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Association loi 1901 créée en 1994, enregistrée à la préfecture du Rhône N°691052256

Sudan: a year of civil war and the dawn of famine

Lyon, 15 April 2024

Exactly one year ago, the civil war that is now engulfing Sudan more than ever began. A paroxysmal episode in a political crisis that emerged from the peaceful civilian revolution of 2019, which led to the creation of a transitional council that included civil society, this conflict pits two warlords against each other, despite the fact that two years later they had managed to join forces and seize power for themselves, before their disagreements and personal ambitions exploded into the open.

With unprecedented intensity in a country whose recent history has been marked by conflict, the current crisis has left the Sudanese people torn between the SAF (Sudanese Armed Forces), representatives of a hated former regime but associated with the relative security that once prevailed, and the RSF (Rapid Support Forces), embodiments of change and revenge from the margins, but also the intrusion of violence into the daily lives of people who, with the notable exception of the inhabitants of Darfur or Kordofan, had been sheltered from it.

One year on from the start of the civil war, there is no prospect of an early settlement. On the contrary, everything is conspiring to give credibility to the worst-case scenarios, including increased recruitment, the intensification of the ethnic nature of the conflict, the maintenance of the de facto partition of the country and the spread of chaos.

As always in such situations, it is the civilian population that pays the heaviest price. To date, more than 8 million Sudanese have had to flee, either internally or to neighbouring countries. More than 15,000 people



have been killed, a figure that is likely to be grossly underestimated. Above all, this year's poor harvest as a result of the conflict, the lack of supplies to the markets and the galloping inflation it has caused raise fears that the food insecurity already experienced by millions of Sudanese could turn into a catastrophic and uncontrollable famine, in a country where access to people in need is made extremely difficult by the size of the country, the non-functioning of the few infrastructures and widespread insecurity.

Internally displaced persons seeking shelter on the Sudan-Chad border, August 2023 © TGH

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Famine: the word is frightening, and its use almost automatically evokes warnings of caution and references to a strict definition that alone would allow it to be used. Far from these arguments, the Sudanese people are well aware of the reality of the situation. There are recent precedents: 100,000 deaths in Darfur in 1984-85, 250,000 in Southern Sudan in 1988, 70,000 in 1998 - to name but a few of the famines that have struck Sudan in recent history, each time leaving the survivors in permanent poverty, whether they have lost their livestock or other means of production, or have sought refuge in the slums of the big cities. After a year of civil war, what is at stake in Sudan is the protection of life today and tomorrow.



This year marks the anniversary of Triangle Génération Humanitaire's intervention in Sudan.

Over the past 20 years, we have helped to alleviate the suffering of people already affected by conflict, and have also worked with Sudanese communities during periods of calm to bring about lasting improvements in their conditions. Today, TGH is present in both Darfur and the east of the country, playing an active role in the humanitarian response, despite the extremely difficult operating conditions. However, despite our efforts and those of the partners with whom we have joined forces to increase our effectiveness, our action will not be enough to meet all the needs or to avoid the most catastrophic consequences.

The situation in Sudan demands attention and mobilisation beyond this anniversary, so that we don't have to say *never again*. In any case, we won't be able to say *we didn't know*.

TGH's WASH team repairs a manual water pump in the Sirba commune of Darfur, January 2024 © TGH