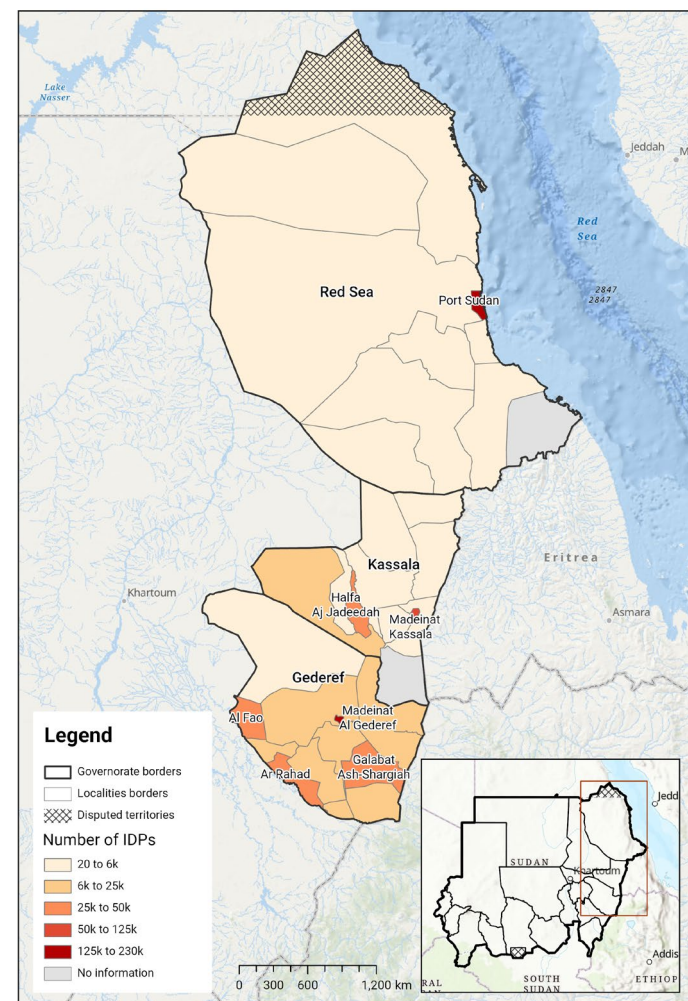


Impact of long-term displacement in the East

CRISIS OVERVIEW

- The fighting that broke out between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) on 15 April 2023 has displaced **over 7.76 million people** both inside and outside Sudan (OCHA 14/01/2024).
- Over 6.1 million individuals have been **displaced to 6,771 locations** across Sudan's 18 states. 62 of these locations were added between 16–23 February 2024 (OCHA 23/02/2024).
- The largest number of IDPs (3,522,784 or 57% of total IDPs) originated **from Khartoum** state. This is followed by South Darfur (15%), North Darfur (8%), Aj Jazirah (7%), Central Darfur (4%), West Darfur (3%), East Darfur (1%), South Kordofan (1%), West Kordofan (1%), North Kordofan (1%), Sennar (less than 1%), and White Nile (less than 1%) (IOM 06/02/2024).
- As at 13 February, **over 405,200 IDPs had sought refuge in Gedaref state** (IOM 21/02/2024). Concerns over the conflict spilling over, and Gedaref's proximity to Aj Jazirah and Khartoum have driven secondary and tertiary displacement (IOM 02/02/2024).
- **In Kassala state, over 175,800 IDPs have been registered**, the majority of whom were displaced from Khartoum (IOM 21/02/2024). The state is facing infrastructure challenges, with frequent electricity cuts and soaring rental prices (IOM 02/02/2024).
- **Red Sea state also witnessed an increase in IDPs to reach a total of over 248,500**, with the majority displaced from Khartoum state (IOM 21/02/2024).
- Before the war, the country hosted 1,144, 675 refugees and asylum seekers (UNHCR 14/11/2024). Of these, 66,099 were in Gedaref, 117,180 in Kassala, and 6,370 in Red Sea State (UNHCR accessed 22/02/2024). Since 15 April 2023, around **1.61 million individuals have crossed into neighbouring countries** (OCHA 12/02/2024). As at 31 December, more than 195,000 refugees self-relocated to safer areas in Sudan (UNHCR accessed 22/02/2024).

Map 1. Displacement in the East



Source: ACAPS using data from (IOM accessed 23/02/2023)

ANTICIPATED SCOPE AND SCALE

Gedaref state

- The RSF is advancing into Gedaref, a largely agricultural state (Dabanga 12/01/2024). RSF presence in Gedaref could disrupt agricultural activities, affecting food security and livelihoods (FEWS NET 01/02/2024).
- Concerns over the conflict's spillover into eastern states, coupled with Gedaref's proximity to Aj Jazirah and Khartoum, may drive continued secondary and tertiary displacement (IOM 02/02/2024). Fear of the conflict's spread could prompt individuals to seek safer areas either within or outside the state.
- Gedaref's role as a relatively affordable transit point for those seeking shelter beyond Sudan's borders – to Ethiopia or Eritrea specifically – is likely to persist (IOM 02/02/2024). As such, smuggling and human trafficking activities will likely increase (UNHCR 10/10/2023).

Kassala state

- Soaring rental prices and increasing demand for accommodation are expected to continue, leading both displaced individuals and existing populations to face challenges in obtaining affordable housing (IOM 02/02/2024).
- Rising food and NFI prices are likely to persist, contributing to continued economic challenges for both displaced individuals and host communities (IOM 02/02/2024).
- Kassala's urban centres are likely to continue serving as transit points for IDPs seeking further movement to either other states in eastern and northern Sudan or neighbouring countries (IOM 02/02/2024). These movements could result in continued fluctuations in the region's displaced population and increased smuggling and human trafficking activities (UNHCR 10/10/2023).
- Given the precarious living conditions and urgent need for food, NFIs, and healthcare in shelters, the need for humanitarian assistance will likely persist or even increase (IOM 02/02/2024).

Red Sea state

Clashes in Aj Jazirah state, which began on 15 December 2023, have resulted in an increased number of IDPs in Red Sea state. This trend is likely to continue, leading to a further influx of displaced individuals seeking safety (IOM 02/02/2024).

Escalating security concerns have led to the declaration of a state of emergency, indicating continued challenges in the state (IOM 02/02/2024).

The diversity of living arrangements, including the use of youth centres, abandoned schools, and vacant structures, suggests that obtaining suitable shelter may be a persistent challenge (IOM 02/02/2024). As rental prices rise, IDPs will likely continue facing difficulties in finding affordable accommodation.

The challenges IDPs face around access to basic goods and services, alongside the rising cost of food and water, may persist, affecting the displaced population's overall wellbeing (IOM 02/02/2024).

The economic strain – including the non-payment of salaries, the near-collapse of the service sectors, and non-functional markets – is likely to continue, posing challenges for both displaced individuals and host communities (IOM 02/02/2024).

The indication that many IDPs have come to Red Sea state for passport processing or departure via Port Sudan airport or Sawakin seaport suggests the potential for the further movement of displaced individuals, either within the region or outside the country (IOM 02/11/2023 and 02/02/2024).

HUMANITARIAN CONSTRAINTS

- Eastern Sudan's size, desert terrain, and limited infrastructure pose logistical challenges. Getting essentials such as food, water, and medical supplies to displacement affected populations is critical but arduous. The state of emergency in Red Sea state may affect humanitarian access and the mobility of displaced communities (IOM 29/12/2023).
- The humanitarian response is severely underfunded, leaving organizations struggling to meet even the basic needs of food, shelter, water, and sanitation for affected populations (IOM 23/01/2024). Continued insecurity, unreliable communication networks, rising prices, and disrupted supply chains are also hindering the delivery of vital humanitarian aid (IOM 02/02/2024).
- This results in shortages of essential commodities and fuel, further aggravating the hardships faced by displaced populations (IOM 02/02/2024). Despite these challenges, aid organizations have made strides to provide assistance (OCHA 02/11/2023).

CRISIS IMPACTS

Gedaref

Displacement

As a result of the conflict in Aj Jazirah in December 2023, Gedaref has experienced unprecedented movement into or through the state. As at 13 February 2024, it was estimated that nearly 406,000 IDPs had sought refuge in Gedaref since the eruption of conflict (IOM 21/02/2024 and 02/02/2024). This is an increase of over 127,000 since 13 December 2023 (IOM 11/01/2024).

Approximately 85% of IDPs in Gedaref were originally from Khartoum, with others subsequently displaced from Aj Jazirah (UNHCR 10/10/2023). Displaced communities in Ar Rahad, Galabat Ash-Shargiah, and Madeinat Al Gedaref localities are seeking shelter within urban neighbourhoods, with host communities, or in rented accommodation (IOM 02/02/2024).

The majority of IDPs arriving in Gedaref use it as a transit point, intending to reach destinations such as Eritrea, Ethiopia, or Saudi Arabia. Concerns over the continuation of conflict and potential spillover to the east are fuelling this movement. Gedaref's proximity to Aj Jazirah and Khartoum also contributes significantly to driving secondary and tertiary displacement (IOM 02/02/2024).

Shelter

As service provision deteriorates amid a dire humanitarian crisis, the situation in Gedaref is worsening. The significant influx of IDPs arriving in or passing through Gedaref, the majority of whom face challenges in accessing adequate shelter, is leading to overcrowded conditions in IDP shelters. Among IDPs in Gedaref, 79% are residing with host communities, 14% are in rented accommodation, 6% are in schools or other public buildings, and 1% are in open areas or informal settlements. Food security, health, and NFIs rank highest on the priority list, at 93%, 47%, and 40%, respectively (IOM 02/02/2024).

WASH

The influx of IDPs has amplified demands for safe WASH services, particularly as 79% of IDPs rely on host communities (IOM 02/02/2024). This, coupled with deteriorating service provision, creates an environment conducive to disease outbreaks. Limited access to proper sanitation facilities and hygiene supplies increases the practice of open defecation and the spread of waterborne illnesses, such as cholera. Despite humanitarian organisation efforts in WASH training and capacity building, delayed healthcare seeking, especially by patients with comorbidities, is leading to increased mortality rates (OCHA 19/10/2023).

Health concerns

The alarming proliferation of diseases such as dengue fever and cholera, among others, is placing significant strain on the public health sector and humanitarian efforts. In one week in September 2023, there were 70 confirmed cases of dengue fever and two deaths (Dabanga 18/09/2023). In October 2023, in response to the outbreak of cholera, one million cholera vaccines were approved for Gedaref, demonstrating a proactive approach to addressing the outbreak (OCHA 14/11/2023). By December 2023, however, 2,005 suspected cholera cases and 49 deaths had been recorded in the state (OCHA 24/12/2023).

Food security and malnutrition

Between April–July 2023, at least 132 children in Gedaref succumbed to malnutrition. Reports indicate that 36% of all children with malnutrition admitted to one Gedaref state hospital met tragic outcomes or suffered from related illnesses. The Gedaref Children's Hospital has reported a stark surge in malnutrition cases, with notable impacts on children recently displaced from Khartoum and residing with host communities, in rented shelters, or with a small minority in collective shelters (STC 22/08/2023).

Education

As at October 2023, approximately 50 schools in the state had been converted into shelters for displaced people (Dabanga 24/10/2023). Despite these challenges, Gedaref stands out as one of the few states actively working to implement education-in-emergencies programmes and establish learning spaces in schools or temporary shelters, anticipating the eventual reopening of schools (UNHCR 10/10/2023).

Kassala

Displacement

As at 13 February 2024, Kassala state was accommodating around 175,800 IDPs, an increase of over 55,400 from 13 December 2023 (IOM 11/01/2024). majority of these IDPs (146,538 individuals of the observed caseload) were initially displaced from Khartoum, with Aj Jazirah state contributing the rest (IOM 21/02/2024).

For IDPs aiming to reach various states in the east and north of Sudan or exit the country towards Saudi Arabia or the United Arab Emirates via Eritrea, Kassala's urban centres are pivotal transit points (IOM 29/12/2023). The substantial influx of IDPs has the potential to strain Kassala's already limited resources and services, further aggravating IDPs' ability to meet their basic needs. The risks associated with such movements include an elevated threat of human trafficking, forced labour, and sexual violence, particularly when individuals undertake these journeys without adequate support and protection (UNHCR 04/06/2023).

Shelter

IDPs in Kassala are currently living in precarious conditions, facing urgent needs in terms of food, shelter, and healthcare services (OCHA 27/12/2023). The majority of IDP households (73%) are concentrated in urban areas, particularly in Kassala and Halfa Aj Jadeedah towns, where vital services are accessible. As social connections are often a driving force in the decision to seek refuge in Kassala, 76% of IDPs reside alongside host communities in urban centres. Of the remaining 24%, 17% are accommodated in rented residences, and 7% are situated in schools, public buildings, or open area gathering sites. Soaring rental prices, which have surged to between USD 600–1,000 for modest accommodations, further aggravate the continued economic strain in Kassala town (IOM 02/02/2024).

Strain on infrastructural services

The influx of IDPs has placed considerable strain on Kassala's already burdened infrastructural services, with specific challenges emerging around water, fuel, electricity, and healthcare.

Power disruptions are common throughout the state, highlighting the widespread impact on essential services (IOM 02/02/2024).

Rising costs

Escalating food and NFI prices, reflecting heightened demand, are intensifying economic difficulties for both IDPs and host communities, adding to their overall economic challenges. Food security, health, and water rank highest on the priority list at 84%, 83%, and 35%, respectively (IOM 02/02/2024).

Health concerns

By December 2023, Kassala had reported 86 suspected cholera cases and three associated deaths (OCHA 24/12/2023). The state is part of a targeted oral cholera vaccination campaign to immunise 5.5 million individuals in 14 localities battling cholera (OCHA 24/12/2023).

Education

Several factors – including the use of schools as shelters for displaced people, the displacement of children to distant areas, and the need to work – contribute to reduced school attendance among displaced populations, making education delivery less of a priority (OCHA 27/12/2023). Kassala remains, however, one of the few states developing education-in-emergencies programmes in schools or temporary learning shelters in preparation for the reopening of schools (UNHCR 10/10/2023).

Social cohesion and tensions

Tensions are growing between IDPs and host communities over increasing prices and demands for goods in areas such as Kassala city. There is also an increased risk of gender-based violence (GBV) against women and girls in shelters (UNHCR 04/06/2023).

Red Sea

Displacement

While Khartoum state and Darfur and Kordofan regions saw continued violence, Red Sea state remained relatively peaceful until December 2023, when clashes in Aj Jazirah led to a large influx of IDPs (FEWS NET 06/01/2024). Prior to the conflict, the state hosted nearly 6,400 refugees and asylum seekers (UNHCR 22/01/2024). In response to escalating security concerns and the surge in displaced individuals, the local government declared a state of emergency on 25 December 2023 (IOM 02/02/2024).

The number of IDPs in Red Sea state has increased substantially, reaching more than 248,000 by 13 February 2024, 123,036 more than recorded on 6 December 2023 (IOM 12/02/2024 and 02/02/2024). The majority (approximately 67%) originated from Khartoum state, while the others came from Aj Jazirah (25%), Darfur region (4%), Kordofan region (3%), Sennar (1%), and White Nile (less than 1%). The significant portion, over 109,000 individuals, who fled from Aj Jazirah includes both primary displacement as well as secondary displacement of those originally displaced from Khartoum having sought refuge in Aj Jazirah (IOM 02/02/2024).

A considerable number of IDPs are choosing Red Sea state as a destination, primarily to facilitate passport processing or embark on international departures via Port Sudan airport or Sawakin seaport. In terms of distribution, the majority of these IDPs, comprising 94%, are concentrated in Port Sudan. Other locations hosting IDPs include Sinkat (2%), Haya (1%), and Sawakin (1%) localities (IOM 02/02/2024).

Shelter

Overall, 53% of IDPs in Red Sea state are living with host communities, 33% are in rented accommodations, 6% are in schools or other public buildings, and 5% are in open areas and other informal settlements. As rental prices rise, more IDPs are seeking shelter in youth centres, abandoned schools, or other vacant structures (IOM 02/02/2024).

Rising cost of living

As a result of rising costs, IDPs across the state face challenges in accessing basic goods and services, including food and water. Low or complete lack of income resulting from the non-payment of salaries, collapsed service sectors, and non-functional markets compound the inaccessibility of services. Livelihoods, education, and water rank highest on the priority list at 91%, 89%, and 85%, respectively (IOM 02/02/2024).

WASH

Both Sawakin and Port Sudan are experiencing a spike in suspected cholera cases. There are also reports of the increasing spread of other waterborne and mosquito-borne diseases, such as dengue fever, attributed to increased rainfall and poor sanitation (IOM 02/02/2024). Floods also cut off the road connecting Sawakin with Tawkar, leaving the area isolated and at risk of waterborne diseases (Dabanga 30/10/2023).

CRISIS DRIVERS

Armed conflict

Continued insecurity, including atrocity crimes, is creating significant protection and humanitarian needs, displacing civilians in Sudan's eastern states, amongst other areas. Even if the conflict ends soon, continuing instability, infrastructure destruction, and the loss of livelihoods may prevent the immediate return of many displaced people, leading to protracted displacement and associated challenges.

The geographical proximity of these states – particularly Gedaref and Kassala – to conflict zones, notably in Aj Jazirah and Khartoum, plays a role in driving secondary and tertiary displacement (MMC 22/06/2023). The fear of conflict spillover and security concerns prompt individuals to move to areas perceived as safer.

Migration protocols

Gedaref and Kassala serve as major transit points for those travelling to Ethiopia, offering a more affordable alternative to Port Sudan in Red Sea state (IOM 30/11/2023; (OCHA accessed 23/02/2024).

As at 13 February 2024, there were over 248,500 IDPs in Red Sea state, the majority of whom originated in Khartoum, alongside others from Aj Jazirah and North Kordofan states (IOM 21/02/2024). Many IDPs came to Red Sea state specifically to process passports or leave the country via Port Sudan airport or Sawakin seaport (IOM 29/12/2023; IOM 02/02/2024).

Economic challenges

Economic challenges, including a dire economic situation, hyperinflation, unaffordable necessities, and limited employment opportunities, drive IDPs to towns and economic centres in search of better prospects (FAO 12/12/2023). Economic factors, including limited job opportunities and strained local resources, also contribute to the overall mobility trends observed in these regions, hindering self-reliance and economic recovery for displaced populations.

COMPOUNDING/AGGRAVATING FACTORS

Lack of peace and continued conflict

Continued fighting disrupts livelihoods, destroys infrastructure, and forces people to flee, directly contributing to displacement (IOM 02/02/2024).

The crisis lacks a clear path towards peace and stability (ICG 09/01/2024). This creates uncertainty and discourages displaced populations from returning home.

Fragile governance and limited access to justice mechanisms are aggravating the conflict and hindering long-term solutions (HRW accessed 12/02/2024).

Government restrictions and policies

Restrictions on movement both within and outside displacement sites limit access to essential services and opportunities, affecting livelihoods. Obtaining identification and travel documents involves complex procedures that prevents liberty of movement for displaced populations including seeking new opportunities (MMC 04/05/2023).

Lack of access to essential services and opportunities

Limited access to banking and financial services, coupled with recent telecommunication shutdowns that further hamper digital transactions and communication, hinders economic recovery and integration, trapping displaced individuals in stranded situations and impeding their ability to rebuild their lives (OCHA 25/01/2024).

Limited access to basic services such as healthcare and education further weakens resilience and perpetuates displacement cycles (IPC 12/12/2023).

Intercommunal conflict

Intercommunal tensions, as seen in clashes between different tribes or communities, add complexity to the displacement crisis (IOM 02/02/2024; UNHCR 04/06/2023). Such tensions contribute to a cycle of violence, creating an environment where displacement is more likely to occur.

Humanitarian resource shortages

Severe shortages in medical supplies and limited access to electricity, water, food, and NFIs highlight the humanitarian response's resource shortages (Health Cluster 20/12/2023). The scarcity of resources aggravates the living conditions of displaced populations.

Climate issues

Like many developing nations, Sudan is particularly susceptible to the harsh realities of climate change. Extreme weather events, such as recurrent floods and drought, combined with unpredictable rainfall patterns, amplify existing vulnerabilities, leaving displaced populations more at risk (NUPI/SIPRI 16/05/2022). Kassala has experienced regional warming of over 2° C per century. The state is facing Crisis (IPC Phase 3) food insecurity levels. Gedaref and Red Sea are experiencing both Stressed (IPC Phase 2) and IPC 3 food insecurity levels (ICPAC accessed 23/02/2024).

FUNDING AND RESPONSE CAPACITY

The 2024 Sudan Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan requires USD 2.7 billion to provide lifesaving multicluster protection assistance to 14.7 million people across Sudan (OCHA 24/12/2023). From the start of the crisis to 30 November 2023, despite the challenges, 166 humanitarian organisations successfully provided life-saving assistance to approximately 5.2 million people (OCHA 18/12/2023).

Gedaref

In 2023, the humanitarian response in Gedaref reached 648,700 of the targeted 967,700 people. In the education sector, only 10,800 or 5% of the targeted 216,400 people in need were reached. Food security and livelihood efforts were more successful, reaching 562,900 or 65% of the targeted 864,100 people. In health, 124,500 or 30% of the targeted 411,000 people in need were reached. The Nutrition Cluster reached 27,700 but did not provide specific target figures. General protection exceeded expectations, reaching 18,000 or 2406% while it had initially targeted 747 people in need. Child protection reached 6,200 or 26% of the targeted 23,900 people. GBV efforts surpassed the target, reaching 41,500 or 101% of the targeted 40,900 people. Shelter and NFI assistance reached 49,900 or 61% of the targeted 82,200 people. WASH initiatives made significant strides, reaching 597,000 or 252%, having targeted 236,700 people. Refugee response initiatives surpassed their goal, reaching 106,000 or 132% of the targeted 80,200 people (OCHA 31/12/2023).

Kassala

In 2023, the humanitarian response in Kassala reached 638,100 of the targeted 1.1 million people in need. In education, only 12,300 of the targeted 234,200 people in need were reached. In food security and livelihood initiatives were relatively successful, reaching 65% or 645,900 of the targeted one million people. Health efforts were effective, reaching 71% or 288,300 of the targeted 408,400 people in need. The Nutrition Cluster reached 19,300 but did not provide specific target figures. General protection initiatives significantly surpassed their goals, reaching 2.7 million people in need or 357% of the 746,000 targeted. Child protection reached 6,000 people or 19% of the targeted 31,400. GBV initiatives achieved considerable success, reaching 24,400 people or 90% of the targeted 27,200. Shelter and NFIs reached 10,000 or 12% of the targeted 84,800 people. WASH initiatives made substantial progress, reaching 447,200 people or 175%, having initially targeted 255,200. Refugee response initiatives exceeded their target, reaching 119,300 people or 119% of the 99,900 targeted (OCHA 31/12/2023).

Red Sea

In 2023, the humanitarian response in Red Sea state reached 400,900 of the targeted 592,000 people in need. In education, only reached 7,000 or 5% of the 151,500 targeted. Food security and livelihood initiatives were relatively successful, reaching 485,300 people or 86% of the 566,000 targeted. Health efforts reached 82,000 people in need or 29% of the 282,300 targeted. The Nutrition Cluster reached 13,600 but did not provide specific target figures. General protection initiatives achieved 49% of their target, reaching 6,400 of the targeted 13,000 people in need. Child protection reached 8,600 people or 18% of the 47,600 targeted. GBV initiatives provided no data on the people reached. Shelter and NFIs significantly surpassed their goal, reaching 36,600 people or 172% of the 21,200 targeted. WASH initiatives also made substantial progress, reaching 495,400 people or 286% of the 173,000 targeted. Refugee response initiatives reached 1,200 people or 5% of the 22,600 targeted (OCHA 31/12/2023).