

# Sudan

## Key Facts

Total Population:	37,964,000
Population aged under 5:	14.8%
Population aged under 15:	41% (2013)
Population aged 15-24:	20.5% (2015)
Migration to the UK:	2001 Census identified approximately 10,000
Capital:	Khartoum
Area:	1,861,484 sq km
Languages:	Arabic (official) English (official) Nubian Ta Bedawie Diverse dialects of Nilotic, Nilo-Hamitic, Sudanic languages
Major religions:	Sunni Muslim 70% (in north) Christian 5% (mostly in south and Khartoum) Indigenous beliefs 25%
Life expectancy:	61 years males; 65 years females (2013)
Political party:	Republic of the Sudan
President:	Umar Hassan Ahmad al-BASHIR

## Geographical Location



## Economy

Sudan is an extremely poor country that has experienced protracted social conflict, civil war, and, in July 2011, the loss of three-quarters of its oil production due to the secession of South Sudan. The oil sector had driven much of Sudan's GDP growth since 1999. For nearly a decade, the economy boomed on the back of rising oil production, high oil prices, and significant inflows of foreign direct investment. Since South Sudan's secession, Sudan has struggled to stabilise its economy and make up for the loss of foreign exchange earnings. Sudan is also subject to comprehensive US sanctions. Sudan is attempting to develop non-oil sources of revenues, such as gold mining. The world's largest exporter of gum Arabic, Sudan produces 75-80% of the world's total output. Agriculture continues to employ 80% of the work force. Ongoing conflicts in Southern Kordofan, Darfur, and the Blue Nile states, lack of basic infrastructure in large areas, and reliance by much of the population on subsistence agriculture keep close to half of the population at or below the poverty line.

Labour force by occupation	Agriculture	29.2%
	Industry	20.4%
	Services	50.4%
Unemployment rate youths aged 15-24:	Total	22.9%
	Male	21.2%
	Female	25.7%
Population below the poverty line:	46.5% (2009)	
Child labour:	<i>See Human Rights- People Trafficking section</i>	

## Education

Percentage of children aged over 15 who can read and write (2015):	Total	75.9%
	Male	83.3%
	Female	68.6%
Primary school net enrolment ratio (%) (2009-2013):	Total	51.5%
	Male	54.4%
	Female	48.6%
Secondary school net enrolment ratio (%) (2009-2013):	Male	32.6%
	Female	30.4%

## Child Protection

Percentage of children married	- by age of 15:	7.2%	(2005-2013)
	- by age of 18:	32.9%	(2005-2013)
Justification of wife beating:		47%	(2005-2013)
Female genital mutilation	- prevalence girls:	37%	(2004-2013)
	- prevalence women:	87.6%	(2004-2013)
	- attitudes which support the practice:	42.3%	
Births by age 18 years:		14%	(2009-2013)



## Politics

### Political parties and leaders:

- Democratic Unionist Party or DUP [Jalal al-DIGAIR]
- Democratic Unionist Party [Muhammad Uthman al-MIRGHANI]
- Muslim Brotherhood or MB
- National Congress Party or NCP [Umar Hassan al-BASHIR]
- National Umma Party or UP [Siddiq al-MAHDI]
- Popular Congress Party or PCP [Hassan al-TURABI]
- Reform Now Party or RNP [Dr. Ghazi Salah al-DEEN]
- Sudanese Communist Party or SCP [Mohammed Moktar Al-KHATEEB]
- Sudanese Congress Party [Ibrahim Al-SHEIKH]
- Unionist Movement Party or UMP [Nagla AL-AZHARI]

### Key dates:

1899-1955 - Sudan was under joint British-Egyptian rule.

1956 - Sudan becomes independent.

2011 – Sudan splits into two countries in July 2011 after the people of the south voted for independence.

### Civil War:

Sudan was embroiled in two prolonged civil wars during most of the 20th century since independence in 1956. These conflicts were rooted in northern Arab Muslim economic, political, and social domination of a mainly Christian southern Sudanese. The first civil war ended in 1972 but another broke out in 1983. The two rounds of north-south civil war cost the lives of 1.5 million people.

Peace talks gained momentum in 2002-04 with the signing of several accords. The final North/South Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), signed in January 2005, granted the southern rebels autonomy for six years followed by a referendum on independence for Southern Sudan. The referendum was held in January 2011 and indicated overwhelming support for independence. South Sudan became independent on 9 July 2011.

Sudan and South Sudan have yet to fully implement security and economic agreements signed in September 2012 relating to the normalisation of relations between the two countries. Specific outstanding issues include the question of shared oil revenues and border demarcation; issue which continue to create tensions between the two successor states.

Since South Sudan's independence, conflict has broken out between the government and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile states, which has resulted in 1.2 million internally displaced persons or severely affected persons needing humanitarian assistance. A separate conflict, which broke out in the western region of Darfur in 2003, in which the United Nations has accused pro-government Arab militias of a campaign of ethnic cleansing against non-Arab locals, displaced nearly two million people and caused an estimated 200,000 to 400,000 deaths. Violence in Darfur in 2013 resulted in an additional estimated 6,000 civilians killed and 500,000 displaced. The UN and the African Union have jointly commanded a Darfur peacekeeping operation known as the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) since 2007. Peacekeeping troops have struggled to stabilize the situation and have increasingly become targets for attacks by armed groups. Sudan also has faced refugee influxes from neighbouring countries, primarily Ethiopia, Eritrea, Chad, Central African Republic, and South Sudan. Armed conflict, poor transport infrastructure, and government denial of access have impeded the provision of humanitarian assistance to affected populations



President- Omar Hassan al-Bashir:

Omar Hassan al-Bashir has ruled with an iron fist for more than 25 years. He came to power in a coup in 1989 and was elected president in 1996. He was re-elected several times since, most recently in 2015 when he gained another five-year term. Most opposition parties boycotted the vote.

In 2009 the International Criminal Court issued an arrest warrant for President Omar Bashir on charges of war crimes, mass genocide and crimes against humanity relating to the drawn-out conflict in Darfur.

## National Service

The Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) consists of the Land Forces, Navy, Sudanese Air Force (Sikakh al-Jawwiya as-Sudaniya) and Popular Defense Forces. The legal age to join the military service is between 18 and 33 years. There is a 1-2 year service obligation.

## Human Rights

There were new episodes of conflict in Darfur, South Kordofan, and Blue Nile states in 2014 resulting in large numbers of civilian deaths and displaced people. Security forces repeatedly suppressed protesters demonstrating against government policies and authorities continued to stifle civil society and independent media. The ruling National Congress Party and opposition parties, two of which signed an alliance in August, remained deadlocked over a national dialogue process that was to pave the way for elections and a new constitution. Sudan has yet to adopt a constitution after the Comprehensive Peace Agreement's six-year interim period ended in 2011 and South Sudan became independent.

### ***Conflict and Abuses in Darfur***

Fighting between government forces and rebel groups, and between other armed groups, often using government equipment and weapons, continues in several parts of Darfur. More than 450,000 people have fled violence in Darfur since the beginning of 2014. Starting in February, the Rapid Support Forces, a Sudanese government force consisting largely of former militias, moved into Darfur from the Kordofan region. They have carried out massive ground attacks on dozens of villages in South and North Darfur, targeting areas where they accused the population of sympathizing with rebels. They burned homes and shops, looted livestock, killed and robbed civilians, and forced tens of thousands of residents to flee to towns and camps for displaced people. Government forces carried out raids in camps for internally displaced people, resulting in four deaths of residents at Kalma camp. The raids were ostensibly to search for weapons, alcohol, and other contraband as part of the governor's emergency response to rising criminality. Starting in October, large numbers of Sudanese forces entered the North Darfur town of Tabit, beating men and raping women and girls over a two-day period. Sudan initially refused to allow the African Union (AU)/United Nations Hybrid Operations in Darfur (UNAMID) to access the town. When the peacekeepers did gain access, Sudanese security forces were present during their visit, undermining the credibility of their investigation.

In its sixth year, UNAMID has been largely ineffective in protecting civilians from violence and has all but ceased public reporting on human rights issues. Sudanese government restrictions have seriously hampered access to conflict areas, including the rebel stronghold, Jebel Mara. Chronic security threats have also undermined its effectiveness: attacks on the peacekeepers have killed at least 207 since 2008.

### ***Conflict and Abuses in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile***

In April 2014, the government intensified ground and aerial attacks in rebel-held areas of the Nuba Mountains, Southern Kordofan, deploying the Rapid Support Forces and other security forces to several areas. In May and June, government

bombing damaged schools, mosques, churches, water sources and health centers, including a Médecins sans Frontières clinic. Dozens of civilians were killed or injured. The attacks, which



continued throughout the year, forced tens of thousands of people, some already displaced, to abandon their homes and fields. In government- controlled areas, government forces detained dozens of displaced civilians for their perceived political views. Ground attacks and government bombing also persisted in Blue Nile, though many people have fled to refugee camps in South Sudan. In September, government forces attacked villages, carrying out numerous cases of sexual violence in Bau locality. In August, the conflict in South Sudan spilled into the refugee camps when a local militia group, following clashes between government soldiers and ethnic Nuer opposition forces, targeted ethnic Nuer aid workers, killing five in the area of Bunj town. More than 220,000 refugees from Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile remain in camps in Unity and Upper Nile states in South Sudan.

### ***Freedom of Peaceful Assembly, Association, Expression***

Sudanese law enforcement officers continued to violently disperse protests and to arbitrarily arrest and detain protesters and activists. In September 2013, government forces used excessive force, including live ammunition, to disperse a wave of protests over austerity measures. The forces were implicated in over 170 deaths, and hundreds of injuries and arrests. Many people were held for weeks or months without charge or access to family or lawyers, and were beaten, verbally abused, deprived of sleep, and held for long periods in solitary confinement. The government has failed to investigate or prosecute those responsible for the 2013 killings and related abuses. In September 2014, the UN's independent expert on Sudan reported to the Human Rights Council (HRC) that the government had not conducted thorough and independent investigations. Of scores of complaints lodged, only one proceeded to trial, unsuccessfully.

### ***Arbitrary Detentions, Ill-treatment, and Torture***

Sudan's National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) and other security forces arrested opposition party members and activists throughout the year, despite promises by President Omar al-Bashir to release all "political detainees."

'Prisoners' have been known to be detained without charge and subjected to ill-treatment and torture without access to family, lawyers or medical care.

### ***Law Reform***

Authorities continued to apply Shari'a law sanctions that violate international prohibitions on cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment. The penalties are applied disproportionately to women and girls, typically for "crimes" that include private beliefs and decisions about marriage, sexuality, or dress code. In May, a judge in Khartoum sentenced a pregnant 27 year old, Mariam Yahya Ibrahim, to death for the crime of "apostasy," and to 100 lashings for "adultery."

Ibrahim, detained for months, was initially accused of adultery because she is married to a non-Muslim of South Sudanese origin, a marriage the court did not recognize. The court added the apostasy charge after Mariam said she is Christian. Following intense international pressure, Ibrahim was released.

### ***People Trafficking***

Sudan is a source, transit, and destination country for men, women, and children subjected to forced labour and sex trafficking. Sudanese women and girls, particularly those from rural areas or who are internally displaced, are vulnerable to forced labour as domestic workers in homes throughout the country. Sudanese women and girls are subjected to domestic servitude in Middle Eastern countries and to forced sex trafficking in Europe. Some Sudanese men who voluntarily migrate to the Middle East as low-skilled labourers face conditions indicative of forced labour. Sudanese children in Darfur are forcibly conscripted, at times through abduction, and used by armed groups and government security forces. While Sudanese children in Saudi Arabia are used in forced begging and street vending.

Sudan does not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking and is not making significant efforts to do so. In 2013, the government enacted an anti-trafficking law, raised the age of military recruitment to 18, rescued and assisted an increased number of trafficking victims, and made efforts to bring traffickers to justice. However, its law enforcement, protection, or prevention



measures to address human trafficking remained ad hoc; the government did not employ a system for proactively identifying trafficking victims among vulnerable population or a referral process for transferring victims to organizations providing care. In 2013, Sudan's armed forces and proxy militia continued to recruit child soldiers and did not conclude a proposed joint action plan with the UN to address the issue.

## Family life

Large families are desired and children are very valued. The family unit includes; mother, father, wife, children, brothers, sisters, grandparents, nephews, nieces, cousins, in-laws, and godparents. Divorce is extremely rare. Gender and hierarchical rules are very defined and by tradition, the father is the head of the household and the official leader. Women provide most of the social services and are also responsible for maintaining the home and raising the children. Children do not mix socially with adults. Separation of the sexes is common to the Muslim north, and even homes are divided into male and female areas. Respect should be afforded to the man as the household head and they traditionally make all decisions regarding the family. However typically mothers will be more knowledgeable about children's health and can be addressed directly, especially with southern families, where the rules of interaction are less rigid.

## Cultural Etiquette

- Sudanese culture is very informal. Except for elders, teachers, and religious leaders, every person is called by their first name. This is considered very friendly and appropriate.
- Shaking hands is very important when greeting someone or saying goodbye. Some females do not like shaking hands with males and men should not initiate a handshake with a woman unless she extends her hand first. The right hand should be used for greeting, eating, and all other activities. The left hand is used only for bodily hygiene.
- Relative age is of great importance in interpersonal relationships. For example, men of the same "age set" will call each other "brother" and will act informally with one another.
- Avoid showing or pointing to the sole of your foot to someone. This is a sign of disrespect.
- Avoid using an index finger to call someone. This is seen as rude and disrespectful. Instead, one extends one's hand, palm downwards, and motions towards oneself.
- An interesting custom is the custom of the "Zar". This takes place when a Sudanese man or woman, generally a woman, feels that she has been possessed by an evil spirit. Her friends then get together and hire an exorcist. The exorcist then comes to the family and performs the rite of exorcism. There is generally a high feeling and great excitement at the "Zar". It is important to remember that to the Sudanese ladies the possibility of possession and the rite of exorcism are very real.
- Sudanese people tend to have a relaxed approach to time. To be late is very normal and does not imply rudeness. Sometimes lateness is related to social status. Important people are expected to be late while everyone waits for them.

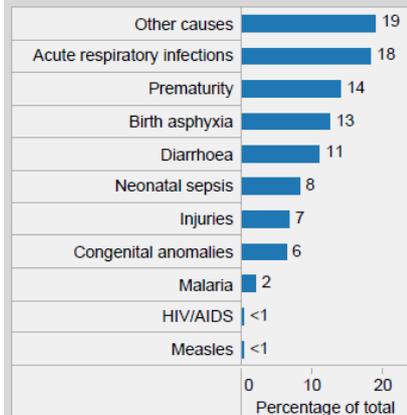
## Health

### *Mortality*

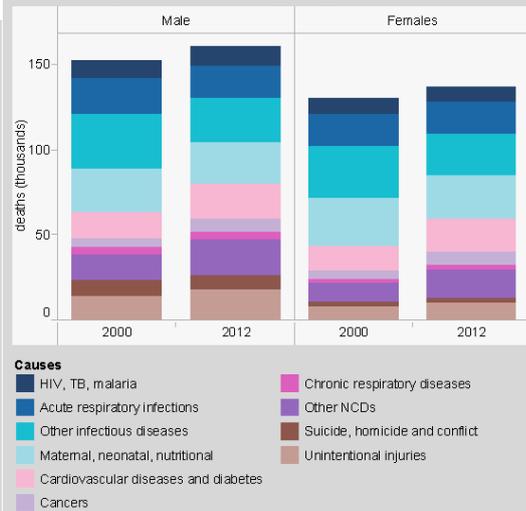
Neonatal mortality rate per 1000 live births:	29.9	(2013)
Infant mortality rate per 1000 live births:	51.2	(2013)
Under 5 mortality rate per 1000 live births:	76.6	(2013)
Probability of dying between 15 and 60 years (per 1000 population):	274 male /212 female	(2013)



**Distribution of causes of deaths in children under-5, 2013**



**Deaths by broad cause group**



**Top 10 causes of death**

Lower respiratory infections was the leading cause of death, killing 37.8 thousand people in 2012.

	No of deaths (000s) 2012	Crude death rate 2000-2012	Change in rank 2000-2012
Lower respiratory infections (12.7%)	37.8		
Diarrhoeal diseases (6.7%)	20.0		
Stroke (5.4%)	16.0		
Preterm birth complications (4.2%)	12.4		
Protein-energy malnutrition (4.1%)	12.1		
Birth asphyxia and birth trauma (3.8%)	11.2		
Ischaemic heart disease (3.2%)	9.5		
Road injury (3.1%)	9.3		
Tuberculosis (2.7%)	8.0		
Neonatal sepsis and infections (2.5%)	7.4		

**Rank** decreased increased no change

**Infectious diseases**

- TB** - There is a high rate of tuberculosis in Sudan (40-499/100,000).
- HIV** - The rate of HIV in Sudan is >1%.
  - Adults and children currently receiving ARV therapy among all adults and children living with HIV, estimated in 2013 as 7%.
  - 22% as a result of mother to child transmission of HIV (2013).
  - Comprehensive knowledge of HIV amongst adolescents between 2009-2013; males 9.8% females 4.3%
- Malaria** - There is a high risk of malaria in this country predominantly due to *P. falciparum*.
- Hepatitis B** - Sudan has an intermediate prevalence of hepatitis B.
- Hepatitis C** - Sudan has a considerably higher prevalence of hepatitis C than the UK.



Thyphoid - There is a risk of typhoid infection in Sudan.

Helminths - There is a risk of helminth infections including schistosomiasis, lymphatic filariasis and soil transmitted helminthiasis in Sudan.

## **Immunisations**

Percentage coverage in under 1s:

DPT3/pentavalant B and Hib	93%	combination vaccine: diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, hepatitis B and Hib
Measles	85%	
BCG	93%	
PCV3	30%	
HBV3 (hepatitis B)	93%	
Rotavirus	80%	
Hib	93%	
Polio	93%	

## **Nutrition**

Percentage of babies born with low birthweight: 31% (2011)

Percentage of babies exclusively breastfed for 6 months: 41% (2011)

Introduction to solid, semi-solid or soft foods 6-8 months: 51.1% (2009-2013)

Breastfeeding at age 2: 40.1% (2009-2013)

Percentage of children under 5 years whose growth was stunted: 35% (2010)

Percentage of children under 5 years whose growth was wasted: 16.4% (2010)

Anaemia - The estimated prevalence of anaemia in pre-school children in this country is >40%.

Vitamin A deficiency - There is a high risk of vitamin A deficiency in this country.

Iodine deficiency - People from this country may be at risk of mild iodine deficiency due to inadequate intake.

## **Female genital mutilation (FGM)**

FGM has been estimated to affect more than 80% of women and girls in this country.

## **Health beliefs**

Although staying healthy is very important in the Sudanese community, people do not usually access preventative medicine, nor do they have a clear concept of health and wellness. Except for children's immunizations, no one seeks professional medical help unless they become very sick and cannot be treated at home. For mild illnesses that can be handled by herbs or over-the-counter medicines, they do not consult a health care provider.

Use of spiritual healing and healers is widespread in Sudanese culture. The Nuer believe in a pantheon of Gods and spirits, both supernatural beings and spirits of animals, especially birds. During periods of epidemics or even individual health crises, oracles are sought out to identify the offended spirits and determine the proper recourse. There is also a widespread belief in the concept of the "evil eye," where a malevolent person possessing supernatural powers can cast a spell on someone just by gazing upon them. Herbal remedies are often used such as the believed cure for migraine headaches is a chalky compound (clay mixed with certain leaves and water) which is rubbed over the head. To relieve the symptoms of malaria, there is a certain root chewed like a stick. One common form is



“visiri” a bitter shrub that bends its shoot to follow the sun. There are certain leaves that are boiled and consumed to relieve malarial sweats. The same mixture can also be used to treat stomach disorders. For wounds, there are special leaves found in the bush which are tied over the wound like a plaster. These leaves may sometimes be burned and the ashes spread over the wound site. Parasitism is very common amongst Sudanese, especially tapeworms, amoebas, bilharzias, and roundworm (Ascaris.) To cure Ascaris, leaves and roots are boiled to produce a bitter liquid, which when swallowed expels the worms. Thread worm infection, under the skin, is treated by slowly rolling the emerging worm on a stick until the whole worm comes out.

