

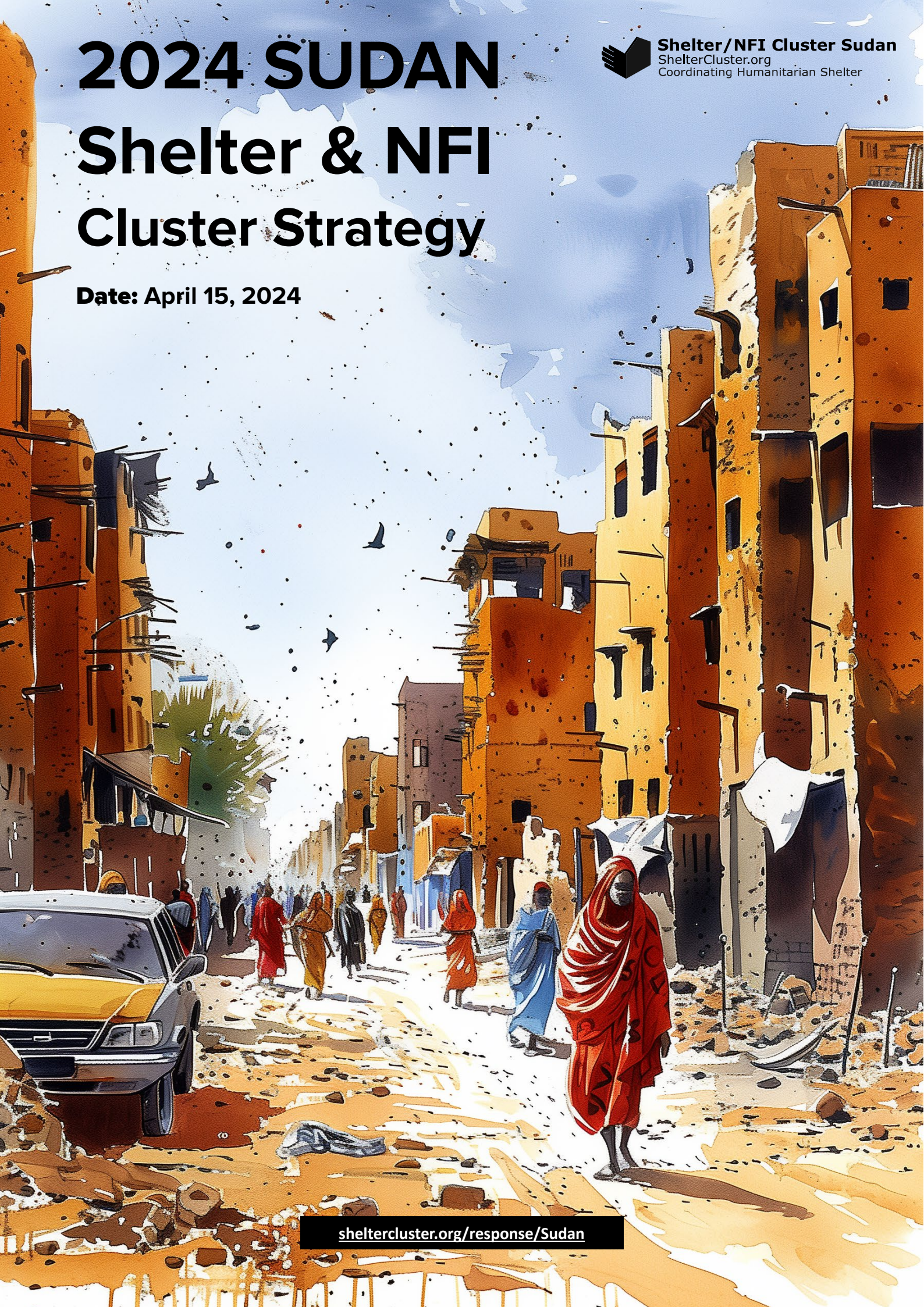
2024 SUDAN



Shelter/NFI Cluster Sudan
ShelterCluster.org
Coordinating Humanitarian Shelter

Shelter & NFI Cluster Strategy

Date: April 15, 2024



sheltercluster.org/response/Sudan

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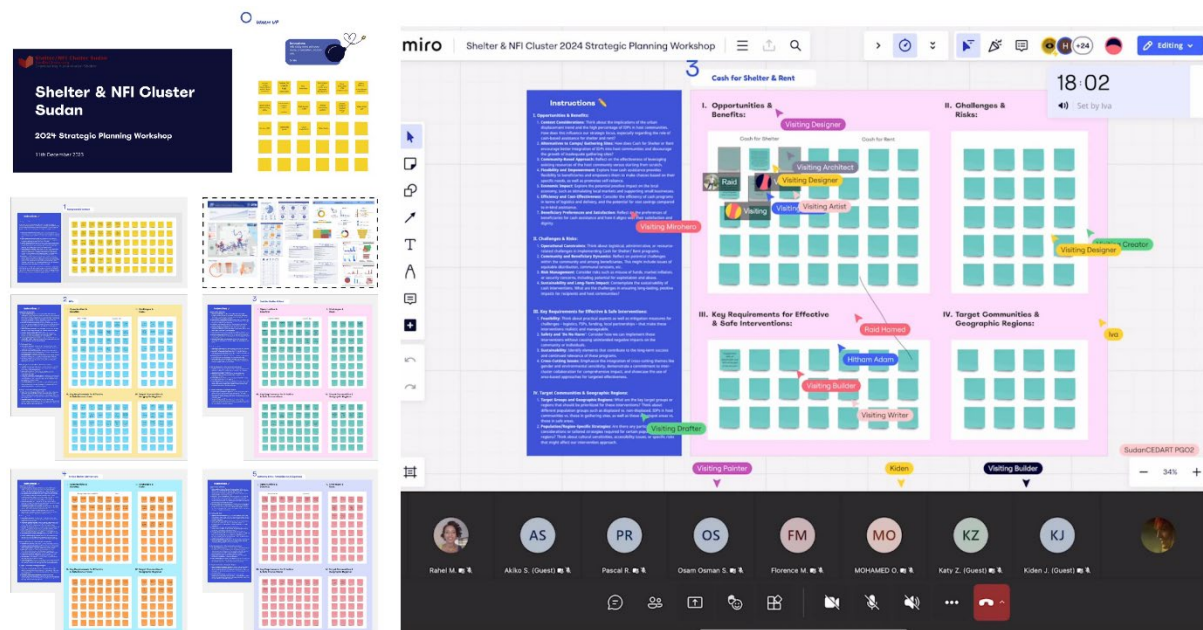
Cluster Active Partners: [2024 Shelter and NFI Cluster Achievements Dashboard](#)

Cluster Members: AAHI, ACAPS, ACTED, ADD, ADRA, AGWA, AHA, AICS, ALIGHT, AORD, AOSCD, ASTLER, AWIMA, AWS, CAFOD, CDF, CfPS, CI, COOPI, CRS, CRW, CWW, DFL, DRC, ECDO, ECHO, ER, ERR, FCDO, FHDO, GAH, GFO, GOAL, HA, HADC, HADHREEN, HDPO, IMPACT, IN, INGOF, IOM, IRC, IRW, JASMAR, JMCO, JPRD, KACE, LMI/ IAS, MC, MEDAIR, MHPDO, MHUN, MSF, NCA, NEF, NOHS, NPO, NRC, OCHA, PA, PCS, PI, QC, QRCS, RCDO, RDHAO, REACH, RRIPL, SAG, SAHARI, SAO, SB, SCEFA, SCI, SDO, SI, SIF, SOD, SORR, SOS, SP, SRCS, TGH, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNISFA, UO, UPO, USAID, WADI, WeDCO, WFP, WHH, WVI, ZOA.

Preface:

The development of the 2024 Shelter and NFI Cluster Strategy represents a concerted effort to address the needs of Sudan's vulnerable populations through a collaborative and adaptive approach. Initiated during the HRP 2024 consultations from September to November 2023, the process included several national cluster meetings aimed at refining our strategic framework, prioritization, and targeting. In December 2023, we held an online Miro Workshop that allowed members to contribute innovative ideas and practical solutions, broadening the strategy's scope beyond the HRP's initial framework. This was followed by further refinements in response to developments in Aj Jazirah at the end of the year, ensuring our approach remained responsive to changing on-ground realities. The final draft was presented at the national cluster meeting on April 1st, 2024, where members provided verbal feedback. The draft was then circulated via email, providing a two-week period for detailed review and additional written feedback.

We are grateful for the active participation and valuable insights from all cluster members, which have been instrumental in shaping this strategic document. Reflecting on the collective expertise and dedication exhibited throughout this process, we look forward to continued collaboration as we implement this strategy to effectively support Sudan's most vulnerable populations.



Executive Summary:

Persistent conflicts in Sudan, marked by deep ethnic divisions and spatial inequality, and stemming from political manipulation and economic mismanagement, are further aggravated by climate change fueling fierce competition for diminishing land and resources, while recurrent natural disasters additionally devastate housing and infrastructure. Before the war, these compounded issues resulted in a dire housing crisis, with only 16% of the population in adequate housing and up to 93% of IDPs and refugees living in severely inadequate and damaged conditions. Since the outbreak of an all-out war between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and Rapid Support Forces (RSF) on April 15, 2023, this already fragile situation got infinitely worse. Fierce and indiscriminate clashes have not only inflicted heavy civilian casualties and caused unprecedented levels of displacement, but also wrecked vital infrastructure, destroyed housing, and led to loss of personal and household assets. These escalating needs outpace available resources, severely impacting Shelter and Non-Food Item (NFI) response efforts. Funding constraints have left many communities underserved, forcing them to rely on their own meager resources for rebuilding. This inadvertently causes them to reconstruct the very vulnerabilities that initially exposed them to risk, perpetuating a cycle of susceptibility to recurring hazards. This backdrop results in a tailored, conflict-sensitive strategy to address the complex dynamics and humanitarian needs in Sudan. Through stringent prioritization rooted in severity of needs and feasibility-driven priorities, the strategy adapts to the intricate challenges of funding constraints and access barriers.

Prevailing NFI needs are addressed with in-kind interventions in volatile hotspots, and cash for NFIs in more stable, market-resilient areas. Aligned with a shift in displacement patterns, a community-based, urban-centric shelter approach is prioritized, emphasizing cash assistance for its adaptability to diverse housing needs, supporting IDPs and local communities hosting them. This reduces the proliferation of inadequate sites and alleviates pressures on IDP-occupied schools. Rehabilitation efforts in gathering sites focus on addressing their inherent inadequacies and minimizing protection risks, while the cautious establishment of new communal accommodation facilitates rationalization of sites through consolidation. Although supply chain limitations, high costs, and limited impact temper provision of tents and emergency shelter kits (ESKs), varied crossline and cross-border efforts effectively navigate these challenges to ensure delivery in rural and hard-to-reach areas where they are most needed and appropriate. Site development focuses on enhancing accessibility and mobility in flood-prone areas through targeted Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) efforts, aiming not only to improve living conditions for vulnerable groups but also to ensure the sustainability of our investments in these sites. Concurrently, active collaboration with development actors and authorities aims to create scalable and sustainable solutions that exceed our current capabilities, particularly at the settlement level.

The strategy places significant emphasis on key cross-cutting themes to ensure a holistic and sustainable humanitarian response. Localization efforts have positioned national NGOs and Emergency Response Rooms (ERRs) as central actors, enhancing the delivery of context-specific shelter solutions through deep local knowledge and extensive networks. This approach is complemented by robust GBV reduction strategies that address risks associated with inadequate shelter, emphasizing the importance of gender-sensitive aid distribution and the inclusion of privacy and security features. Accountability to affected populations is prioritized through enhanced feedback mechanisms and community participation, ensuring that aid delivery aligns with beneficiary expectations and ethical standards. The strategy also highlights the need for inclusion and comprehensive support for individuals with disabilities and others with specific needs. Additionally, conflict sensitivity and HLP due diligence are integral to mitigating land and resource competition, with a focus on maintaining community cohesion and ensuring sustainable shelter solutions amidst Sudan's complex humanitarian landscape.

Failing to address the urgent need for shelter and essential household items in Sudan, especially amid ongoing conflict, could lead to dire consequences. Displaced individuals without adequate shelter face severe environmental conditions, such as intense heat and flooding, increasing their vulnerability to health risks like heatstroke, dehydration, and infectious diseases. Overcrowding and insufficient sanitation exacerbate these health threats, while the absence of secure shelter heightens safety risks, particularly for women and children, making them prone to gender-based violence and exploitation. The psychological toll of living in inadequate conditions undermines mental well-being and hampers efforts towards self-reliance, perpetuating cycles of displacement and poverty. Moreover, the lack of stable shelter disrupts education for children and strains social and community networks, eroding cultural cohesion and extending dependency on humanitarian aid. Inadequate living conditions also compromise nutritional outcomes, as disrupted cooking and food storage facilities heighten the risk of foodborne illnesses and contribute to malnutrition, emphasizing the need for effective famine prevention strategies. Comprehensive shelter and NFI assistance is crucial to mitigate these impacts, enhance safety and security, and support the resilience and recovery of affected communities.

Amidst ongoing relentless hostilities, infrastructure devastation and inadequate funding, the cluster faces an uphill task to assist millions who have lost their homes and now reside in overcrowded dwellings and structures ill-suited for prolonged human habitation. The strategy urges enhanced support from the international community and stakeholders to bridge the gap between the available resources and the cluster's capacity to reach those in need. It focuses on transforming operational capabilities into tangible impacts, advocating for investments that not only meet immediate needs but also lay foundation for early recovery. In this context, early recovery aims to enhance self-sufficiency and reduce aid dependency, which, although challenging amid ongoing conflict, is essential given the resource constraints. Ultimately, the strategy envisions a more robust and responsive humanitarian landscape, striving to restore stability and dignity for Sudan's most vulnerable populations.



2024 Shelter & NFI Cluster Strategy

Background:

Persistent conflicts in Sudan are the result of a complex interplay of historical, ethnic, political, economic, and social factors. Colonial legacies laid groundwork for deep-rooted ethnic and regional divisions, notably the rift between Arab and African communities, along with the historical exploitation of peripheries for the amassment of resources, opportunities and power at the center. These divisions were, and continue to be, further aggravated by climate change, with desertification and reduced rainfall diminishing the availability of arable land and water, thus intensifying competition and clashes over dwindling resources. As environmental challenges altered migration patterns, many nomadic groups pivoted from pastoralism towards a more sedentary lifestyle, and with that often encroached on lands traditionally used by settled farming communities. Post independence, successive central governments capitalized on these divisions for political control, utilizing various tactics, including the mobilization of militias to quell insurgencies in neglected regions, with forces on both sides organized along ethnic lines. This strategy has entrenched peripheral exploitation and maintained power at the center by fueling division and conflict, perpetuating a cycle of marginalization and unrest.

In the lead-up to the all-out Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and Rapid Support Forces (RSF) war, Sudan was already contending with a profound economic crisis and subsequently the aftermath of yet another unsuccessful peace agreement. Enduring sanctions and transitional government's austerity measures, aimed at securing debt relief and international funding, but lacking social safety nets, wreaked havoc on the population. Removal of subsidies and currency devaluation catapulted inflation, eroding the purchasing power of ordinary Sudanese and undermining their capacity to secure housing and other basic necessities. The 2021 coup reversed any gains made by the macroeconomic measures and intensified the losses, as well as removed any hope for democratization and entrenched fears of a continued hegemony of the military-commercial complex.

Simultaneously, the transition from 2020 into 2021 witnessed a dramatic increase in internal displacement, coinciding with UNAMID's withdrawal—a move driven by optimistic expectations for the Juba Peace Agreement (JPA). This departure created a security vacuum, reigniting old inter-communal tensions and resulting in nearly half a million people becoming newly displaced during the course of 2021. In parallel, Sudan continued to face its perennial battle with natural disasters.

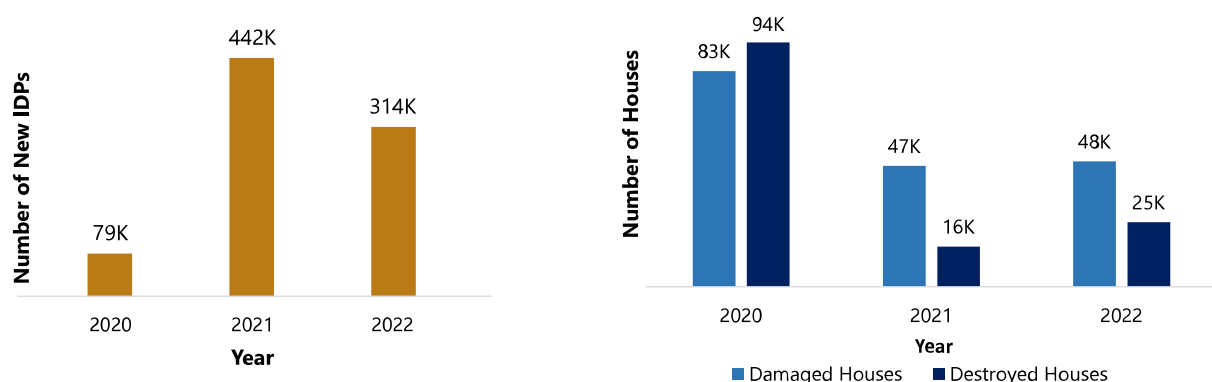


Figure 1. Trends in New Displacement¹ and Flood Impact² Immediately Prior to the SAF-RSF Conflict Outbreak

¹ Data Source: <https://www.internal-displacement.org/countries/sudan/>

² Data Source: [Flooding Overview 2020 - 885K affected](#); [Flooding Overview 2021 - 315K affected](#) and [Flooding Overview 2022 - 349K affected](#)

Each year, the rainy season brings severe storms and flooding that cause extensive damage to homes and infrastructure, hamper access and mobility, and increase the prevalence of water and vector-borne diseases. In Sudan, housing typologies vary widely, reflecting the country's diverse geography and socio-economic conditions. In rural areas, traditional dwellings are commonly constructed using locally available materials such as mud bricks and thatch, known for their natural insulation properties but also for their vulnerability to severe weather. These homes, while suited to drier climates, can be severely compromised during heavy rains, leading to damage or complete destruction. In contrast, urban areas feature a combination of informal settlements and more robust buildings made of bricks and concrete. While these urban structures typically provide better protection from the elements, their effectiveness is compromised in densely populated areas that lack adequate drainage systems and feature high levels of impervious surface coverage. Moreover, urban slums, which are expanding due to rapid urbanization and displacement, are particularly vulnerable as they frequently occupy low-lying areas with inadequate infrastructure. The durability of both rural and urban homes largely hinges on construction quality, frequently compromised in informal and displacement settings. This situation underscores the critical need for improved building practices that are resilient and robust.

Meanwhile, alternating periods of drought continue to severely impact agriculture and rural livelihoods, resulting in food shortages, income loss, and forced migration of those in search of sustenance — a situation that has drawn comparisons to modern-day slavery for migrant workers. Additionally, droughts often lead to fires, causing further destruction of homes built from vulnerable materials like dry grass. The repetitive nature of these disasters not only triggers cyclical displacement but also compounds the vulnerabilities of communities struggling to recover from ongoing conflicts and economic instability.

Hence, the findings from the nationwide Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment (MSNA) of 2022³ are unsurprising, revealing an already critical housing crisis preceding the SAF-RSF war. The assessment

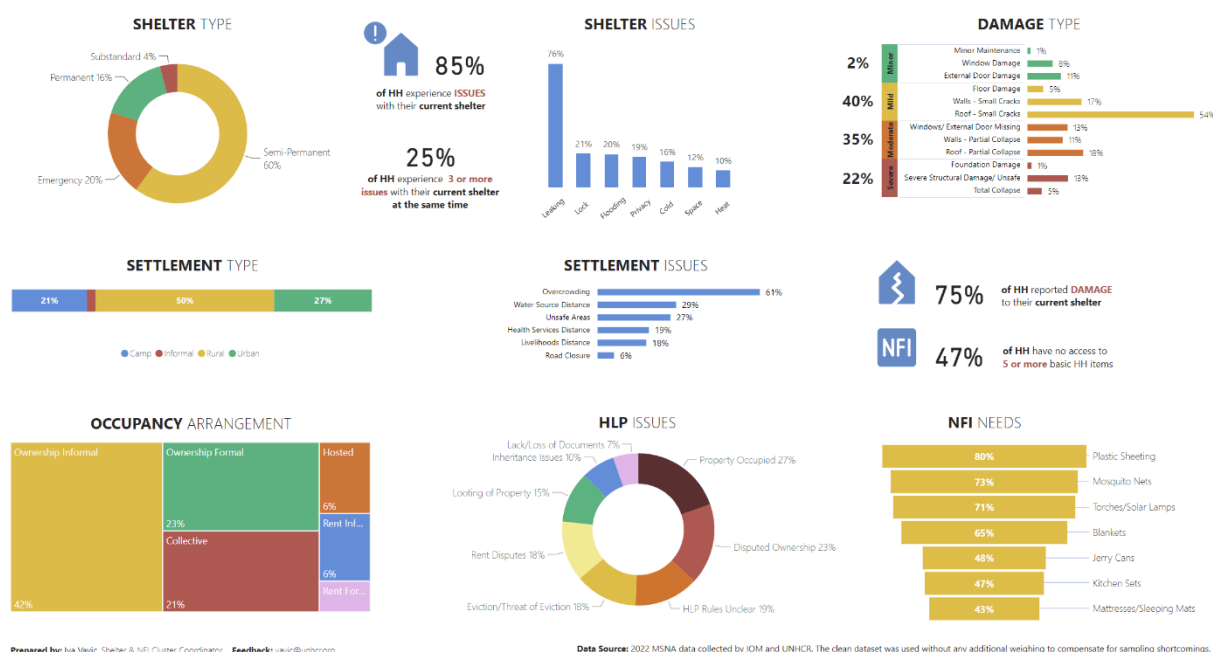


Figure 2. MSNA 2022 Dashboard³

³ MSNA 2022 Dashboard:

<https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrljoiNmMONTYwMmUtZGE2MC00MTQwLWFhZDgtMWIwMDRkNGQ5YTIlljwidCI6ImU1YzM3OTgxLTJNjQ0NDZlNC04YTJlYTY1NDNkMmFmODBiZSIsImMiOiJh9>

showed that a mere 16% of the population surveyed lived in conditions that could be considered adequate—permanent housing offering sufficient levels of privacy, security, and protection from exposure. In stark contrast, 60% of respondents were living in semi-permanent housing, while 24% lived in conditions deemed sub-standard. Alarming, three-quarters of households reported some form of damage to their dwellings, with 22% experiencing severe damage that compromised structural safety and integrity. Furthermore, an overwhelming 85% of respondents faced issues related to their shelter, 25% of whom contended with multiple problems simultaneously. The primary issue reported was leakage, which was consistent with frequent damage reports, including cracked roofs and partial physical collapse.

The situation was even more dire for displaced populations specifically, where a staggering 93% of IDPs and refugees faced inadequate shelter, and 85% lived in damaged accommodation. Many were in makeshift, emergency, or collective shelters, increasing their vulnerability to environmental hazards, disease, and pests. Key challenges identified included inadequate lighting (88%), overcrowding (62%), insufficient non-food items (64%), unsafe locations (43%) and the lack of privacy (27%). These conditions impact people's health, including their mental well-being, and significantly increase the risk of violence and exploitation, particularly gender-based violence (GBV) against women and girls.

In terms of HLP rights, only 25% of households surveyed during the 2022 MSNA, reported having security of tenure, majority of them residing in cities and villages. Amongst 23% of households residing in camps and informal sites, as much as 73% reported collective types of occupancy arrangements. In terms of those who face outright HLP issues, at least a quarter of households experienced problems with property occupation (27%), followed by ownership disputes (23%), a general lack of understanding of HLP rules and processes (19%), threat of eviction and rent disputes (18%) and looting of property (15%).



It is therefore worrying that, in the wake of the complex and multifaceted challenges Sudan has faced, even prior to the exacerbation caused by the SAF-RSF war, and importantly more so in its aftermath, the financial response from the international community, though gratefully acknowledged, has not been fully in step with the rapidly evolving and intensifying needs on the ground. Although recent data from the Financial Tracking Service (FTS)⁴ suggests rising funding percentages, it is important to clarify that this in fact stems from more stringent ceilings imposed on our operational targets. As a result, we're compelled to request decreasing amounts of funding each year, in contrast to the simultaneous and alarming rise in the number of people in need. This is why in the graph below, you can see the ever-widening chasm between the number of People in Need (PiN) and our operational targets, which are artificially reined in.

PiN vs. Target

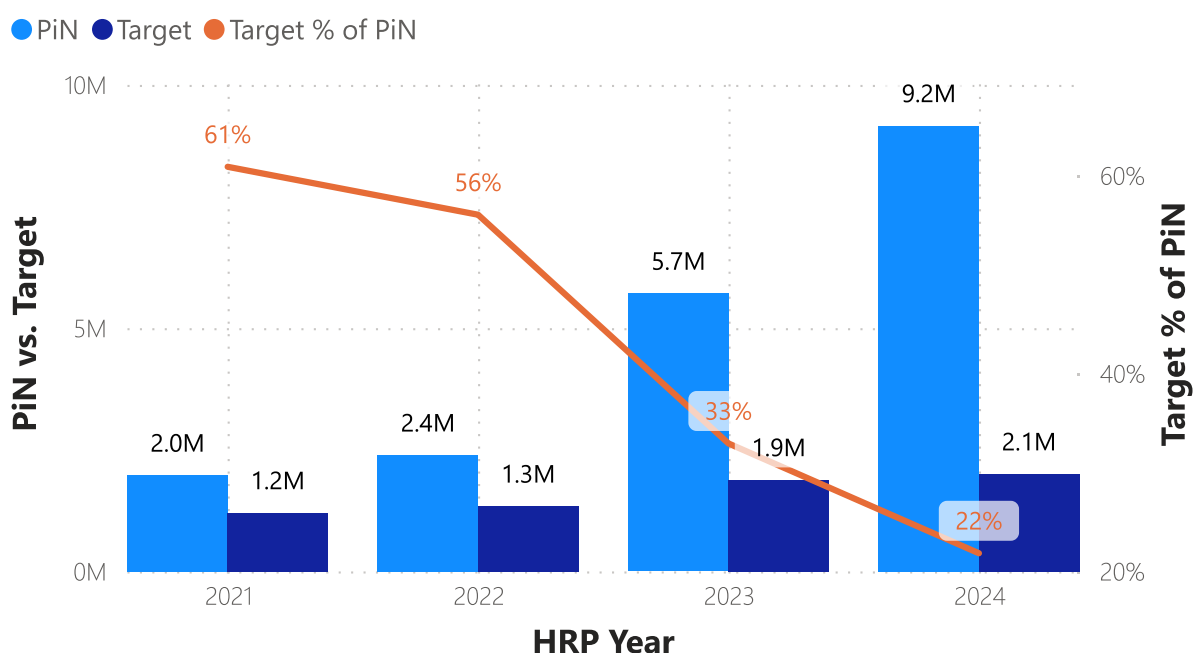


Figure 3. Comparison of Operational Targets vs. People in Need (PiN) over time⁵

Financial constraints left many areas underserved, compelling communities to depend on their own meager resources for rebuilding. This inadvertently led them to reconstruct those very vulnerabilities that initially exposed them to risk, perpetuating a cycle of susceptibility to recurring hazards.

The backdrop summarized above lays the foundation for understanding the years leading up to the SAF-RSF war, reminding us of the conflict's deep-rooted causes and contextualizing our interventions amidst ongoing strife. This analysis underscores the importance of acknowledging the broader dynamics in which the SAF-RSF conflict unfolds, thereby shaping a conflict-sensitive strategic response.

⁴ <https://fts.unocha.org/plans/1123/summary>

⁵ [HRP 2021](#), [HRP 2022](#), [HRP 2023](#), [HRP 2024](#)

Please note that HRP for the years 2021, 2022, and 2023 incorporated refugees in the sector-specific People in Need (PiN) figures. However, in 2024, OCHA has opted to exclude refugees from the PiN. For the sake of consistency and to allow for accurate year-on-year comparisons, refugees have been included in the 2024 PiN figures presented in the graph.

Context Post April 15, 2023:

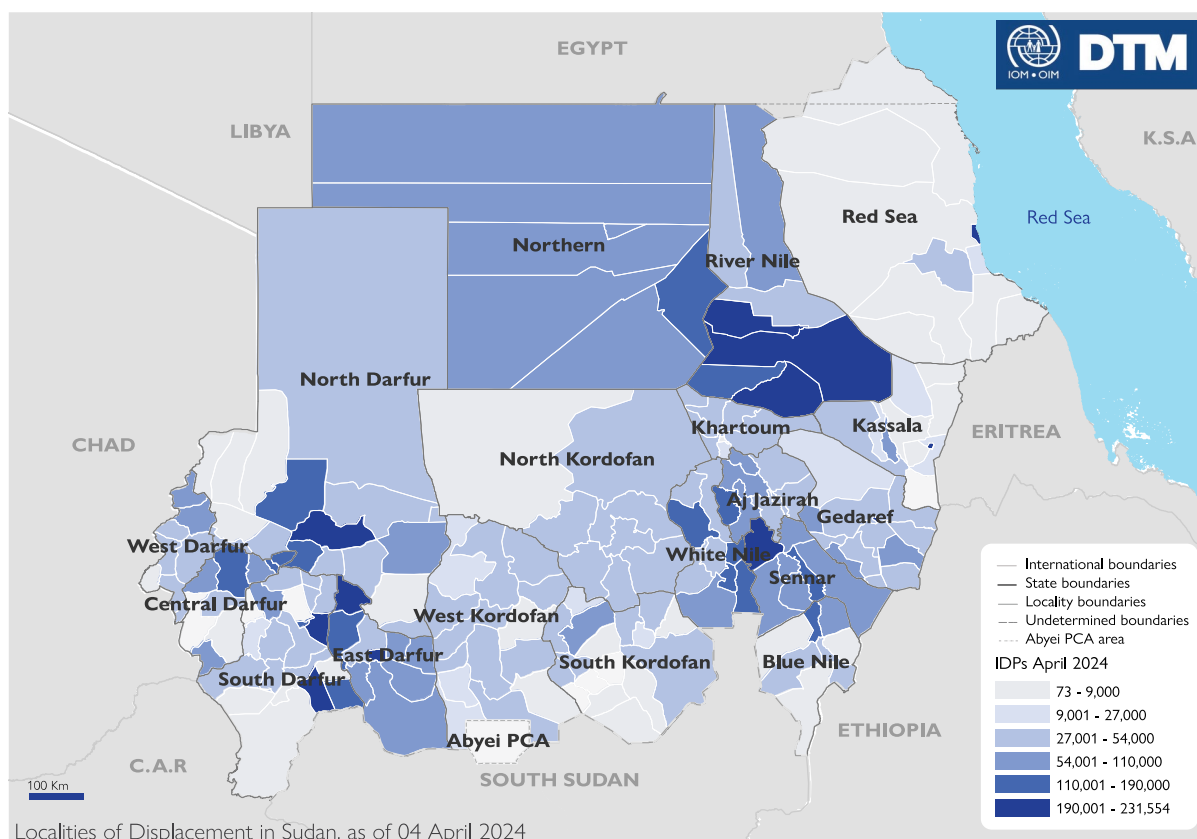
Since April 15, 2023, Sudan has been in throes of catastrophic armed conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), causing over 6.7 million people to become newly internally displaced within one year⁶, elevating the total count of IDPs in Sudan to over 10 million.

The intensity of the conflict, and the subsequent steep surge in displacement, show no signs of slowing down, resulting in widespread human rights violations, food insecurity that threatens millions with famine, and a healthcare system near collapse. Fierce and indiscriminate clashes have not only inflicted heavy civilian casualties but also caused devastation of vital infrastructure, destruction of housing, and loss of personal and household assets. Widespread looting, including of humanitarian organizations' facilities, led to significant losses of aid supplies, including NFI kits, tents, and shelter materials. Concurrently, supply chain disruptions compromised the functionality of local markets, leading to acute shortages of fuel and other basic commodities and driving unprecedented price hikes. These conditions are also contributing to an increasingly expensive Shelter/NFI response. Moreover, the destruction of physical assets, including partner offices, warehouses, vehicles, and equipment, subsequently increased operational costs. Telecommunication services have also been severely impacted, with nationwide connectivity issues constraining coordination efforts and situational awareness, but also cash-based interventions in light of growing reliance on mobile money due to prevailing cash liquidity challenges in banks.

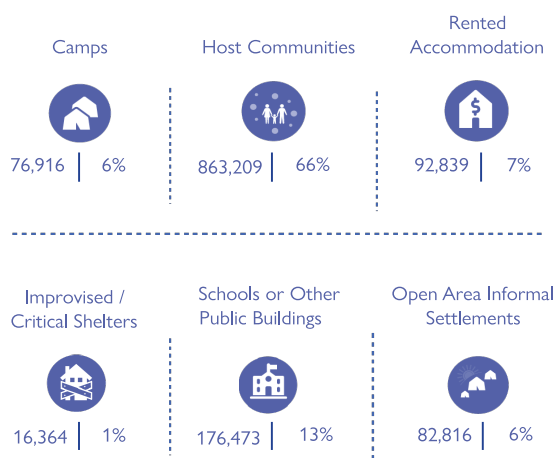


⁶ As of April 16, 2024, per [IOM DTM WDS 27](#)

Since the conflict erupted on April 15, 2023, the displacement dynamics in Sudan have undergone a notable transformation. Historically, internal displacement was predominantly rural in nature, with IDPs seeking refuge in designated gathering sites and encampments scattered throughout the regions of Darfur, Kordofan, and Blue Nile. In the wake of the recent conflict, however, there has been a marked shift towards more urban-like displacement. State capitals and large urban centers have been among the hardest hit, prompting many IDPs to flee towards familiar settings, overwhelmingly taking refuge in residential districts of other cities. In a departure from the conventional encampment model, these individuals are increasingly being sheltered by the host community, which presents a new set of opportunities and dynamics.



Shelter Categories (by households)



Displacement in Sudan by Location Type

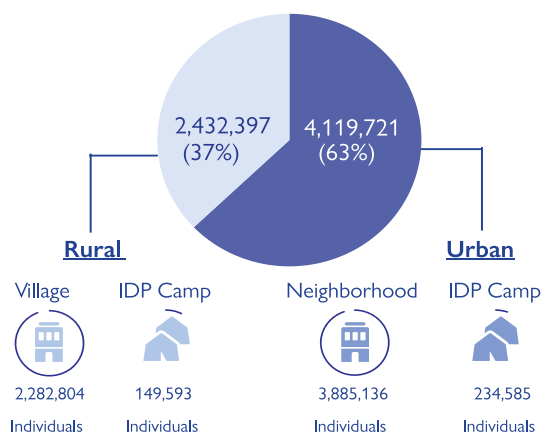


Figure 4. Internal Displacement in Sudan, April 2024⁷

⁷IOM DTM Sudan: <https://dtm.iom.int/sudan>

Notably, in the more accessible areas of Eastern and Northern Sudan, home to approximately 48% of those newly displaced in the last year, an overwhelming 90% of IDPs find refuge within residential areas of hosts communities, staying with family and friends or in rented accommodation⁸. This scenario contrasts sharply with some Darfur states, where the figure plummets to as low as 35%⁸. This variance emphasizes the critical need for tailored, region-specific solutions, cautioning against the pitfalls of one-size-fits-all approaches and highlighting the importance of contextualized intervention strategies.

In the regions of Darfur and Kordofan, which account for 39% and 7% of the newly displaced populations respectively⁸, the primary focus is on the cross-border operation from Chad, which remains functional despite challenges. Notably, these efforts recently faced a temporary setback due to a government-imposed ban, however, the cross-border response has resumed to North Darfur, the sole Darfur state not under RSF control, thanks to defense coalition of former rebels and SAF. Simultaneously, negotiations are in progress to establish a new cross-border channel from South Sudan, aiming to improve access not only to White Nile and Kordofan states but also potentially to East and South Darfur. Additionally, despite significant security risks and other hindrances, crossline responses from the Northern state to North Darfur as well as from Port Sudan through Kassala, Gadaref, circling to White Nile, and onward to El Obeid and the Kordofans are also in use, navigating through a backdrop of severe insecurity and logistical challenges.

Results Framework:

Our two-pillar response strategy, focusing on provision of NFIs and shelter to support fundamental daily activities and offer adaptable housing solutions to foster community resilience, directly reflects needs assessment data, mirroring the proportions of NFI and shelter requirements observed among affected populations. Furthermore, this strategy pragmatically bridges the widening gap between escalating needs and our capacity to meet them, amidst dwindling resources. By strategically playing to the strengths of specific activities and collaboratively addressing weaknesses, the collective impact and reach are amplified. Recognizing that the vastness of needs calls for all hands on deck, the logistical prowess of some partners for NFI delivery is leveraged, while others contribute their specialized skills and experience to navigate the complexities of shelter provision, including technical guidance and HLP due diligence.

Cluster Objectives:

1. **Ensure Timely Provision of Non-Food Items (NFIs):** This objective focuses on providing essential household items to meet the immediate needs of displaced populations, including those experiencing multiple displacements, as well as supporting host families who require additional resources to accommodate extended households. The goal is to rapidly deliver NFI assistance that facilitates essential household activities such as food consumption, sleeping, etc. This goal underscores the distribution of critical items such as kitchen sets for meal preparation and eating, jerry cans for water storage, plastic sheets for emergency shelter offering minimum physical protection, alongside health-sustaining supplies like mosquito nets, blankets, and sleeping mats, while safety and security are enhanced through provision of solar lamps. Furthermore, adopting cash or vouchers as a modality for addressing NFI requirements allows communities, especially those in urban areas with diverse needs and robust markets, to tailor assistance to their unique circumstances, ensuring responses are both more effective and adaptable.

⁸ As of April 16, 2024, per [IOM DTM WDS 27](#)

2. **Facilitate Access to Adequate⁹ Shelter Solutions:** This objective focuses on empowering populations impacted by the crisis to access shelter solutions crucial for protection against environmental hazards, security against external threats and violence, and for maintaining both physical health and mental well-being. Such stability and normalcy lay the groundwork for enhancing livelihoods and educational outcomes, thereby nurturing self-reliance. In response to the complex operational environment, our strategy diversifies shelter response modalities to adapt to the varied conditions of each area. For example, in some states of Darfur, with disrupted markets and as few as 35% of the newly displaced living within host communities, in-kind support is critical. Conversely, in regions like the East, where more resilient markets and significant community solidarity result in over 90% of the newly displaced residing within host communities, cash assistance for shelter proves more advantageous.

Cluster Activities:

#	Activity	Unit Cost	Total Cost	Target (HH)
1.	Provision of cash/vouchers for shelter repair or emergency shelter	650	58,4 M	90,546
2.	Provision of cash/vouchers for NFIs	200	35,8 M	178,848
3.	In-kind NFI kit distribution	200	35,8 M	178,848
4.	In-kind Emergency Shelter Kit (ESK) distribution	650	27,4 M	42,078
5.	Provision of cash/vouchers for rent	800	24,3 M	30,349
6.	Tent distribution	550	11,6 M	21,041
7.	Establishment of communal shelters	650	8,6 M	13,185
8.	Rehabilitation of collective centres	500	6,6 M	13,185
9.	General site development	650	3,9 M	5 924
Total:			212,4 M	2,1 M

Prioritization and Targeting:

During the development of Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) for 2024, the directive from the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) to revert our financial requirements to the 2023 May-revised HRP level, despite a threefold increase in newly internally displaced persons, signified a mandated prioritization rooted in a constrained funding outlook for 2024, coupled with persistent access challenges in Sudan. In response, we were compelled to adopt a stringent prioritization strategy, which is underpinned by two principal factors that guided targeting at locality level:

- 1) **Severity of Needs** – This criterion is informed by a confluence of assessment data, magnitude of new displacement post April 15, 2023, and the multi-hazard risk analysis. It serves as a foundational layer in identifying the most urgent needs across localities.
- 2) **Feasibility-Driven Priority** – This aspect reflects our partners' capacity to deliver, leveraging three years of ActivityInfo People Reached data, with significant focus on progress post-April 15, 2023. The evaluation covers several layers: it assesses performance at sub-sector level, examines outcomes for specific population groups and evaluates effectiveness of various activities, as well as dissects these observations down to locality level for precise prioritization across all these categories. To enhance the accuracy of our planning, this comprehensive analysis is supplemented with OCHA's access data, as well as with historic funding data coupled with the 2024 funding outlook, providing a detailed and realistic understanding of our operational capabilities.

⁹ The concept of "adequacy" means that housing is more than four walls and a roof. It underlines the importance of including a settlement lens, cultural identity, and the availability of services in a shelter response.

By combining the intensity of needs with our ability to effectively intervene, we ensure resources are allocated where they can have the greatest impact. This focused methodology enables us to deliver meaningful aid, optimizing our impact within the limitations of our budget and the complex operational context of Sudan.

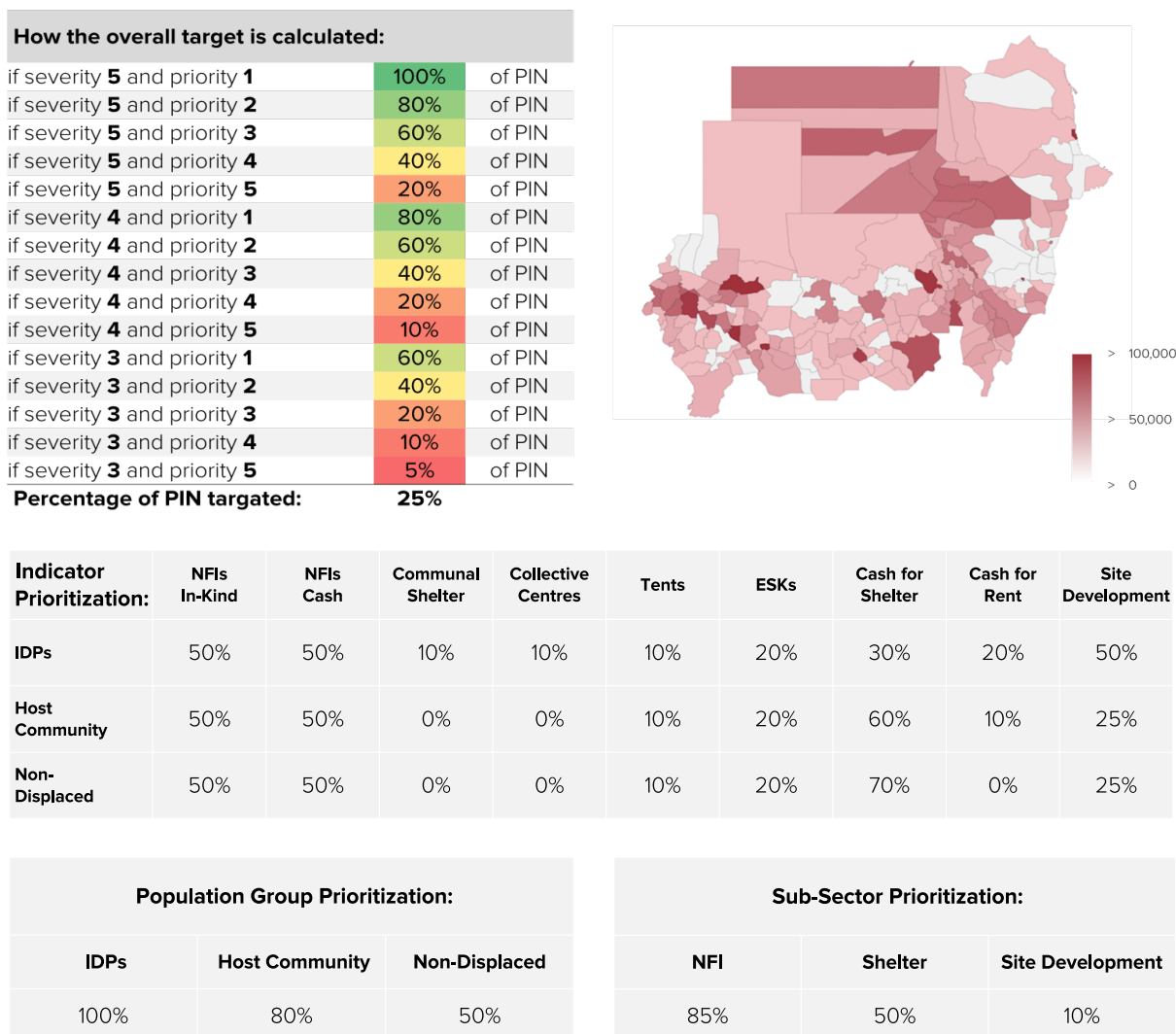


Figure 5. Prioritization and Targeting¹⁰

Response Strategy:

Since the onset of the war between SAF and RSF, [IOM DTM monthly overview reports](https://dtm.iom.int/sudan)¹¹ have persistently highlighted an acute need for NFIs among affected populations. In fact, NFIs have continuously ranked among the top three needs, immediately following food and health. Shelter needs, by comparison, register significantly lower, thanks in large part to the extraordinary levels of community solidarity. This disparity is quantitatively reflected in the consistent 30 to 40 percentage point gap, with recent data showing 80% of the population requiring NFIs and 44% needing shelter, as depicted below (Figure 6.). Reflecting these insights, 85% of the target population is intended to receive NFI assistance, while 50% will be allocated shelter support, as indicated in the prioritization matrix above (Figure 5.).

¹⁰ <https://sheltercluster.org/sudan/pages/hrp-2024>

¹¹ IOM DTM Sudan: <https://dtm.iom.int/sudan>

Commonly, families require both shelter and NFI assistance concurrently, leading to an anticipated overlap between the 50% and 85% allocations. Nonetheless, the 15% gap to reach the entirety of our target reflects an assumption of distinct needs within the population: a segment that exclusively requires either shelter or NFIs, without the necessity for combined support. This differentiation ensures tailored assistance, aligning resources more precisely with the unique requirements.

Percentage of Population in Need of NFIs vs. Shelter - 6 Months Progression

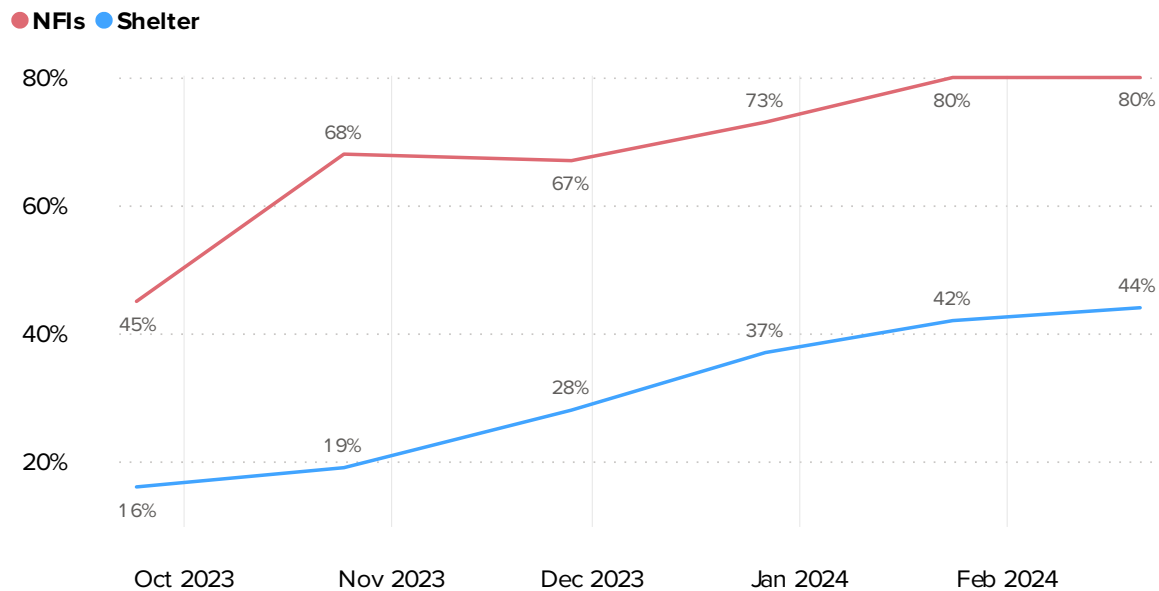


Figure 6. Comparative Analysis of NFIs and Shelter Needs over time¹⁰

Non-Food Items (NFIs):

The decision of prevalent focus on provision of NFIs is not only the result of observed demand dynamics, but also a pragmatic response to the logistical and financial constraints we face, ensuring that we can provide meaningful support to as many people as possible, capitalizing on several key advantages:

Cost-Effectiveness and Scale: Given the ongoing conflict, volatile conditions, and funding constraints faced by shelter partners, providing NFIs emerges as the more economical option compared to other shelter interventions. This cost advantage is a key factor that expands our reach within limited resources against the backdrop of vast needs, as we navigate challenges of matching the rapid pace and scale of displacement.

Simplicity and Logistical Feasibility: Unlike provision of shelter, NFIs are inherently less bulky and easier as well as cheaper to transport, store and distribute. This logistical simplicity facilitates quicker and more straightforward assistance to those in need. Even cash for shelter, which is somewhat logistically simple, introduces a different set of complexities, such as the need for technical guidance and Housing, Land, and Property (HLP) due diligence, making it overall a complex solution due to considerations of conflict sensitivity and tenure security, as well as continued protection monitoring to mitigate risks of exploitation and potential abuse by some host families or landlords.

Procurement and Availability: Larger cluster partners, notably UNHCR and IOM, who also manage common pipelines for the benefit of other cluster members, leverage expansive global framework agreements to procure NFIs. Whilst this approach capitalizes on economies of scale for cost efficiency and accelerates the procurement process ensuring that NFIs are both affordable and readily available, local and regional procurement remains a necessary alternative to support the recovery of local markets and diversify supply chains for enhanced adaptability.

Applicability in Varied Contexts:

- a) **Flexibility and Relevance of Cash-Based NFI Support in Urban-Like Areas:** In more urban-like areas, marked by relative stability and resilient markets, cash for NFIs stands as a key strategy modality. This approach grants families the autonomy to select items that precisely meet their requirements, a degree of specificity unattainable with standardized in-kind kits given the wide range of needs. By embracing the diversity and relatively higher vitality of urban environments, our strategy ensures that our support effectively meets unique demands of these communities.
- b) **Efficacy of In-Kind NFI Support in Rural and Hard-to-Reach Areas:** In rural and hard-to-reach areas, marked by insecurity and the absence of resilient markets, in-kind NFI support is crucial. These regions, often facing shortages of basic commodities or under siege, render cash-based interventions impractical. Moreover, in the context of famine prevention, where mobility is crucial due to food insecurity prompting migration for sustenance, the portability of NFI kits becomes a vital asset. These kits support families on the move by including not only essential household items necessary for survival but also a plastic sheet, offering basic shelter or cover.

Standard NFI kit content is available [HERE](#).



Cash for Shelter and Rental Support:

Given that 73% of the 6.6 million newly displaced individuals in Sudan, shelter within residential neighborhoods of host communities, with 66% being accommodated by family and friends, and 7% securing rental housing¹², a community-based, urban-centric shelter approach is prioritized, emphasizing cash assistance for its adaptability to diverse housing needs, supporting IDPs and communities hosting them.

By leveraging strengths of more urban-like environments, such as the already present housing infrastructure and the solidarity of local communities, this approach focuses on building on top of these existing resources. Starting from scratch with the new construction of temporary and fragile emergency shelters is avoided, because they offer inferior protection and are better suited for rural and hard-to-reach areas, where the opportunities afforded by an urban context do not exist. Channeling cash assistance towards host families and property owners empowers them to provide more sustainable and secure shelter options to IDPs, offering a versatile solution that is customized for an array of housing types, materials, and repair needs. Furthermore, restoring autonomy to IDPs by empowering them to make critical decisions about their daily lives and living conditions, enhances their mental health and psychosocial well-being. This empowerment instills resilience within individuals and communities, transcending mere survival to uphold the dignity of IDPs and facilitate a path toward more lasting stability and self-reliance, marking a significant leap from temporary relief to foundational steps in early recovery and development.

Cash for Shelter as a programme is designed to incentivize host communities to accommodate IDPs for extended periods, by offering financial assistance for home improvements, while securing IDPs' housing rights through tenure agreements. Evaluation of this approach has revealed that host families allocate the funds for various improvements, such as adding extra rooms to alleviate overcrowding caused by IDPs, repairing leaky roofs, upgrading windows and doors for security, strengthening structures against natural disasters, fixing faulty wiring, rehabilitating kitchens, improving ventilation, and so on. This approach stands out as a cost-effective strategy for providing IDPs with stable and secure housing within Sudan's tight financial constraints, transitioning from temporary to permanent structures, as well as easing public infrastructure pressure (e.g., on schools) and preventing the spread of makeshift living conditions.

Importantly, this assistance model is flexible and does not strictly require a host-IDP living arrangement. If IDPs independently have a secure and legitimate land claim (verified through HLP due diligence), they can receive this support as a subsidy for constructing their own home, further expanding the program's adaptability to different needs and situations. Thus, it's unsurprising that this smart shelter model represents nearly half (43%) of our overall shelter target.

Cash for Rent while essential, faces sustainability challenges due to high urban rental costs, serving primarily as a bridge to more permanent solutions. It offers families a chance to stabilize financially and socially, thereby enhancing their ability to move towards self-sufficiency. However, to mitigate the risk of re-displacement, this support, constituting 14% of our overall shelter target, is cautiously implemented. To ensure the sustainability of Cash for Rent programs in Sudan, it's vital to strategically combine these with livelihood initiatives that reflect the country's unique socio-economic landscape. Vocational training programs—such as agriculture, small-scale manufacturing, or services that are resilient to Sudan's fluctuating economic conditions—can equip IDPs with marketable skills. To encourage the employment of IDPs, subsidies could be introduced for businesses within the host communities that hire from this demographic, aiding both economic recovery and integration.

¹² As of April 16, 2024, per [IOM DTM WDS 27](#)

Moreover, microfinance opportunities can significantly contribute to IDP self-sufficiency by enabling them to start or scale small businesses, ranging from agricultural initiatives, to retail or service-oriented ventures that meet local market demands.

Depending on the program's needs and characteristics, Cash for Rent can serve both as an emergency and transitional shelter solution. In its role as an emergency shelter, it offers a vital short-term solution to mitigate eviction risks or meet the urgent needs of vulnerable groups—such as female-headed households, households with chronically ill members, persons with disabilities, and the elderly—facilitating access to or retention of safer housing options away from precarious or severely overcrowded living conditions. Such targeted support is critical for those lacking community ties and facing limited housing options. As a transitional shelter, rental support is provided on a time-bound basis, allowing households time to stabilize or recover from the impact of the crisis. This also includes families, for example, facing bureaucratic delays while awaiting passage to Egypt for an average of three months, who can significantly benefit from this assistance. It provides a sustainable solution by safeguarding them from the vulnerabilities of communal shelters and the exposure of staying in the open during this period.

Understanding the housing rental market is critical to all rental assistance programmes. As a service market, it is fundamentally different to commodity markets. Every accommodation unit is unique due to infinite variations in location, size, cost, access to services, tenure arrangement, etc. Hence, partners are required to utilize the comprehensive [Cluster Rental Market Assessment](#) tool, to inform the design of their Cash for Rent programmes.



Protection Mainstreaming in Cash for Shelter/Rent Interventions: Aligned with the 'Do No Harm' principle, integrating Cash for Shelter/Rent Interventions with protection measures is imperative, recognizing the inherent vulnerability of IDPs, especially in crisis of this magnitude where the stakes are so high. The conjunction of these cash-based interventions with tenure security agreements provides a legal safeguard and sets clear expectations for host families and lessors or property managers, effectively mitigating risks such as the commodification of IDPs or abuse. Beyond the disbursement of funds, continuous protection monitoring is essential to ensure adherence to these agreements, thereby safeguarding the IDPs' safety, dignity, and rights. Furthermore, advocacy for rental control and eviction moratoriums with local authorities is crucial, aimed at securing sustainable, dignified living conditions for the displaced.

Emergency Shelter Kits (ESKs) and Tents:

Supply chain limitations, high costs, and limited impact temper provision of tents and Emergency Shelter Kits (ESKs) at a scale. Nonetheless, in the rural expanses of Sudan, particularly within certain Darfur states where a relatively lower percentage (as few as 35%) of IDPs find refuge with host communities, these emergency shelter solutions become not just beneficial, but a lifeline in times of need, therefore accounting for 30% of our overall shelter target.

Remote, hard-to-reach areas, with markets devastated by conflict and camp-like situations, leave little room for alternatives. In these settings, the packability, rapid setup, and deployment capabilities of emergency shelter solutions are critical. They can swiftly address the needs of large displacement waves, providing immediate protection from the environment. Furthermore, even though ESKs are often met with skepticism by urban IDPs, there are notable instances where these kits have been used to extend homes in urban areas and peri-urban areas, particularly where there is some space available within individual plots or family compounds. The capacity of ESKs for incremental upgrades reflects their adaptability to the distinct needs of IDPs, facilitating a dignified evolution from initial emergency shelters to more stable, transitional housing solutions.

In the aftermath of April 15, 2023, we established the Technical Working Group (TWIG) with the mission to critically reassess and redesign our Emergency Shelter Kits (ESKs) in response to the significantly changed circumstances in Sudan. The initiative was driven by the urgent need for emergency shelter solutions that are not only robust and sustainable but also flexible enough to adapt to the complex challenges of increased insecurity, logistical hurdles, and the harsh climatic conditions prevalent in the region. Previously dependent on natural materials like wooden poles, bamboo, and thatch for their cultural acceptance and suitability to the local climate, the ESKs faced severe supply chain disruptions due to the conflict's impact on material sourcing, transportation, and storage. Recognizing these challenges, the TWIG has innovatively reimagined the ESKs through a modular, component-interchangeable approach. This new design philosophy ensures that each component of the shelter kit can be diversified and tailored to the materials available at any given time in any specific locality, maintaining the structural integrity of the shelter while allowing for adaptability to the immediate context and resources of different regions within Sudan. The design is available [HERE](#).

Tents, while not perfectly suited to Sudan's harsh climate due to their limited breathability and resistance to storms, play an indispensable role in supporting mobility needed to address food insecurity. As the threat of famine drives migration in search of sustenance, the portability of tents becomes crucial, enabling affected individuals to carry their shelter as they move to areas with better access to food or agricultural opportunities. Although ESKs built with natural materials and traditional techniques offer superior air circulation and temperature control, leveraging inherent material properties for comfort and being both cost-effective and culturally appropriate, their seasonal material availability, exacerbated by insecurity, can render them impractical, positioning tents as a vital

alternative. As rapidly deployable and installed, tents are essential in emergency scenarios where swift action is needed. Their ease of transport allows humanitarian organizations to swiftly deliver them to even the most inaccessible areas, thereby ensuring the survival of displaced communities in Sudan's most challenging environments. Furthermore, ongoing innovations in tent design are enhancing their resilience and adaptability to extreme conditions, contributing to broader survival strategies and ensuring tents remain a critical component of emergency response efforts.



Conflict Sensitivity and Housing, Land, and Property (HLP): In Sudan, the complex interplay of conflict dynamics necessitates a conflict-sensitive approach to providing in-kind shelter support, adhering to the 'Do No Harm' principle. The intricacy of land tenure and rights, and historical competition over scarce resources means that even temporary emergency shelter interventions could inadvertently escalate tensions. Communities might view any form of development, particularly semi-permanent or durable shelters, as an assertion of land claims, potentially igniting disputes among groups competing for control or ownership.

Addressing HLP rights in the shelter response begins by identifying the HLP elements affected by our interventions, alongside understanding the local tenure systems¹³ and realities on the ground. This process involves collaborating with local authorities and key stakeholders to undertake HLP due diligence, aimed at achieving certainty about tenure and defining necessary tenure arrangements to accompany provision of shelter assistance. These measures are crucial for securing the rights of all parties involved and protecting project participants from exploitation, forced eviction, or further displacement. This is also crucial for preventing the inadvertent legitimization of land grabbing and illegal occupation, thereby mitigating the risk of exacerbating existing conflicts or sparking new ones.

Cluster partners are expected to be aware of, understand, and respect the relevant HLP aspects within the complex tenure system of Sudan. This knowledge enables humanitarian actors to devise shelter solutions that are not only immediately beneficial but also sustainable, promoting long-term stability through approaches that allow for incremental upgrades of emergency shelters. Emphasizing legal frameworks and community engagement, this conflict-sensitive method aims to break the cycle of violence fueled by land and property disputes, paving a safer and more equitable route to recovery for displaced communities.

Response in the Gathering Sites/Collective Centers:

In addressing the shelter needs within gathering sites, where approximately 27% of IDPs currently find refuge¹⁴, our strategy consciously pivots from investing heavily in these temporary accommodations, towards promoting IDPs' transition to more stable, individual housing options within host communities. These sites require substantial investment for both setup and maintenance, yet offer disproportionately low impact and can even be detrimental. Site-based sheltering frequently grapples with issues like overcrowding, insufficient facilities, and compromised privacy and security, aggravating protection concerns such as GBV and theft, while fueling tensions and disputes due to cramped conditions and resource scarcity. These challenges not only heighten health risks due to substandard living conditions but also pose risks of eviction, gatekeeping and exploitation, particularly in schools or privately held properties. The absence of viable alternatives for individuals with specific needs, further deepens vulnerabilities and mental health struggles, entrenching a state of perpetual alertness and uncertainty. This dynamic undermines community cohesion and self-reliance, contributing to a vicious cycle of displacement and reliance on aid, and hindering the pursuit of lasting solutions. Over time, the unchecked growth of these sites risks evolving into urban slums, exacerbating crime and social discord, thereby straining local economies. Such developments emphasize the critical need for sustainable, urban-centric shelter strategies that focus on integration, and offer secure, adequate housing alternatives, positioning site-based sheltering as a measure of last resort.

¹³ Tenure systems are the sets of formal or informal rules and institutions that determine access to, use, the transactions and control over housing, land and natural resources.

¹⁴ As of April 16, 2024, per [IOM DTM WDS 27](#)

Given these challenges, our strategy increasingly emphasizes targeted cash for shelter and rent initiatives that are leveraged to not only support IDPs in finding safer and more permanent housing, but also to prevent the further proliferation of gathering sites. While we recognize that gathering sites should only be used as a last resort, it is imperative that families, women, men, youth, girls, boys, and the elderly living in these substandard spaces are not left behind. Therefore, our engagement in these areas focuses on meeting essential needs and addressing their inherent inadequacies to reduce protection risks. We achieve this through the rehabilitation or adaptation of existing public buildings and collective centers, as well as the careful establishment of new communal accommodations to facilitate site consolidation or alleviate overcrowding. This strategy accounts for 12% of our overall shelter target and includes both direct construction services provided by humanitarian organizations, and the implementation of group cash grants for community-led initiatives, such as Emergency Response Rooms (ERRs). The goal is to provide balanced support to both IDPs and host communities, who often serve as the first line of response, and to advocate for the regulation of rental policies and the strengthening of public services. These actions are intended to enhance social cohesion and improve the absorption capacity of key hosting areas. Authorities are also encouraged to develop sustainable strategies for existing sites, including a moratorium on evictions and a gradual approach to balancing the competing priorities of education and IDP sheltering, thereby adhering to the 'Do No Harm' principle and avoiding investments in locations where tenure security cannot be guaranteed.

In the allocation of resources to various gathering sites, the goal is to optimize the impact of our efforts by directing attention to locations that boast better tenure security, access to essential public services, and thus a higher potential for sustainable development. Given the constraints of limited resources, accessibility issues, and the capacities of responding teams, prioritizing sites becomes a critical task. However, it's important to differentiate between the broad spectrum of displacement needs and the particular protection risks or needs stemming from factors like age, gender, or specific vulnerabilities. This approach ensures that protection risks are universally addressed, while significant investments in rehabilitation are reserved for sites where long-term viability can be guaranteed.



Sites warranting priority for large construction investments are those with consistent humanitarian access, situated in safe and secure areas, accommodating large populations of displaced persons or those with specific needs, and are either recognized or managed by authorities. Preferences should be accorded to sites with lower risks of eviction, capacity for additional consolidation, potential for development, opportunities for social and recreational activities, and the capacity to promote peaceful co-existence. Furthermore, the selection process should also consider minimizing exposure to environmental hazards, whether they are related to weather patterns, climate change, or anthropogenic factors.

To effectively address the comprehensive needs within gathering sites, an intersectoral response coordinated under the Site Management sector is essential. Cluster partners should foster integrated responses through holistic programming and collaboration with WASH actors particularly, but also with other relevant clusters, including by leveraging public services and infrastructure from surrounding host communities wherever possible. Additionally, this approach involves enhancing protection with physical structures such as women and child-friendly spaces to provide a hardware component to the softer aspects of protection interventions. To further support IDP resilience and recovery within gathering sites, it is crucial to provide tailored shelter and water solutions that accommodate small livestock and working equids. Facilitating such arrangements, not only upholds traditional livelihoods but also helps prevent the adoption of harmful coping mechanisms.

To ensure a safe and informed response regarding gathering sites and relocations, it is imperative that partners familiarize themselves with the following key documents:

- [ICCG Guidance Note on IDP Sites in Sudan](#)
- [ICCG Common Position Paper - Relocation and Alternative Solutions to Gathering Sites](#)

Site Development:

The settlement conditions in displacement sites often suffer from a critical lack of infrastructure, public facilities, and utilities, significantly hindering access to essential services and negatively impacting both physical and mental health. Issues with pedestrian and vehicular access not only restrict mobility and limit transportation options, impacting the diversification of livelihoods, but also lead to long distances and poor walkability to essential public facilities such as water sources, health centers, markets, etc. This is further compounded by inadequate drainage, a lack of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) infrastructure such as culverts, bridges, and embankments to prevent flooding and waterlogging, as well as insufficient street lighting for security, poor solid waste management, and inadequate sanitation, all of which have been reported at various degrees in multi-sectoral needs assessments. Persons with disabilities, elderly and others with reduced mobility bear the worst consequences of sub-standard settlement conditions, whereby physical barriers impact their ability to engage in community activities. A lack of awareness further compounds the issue, potentially leading to people's needs not being identified and the risk of excluding vulnerable individuals from humanitarian assistance. Consequently, the most socioeconomically vulnerable households may often adopt harmful coping mechanisms to navigate these obstacles.

In Sudan, millions reside in flood-prone areas where vulnerable groups in local communities and displaced persons are disproportionately affected by natural hazards yet often benefit the least from disaster risk reduction (DRR) measures. Therefore, integrating DRR through the rehabilitation of basic infrastructure is essential to bolster civil resilience and mitigate the vulnerabilities of those most at risk. Given the cost-intensive nature of site development, the strategy dedicates a limited portion of resources to enhancing accessibility, safety, mobility, and ensuring effective evacuation routes, which protects vulnerable residents and secures the sustainability of investments in these sites. This includes

fire prevention through shelter design and settlement planning as well as community awareness raising. Educational initiatives that promote safer building practices help prevent the reconstruction of vulnerabilities. Meanwhile, solar streetlights enhance security, and broader solarization efforts facilitate access to energy. Together with improved connectivity, these interventions become lifesaving in contexts where banking crises and cash liquidity issues necessitate increased reliance on mobile money. However, it is crucial for agencies engaged in solarization to prioritize community engagement to maximize the effectiveness of their interventions. Experience in Sudan has demonstrated that meaningful community participation is essential to ensure the success and sustainability of solar installations at the settlement level.

Cross-Cutting Themes:

Localization: In Sudan's humanitarian sector, particularly within the Shelter and NFI Cluster, national NGOs have become pivotal, both in their response footprint and as members of the cluster's Strategic Advisory Group (SAG). These organizations leverage their deep-rooted local knowledge, extensive networks, and established community trust to deliver tailored and effective shelter and NFI solutions across Sudan. Concurrently, the landscape of humanitarian aid in Sudan is shifting towards increased civilian engagement and grassroots governance, notably through the emergence and operational approach of Emergency Response Rooms (ERRs). ERRs have become essential first-line responders, stepping in as the only entities with access to some of the most conflict-affected and hard-to-reach areas. Despite the inherent risks of due diligence, accountability, and neutrality associated with their non-traditional status, a robust collaborative framework supported by the Sudan Humanitarian Fund (SHF) has been put in place to mitigate these issues. This framework channels resources from international NGOs to local NGOs and then to ERRs, enhancing their operational capabilities through optimized resource management, technical capacity building, and strengthened control mechanisms.



By fostering partnerships that utilize ERRs' strengths as frontline responders, the humanitarian sector can harness their dynamic adaptability, nuanced understanding of local communities, and extensive decentralized reach to significantly scale up shelter and NFI responses. Currently, organizations are channeling group cash grants to ERRs, facilitating community-led budgeting for rehabilitation and management of collective accommodations. Furthermore, ERRs play a crucial role in access to land negotiation and community-level dispute resolution, which are vital for unlocking the shelter response. They also bridge the gap between host communities and unaffiliated IDPs (without local friends or family), preventing these individuals from resorting to inadequate gathering sites by facilitating connections with local families willing to host. Echoing global initiatives like the Ukrainian model, where an Airbnb-like platform connects volunteer host families with displaced individuals, ERRs implement a similar grassroots strategy. With an eye on scaling up these low-tech, community-driven responses, the Shelter and NFI Cluster is eager to capitalize on the unique position of ERRs to deliver more sustainable and inclusive shelter solutions.

GBV Reduction: Limited impact of emergency shelter solutions on GBV prevention is primarily due to the inherent vulnerabilities in their design and material composition. Often made from flimsy materials, emergency shelters provide only nominal security. Despite the potential inclusion of locks as part of an incremental upgrade approach, the ease with which the walls—often made of tarpaulin, plastic sheeting, dry grass or light timber—can be cut or pushed through, renders these deterrents ineffective against determined intruders. Moreover, tents, exacerbate privacy and security issues due to their translucent materials. Such materials not only fail to offer visual privacy but can also silhouette occupants, inadvertently broadcasting the presence of women and girls who are alone, thereby increasing their vulnerability to GBV. These structural vulnerabilities highlight emergency shelters' incapacity to offer genuine protection. Shifting towards cash for shelter and rental assistance initiatives presents an opportunity to access more secure and private housing solutions, thereby enhancing GBV prevention efforts. Further, unless there is an internal partition within an emergency shelter or a separate room within rental accommodation, girls and women lack private spaces to sleep or change clothes. While striving for maximum cost efficiency given the limited resources is important, budgets across modalities should still aim to accommodate the necessary internal space divisions within individual shelters. Incorporating a gender-sensitive approach into aid delivery is crucial for reducing GBV risks effectively. Training from GBV AoR for Shelter/NFI Cluster Partners highlights the critical role of employing female staff in significant positions in aid distribution and management. This ensures sensitivity to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of women and girls and fosters a safer and more responsive environment for them. Key strategies also include scheduling distributions at times and places that are safe and accessible for women and girls and securing private gender segregated facilities. These measures are mandated for cluster partners, aiming to curb abuse and boost the impact of humanitarian assistance.

Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP): In partnership with the AAP working group, the Cluster will focus on enhancing feedback mechanisms, utilizing advanced Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) tools, and ensuring active community participation in decision-making for shelter and NFI provision. This approach is designed to meet beneficiaries' expectations while upholding the highest ethical standards, including the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA). It also involves transparent community engagement to communicate the realities of resource limitations and the rationale for strict vulnerability prioritization. Given severe resource constraints, efforts are focused on directing aid towards the most vulnerable populations. This is achieved through an area-based assessment strategy and leveraging community-based protection networks to apply the prioritization criteria transparently and equitably. Additionally, the Shelter and NFI response planning supports individuals with disabilities and their families to ensure they are not left behind during conflict-related and natural disasters, such as habitat destruction, displacement, food crises, and climate-induced events.

Inclusion and Disability: Ensuring inclusive Shelter and NFI assistance in Sudan demands a nuanced, multifaceted strategy. Central to this approach is the enhancement of physical access, mobility, and evacuation pathways through targeted DRR initiatives, as well as refinement of aid delivery mechanisms to directly reach individuals with disabilities. A higher focus is necessary on improving data collection to capture the distinct needs of those with disabilities accurately and utilizing local knowledge to inform programming. Engaging community members with disabilities in the co-creation of shelter designs, early warning systems, resilience planning, and disaster risk reduction strategies ensures that the response is deeply rooted in the realities of Sudan's diverse communities.

Conflict Sensitivity and HLP Due Diligence: In the challenging environment of Sudan, the cluster strategy combines careful handling of HLP rights with conflict sensitivity to mitigate the impact of the primary conflict driver: competition over land and resources. This approach aims to avoid escalating tensions or validating unauthorized land claims by focusing on tenure security and integrating protection monitoring into projects. It also aligns with the 'Do No Harm' principle and supports sustainable solutions for communities facing secondary occupation issues. Furthermore, collaboration with the Protection Cluster promotes policy reforms such as rental control and eviction moratoriums, while leveraging community-based conflict resolution methods to effectively address land and property disputes, crucial for the success of shelter efforts.

Risk Management: The Shelter and NFI Cluster will collaborate with the Risk Management Working Group (RMWG), also known as the Risk and Compliance Task Force for Sudan, which is pivotal in leading the risk management process. In collaboration with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) and drawing inspiration from initiatives such as the Risk Information Exchange (RIX) platform in South Sudan, will focus on gathering and analyzing risk data across health, environmental, economic, security, and social domains. The initiative will engage UN agencies, NGOs, government bodies, donors, affected populations, and civil society organizations to ensure a unified approach to risk management. The strategy will employ a comprehensive risk management framework to identify, assess, and prioritize risks, applying resources to mitigate and monitor potential adverse impacts and capitalize on opportunities to meet the Cluster's goals.



Monitoring:

Comprehensive guidance on ActivityInfo 5W Reporting can be found [HERE](#), while the Interactive 2024 Achievements Dashboard is accessible [HERE](#).

For an in-depth understanding and guidance on the unique and standardized Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) practices of the Shelter and NFI Cluster in Sudan, please refer to [HERE](#).

What If We Don't Respond?

The consequences of resource constraints and inaccessibility hampering delivery of shelter and household items in Sudan, particularly in the context of the current conflict, are complex and multifaceted. These include:

- **Exposure to Harsh Environmental Conditions:** Displaced people, lacking adequate shelter, as well as critical NFIs like plastic sheets, blankets and sleeping mats, face exposure to extreme weather conditions. Sudan's climate, characterized by intense heat and periodic heavy rains with flooding, can be particularly harsh. Without proper shelter, individuals are vulnerable to health risks like heatstroke, dehydration, and hypothermia during colder nights, especially in desert areas.
- **Increased Health Risks:** Inadequate shelter conditions often lead to overcrowding, which can exacerbate the spread of infectious diseases. The lack of basic sanitation facilities further increases the risk of waterborne diseases. Displaced populations, without access to clean water or proper sanitation, are more susceptible to illnesses like diarrhea, cholera, and respiratory infections. Additionally, the absence of mosquito nets, which are typically included in household item kits, exacerbates the risk of vector-borne diseases like malaria, underlining the critical importance of comprehensive shelter and household item assistance in these areas.
- **Increased Famine Risks:** Inadequate shelter conditions not only compromise health but also severely impact nutritional outcomes among displaced populations. Overcrowding and the absence of essential household items can hinder proper food preparation and safe storage, increasing the risk of foodborne illnesses. Without reliable access to facilities like clean cooking areas and secure food storage, families face challenges in maintaining a nutritious diet. This is particularly critical where access to food is already precarious. Additionally, the lack of kitchen sets, which are vital for preparing meals safely, directly affects the nutritional health of vulnerable groups, especially children. The absence of adequate shelter and essential cooking utilities thus exacerbates the threat of malnutrition and undernutrition, underscoring the urgent need for comprehensive shelter and NFI assistance to support effective famine prevention strategies.
- **Compromised Safety and Security:** In conflict zones, the absence of secure shelter significantly heightens safety and security risks, offering little protection from shelling and exacerbating the threat of gender-based violence, especially for women and children since the war began on April 15, 2023. This lack of private, safe spaces intensifies the risk of exploitation and abuse. Furthermore, the escalation in looting and crime, driven by desperation, not only increases the risk of personal belongings being stolen but also heightens the likelihood of physical harm from assailants. The provision of items like solar lights or battery torches in NFI kits is crucial, as they can offer a sense of security in the absence of stable lighting, all of which underscores the need for secure shelter solutions.
- **Psychological Impact:** Living in temporary, inadequate shelters or in open areas can lead to significant psychological stress and trauma. The uncertainty of living conditions, coupled with hardships of displacement and conflict, can have long-lasting effects on mental health. This

situation not only affects mental well-being but also becomes a primary barrier to self-reliance for affected populations. Consequently, it perpetuates their state of displacement, hindering their ability to rebuild stable, self-sufficient lives.

- **Disruption of Social and Community Networks:** Displacement often fragments community and family structures, disrupting traditional support networks with profound social impacts, including the loss of cultural practices and community cohesion. Providing adequate shelter can help begin the process of rebuilding these vital connections. A stable sense of home can be instrumental in re-establishing cultural ties and enhancing community cohesion. However, it is crucial to manage this process in a conflict-sensitive manner, recognizing the complex ethnic divisions and resource competition that fuel conflicts in these areas. Culturally informed and thoughtful responses are essential for helping communities regain their sense of identity and belonging within a challenging environment.
- **Impact on Education and Development for Children:** In Sudan, the displacement crisis profoundly impacts children's education and development. Displaced children often lose access to education, critical for their future prospects, and the lack of a stable environment can lead to developmental delays and psychological distress. This issue is exacerbated as many newly displaced families are seeking shelter in educational facilities. Providing appropriate shelter solutions could alleviate this pressure, potentially freeing up these facilities and allowing children to resume their education, should the situation stabilize over time.
- **Economic Hardship:** The loss of property and the inability to maintain a stable livelihood due to displacement can lead to economic hardship. The need to rebuild lives and homes in a new location, often with limited resources, can perpetuate cycles of poverty.
- **Dependency on Aid:** Prolonged displacement and the inability to access shelter and household items increase dependency on humanitarian aid, which can be sporadic and insufficient due to resource constraints and challenges in delivery in conflict areas.



Conclusion:

In the evolving landscape of Sudan's complex humanitarian crises, the Shelter & NFI Cluster Strategy for 2024 has embarked on an ambitious journey to navigate the confluence of persistent conflicts, climate change impacts, economic turmoil, and the colossal task of meeting the shelter and NFI needs of millions of displaced and vulnerable individuals. The challenges are many, with each layer of adversity adding complexity to an already intricate humanitarian response. However, amidst these obstacles, the strategy has identified pathways to resilience, leveraging innovative approaches to shelter and NFI provision, and laying the groundwork for a more sustainable and inclusive humanitarian response.

Despite significant challenges posed by access constraints, Shelter and NFI Cluster partners have already demonstrated remarkable resilience and capacity, reaching close to 300,000 people across 14 of Sudan's 18 states in the first three months of 2024 alone—including in the most hard-to-reach areas like Khartoum and West Darfur. This achievement highlights a critical reality: while our operational capabilities have hit the 'resources ceiling' due to current funding and resource limitations, our potential for impact—the 'access ceiling'—remains significantly higher. This gap underscores both a challenge and an opportunity for action.

The disparity between the resources at our disposal and our capacity to overcome access barriers emphasizes the urgent need for additional funding, and advocacy at different government and institutional levels. By securing further support, we can bridge this gap and scale up the response, extending vital assistance to more individuals and communities in need. It's a call to action for the international community, donors, and stakeholders to invest in the Shelter & NFI sector, recognizing its foundational role in ensuring safety, security, health, mental well-being, and the basis for improved livelihoods and educational outcomes.

In essence, Sudan is a neglected crisis, and our humanitarian mandate compels us to alleviate the ongoing suffering, further exacerbated by dire shelter conditions. There lies a critical window of opportunity to enhance our humanitarian efforts significantly. This is not just about meeting immediate needs but about building a foundation for sustainable recovery and resilience among Sudan's most vulnerable populations. The potential to do more exists—between our current resources and our ability to access those in need. Now is the time to act, to ensure that the gap between what is possible and what is necessary to uphold the dignity and well-being of those we serve is closed.

