

Monitoring Brief

Food-related violence in Sudan since January 2025

May 2025





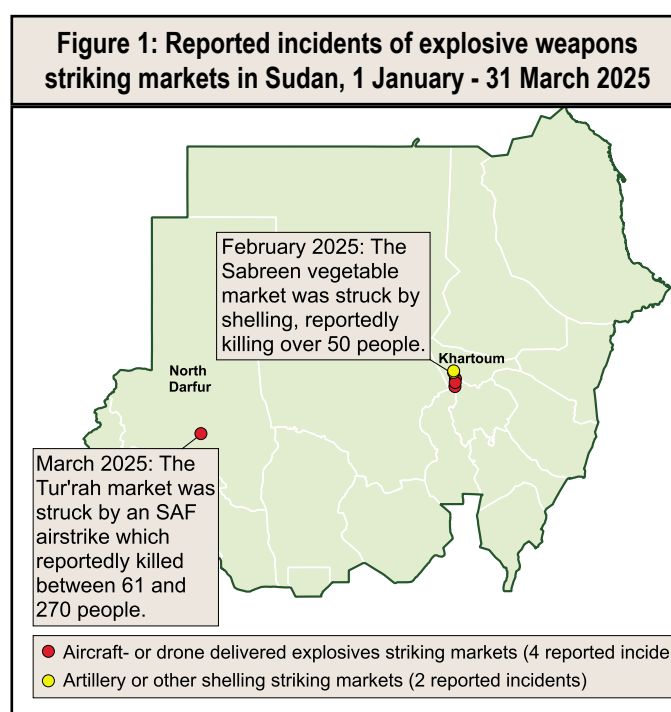
Food-related violence continued to be reported in Sudan between 1 January and 31 March 2025 in addition to the blockading of essential food supplies from urban areas, most notably in El Fasher. **This briefing provides an overview of the most frequently reported forms of food violence over this period.**

The incidents documented form part of a broader pattern in which food and food-related infrastructure have been repeatedly attacked, looted, damaged and destroyed since mid-April 2023, especially in the states of Darfur, Gezira, Kordofan and Khartoum. For details of the long-term trends, see Insecurity Insight's in-depth report on conflict and hunger in Sudan: **The Sudan Crisis**: How Over a Year of Violence and Humanitarian Access Restrictions Have Produced Famine Conditions (January 2025).

Insecurity Insight's data on food-related violence is available for download via the **Humanitarian Data Exchange** (HDX).

Violence at markets

- Aircraft- or drone-delivered explosives struck markets on at least four occasions between early January and late March. Three of the incidents were attributed to the SAF and were in Khartoum state which the SAF **recaptured in late March**. In one incident, the origin of the air delivered explosives was unclear. The only incident reported outside of Khartoum was arguably the most violent, occurring in late March at the Tur'rah market around 40 kilometres north of El Fasher in North Darfur where an SAF airstrike **killed between 61 and 270 people** according to estimates.
- Artillery or other forms of shelling struck markets twice. Both incidents were in Omdurman, Khartoum state, over a two week period between late January and early February. The RSF was named as the conflict party in both cases. In the most recent incident, the Sabreen vegetable market in Omdurman, Khartoum state, was struck by RSF shelling, reportedly **killing over 50 people**.
- Among other reported incidents of violence, markets were burned by the RSF in January and March in Gezira state and North Darfur as part of wider attacks on civilian infrastructure. Unexploded ordnance also detonated at a market in Gezira state in March.
- Although individual incident reports have not been identified, many individuals were captured and detained in areas of Khartoum whilst on their way to buy food prior to the RSF's retreat according to reporting in **April 2025**.

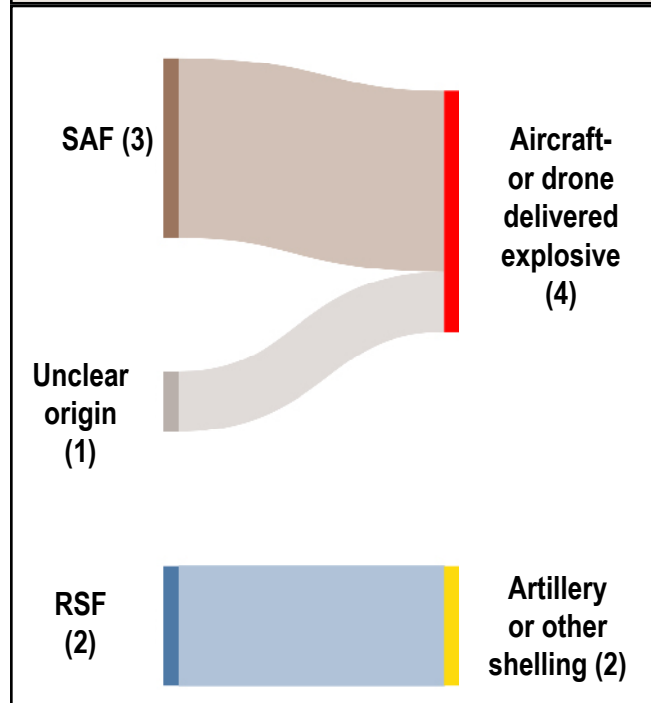




Looting of livestock, markets and harvests

- Livestock - mainly cattle - was reported looted in at least 35 incidents. The majority were recorded in January and March and attributed to the RSF operating in the states of Darfur, sometimes as part of wider attacks on communities and civilian infrastructure. Incidents were also reported in Gezira and Kordofan states. Reporting barriers mean that the reported figures are likely unrepresentative of the full extent of the issue. A report referenced by the [Sudan Tribune](#) states that the RSF looted 60% of all livestock in Gezira state after it gained control of the state capital in December 2023 (but which the SAF [recaptured](#) in January 2025).
- There are also multiple reports of markets and harvested crops being looted across Sudan. However, reporting barriers mean that it is difficult to quantify the full extent of this problem. Previously, the RSF carried out large-scale [looting of crops](#) in Gezira state, a key region for agricultural production.

Figure 2: Sankey diagram showing the conflict parties to which incidents of explosive weapons striking markets in Sudan were attributed, 1 January-31 March 2025



Concerns

Under international humanitarian law, foodstuffs constitute objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population (OIS). Article 54 (2) of the Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions stipulates that attacking, destroying or rendering useless OIS is prohibited.¹ Furthermore, Article 8(2)(b)(xxv) of the Rome Statute (1998) of the International Criminal Court classifies as a war crime the act of “[i]ntentionally using starvation of civilians as a method of warfare by depriving them of objects indispensable to their survival.”²

The repeated nature of incidents of violence at markets in Sudan since the outbreak of the current armed conflict in mid-April 2023 raises concerns regarding potential violations of international humanitarian law. These warrant impartial and independent investigations to determine the legality of the reported conflict incidents and, where applicable, to hold conflict parties accountable for their actions.

Recommendations and methodology

For detailed recommendations on conflict and hunger in Sudan, definitions of data categories and the methodology, see Insecurity Insight’s in-depth report: [The Sudan Crisis: How Over a Year of Violence and Humanitarian Access Restrictions Have Produced Famine Conditions](#) (January 2025).

Endnotes

1 Article 54 (2), Protection of objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population, Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions (1949).

2 See International Criminal Court. 2021. Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, p. 8

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