



IN HER  
OWN  
WORDS

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**Voices of Sudan**

**The Women's Refugee Commission (WRC)** improves the lives and protects the rights of women, children, youth, and other people who are often overlooked, undervalued, and underserved in humanitarian responses to displacement and crises. We work in partnership with displaced communities to research their needs, identify solutions, and advocate for gender-transformative and sustained improvement in humanitarian, development, and displacement policy and practice. Since our founding in 1989, we have been a leading expert on the needs of refugee women, children, and youth and the policies that can protect and empower them. [www.womensrefugeecommission.org](http://www.womensrefugeecommission.org).

**The Sudan Family Planning Association (SFPA)** is dedicated to improving the status of women and closely aligning sexual and reproductive health with development initiatives. SFPA advocates for financial and political support for sexual and reproductive health and rights. During humanitarian situations, SFPA collaborates with partners to provide SRHR services to IDPs and refugees through various health service modalities. SFPA's main mission is to provide high-quality sexual and reproductive health services (SRHS) according to targeted quality standards, focusing on vulnerable groups in areas of poverty, IDPs, refugees, crisis, and lack of SRH services. [www.ippf.org/about-us/member-associations/sudan](http://www.ippf.org/about-us/member-associations/sudan)

**The Gender in Emergencies Group** is helping humanitarians to put gender equality into practice. The GiE Group is a feminist social enterprise dedicated to advancing gender equality in humanitarian action. [www.giegroup.org](http://www.giegroup.org)

## Acknowledgments

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The women whose stories appear in this report are internally displaced in Sudan or are refugees in Chad, Egypt, and Uganda.



# Introduction

The conflict in Sudan that began in April 2023 has had a devastating impact on women and girls. Yet their stories are seldom heard. In this report, the Women’s Refugee Commission (WRC), Sudan Family Planning Association (SFPA), and the Gender in Emergencies Group (GiE) gathered first-hand accounts from more than 20 internally displaced and refugee Sudanese women from all walks of life. Stories were gathered from students, nongovernmental organization (NGO) staff, women leaders, homemakers, mothers and grandmothers, ranging in age from 18 to over 70. In the stories that follow, some women chose to be identified by name and some by initials, while others preferred to remain anonymous. Their stories reflect the huge challenges they face, but also their tremendous strength and resilience.

In the face of violence, exploitation, and separation from family breadwinners, women have had to take on new roles. Often with little or no support, they have started successful small businesses, set up safe spaces for women, and established learning centers for children. Many of the women, however, stressed the need for psychosocial care for themselves and their children. And many talked about the struggles of youth, and the danger of a “lost generation.”

**It is time to listen to Sudanese women; they demand to be heard. To achieve the solutions that Sudanese women seek, we must listen to their lived experiences and partner with them, following their leadership.**

Governments must strengthen the capacity of women-led networks and institutions to enable better communication, political coordination, and collaborative action between Sudanese women and their allies around the world. Donors must increase direct funding to local women- and youth-led organizations and networks. In addition, policies and programs that address the immediate needs of Sudanese women, including young women—protection from violence, access to humanitarian assistance, and livelihoods and psychosocial support—must be funded and prioritized. Governments and donors must invest in young Sudanese women and youth-led organizations, ensuring that they are meaningfully included in official peace negotiations and have access to education and livelihood possibilities.

*“War taught me to be the pillar of the house. The Sudanese woman is the foundation and the head of the family. I love my country”*

**- Anonymous  
Trader/Journalist**



# The Situation in Sudan

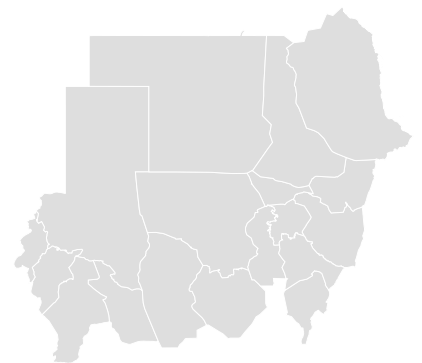
The current situation in Sudan is marked by escalating violence and humanitarian crises following the outbreak of conflict in April 2023. Clashes between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces have led to widespread displacement. According to the [United Nations](#), nearly 11 million people have been displaced internally, while more than 2 million have sought refuge in neighboring countries. The humanitarian response is severely hindered by ongoing violence, limited access to basic services and a deteriorating economy, resulting in a dire need for food, water, and medical assistance for millions of people. Only 51% of the Sudan humanitarian response plan requirements, which lays out plans for [lifesaving and protection assistance](#), have been met.

Women and children are [disproportionately affected](#) by this crisis, facing heightened risks of violence, exploitation, and educational setbacks. The conflict has intensified existing inequalities, making it increasingly difficult for women, especially young women, to engage in [social and political processes](#). Despite these obstacles, [grassroots movements led by women](#) are providing support and bolster resilience within displaced communities.

While women-led organizations are actively coordinating community responses, they receive insufficient funding to provide support proportionate to need—only 1.63% of humanitarian assistance from the [Sudan Humanitarian Fund](#) went to these groups in 2023, less than half the already paltry global average of funding for women-led organizations. Women's participation in humanitarian and political decision-making remains limited in Sudan. Positive developments, such as Sudanese women's involvement in high-level international peace negotiations in Geneva (August 2024) and initiatives like the Sudan Women's Peace Dialogue (July 2024) offer hope, but access to such platforms remains elusive for most Sudanese women.

*"Everything shifted, our social relationships were affected, and our mental state hit rock bottom. We lost our shelter, health, our jobs and salaries, which we relied on for our livelihood. For more than a year and a half, we have had no source of income and haven't found any work. We are now hungry, naked, and barefoot, and we haven't received any support from any organization"*

**- [Badriya, Teacher](#)**



## This Project

The Women's Refugee Commission, the Sudan Family Planning Association, and the Gender in Emergencies Group have united to spotlight the pressing issues facing women in Sudan. At a time when women are lifting their voices globally, we wanted to hear directly from Sudanese women about their experiences. Our storytelling project captures personal narratives and experiences, allowing women to share their challenges and triumphs in their own words.

This project reflects diverse voices—mothers, grandmothers, nurses, teachers, students, and community workers—who all share the burden of care and responsibility in Sudan and in neighboring countries.

The accompanying [scoping report](#) covers the current state of evidence regarding the conflict in Sudan, including how data is being collected, by whom, the methodologies they are using, and how their efforts are contributing to understanding the conflict. We will continue to build on this report to amplify women's voices with continued advocacy efforts for Sudan.

## Key Findings

### 1. Sudanese women are demonstrating immense resilience in the face of crises.

Despite limited resources and difficult circumstances, Sudanese women demonstrate immense resilience and innovation to protect and provide for themselves, their families, and their communities, and are supporting one another. This includes pursuing new livelihoods to generate income, establishing community groups to support the mental health of displaced women, and coordinating creative educational activities with children who are no longer able to attend school.

### 2. No woman was prepared for this war; no woman is protected in this war.

The war in Sudan took many communities by surprise, with women recalling their joyful preparations for Eid festivals when conflict erupted in their neighborhoods. Initially, they thought their displacement would be temporary. But over a year later, the ongoing devastation has brought fear, hunger, and violence. Many have faced multiple displacements and traumatic losses, including the deaths of loved ones, starvation of their children, and the destruction of their homes, livelihoods, and past lives. Women across Sudan are bearing the brunt of this violence.

*"I want to instill beautiful values in the children and help rebuild our country for the next generation. Change starts with women. We hope that mothers teach their sons and daughters good words so they grow up to be beautiful individuals. Based on this, our small communities can flourish, and in turn, Sudan can become even more beautiful."*

**- B.H.F. Government Employee**

*"I, along with the women in general, need psychological support and training in crafts and handwork that can be utilized for livelihood."*

**- Samia, Mother of Four**

*"One of the things I learned from the war is that you can plan for your life, and in a second everything can change and [you have to] start to build everything from scratch"*

**- Ayesha Dabaka, University Student**

*"What happened to me was a very shocking surprise at the end of Ramadan and without any warning. There was heavy gunfire and chaos early in the morning, while we were preparing for Eid."*

**- Badriya, Teacher**

### 3. The war is leading to gender role reversals.

The brutality of war in Sudan has disrupted families, leaving many women to take on new responsibilities as male family members are separated, displaced, or targeted by armed groups. As a result, Sudanese women are increasingly responsible for protecting their families, which includes safeguarding vulnerable individuals like children, the elderly, and those with disabilities. Due to the war, women are often the sole providers in their households, taking on the role of breadwinners in a culture that traditionally emphasized shared caregiving. They are also faced with the difficult task of making critical decisions under extreme circumstances, such as determining when and how to move their families during periods of violence and multiple displacements. Yet, despite taking on leadership roles in their families and communities, Sudanese women continue to be excluded from local, national, and international peace negotiations or governance mechanisms.

### 4. Sudanese women are overwhelmed, under-resourced, and overburdened.

In the face of declining resources and sharply rising needs, Sudanese women consistently expressed how violence, repeated displacements, lack of resources, and growing care responsibilities impacted both their health and the health of their family members, and the often-ignored mental health of women across Sudan. Many of the women we spoke to expressed the lack of support they had received from both national and international institutions, often having to rely on informal family or community networks to meet their basic needs.

*"We also thought about ways to sustain ourselves, so I set up a place to sell zalabia [a type of sweet] in a spot where people gather and have Wi-Fi. There is also a dairy shop where I can sell Zalabia, hoping things will improve. Thankfully, we're managing to get some money to buy basic necessities."*

**- Sabria Mohamed Osman, Psychological Counselor**

*"After five months, the area [of the shelter] was bombed.... We were forced to move again to a nearby safe village, but we returned after the situation calmed down. We had left all our belongings there. After the bombing of the city of Sennar and the worsening of our situation, we were forced to flee to Port Sudan."*

**- Susan, Mother of Six with a Disability**

*"We need clothes and food. The women are complaining about menstrual issues due to lack of nutrition, and we also need all essential women's supplies."*

**- Umm Adel, Widow**

*"I wish organizations would focus on providing health support and especially psychological support. People are suffering. GBV cases are high, and people do not know where to report or receive support. People are adopting harmful coping mechanisms to provide food and prevent themselves from rape."*

**- Tasabeeh, International Organization Employee**



# Recommendations

The women we spoke to shared many common calls for action: they asked for their voices to be listened to in Sudan and beyond; they needed protection from violence for themselves and their families; they demanded safe access to humanitarian aid. Many spoke of their desire to pursue independent, income-generating livelihoods, their need for mental health and psychosocial support, and how urgent education and mental health support is for Sudanese youth.

Drawing on the calls to action by the Sudanese women who shared their stories with us, as well as findings of the scoping report, WRC, SFPFA, and GiE Group collaboratively developed three key recommendations for governments, donors, and humanitarian actors

## 1 Institutionalize the sustained leadership and equal participation of Sudanese women in governance and peace negotiations at local, national, and international levels.

### Sudanese women are taking action and demand to be heard.

**Governments** must **strengthen the capacity of local, national, and international women-led networks and institutions**, to enable better communication, political coordination, and collaborative action between Sudanese women and their allies around the world.

**Humanitarian actors** must **ensure that local women-led organizations are integrated into humanitarian planning and coordination networks** across the region, addressing barriers to participation such as language and safety, and supporting them to play a leading role in shaping accessible and appropriate humanitarian response in Sudan.

**Donors and donor funds** such as the [Sudan Humanitarian Fund](#), must **increase direct funding to local women-led organizations and networks** and ensure that such funding is flexible, rapid, trust-based, and enables the leadership of Sudanese women, and follow the example of the [Coalition for Mutual Aid](#).

**2 Urgently fund the Sudan response and prioritize policy, programs, and funding which address the immediate needs of Sudanese women: protection from violence, access to humanitarian assistance, and livelihoods and psychosocial support.**

**Sudanese women are at breaking point: Their well-being cannot wait another day.**

**Governments and multilateral agencies** must **exert diplomatic pressure** on parties to the conflict to adhere to UN Security Council Resolution 2736 (2024), which demands the protection of civilians and calls for the rapid, safe, unhindered, and sustained passage of humanitarian relief for civilians in need—prioritizing the specific protection needs of women and girls and addressing obstacles to access.

**Humanitarian actors** must **increase programming to deliver essential services** to meet the needs of Sudanese women, including protected access to emergency, chronic, and reproductive healthcare, psychological support, gender-based violence mitigation and response, and livelihoods—working in partnership with women-led organizations to develop safe and responsible programming that protect women and vulnerable groups from negative coping mechanisms.

**Donors** must **immediately fulfill and scale up their funding** pledges to the Sudan particularly increasing funding for the holistic needs of Sudanese women, including psychological support, accessible healthcare, and livelihoods programming.

**3 Urgently invest in education, employment, and leadership pathways for young Sudanese women, to avoid risks of a lost generation.**

**The future of Sudan is under threat.**

*“The youth are the kernel of Sudan. Take care of youth during this war.”*

**- Ayesha Dabaka, University Student**

**Governments** must **invest in the leadership of young Sudanese women**, ensuring that they are meaningfully included in peace negotiations, and must urgently increase visa and refugee pathways, as well as creative and accessible distant learning or training opportunities, working with private sector employers and universities, for young Sudanese women to pursue education, employment, and training in Sudan and beyond.

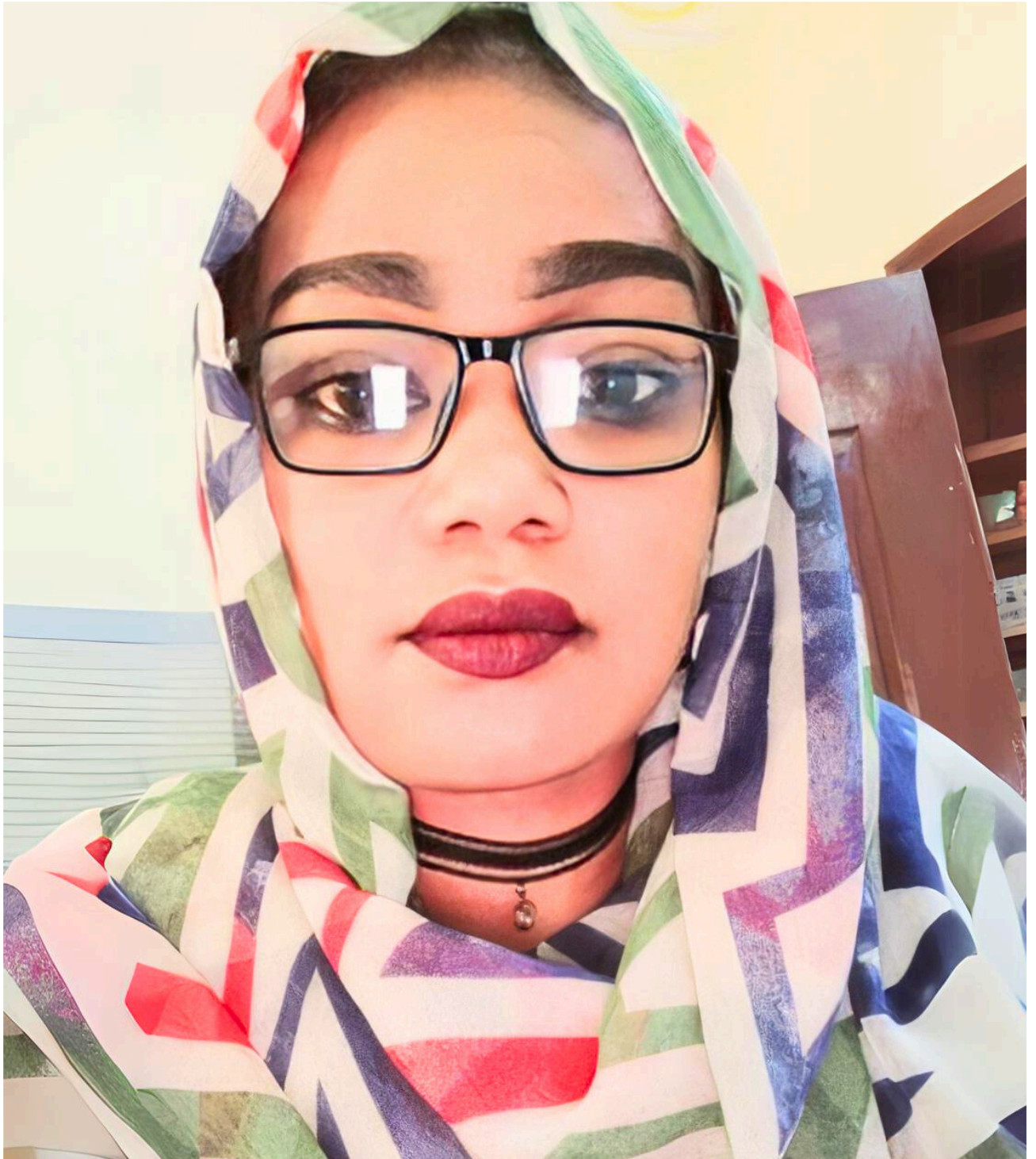
**Humanitarian actors** must **provide sensitive and accessible psychosocial support to young Sudanese women** who are impacted by the trauma of war, and invest in further gender analysis on the impacts of the crisis on young women and girls, using participative and innovative approaches, to inform more accurate policy and programs on the specific needs of young Sudanese women.

**Donors** must **increase funding for youth-led organizations**, and offer scholarship funds, visa pathways, and private partnerships for employment and training, as well as increased humanitarian support for education, training, and livelihoods programs for displaced Young Women in Sudan

# IN HER OWN WORDS

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Voices of Sudan



**TASABEEH**

**International Organization Employee**

*Photo GiE Group*

# TASABEEH

## International Organization Employee

I am *Tasabeeh Abdallah Mahmoud Mohammed* from Hay Khartoum Belil, Nyala city, South Darfur State. I am 27 years old. I work for an international organization. My mother is a deputy principal at an elementary school, and my father is a police officer.

Before the war, my father, mother, and I were responsible for the household income. We shared the responsibility. When the war began in April 2024, it was Ramadan, so we had plenty of food stored. We were still in South Darfur. I was the only one receiving an income after the war. I bought extra food, and we shared it with our neighbors. In our neighborhood, we ate in groups—the men together and the women together. The place we were living at was near the RSF [Rapid Support Forces] camp. We were depending on the food we had because it was dangerous for both women and men to go out of our neighborhood. Women who attempted to go out to the market were either kidnapped or raped. However, men were assassinated, especially men related to police or military. Young men were facing forced conscription. Hence, we were depending on each other to make and provide food for others. This is what we were doing before we got out of Nyala.

We decided to leave Nyala after we had limited access to food and water. They destroyed the water pipes. The northern part of our neighborhood, where we lived, lacked wells, and we depended solely on water pipes. They intentionally targeted areas with access to water and electricity. There were several incidents of men, women, and children being killed because of water. We didn't have water, food, or money to buy anything. In addition, the RSF were searching for officers or their children to bargain with the officers to force them to surrender. My father received an order from his bosses to never go out of the house because his life was in danger. This is when my father decided to get out of Nyala no matter what.

**“Sometimes we remained *eleven hours under the bed* without food because we were afraid. We witnessed blood spread on the floors, fear, and different type of exploitation and we couldn't do anything! The media was not reflecting what was really happening in Darfur.”**

Our neighbor helped us to get out because he had some relations with RSF. In addition, RSF were knocking on doors and if they found women they raped them. One of our neighbors died after she was raped. Some women were kidnapped, and some were raped. They raped women in front of their male family members. They even raped the girls and older women in our neighborhood. They raped women in groups of not less than six or seven men. They came in batches with their cars to rape women. Sometimes they killed the males when they tried to defend their women.

With all this happening, there was no way but to leave! Our neighbor brought a big vehicle in front of his house, and we crawled on the floor to reach our neighbor's front door to enter the vehicle. We didn't take anything except for a few clothing items.

We lay down in our seats so no one could see us. We reached the bus station, and we took a bus to El Fasher, North Darfur. We faced three strikes while traveling on the road. The driver of the bus and a few passengers were injured.

We reached a place called Monwashy, controlled by the RSF, and they took the injured to their mobile clinic. We were so afraid to be killed or raped, but luckily nothing happened, and we reached El Fasher safely. El Fasher was under attack, too. We stayed with my aunt. We were still afraid that the RSF might do the same as they did [in Nyala] to El Fasher and we decided to go to another state. We reached White Nile State.

After three months, our neighbors in Nyala called and said that RSF had broken into our house searching for weapons. My mother decided to go back to Nyala to get the rest of our stuff before the RSF closed the Sinar road because they had reached Sinar. Meanwhile, my father, my sister, my brother, and I decided to go to Libya. The ticket prices were expensive. It was the worst experience I have ever had. My mother reached Nyala and stayed in another neighborhood because our house was being observed all the time. After a while my mother managed to enter the house by looking like a maid. She managed to take some gold items and important documents, but everything else was stolen. She managed to reach us in Libya. With my salary, we managed to provide food. Nevertheless, we couldn't forget about what we have seen in Darfur. Sometimes we remained eleven hours under the bed without food because we were afraid. We witnessed blood spread on the floors, fear, and different type of exploitation and we couldn't do anything! The media was not reflecting what was really happening in Darfur.

**“ [P]eople are suffering from lack of medicine and doctors... I wish organizations would focus on providing health support and especially psychological support. ”**

In Libya, we took my sister's kids to a psychiatrist. My father is still suffering from panic attacks. He still can not process the death of his friends and the amount of blood he saw. We took him to a psychiatrist, but his situation worsened. He still imagines that people are knocking on the door to attack and rape us in front of him. He cannot sleep alone.

We face many financial struggles in Libya. My salary wasn't enough. My brother was in his final year in medicine in Sudan. In Libya, he used to clean others' houses to bring some money to support us. We registered to receive food assistance from "Haftar." In winter, we didn't have enough winter clothes, but our neighbors supported us. My brother managed to receive his certificate from his college in Sudan, and he managed to find a job in Libya. I returned to Port Sudan, Sudan, because our organization demanded everyone to return to Sudan.

I wish the war to stop. We can only fix everything if the war stops. In Nyala, people are suffering from a lack of medicine and doctors. People are poor and they don't have money for doctors. **I wish organizations would focus on providing health support and especially psychological support. People are suffering. GBV cases are high, and people do not know where to report or receive support.** People are adopting harmful coping mechanisms to provide food and protect themselves from rape.



**AYESHA DABAKA**

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University Student

*Photo GiE Group*

# AYESHA DABAKA

## University Student

I am *Ayesha Abdallah Abdalrahman Dabaka*. I am 24 years old. I was born in Nyala city and raised in Salha, durman. I study clinical nutrition, level 3, in Khartoum University. I am currently not officially working, but I volunteer, and I have a side business.

I am a single woman. I don't have a regular income, but my small business has some financial benefits. My father is responsible for all my expenses. A lot of great things were happening in my life before the war, and I have learned many things that contributed to build my awareness and capacity. I started to know what I wanted to do in life. The war has stopped many things that I have started. I was a member of our resistance committee for Salha and part of the service and change committee, too. In college, I was the public relations officer in the Clinical Nutrition Association. I represented the University of Khartoum in the Sudanese Nutritionists Organization. I was also part of 200 young women from Salha chosen by CARE International for leadership trainings and active participation in public, and I received a grant for the "Montada Salha Al-thagafy" project for six months. I was also a member in the "Ma'an" Organization and part of a beautiful program named "Benayat Al-fareeg" that empowers women economically. My life was full of vitality between my work in university and volunteering. I love to improve myself.

The war has had a huge effect on me. My life has totally stopped. I am trying to be resilient, but everything has stopped. This affected me mentally, financially, and socially. Going to a new place where I don't know anyone and thinking when you will be back has a huge effect that till now, I don't feel like the old me with the same strength and energy.

*“One of the things I learned from the war is that you can plan for your life, and in a second, everything can change and [you have to] start to build everything from scratch. If you start from a zero point and fail, try again, fail and try again, but never give up because if you stopped, only you will lose! ... **Whatever bad situation you are in, don't stop. Try your best to continue in any way.**”*

The first place we went to when the war started in Khartoum was Kosty, White Nile State. I had a minor cultural shock because the community wasn't like our community in Khartoum; [it was] very conservative and closed, but we were hoping the war wouldn't last more than a month. After two months staying in Kosty, we decided to start a small business with my sisters. We sold legemat [sweet fritters]. It didn't work, and we changed it to pastries, and they sold well.

I was searching for other jobs to volunteer at a different organization, but they all stated that I need to be a graduate first. I searched for courses to improve myself and I completed an IT course. I registered for a nursing course, but the strike on Madani happened, and we all thought that they were going to strike Kosty next. We figured if we moved to another state in Sudan, it will be a matter of time till they strike it, too, so we decided to move outside Sudan. The best option for us was Chad.



We came to N'djamena, and we faced many obstacles on the road to Chad. We spent 10 days on the road before we reached Chad. We saw things that were indescribable. I thought when I reached Chad, everything will be for the better, and I will be able to do many things. I was happy, but when I settled here, I was shocked! Society was totally different from ours. We thought that Sudan is difficult, with limited opportunities for growth, but here it was more difficult. Women are more persecuted here than in Sudan. Jobs opportunities are limited for women here. I spent the next three to four months lost. At that moment, I was thinking that I needed to start a business, but I was financially incapable of funding any business. However, I managed to start a small business of saboniya [a type of soap that is used for cosmetic purposes]. I distributed it to my neighbors and people near me.

I was searching for a job but had a language barrier because I don't know French! So, I decided to learn French in a French institute. I am trying to cope with the place I am in now, but I am mentally incapable of it. I am trying to tell myself that I have no choice but to cope with this place and its culture but from inside, I am not convinced, so I struggle.

One of the things I learned from the war is that you can plan for your life, and in a second, everything can change and [you have to] start to build everything from scratch. If you start from a zero point and fail, try again, fail and try again, but never give up because if you stopped, only you will lose! Everybody else will be moving forward with their lives. Whatever bad situation you are in, don't stop. Try your best to continue in any way.

*“We are the kernel of Sudan. We are the ones to build Sudan in and for the future, so I wish all parties to take care of youth during this war.”*

The thought that I cannot join my colleagues for my college examination in Sudan has affected me emotionally. The examination centers are only in Sudan, Egypt, UAE, and Saudi Arabia. I tried to request a center in Chad, but the request was declined. At the beginning I was emotional about not joining my friends and losing a year at college, but this is God's plan, and it is for good for sure.

I wish the war to stop because the sense of safety and security is important. We now understand the value of peace and safety. I wish to return to Sudan and to mend it and build to live in peace. I also wish organizations and other national and international platforms to focus on youth because they were the most affected by the war, especially with the closure of schools and universities. We are unemployed and our lives have stopped completely. We are the kernel of Sudan. We are the ones to build Sudan in and for the future, so I wish all parties to take care of youth during this war.

I want to add that most of us need psychological support, especially the ones who saw things that are difficult to describe. I am one of the people who got looted on the road to Chad and at some point, a gun was pointed to my head. I still remember these events and think that at that moment I might have lost my whole family. If organizations worked on war trauma, it would be good.



# ANONYMOUS

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Public Health Worker

# ANONYMOUS

## Public Health Worker

Before the conflict, I lived in Khartoum in the same house with my mother and sister and had a relatively normal life despite the unstable security situation since 2018. We got used to the protests and the harsh economic conditions in Khartoum. My other sister and brother both lived nearby, and I worked in the public health sector.

Nobody expected the war to erupt the way it did. On my way to work, I heard explosions, and my mother called me and said I should return home. We expected the situation to calm down soon thereafter, but it didn't. My brother and other sister's families all joined us at my mother's home because it was located in a relatively safer area. But soon after, we found that most of the residents in the neighborhood started leaving. At the beginning of the conflict, the majority of Khartoum residents fled to Egypt, as it had simplified the processes for receiving Sudanese migrants. When the Rapid Support Forces set up a station in our neighborhood, we decided to flee, especially because of what we heard had happened in Darfur. We knew of people who lost their lives on their route to Ethiopia, so we decided to move to Egypt. I was not in favour of fleeing altogether, but the rest of my family feared staying. I was in complete denial and was so emotional that I could not be of help to my family as they were preparing the paperwork. Luckily, we had money saved at home, which helped us along with members of our extended family to travel from Sudan. Many people did not have such privilege and could not access money—so they had to stay.

**“Our main hope is to return back to Sudan and to feel safe at home once again.”**

On our journey northwards, we slept on the streets and faced challenges with the fixers and drivers who charged people very high rates. After an argument with our driver, we waited days until we could find another one that could drive us across the border to Aswan. We thought that we would only stay in Egypt for a maximum of one month. I thought we could remain in the south in Aswan and told my family we did not need to travel further north to Cairo. At the time, I was still hopeful the situation would improve shortly after, and we would return quickly back to Khartoum. Throughout our journey, I was working remotely, unlike my siblings who took time off from their jobs. In Egypt, we relied on the experience of those that had fled before we did. They helped us plan our journey to Cairo and get settled there.

My mother's health has been severely impacted since the war. We all now are feeling extremely anxious, always worried about our future and our present, the rent, our jobs, and our visas. A friend of mine back in Sudan has been displaced three times so far and also got separated from her children and husband.

At this time, most international NGOs are requiring their local staff to return to their offices in Sudan and are canceling their remote work arrangements. The journey back is very unsafe. We have also lost our homes, and the rent has become very expensive, making it impossible for us to find a new home and go back to working from there. However, I also know many women who have decided to return to Sudan already or, unlike us, have never even left for a safer place since the eruption of violence, so that they could keep their jobs and their incomes. They all carry a lot of financial burden and responsibilities and are separated from their children and families.

As part of my work in the public health sector, I am deeply tied to the situation in Sudan. This makes me feel that while living away I am at least able to help those who were stranded in Sudan. I have recently accepted a job with the headquarters of an international NGO, which makes me feel that I could also make a difference.

I really hope that we will get to peace and that justice will be sought. Our main hope is to return to Sudan and to feel safe at home once again.



**ANONYMOUS**

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Trader/Journalist

# ANONYMOUS

## Trader/Journalist

I am 47 years old, married, and a mother of three boys and two girls in different educational stages. My mother, who suffers from Alzheimer's disease due to her old age, lives with me. I am her only daughter among two brothers.

We were displaced because of the lack of safety in Khartoum. The planes were constantly bombing, and during the chases, they would enter our house.

I lived in my house in a Khartoum neighborhood. I worked in trade and my daughter was a school secretary. I was a journalist and was doing renovations on the house. After the war, I lost my source of income. During the displacement, we couldn't afford the ticket prices. We divided the family into two parts because we couldn't pay for all the tickets. My son went to the shelter center, worked for two weeks, saved money and sent it to us so we could travel and reunite.

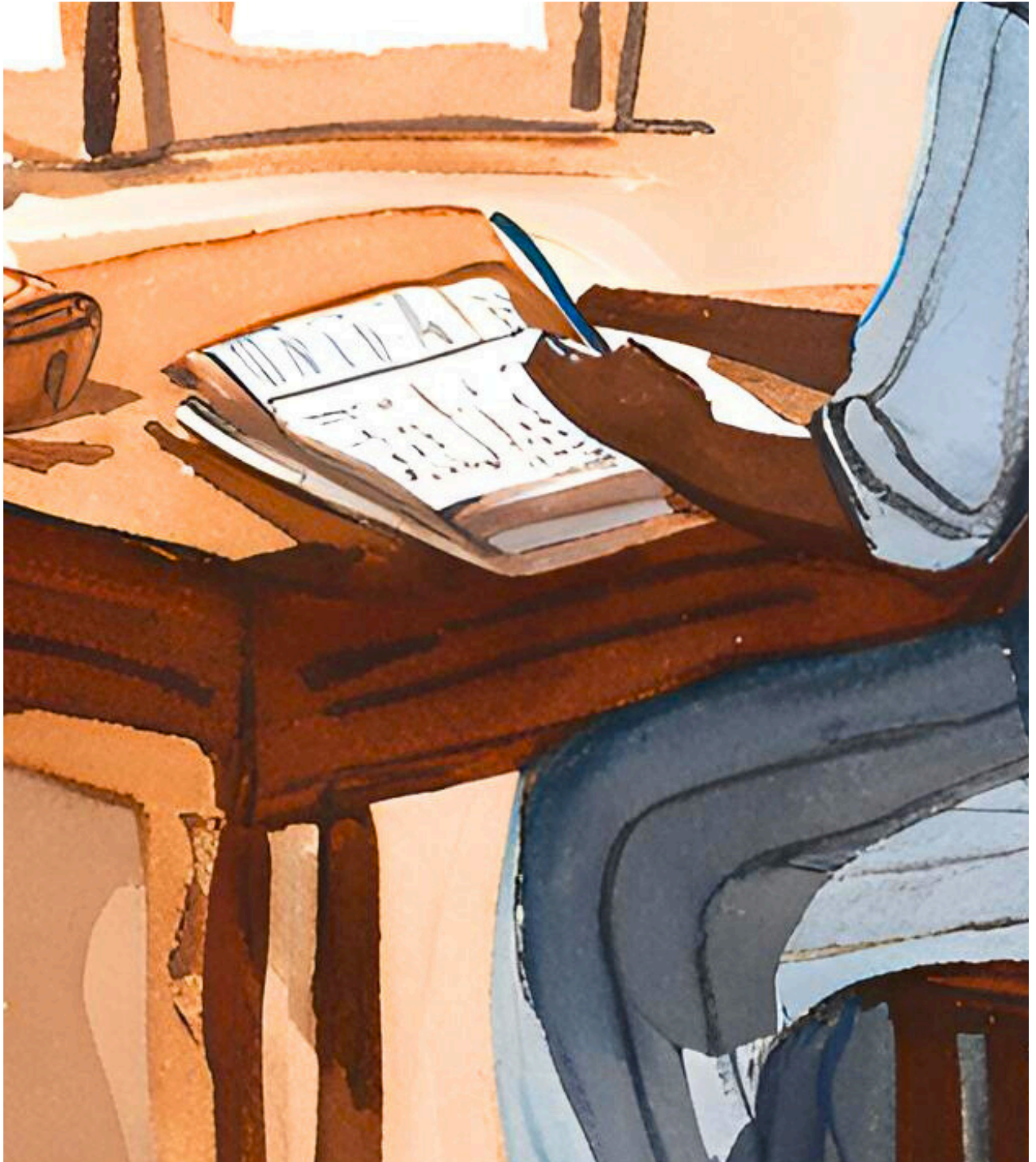
I stayed in the shelter until Eid al-Adha, then moved to the second center and received many services from organizations. However, we feel uncomfortable due to cultural differences and many issues between different age groups. We have lost our previous stability and are suffering from lack of psychological comfort. I want to improve my situation, as I am responsible for my family. My husband suffers from a heart condition and knee stiffness, and my mother is elderly, with limited mobility and vision problems.

*“ War taught me to be the pillar of the house and the Sudanese woman is the foundation and the head of the family. I love my country. ”*

To improve my situation, I am looking for a source of income and a housing opportunity so that I can return to my previous state, even if just by 50 percent. The reason for my displacement was the attack that took place in the neighborhood, with many random shellings and constant gunfire. There were many injuries among the families around us, so we left Khartoum due to a lack of safety.

Many women in the shelter suffer from housing problems due to lack of privacy and the cramped living conditions. I believe that women are strong, but we face many hardships, and we don't have many options. I have a son who developed a psychological condition due to war. He was away when the war began. He is 23 years old and quit his job. My son's situation has affected my mental well-being as a mother, and the moods of all family members have changed. There are also issues in how the father interacts with the children.

War taught me to be the pillar of the house and the Sudanese woman is the foundation and the head of the family. I love my country.



**ANONYMOUS**

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10th Grade Student

# ANONYMOUS

## 10th Grade Student

My name is (L), an Ethiopian refugee in Sudan. I am 20 years old. I am in the tenth grade. We [have] lived in Sudan in Madani [since] early childhood. We went to Ethiopia after the war. From Ethiopia, we came here again (Rakoba camp). While we were in the camp, my mother developed an eye problem while she was working. We tried to treat her here, but we couldn't find a cure. We tried to go to Madani [in Sudan] because my father and brother were working there. We attempted to get her treated there as well, but she was told that she had waited too long and that she wouldn't be able to do anything except outside Sudan. They prescribed glasses, which were expensive. We took a risk and bought them and paid a lot of money. After the war, we arrived in Madani and we all settled in the camp here.

Here in the camp, there are no schools, no work, nothing at all. We're all just sitting around. My mom, dad, my brother, and I tried looking for jobs. We'd go ask around but wouldn't find anything, so we'd just come back.

*“Here in the camp, there are no schools, no work, nothing at all. We're all just sitting around. My mom, dad, my brother and I tried looking for jobs. We'd go ask around but wouldn't find anything, so we'd just come back.”*

My mother had high blood pressure and needed treatment. She went to the hospital and was told that the medicine had run out. We have no money because no one in the family is working.

Until now, my younger siblings have a problem with their studies. We have been here for four years and they keep repeating the same grade. For example, my little sister is in the first grade but hasn't advanced. They just go back and forth without any progress; they don't have books or anything. We have a problem with education and expenses, especially when my mother wants to buy household necessities.

Another problem is that the water in the camp is far from the house. We walk half an hour and I can't carry the jug and bring it home due to my health condition. I have kidney disease, my father is elderly, and my mother is sick, so it's just my brother. We don't have money to buy water from the cart.

Because of all the stress and worries, my mother developed high blood pressure as a result of the problems we have here in the camp.





**SAMIA**

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Mother of Four

# SAMIA

## Mother of Four

I was born in Port Sudan. I am 42 years old. I moved to the city of Al-Abyad in North Kordofan after marriage and lived there until the beginning of the war.

Before April 15, life was normal. We never imagined that something like this would happen. We were safe and secure. The war started in the Matar neighborhood. We saw people heading south. Then we learned that the army and the Rapid Support Forces had clashed.

When the war broke out, we imagined that it would be a momentary event that would quickly come to an end. Sunday morning around 8:00 AM, the shelling began and a shell fell in front of our house, injuring my six-year-old daughter. We took her to the hospital, where they decided she needed emergency surgery, but there were no available doctors in the emergency room until we called them. She underwent surgery in the afternoon. In the evening, her father asked the doctor about her condition and the reason for the delay. The doctor told him that they would attempt to revive her for half an hour; if she didn't respond, he would offer his condolences. Unfortunately, they announced her passing shortly after that. The shell had damaged her kidney, spleen, and intestines on the right side. She was my only daughter, and she had three older brothers. I stayed ten days at my aunt's house. I couldn't go back home. My brothers and sisters were in Madani and Khartoum. I was alone. Then I returned home with my husband and children. My husband went out to the neighbors. I stayed at home with my younger son who was scared because he witnessed his sister's injury.

*“I, along with the women in general, need psychological support and training in crafts and handwork that can be utilized for livelihood. The war has affected everyone. I pray to God for peace and security to prevail in the country.”*

I heard the sound of a speeding Rapid Support Forces vehicle and told my son that they were here, but not to be afraid. We hid in the storeroom and after a few moments I heard their voices in the courtyard. I closed the storeroom door. I told him, “They have entered. Don't be afraid.” They called me by my name, Samia. (They probably knew from the neighbors.) I looked through the door hole opening and saw them carrying my phone. One of them saw our footprints. They knew that we were in the storeroom. They knocked on the storeroom door and one of them told the other, “If you don't open it, I will shoot.”

I opened the door. He hit me and said, “You are hiding.” I told him that I didn't hide, but we were afraid of the sounds of the bullets. They hit me again and asked me if my husband was cooperating with the army or not. I told them no, and they told my son to stand facing the wall.

Then they left, and I followed them, only to find that they had taken my husband with them in the pickup truck. We didn't hear anything about him for 27 days. They demanded a ransom of one million Sudanese pounds. I communicated with my brothers by phone. We paid the required amount. After his release, he was in a terrible condition; there wasn't a part of his body without wounds or signs of beating. I feared he would die. I stayed with him for treatment while we heard the sounds of gunfire and skirmishes for six months.

After that, I decided to leave with my children to my family in Madani. On the way we faced hardships. The bus was mostly filled with women and children. We encountered armed groups who demanded money. We were forced to pay them. We finally reached the city of Madani and then made our way to the city of Port Sudan.

In Port Sudan, I felt safe, but the psychological toll and the haunting memories of war still linger. We become anxious at the slightest sound. In Port Sudan, I stayed with one of my relatives for a while. I am now in a displacement shelter with my sisters who have fled from Madani and Khartoum. Thank God, I receive support from my brothers and my husband, who is still in El-Obeid.

I, along with the women in general, need psychological support and training in crafts and handwork that can be utilized for livelihood. The war has affected everyone. I pray to God for peace and security to prevail in the country.



**LUBNA**

University Student

*Photo GiE Group*

# LUBNA

## University Student

My name is Lubna Ahmed Hussein. I am a student of architecture and planning at Sudan University of Science and Technology. I live in Omdurman Salha. I am currently volunteering as a teacher in a school here in Salha, and I am still studying online. I am 23 years old.

I haven't moved out from Salha to anywhere else. I only had to move once to Althawra, Karary (from a Rapid Support Forces (RSF)-controlled region to the military region) to attend my college examination.

Before the war, I was still living with my family in Salha, a student, and I worked as a volunteer in different places.

The war has rearranged all of us or all the Sudanese who went through the war in Sudan in particular. I became more mature and conscious. The state of deprivation from things that I used to have such as safety and normal life, and then the basic necessities of life such as water, electricity, food, let me know the importance of having the basic necessities of life and I rearranged my priorities.

The war has added years to my age; before the war I was 22 and now I feel like I carry the experience of a retired person. The war has made me change my perspective about Salha's society because I wasn't staying in Salha a lot. I return home at night. Staying in Salha more now has made me know different people and deal with different social classes and become closer to them. I felt there are many concepts that need to be changed in Salha because Salha community is closer to a rural community. I felt if I am here, at this time, at this crisis, then I am here for a reason. I could have been locked anywhere else but since I am here, it means there is a message or a purpose I must achieve at this time. So, I started to think how to make our lives better.

*“The majority of women in Salha are unemployed or housewives. We started to think about creating a space to discuss different issues and topics and most people are sitting in their house doing nothing anyway! We started to conduct workshops on different topics and provided a space for women to share their thoughts.”*

The majority of women in Salha are unemployed or housewives. We started to think about creating a space to discuss different issues and topics and most people are sitting in their house doing nothing anyway! We started to conduct workshops on different topics and provided a space for women to share their thoughts. Before this, there was the idea of reopening the school. The idea has started from a woman who has a four-year-old child. She was thinking if they were living a normal life, her daughter would have gone to kindergarten by now. There is no kindergarten, no education, no government! The woman

started to think that her daughter might grow up illiterate, so she suggested to us (young women) to use the empty kindergarten to teach others. We discussed it together and thought that the generations that were supposed to enter kindergarten at that moment would grow up illiterate, so we thought why not! We started with a few students. We started teaching them how to read and write, and we do recreation activities to get them out of the war traumas and to turn their thoughts and attention away from war, weapons, and strikes. I started to notice that the children in the street instead of playing with their normal toys, they started to create weapons from wood or straw, which is very dangerous. It was very common! All terminologies were becoming war terminologies! When we opened the school, we noticed changes in children's attitudes. The conversations shifted from playing with weapons to whether you have completed your homework or not! Their ideas became more relevant to their age group.

We also targeted mothers with activities to make them more capable of facing this current crisis stronger because they affect the community, particularly children, more. We provided two types of activities: one for young women and one for mothers. From our discussions with young women, there were many topics that they were unaware of, such as building confidence, harmful social norms, child marriage. The young women also pick and research the topics of their interest to discuss with us. For mothers, most of their interests are around building practical skills, such as sewing. They are participating in high numbers in sewing classes now and they have organized themselves and created a cash-lending association. They are now using these classes to discuss other topics related to adolescents.

*“Once we lose the sense of a country, we understand the importance of having a place to belong to. We have high energy to help, build, and provide the best in our roles. We discovered our abilities. I am happy that within this current crisis, we managed to create beautiful things.”*

All these activities are conducted in the school. The school has become a social center where we conduct different activities. Every month, we organize a day where we invite all the children's parents, and we show plays that discuss different topics. Sometimes we organize art galleries where we teach the children how to use what we taught them in classes in a practical way. We also conduct regular psychological support sessions facilitated by my sister "Lamiaa." She studied psychology as a major. We are currently planning to conduct one for adolescents. One of the days was also dedicated as a traditional day to show Sudanese multiple cultures and enhancing social cohesion. The students and we, the teachers, participated in the event and we divided ourselves to represent four groups: East Sudan, Central Sudan, West Sudan, and North Sudan. We made a gallery to show traditional tools and information from these areas. It was open to everyone in the community and each area presented a cultural dance from their area.

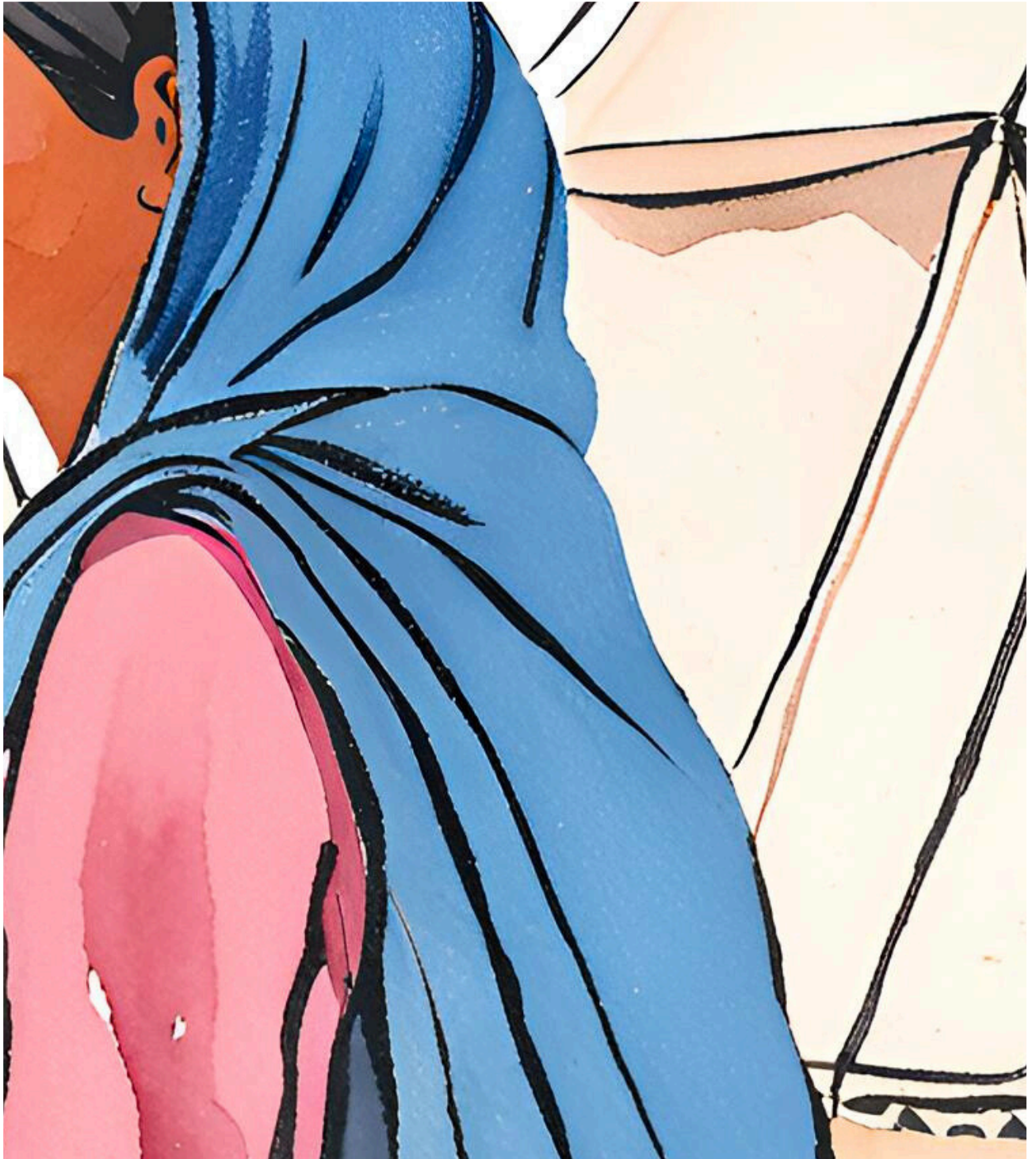
I started all these activities after January 2024. Before that, I was just trying to take care of my mental health. I had insomnia. I couldn't sleep well. It was a difficult time for me. I even

searched for a psychologist to support me. To release all these thoughts, I started to write. I also read books about mental health. I was trying to keep myself busy. When we had internet network, before it was disconnected, I was using the internet to learn different skills because I know emptiness is deadly. I was trying to avoid thinking about the situation we were currently in to avoid feeling bad. I tried to learn Spanish, and improve my English. I was also reading about my engineering major. When I started these activities, I started to feel that life has a meaning and purpose, and I can create impact in others' lives. This sense of purpose made me able to face difficult times in Salha where there were multiple strikes a day. It made me feel I want to live to help others. The community feedback around our work in the school gave a sense of accomplishment and that I achieved something big.

Everyone in Salha was affected by the war. We became more productive and tried to create our own farms and soaps. There are some negative changes where voices that promote racial discrimination have increased, but in general, the positive changes are more. All we want, once the war stops, is to be more productive than now.

I am currently part of a project called "Howama Ma'mariya," whose objective is to teach others about Sudanese architecture. We are trying to create the first Sudanese architecture magazine to teach people about architecture.

The last thing I want to say that all Sudanese became more helpful. Once we lose the sense of a country, we understand the importance of having a place to belong to. We have high energy to help, build, and provide the best in our roles. We discovered our abilities. I am happy that within this current crisis, we managed to create beautiful things. We just need to the war to stop to impact more lives.



**RANIA**

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Humanitarian Worker



# RANIA

## Humanitarian Worker

I am 38 years old and originally from South Kordofan, but have left since the beginning of this conflict. I work as a humanitarian worker at an international nongovernmental organization and now live as a refugee in Uganda along with my four children. Our displacement journey started on 17 June 2023 because I feared for my children with the clashes and detentions on the rise. The WFP [World Food Programme] had a safe security room in South Kordofan, which people could use in case of escalation, but it didn't accept children. This was the moment when I decided I must leave with my children even if this meant I might leave my job. After all, I work for my children.

The journey westwards and northwards was filled with checkpoints and we heard of sexual and physical violence occurring on the way. I decided to travel via the mountains because I felt it was a safer route for us. I baked some pastries for us thinking our journey will not take more than a day. I had to pay our driver 300,000 Sudanese pounds (US \$500), which is much higher than what it would usually cost. Our driver used to speak to the security at the checkpoints to let us pass. We had an accident on the way and my youngest boy broke his arm. I couldn't find a hospital to help so I used pieces of clothes to help hold it firm. On the way, I ran out of food for my children and had to look for water. I did not feel safe. I kept our money in the back pocket of my youngest boy because I thought he would not be searched at checkpoints. I always thought about what would happen to me or to my daughter. We slept on the streets. I used to stay up all night to protect myself and children. I told my children this is a decision we took, and we cannot do anything but rely on God to protect us.

*“Many women also face harassment and blackmail on a daily basis and they have become extremely vulnerable. But they don't only need financial support. They also need psychological and mental support because of the pressure they have to endure.”*

The journey was very scary. In our first stop in the mountainous area, we learned how to hide in narrow tunnels to protect ourselves from the air strikes. It was the first time for me to witness air strikes. A man that we met on the way showed my children how to hide properly in the tunnels to stay safe. We spent five days travelling until we reached a village where we were picked up by a truck belonging to a humanitarian NGO that drove us to Haban, where we stayed until September. Then I carried my journey with my children until we reached Kampala [Uganda] because I felt I would be able to carry out my job from there. It was a difficult journey, but I do thank God because our situation is much better than others'. I stayed at a refugee camp for a while. It did not offer us appropriate shelter and the tents could not protect us from the rain. My children were also getting sick often and the health services were not adequate.

Before the conflict, I was the breadwinner and paid for our children's education and they relied on me for support. Many Sudanese women were carrying the financial responsibilities of their families and lost it when violence escalated. They also lost their husbands or brothers and had to relocate to Uganda, where living expenses are very high. In Sudan, we were never used to living without their male family members. Women are burdened and do not speak up. Many women also face harassment and blackmail on a daily basis, and they have become extremely vulnerable. But they don't only need financial support. They also need psychological and mental support because of the pressure they have to endure. The children also have become more aggressive, and they are somehow broken. The stories they tell each other have changed a lot. Now they speak about our displacement journey and recall the fighting they have seen on our way.

I haven't lost my job, so I became financially responsible for my extended family, too. I was able to work remotely for a whole year. Sometimes I ask myself why I have to carry this burden alone. But then I tell myself that my situation is still much better than that of many other people. But now, my employer needs me to return to Sudan in October. I can't secure a job or a work permit in Uganda. I will return because I don't want to lose my job. My life is now stable here, but my whole family depends on me. I will leave my children and husband behind because I want my children to go to school. I really hope to find a safe place to stay when I go back. I also hope to be strong enough for my children to live a dignified life and to have an impact on the lives of other women.



**IKHLAS**

Women's Rights Activist

*Photo GiE Group*

# IKHLAS

## Women's Rights Activist

I am 42 years old and lived in Umm Durman, Khartoum, before the conflict. I am originally an agricultural engineer but have turned into a women's rights activist. I have moved to the north with my two children since the conflict and now we live in Dongola in the Northern State.

Ten days after the eruption of violence, it was Eid El Fitr and so I decided to travel to the north with my children where my extended family lived to spend this time with them. My husband travelled to the White Nile State where his extended family lived. We thought it was going to be just a temporary situation and that we were going to return shortly thereafter. It has been more than 18 months since then. We only took very little money and jewelry with us. The mobile networks were very weak and the communication with the rest of the family was very challenging. My children miss their father. He is unable to join us here because the route is very long and dangerous. The income of my husband is transferred to my account and so now he has to work a second job to support himself there in the White Nile state.

*“ Most of the displaced people we work with are women and children... Sudanese women need to gain control over their lives and the power to make decisions. Harassment and abuse, which are very common, can be deterred when women are stronger, empowered, and have access to adequate and dignified livelihood opportunities. ”*

I started humanitarian and volunteer work to help me overcome the situation mentally and psychologically. Helping others helped me tremendously. My work in development and civic engagement before the conflict assisted me in creating partnerships and undertaking needs assessments for effective community service. I decided there was a need to set up a branch for our NGO in the North Sudan state. We now have partnerships with nongovernmental organizations and state institutions in support of displaced communities from all of Sudan living in the camps. We led an activity that supported children to establish a music and arts troupe, which I am very happy with. The children get time to play, have a meal, and regain a sense of community to help them deal with the trauma and displacement they have been through. Other activities we engaged in included protection awareness raising, psychosocial support, referrals, livelihoods, and legal assistance for those that faced harassment or abuse. We also supported families with livelihood activities in the agriculture and livestock sectors, which I had completed my master's and PhD degrees in.

I have also struggled with my children staying at home and not going to school. All children in the community were suffering, not only my children. The children had no place to go to and many became very aggressive. I led an advocacy campaign with the local councils to reopen the schools across the state. I argued how the whole situation of the state would improve if schools opened up. The schools have now resumed operations. We have also collaborated with some schools and offered training for the teachers.

I feel that I would not have been able to accomplish such change in the lives of so many people if I had not relocated to Umm Durman. Most of the displaced people we work with are women and children. Many women within the affected communities are overburdened with responsibilities and have lost their husbands and fathers or had to leave them behind to seek safety and protection. Sudanese women need to gain control over their lives and the power to make decisions. Harassment and abuse, which are very common, can be deterred when women are stronger, empowered, and have access to adequate and dignified livelihood opportunities.

I want to make sure the voices of the Sudanese women are heard, those that are harassed, those that have limited livelihood opportunities, and those whose children have missed years of school. I really hope that we get access to avenues to share their voices and dreams.



**ANONYMOUS**

Student

Photo SFPA

# ANONYMOUS

## Student

I am 18 years old. We used to live in Khartoum in very comfortable conditions, thank God. We used to lead a good life, with my family consisting of my mother and father. My mother was a teacher, and my father was a pharmacist. Our life was stable, each of us had their own job and their life was going normally. But after the war started, the world turned upside down, and problems began to appear on every side. We stayed locked in the house for ten days, hungry, and unable to get out. The food at home was running out day after day, and life became more difficult than we could imagine.

We used to eat the few things left in the house; one day we would find something to eat, and the next day we wouldn't. Ten days and the Rapid Support Forces were stationed in front of the house. There was no way for us to get out or even to move. When the siege intensified, we decided to get out in an unexpected way. We climbed through the neighbors' wall, which was an adventure in itself. My mom had some money hidden, and my dad was at work at the time and we didn't know what happened to him.

*“After the war started, the world turned upside down, and problems began to appear on every side. We stayed locked in the house for ten days, hungry, and unable to get out. The food at home was running out day after day, and life became more difficult than we could imagine.”*

We left Khartoum and headed towards Kosti, in a journey that was full of fatigue and hardship. The Rapid Support Forces stopped us on the road many times, and we suffered hunger, thirst, and exhaustion for three days. Three days later, we arrived in Kosti. We stayed there for two days resting and trying to find a way to move around. After that, we went to Madani, where there were new strikes. So, we decided to move to Kassala.

After two days we arrived in Kassala, thanks to the help of the Red Crescent, who helped us reach the shelter, which was a school. We stayed in the school, but life was not easy. We were not comfortable in that place, and we did not even have money for our expenses. Ever since we left Khartoum and until this moment, we don't know where my father is, and we haven't received any news about him. We later learned that he was detained by the Rapid Support Forces, but we didn't know how he was.

My mother started to work at a restaurant in Kassala so we could make a living. She would work day by day and would get three thousand pounds [\$5] a day. That was barely enough for simple food.

I have a vision for the future, and I hope that life would get back to the way it was before the war. I hope that my mother's financial situation would improve, we would hear good news about my father, return home in Khartoum, and complete my studies.



**SUAAD AHMED**

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**National Organization Employee**

*Photo GiE Group*



# SUAAD AHMED

## National Organization Employee

I am Suaad Ahmed from West Darfur State. I am currently a refugee in the Adra camp in Chad. I am 30 years old, a Bahri University graduate, in archeology. I am married. I was living in Khartoum but then I moved to Al-jinina in West Darfur State after my marriage. I was a volunteer in many organizations and different initiatives. I was working in a national organization called "Markz Al-hiwar Al-mosdatam." Both my husband and I were contributing to the household income.

At the beginning of the war, I was in Al-jinina. I lost all connection with my family, where I live, and our neighbors in Khartoum. It was Ramadan. All I wanted to know is how is family doing? Did they go out from Khartoum or not?

Then the war spread to Al-jinina. I have never experienced war before. I thought the Military and RSF [Rapid Support Forces] are going to fight together and that is it! But the war transitioned to a racial war. The color of your skin defined who you were standing with. Even if you are neutral and don't belong to any party, you were still classified based on your skin color. A lot of people died because of this. Al-jinina experienced a lot of youth death. A few of my colleagues and neighbors have died. Our community has divided to Arab group and "Zurga" Group. They classified people based on how they looked whether they were from Arab tribes or "Masaleet" tribe. This was my challenge. I face a huge challenge protecting my husband and a lot of young men who came from Khartoum and were working in remote locations in my house in Al-jinina. Men had no choice but to either carry a weapon and join a party or to be violated by one of parties based on how he looks.

**“ Sudanese women can do anything; are able to hold any position; are able to do any type of business; are able to be mothers; are able to express anything and to do everything. ”**

Al-jinina was filled with chaos; everyone was carrying a weapon; all ages. Women suffered a lot of challenges to protect their children and males in their households. Women were the only ones able to move. We were all trying as women to hide our men. Sometimes when there is any type of inspection by RSF to search for men and kill them, I hide men in my household under the bed. I was the one who talked to and faced these forces. Women were the only ones able to go to the market or see what is going on in the streets. All I was thinking about at that time was to keep the people in my household safe.

We had no solution but to move to the refugee camp in Adra, Chad. To me it was a new place. This is my first time in Chad. When we first came, some refugees were staying in schools, some didn't have a place to stay. We faced a challenge to find food and water. When we got more settled, we were thinking about how to generate an income. We faced many challenges to keep up Chad's laws and regulations, being accepted by community, how to forget what we have seen in Al-jinina, and how reconnect with our families in Sudan.

Eighty percent of my family was still in Khartoum and I have to gather myself to be strong and think about finding a job and regular day-to-day activities. I still have nightmares about Al-jinina. How can I forget all these things that I have seen? Before the war, the humanitarian organizations made huge efforts to build social cohesion in Al-jinina. But when the war started, the police and native administrations distributed weapons to civilians. Everybody in Al-jinina is involved in the exacerbated tension in Al-jinina.

Adra was filled with mosquitos, so we faced a lot of diseases when we first came. The most dangerous type of malaria existed in Adra. My husband and I got malaria. I returned to Al-jinina to get the rest of our stuff from our house, and I returned to the camp. The living conditions in camp weren't suitable to settle in so we decided to move close to the locals' neighborhood. We rented a house. It was a "Kurnok"; a house smaller than a room with a roof made of local materials.

My husband tried to return to the market. He was a well-known used-clothes merchant selling "gugu." He received a loan from other merchants, and he started to work again in the cloth market. I started to search again for a job in the organizations to support Sudanese in Adra Camp, but the Chad government didn't allow Sudanese national organizations to operate in the camp. However, there were few initiatives funded privately to build a hospital. Then organizations came to the camp and started distributing food to the refugees. A few of my colleagues have moved to Kampala, Uganda, and initiated a few projects. I have collected some data from the camp, but it was dangerous because no one allowed it to happen. Even our native administration did not allow data collection from the camp. I took some videos that documented the violations that happened in the camp and in Al-jinina. I still don't feel settled in Chad; however, we are still trying to start from scratch. I am trying to cope with Adra's community and know I am famous in Adra. Everyone knows me.

This war has taught me the value of peace and safety. Also innovation; anyone can be innovative and think differently. Through all the struggles I have faced, I still gathered the pieces left in me and managed to move forward and cope. I also benefited by knowing about different cultures. The parties fighting now in Sudan, if you sit with their local affiliated people in Al-jinina, you will see how different they are from what is shown in Facebook. They are welcoming and peaceful. I also learned that family is the most important thing. These are the things that I learned from the war.

After the war, I wish women have a stronger voice and to give women more opportunities to participate in public freely. Sudanese women can do anything; are able to hold any position; are able to do any type of business; are able to be mothers; are able to express anything and to do everything.

Women are suffering in the camp. They need nutrition support. They suffer from lack of food security. Women also need safe spaces to speak and discuss their challenges and to share their stories. They need a psychologist available at the safe space to provide support to women. Women need psychological support, or these war traumas will be carried over to their children. We need to address this before it becomes a disaster for children and young people in the future by carrying all this hatred.



*“I have an amputated leg. I struggled to move from one place to another during the war.”*

## IMAN

### Midwife and Widow

My name is Iman Mystafa Mohammed. I am from Omdurman, Al-Eskan. We suffered a lot in this war. Our things were looted from our house. We came to Egypt with the help of smugglers. We are struggling in Egypt, too, because rent prices are high. We don't know whether to remain in Egypt or return to Sudan!

I have three children. I am a widow. I have an amputated leg. I struggled to move from one place to another during the war. Now, I don't have a stable source of income. I depend on relatives who send us money from abroad. My medicines are expensive. I have high blood pressure and diabetes. With my physical disability, I was still working as a midwife even after the war in Khartoum. I moved around using a "karo" (a donkey carriage), but I stopped after a while because people didn't have money to pay me. I cannot work as a midwife in Egypt. That would be very difficult for me. I also used to work in the military, so I still receive a pension, but it stopped after the war.

I hope there are different income-generating projects for women. We can sew or make ice cream from home.

I want to return to Sudan because I think it will be easier to get food with my neighbors. Omdurman is still under constant strikes, but we still want to go back.

Unless the war stops, the situation cannot become better.



# BADRIYA

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Teacher

Photo SFPA

# BADRIYA

## Teacher

I am a Sudanese citizen from the city of El Fasher. What happened to me was a very shocking surprise at the end of Ramadan and without any warning. There was heavy gunfire and chaos early in the morning, while we were preparing for Eid. The eyes of our children were filled with joy as we baked. When the sounds of gunfire increased, we went out into the street to find out what was happening.

We found people running everywhere. Our house was close to the command area. We saw smoke rising in the direction of the army command. We stood in front of our houses while the women rushed inside.

It was my first-time witnessing war like this; it created a new reality for us, as we had no experience with war. The gunfire continued throughout the day and into the night. At the time of iftar [meal to break the fast], we only had water and a few basic things to eat because the gunfire was everywhere, falling like rain into every house and every street. We couldn't even step outside. Our closest neighbor's house was destroyed by a shell. The shelling was brutal in south El Fasher, and it became violent with no place to go for refuge. There was no mercy anywhere.

*“ We lost our shelter, health, our jobs and salaries, which we relied on for our livelihood. For more than a year and a half, we have had no source of income and haven't found any work. ”*

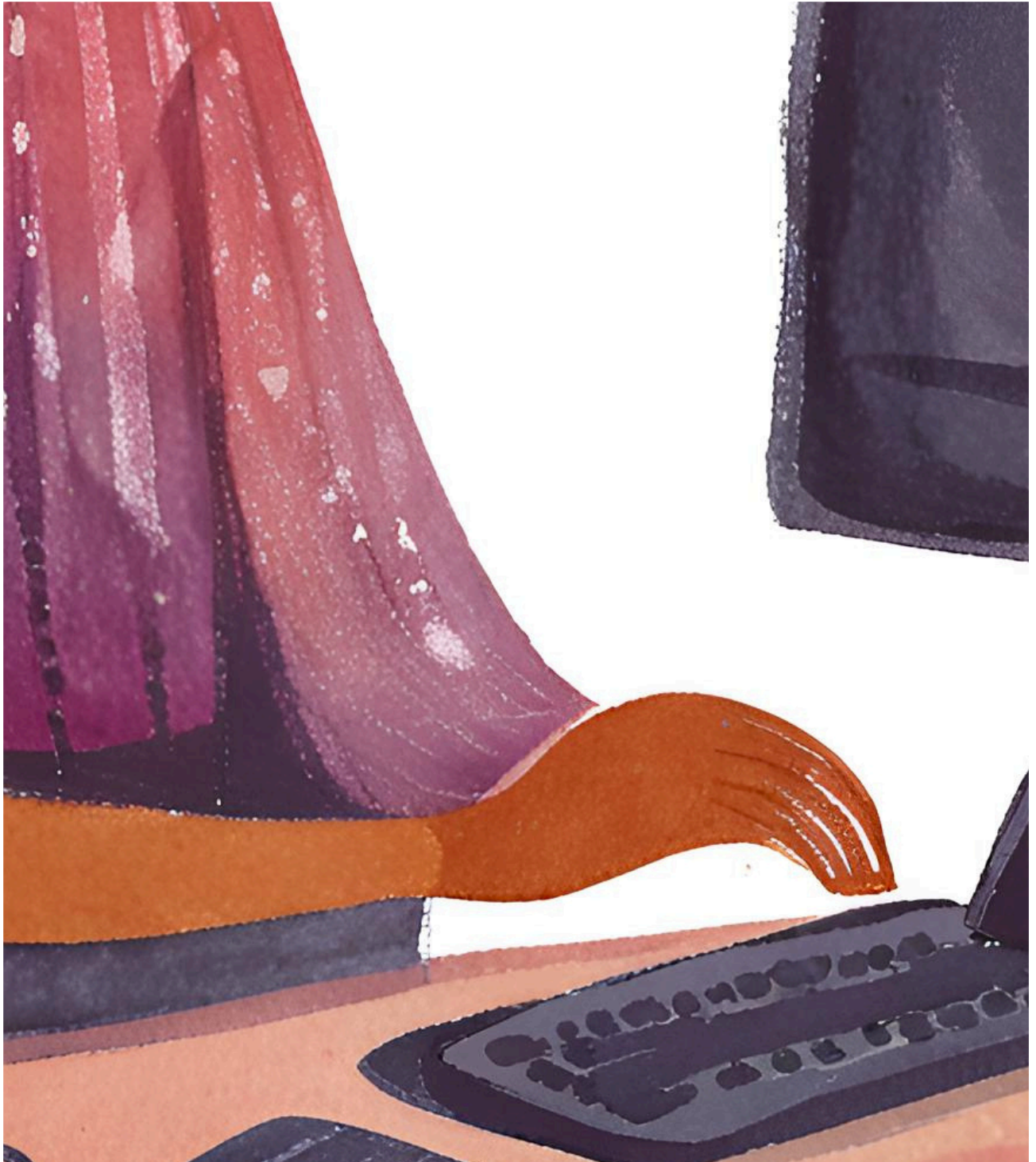
As night fell, before the pre-dawn meal, we received a call instructing us to leave our houses for the north of the city. Since my mother is elderly, we couldn't leave at that moment. Then we realized that there was a serious problem—both the army and the [Rapid] Support Forces were in the capital and across all states, leaving us, as citizens, uncertain about our fate. On the second day we found bullets and blood everywhere, with bodies lying in the streets. In our neighbor's house, we couldn't even bury the martyrs.

We moved to south El Fasher because it was safer at that time, but then we had to move to the Shuqra area as the war intensified in south El Fasher. *During this period, we lost everything—food, drink, clothing, and shelter.*

After these events, many changes occurred in our lives. Everything shifted, our social relationships were affected, and our mental state hit rock bottom. We lost our shelter, health, our jobs and salaries, which we relied on for our livelihood. For more than a year and a half, we have had no source of income and haven't found any work. We are now hungry, naked, and barefoot, and we haven't received any support from any organization. I am now in a safe place in Tawilah locality, but the feeling of war and insecurity still lingers.

In our current situation, we tried to adapt to the new reality. As a teacher, I trained in workshops held at schools on how to provide psychological support. I provided support for my sisters in the shelters on how to adapt to this new life. I also raised awareness about the environmental sanitation and how to make the most of our time by creating low-cost Bedouin handicrafts. Additionally, we started planting vegetables like molokhia [jute mallow] for sale, as well as tamlik plants and some herbs that can be used as animal feed, which have financial benefits.

Thank God the situation is better now since we are away from conflict zones and gunfire.



**B.H.F**

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Government Employee

# B.H.F

## Government Employee

I am B.H.F. from Nyala, South Darfur. I was a government employee, living in my father's house with my two sisters and my father in the northern part, Al-Matar neighborhood. I am 30 years old and single. My brothers are married and live north of Nyala.

I had irrigation projects, and we were happy, taking care of my father's needs. My married sister would come and bring her children to my father, and our neighbor who is retired would come and help with my sister's children. We would return at the end of the day and our life was organized. My sister's children were going to their schools, and I had a busy life as an employee. I had my own projects, and life was comfortable. I am someone who serves my community, earning a lawful income, and was happy with both my public and private work. I was happy even though I was not married, but thank God I lived with my father, brothers, and sisters, and I was content.

On Saturday, the war broke out in Nyala. I heard gunfire while I was in the market and ran into my friend there, who told me that we should return to our houses. I returned home and the sound of gunfire was continuous, loud, and extremely terrifying. The Matar district became a center for the Rapid Support Forces, with their vehicles surrounding us with repair workshops nearby.

*“I want to instill beautiful values in the children and help rebuild our country for the next generation. Change starts with women.”*

The network was cut off, and we couldn't get any news about our family in the southern part of the city. We were trapped in our homes for two months, unable to go out due to the heavy presence of snipers, gunfire, and shelling. The city and the neighborhood began to empty out, and eventually, only four houses remained occupied, mostly by families.

The Rapid Support Forces started forcibly recruiting the young men, threatening them. Their families urged them to leave Nyala. After a few days, we couldn't even go out to get food. One day I decided to go to find something for the kids to eat. A member of the Rapid Support Forces was standing at the end of the street holding his weapon for no apparent reason. He leaned over and raised his weapon and began firing ammunition for a long time, while I was stuck against the wall, expecting a bullet to hit me at any moment. I returned home safely, thank God, without anything, and we locked the door. We forbade the children from going outside.

At any moment we would see and hear the explosions, and it became very difficult for us to endure. My father, who suffers from high blood pressure and epilepsy, ran out of his medication. The stress had a significant impact on both adults and children. We were four women, my elderly father, and my sister's children. We started thinking about leaving the city. We offered our household items for sale but couldn't find buyers easily because everyone was fleeing Nyala.



My sister has a colleague who studied with her at the university in El Obeid, North Kordofan. We contacted her and she welcomed us warmly. We traveled during the fall, which made the journey from Nyala to Ad-Daein challenging, as the rain was not the only difficulty we faced. But from Ad-Daein to El Obeid, we faced checkpoints where the Rapid Support Forces robbed us and subjected us to verbal harassment. We lost everything we had.

Our acquaintances in El Obeid welcomed us, and after four days, we rented a house for three months, but we struggled to pay the rent. Afterward, we moved to the Rashideen School shelter in Karima 14. There were no aids from organizations, and we had no food. But once, a kind person brought us a meal of lentils. My father had malaria and an epilepsy episode. We found a tuk-tuk driver who took us to the hospital. My father was hospitalized and needed tests but couldn't afford them. The tuk-tuk driver was patient with us until I managed to earn some money and paid him.

*“ I tried to work a lot, but the economic situation in the city is extremely difficult because of the war. We faced many difficulties. Many people helped us, but there were also some who treated us poorly. The security committee transferred all the people living in the schools to one camp, saying it was going to reopen the schools. ”*

May God be merciful to us, and thank God. Thank God, despite all the hardships of war, we ended up in another place and drew closer to God. We met many kind people whom we are very grateful for, but we also encountered some who treated us poorly. May God guide them and forgive them. My sister's children get upset when they are called "internally displaced people," but we try to comfort them. I hope women like us don't treat us poorly.

My wishes for my future are that this war comes to an end and that my current situation changes. I hope to fill the emptiness inside me and to improve our circumstances. I want to instill beautiful values in the children and help rebuild our country for the next generation. Change starts with women. We hope that mothers teach their sons and daughters good words so they grow up to be beautiful individuals. Based on this, our small communities can flourish, and in turn, Sudan can become even more beautiful.



## UMM ADEL

### Widow

I am 43 years old, from Khartoum Al-Azhari, a widow and a mother of three children.

Before the war, I didn't work. Following my husband's death, my brothers and my husband's brothers became my family and the breadwinners for my children. I have diabetes and I use mixed insulin, but I don't have a fridge to store it.

Sometimes I have to leave it with neighbors or keep it in an ice pack, but it often spoils. My diabetes and its complications led to the amputation of my left leg two years ago. Thankfully, I received a lot of financial support from my relatives back then, and the situation was better.

On the day the war broke out, I was waiting to receive a permanent prosthetic limb from a factory in the Burri area, which had become very difficult to reach because of the war. After a while, I heard that the factory had been destroyed. Six months later, I was tired of using a wheelchair, I decided to try to reach the factory. I went with my son and my neighbor. We struggled to get there, only to find it completely empty except for some dogs. Fortunately, I found the trial prosthetic I had used before, with my name on it. It's not ideal, but it's better than the wheelchair, so I took it and used it for a month.

***“We need clothes and food. The women are complaining about menstrual issues due to lack of nutrition, and we also need all essential women's supplies.”***

I decided to go to Port Sudan in hopes of finding support from charitable people for a permanent prosthetic. I left Khartoum with my young son, who also suffers from a congenital loss of two vertebrae and now experiences involuntary urination. He needs diapers, but it's become difficult to provide them. I sold falafel during Ramadan to support him, and people have come to love it and ask for it regularly.

We moved from Khartoum and after seven days we arrived in Port Sudan. I struggled a lot on the way, facing difficulties with movement, eating, and using the bathroom. I stayed in a shelter while waiting for organizations to hear my story and my need for a prosthetic. Then, a charitable woman visited us, took my prosthetic bill, paid it, and after some time, I received the prosthetic. Thank God, I am in a better situation now.

We need clothes and food. The women are complaining about menstrual issues due to lack of nutrition, and we also need all essential women's supplies. The war has affected everyone, and most of the women here are without their husbands—some have died from shelling, while others had to stay in war zones to protect their homes. The burden of raising and caring for the children falls on the women, which is challenging in the shelters.



**SABRIA MOHAMED OSMAN**

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**Psychological Counselor**

*Photo SFPA*

# SABRIA MOHAMED OSMAN

## Psychological Counselor

I am Sabria Mohamed Osman from El Fasher and I am now displaced in Tawila locality. I used to work as a psychological counselor at the Sudanese Family Planning Association in North Darfur.

The war affected me grievously. It was painful and brought significant changes to my life. My story is strange and sad. The war started on the 26th day of Ramadan. At the beginning of the conflict, we heard the sounds of gunfire and chaos. I was living with my grandmother, when my brothers came running and said that my mother was shot in the main market. We did not know what was happening. We went out during Ramadan, running in the streets searching for her. We looked for my mother and did not find her, even in El Fasher hospitals.

The war escalated quickly, with chaos and sounds of shelling. After extreme hardships, we finally found her in the emergency room of El Fasher Hospital. The scene was unimaginable, people injured and dead, blood on the ground as we walked through. Thank God, we found my mother. They provided her with first aid and stopped the bleeding. The bullet had hit her thigh. At the same time, while we were in the emergency room, there was gunfire breaking out nearby. We tried to ask the doctors if my mother's condition was stable because we wanted to take her home, we were worried about what could happen next. We managed to take her home from the emergency room. The next day, there was an announcement for people to leave El Fasher. We did not even know that there was a conflict between the Sudanese army and the Rapid Support Forces.

*“There were people protesting because someone from their group had been killed. We thought it was just a demonstration or something similar. Until the second and third day, we didn't know that there was a war.”*

We left at 3:00 AM because we heard there would be airstrikes, and people were advised to head north. We walked to the peace camp and arrived at 8:00 AM, covering the distance on foot. We split up and walked on foot. My mother was injured, and we had my grandmother with us. We managed to get them into a car and took them to my uncle's house, which was a bit farther away. We stayed for two days and then returned home, but each time the shelling got worse, and the situation deteriorated further.

After two or three days, it stabilized a bit, but then the bombardment intensified again. A shell fell on our house injuring my sister's two children (Mohi El-Din and Moaza). The girl's injury was minor, but the boy's injury was very severe. His right leg, from the hip to the toes, was completely shattered, just the bone was left. We all feared that they would have to amputate his leg. But thanks be to God, two operations were performed on him, and they put plates in his leg. He had a fracture in the bone, but now, thank God, he can walk again. Praise be to God Almighty. When the shell fell, the house caught on fire and it destroyed everything in the house. Fortunately, people took risks and helped everyone in the house escape, but the fire consumed the house, and many fled with nothing.

After that, we were transferred to the hospital and spent a month there with the injured, while some stayed with my aunt in southern El Fasher. From there, the Rapid Support Forces tried again to put the hospital out of service. They bombed the hospital from the north and the south and the hospital courtyard. The doctors said that patients in stable condition should leave the hospital because it had become a target. After we left, they came in, raided it, stole from the pharmacy, and destroyed the operating room.

We left the hospital and went to my aunt's house. My aunt's house is known by everyone in north El Fasher. We all went to my aunt's house in south El Fasher, which **turned into a large group of more than eight or nine families**. From there, we split up. Some stayed in my aunt's house, and some went to the shelters in the schools in south El Fasher. After I made sure that my sister's children were getting better, my mother and her children went to school, and my grandmother, my other aunt, and I stayed in my aunt's house.

After that, we still didn't settle and were displaced again. This time, we were displaced to the far south, to a place called Umm al-Qura, at my uncle's house. We didn't stay long there, just two or three days, as people kept moving forward with the [Rapid] Support [Forces]. From there, everyone decided to move; this time we encountered something new called "Bankak," and if you fell into that, it would be the end for you. The army was protecting us, but we didn't want anything else.

*“ I've realized that it's not necessary to be an employee or live in an ideal environment; with determination and perseverance, a person can survive anywhere, at any time. ”*

In the end, all the people decided to go to Tawilah locality, a safe place, and the movements that existed were completely neutral, neither with the [Rapid] Support [Forces] nor with the army, and they were protecting the people. So, we moved to the locality. My mother's people split up and went to a place called Qaloo Qaryat Sagheera. My grandmother and I went to Tawilah locality. If anything happened, my grandmother is a big thing, we couldn't run with her because we didn't have the means, so we ended up in the Tawilah locality.

Before we got to the Tawilah locality, my brother Ahmed was injured when he was in the army. A shell fell on him while he was leaving the shelter at the Ittihad School, and heading to the Command. He was injured in the back, close to the spinal cord, but he was fine. Thankfully he's okay now, thank God.

We split into three families. The young boys are still at school in El Fasher, my mother and her children are in Qolo, and my grandmother and I are in the Tawilah locality. Thank God, we stay in touch daily through the network, we check on each other and ask if everything is okay. We're managing, and we pray that things continue to ease for us.

After that, I arrived at Tawilah locality, lost everything and my job. I used to work for the Sudanese Family Planning Association, and I came here without work, stayed with my uncle, and some families were living with him. It was the rainy season, and there wasn't much space.

We built a temporary shelter for ourselves at my grandfather's house and made a cover for it to stay dry. After that, my uncle helped us, and I volunteered at a hospital here. They have a psychological and social support office that I visit three times a week.

“We also thought about ways to sustain ourselves, so I set up a place to sell zalabia [a type of sweet] in a spot where people gather and have Wi-Fi. There is also a dairy shop where I can sell zalabia, hoping things will improve. Thankfully, we're managing to get some money to buy basic necessities.”

My uncle who helped us in El Fasher, the [Rapid] Support [Forces] took him away and he has been missing since the third day of Eid al-Adha, and we haven't heard from him since. We pray for his safe return and thank God for everything we have. Also, the Rapid Support Forces were targeting any young man or soldier, even the retired soldiers. They also targeted displaced children in the market, forcing them to carry ammunition for them—this was at the beginning of the war.

The situation has changed a lot; our lives have turned 80 or even 100 degrees, but with determination and persistence, a person tries to survive. This is something that comes from God and we cannot change it. When a person is satisfied with what he has been given, he will be able to live. As Aisha said, when we go to the center or the hospital here, we make a difference, and I get to know new colleagues.

Being in a situation like this and being able to provide support to someone who is worse off is a blessing. We visit shelters, spend time with people, and share laughter. We also do some cleaning in the shelters around where we live, clearing away weeds and trash, especially since it's the rainy season. Thank God, things are going well with the zalabia I'm making.

I've realized that it's not necessary to be an employee or live in an ideal environment; with determination and perseverance, a person can survive anywhere, at any time.

Thank you very much. The only thing I want is for God to make peace prevail and for us, the three families, to be united in one place as we were, my family, my mother and her children, my sister, and my uncle, may God free him, and also bring us together with my other uncle in El Fasher in good health.



# ANONYMOUS

## Farmer

I am in my twenties from a village near Haj Abdullah in Al-Jazirah. My father passed away, may God have mercy on him. We are staying at home, with my mother and my younger brother. I have a married sister who used to live in Khartoum, and my brothers are married and live in separate houses from us.

After the Khartoum attack, my sister and her children left Khartoum and came to live with us. After the attack on Madani, not long after, the Rapid Support Forces entered our village. I saw them stealing cars and anything of value from all the houses around us and the market.

After four days they entered our village, entered our house, searched the whole house and took all our money and gold. On the fifth day, my mother decided that we all needed to leave. There was no means of transportation, and we walked on foot for hours until we found a nearby village and rested for a day at a relative's house.

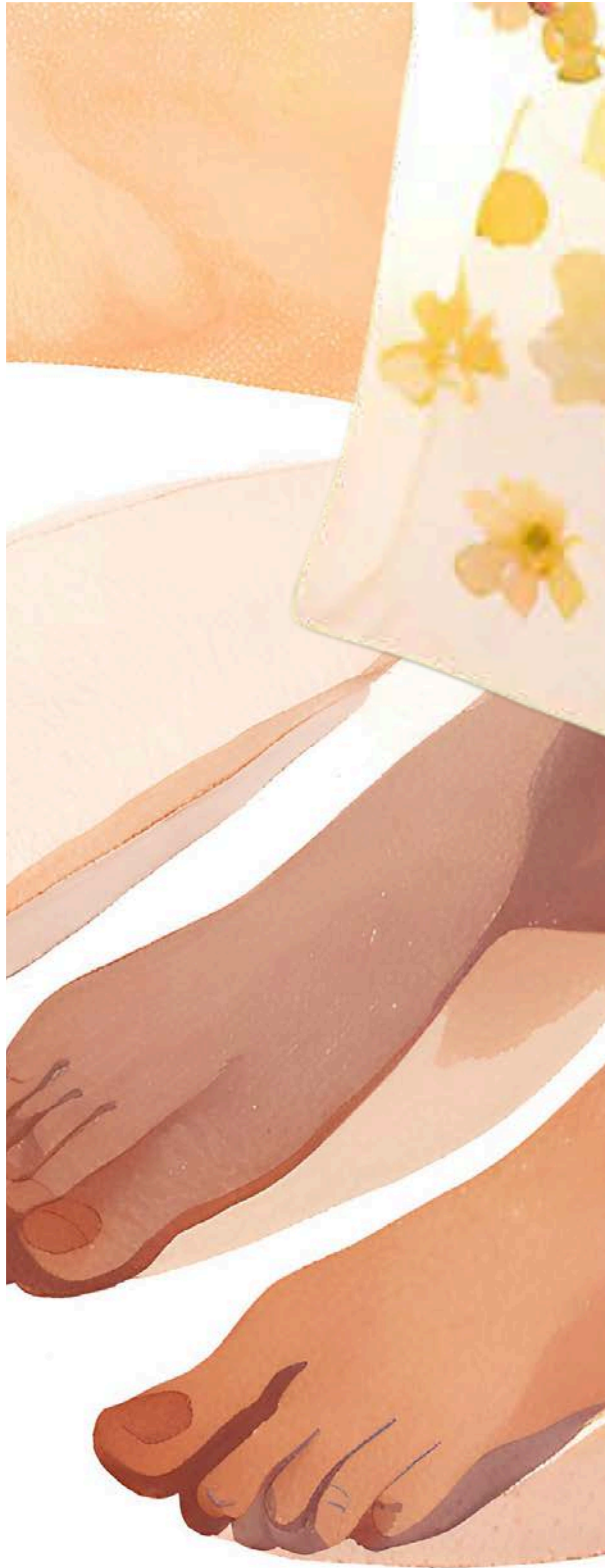
*“ Thank God we're here and don't hear the sounds of gunfire. I hope our country returns to being better than it was, and that we can go back to our farming and our pastures.”*

The next day, we continued on foot to the edge of the forest. We stayed there until the evening and noticed many vehicles stored there. My brother suggested that after resting a bit, we should leave the forest to find a boat. As soon as we left the forest, the aircraft bombed. Thank God, our Lord saved us from the strike. When we reached the boat area, we found people who had been there for two days. There was a registration for crossing based on the order of arrival. We registered our names, my mother, my sister, my brothers, and my sister's children. One of my sister's children was a child with a heart condition.

The cold was severe, and we could not sleep because of the cold and hunger. By the next day in the afternoon, we found a small fishing boat that could only carry three people at a time.

We had to remain very still, because even the slightest movement could tip the boat over in the water. After we crossed, we went to a village in east Al-Jazirah, where the locals welcomed us warmly, and we stayed with them. We ate and then we moved on foot to a village in the east of Sennar where my mother's relatives live. We stayed with them for two months until the attack on Sinja began. Then we immediately moved with the people to the shelter centers in Damazin.

Thank God we're here and don't hear the sounds of gunfire. I hope our country returns to being better than it was, and that we can go back to our farming and our pastures.



## MAMA A

### Elderly woman

Mama A. is now in a shelter in Damazin. She got married in 1961 AD and lived in Madinah. She has three daughters and two sons, all of whom are university graduates. She was living with her family in Madinah, her sisters' families were around her, and her family was safe. She said:

*“ I had a severe visual impairment, and I could not move my legs without the help of my children. ”*

“We were under the tree in our house yard when we heard heavy shooting, bullets and shells. My son said we should get out of the city. As soon as we were about to get into the car, a man came to us and said get out of the car. My son said to him, ‘My mother is blind and can’t move unless we carry her.’ Then I heard the sound of a gun being loaded and I said to them, ‘Get me out and let him take the car.’ My son helped me out of the car and sat me down on a chair in the street.

“After they took the car, the guard told me that they took the car and many things from the house. He left me with the house residents and went to hire a truck to take us all.

“Thank God, they were able to lift me into the larger vehicle and we traveled for a long time until we reached Singaln Singa, where we rented a house. The attack happened there, we were forced to flee to Damazin and ended up staying in a shelter.”





Photo SFPA

*“I was pregnant when the war broke out and we moved to the White Nile... We rode a lorry, and for three days on the road I had labor pains. I gave birth in the street and had a hemorrhage.”*

**H.H.**

### Pregnant While Fleeing

I am H.H., 38 years old, married, thank God. Before the war, I lived in Bahri, in the Kadro area, and I had seven children. My husband was self-employed (whitewasher).

I was pregnant when the war broke out and we moved to the White Nile. I didn't know anyone there. We rode a lorry, and for three days on the road I had labor pains. I gave birth in the street and had a hemorrhage. I was taken to Al-Qatana Hospital. The lorry owner and the people traveling with us were waiting for me to give birth. I left the hospital and continued with them to Kosti.

When we arrived in Kosti, we were received in a shelter center in Abu Sharif, Ezz El-Din Center. I had a little girl who suffered from severe anemia. Before the war in Khartoum, she used to get blood. Now I don't have money for movement and treatment.

After the war and childbirth, I fell ill and was diagnosed with diabetes and high blood pressure. The newborn girl suffered from a hole in her heart that was discovered in one of the follow-ups at the mobile clinic inside the shelter center. Now she has been transferred to the Kosti Cardiac Center, and she needs an operation. The girl is now one year old.

I hope to be funded so that I can start a business project that will allow me to provide treatment, food, clothing, and a visit to a cardiologist.



# ANONYMOUS

## University Student

I am 19 years old. I used to live in Mayo district, in Madani. Thank God, we were living in comfort; my father and brothers were working, and I was studying at the university.

On the day of the attack, we heard gunfire and ran out of our houses. They deceived us, saying the army had repelled the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). We returned home, and then we learned that the army had left the city, and the RSF filled the city. We couldn't leave our house for three very difficult days.

After that, my father said we should leave the city, so we walked 45 kilometers on foot from Madani to Al-Shokaba. Then we got on a Dafar Jambo and traveled a few kilometers. Then the Janjaweed stopped us at a checkpoint, got the men and the youth out, made them stand, insulted them, beat them, humiliated them, and made them lie on the ground, telling them to stand and sit down, and they whipped them.

*“ [A] Janjaweed came and took off my niqab and insisted on searching me. He said that I was carrying something. He touched my chest from the inside and started feeling my body in a bad way. ”*

We were in the truck, they came in, searched us, and stole our cell phones and our money. There was an elderly woman who had a gold bracelet on her wrist; they took it from her.

I was wearing a niqab, and a Janjaweed came and took off my niqab and insisted on searching me. He said that I was carrying something. He touched my chest from the inside and started feeling my body in a bad way.

*I was terrified and cried saying, “ I am not carrying anything.”  
He told me, “ Shut up, you (bad word). I can search you more than that.”*

When I kept quiet, a man came and said, “Okay, let's go. They have nothing.” After the ordeal, we arrived in Sennar. We had two days of rest with our family, but we were afraid we wouldn't be safe in Sennar, so we moved again to Damazin. Now, thank God, we live in ashelter, and my brothers and father work in agriculture.



## ANONYMOUS

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## Teacher and Designer

*Photo SFPA*

# ANONYMOUS

## Teacher and Designer

I am a mother of four, displaced from Khartoum, and I am 40 years old. I have special needs, I have a motor disability. Before the war, I played the role of both mother and father, because I had been separated from my husband six years earlier. I have a 21-year-old daughter studying nursing. She has one year left to graduate. My eldest son is 18 years old and is studying engineering. I have a daughter in the second year of high school, and a little boy who is supposed to be in the fourth grade.

“ *One of the negative things that the war left in my life was that I lost my shop, which I had opened, where I used to make food for students. I lost my job.* ”

I got married at a young age and did not complete my studies. However, after marriage I went back to school, attended the Sudan Open University and studied English. But I was not able to complete my studies. However, I worked by that certificate. I taught English language courses at private schools. I was also a clothes designer, and worked in preparing sweets. Thank God, I was self-sufficient.

When the war started, I was working during Ramadan. The money I used to get was from this work. After the war started, I left Khartoum and went to Madani. I stayed there for a week, and then I came to Kassala.

On my way out, I did not encounter the Rapid Support Forces directly, but I saw them from afar. One of the negative things that the war left in my life was that I lost my shop, which I had opened, where I used to make food for students. I lost my job. After we came here to a home for people with disabilities, I started looking for work. During that period, I worked with sixth-graders, and I used to go to factories looking for work.

Humanitarian organizations helped me with food supplies. If there were open training workshops, I would go and attend them. Despite the difficult circumstances, one of the positive things is that the war made me return to my husband. He is also disabled, works in physiotherapy, and runs the prosthetics clinic, which is supposed to be located in the home for people with disabilities here. He is married in New Halfa as well, but we are trying to be together.

My vision for the future is that *I wish to own a house*, because all my life I have been moving from place to place. I also hope that my children will complete their studies and we will get settled in one place.



**SUSAN**

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**Mother of Six with a Disability**

# SUSAN

## Mother of Six with a Disability

I am 35 years old, from the Al-Jazeera state, specifically from the Haj Abdallah area. Before the war, we were safe. I worked for a while selling tea and then became a housewife after marriage. My husband works as a farmer. Thank God, I was living well; we had everything we needed. We have six children, and we fled together with our small family, but the rest of my relatives are still there in the war zone.

I have had a disability in my legs since I was three years old (I had polio) and I have undergone several surgeries. Thank God, I can now move, but only for short distances. I was supposed to receive a mobility aid [a motorized vehicle to facilitate movement for people with disabilities] from the city of Madani, but I did not get it.

When the war broke out, we never thought that what happened in Khartoum would happen to us. I would stay at home all day and never go out, and almost thirty families of our relatives who had fled from Madani ended up in our house.

One day, the Rapid Support Forces entered the house asking for the car keys. We told them that we did not have cars, so they left us. On the morning of the second day, we immediately fled to the Sheikh Al-Samani area [part of the Sennar state] with my husband and children, as it is a safe area. We crossed the river with great risk using a small boat [called a bangoli] that can only hold two people. I was carrying my three-month-old baby at that time, and I fell over more than ten times during the crossing.

*“ When the war broke out, we never thought that what happened in Khartoum would happen to us. I would stay at home all day and never go out, and almost thirty families of our relatives who had fled from Madani ended up in our house. ”*

When we reached the Sheikh Al-Samani area, we settled safely in a school [shelter center] and were warmly welcomed by the locals. Even my mother and family came to us when their situation became difficult in the Haj Abdallah area.

After five months, the area was bombed. About 30 people died and our conditions deteriorated. We were forced to move again to a nearby safe village, but we returned after the situation calmed down. *We had left all our belongings there. After the bombing of the city of Sennar and the worsening of our situation, we were forced to flee to Port Sudan.*

In Port Sudan, we stayed on the street for a long time waiting to be assigned to one of the shelters. Good-hearted people provided us with food and drink, but the straw huts we were in could not withstand the rain. We have been here for about 15 days now and we receive one meal a day. We are in urgent need of support, as my husband can no longer work and the children need enough food. I also need a wheelchair to facilitate movement.

My situation is like everyone else here. No one is working. Women and young women need their basic necessities, soap, and children require support. We appeal to organizations for support. We left our homes with nothing. We need clothes, household items, and all forms of support. May God improve our situation.

