

SUDAN: SCENARIOS

How control and governance could shape conditions for the population and humanitarian response in 2026.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the past year, changes in areas of control and political alignments among parties to Sudan’s conflict have rapidly shifted local and national governance in the country. The situation is expected to remain dynamic, critically affecting humanitarian response. Strategic planning and preparation for humanitarian interventions in Sudan require an understanding of the potential changes in control and governance so that responders and policymakers can anticipate any disruptions and opportunities where adaptation may be possible.

In September 2025, ACAPS convened context and humanitarian experts in a series of scenario workshops to provide anticipatory analysis and support humanitarian decision makers in their strategic planning, following similar exercises in 2023 and 2024. This report captures the workshops’ findings, outlining four scenarios that explore the ways governance and control in Sudan could develop until December 2026 and the potential impacts on people and the humanitarian response. The scenarios consider impacts on the economy, services, access, and humanitarian conditions. The four scenarios are designed to help humanitarian decision makers anticipate potential inflexion points in Sudan and enable a proactive response to increasing needs in an ever-more-complex operating environment.

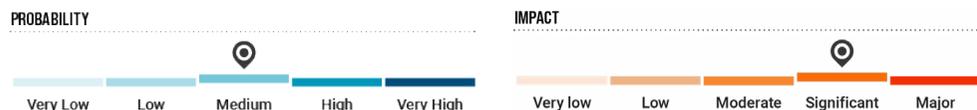
Readers unfamiliar with the context of Sudan are advised to read Annex A, which summarises the contextual developments in the past year. Annex B provides a table of trigger events that may lead to the scenarios materialising. Annex C provides a list of acronyms used in the report.

*** For the purpose of this analysis, governance refers to how state and non-state parties make and implement decisions within communities to allocate resources, enforce rules, regulate aid, and resolve disputes, among others, through mechanisms that include but are not limited to customs, violence, permits, checkpoints, and access to services.*

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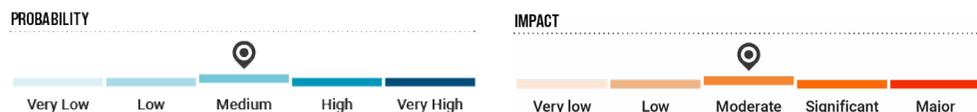
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Scenario 1: Attrition



Sudan’s fragmentation deepens as the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) entrenches its control of the east and centre under weak governance. The Rapid Support Forces (RSF) control most of western Sudan, mainly through military operations and coercive control – such as extortion and checkpoints – maintaining a constrained, costly, and high-security-risk ecosystem for humanitarian organisations. Abdelaziz Adam Al Hilu’s Sudan People’s Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N/AI Hilu) controls parts of Kordofan with community-based governance, while the Sudan Liberation Movement/Abdul Wahid Al Nur (SLM/AW) and other armed groups hold pockets of control, creating separate aid environments. Front lines intensify and remain dynamic in Darfur and Kordofan, requiring responders to be agile while facing fluid access and shifting authorities. Overlapping governance systems, damaged infrastructure, insecurity, coercive control, and displacement worsen humanitarian conditions and deepen economic collapse. Humanitarian responders navigate politicised coordination, uneven coverage, and reliance on grassroots responders to shift insecurity and high protection risks to them.

Scenario 2: Partition



The country consolidates around two separate but functioning rival governing blocs: the RSF and SPLM-N-backed Tasis government in western Sudan and the SAF-backed Transitional Sovereignty Council (TSC) Government in eastern and central Sudan. Front lines stabilise while each bloc strengthens governance, administration, and command within its territory. Two distinct aid environments emerge, with separate clearance mechanisms, taxation, and registration systems. Humanitarian access improves nationwide, particularly in western Sudan, as insecurity and violence recede and the bureaucratic environment improves. Humanitarian conditions gradually improve, and service provision expands, though it remains exclusionary to communities perceived as politically unaligned with governing authorities. In TSC-governed areas, services become more centralised, while in Tasis areas, they remain participatory and community-based.

Scenario 3: Disintegration



RSF and SPLM-N/AI Hilu advance towards central Sudan as SAF fractures and the chain of command and institutional capacity of centralised state governance disintegrate. Native administration units backed by local armed groups emerge as alternative localised units of administration and governance to fill governance gaps. Access constraints deepen as humanitarian organisations are forced to negotiate with separate armed groups for access in their various territories, causing delays and bureaucratic hurdles. High security risks and access constraints increase humanitarian organisations’ reliance on mutual aid groups (MAGs) for last-mile aid delivery, increasing security and protection risks for them. Service provision and market functions collapse, aggravating humanitarian conditions and triggering unrest in major cities. Protection concerns increase amid escalating violence, looting, sexual violence, and the ethnic targeting of communities perceived as politically unaligned with governing authorities, while displacement and refugee flows increase.

Scenario 4: Reassertion



SAF advances into Kordofan and Darfur regions, forcing a weakened RSF towards Nyala town and the border with Chad. These gains strengthen SAF’s domestic and international perceived legitimacy. Reasserted state control brings centralised governance, surveillance, and punitive control that shrinks independent humanitarian operations and civil society, including MAGs. Humanitarian access improves in newly recaptured areas, but aid politicisation increases and dependency on government channels grows. Service provisions and markets slowly recover in SAF-recaptured areas as trade routes reopen but remain uneven, excluding populations perceived as affiliated with RSF. In the remaining areas under RSF control, access constraints and loss of supply lines deteriorate food security, while increased insecurity and loss of internal cohesion among RSF fighters intensify protection risks. In those areas, humanitarian organisations rely more on local groups, increasingly shifting the security risk to them.

METHODOLOGY

The scenarios were developed between August–September 2025 with input from over 40 participants from civil society, humanitarian, donor, and academic organisations as well as independent experts, who contributed through online and in-person workshops, bilateral meetings, and reviews. The collaborative process involved:

- Identifying the research question, analysing the current situation, and mapping the wide array of variables affecting the Sudan context
- Creating scenarios from different combinations of assumptions on how the main variables might change from 2025–2026
- Reviewing and further developing four plausible scenarios considered most relevant and useful for humanitarian decision makers.

ACAPS uses the chain of plausibility approach to scenario-building, as outlined in our **guidance note**. Key terms used throughout the scenario-building process and the report are:

- Variable: a development or event likely to cause a change in a situation.
- Assumption: the direction that a variable can take (e.g. increase or decrease).
- Scenario: an imagined picture of a possible future state based on a number of assumptions (which may be more or less probable) as to how certain key variables will change. Scenarios describe both the future state and its impact and consequences on people and society.
- Triggers: events that, should they occur, may contribute to a scenario materialising.
- Compounding factor: a development that can occur in parallel with any of the above scenarios and which has the potential to significantly change the scenarios' evolution and the nature of humanitarian needs and response.

Estimated humanitarian impact levels and likelihoods are subjective and based on the views of individual participants. They are most useful as a comparative guide in assessing the relative likelihood of the scenarios.

Limitations

- Scenarios can seem to oversimplify an issue, as the analysis balances details against broader assumptions. Scenarios are not based on consensus or scientific findings but are the result of a joint structured analysis by a group of experts. Scenario-building is not an end in itself; it is a process for generating new ideas that should, in turn, lead to changes in project design or decision-making. These scenarios primarily focus on how changes in areas of control and governance will affect conditions for populations and the humanitarian response in Sudan.
- While participants from INGOs and the UN attended the scenarios workshop, the participants in this scenario-building exercise were primarily members of national civil society, particularly those involved with MAGs in Sudan. Discussions on governance, control, and their impacts were heavily influenced by the operational and political realities members of MAGs experience, which differ from those experienced by international responders. ACAPS triangulated the workshop findings with inputs from operational experts working with INGOs in Sudan to ensure the dynamics around governance and control and their impacts reflect the realities for international responders.
- Travel and logistic constraints resulted in many participants coming from central and eastern Sudan or being based outside the country. This may have influenced perceptions, underrepresenting variables and dynamics in Darfur and Kordofan. To mitigate potential imbalances, ACAPS conducted a secondary data review while drafting the report to ensure the findings are balanced and contextually sound.

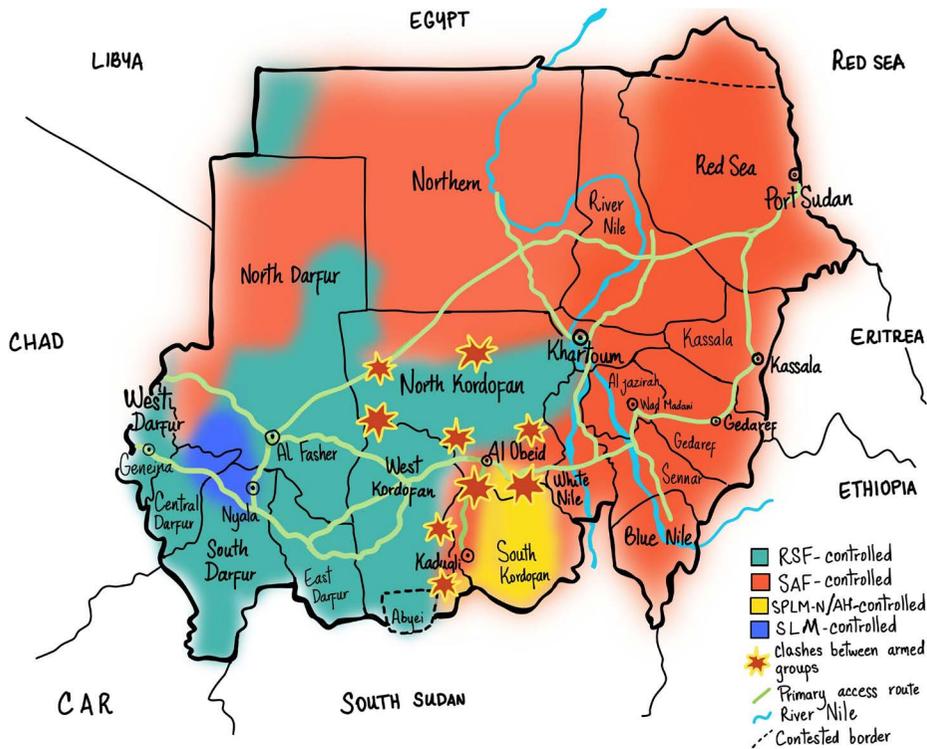
Acknowledgements

ACAPS would like to thank all the participants and organisations that provided input to these scenarios, in particular the Conflict Sensitivity Facility, the INGO Forum, and another operational organisation that preferred to remain anonymous, which were all part of the advisory core group that helped develop and organise the exercise.

1. Attrition



Map 1. Areas of control under Scenario 1 by December 2026 (fragmentation)



Source: ACAPS

No party to the conflict consolidates control over Sudan, leading to protracted, fragmented control and attrition in governance and humanitarian conditions across the country. The conflict intensifies in the Kordofan states, especially in North and West Kordofan, as SAF, RSF, and SPLM-N/AI Hilu contest these areas over their strategic location between central and western Sudan and their vast resources, including agricultural resources and oil. SAF and RSF increase the use of drone attacks across the country to target civilian infrastructure, deteriorating services and humanitarian conditions.

The efforts of RSF and SPLM-N/AI Hilu to form a functional rival government achieve limited progress in establishing state institutions or delivering public services, resulting in civic responders and armed groups imposing authority through coercive measures, such as extortion, checkpoints, and punitive violence. As such, the SAF-allied TSC Government continues to be recognised as the authority over the whole of Sudan by the wider international community, including the UN, and asserts itself as the central authority controlling humanitarian coordination. The TSC has nominal authority over the Darfur states and parts of Kordofan region, where RSF and SPLM-N/AI Hilu entrench their control. Both SAF and RSF prioritise military fighting and spending while relegating service delivery or using it as a tactic of control, resulting in larger humanitarian needs across different territories.

Economy

Sudan's economy continues to decline as the conflict protracts, resources deplete, and household-level coping mechanisms are exhausted. Wartime economy and patronage networks entrench throughout the country, with further checkpoints and commodity extraction that sustain the main parties' military efforts. SAF's continued prohibition of old banknotes increasingly limits the availability of cash in RSF areas, constraining local trade and liquidity for humanitarian operations and widening financial fragmentation. The ongoing military contestation of territories broadens as conflict parties try to seize areas with resources such as gold, livestock, and agricultural products that can generate income and finance military operations. Trading networks between the different territories of control continue, including for humanitarian logistical purposes, although insecurity, military checkpoints, and liquidity limitations constrain these operations.

Service provision

Service provision is starkly fragmented, uneven, and non-institutionalised in most of the country. In RSF-controlled areas, grassroots aid responders and MAGs, with the support of INGOs, meet most growing service needs. Service provision in Darfur and Kordofan is focused on immediate needs, such as health interventions, to mitigate worsening humanitarian



conditions, making the nature of services delivered reactionary rather than structured and planned. Deteriorating humanitarian conditions in areas dominated by RSF- and SPLM-N/AI Hilu force people to pursue essential services in neighbouring countries, such as Chad and South Sudan.

In SAF-controlled areas in central and east Sudan, civil space shrinks as SAF broadens efforts to restrict civil societies, such as MAGs, with arbitrary arrests, detentions, and new registration requirements. SAF increasingly targets MAGs operating in frontline areas on suspicion of RSF affiliation, further disrupting service provision in these areas. UN agencies continue to have a permanent presence in those areas, providing services and implementing limited recovery interventions.

Humanitarian access

Humanitarian access becomes further politicised and relies heavily on grassroots responders, especially for areas outside SAF control. Bureaucratic restrictions throughout the country rise significantly as armed groups and coordination bodies such as the Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC) and the Sudanese Agency for Relief and Humanitarian Operations (SARHO) increase their control on aid delivery. The HAC continues to pressure humanitarian responders to use crossline delivery, mainly through Port Sudan across borders, asserting control over aid deliveries to RSF-dominated areas. This insistence on cross-line delivery worsens logistic and security concerns for last-mile aid responders through additional costs and delays. As conflict intensifies in North Darfur and Kordofan states, international responders increasingly rely on local groups for last-mile delivery, transferring operational and security risks to national organisations.

In RSF-controlled areas, SARHO imposes new directives for local and international humanitarian organisations that tighten control over aid delivery while attempting to align aid coordination with SPLM-N/AI Hilu to strengthen the legitimacy and capacities of the coordination body. MAGs continue to operate in RSF-controlled areas but under a less bureaucratic environment compared to SAF-controlled areas. MAGs still face insecurity, including opportunistic threats of detention, looting, and extortion from RSF's rank and file. The Adré border crossing with Chad remains the primary route for cross-border aid delivery into Darfur region. HAC tightens control on the use of Adré crossing, however, through periodic authorisation for the UN and humanitarian organisations, constraining the flow of supplies to RSF-controlled areas.

Humanitarian conditions

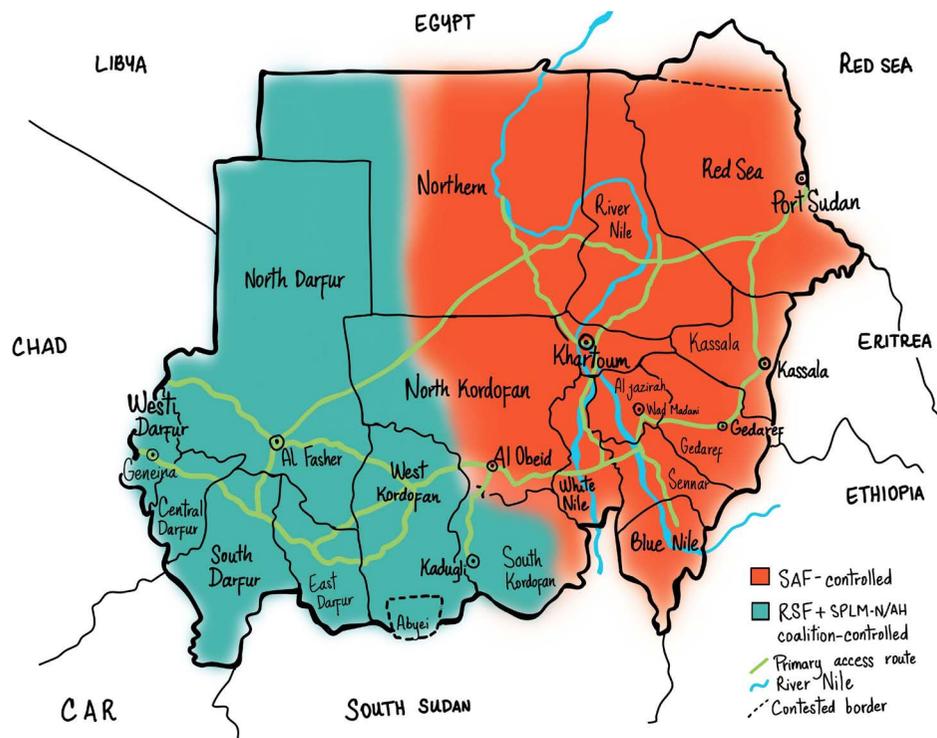
With conflict intensifying in Darfur and Kordofan regions, humanitarian conditions and needs – including shelter, health, and food – for populations in these areas worsen without significant new response capacity, leading to chronic unmet needs. Violence and hostilities on the front lines deepen humanitarian needs, resulting in increased temporary displacements from these areas to central and eastern Sudan, where there is relative security. As governance begins to improve, humanitarian conditions improve unevenly in central and eastern Sudan, limited to urban centres such as Khartoum. Although SAF pushes for gradual recovery and the rehabilitation of local infrastructure in the recaptured urban centres, the influx of IDPs and returnees strains recovery efforts.

Overall, the continuation of limited livelihood opportunities exhausts the remaining limited coping mechanisms, giving rise to potentially harmful coping strategies, especially for children and women. Gender-based violence persists in the country in the absence of effective accountability mechanisms. The forced recruitment of young male adults by different conflict parties rises in a bid to bolster their fighting capacity as hostilities protract, deepening protection concerns. Hate speech and ethnic incitement escalate across Sudan, fuelling communal violence that spills into urban centres.

2. Partition



Map 2. Areas of control under Scenario 2 by December 2026 (partition)



Source: ACAPS

The different conflict parties consolidate into two separate rival governing blocs with functional state institutions: the RSF- and SPLM-N/AH-backed Tasis government in Darfur and parts of Kordofan and the SAF-backed TSC Government in eastern and central Sudan. Front lines stabilise in the Kordofan states, although minimal localised clashes and drone attacks continue. The overall level of conflict and hostilities between the armed groups lessens as the capacity of all warring parties to gain territory diminishes, shifting from offensive warfare to the consolidation of governance and control over their respective territories.

The emergence of two rival administrative blocs leads to two distinct aid environments, with separate aid clearance mechanisms, taxation, and registration. Both SAF and Tasis governments achieve de facto recognition as trade and humanitarian access negotiations lead to increased international engagement. The two blocs use this period of reduced conflict to restructure their armed forces to enhance their military capacity, stockpiling arms and munitions in the expectation that the conflict will eventually resume. The Tasis alliance gains control of the entire Darfur region, including Jabel Marrah from SLM/AW, after SPLM-N/AI Hilu bolsters RSF’s military capacity in Darfur, marking a completion milestone for consolidating control in western Sudan and partition. SAF controls strategic logistical towns in North Kordofan, creating a military buffer to the capital Khartoum and all territories to the east.

Economy

Separate institutionalised economic governance and environments emerge in each of the Tasis- and SAF-governed areas. Both economies begin to marginally improve as governance vacuum and conflicts lessen, permitting stability, certainty, and increased productivity and trade. Markets gradually recover, with trade localising as both areas re-establish supply chains adapted to their needs and trading opportunities. New political alignments and spheres of influence emerge as economic patronage formalises, embedding a dual elite structure in each bloc and creating wealth disparities and social inequalities.

In Tasis-governed areas, as the region recovers from the prolonged period of conflict and economic marginalisation, the economy is primarily aid-driven and serves as both a revenue base and a governance instrument through service provision access and administrative oversight. The economy’s heavy reliance on aid creates additional risks of aid monetisation, leading to additional aid delivery costs and risking imbalanced aid targeting. The Tasis government strengthens and formalises economic ties with Chad and South Sudan, improving cross-border trade to replace dependency on Khartoum as economic ties with SAF areas significantly decline, signalling an economic pivot. The Central African franc gradually replaces the Sudanese pound. Tasis starts to formalise taxation on private sector, civilian, and relief organisations to generate revenue for the early state governance institution-building. It also attempts to exert more control over resources such as gold and gum Arabic even though the smuggling of these resources continues.



Improved trade, agricultural production, and limited influx of foreign investment bolster SAF's economy, as many regional countries want to strengthen their positioning in the emerging stable Government in the east and centre. Multilateral financial institutions resume limited engagement, contingent on governance compliance and reforms. These financial institutions prioritise post-conflict recovery and resilience to influence state policies to align with these institutions' interests and agendas. The SAF-led TSC Government prioritises development recovery over humanitarian interventions, driven by the need to rebuild and salvage state institutions, infrastructure, and services to restore legitimacy. Security and stability pave the way for the resumption of livelihoods, including farming in Sudan's agricultural bread basket in central and eastern Sudan.

Service provision

In urban centres and administrative hubs such as Khartoum and Wad Madani, SAF prioritises reconstruction and recovery efforts in sectors including health and aims to expedite the resumption of civilian access to essential services though periphery areas face neglect. Service provision becomes more centralised as SAF suppression of civil societies, including MAGs, especially those not politically inclined to SAF, progressively weakens the civil landscape.

In contrast, the Tasis government improves public trust through deepening service delivery by embracing service providers such as MAGs, as well as local and international humanitarian organisations. Native and tribal administrations gain increased relevance in Tasis governance structure as the basic unit of administration. As the Tasis government is still nascent and experiencing rapid unstructured bureaucratisation, the absence of experienced, skilled individuals who can run state institutions effectively and competently to deliver government mandates constrains service delivery. The pronounced skill gap accelerates weak policies and regulations, including those on humanitarian coordination. This results in weak institutions that are limited in enforcing the rule of law and prone to corruption, undermining humanitarian interventions' impartiality and transparency. Ethnic favouritism worsens and is increasingly used politically to allocate resources and maintain patronage networks. The Tasis government benefits from SPLM-N/AI Hilu and its civilian authority's institutional knowledge on governance and administration in Kordofan region, as they deepen and expand governance to areas such as Darfur. Civilians in Kordofan region under Tasis see relative improved access, services, and governance, although security remains fragile because of the region's proximity to the fixed front lines.

Humanitarian access

With governance structures split between SAF and Tasis, the dual administration of humanitarian response becomes more formalised, with both HAC and SARHO's roles deepened, contained, and more assertive in their separate areas of control. Both SAF and Tasis entrench aid politicisation, presenting relief organisations with significant operational dilemmas, including challenges to the humanitarian neutrality principle, as responders adopt varying engagement strategies with authorities in TSC- and Tasis-governed areas to ensure compliance. Some organisations choose to operate in one area and not the other, pushing humanitarian clusters to adapt into two parallel coordination structures. As physical humanitarian access improves with the reduction of insecurity and violence in Darfur and Tasis-controlled Kordofan, bureaucratic barriers also improve with the HAC's diminished role in imposing directives and procedures in western Sudan. Regular needs assessments and reporting depict a better scale of humanitarian needs. Adré's position as a logistical humanitarian hub strengthens through independence from the HAC's influence and restrictions, shifting control of aid coordination to Tasis and giving humanitarian organisations more access to western Sudan. Following this shift, Tasis tightens its control of aid operations, imposing more directives on humanitarian organisations using Adré.

In TSC-governed territories, the HAC continues to be the formal humanitarian gatekeeper that SAF uses to project sovereignty and control international engagement. SAF prioritises policies on aid activities that favour engagement with aid responders who align closely with its military and diplomatic ambitions, increasing humanitarian organisations' risk of suspension and expulsion if they do not comply with the SAF agenda.

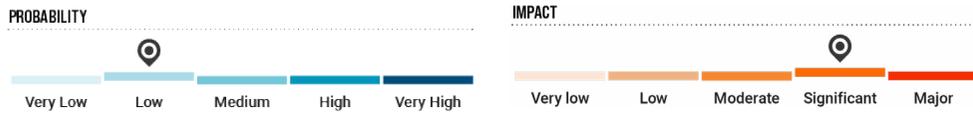
Humanitarian conditions

The reduction in conflict increases stability and security across most of the country, leading to improved humanitarian conditions. These improvements are skewed towards populations aligned with the governing authorities, however, and service exclusion and protection risks remain high for groups not linked to these new patronage networks. Many TSC-held areas see a general reduction of humanitarian needs, despite new needs for people displaced by conflict along the front lines and those fleeing ethnic targeting in Tasis-held areas. SAF increasingly discriminates and excludes communities perceived to be affiliated with RSF from accessing services while targeting them with arbitrary arrests and detentions.

RSF continues with its ethnic marginalisation, targeting minority communities such as the Masalit and Zaghawa in West Darfur and creating social rifts, violence, and displacements. Protection concerns surge, transitioning from conflict violence to governance-backed coercions, especially in Abou Shouk, Al Fasher, and Zamzam IDP camps as those areas

come under RSF control. Despite significant scale-up, the humanitarian response in Darfur cannot adequately meet the rising humanitarian needs. In the absence of a professional military structure and command discipline, rank-and-file soldiers of Tasis continue looting, opportunistic crime, and conflict-related sexual violence, heightening protection concerns. The return of previously displaced IDPs and refugees creates competition for resources. As such, land access becomes a flashpoint for conflict, sparking intercommunal clashes and tribal conflicts.

3. Disintegration

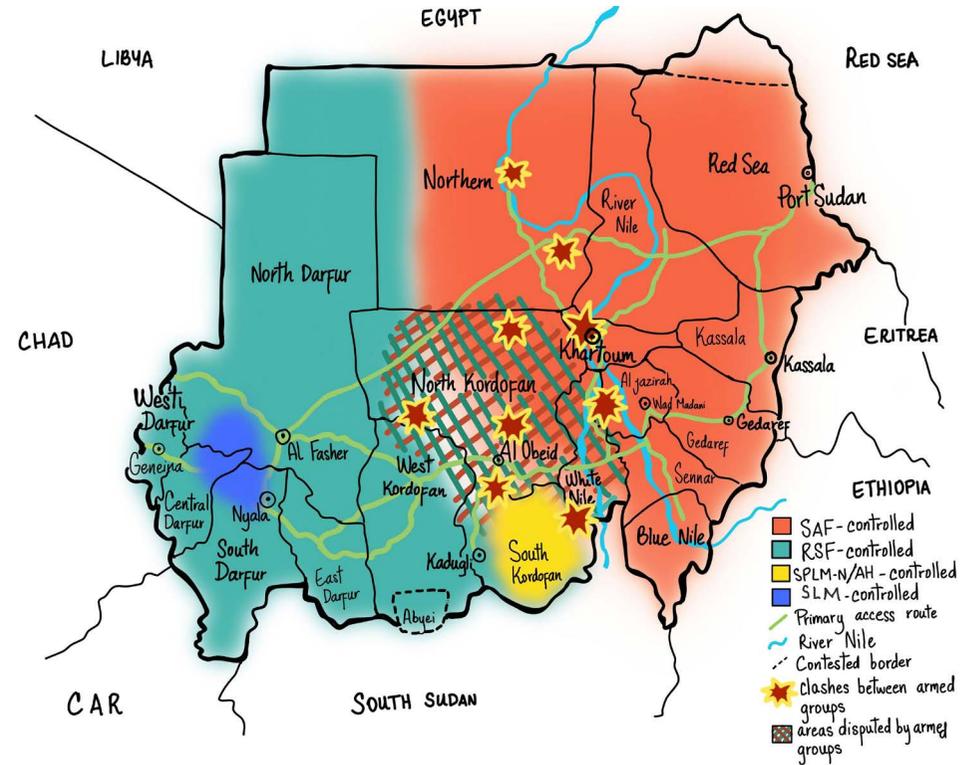


RSF and SPLM-N/AI Hilu take advantage of a weakened SAF and make advances in Kordofan and central Sudan while strengthening their hold on North Darfur. SAF fractures both politically and militarily as central command coherence collapses after failing to maintain unity along different ideological, political, and tribal lines, particularly between factions aligned with political Islam and those with other political leanings. More radical elements emerge from the splintered military and tribal armed groups previously allied with SAF, taking over resources and asserting localised authority and agendas in their areas of control, reducing SAF’s dominance.

SAF’s governance structures fracture, further disrupting the functionalities of existing state institutions. Native administration units backed by local armed groups emerge as alternative localised units of administration and governance, filling the power vacuum left by SAF’s disintegration. The composition of the native administrations is tribal and ethnic, and members prioritise the resources and security of their communities.

Localised violence and clashes among competing SAF factions erupt around key installations – such as garrisons and airports in Khartoum, Port Sudan, and other major cities – to assert control through strategic positioning and access to trade centres, leading to the disruption of trade and aid supply chains and access routes. The rise of multiple and overlapping authorities within SAF undermines the TSC’s legitimacy, eroding trust among international allies and diminishing diplomatic, military, and funding opportunities.

Map 3. Areas of control under Scenario 3 by December 2026 (disintegration)



Source: ACAPS

The disintegration also means previous negotiations for humanitarian access are lost and humanitarian responders need to negotiate based on a case-by-case process, depending on the local authority. Multiple and uncoordinated authorities operating on transactional agreements further constrain humanitarian assistance, leading to humanitarian conditions worsening across Sudan.

Economy In the absence of a functional central bank for Sudan, increased liquidity challenges worsen hyperinflation in SAF-governed areas. Different regions use multiple currencies, leading to a reliance on in-kind goods in transactions and trade deals, which also strains cash assistance programmes. The increased insecurity undermines critical sectors such as communications, energy, and finance, disrupting service provision. The lack of a Government with asserted authority to impose and ratify agreements, control ports, and guarantee



security hinders local and international trade as well as foreign and domestic investments. The economy depends on the goods and services that local groups in charge provide in hyperlocalised markets that struggle to sustain supply and secure proximity to trade access points. A wartime economy entrenches, with multiple fighting parties and authorities emerging to control illicit trading networks and extract resources. Gold and arms trade are the pillars of this war economy, sustaining military operations for the fighting parties.

SAF's continued fragmentation gives the Tasis more room to control cross-border supply flow. The territorial expansion of RSF and SPLM-N/AI Hilu creates opportunities to seize and control trading hubs and routes managed by Tasis' newly established civic authorities. RSF pursues de facto international recognition and legitimacy through regional allies such as Chad and South Sudan by establishing supply chains and expanding trading opportunities adapted to the new situation. This recognition remains based on its growing territory gains as it struggles to gain international legitimacy.

Service provision

Civilians in SAF's fragmented areas of control see a complete absence of services caused by dysfunctional state institutions and infrastructure destruction resulting from renewed violence as front lines move eastwards into central Sudan. As SAF fragmentation shrinks service provision in central Sudan, the role of civil society expands in providing services. Though they are not formally recognised responders, they increasingly fill the gap in service delivery, exposing their staff and volunteers to even greater security and protection risks. Members of MAGs are continuously targeted, despite their low visibility, on suspicion of affiliation with competing armed groups. The shrinking humanitarian operational landscape sees humanitarian organisations increase their dependence on MAGs for last-mile aid delivery because of MAGs' ability to navigate access constraints.

In RSF areas, cooperation between MAGs and humanitarian organisations strengthens as they expand their ability to provide services. Shifting humanitarian positioning from Port Sudan to Adré sees more humanitarian activities, easing the service deficit for communities in Darfur and Kordofan.

Humanitarian access

Overall, humanitarian access becomes more constrained. The HAC continues to enforce their de jure strict control over humanitarian operations, including the determination of visas for international staff. Additional levels of access negotiations with the emerging civic authorities become necessary, as opposing factions no longer regard the HAC as a legitimate central authority. Consequently, bureaucratic barriers become more layered and difficult to navigate with the emergence of platforms led by local armed groups taking on the HAC's mandate.

The increased spread of violence in fragmented SAF areas deepens security risks for aid workers, and necessary reliance on national responders transfers further risk to them. Crossline aid delivery routes and networks from Port Sudan largely cease as operational costs, insecurity, and the risk of aid interference by various armed groups rise to unacceptable levels. Aid is delivered through high-risk routes under the protection of armed authorities in targeted areas, navigating multiple checkpoints and locally imposed taxation, eroding the neutrality of operations.

SARHO strengthens its position in most RSF-controlled territories, allowing more aid to enter the country under its supervision and bureaucratic directives. Bureaucratic hurdles increase as RSF tightens its control over aid, imposing more strict directives and registration requirements for humanitarian organisations operating in western Sudan. Aid diversion is an embedded practice governing authorities use to reward loyal armed groups, eroding donor confidence. The Adré border point emerges as a major entry point of aid, rivalling Port Sudan on account of reduced violence and minimal coordination with SAF.

Humanitarian conditions

Civilian displacement rises in central Sudan, including in Kordofan, as the conflict's front lines shift eastwards into these areas and people seek safety, services, and livelihoods in more stable areas eastwards and across borders. The movement is unstructured, driven by immediate survival needs, with routes chosen based on anecdotal news and rumours rather than organised and coordinated movement. RSF's capture of areas previously controlled by SAF results in mass displacement and grave protection concerns, including mass killings, killings on ethnic bases, retaliatory prosecutions, and sexual violence.

Dynamic movement and insecurity reduce displacement tracking capacity and create information gaps, constraining targeted humanitarian interventions. Peripheral states such as Red Sea also experience increased displacement with localised violence, creating an influx of refugees to neighbouring countries, such as Egypt.

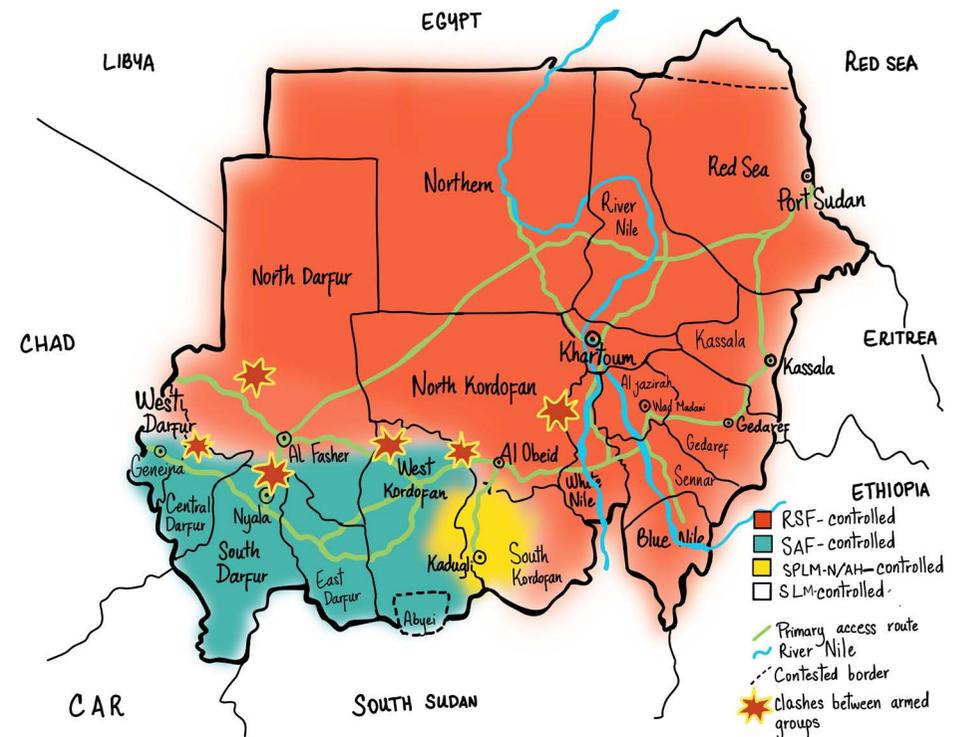
Hate speech and ethnic incitement reflected in the propaganda of different armed groups – fuelled by social media content and pandering to tribal pertinences – escalate across Sudan, eroding social cohesion and fuelling communal violence that spills into urban centres. Expanded conflict in SAF areas widens protection gaps, especially the forced conscription of young men and boys into various armed groups. Overall, reduced humanitarian presence and more intense insecurities in fragmented SAF areas result in worsening food insecurity, high malnutrition rates, and the spread of diseases.

In RSF-controlled areas, humanitarian conditions marginally improve as RSF controls more areas and resources and captures supply routes leading to its areas of control. The shift in front lines eastwards away from western Sudan helps reduce insecurity in RSF-controlled areas. Protection needs persist, however, as general violence, looting, renewed conflict-related sexual violence against women and girls, and the ethnic targeting of people affiliated with SAF continue.

4. Reassertion



Map 4. Areas of control under Scenario 4 by December 2026 (reassertion)



Source: ACAPS



SAF regains territorial control in the Darfur and Kordofan states. RSF weakens as it continues to lose territory, shrinking access to key resources and trade routes. SAF exploits the weaknesses and divisions of the RSF coalition to prompt defections within the coalition along tribal lines, as RSF fails to consolidate governance in areas under its control. The remaining RSF members retreat to Nyala town, which becomes the last stronghold. Front lines shift to Al Geneina and Zalingei towns as SAF tries to take control of Adré crossing and restrict supply flow to Nyala.

These gains strengthen SAF's domestic and international perceived legitimacy, while RSF's legitimacy erodes under sustained military and political pressure from SAF, resulting in the loss of external and local support and the inability to sustain patronage networks. Despite reasserting control over strategic urban centres, SAF's governance remains fragile without fully rebuilding governance in the recaptured areas, constrained by its limited capacity.

In peripheral regions historically marginalised by Khartoum, SAF relies on armed groups to govern on its behalf, producing fragmented authority and projecting control through surveillance and punitive measures, repression, and access to services in core zones rather than administrative governance capabilities. Local resistance to the central governance of SAF persists in some areas. SPLM-N/AI Hilu maintains control of strongholds in parts of Kordofan, such as the Nuba Mountains, where clashes with SAF intensify.

Economy

SAF's advance in western Sudan reopens trade corridors linking central Sudan to Darfur, though routes are militarised and security checkpoints control movement. This stimulates limited economic recovery in retaken urban areas where market activity resumes under SAF oversight, while peripheries face punitive extraction and militarised taxation. Economic gains are limited by widespread infrastructure damage, disrupted production chains, and the withdrawal of RSF-linked smuggling networks that previously drove informal trade and sustained some households during conflict. In these areas, SAF attempts to reintroduce taxation and exert greater economic control, increasing state revenue without significant improvement in service delivery, straining fragile household economies.

In RSF-held areas of West Darfur, economic activity continues to collapse as access to critical supply lines and resource-rich areas is lost. Insecurity and territorial fragmentation heavily disrupt gold mining, while livestock and gum arabic exports decline because of trade route disruptions and conflict-driven displacements. This significantly reduces revenue generation for both households and RSF. As RSF revenue streams weaken, its support networks deteriorate, deepening internal fragmentation, weakening RSF's remaining governance capacity, and accelerating SAF reassertion.

Shrinking RSF and SPLM-N/AI Hilu areas are more reliant on informal and subsistence economies as they are increasingly cut off from trade and aid flows. As such, localised bartering, small-scale trade, and community-based resource-sharing become increasingly important in these areas, though livelihoods remain vulnerable to instability, limited humanitarian access, and rising food insecurity.

Service provision

In recaptured areas of Darfur and Kordofan, SAF's reliance on allied armed groups rather than formal governance structures limits the scale and quality of service delivery in newly recaptured areas. State infrastructure remains weak or absent, and basic services such as health, water, and electricity are slow to return, concentrated in urban areas, and used as a tool of political control and not a rights-based governance function. In recaptured urban areas that fall under strong SAF control, civil society groups are shrivelled, sidelined, or co-opted into SAF-controlled delivery mechanisms, undermining independent operations. MAGs face crackdowns and targeting as SAF perceives them as a threat and competition to their reasserted governance. In conflict zones, particularly in North and West Kordofan, service delivery remains virtually non-existent owing to overlapping authorities, violence, and SAF's limited administrative reach. In RSF-controlled Darfur, resource scarcity and the lack of functional governance leave civilians reliant on informal mutual aid networks and overstretched grassroots responders.

In SPLM-N/AI Hilu-controlled areas of the Nuba Mountains, native administration structures persist but remain isolated, a result of proximal SAF activities in northern parts of the region and constrained physical access from South Sudan, which has deepened economic deterioration. Escalating frontline conflict with SAF impedes aid access and disrupts existing service provision, tightening aid delivery bottlenecks amid rising unmet needs in the region.

Humanitarian access

In SAF-recaptured urban centres and along newly secured corridors, humanitarian access marginally improves but is tightly controlled and militarised. Bureaucratic hurdles, such as visas, travel permits, and registrations, increase as SAF's legitimacy and territorial control strengthen, giving the authorities greater leverage to impose more restrictive procedures on aid delivery, particularly for INGOs. UN agencies, which only recognise the HAC, experience better overall access but face increasingly politicised coordination. Humanitarian assistance is increasingly routed through state institutions and pro-SAF civic authorities, undermining independent civil society and MAGs, threatening independence and impartiality. SAF reinstates cross-line aid delivery mechanisms from Port Sudan into the newly captured areas.

In RSF-held western Darfur, humanitarian access deteriorates as insecurity and fragmentation deepen. SARHO is weakened as RSF's legitimacy and areas of control are diminished, reducing bureaucratic impediments but increasing security risks for humanitarian operations. Shifting border dynamics and intensified conflict along routes connecting to Chad increasingly constrain access to the neighbouring country, while SAF uses the authorisation of the Adré border crossing with Chad to further limit access to RSF-controlled areas. International humanitarian organisations face severe operational risks and logistical barriers, which increase operational costs, expand reliance on local groups for aid delivery, and complicate access negotiations.

Humanitarian conditions

SAF's westward advance triggers large-scale population movements. Some IDPs return to recaptured towns, such as Al Fasher and Al Obeid, as they seek better living conditions while facing pressure from SAF to showcase stability and from host communities strained by social tensions. Protection concerns are widespread as SAF and allied forces engage in retaliatory abuses in newly recaptured areas, including arbitrary arrests, extrajudicial killings, and the ethnic targeting of communities perceived to be affiliated with RSF. Reports of profiling, detention, and torture emerge in both rural and urban areas.

In the remaining RSF-controlled areas of West Sudan, conflict intensification, the deterioration of internal cohesion among RSF fighters and leadership, and the loss of resources and supply lines worsen security and humanitarian conditions. Protection violations increase, including looting, forced recruitment, sexual violence, and forced displacement. As RSF's command structure deteriorates, rival factions and unaffiliated armed groups exploit the power vacuum, leading to intercommunal violence and further destabilising the region. Civilians are caught between shifting front lines and restricted humanitarian access, leading to rising food insecurity, especially among people forced to flee conflict, as many lose their livelihoods and some of their social capital.

In SPLM-N/AI Hilu areas, escalating conflict with SAF drives new waves of displacement from the Nuba Mountains and surrounding regions. Many are unable to flee because of active fighting or a lack of safe passage. As clashes along routes in Kordofan intensify, the Nuba Mountains become more isolated. SPLM-N/AI Hilu seeks to establish alternative routes through South Sudan, but humanitarian needs rise in these areas as many displaced populations remain without shelter, food, or medical care. Humanitarian responders struggle to assess the severity and scale of needs amid extremely limited access, information gaps, and insecurity.

COMPOUNDING FACTORS

Compounding factors are developments that have the potential to significantly change the situation, such as conflict dynamics, governance, and humanitarian needs, across the four scenarios.

The quadripartite peace talks

The US-led quadripartite peace initiative marks a major shift in mediation efforts in Sudan by aligning key regional backers behind a civilian-centric transition roadmap, potentially redefining governance legitimacy and conflict trajectories, depending on how SAF and RSF respond to international pressure. In early 2025, the US intensified efforts to broker a peace deal in Sudan, and in September, the US secured an agreement with Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on a roadmap for a transition process to end the conflict. The quadripartite peace talks mark a shift in the mediation efforts by uniting major external parties behind a common framework (ICG 02/09/2025 and 16/09/2025; Reuters 16/01/2025).

The roadmap to a ceasefire underscores that future governance of Sudan will be determined by people and not warring parties (US DOS 12/09/2025). This precedent declaration signals that the international community favours a civilian authority and strips legitimacy from the parties to the conflict, asserting the need for civilian-led governance (ICG 30/01/2025).

The US efforts come on the heels of other previous peace mediations that have yielded little progress. Regional mediation by the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development has failed, largely owing to implementation gaps. Similarly, international initiatives, such as the UK's Pathways to Peace talks and France's Ministerial Meeting for Sudan Peace Initiatives, have struggled to move beyond declarations (ICG 02/09/2025 and 16/09/2025; Reuters 16/01/2025).

The quadripartite roadmap could force both SAF and RSF authorities to align their strategies with international expectations in an attempt to gain legitimacy in the process (MEE 27/10/2025; ISSA 18/10/2025). Across all four scenarios, the outcome of the quadripartite talks could potentially shift the trajectory of governance. A ceasefire could freeze the front lines along the current line of conflict, legitimising a partition, supporting one authority, or backing a civilian transition – all options with varied implications on humanitarian delivery and access.

Climate conditions

Sudan's extreme weather events, such as heavy rains and floods, affect conflict patterns as well as humanitarian access and needs, which influence the control and governance strategies that parties to the conflict employ. Heavy rainfall and above-average precipitation in Darfur and Kordofan region and around River Nile state cause annual flooding, resulting in displacement and access limitations (NASA accessed 03/11/2025; FAO 10/09/2024). A retrospective analysis on conflict trends suggests that the ground advancement of troops surges during the dry months between October–May, while the rainy season between June and September slows troop advancements (ICG 08/2024; IOM 15/04/2025; Reuters 04/10/2024). The varying climatic conditions have the potential to temporarily shift the front lines, areas of control, and governance of the conflict parties during certain periods, especially in central Sudan.

Adré border crossing is the main supply route to RSF-controlled areas in western Sudan, and it faces physical and logistical constraints during the rainy season. Historically, SAF's periodic three-month renewal authorisation on the use of Adré for humanitarian operations has coincided with the rainy season when some routes become impassable, creating operational hurdles and uncertainties for humanitarian organisations (Logistics Cluster 06/08/2025; OCHA 13/05/2025). SAF views alternative cross-border entry points outside its physical control, including Adré, as enabling RSF's weapons supply, which institutionalises mistrust of Adré's humanitarian significance (TNH 11/04/2025; AN 13/11/2024; Sudan Tribune 02/09/2025). Considering that heavy rains in Sudan are a cyclical occurrence, Adré's future use for cross-border deliveries, especially during the wet season, will be dependent on the authority in control.

Renewed conflict in South Sudan

Growing political instability in South Sudan risks a spillover into Sudan by fuelling fighters' inflow, disrupting cross-border supply routes to fighting parties, and reducing revenue to SAF from oil transit fees. As tensions between President Salva Kiir and Riek Machar, the first vice-president, escalate, the nation grows closer to a civil war (AJ 27/10/2025; BBC 16/09/2025). A conflict in South Sudan could drive a proliferation of South Sudanese mercenaries into Sudan, especially to SPLM-N/AI Hilu and SPLM-N/Malik Agar factions and their allies given ethnic and historical political ties (Sudan War Monitor 18/02/2025; AJ 29/03/2025; Radio Tamazuj 11/08/2025). The potential militarisation of borderlands could cut supply routes for both RSF and SPLM-N/AI Hilu, as armed groups in Upper Nile state in South Sudan, who are allied with SAF, assert their control. Such a change in the control of critical supply lines could change the conflict dynamics in Sudan, resulting in a shift in territorial control and governance (Amani

Africa 17/03/2025; SCR 18/03/2025). Conflict in South Sudan could further disrupt oil exports via Port Sudan, reducing transit fee collections, a significant revenue source for SAF. Lower revenue generation will weaken SAF's capacity to sustain military operations and governance functions, potentially altering areas of control and governance in Sudan (PTJ 08/10/2025; IFRI 26/05/2025; STPT 04/07/2024; Ecofin 09/10/2025).

Instability in Chad

Instability in Chad could spill into western Sudan, fuelling recruitment, altering smuggling dynamics, and causing reverse displacement, which could reshape governance and control dynamics in Sudan. Chad remains vulnerable to internal political instability and rapid destabilisation. Given Chad's role as a logistics and humanitarian access corridor into western Sudan, any deterioration in stability could create additional risks for recruitment and mercenary supply into the Sudanese conflict, entrench smuggling networks, and shift alignments on account of ethnic ties at the Chad–Sudan border (Global Initiative 09/08/2023; USHMM 30/03/2023; DiA 29/07/2024). Instability in Chad would also result in the reverse displacement of Chadians and Sudanese, despite the lack of capacity and infrastructure in western Sudan to absorb additional displaced people. Chad serves as a main destination for nearly 1.3 million Sudanese refugees displaced from the Darfur states, a situation that continues to create growing humanitarian needs for both host and refugee populations (UNHCR accessed 27/10/2025). A mass return movement would compound the crisis and add pressure on already fragile social dynamics and intercommunal tensions in western Sudan (IOM 16/10/2025; ICG 01/09/2025). Instability in Chad could disrupt the critical role the country plays in the Sudan crisis and shift policies and alignments between Chad and fighting parties in Sudan, affecting areas of control and governance in Sudan.

Tensions in Egypt, Eritrea, and Ethiopia

Escalating tensions between Egypt, Ethiopia, and Sudan over the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, as well as the Ethiopia–Eritrea tensions over Red Sea access, risk drawing Sudan into a new regional conflict, reshaping the currently existing conflict between SAF and RSF. These tensions risk militarising Port Sudan and the eastern border, constraining humanitarian access and trade. Port Sudan is the wartime unofficial capital of Sudan, and it shares international borders with Egypt and Eritrea, both longstanding adversaries of Ethiopia (Pulitzer Center 16/09/2024; RVI 21/05/2024; ICG 27/03/2025; Chatham House 19/03/2025; Genocide Watch 22/10/2025). As tensions over Nile water sovereignty escalate, Port Sudan risks transforming from a humanitarian access and trade corridor into a militarised front, forcing humanitarians to prioritise alternative border entry points for aid. Militarised activities in Port Sudan will result in authorities tightening their control on the east, a shrinking civil space, prioritising defence over service delivery, which would likely undermine governance.



Diminishing humanitarian funding

Shrinking global humanitarian budgets and donor fatigue towards Sudan's protracted crisis are eroding humanitarian responders' service delivery and potentially shifting governance legitimacy to authorities in control of places where services are concentrated. Humanitarian support to Sudan is likely to decline as the crisis becomes protracted, resulting in donor fatigue and a reduction in overall global funding for humanitarian causes (UNHCR 04/08/2025). By 30 October, only 27.3% (USD 1.02 billion) of the necessary funding had been secured for the response in Sudan, compared to 51% and 69% in 2023 and 2024, respectively (OCHA accessed 30/10/2025). European nations such as the UK and Germany are increasingly bolstering their defence budgets, partially in response to shifting national priorities, resulting in reduced humanitarian commitments globally, including in Sudan, by longstanding donors (TNH 01/07/2025). In 2025, the UK Government announced a 17% (USD 34 million) funding reduction for Sudan's 2026–2027 earmarked budget (UK Govt. 29/10/2025). US aid to Sudan was similarly cut in 2025 after the closure of USAID, compounding humanitarian needs in Sudan (CBM accessed 27/10/2025; SUWRA 25/02/2025). These cuts signal a shift from multiyear programming to short-term and surge response, which affects planning and localisation capacity. Diminishing funds not only reduce volumes of assistance but also reorder who controls aid, where it flows, and whose legitimacy it reinforces, with direct implications on protection outcomes and the feasibility of principled humanitarian delivery.

ANNEX A: CONTEXTUAL DEVELOPMENTS

Political dynamics

In 2025, Sudan's political landscape witnessed major realignments, with the formation of the Tasis alliance aimed at consolidating control and establishing a parallel government in Darfur and Kordofan. This has the potential to further entrench the fragmentation of humanitarian response coordination in Sudan by creating two distinct aid environments and access negotiations (Reuters 26/07/2025; UN 13/08/2025; CSF 24/11/2023). Announced in February 2025, the alliance included the SLM/Transitional Council, the Justice and Equality Movement, and the Gathering of Sudan Liberation Forces, with the SPLM-N/AI Hilu joining a month later, fearing a SAF victory would revive the political Islam agenda and policies it had long opposed, securing political leverage in the parallel government, and avoiding marginalisation under a potential SAF-led post-conflict settlement. The realignment also offered SPLM-N/AI Hilu access to RSF weapons, military assets, and support for operations around its strongholds in Kordofan. In return, RSF was able to regroup in SPLM-N/AI Hilu's rugged terrain, which provided defensive depth after their retreat from central Sudan in early 2025. This more formal alliance has enabled RSF to sustain operations across multiple fronts and increase its perceived domestic and international legitimacy (AJ 19/08/2025; ACLED 15/04/2025).

In May 2025, SAF appointed Kamil Idris, a civilian, as the Prime Minister of the TSC, the first since Abdallah Hamdok stepped down in 2022 to counter RSF's attempts to establish a parallel government, project legitimacy, and consolidate fragmented governance (Euronews 20/05/2025). Idris has struggled to unify factions, and the State continues to face challenges in asserting authority in some areas, such as central Sudan, where SAF relies on allied armed groups (AA 31/05/2025; Reuters 26/07/2025; AJ 23/07/2025; ACLED 15/04/2025). As such, governance remains fragmented, and humanitarian responders need to engage not only with the main parties of the conflict but also with the different armed groups across the country (CSF 25/03/2024; OCHA 13/10/2025).

In July 2025, the Tasis alliance announced the formation of a parallel government based in Nyala, South Darfur, further institutionalising governance fragmentation in the country. Hemedti, the RSF leader, assumed the role of president; Abdelaziz Adam Al Hilu, leader of the SPLM-N/AI Hilu, was appointed vice-president; and Mohamed Hassan Al Taishi, a civilian politician, was named prime minister (Reuters 26/07/2025). The establishment of a parallel government is believed to be driven by the RSF alliance's need to consolidate control and governance in Darfur and Kordofan to broaden RSF's political appeal among civilians and domestic and international parties following major battlefield losses, challenge the legitimacy of the TSC Government, gain recognition from neighbouring countries, and

strengthen its bargaining position in future peace negotiations (AJ 28/07/2025; ICG 02/09/2025). This parallel government, however, has had limited impact in governance, facing delays in forming a cabinet and establishing state institutions. It has also failed to gain regional recognition, as the African Union, Arab League, and UN have rejected its legitimacy, limiting the organisations' levels of engagement and humanitarian response in vast areas under the control of the Tasis alliance (UN 13/08/2025; AA 02/09/2025; Le Monde 27/07/2025).

Conflict dynamics

In 2025, SAF temporarily managed to gain the upper hand over RSF, and in March, it recaptured most of central Sudan, including Khartoum (ACLEDD 15/04/2025). As a result, the conflict's front lines have since shifted, with Kordofan emerging as the new battleground, particularly around the main urban centres of Al Obeid, Dilling, and Kadugli, which are strategic to critical transport and access routes to west and central Sudan (ASA 24/07/2025; OCHA 09/09/2025; UNICEF 24/08/2025; BBC 24/02/2025). This shift has created dynamic and unstable operations in those areas, requiring responders to rapidly adjust to fluid access and shifting authorities (TNH 11/04/2025). Most of western Sudan remains under RSF control, except for pockets of North Darfur state, such as Jabal Marrah and Tawila (AJ 04/09/2025; TNH 02/06/2025).

Military tactics have increasingly shifted from the use of ground forces and heavy weapons to a tit-for-tat aerial war in 2025, with drones used to target civilians, infrastructure, and military assets beyond the front lines, reaching places such as Khartoum, Nyala, and eastern Sudan. In January 2025, unidentified drones, believed to be operated by RSF, attacked the Merowe Dam, causing significant damage and power outages across northern Sudan that limited access to WASH services, aggravating the spread of cholera across the country. In May, drone strikes targeted Port Sudan, the country's vital seaport and main humanitarian hub, raising concerns about new targeting patterns and additional access and security risks (AJ 29/07/2025; ADF 15/07/2025).

Regional and international dynamics

In 2025, SAF continues to receive support from several countries, notably Egypt and Saudi Arabia, which provide either diplomatic or military backing. Egypt's interests focus on maintaining stability on its southern border and securing Nile water rights. Similarly, Saudi Arabia supports SAF to preserve stability, safeguard its interests in the Red Sea on its eastern border, and counter UAE influence in the region (ECFR 30/07/2025; NAI 07/02/2025; Arab News 18/04/2025). In 2025, Russia switched sides to back SAF after a diplomatic meeting in February 2025 resulted in an agreement to establish a Russian naval base on the Red Sea, securing the country's interests in the Red Sea and the Mediterranean (ADF 05/08/2025; ECFR 30/07/2025). The external support SAF receives from countries such as Russia and

Saudi Arabia goes beyond military cooperation. The support implicitly legitimises SAF as a governing authority, enabling external parties to secure cooperation around the strategic Port Sudan and the Red Sea for their defence and economic ambitions.

RSF, by contrast, continues to receive support from some regional countries, mainly the UAE and Chad. The UAE backs RSF for economic interests in gold mining smuggling via Chad and South Sudan, which provides a vital revenue stream for RSF to finance its operations. The UAE is also believed to support RSF to counter the rise of groups with political Islam leanings – such as SAF – in governance in the region, as the UAE views these groups as a threat to their domestic stability and regional interests. Although the UAE denies these claims, experts and UN reports indicate its involvement in supplying arms to RSF (Reuters 07/01/2025; Peoples Dispatch 27/07/2025; Le Monde 03/11/2025; Steinberg 08/07/2020). Chad's support stems from its alignment with the UAE in relation to financial investments in Chad as well as the Government's attempt to contain spillover across the border. Many tribes near the border with ethnic and political ties to Darfuri armed groups form the bulk of RSF combatants (Peoples Dispatch 27/07/2025; ICG 01/09/2025; BBC 24/03/2025).

ANNEX B: TRIGGERS FOR THE SCENARIOS

The table below lists events that, should they occur – in a combination but not necessarily all at once – may contribute to a scenario materialising.

Table 1. Triggers for the scenarios

TRIGGER	S1	S2	S3	S4
CONFLICT DYNAMICS				
Conflict dynamics				
SAF and RSF fight indecisive battles across Kordofan	x			
Arms and munitions to SAF decrease			x	
Arms and munitions to RSF decrease				x
SAF recruits tribal militias and Eritrean fighters	x			x
RSF obtains fighter jets, intensifying the fighting	x		x	
Both SAF and RSF maintain steady access to munitions and weapons supply	x			
Either or both RSF and SAF forces experience fatigue		x	x	x
North Darfur and Kordofan tribes mobilise in support of SAF	x			x
POLITICAL DYNAMICS				
Burhan intensifies purges of factions with political Islam tendencies	x		x	x
Power-sharing disputes intensify within the Tasis coalition	x			x
Grievances within RSF-allied groups increase	x			x
INTERNAL DYNAMICS				
The senior leader of a main armed group is voluntarily or involuntarily removal	x	x	x	x
New militias emerge from SAF's ranks	x		x	
Armed groups such as SLM/AW side against RSF	x			x
Armed groups such as SLM/AW yield control to RSF	x	x	x	
SAF undergoes internal restructuring and reform			x	x
INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL INVOLVEMENT				
A peace deal or negotiated ceasefire freezes front lines		x		x

TRIGGER	S1	S2	S3	S4
Mediation efforts collapse	x		x	x
Mediations aimed at partition as a solution to end the conflict succeed		x		
Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE reach a settlement on influence areas in Sudan		x		
Egypt, Eritrea, or other regional powers reduce their support for SAF			x	
The Egyptian military intervenes	x			x
Chad, South Sudan, or the UAE reduce support to RSF				x
Geopolitical rivalries intensify	x			
SAF-aligned TSC cedes Halayeb and Shalateen to Egypt	x			x
There is a change in Chad's leadership			x	x
The South Sudanese opposition seizes Upper Nile state in South Sudan				x
SAF supports regime change in South Sudan				x
ECONOMICS AND REVENUE GENERATION				
Severe drought, floods, or failure of the agriculture season occurs	x		x	x
Gold mining revenue is disrupted	x		x	x
SOCIAL DYNAMICS				
Disinformation and hate speech campaigns proliferate	x	x	x	x
There is localised or widespread violent popular uprising	x		x	x

ANNEX C: ACRONYMS

- **MAGs:** Mutual aid groups
- **RSF:** Rapid Support Forces
- **SAF:** Sudanese Armed Forces
- **SARHO:** Sudanese Agency for Relief and Humanitarian Operations
- **SLM/AW:** Sudan Liberation Movement/Abdul Wahid Al Nur
- **SPLM-N/AI Hilu:** Abdelaziz Adam Al Hilu's Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North
- **TSC:** Transition Sovereignty Council