

SUDAN CONFLICT SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS: POST-JANUARY 2024 DYNAMICS, IMPACTS, & FUTURE SCENARIOS

BACKGROUND

Sudan's conflict, which escalated into a full-scale war in April 2023, continues to evolve. Shifts in alliances, fragmented authority, and contested control over strategic corridors have deepened humanitarian needs and widened security risks. Episodes of mass displacement, attacks on health and market systems, widespread gender-based violence, and warnings of genocide have been documented alongside competing narratives amplified through social and digital media. Given the pace of change and the policy attention on ceasefire prospects, a short, rigorous analysis that consolidates recent dynamics and future risks is both timely and necessary for actors to rethink their interventions in light of programming and advocacy.

Sudan's current war cannot be understood without reference to its deep structural and historical fault lines. Researchers consistently point to a mix of long-term governance deficits, marginalization of peripheries, militarized politics, resource competition, and environmental stresses as persistent backdrops to periodic crises. First, a pattern of military dominance in politics has repeatedly interrupted transitions to civilian governance. Second, peripheral marginalization and identity-based grievances remain potent. Regions such as Darfur, Kordofan and parts of the east have long experienced underinvestment, exclusion from decision-making and social injustices. Third, competition over resources especially gold, land and revenue from agro commodities have intensified the

stakes for control. Fourth, environmental stress and climate change increasingly interact with socio-economic fragility spread of desertification, shifts in rainfall patterns and competition over water and arable lands exacerbate migration pressures and local conflicts. These pressures heighten communities' vulnerability, making them more susceptible to militarized mobilization.

Over twelve million people are displaced, infrastructure and social services have collapsed, and famine and disease are spreading. Humanitarian access remains highly restricted, forcing local organizations and faith networks to sustain relief operations under perilous conditions. Gender-based violence has escalated sharply, with sexual violence, abduction, and exploitation used as deliberate weapons of war. Women and girls face compounded risks from hunger, displacement, and stigma, while protection and health systems have disintegrated. Yet women and youth continue to emerge as key actors in peacebuilding and humanitarian response organizing community care, trauma-healing initiatives and digital advocacy for justice and accountability.

These dynamics point to three plausible trajectories in Sudan: *an inclusive peace process, prolonged instability with localized negotiations, or worst-case escalation the partitioning of Sudan and regional destabilization.*



KEY ASKS

The findings from this study – Sudan Conflict Situational Analysis – Post-January 2024 Dynamics, Impacts and Future Scenarios – reveals that Sudan’s conflict is not only a crisis of governance and power but also one of humanity, identity and resilience. Respondents across all categories emphasized that recovery would depend on inclusive dialogue, justice and locally led resilience, supported by coherent action from national, regional, and global stakeholders.

1. **Ceasefire and access to humanitarian aid:** Call for an immediate ceasefire, and provide unhindered humanitarian access across all regions, especially in Darfur, Kordofan, Blue Nile in addition to other regions.
2. **Condemn the use of starvation as a weapon of war,** siege tactics, and obstruction of lifesaving aid, and demand for the protection of civilians, humanitarian workers, medical facilities, water networks, and displaced persons.
3. **Support humanitarian access and recovery:** Increase funding for life-saving interventions in health, education, food security, while integrating trauma healing and psychosocial programs.
4. **Enforce arms embargoes and accountability mechanisms:** The EU through bilateral and multilateral cooperation should strengthen sanctions on actors fuelling the conflict and track illicit financial flows linked to gold and arms trade.
5. **Expand survivor-centred GBV prevention and response:** Establish mobile health clinics for treatment of survivors, safe spaces and confidential psychosocial services for survivors, through trusted local organizations and faith-based institutions. Integrate feminist and survivor-led networks into humanitarian coordination to ensure dignity and confidentiality.
6. **Encourage coordinated diplomacy:** Harmonize international mediation efforts to avoid duplication and ensure neutrality in peace processes. Inclusion of women and youth should be paramount in all mediation processes.
7. **Strengthen refugee protection and burden-sharing:** Enhance cooperation among host countries (Kenya, Chad, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Egypt) to ensure equitable service delivery and uphold refugee rights.
8. **Address cross-border insecurity and trafficking:** Develop joint border management initiatives to curb arms smuggling, mercenary movements, and extremist infiltration.
9. **Empower local media for peace communication:** Train community journalists and youth influencers in conflict-sensitive reporting, fact-checking, and peace messaging to counter hate speech and disinformation.

CONCLUSION

The Sudan conflict remains one of the most complex humanitarian and political crises in Africa, marked by immense suffering but also by extraordinary resilience. Across all respondent categories, the call was unanimous: peace must be Sudanese-owned, inclusive, and anchored in justice and healing. The insights presented in this study demonstrate that while the war has devastated communities, it has also awakened a new generation of civic and moral leadership among women, youth, and faith actors. Feminist and grassroots movements have emerged as vital moral anchors, while independent media and community organizations continue to challenge misinformation and rebuild social trust. The pathway to recovery lies in empowering these actors, restoring legitimate institutions and fostering a regional and global environment that supports peace with dignity. Only through collective responsibility from local to global can Sudan move from survival to sustainable peace and reconstruction.