One Year of Conflict in Sudan: Visualizing the World’s Largest Displacement Crisis

April 2024

IOM UN MIGRATION DISPLACEMENT TRACKING MATRIX (DTM)
OVERVIEW

Within the span of a single year, an estimated 6,657,550 individuals were internally displaced across Sudan due to the armed conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), while an additional 2,044,248 individuals were displaced across borders into neighbouring countries. Given Sudan already hosted millions of displaced individuals prior to the outbreak of the conflict, the past year of conflict has made Sudan the largest displacement crisis in the world.

• Over 13 per cent of Sudan’s population was displaced internally within the past year, since 15 April 2023.

• Approximately 10 per cent of localities across Sudan experienced a population increase of 50 percent or higher due to the influx of displaced individuals in the past year.

• Sudan hosts approximately 13 per cent of all internally displaced persons globally. Nearly 1 in every 8 internally displaced persons worldwide is Sudanese.

On 15 April 2023, armed clashes erupted in the capital city, Khartoum, and quickly spread throughout Sudan. Between April 2023 and April 2024, IOM’s Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) monitored a continuous increase in displacement and provided weekly updates on the movements, needs, and intentions of displaced households across all 18 states in Sudan. DTM also released 196 Early Warning Flash alerts, reporting on specific clashes and events that triggered displacement.

This report presents data from one year of conflict and displacement within Sudan. It analyses how displacement due to the current crisis compares to displacement in Sudan over the past two decades, as well as the evolution of displacement trends throughout the past year of conflict, based on DTM data collected between 15 April 2023 and 04 April 2024.

CONTEXTUALIZING DISPLACEMENT IN SUDAN

Prior to the outbreak of the current conflict on 15 April 2023, Sudan already hosted an estimated 3,820,772 internally displaced persons (IDPs), many of whom were initially displaced during the crises in Darfur, beginning in 2003. Displaced individuals were reported across 138 localities, primarily in the Darfur and Kordofan regions. In comparison, DTM Sudan tracked approximately 6,657,550 internally displaced persons during the past year of conflict. IDPs were recorded across over 7,000 locations in 181 out of Sudan’s 189 administrative localities, in all 18 states.

The number of persons internally displaced within Sudan within the past year was unprecedented, representing over five times the number of individuals displaced in 2022 and two times the cumulative number of people displaced internally between 2003 and 2022.

Graph 1: Displacement Overtime in Sudan, from 2003-2024

1. Except where otherwise stated, this report analyses DTM internal displacement data from 15 April 2023 to 04 April 2024, and data for cross-border movements from 15 April 2023 to 07 April 2024.
2. This figures was calculated using DTM displacement data from 04 April 2024 and UN population estimates for Sudan from November 2022.
3. Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), 2023 Global Report on Internal Displacement. Figures were calculated using the IDMC GRID 2023 global total of 71.1 million IDPs as a denominator, with total IDPs according to DTM Sudan estimates, less the estimated population of foreign nationals according to DTM estimates as a numerator.
4. For further information, see DTM Sudan’s Internal Displacement Persons 2023 Estimates.
This map is for illustration purposes only. Names and boundaries do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM.

Map 1: Localities of Displacement in Sudan, as of 15 March 2023

Map 2: Localities of Displacement in Sudan, as of 04 April 2024
Since the outbreak of conflict on 15 April 2023, DTM Sudan published 196 Early Warning Flash Alerts in order to inform humanitarian partners of events triggering displacement across Sudan. To facilitate quick action on the ground, Early Warning Flash Alerts were usually released within 24 to 48 hours of each reported incident. Map 3 illustrates the number of DTM’s Early Warning Flash Alerts published across different localities in Sudan during one year of conflict, from 15 April 2023 to 04 April 2024.

The most reported incidents causing displacement were across conflict zones in North Darfur (38 flash alerts), South Darfur (31 flash alerts), and South Kordofan (34 flash alerts). The months with the most reported Early Warning Flash Alerts were: December 2023 (30 flash alerts), reflecting the expansion of the conflict into Aj Jazirah state; November 2023 (24 flash alerts), reflecting renewed clashes across the Kordofan states; and January 2024 (22 flash alerts), reflecting intensified clashes across North Darfur. DTM Sudan released an average of 16 Early Warning Flash Alerts per month since the onset of the conflict.
Map 4 combines The Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED) with DTM data on localities of origin among IDPs to visually represent how various conflict-related incidents interacted with displacement dynamics throughout the year. ACLED records battles, explosions or forms of remote violence, protests, riots, strategic developments, and instances of violence against civilians.

**Top State of Origin**

As an epicentre of conflict, Khartoum remained the top state of origin among IDPs displaced since 15 April 2023. As of 04 April 2024, an estimated 3,571,549 IDPs originated from Khartoum, representing approximately 54 per cent of the total population displaced internally during the past year. Five of the top 10 localities of origin were in Khartoum state.

South Darfur was the second most common state of origin among IDPs, with an estimated 971,966 IDPs (15%) displaced from locations in South Darfur. Specifically, Nyala Janoub locality represented the second-highest locality of origin among IDPs due to continued armed clashes throughout the year. Other top localities of origin in the Darfur region included: Zalingi, Central Darfur; Tawila, North Darfur; and Al Fasher, North Darfur.

Finally, Aj Jazirah state represented the third most common state of origin among IDPs as of 04 April 2024. Following the eruption of conflict in 15 April 2023, many individuals were displaced from Khartoum to neighbouring Aj Jazirah state, which hosted approximately 524,919 IDPs as of 13 December 2023. However, the expansion of the conflict into Aj Jazirah state on 15 December 2023 led to widespread displacement. As a result, an estimated 626,345 IDPs were displaced from Aj Jazirah. Specifically, the locality of Medani Al Kubra became a top locality of origin among IDPs nationwide following the clashes in December 2023.

**Map 5: Localities Hosting Internally Displaced Persons in Sudan from April 2023 to April 2024**

April 2023

July 2023

December 2023

April 2024

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Map 5: Localities Hosting Internally Displaced Persons in Sudan from April 2023 to April 2024
DISPLACEMENT PATHWAYS & EXPERIENCES

While the top states of origin among IDPs were Khartoum (54%), South Darfur (15%), and Aj Jazirah (9%), the top states of displacement were South Darfur (11%), River Nile (11%), and East Darfur (10%). Map 5 illustrates the localities hosting IDPs throughout the past year of conflict.

IDPs from Khartoum and Aj Jazirah were primarily displaced to states across the central, northern, and eastern regions of Sudan. In contrast, IDPs from Darfur and Kordofan states were primarily displaced within these same states, across the western regions of Sudan.

Specifically, the majority of IDPs from Khartoum (82%) were displaced across central, northern, and eastern regions of Sudan. The states hosting the highest proportions of IDPs from Khartoum were River Nile (20%), White Nile (13%), and Northern (11%).

However, the vast majority (99%) of IDPs from the Darfur region were displaced to other locations within the Darfur region, or even within the same state. Approximately 72 per cent of IDPs from South Darfur were displaced to other locations within South Darfur. Similarly, approximately 93 per cent of IDPs displaced from locations across the Kordofan region were reportedly displaced to other locations across the Kordofan region.

In terms of shelter and accommodation in sites of displacement, IDPs reportedly stayed with host families and communities (66%), followed by schools or public buildings (14%). Smaller proportions of IDPs stayed in private rented accommodation (7%), gathering sites, including informal settlements or open areas (6%), formal camps (6%), and improvised or critical shelters (1%). This pattern occurred across the entire country: staying with host families represented the most common form of accommodation in all 18 states. In particular, an estimated 94 per cent of IDPs in North Kordofan stayed with host families, while only 6 per cent stayed in other forms of shelter or accommodation, including schools and public buildings (4%), gathering sites (1%), or critical shelters (1%). The high proportion of IDPs staying with host families likely reflects the role of tribal connections and networks of social support in determining locations of displacement.

In states with more frequent clashes or higher levels of insecurity, IDPs were more evenly distributed among host families and other forms of shelter. For example, IDPs in South
Darfur reportedly stayed with host families (39%), in schools or other public buildings (34%), and formal camps (18%). In addition, field teams across several states reported that some IDP communities were increasingly moving from host families to collective shelters or other forms of accommodation as host families faced increased economic pressure. Host families may face especially acute pressure in localities that experienced the highest percentage increase in population due to the influx of IDPs since 15 April 2023, including: Shia’ria, East Darfur (estimated 226% population increase); Sharg Aj Jabal, South Darfur (214% increase in population), and Halfa, Northern state (102% increase in population). Among IDPs nationwide, over half (53%) were estimated to be children under 18 years old, while 22 per cent were children under five years old. In addition, approximately 28 per cent were female children under 18 years old, who faced unique protection risks during displacement.\(^6\)

\(^5\) This figure was calculated using DTM displacement data from 04 April 2024 and UN population estimates for Sudan from November 2022.

\(^6\) Estimates for sex and age disaggregated data valid as of 21 March 2024.
OVERVIEW OF DISPLACEMENT STATE

**Aj Jazirah**

An estimated 364,158 internally displaced persons (IDPs) were hosted in Aj Jazirah as of 04 April 2024, while approximately 626,345 IDPs reportedly originated from Aj Jazirah. As clashes erupted in Khartoum at the start of the conflict, many individuals fled to neighbouring Aj Jazirah state given its proximity and relative security. Aj Jazirah also served as an operational base for various humanitarian actors throughout the conflict. However, clashes in Aj Jazirah since December 2023 triggered significant waves of displacement, both within Aj Jazirah and to neighbouring states. Many IDPs who were originally from Khartoum experienced secondary displacement. As a result, Aj Jazirah became the third most common state of origin among IDPs in Sudan as of 04 April 2024.

**Blue Nile**

An estimated 142,936 IDPs were hosted in Blue Nile as of 04 April 2024, representing only 2 percent of total IDPs in Sudan. The vast majority (87%) of IDPs in Blue Nile were reportedly from Khartoum. There was a stark increase in the number of IDPs hosted in Blue Nile between November 2023 and January 2024, likely due to expansion of the conflict into Aj Jazirah state.
Central Darfur

Approximately 428,675 IDPs were hosted in Central Darfur as of 04 April 2024, while an estimated total of 292,371 IDPs were originally displaced from Central Darfur. The vast majority of IDPs in Central Darfur originated either from other locations across Central Darfur (63%) or from other locations in the Darfur states (36%).

Graph 5: Timeline of IDPs in Central Darfur, May 2023 - April 2024

East Darfur

East Darfur represented the third most common state of displacement among IDPs in Sudan, and hosted an estimated 660,640 IDPs as of 04 April 2024. There was a sharp increase in IDPs recorded in East Darfur between July and September 2023: from approximately 9,420 recorded IDPs on 26 July 2023 to an estimated 500,965 IDPs recorded on 29 September 2023. The increase followed a series of clashes between SAF and RSF in Nyala Town, South Darfur, which spurred significant displacement to East Darfur. In particular, the population of Shia’ria locality reportedly increased by over 200 per cent within the past year due to the influx of IDPs, which increased demand for already-limited resources and services.7

Graph 6: Timeline of IDPs in East Darfur, May 2023 - April 2024

7. This figure is calculated using DTM displacement data from 04 April 2024 and UN nationwide population estimates for Sudan from November 2022.
Gedaref

An estimated 471,547 IDPs were hosted in Gedaref as of 04 April 2024. While Gedaref was not a reported state of origin among IDPs, there was a consistent monthly increase in IDPs arriving in Gedaref throughout the year. Gedaref primarily hosted IDPs originating from the neighbouring state of Khartoum. Many IDPs who were hosted in Gedaref had experienced secondary displacement following the expansion of conflict into neighbouring Aj Jazirah in December 2023.

Kassala

An estimated 196,893 IDPS were hosted in Kassala as of 04 April 2024, with approximately 74 per cent originating from Khartoum. There was a consistent increase each month of IDPs in Kassala, with a notable increase between November 2023 and January 2024 following the clashes in Aj Jazirah. Kassala also served as a key transit state for IDPs intending to either go to eastern and northern states within Sudan, or to cross borders to reach the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia or the United Arab Emirates via Eritrea.
Khartoum

As an epicentre of the conflict, Khartoum represented the top state of origin among IDPs displaced during the past year. Approximately 3,571,549 residents were internally displaced from Khartoum, while many more displaced across borders into neighbouring countries, especially to Egypt. In total, an estimated 50 per cent of the population of Khartoum was displaced since 15 April 2023. Of those displaced internally, most fled into neighbouring states, including Aj Jazirah, River Nile, White Nile, and Northern. Only 59,892 IDPs were reportedly hosted within Khartoum state, with about two per cent reportedly originated from Aj Jazirah. In addition, many IDPs from Khartoum were initially displaced to neighbouring Aj Jazirah, but experienced secondary displacement as the conflict expanded into Aj Jazirah in December 2023.

North Darfur

An estimated 547,866 IDPS were hosted in North Darfur as of 04 April 2024, making North Darfur the fourth highest state of displacement. The number of IDPs in North Darfur increased by approximately 89,210 IDPs between October 2023 and November 2023. The increase followed intensified clashes between SAF and RSF in neighbouring states, including South Darfur and West Darfur. North Darfur was also the state with the highest number of corresponding DTM Early Warning Flash Alerts: DTM published 38 flash alerts covering armed clashes and other incidents spurring displacement between 15 April 2023 and 04 April 2024.

Graph 9: Timeline of IDPs in Khartoum, May 2023 - April 2024

Graph 10: Timeline of IDPs in North Darfur, May 2023 - April 2024

8. This figure was calculated using DTM displacement data from 04 April 2024 and UN population estimates for Sudan from November 2022.
North Kordofan

An estimated 152,010 IDPs were hosted in North Kordofan as of 04 April 2024, while approximately 49,820 IDPs reportedly originated from North Kordofan. Among IDPs in the state, approximately 81 per cent were from Khartoum and 15 per cent were from other locations within North Kordofan. Clashes across North Kordofan triggered significant displacement within the state, particularly from Sheikan locality. Due to widespread clashes, North Kordofan had the fourth highest number of corresponding Early Warning Flash Alerts: DTM published 22 flash alerts on clashes and other incidents causing displacement in North Kordofan between April 2023 and April 2024.

Graph 11: Timeline of IDPs in North Kordofan, May 2023 - April 2024

Northern

An estimated 400,189 IDPS were hosted in Northern state as of 04 April 2024. Compared to other states, Northern state remained relatively isolated from on-going clashes. The largest monthly increase of IDPs in Northern state occurred during the first months of the conflict. Between May 2023 and June 2023, DTM field teams reported an increase of approximately 209,151 IDPs. The vast majority of IDPs in Northern were from Khartoum (97%), while a smaller proportion (3%) were from Aj Jazirah. Throughout the year, Northern state reportedly served as a transit state for IDPs intending to reach the border with Egypt.

Graph 12: Timeline of IDPs in Northern, May 2023 - April 2024
Red Sea

An estimated 247,772 IDPs were hosted in Red Sea state as of 04 April 2024. The majority of IDPs reportedly originated from Khartoum (66%) and Aj Jazirah (26%). Compared to other states, Red Sea remained relatively isolated from armed clashes and insecurity. The state functioned as a key operational base for many humanitarian actors in Sudan. Many IDPs reportedly arrived in Port Sudan to access relatively better services or to process passports and other documents needed to leave Sudan via Port Sudan airport or Sawakin Seaport.

The population in the locality of Port Sudan increased by an estimated 71 per cent over the past year due to the influx of IDPs, which drastically increased demand for key resources and services. Specifically, access to affordable housing remained a key challenge in Red Sea state: as a result, an estimated 51 per cent of IDPs reportedly stayed with relatives or host families, while 15 per cent stayed in critical shelters, schools, gathering sites or informal settlements.

Graph 13: Timeline of IDPs in Red Sea, May 2023 - April 2024

River Nile

River Nile represented the second highest state of displacement, and hosted an estimated 716,471 IDPs as of 04 April 2024. The majority of IDPs in River Nile (97%) were reportedly from Khartoum, with a small proportion (2%) reportedly displaced from Aj Jazirah. River Nile also served as a transit state for IDPs intending to reach either Northern and Red Sea states, or continue onwards to neighbouring countries.

Graph 14: Timeline of IDPs in River Nile, May 2023 - April 2024

9. This figure compares DTM displacement data from 04 April 2024 with UN nationwide population estimates for Sudan from November 2022.
An estimated 504,578 IDPs were hosted in Sennar as of 04 April 2024, with most originating from either Khartoum (69%) or Aj Jazirah (23%). The biggest reported increases of IDPs occurred between May 2023 and July 2023, reflecting continued conflict in Khartoum. There were additional increases in the wake of the expansion of the conflict into Aj Jazirah state, in December 2023.

In addition, an estimated total of 42,932 IDPs were reportedly displaced from Sennar during the past year. The number of IDPs from Sennar drastically increased between March and April 2024 likely due to clashes in Sennar locality.

An estimated 743,533 IDPs were hosted in South Darfur as of 04 April 2024, representing the top state of displacement among IDPs in Sudan.

South Darfur also represented the second highest state of origin among IDPs: approximately 94 per cent of IDPs in South Darfur originated from other locations within the state. Specifically, the population of three localities in South Darfur (Sharg Aj Jabal, Barum, and As Sunta) increased by over 50 per cent during the year due to the influx of IDPs, with the population of Sharg Aj Jabal increasing by a staggering 214 per cent. The significant increase exacerbated pressure on already-limited resources and services. South Darfur also had the second-highest number of corresponding Early Warning Flash Alerts: DTM Sudan released 31 flash alerts covering clashes and displacement-inducing incidents in the state from 15 April 2023 to 04 April 2024.
South Kordofan

An estimated 176,486 IDPs were hosted in South Kordofan as of 04 April 2024, while approximately 117,817 IDPs originated from South Kordofan. Approximately 58 per cent of IDPs in South Kordofan were displaced from other locations within South Kordofan, while 37 per cent were reportedly displaced from Khartoum. South Kordofan also represented the state with the third-most corresponding Early Warning Flash Alerts: from 15 April 2023 to 04 April 2024, DTM Sudan published 34 flash alerts reporting displacement-inducing incidents — more than any other state in the Kordofan region.

West Darfur

An estimated 172,370 IDPs were hosted in West Darfur state as of 04 April 2024. The vast majority of IDPs in West Darfur (90%) were originally displaced from other locations within West Darfur. Notably, the population of IDPs decreased from an estimated 248,080 IDPs in June 2023 to an estimated 68,965 IDPs in August 2023, likely reflecting increased cross-border movements into Chad. While displacement was primarily driven by armed conflict, DTM also published flash alerts focused on tensions between pastoralist and sedentary farmers in West Darfur.
West Kordofan

An estimated 146,031 IDPs were hosted in West Kordofan as of 04 April 2024, while approximately 69,409 IDPs were displaced from West Kordofan. Forty-six per cent of IDPs in West Kordofan were displaced from other locations within the state, particularly following clashes between SAF and RSF in November 2023. An estimated 42 per cent were displaced from Khartoum and 11 per cent were displaced from North and South Kordofan states.

White Nile

An estimated 525,503 IDPs were hosted in White Nile as of 04 April 2024, while less than one per cent of IDPs in Sudan were originally displaced from White Nile. In addition, White Nile consistently hosted the highest proportion of non-Sudanese IDPs, including many South Sudanese nationals. The state served as a transit state for displaced individuals crossing into South Sudan, with numerous reports of overcrowding at the Renk-Wunthow (Juda) border crossing point throughout the year.
Since the outbreak of the conflict on 15 April 2023, there were an estimated 2,044,248 individuals displaced across borders into neighbouring countries.11

DTM Sudan reported on the cross-border movements from Sudan into Central African Republic, Chad, Egypt, Ethiopia, Libya, and South Sudan on a weekly basis from April 2023 - April 2024.

Most reported cross-border movements occurred in the months following the onset of the conflict, between April and June 2023. However, recorded cross-border displacements increased in December 2023 and January 2024, likely due to intensified clashes across the Kordofan region and the expansion of conflict into Aj Jazirah state.

The greatest proportion of cross-border movements were recorded in Chad (36%), South Sudan (31%), and Egypt (25%). Approximately 63 per cent of individuals displaced across borders were Sudanese nationals, while 37 per cent were non-Sudanese nationals or returnees.

The majority of cross-border movement to Chad represented Sudanese nationals (79%), primarily from the Darfur region. Most reportedly sheltered in transit camps or shelters within provinces along the border. Recorded cross-border movement to Chad increased in July 2023, reflecting the intensified clashes across West Darfur and Central Darfur states.

In contrast, the majority (80%) of cross-border movements into South Sudan were non-Sudanese nationals, primarily South Sudanese nationals. The vast majority of crossings reportedly occurred at the Joda/Wunthrow point, in Renk County on the eastern side of the border.

Finally, of the individuals crossing into Egypt, the vast majority (97%) were Sudanese nationals. Egypt represented a top country of displacement throughout the year, especially for residents fleeing Khartoum during the first months of the conflict.

An interactive version of this report with more granular data is available at the IOM-DTM website.
For detailed insights into DTM methodology, please refer to DTM’s Active Methodological Components.
DTM Sudan is a suite of methodological tools which aims to track and monitor displacement. DTM collects primary data, with a focus on providing best estimates for support of the wider humanitarian community. DTM Sudan notes that armed clashes remain continuous in many areas across Sudan. As such, DTM is currently collecting data through a dual combination of face-to-face and remote interviews with key informants across its network. Data on flows into neighbouring countries is based on available information from DTM flow monitoring networks and secondary sources. Figures should be treated as preliminary findings only and are subject to change via future verification exercises.

All reports are available at: https://dtm.iom.int/sudan

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1. Displaced populations in Wad Medani, Al Jazirah state. © IOM 2023
2. IOM teams conduct pre-registration interviews with people fleeing violence in Sudan at the Mogororo site in Sila province in Eastern Chad. © IOM 2023

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