

IPC Alert: Famine-Affected Areas in Sudan

Published on 11 July 2025

The IPC Global Initiative is issuing this alert based on the latest evidence available* to draw urgent attention to the deteriorating humanitarian situation in areas of the Nuba Mountains and North Darfur where Famine (IPC Phase 5) was ongoing or projected between December 2024 and May 2025, as well as other areas at risk of Famine. Sudan's lean season has begun and will continue for at least 3-4 months, which will further exacerbate the already catastrophic food security and nutrition conditions.

This Alert was produced by the IPC Global Initiative and does not necessarily reflect the views of individual agencies.

- Despite increased stability in parts of Sudan, intense conflict in Northern Darfur and Greater Kordofan states continues to displace people and severely restrict humanitarian access. Isolated communities in El Fasher and the Nuba Mountains still face extreme food shortages, very low access to basic services and overstretched social support systems.
- While the main harvest season (late 2024-early 2025) appeared to be favourable in parts of Sudan, major production gaps and supply barriers persist in conflict-affected areas, exacerbating food insecurity.
- The humanitarian response and local support mechanisms in Sudan are critically underfunded. These shortfalls hindered the prepositioning of essential supplies ahead of the rainy season, and forced to substantially scale down operations, including community kitchens which are critical to mitigate the extreme needs of affected populations.
- The alarming levels of acute malnutrition recorded during the post-harvest season, combined with constrained access to treatment services, raise serious concerns for children during the July-September lean season.
- With road access set to worsen in the coming months, immediate political action and large-scale response are critical. Sustained delivery of food, nutrition, water and health assistance, and support to basic services and public infrastructure are essential to alleviate human suffering and prevent further loss of life.

With conflict in Sudan now entering its third year, the country is facing one of the world's gravest humanitarian crises. Conflict has displaced more than 10 million people, exacerbated a protracted economic crisis marked by soaring food prices, and devastated essential water, sanitation, health services, and markets.¹ Intense conflict continues to drive dire food security, health and nutrition conditions in North Darfur and Greater Kordofan. In Khartoum and Al Jazirah, where direct clashes have subsided, the situation remains severe due to the impacts of conflict, including the destruction of basic infrastructure and services, a shattered economy and an ongoing cholera outbreak.

The IPC analysis published in December 2024 projected that 24.6 million people would face high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above) through May 2025, including at least 638,000 people in IPC Phase 5 (Catastrophe) and 8.1 million people in IPC Phase 4 (Emergency).² The Famine Review Committee (FRC) detected Famine in five camps/areas in El Fasher and the Western Nuba Mountains, and projected that Famine would expand to five additional localities of North Darfur by May 2025.^{3,4} A risk of Famine was detected in 17 other locations in Central Nuba Mountains, South, East, and North Darfur, Al Jazirah, and Khartoum states.^{5 **}

The food security and nutrition situation is expected to deteriorate during the lean season (July-September 2025). Concern is highest for people living in the above-mentioned areas and for internally

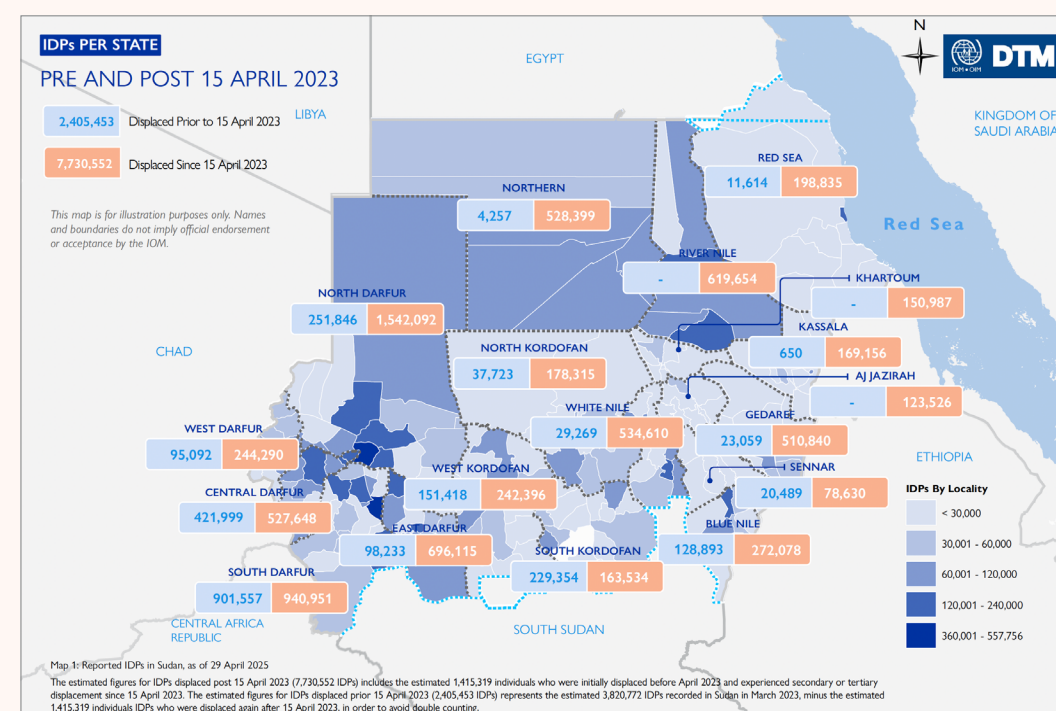
displaced persons (IDPs) across the country. Despite year-on-year gains in the 2024 harvest in parts of Sudan, the conflict has disrupted both food production and supply flows in others. Displaced populations in war-torn areas of North Darfur and Greater Kordofan states, as well as returnees in Khartoum, Al Jazirah, Sennar and many other states, were unable to grow food and rely primarily on markets, where the prices of staple foods have surged by 430 percent above pre-conflict levels.⁶ Similarly, violence and shelling continue to disrupt food supply systems and access, as demonstrated during the 4 June 2025 attack on the Abu Shouk camp market in El Fasher.

Severely inadequate funding is undermining the urgent ramp-up of needed assistance in the country. Despite some gains in humanitarian access in the past months, ongoing fighting in Kordofan and Darfur hinders consistent outreach to those in need. Since March 2025, food assistance has reached an average of nearly 4 million people monthly, prioritising populations and areas facing Famine, at risk of Famine or in IPC Phase 4 (Emergency). However, support remains largely insufficient overall, including for the 8.7 million people facing Phase 4 or 5 conditions. Communal kitchens in Khartoum, El Fasher, and other urban centres are closing due to lack of funds and conflict has overwhelmed communities' ability to support their most vulnerable members.

Over half of the 21 SMART nutrition surveys conducted during the harvest and post-harvest seasons, reported Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) levels consistent with IPC Acute Malnutrition Phase 4 (Critical), with a high likelihood of pockets of populations facing even higher severity. This is a key indicator of a worsening crisis, that also raises serious concerns about the likely deterioration in acute malnutrition during the forthcoming peak of the lean season, particularly in areas facing Famine or at risk of Famine where food shortages, and dwindling health, hygiene and sanitation services are resulting in cholera outbreaks.

This deepening crisis continues to pose a substantial and growing threat to people's lives overall, and children in particular. Scaling up humanitarian interventions and service delivery in food security, water sanitation and hygiene (WASH), health, and nutrition—including through grassroots local systems—is critical to address the extreme conditions already witnessed in 2024, characterised by extreme food gaps, high levels of acute malnutrition, and loss of life.

Map 1. Sudan Mobility Overview, Number of IDPs per State, June 2025. Source: IOM DTM.



Recommended Actions



End hostilities: Ensure a sustainable ceasefire and an inclusive negotiation process that can stop the further spread of famine and contain the already alarmingly high levels of acute food insecurity, malnutrition and mortality.



Protect civilians: Cease all attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure, including health services, water supplies, roads and markets; and address the widespread concerns regarding the protection of vulnerable populations.



Expand and stabilise access routes before the height of the rainy season: Ensure unhindered access for humanitarian and commercial actors across borders and conflict lines—including through the Adre border crossing and El Obeid corridors—and to communities under siege in El Fasher and surrounding areas.



Fund and provide immediate life-saving assistance through a scaled-up, coordinated, multi-sectoral response, encompassing food security, nutrition, health, WASH, shelter, livelihoods and protection.



Support local and community-based response systems and scale up funding in support of local responders, such as the Emergency Response Rooms (ERR), especially in hard-to-reach areas.



Facilitate unrestricted access for the collection of health, water, nutrition and food security data in the worst-affected areas and ensure timely dissemination to support evidence-based food security and nutrition analyses.



26 MONTHS OF CONFLICT

After years of protracted crisis, Sudan plunged into a conflict of alarming scale in mid-April 2023 when fierce fighting between the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) broke out initially in the capital Khartoum, but quickly expanded to other areas across the country.



10.1 MILLION DISPLACED

Over 10 million people (around one third of the population) across all 18 states of Sudan are displaced, many of whom have been displaced multiple times. Another four million refugees have left the country since the beginning of the conflict.

* Data on food security and nutrition outcomes is currently insufficient to produce a fully-fledged IPC analysis.

** The Government of Sudan did not endorse this analysis.

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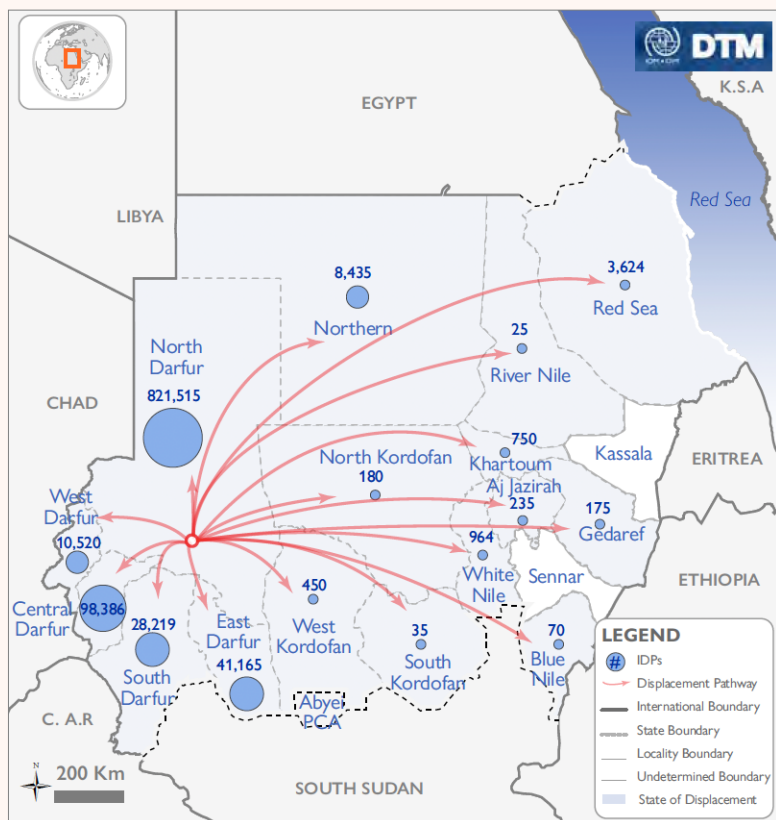
Conflict: Fighting continues to escalate in the famine-affected areas of Greater Darfur and Western Nuba Mountains

As Sudan's war enters its third year, civilians continue to endure the severe consequences of the conflict, with 10.1 million people internally displaced and 4 million people displaced in bordering countries.⁷ Major shifts in conflict dynamics have occurred, including the control of Khartoum state since March 2025.

Since the outbreak of conflict in April 2023, North Darfur has remained a primary source of internal displacement. Of the 1.9 million IDPs in the state, over half originate from El Fasher locality. In April 2025, hundreds of civilians were killed in a targeted assault on Zamzam camp and over 436,000 people (87 percent of the camp population) have been displaced towards Tawila and El Fasher.^{8,9} Clashes to the north and attacks on El Fasher city and Abu Shouk IDP camp are driving further displacement, damaging markets, community kitchens, and health facilities, and worsening food and water shortages. Meanwhile, the siege of El Fasher has tightened, and fighting over the control of critical trade routes has intensified in Greater Kordofan, once again disrupting access to food, health, and nutrition services and placing additional strain on already scarce resources. Severely limited access to resources and basic services has also exposed women to sexual abuse and exploitation.¹⁰

Since March 2025, drone attacks have hit critical energy and water infrastructure, further deteriorating already poor WASH conditions and fuelling the growing cholera outbreak in Khartoum state. The return of an estimated 1.2 million people to Khartoum, Sennar, and Aj Jazirah reflects a relative improvement in security.¹¹ However, it is placing immense pressure on already limited food supplies, overstretched health and nutrition facilities, strained community resources, and the weak labour market.

Map 2. Reported Movements of IDPs from El Fasher locality (April 2023 to June 2025), 25 June 2025. Source: IOM/DTM



Humanitarian Access: Despite notable gains in parts of the country, access constraints persist in famine-affected areas as the rainy season advances

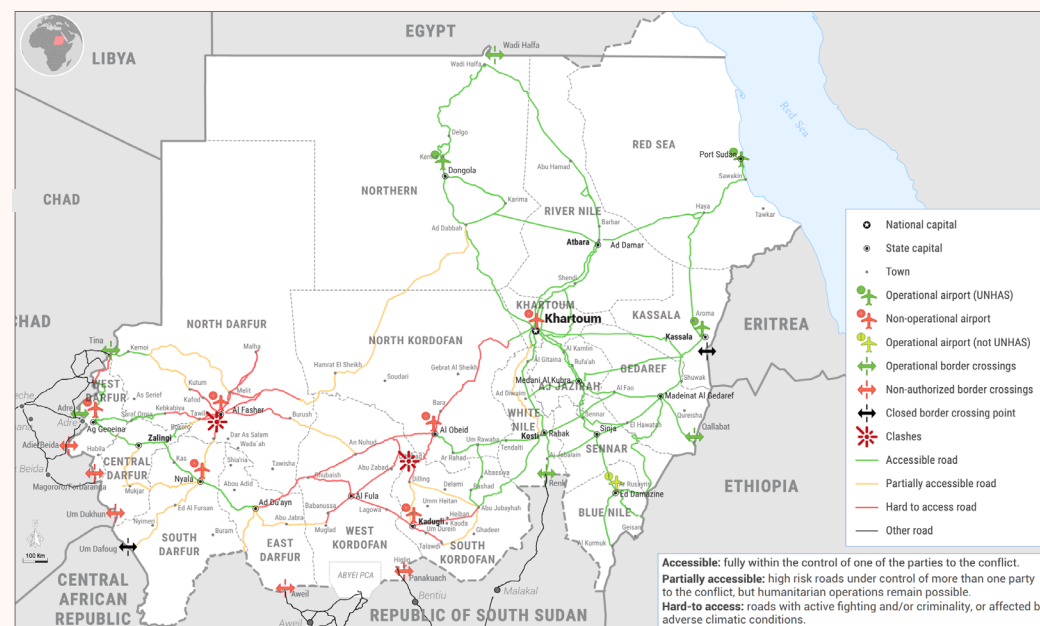
While increased humanitarian outreach has yielded positive results in areas of Greater Darfur and Greater Kordofan with large IDP populations, such as Tawila and Jabal Marrah, many of the famine-affected areas, including El Fasher, Kadugli and surrounding areas, remain inaccessible or difficult to reach.

The recent reopening of El Obeid corridors—a major hub for commercial and humanitarian flows in central Sudan—was short-lived. Since mid-May 2025, shifting frontlines have disrupted trade and humanitarian routes linking North, South and West Kordofan states, halting supply flows. Despite these challenges, in the Nuba Mountains, operational agencies were able to access some localities including As Sunut, Al Lagowa and Sheikan; while Habila, Dilling and Kadugli have become increasingly difficult to reach.¹²

In El Fasher, fighting has cut off IDPs in Abu Shouk and Zamzam camps. The attack on an aid convoy to El Fasher on 2 June 2025, in which five transporter's contracted personnel were killed, and earlier shelling of a WFP warehouse, highlight the recurrent risks of operating in a conflict zone.¹³ While access to other parts of El Fasher and other localities in North Darfur, such as Um Kadadah, Al Lait and At Tawisha, has improved, access to the most vulnerable people remains intermittent and largely inadequate in many of the areas facing Famine or a risk of Famine.

While challenges persist at the El Obeid hub, humanitarian agencies continue to rely on the Adre border crossing.¹⁴ Between 1 May and 12 June 2025, 339 trucks carrying approximately 13,000 metric tons of humanitarian supplies entered through Adre—an increase from previous months, though still insufficient. No movements were reported via At Tina. As the rainy season progresses and routes from South Sudan and Chad become impassable, access to famine-affected areas will depend on the reopening of critical routes, such as the eastern El Obeid–Darfur and El Obeid–southern corridors. Humanitarian organisations continue facing administrative constraints—such as permit and visa denials or delays in transport clearance—disrupting their work.¹⁵ For instance, in Khartoum, administrative delays hinder the scale-up of multi-sectoral aid amid a growing cholera outbreak.¹⁶

Map 3. Sudan Humanitarian Access Snapshot, May 2025. Source: UNOCHA



What is the IPC Acute Food Insecurity Scale?

The IPC is a set of tools and procedures to classify the severity and characteristics of acute food and nutrition crises based on international standards. The IPC consists of four mutually reinforcing functions, each with a set of specific protocols (tools and procedures). The core IPC parameters include consensus building, convergence of evidence, accountability, transparency and comparability. IPC analyses aim at informing emergency response as well as medium and long-term food security and nutrition policy and programming.

Insight from the Famine Review Committee

Although the IPC Famine Review Committee (FRC) was not formally activated to review this IPC Alert, the Committee offered to review and comment on its findings. The FRC fully supports the Alert and is gravely concerned about the current and deteriorating humanitarian situation throughout Sudan.

In December 2024, the FRC found that Famine (IPC Phase 5) was ongoing in Zamzam, Abu Shouk and Al Salam camps in El Fasher and in the Western Nuba Mountains, and would most likely spread to Um Kadadah, Melit, El Fasher, At Tawisha, and Al Lait localities by May 2025. The FRC warned of a risk of Famine in additional areas in the Central Nuba Mountains, and in areas expected to experience significant influxes of IDPs in North and South Darfur, including Tawila, Nyala Janoub, Nyala Shimal, Beliel, Shattaya, As Salam, As Sunta, Buram, and Kas in South Darfur, as well as in Medani Al Kubra and Sharg Al Jazirah in Al Jazirah state, Mayo and Alingaz in Jebel – Awilia, Khartoum state and Al Firdous in East Darfur state.¹⁷

The extreme lack of humanitarian access to provide essential services, as well as collect basic data on human welfare has hampered the FRC's ability to determine the current classification of areas where Famine was projected or a risk of Famine statement was made in December 2024. However, the available evidence strongly substantiates that famine conditions are continuing. Furthermore, on top of an already dire humanitarian situation, Sudan has now entered the seasonal lean period, which will last for 3-4 months, and is very likely to see a significant deterioration in the situation.

The FRC implores all responsible parties—domestically and internationally—to enable humanitarian access to provide essential lifesaving services, protect civilians from violence and exploitation, support community-based organisations to provide front-line support, allow for the collection of basic data on human welfare, and, most importantly, do everything possible to urgently end this conflict. The FRC remains on standby to conduct a thorough and independent famine review once new analyses become available. Sudan is in an extraordinary humanitarian catastrophe that will dramatically worsen in the coming months unless extraordinary actions are taken to prevent further mass human death, displacement, and suffering.

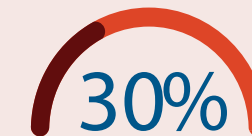


When is Famine Classified?

Famine (IPC Phase 5) is the highest phase of the IPC Acute Food Insecurity scale, and is classified when an area has:



of households facing an
extreme lack of food



of children suffering from
acute malnutrition



non-trauma deaths
**for every 10,000
each day**

For further information on how the IPC classifies Famine, please consult the [IPC Famine Fact Sheet](#).

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Food insecurity during the lean season will worsen amid protracted conflict, economic shocks and flood risks

Food availability and access are expected to worsen during the lean season (July–September), especially in conflict-affected areas in Greater Darfur and Greater Kordofan.

Despite above-average national sorghum and millet production in late 2024, conflict has disrupted food availability, supply chains and economic access, particularly for IDPs, refugees and returnees who had little to no opportunity to farm. Many households have fled combat zones, abandoning their food stocks.¹⁸ Typically, households rely on markets as their stocks decline, but high food prices, reduced incomes, and limited supplies have driven many to rely on household sharing and community kitchens—coping mechanisms that are under huge strain.¹⁹

Market access, both physical and financial, is expected to further deteriorate through the lean season. In May, the national average cost of the local food basket rose by 14 percent—113 percent higher than the same period last year—while the Sudanese Pound depreciated yearly by 56 percent in the parallel market and 62 percent in commercial banks.²⁰

Overlapping challenges—including conflict, displacement, input shortages, infrastructure damage and flood risks—will likely undermine production in the upcoming harvest season (October–December 2025). Improved security and access in high producing areas such as Al Jazirah, Sennar and central Khartoum, coupled with favourable agroclimatic forecasts and plans to supply agricultural inputs, will potentially offer favourable conditions for farmers and livestock herders.²¹ However, the benefits will only materialise towards the end of the year, and, as experienced last year, may be undermined by extensive damage to irrigation infrastructure caused by conflict, coupled with insufficient resources for their rehabilitation and maintenance.

A delayed onset of rainfall has been observed in Southern Darfur and Southern Kordofan.²² While a recovery in crop production remains possible, it is contingent upon sufficient precipitation materialising in July. Overall, the outlook for July-August suggests wetter-than-average conditions, although significant variability is expected across different localities and states. In addition, only households that get farming supplies on time and avoid being displaced during the season are likely to benefit. Moreover, the above average rainfall raises the risk of flooding in flood-prone areas, threatening infrastructure, disrupting agriculture, causing displacement, and damaging livelihoods.

Rising acute malnutrition and heightened risk of child mortality

Over half of the 21 SMART nutrition surveys conducted in the aftermath of the harvest indicated Critical (IPC Acute Malnutrition Phase 4) levels of GAM, based on the weight-for-height measurements of children. The highest prevalence of cases of children facing acute malnutrition was recorded in April 2025 in Yasin (East Darfur), at 28.8 percent.²³ Uneven conditions within some localities suggest a high likelihood of pockets where GAM levels might be even higher and possibly approaching or exceeding the Famine threshold. This is a key indicator of a worsening crisis. The very high prevalence of GAM in areas that were not previously identified as highest concern is deeply alarming, especially for areas facing Famine or a risk of Famine where recent data is not available. It should be noted that surveys are planned for July 2025.

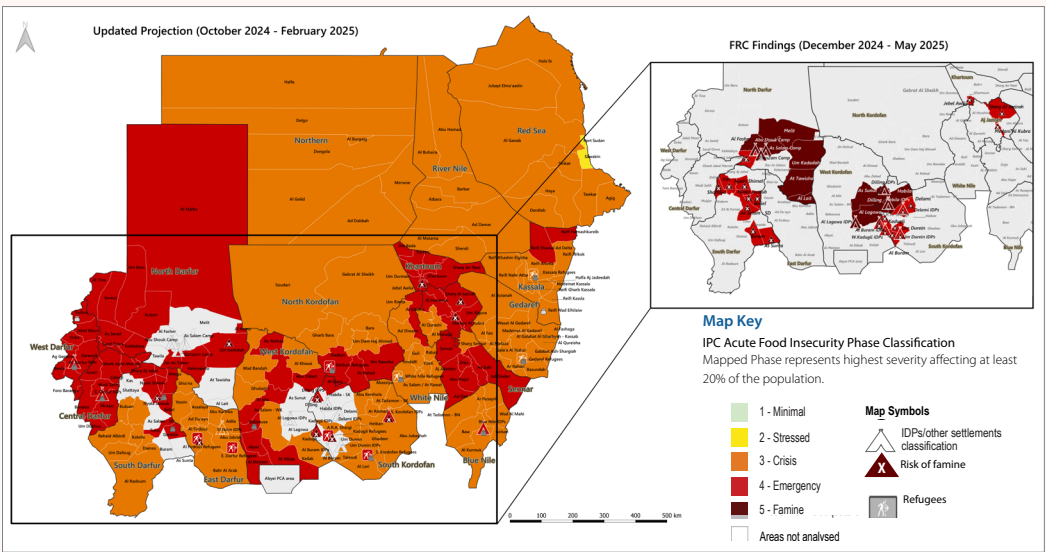
In March 2025, a rapid needs assessment conducted by various non-governmental organisations and government institutions in IDP communities in El Fasher showed a catastrophic situation with 38 percent of children under five years of age suffering from acute malnutrition, based on mid upper-arm circumference measurements.²⁴ Although improved humanitarian access since March 2025 may have helped address some of the nutritional needs, significant concerns persist for many inaccessible areas of El Fasher.

In Khartoum, as of June 2025, 21,000 cases of cholera have been reported, resulting in 388 deaths, with 700 new infections recorded per week. Yet, only about 31 percent of hospitals and 17 percent of primary health centres remain operational to treat affected people.^{25, 26} The outbreak has likely been exacerbated by drone strikes targeting power infrastructure, rendering nearly

80 percent of water systems non-functional and severely impacting communities in Southern Khartoum and Jebel – Awilia.^{27,28,29} Additional cholera hotspots have been identified in South Darfur and West Darfur.³⁰

With acute malnutrition expected to peak between July-October, the combination of declining food stocks, shortages of safe drinking water, deteriorating access to health and nutrition services due to insecurity, impassable roads, and reduced funding, poses a serious risk of further worsening malnutrition. These conditions may also trigger disease outbreaks in the worst-affected localities. This situation could significantly increase the risk of child mortality.

Map 4. Projected IPC Acute Food Insecurity, December 2024. Source: IPC Global Initiative

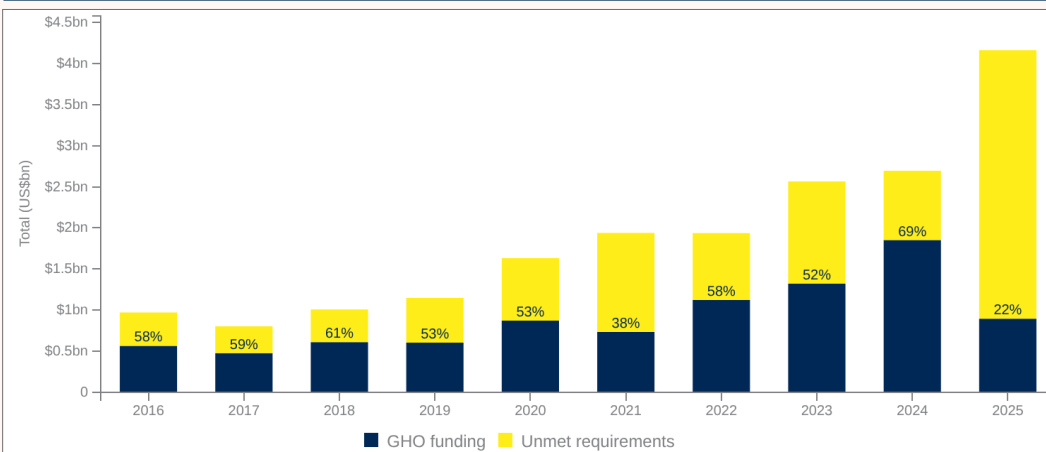


Critical aid programmes affected by access and funding shortages

Despite urgent calls for action, Sudan's Humanitarian Response Plan – which requires USD \$4.1 billion – is only 15 percent funded. Just 19 percent of food and health sector needs and only 5 percent of other critical multi-sector programmes are covered, including WASH, nutrition and shelter.³¹ Current response levels are inadequate to meet people's needs during the lean season. Between January and March 2025, shrinking resources have forced the closure of hundreds of service facilities, including 900 out of the 1,400 community kitchens operated by volunteers from the ERR in urban areas and IDP settlements.^{32,33} Health systems in IDP settlements have also deteriorated, with only 44 percent of sites offering functioning services. In Darfur states only 30–38 percent of services are available.³⁴

Improved access in 2025 allowed for increased humanitarian deliveries compared to 2024. For example, in February, cash transfers were scaled up to reach 1.4 million people in hard-to-reach areas. However, the cash transfer programme has faced challenges due to limited internet access, liquidity shortages, market instability, and reported diversions.³⁵ In May, WFP reported reaching 5.1 million people—the highest since the conflict began—including 1.7 million people located in Famine and risk of Famine areas.³⁶ Around 380,000 people were reached per month between March and April in critical localities of North Darfur. The latest data from June shows an increase in coverage of food assistance in some areas. However, this trend conceals significant disparities within specific localities.³⁷

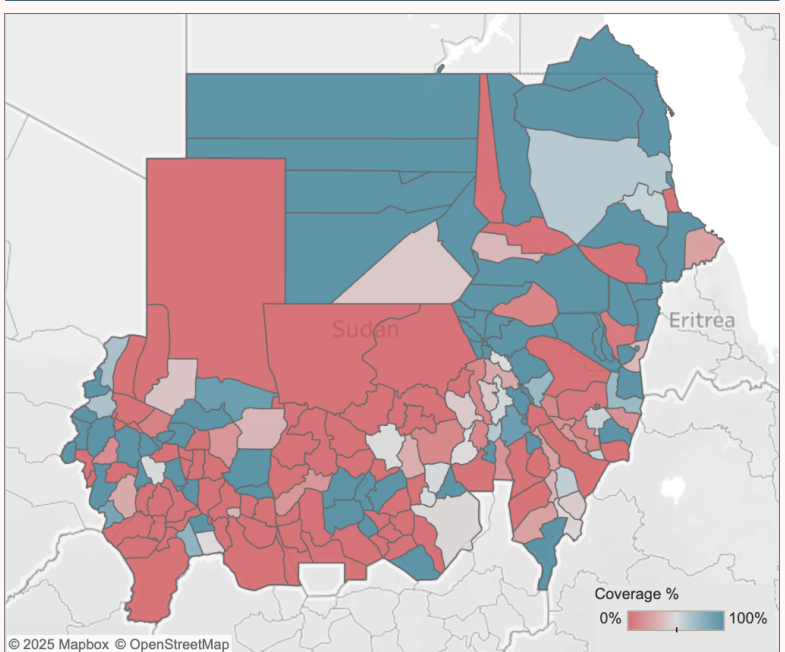
Figure 1. Trends in Coordinated Plan Requirements, Financial Tracking System, Sudan, 7 July 2025. Source: UNOCHA



Despite ongoing efforts, nearly 20 million people facing high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above) remain underserved due to funding gaps and operational constraints, including among the 8.7 million people in IPC Phase 4 (Emergency) and IPC Phase 5 (Catastrophe). Concurrent efforts to support food production continue, with FAO distributing high-quality seeds to almost 750,000 households nationally in preparation of the cropping season.

Since January 2025, the nutrition sector's response to acute malnutrition has been significantly constrained by constant population movements, limited access, bureaucratic impediments, and supply shortages. As a result, of the estimated 70 percent of children admitted for severe acute malnutrition treatment in the most affected localities, only 20 percent of those with medical complications were treated by the end of May. As for moderate acute malnutrition, only 17 percent of the total needs were covered in the same reporting period. Blanket supplementary feeding programmes are similarly constrained, covering only 38 percent of needs.³⁸ Access to essential health services has been severely disrupted in conflict-affected states due to infrastructure damage and the departure of healthcare workers.

Map 5. Gap Analysis - Food Assistance Coverage in Sudan, July 2025. Source: Sudan Food Security & Livelihoods Sector



Note: This map displays actual food assistance coverage against a national target of 8.37 million beneficiaries.

Figure 2. Nutrition treatment coverage in 30 critical priority localities including those in Famine or risk of Famine, May 2025. Source: Sudan Nutrition Sector

Programme	PIN (Jan-May 2025)	Target (Jan-May 2025)	Admissions (Jan-May 2025)	Percentage of Target	GAP (PIN)
Outpatient Therapeutic Programme	71,992	59,915	55,374	92%	23%
Stabilization Centre	10,800	9,988	2,168	22%	80%
Targeted Supplementary Feeding Programme for children under 5	210,561	139,789	34,782	25%	83%
Targeted Supplementary Feeding Programme for Pregnant and Lactating Women	37,950	27,755	5,408	19%	86%
Blanket Supplementary Feeding Programme	587,550	146,886	218,939	149%	63%
Grand Total	320,503	227,459	97,732	43%	70%



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