

## **Sudan War: A surge of unwanted pregnancies as a result of sexual violence**

The African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies (ACJPS) [previously](#) documented incidents where **fourteen** women and girls from both Kalma and Utash IDP Camps in South Darfur State were sexually violated. A follow-up with the victims indicated that **six** of them got pregnant due to failure to get medical attention. Three other victims; two from Kalma and one from Utash camp got abortions.

Ms. Salma, a rape victim from the Aljeer neighborhood located North East of Nyala town, South Darfur also ended up getting pregnant.

### **Victims' Testimonies**

Ms. Mona (not a real name) a 24-year-old resident of Center 6 in Kalma Camp was raped by armed men dressed in RSF uniform on 25 December 2023 at Barli Valley also known as Nyala Valley. She testified to ACJPS that *“in January 2024, I visited the health Centre because my monthly period was late. I took a test and after about 15 minutes, the medical officer came and informed me that I was pregnant. I couldn't control my tears after receiving the news because of the circumstance under which I got pregnant. I gathered some energy, returned home, and told my parents and siblings who have always supported me. It has been difficult for me to accept the situation and how it will affect my life. My mother refuses to entertain the idea of abortion...,”* she said

On 12 December 2023, Ms. Shahidah (not real name) a 33-year-old resident of Center 4 in Utash Camp was raped among a group of other female IDPs by a group of armed men in RSF uniform at one of the stores in Almasani aka Industrial neighborhood in Nyala. *“In January 2024, I found out that I am pregnant. I informed my husband who was away at the time and we decided to terminate the pregnancy because I couldn't accept what had happened to me and having the baby would only make the situation worse. The stigma from people in the community was also affecting me negatively...,”* she testified

A credible source informed ACJPS that the number of rape victims getting abortions is more than reported because of the stigma surrounding it.

### **Incidents in North Darfur State**

During the period between 15 April 2023 and 27 March 2024, at least **81 cases** of sexual violence against women and girls were been reported in North Darfur State. Most cases were reported in the three towns of El-fashir, Kutum, and Tawilla locality. El-fashir is the North Darfur capital located approximately 1,250 kilometers northwest of Khartoum. Kutum town is located approximately 102 kilometers West of El-fashir and Tawila locality is located approximately 76 kilometers Southwest of El-fashir. The most affected group are female IDPs who fled Nyala (the capital of South Darfur State) and have temporarily settled in North Darfur aged between 12 to 40 years. It is however unfortunate that only **22** out of the 81 victims were able to receive medical assistance. This can be attributed to the lack of medical supplies in the few functional medical facilities. For instance, since 02 April 2024, the few medical facilities that are functional in North Darfur have been out of

sexual violence medicine due to the escalation of tension between the warring parties in El-Fashir and consequently disrupting the transportation of humanitarian aid including medical supplies into the town.

In another development, in November 2023, two main signatories of the Juba Peace Agreement decided to support the Sudanese Army. This decision affected the transportation of humanitarian assistance from Port Sudan and Red Sea State to Darfur region as it escalated tension between the warring parties in the Darfur region.

### **El-Fashir town**

When the armed conflict broke out in Sudan on 15 April 2023, the Native administration in North Darfur was quick to form a local ceasefire committee. The committee was established by Mr. Nimir Abdul Rahman, the former Governor of North Darfur state on 20 April 2023. The ceasefire committee prevented the warring parties from engaging in North Darfur by keeping them away from each other. For example, in El-fashir, the SAF stayed in the western part while RSF remained in the Eastern part of the town. The committee also sealed off the market as a No-Go zone for both parties. However, this peace was short lived because the warring parties eventually engaged and committed various violations including sexual violence against the population.

There have been reports of at least **20 cases** of rape and **three** cases of sexual harassment in El-fashir mainly from the Eastern neighborhoods of; Altadamon, Alnakhil aka Khur Saial, Altijania, Almsani, Aljabal, North Althura and Alshuha. All these neighbourhoods are under the control of RSF.

An eye witness testified to ACJPS that he witnessed three masked armed men dressed in RSF uniform raping a girl in El-fashir main market near the Cultural Complex.

Ms. Fatima (not her real name) aged 16 years old was raped by two armed men dressed in RSF uniform while fleeing from Nyala to El-fashir. She ended up getting pregnant because she was unable to access medical assistance. She also faced stigma from society which eventually caused her to attempt to take her own life. Although she was rescued and taken to South Hospital, she unfortunately died as doctors were on strike on that fateful day.

### **Tawilla locality**

At least **32** women and girls were sexually violated by RSF members when RSF attacked the Tawilla locality. The attack lasted three days before the RSF troops withdrew from the area. The three day-attack resulted in the exodus of residents including some of the victims who fled to fairly safe neighborhoods around El-fashir like Shagra village, Abu Shook, and Zamzam IDP camps. The attackers also raided Tawilla Hospital and looted supplies, equipment, and ambulances, further hindering victims from getting medical assistance.

### **Kutum town**

On 5 June 2023, RSF together with its allied militias attacked the SAF base in Kutum. During the attack, several violations were committed including the rape of at least **29**

women and girls, raiding and looting of private homes in the neighborhoods of Algasir, Salamah Abu Domah, and East Dababin.

Ms. Samah (not her real name) testified to ACJPS that a group of RSF members raided the house where she and several others were staying. The raiders gathered all the females in one room and that they would take the females (herself included) to another room one at a time and they were raped and returned to the group. *“I was taken to the other room where all the raiders took turns raping me before I was returned to the room with the rest of the group. After the despicable act, stole several items from the house and left....”* She painfully recollected.

*“The attackers were many in number and when they raided a house in the neighborhood, neighbors would not come to the victims’ rescue as they feared that they would suffer the same fate ....,”* another witness testified.

Ms. Halima (not her real name) told ACJPS that *“... on the second day of the attack in Kutum by RSF, I together with several other women and girls fled the town but as we were heading to El-fashir, we were followed by a group armed Arab militia wearing masks. We ran and ended up splitting in different directions and unfortunately, myself together with four other women, were caught. One of the men took me away from the group and raped me. I do not know what happened to the other women. After I had been raped, I walked for around 20 minutes in a state of confusion until I found a group of people heading to El-fashir. I joined them and we walked together for three days until we reached El-fashir where I got medical attention upon arrival...,”* she testified

### **Incidents in West Darfur state**

ACJPS previously [documented](#) incidents where girls were abducted and subjected to sexual slavery in Elgenina. During the period between 26 June 2023 to 4 August 2023, at least **30** cases of sexual violence against women and girls were reported in Elegnina, West Darfur State.

On 26 June 2023, at least **11** females were sexually violated by RSF members and its allied militias while they were fleeing from Aljamarik, Altadamon, Althura, and Alzuhoor neighborhoods in Elgenina, West Darfur State following intense gunfights between the warring parties. There were also reports of sexual harassment and assault perpetrated by the attackers.

On 28 June 2023, at about 06:00 Pm, two young women aged between 22 to 24 were raped in Libya market in West Darfur State by a group of armed masked men dressed in RSF uniform.

Mr. Ahmed (not real name), a cross-border trader in Elgenina, Sudan, Chad, and Cameroon talked to ACJPS on 24 June 2023. He informed ACJPS that the situation in Elgenina market and Elgenina town made a turn for the worst following the withdrawal of the Sudanese Liberation Movement - Sudanese Alliance (SLM/SA) from the market. He stated that on 25 June 2023, groups of RSF and its allied Arab militias raided Elgenina town and

they were seen moving around the town and in the market. They allegedly looted several shops in the market mainly targeting those dealing in electronics and mobile phones and later advanced to stealing agricultural machines such as grinding mills. *“These incidents caused me to pack up the goods from my store in the market and transport them to Chad. As I was on my way to the border, a few meters away from a checkpoint, I saw two men dressed in RSF uniform raping two girls”* Mr. Ahmed narrated

Another witness who preferred anonymity informed ACJPS that on 28 June 2023, at around 08:30 Am, a group of armed Arab militia allied to RSF dressed in plain clothes raided a house in Almajlis neighborhood aka City Council in Elgenina. He added that the raiders entered a room where two young girls aged 14 and 15 were hiding and raped the 14-year-old girl. Fortunately, the 15-year-old girl was able to escape unharmed.

On 29 June 2023, a group of armed Arab men raped **six** girls aged between 18 to 24 years in the Al-Safa neighborhood located West South of Elgenina Market in West Darfur State.

Mr. Khalid (not real name), an eye witness testified to ACJPS that *“On 29 June 2023, at around 04:00 Pm while I was on my way from Donki 13 to Al-Safa neighborhood in Elgenina, I saw a lady aged approximately 20 years old crossing the road in the company of an elderly man. The two were stopped by two armed Arab men and under gunpoint, the lady was raped in the presence of the elderly man. I witnessed the incident while in hiding...,”* he narrated

On 25 June 2023, at least **five** girls were raped in the Almdaris neighborhood in Elgenina, West Darfur State by Armed Arabs affiliated with RSF.

### **Victims’ Testimonies**

*“On 25 June 2023, at around 11:00 Am when RSF and its allied militia raided our neighborhood (Al-Madara neighborhood located West of Elgenina town), my younger brother and I left our home and headed for Armata locality. While on our way to Armata, we were stopped by two armed Arab men dressed in Jalabia wear locally known as Allalah. I got scared and wondered what they were going to do to us. However, my fears quickly became a reality when we were taken inside Ibin Sena School located a few meters North of the main street. One of the men took me inside one of the classrooms. Although I tried to resist, he overpowered and eventually raped me as the other armed man stayed outside beating my brother with a lash. He (the second rapist) later entered the room and took his turn raping me. They then tied our legs and hands with ropes and left...,”* she recounted

Ms. Sabra (not real name), a 32-year-old mother of three from the Donki 13 neighborhood in Elgenina, testified to ACJPS that *“On 4 August 2023, the gunfights between the warring parties intensified in Elgenina and our neighborhood of Donki 13. While I sat and contemplated fleeing for safety with my three children, our house was raided by three armed men. One of them was wearing an RSF uniform while the other two were dressed in plain clothes. The raiders demanded gold and money but I responded and told them that we had neither. One of the raiders then grabbed me by the waist and raped me in the*

*presence of my children and the other raiders. They then went to my bedroom, searched, and stole 3 million Sudanese pounds that belonged to my husband who works as a businessman. They also stole the Television set and left....”*