

Window is closing for humanitarian actors to provide timely response in Sudan and across the region.

NGO Foras in Sudan, Chad, South Sudan and across the region, jointly urge donors to provide urgent additional funding to enable humanitarian response to save lives before it is too late.

Two months on from the outbreak of fighting between Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and Rapid Support Forces (RSF), Sudan's pre-existing humanitarian crisis has become a full-blown catastrophe, pushing an already vulnerable population into a further state of emergency. Hundreds of civilians have been killed and thousands injured across the country. At least 11 humanitarian aid workers have been killed (including UN and NGO staff) and at least 25 NGO offices and warehouses have been looted in Khartoum alone. Approximately 24.7 million people – roughly half of the country's population – are in urgent need of humanitarian assistance and protection. In addition, nearly half a million people, including both Sudanese, returnees and refugees from third countries, have crossed the borders into neighbouring Egypt, Chad, Central African Republic, South Sudan and Ethiopia in search of safety – far exceeding initial projections.

Inside Sudan, civilians have been trapped by fighting, unable to move freely either in search of safety or to find food, water and medicine. In West Darfur civilians report that they are unable to leave their homes to bury the dead who lie in the street after fighting across the Darfur states has taken on an increasing intercommunal dimension. In Khartoum, many people are de facto imprisoned – especially the most vulnerable (e.g. the elderly and persons with disability) due to fears for their safety and security, active conflict, the increasing cost of transportation and closures of roads and bridges. Gender-based violence is pervasive in both areas of conflict and displacement and is on the rise across all facets of the current emergency in Sudan. Millions across the country are without access to food, water, electricity and the most basic services including healthcare.

Those fleeing the country also face a dire situation, encountering long journeys, severe delays at border-crossings, limited infrastructure and increasingly face new bureaucratic impediments that limit their access to asylum. Once they arrive in neighbouring countries, essential services such as water, sanitation and hygiene facilities are limited, increasing the risk of communicable and water-borne diseases. Many refugees and returnees have displaced to areas where they are in imminent danger of being completely cut off from assistance as the rainy season approaches.

Despite the severe bureaucratic, security and logistical challenges, humanitarian organisations both within Sudan and across the region are making tremendous efforts to respond. NGOs across Sudan continue operations across all 18 states, supporting hundreds of health facilities that continue, against the odds, to provide life-saving health and nutrition services to thousands of people every day, in addition to providing cash, food, water and shelter to the millions of people who have been displaced – reaching over 1.8 million people with some form of assistance over the last two months. These efforts, however, are neither sustainable nor scalable without the removal of the current bureaucratic impediments that impede the movement of aid workers and critical supplies both into and throughout the country.

Furthermore, humanitarian resources across the region are being stretched to breaking point. Prior to the 15 April, 15.8 million people were estimated to be in need of emergency assistance in Sudan, and a further 40 million people across Sudan's neighbours. Without additional support, the current conflict in Sudan will worsen the conditions for the most vulnerable across the region, with food and fuel prices across Sudan and neighbouring countries increasing exponentially and pushing millions of people into increased food insecurity. The window to provide timely response is rapidly closing as supplies within Sudan run dry and the rainy season approaches, further increasing access challenges. Without additional funding NGOs and other humanitarian actors will be unable to address the unprecedented new and pre-existing needs across Sudan and the region.

The pledging conference on the 19th June is an opportunity for donors across the world to stand in solidarity with the people of Sudan. NGO Forums across the region are calling on all donors to:

1. **Ensure that the humanitarian appeals in all countries affected by the Sudan crisis are fully funded.** At present less than 17% of the required funding for the humanitarian appeal in Sudan and Regional Refugee Response Plan has been received. Attempts to re-allocate existing funding to meet new needs are grossly insufficient. Additional new funding should be delivered as soon as possible to enable humanitarian response to save lives before it is too late.
2. **Advocate with the Government of Sudan to remove bureaucratic impediments that impede the delivery of assistance to those in need.** NGOs face significant constraints to move staff and supplies into and around Sudan – making the most vulnerable the hardest-to-reach - and border crossings that would allow for the immediate delivery of assistance remain closed. Increased advocacy is required to enable humanitarian actors to urgently reach those in need.
3. **Support neighbouring countries to keep borders open.** Those fleeing Sudan face increasing challenges accessing safety and assistance in neighbouring countries. Donors must increase engagement with neighbouring countries and provide the necessary financial support to keep borders open in line with international obligations and allow those impacted by the conflict to seek safety and access humanitarian assistance on all sides of Sudan's borders.