

NRC's operations in Sudan

Humanitarian overview

Sudan has endured over 500 days of relentless war and indiscriminate violence, plunging the country into an unprecedented catastrophe. The human cost is devastating. Sudan now faces the largest displacement crisis in the world, with over 10 million people internally displaced, including 8.8 million since the war began, and 2 million fleeing across the border

The humanitarian crisis has now reached epic proportions. Thousands of lives have been lost, and countless of homes and displacement camps have been reduced to ashes in Khartoum, Darfur and Kordofan. The country faces the world's largest hunger crisis, with more than 25 million people, over half the population, facing food insecurity.

Despite the magnitude of Sudan's crisis, it was one of the most neglected in 2023, with the international community failing to unite to de-escalate the conflict, mitigate further harm to civilians, and respond to the dire humanitarian situation. Insecurity, obstruction, and arbitrary denials of humanitarian access by the parties to conflict continue to compromise people's access to lifesaving aid.



Photo: Ahmed Omer/NRC

Our core activities



Education



Information, counselling
and legal assistance (ICLA)



Livelihoods
and food security



Protection
from violence



Shelter
and settlements



Water, sanitation
and hygiene (WASH)

NRC in Sudan

Established	2004-2009, 2020
International staff	55
National staff	311

Our areas of operation

- Gedaref
- Khartoum
- North Darfur
- West Darfur
- South Kordofan
- White Nile



Our activities in detail

NRC returned to Sudan in 2020, and currently operates through three area offices: Nile Area Office, serving Gedaref and White Nile, Kordofan Area Office and Darfur Area office serving West Darfur, Central Darfur and South Darfur. We are dedicated to helping people affected by war, protracted displacement and disasters by supporting their survival, protection and dignity.

We provide lifesaving multi-sectoral emergency responses prioritising cash assistance. We respond through education, protection, livelihoods and food security, access to clean water, sanitation and hygiene, shelter, and information, counselling and legal assistance programmes, as well as site management support. We use technology to improve our programmes, work closely with local partners and grassroots networks, and advocate for those in need.



80,493 people reached in 2024 ▼

Education

In coordination with the Ministry of Education, we support displacement-affected children, adolescents and youth to enjoy access to appropriate, quality education opportunities in safe and protected learning environments. Our teams:

- support displacement-affected children to remain connected and protected through the delivery of our emergency programme – First Phase Education Response
- build the capacity of teachers, education personnel and school-based management committees in core teaching, non-specialised classroom-based psychosocial support, and socio-emotional learning skill
- support access to learning opportunities to displacement-affected children and adolescents through improving learning environment in formal schools
- support displaced and out-of-school children to catch up on their learning losses through age-appropriate non-formal education programmes
- distribute learning and teaching materials to learners and teachers to facilitate access and improve retention



24,416 people reached in 2024 ▼

Information, counselling and legal assistance (ICLA)

Our response supports displacement-affected communities to access legal documentation such as the national number, passports, national identity cards, birth registration and marriage registration, to enable them to have better access to services. We strengthen mechanisms of dispute resolution at the local level to help resolve property and land issues. We also promote access to essential services and have set up an eviction monitoring system to identify and respond to eviction threats and actual evictions of vulnerable IDPs taking refuge in schools and other public buildings. Our teams:

- create awareness through the provision of tailored information sessions – in-person and digitally – on access to legal documents
- provide one-on-one counselling and legal assistance to support displacement-affected communities to enforce their rights to access legal documents and essential services
- support collaborative dispute resolution of conflicts through technical and material capacity building of local authorities and community structures
- provide due diligence and security of tenure support to ensure sustainability of our interventions and mitigate against any potential risk of forced evictions
- provide eviction monitoring and response which focuses on identification of threats/actual evictions and follow up with eviction diversion or mitigation support; we are further coordinating the implementation of a roadmap for dignified relocations and re-opening of schools with a rights-based approach
- advocate for displaced people's land and property rights as the co-chair of the Housing, Land and Property Working Group, including through research and publication of reports and briefing notes



106,554 people reached in 2024 ▼

Livelihoods and food security

We support refugees, displacement-affected people and vulnerable host communities to help them meet basic food needs in areas with high levels of food insecurity. We aim to increase access to income-earning opportunities through small-scale off-farm income generating projects, on-farm food production and smallholders' access to input, output and financial markets. Our teams:

- support vulnerable, food-insecure IDPs and refugees to have access to healthy and balanced food through cash-based interventions and market support
- support access to immediate food assistance through communal kitchens, cash for food, MPCA
- provide refugee, IDP and vulnerable host community youth, men and women with the soft and technical skills as well as cash grants for demand-driven small business projects, thus fostering self-reliance and promoting economic inclusion and strengthening the local markets
- assist IDP and host community families with safe access to small backyard gardens and support them with seeds, tools and appropriate training, targeted to increase household income and improve dietary diversification
- support host communities and displacement-affected communities with improved natural resource management



55,294 people reached in 2024 ▼

Protection from violence

NRC is an active member of the Protection Working Group, the National Protection Sector, the Protection Cluster Strategic Advisory Group, and the MHPSS Working Group. Alongside the well-established site management programme, NRC is piloting the NRC Protection from Violence programme focussing on protection monitoring, analysis, individual protection assistance, and civilian self-protection through community-based

protection. The protection programme is supported by NRC's advocacy work, to ensure that evidence from the ground is taken to the attention of decision makers and contributes to change. Our teams:

- conduct protection assessments, analysis, and advocacy
- maintain a proactive presence and individual response services to reduce and address protection concerns
- support civilian self-protection, through working with local groups
- provide comprehensive coordination of services through mobile site management and an urban displacement out-of-camp (UDOC) approach



66,582 people reached in 2024 ▼

Shelter and settlements

We provide access to adequate housing for displacement-affected people. We support site preparation and allocation, distribute and pitch tents, help repair damaged shelters and build durable ones, while training communities in basic carpentry skills. We provide technical support for flood mitigation and distribute essential relief and household items. Our team:

- responds to inadequate shelter conditions and provides essential household items
- supports safe and dignified relocation of IDPs, ensuring access to safe temporary/transitional shelters
- distributes core relief items including emergency shelter kits and family tents
- construct temporary shelters using locally sourced materials, in line with traditional building practices and the specific needs of the affected populations
- undertakes site improvements including site preparation/site level interventions (backfilling and levelling).
- undertakes shelter repair activities for damaged shelters aimed at improving living conditions and providing adequate shelter for affected households



145,897 people reached in 2024 ▼

Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)

We address acute WASH needs and reduce protection risks through the delivery of life-saving assistance, re-storing and sustaining existing WASH facilities which are inclusive. We seek to engage local resources (people, businesses and authorities) in the provision of WASH services. Our teams:

- support rehabilitation and construction of water supply systems and facilitate their management to improve sustainability
- use, support and develop markets to meet affected population's WASH needs like WASH NFIs
- promote positive hygiene practices through hygiene awareness campaigns and sensitisation sessions.
- provide inclusive sanitation facilities with appropriate waste disposal and treatment mechanisms and improve living conditions through public- and community-supported solid waste management
- improve WASH infrastructures in schools to offer a safe environment to children
- respond to emerging disease outbreaks by ensuring infection, prevention and control protocols are in place in the affected locations such as camps and settlements
- explore new ways to reach more people in urban settlements
- support targets groups including IDPs, host communities, refugees and returnees in gathering sites, schools, camps and off-camps

Advocacy and policy

We advocate for the protection of civilians across Sudan, including those forced to flee violence, respecting International Humanitarian Law. We press the world's leaders to address the crisis in Sudan, end the suffering and engage with humanitarian community to improve the quality of the response. Our positions and policy recommendations are informed by the reality on the ground and by the people we serve.

Cash and markets

We design and deliver comprehensive, emergency cash responses to ensure that displacement-affected populations acquire their preferred items with choice and dignity. Cash transfers are part of our efforts to integrate a markets-based approach in our programming. We empower local market actors to take the lead in responding to the needs of their communities and to benefit host communities' struggling economies. NRC also explores digital transfer options to reach the most vulnerable populations in hard-to-reach areas where the banking system is disrupted and financial infrastructure damaged in the wake of the April conflict.

Group cash transfers

NRC introduced the Group Cash Transfer (GCT) approach in June 2023 as an innovative method to support locally led relief efforts in Sudan. Since its inception, NRC has successfully disbursed cash grants ranging from USD 2,000 to USD 5,000 to various groups, including community-based organisations (CBOs), national non-governmental organisations (NNGOs), emergency response rooms (ERRs), and other community-led initiatives.

Where many humanitarian agencies lack access, GCTs can be effectively implemented through local responders, ensuring aid reaches hard-to-reach areas. These grants have empowered local responders to address urgent humanitarian needs effectively, maintaining the spirit of solidarity, ensuring dignified assistance, GCTs strengthen community ownership and help rebuild the social fabric, supporting long-term recovery in conflict-affected regions

Multi-purpose cash assistance

We implement multi-purpose cash assistance at scale for an effective, efficient and people-centred response to the complex humanitarian emergency across Sudan. NRC is a Cash Consortium of Sudan (CCS) partner where we implement MPCA in the Darfur's, South Kordofan, and Gedaref in areas that are IPC 4 and above.

Digital modes of assistance

We utilise NRC's Digital Community Hub (DCH) to allow a two-way communication channel between NRC and displacement-affected populations. This enables people in need to raise questions and trigger emergency alerts, communicate their needs and obtain referrals for specialised services contributing towards Community Feedback Mechanisms. They may also provide feedback and voice complaints. We use the channel to send information in bulk on aid distribution, and to promote hygiene and nutrition best practices, information required. We also leverage the DCH mass messaging capacity to conduct remote data collection, including displacement monitoring through key informants, initial needs assessment, and post distribution monitoring, in locations where access remains a challenge. Additionally, KOBLI platform has been established for ICLA, which enables displacement-affected populations to directly go to the website and find information regarding civil and legal documentations. We are also involved in continuous improvement of internal processes to achieve operational efficiency by digitalising registration and distribution processes.

Emergency response

Through the Rapid Response Mechanism, we provide immediate lifesaving support to displaced populations within the first 14 days of a crisis. Our first line interventions include multi-purpose cash assistance for basic needs, provision of emergency shelter, non-food items solutions, and water and sanitation services. We have invested in strengthening our presence in hard-to-reach locations through a team of trained staff and volunteers which enables us to deploy as early as possible to affected locations to conduct assessments and provide lifesaving support, until a longer-term solution can be found in coordination with other humanitarian partners.

NRC also provides emergency assistance in non-RRM locations both directly and with local partners on an ad hoc basis when there are rapid deteriorations in the humanitarian situation including conflict displacements, high food insecurity/famine, and flooding.

Partnerships and capacity sharing

NRC is advancing its collaborative approaches with local and national organisations to create a more sustainable response within the fragile environment of its interventions. In 2024, NRC formalised partnership agreements with 18 implementing partners and allocated additional 17 Flexible Mini Grants for local partners to support interventions in WASH, shelter, education, ICLA, protection from violence, and livelihoods and food security. As part of its long-term partnership strategy, NRC is emphasising capacity-sharing to enhance the capabilities of implementing partners. This includes efforts in knowledge transfer and strengthening local responses, particularly in addressing the complex humanitarian needs across Sudan. In collaboration with two international partners – the Centre for Humanitarian Leadership and Shabaka – NRC is reinforcing research, monitoring, and capacity development initiatives, focusing on system strengthening and crisis leadership for local actors.

To tackle the challenges of inflation and cash liquidity, NRC Sudan is piloting blockchain technology and digital currency transfers. This innovative initiative, in partnership with COALA Pay, functions within a private marketplace and involves five local NGOs. The pilot aims to streamline financial transfers while reducing risks associated with currency volatility and liquidity for partners.

Coordination and collaboration

We coordinate through the cluster system in Sudan, the Refugee Consultation Forum, and the INGO Forum. Our approach to coordination goes beyond participation, as we share our knowledge and expertise. We co-chair the housing, land, and property rights sub-sector and the education sector's assessment working group. We invest in state-level coordination in each of our areas of operation. Alongside these, NRC is part of seven consortia with INGOs for RRM and CCS.

Our donors

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