

# South Kordofan & Blue Nile: Population Movements Fact Sheet



19 May 2014

## The “Decisive Summer” offensive

Fighting between Government forces and the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement – North (SPLM-N) in parts of South Kordofan and Blue Nile intensified in April-May 2014, with the onset of the second stage of the Government of Sudan’s “Decisive Summer” military campaign to end armed rebellions in the country. Led by the Government’s Rapid Support Force (RSF), the offensive on the SPLM-N has resulted in the deterioration of the humanitarian situation with thousands of civilians newly displaced in the region.

## New displacements

The fighting has led to two streams of civilian displacement: some 25,900 people have sought shelter in Government-controlled areas, according to the Government of Sudan’s Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and other aid agencies. This includes some 13,400 newly displaced that have been registered in South Kordofan and another 12,500 newly displaced that have been registered in Blue Nile (the figure in Blue Nile includes some 4,300 who already returned). This is in addition to some 1.2 million people in Government-controlled areas of South Kordofan and Blue Nile who have been affected by conflict that started in 2011 and are targeted for humanitarian assistance in 2014. Many more people appear to have fled further into SPLM-N strongholds, where it is estimated by SPLM-N that 800,000 people were either internally displaced or severely affected by conflict since 2011 (old caseload). SPLM-N has reported that in total an estimated 90,000 people were displaced in South Kordofan alone over the past month. The overall estimated number of newly displaced people is about 116,000, according to aid agencies and the SPLM-N.

**116,000** new IDPs

## No refuge in South Sudan

In the recent past many civilians displaced from SPLM-N areas in South Kordofan have sought shelter and assistance in Yida refugee settlement in South Sudan, but the intensification of conflict in South Sudan has prevented them from doing so on this occasion and displaced civilians are reportedly trapped in SPLM-N areas, with extremely limited humanitarian assistance.

Remarkably, the intensity of the conflict in South Sudan has persuaded some 17,374 South Sudanese to seek shelter in parts of South Kordofan and Blue Nile states, increasing humanitarian needs yet further. The majority of these new arrivals since January 2014 are in Abu Jubeiha and El Leri in South Kordofan (13,713 people), while the remaining 3,661 are in Blue Nile, according to HAC, IOM and the national NGO ASSIST.

**17,300** people arrived from South Sudan since January 2014

## Humanitarian response

The response to these humanitarian needs in the two states comes on top of some 2 million people both in Government and SPLM-N-controlled areas either internally displaced or severely affected by the conflict since 2011, and is hampered by access challenges, capacity limitations and funding shortfalls. UN agencies have not had access to SPLM-N areas for the past three years and are unable to verify the scale of the civilian displacement and the scope of humanitarian needs. Various rounds of negotiations between the Government of Sudan and SPLM-N in Addis Ababa under the auspices of African Union High Implementation Panel (AUHIP) have failed to secure humanitarian access, even for the vaccination of children, in SPLM-N areas.

**In addition to 2,000,000** people affected by conflict since 2011

According to humanitarian organisations, some 20,000 of the newly displaced people, mainly women and children, in Government-controlled areas have received varying degrees and forms of assistance, mainly food and nutrition. This includes 10,178 new IDPs in Rashad town, South Kordofan, sheltering in public schools. In Blue Nile, an estimated 10,000 newly displaced people have received food aid and other assistance.

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**20,000** new IDPs in Government areas  
received some form of aid

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### Access

Humanitarian access for aid organizations in Government areas has improved in South Kordofan over the past ten months, although from a low base. The presence of international staff of aid organisations in Kadugli has increased and several joint assessment and field monitoring missions with the participation of international staff have been undertaken in response to the new crisis. While international NGOs are present in South Kordofan, there are restrictive regulations in terms of their ability to directly implement activities. In Blue Nile, access for international humanitarian organisations is more restricted and the Government has recently re-iterated its intention to complete the exclusion of all international staff from the State.

### Gaps

In Rashad town, the major gap is access to sanitation, with almost 10,000 people without access to safe sanitation as latrines provided are enough for only 200 people. An assessment in Rashad town also identified water shortages, lack of specialist health care and essential drugs, and recommended strengthening of reproductive health services, distribution of hygiene kits and conducting vector control activities to prevent vector-borne diseases in the area. In South Kordofan, implementing partners are compelled to stretch resources to reach more people with limited capacity, with critical gaps remaining in healthcare, reproductive health, water and sanitation. This further hampers an effective response. In Blue Nile, health services are experiencing major challenges. INGOs working in the sector are currently underrepresented and national NGOs are already overstretched. One of the main concerns for humanitarian organisations providing support to new arrivals from South Sudan is the funding shortage. The Sudan part of UNHCR's regional appeal for South Sudanese refugees remains as one of the least funded given the prevailing access limitations as compared to other countries of asylum across the region.

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**5,900** new IDPs in Government areas  
have not received some form of aid

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The South Kordofan's Voluntary Return and Reintegration Commission (VRRRC) reported that by late April 2014 close to 30,000 people had returned to several locations in the Abu Kershola area, South Kordofan from North Kordofan over the past few months. These people fled their homes in April-May 2013 because of fighting between SAF and SPLM-N in and around Abu Kershola. The majority of the returnees were spontaneous, although some returned under the Government-organized return process in March 2014. UNHCR has dispatched non-food relief supplies for some 15,000 of these returnees, while other agencies provided other assistance.

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**30,000** people returned to Abu  
Kershola from North Kordofan

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### Alarming Humanitarian Prospects

Although the humanitarian situation in South Kordofan is potentially catastrophic, it risks being completely overshadowed by the nearby situations in South Sudan, Central African Republic and Darfur. Similarly, the plight of displaced people in Blue Nile is subject to the multiple handicaps of restrictions on access and reporting, limited response capacity and lack of funding. Without imminent solutions in sight to any of these challenges, the prospects for those in need of assistance and protection are grave. Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) reported in its April update that IDPs in SPLM-N-controlled areas of South Kordofan are the most acutely food insecure in Sudan, with emergency (IPC Phase 4) levels of food insecurity expected in the SPLM-N-controlled areas of South Kordofan from June 2014. FEWS NET reports that over 30 per cent of IDPs and poor host communities in the SPLM-N-controlled areas of South Kordofan are likely to experience extreme loss of assets due to very high cereal prices and deteriorating terms of trade. Significant food consumption deficits are expected to contribute to increased prevalence of GAM in these areas, FEWS NET reported.