

Conflict in Sudan

Issue Brief #2

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As of 10 May 2023

HIGHLIGHTS

- 334,000 people are estimated to have been internally displaced, and over 120,000 people have fled to neighboring countries.
- 30,000 refugees have arrived in South Sudan, 54 percent of whom are women.
- 219,000 pregnant women reside in Khartoum, including 24,000 women expected to give birth in the coming weeks without access to safe delivery services.
- 750 fatalities have been reported to date due to the fighting.
- 61 percent of health facilities have closed in Khartoum and only 16 percent are operating as normal.



16 MILLION

or 1/3 of Sudan's population, depended on humanitarian assistance prior to the start of the most recent conflict.



8.9 MILLION

of those projected to need humanitarian assistance in Sudan in 2023 are women and girls, according to a 2022 OCHA report.

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS



The ongoing military conflict in Sudan is putting women leaders, who have been at the forefront of the movement for democratic change, at direct risk of targeted assassinations and other threats by rival military factions and members of the deposed regime, according to Vital Voices partners.

Sudanese women leaders, including health professionals, have received direct threats via phone and social media. These threats are believed to be led by former regime members against women leaders advocating for democracy. Similar threats have been reported both inside and outside of Sudan, including lawyers, journalists, and activists.

Women played a critical role in the 2019 protests that led to the ouster of the authoritarian regime of General Omar al-Bashir, who had been in power for nearly 30 years and curtailed women's rights. The conflict has provided former members of the regime new opportunities to retaliate against women activists for their role in ending the regime.

Dozens of women leaders in Sudan, particularly in Darfur and Khartoum, face the risk of being killed by former regime members out of retaliation for their activism, according to Vital Voices partners. The risks these women face is compounded by the lack of electricity, basic services, and healthcare in Sudan.

In addition, women and girls are also under threat from the rival military factions that are violently vying for power and are fueling the conflict. The military factions have previously engaged in sexual violence and other abuses, including torture and mass rapes. The collapse of the healthcare system has led to additional vulnerabilities in access to reproductive health, including safe deliveries.

The role of women leaders in Sudan is expected to be a focus on May 11 of a special session of the United Nations Human Rights Council.

VITAL VOICES RESPONSE



1

Swift Mobilization

Vital Voices has mobilized its network of women leaders to support two women-led organizations working to support women leaders in Sudan.

2

Safeguarding Women Leaders

Vital Voices is supporting individual women leaders with financial assistance and other key services through its Crisis Response Fund and Freedom of Expression Fund.

3

Raising an Alert

Vital Voices is standing in solidarity with Sudanese women leaders and amplifying voices of women leaders on the ground.

Earlier this month, Vital Voices convened Sudanese women leaders inside and outside Sudan. [View the list of recommended actions.](#)

To learn more on the topic and the work of women leaders in Sudan, view SUWRA's most recent [statement](#).