Sudan

Country Overview

Politics

The Republic of the Sudan is a presidential republic in northeastern Africa. Since South Sudan seceded in 2011, there has been ongoing conflict between the Sudanese government and the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement-North in Southern Kordofan and the Blue Nile states. Additional conflict has been occurring in the Darfur region since 2003, with an estimated 1.2 million to 1.7 million internally displaced peoples from these conflicts.¹

Economy

Sudan is classified by the World Bank as a lower middle income economy.² The GNI per capital is approximately USD 1,920 as of 2015, and the GDP growth in 2015 was 4.9 percent. Sudan has been in a state of conflict since shortly after South Sudan seceded, and the conflict has led to a drastic reduction in cross-border oil flows. The majority of Sudan’s economy is comprised of oil, though agriculture and livestock contribute 35-40 percent of the country’s GDP.³

Social/Human Development

Approximately 70 percent of the population of Sudan are Sudanese Muslims. Other ethnic groups within the country include Fur, Beja, Nuba, and Fallata. The population is majority Sunni Muslim, though there is a small Christian minority.⁴ As of 2009, 46.5 percent of the population lives below the national poverty line.⁵ Sudan’s Human Development Index score for 2016 was 0.490, and the country ranked 165 out of 188 countries.⁶


U.S. Department of State TIP Ranking: Tier 3

According to the U.S. Department of State Trafficking in Persons Report, potentially exported supply chains with a risk of trafficking include mining and agriculture. Children are vulnerable to forced labor in brick-making, gold mining, and agriculture.
Migrant and Other Vulnerable Populations

Sudan has negative net migration. The World Bank estimates that 800,000 people migrated from the country in 2012. In 2015, the immigrant population of Sudan was approximately 1.25 percent of the entire population and the inward migration was 503,477 people. The largest source country for migrants is Eritrea, though migrants from South Sudan also constitute a large proportion of migrants. Other migrant source countries include Chad, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Central African Republic, and Egypt.

The State Department reports that migrants, refugees, and asylum-seekers are vulnerable to trafficking, including forced labor, in Sudan.
Exports and Trade

The top exports from Sudan include live animals, mineral fuels, oil seeds, lac/gum/resins; and vegetables.\textsuperscript{10}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commodity</th>
<th>Value (USD/Thousands)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables</td>
<td>89,699</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lac, Gums, and Resins</td>
<td>130,315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil, Seeds, and Fruit</td>
<td>335,218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mineral Fuels</td>
<td>420,593</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live Animals</td>
<td>491,300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The top importers of all goods from Sudan according to mirror data include Saudi Arabia, China, India, Ethiopia and France.\textsuperscript{11}
Trafficking in Persons Risk Factors Analysis

Legal/Policy Risk Factors

Level of Legal Protection for Civil Liberties and Workers’ Rights

Freedom of Association

Although the Interim National Constitution and the law provide for freedom of association, this right is extremely restricted by the government. Organizations have reported delays in obtaining permits to run general meetings or to hold elections, as well as arrests of civil society organization members. Civil society activists have stated that they believe the government takes such actions to force them out of compliance with government regulations, though many of the crackdowns have been towards political protesters, not workers.\textsuperscript{12} According to the U.S. Department of State, very few trade unions exist, and those that do are coopted by the government. All strikes must be officially approved.\textsuperscript{13} The unions do not have the right to organize or bargain collectively.\textsuperscript{14}

Working Conditions

The minimum wage increased in 2013 to 425 Sudanese pounds (USD 63) from the prior minimum wage of 165 Sudanese pounds (USD 25).\textsuperscript{15} The legal hours of work are 48 hours per week or eight hours per day, with overtime limited to a maximum of four hours per day or 12 hours per week. A half hour paid break is required each day by law.\textsuperscript{16}

Discrimination

Although the law prohibits discrimination regarding race, sex, gender, disability, tribe, and language, it does not protect against discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity, political opinion, national origin, HIV-positive status, age, or social status. Foreign workers without legal status are not protected under the law, although all labor laws apply to migrant workers with formal legal status. The U.S. Department of State has reported that labor laws are not followed and that penalties for violations are rarely enforced.\textsuperscript{17}

Forced Labor

Penalties and enforcement mechanisms for forced labor are reportedly inadequate.\textsuperscript{18}
Child Labor

The Interim National Constitution does not explicitly prohibit child labor. The minimum age children can be engaged in “light work” is 12 years old. Children are prohibited from working in hazardous jobs, jobs requiring significant physical effort, and jobs that may harm their morals. Children are also prohibited from working between 8 p.m. and 6 a.m. The Right to Education Project reports that the compulsory age of education ends at the age of 14 for those admitted at six and at the age of 16 for those admitted at age eight.19

Civil Society Organizations

The U.S. Department of State reports multiple occurrences when the government did not allow civil society organizations to operate or arrested civil society activists.20

Ratification of ILO Conventions Related to Human Trafficking or Rights of Workers and Migrants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conventions</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ILO 29 Forced Labor</td>
<td>In force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILO 87 Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize</td>
<td>Not ratified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILO 98 Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining</td>
<td>In force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILO 100 Equal Remuneration</td>
<td>In force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILO 105 Abolition of Forced Labor</td>
<td>In force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILO 111 Discrimination</td>
<td>In force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILO 138 Minimum Age</td>
<td>In force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILO 181 Private Employment Agencies</td>
<td>Not ratified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILO 182 Worst Forms of Child Labor</td>
<td>In force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILO 97 Migration for Employment</td>
<td>Not ratified</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Use of Export Processing Zones (EPZs)

The International Trade Confederation reports that there is one export processing zone in Port Sudan that is exempt from labor laws and where no freedom of association for workers exists.22
Political Risk Factors

Political Instability or Conflict

Sudan scored 111.5 on the Fragile States Index in 2016 and was placed in the “Very High Alert” category, as the fourth most fragile state. The score went up 0.7 points from the score in 2015, and in all but one indicator, the status was “poor.” Armed conflict across the country is ongoing and has led to widespread human rights violations. The U.S. Department of State reports that while national elections were held in 2015, these elections were boycotted by opposition parties because of hostilities and actions by the government in power, including suppression of the media and arrests of supporters of the opposition.

Level of Crime and Violence

While the majority of the violence in Sudan comes from armed conflict, the U.S. Department of State also reports that there exists a lack of police or authority forces in the Darfur region to prevent violent crime. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the homicide count in the most populous city in Sudan was 263 deaths per 100,000 population in 2008. The percentage of male intentional homicide victims was 85.3 percent in 2010.

According to the Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC), a division of the State Department, the crime rates in north and central Sudan are low, and typically non-violent. However, gangs and other armed groups are found in the Darfur region, where violent crime rates are much higher. According to the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Diplomatic Security, organized crime groups are found in the eastern region of the country and are reported to be involved in smuggling and human trafficking activities within Sudan and neighbors Eritrea and Ethiopia.

State Persecution

The U.S. Department of State has reported that refugees and asylum seekers are vulnerable to arbitrary arrest and harassment outside of campus because they do not receive identification cards until determination of refugee or asylum status, which can take long periods of time. Large-scale internal displacement is a continued problem in Sudan, and while the government has made efforts to return internally-displaced persons to their homes, they have expressed reluctance to do so because of lack of security. The U.S. Department of State has cited several reports of government forces, armed militias, and individuals raiding IDP camps. UN aid agencies have reported harassment on multiple occasions by government and rebel forces. The government of Sudan has refused to recognize South Sudanese as refugees, and persons of South Sudanese origin living in Sudan may be considered stateless, as they may lack Sudanese or South Sudanese nationality.
Level of Corruption

The Transparency International Corruption Perception Index scores Sudan as 14 out of 100, where a 0 signals “Highly Corrupt” and a 100 signals “Very Clean.” Sudan is ranked 170 of 176 on that index. The U.S. Department of State reports widespread corruption throughout government institutions including the police, the judiciary, and other officials within the government. Although the law provides a legislative framework for addressing corruption, implementation and punishment are considered weak and lenient. The U.S. Department of State has reported that journalists who reported on government corruption have been detained, intimidated, and interrogated.

Socio-Economic Risk Factors

Level of National Economic Development

The UN Human Development Index places Sudan in the low human development category, ranking the country 165 of 188 countries with a score of 0.490 in 2015. The majority of Sudan’s neighbors rank lower than Sudan, including South Sudan, Chad, Central African Republic, Ethiopia and Eritrea. Egypt and Libya score higher than the other neighboring countries, but are considered to have higher levels of economic development. The World Bank classifies Sudan in the lower middle income level. Sudan’s economic growth rose to above 5 percent in 2015, according to the African Economic Outlook.

Level and Extent of Poverty

The poverty headcount ratio at the national poverty lines is 46.5 percent according to the World Bank. This number represents the percentage of the population living below the national poverty lines. According to the UNDP Human Development Reports Multidimensional Poverty Index, 53.1 percent of the population lives in multidimensional poverty. On the Multidimensional Poverty Index, Sudan has a value of 0.290.

Degree of Gender Inequality

The UNDP Human Development Report Gender Inequality Index value for Sudan is 0.575, ranking it 140 of 155 countries.

Under the 2005 Interim Constitution, women and men are equal in all respects under the law. However, in 2011 the President declared that a new constitution would be established based on Sharia law. The current law and traditional legal practices discriminate against women in housing, education, and economic opportunity, specifically in access to employment, equal pay, credit, and ownership of businesses. Sudan is not party to the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women, and has not ratified the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa. Women in Sudan have been disproportionately subject to violence by
state and non-state actors, and have born the burden of displacement and poverty associated with
conflict. In rural areas, less than a third of women have access to any form of education.

Under Islamic family law, women have inheritance rights, but the share for women and daughters is
generally half of that to which men are entitled. Under customary law, widows are required to marry
another man in the husband’s family and do not have any right to inheritance.40

Approximately 13.7 percent of the female population have some secondary education, compared to
18.8 percent of the male population. The percentage of women that are a part of the labor force is 24.3
percent compared to 72.2 percent of the male population.41

Landlessness and Dispossession

It is estimated that 5-6 million people have been displaced from their homes due to conflict in Darfur
and the southern part of Sudan since before 2005.42 Government and rebel forces have continuously
attacked populated villages in Darfur and inter-communal fighting over land has resulted in
displacement.43 The U.S. Department of State reports that internal movement is restricted for those
inside conflict zones, but outside of conflict zones there is generally no such restriction.44

Privately or publicly held land may not be purchased by foreign nationals under Sudanese law, though
the government has been reported to provide land for foreign companies without transferring
ownership.45

The conflict and civil unrest that have occurred in Sudan have led to dislocation and migration of
farmers, which has caused an increase in poverty.46

Large-scale land acquisition for commercial agricultural development has increased in recent years with
hundreds of thousands of hectares leased to countries including Egypt, Jordan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and
South Korea.47

Environmental Factors

According to the CIA, environmental issues in Sudan include inadequate supplies of potable water, soil
erosion, desertification, and periodic droughts (including persistent droughts).48 In early 2017, the Horn
of Africa was suffering from a drought that led to famine-like conditions in Sudan and neighboring
countries.49
Documented Trafficking in Persons Risk Factors in Key Commodity Supply Chains

Gold

Gold Overview

Sudan produces gold via both artisanal and commercial mining, with artisanal mining making up approximately 85 percent of gold production since 2010.\textsuperscript{50} There are an estimated 4,000 mines across the country,\textsuperscript{51} although production has been down in recent years, reportedly due in part to depletion of surface deposits. In 2016, over 40 mining countries were active.\textsuperscript{52} The Hassai Mine in the northeast is the largest commercial gold mine.\textsuperscript{53} The majority of gold from Sudan is exported to United Arab Emirates, both via officially recorded exports and smuggled gold. It is estimated that between 2010 and 2014, 105,822 pounds of gold were smuggled into the UAE from Darfur, amounting to $123 million to armed groups.\textsuperscript{54} The UAE agreed to make a USD $400 million deposit into Sudan’s central bank as a reserve in March of 2017.\textsuperscript{55} Russia is another significant player in the Sudanese gold sector, with Russia signing an agreement to invest in 2016.\textsuperscript{56} Over one million people participate in gold mining in Sudan, according to 2016 estimates,\textsuperscript{57} and the sector represents a crucial economic pillar after South Sudan’s secession took the vast oil and gas profits.

Documented Trafficking in Persons Risk Factors in Gold

The artisanal mining sector is highly unregulated, both in terms of environmental and social protections. Mining operations reportedly dump toxins including mercury and cyanide into the river, which has led to increased cancer rates. Other risks from mercury and cyanide exposure include strokes, harm to pregnant women and fetuses, loss of vision, lung disease, blood disease, liver failure, kidney failure, and heart failure.\textsuperscript{58} Mine collapses are frequently fatal, with one accident in 2014 reportedly killing at least 60 people.\textsuperscript{59} Children sometimes work in artisanal mines where they are subject to “threats, physical and sexual abuse, and harsh and unsafe working conditions, with limited access to schooling or health services.”\textsuperscript{60}

The U.N. has noted that illicit gold mining and smuggling is funding the ongoing conflict,\textsuperscript{61} which is associated with the use of child soldiers.\textsuperscript{62} According to the U.S. Department of State, children have been used as combatants by the Sudanese military and there have been reports that the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Sudanese Rapid Response Forces recruited boys under age 18.\textsuperscript{63}
Livestock

Livestock Overview

Livestock is a significant contributor to the Sudanese economy and the vast majority of production comes from small-holders using pastoral production methods.64 Sudan has the second largest population of livestock in sub-Saharan Africa after Ethiopia. 65 Although a significant percentage of exports may not be reported, most sheep and goats exported go to Saudi Arabia.66

Documented Trafficking in Persons Risk Factors in Livestock

Trafficking has been noted in the agriculture sector more broadly in Sudan, although livestock has not been specified.67

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Endnotes


