections to earlier figures and changes in procedural status separately. SRL Swiss prepared the figures and tables in this version; the map provides general geographical orientation. Citation does not imply that the organisations endorse the report or that it represents their views.

Appendix C Scope of the substantive revision

This version expands the discussion of transitional institutions and historical turning points, strengthens the account of developments in 2025–2026, distinguishes external actors by type of evidence and adds executions attributed to SAF, aid restrictions and the US chemical weapons determination. It clarifies the temporal and geographical limits of famine classification and separates displacement indicators. It develops the ICC case and legal authorities, and connects recommendations to addressees, instruments, review periods and obstacles. A geographical map, additional population chart and page-numbered contents were added to the revised report. This English edition translates the full report, including its tables, figures and reference annotations.

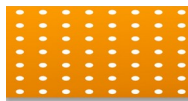
SRL Swiss is the institutional publisher. This is substantive revision 2.0. No independent external peer review or field verification is claimed. Details concerning individual authors, reviewers or declarations of interest have not been added without verification.



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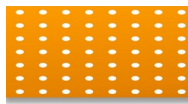
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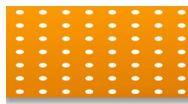
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