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2.6.2. Violence against women and girls

○ (a) Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV)

Since the onset of the armed conflict between the SAF and the RSF in April 2023, the risk of SGBV has seen an 'alarming rise' throughout the country's conflict-affected areas,[486](#) with the number of people at risk rising by 350 % between the beginning of the conflict in 2023 and June 2025, and by 80% over the previous year alone.[487](#) Sources reported evidence of SGBV being committed by both the RSF and the SAF,[488](#) and their allied militias,[489](#) with the vast majority of documented cases attributed to members of the RSF.[490](#) The UN FFM noted that SGBV by the RSF was used on a 'large-scale' and found that the conduct 'formed part of a widespread and systematic attack against civilians'.[491](#) On 31 March 2026, Ruth Kauffman, emergency health manager for Doctors Without Borders (MSF), stated that 'sexual violence is a defining feature of this conflict – not confined to frontlines, but pervasive across communities'.[492](#)

Sexual violence is used as a weapon of war,[493](#) notably by the RSF targeting women and girls perceived to be of non-Arab ethnicity[494](#) – such as Masalit,[495](#) Fur, Zaghawa, Tunjur[496](#), Berti[497](#) – and/or perceived to be supporting the SAF.[498](#) For additional information see section [2.5 Ethnic groups](#).

Sexual violence took the form of rape, mass rape, gang rape, sexual assault, abduction, sexual exploitation, sexualised torture, sexual harassment, forced nudity, and forced and child marriage, with both the RSF and the SAF implicated.[499](#) In some cases, sexual violence resulted in the death of the victim.[500](#) Documented victims of sexual violence were children as young as one year old[501](#) and women as old as 70 years old [502](#).

In 2025, SIHA Network described a pattern of 'three waves of violence' in relation to sexual violence by the RSF. The first wave takes place during the takeover of an area,

when RSF members and allies resort to widespread rape and gang rape of women and girls. The second wave of violence occurs in areas under RSF control, with sexual violence targeting women visible in public spaces, and rape and gang rape taking place in the street.[503](#) The third wave of violence relates to the abduction of women and girls for the purpose of sexual exploitation,[504](#) as well as forced marriage.[505](#) The UN FFM noted that sexual violence against women and girls also continued during flight.[506](#)

The pattern of widespread and systematic use of sexual violence against women and girls of non-Arab ethnicity by the RSF and their allies has been reported during the reference period in North Darfur (El Fasher and surrounding areas),[507](#) South Darfur (Nyala and surroundings),[508](#) West Darfur (El Geneina and surroundings),[509](#) North Kordofan,[510](#) West Kordofan,[511](#) and South Kordofan.[512](#) For information on SGBV committed by the RSF during the previous reporting periods see [2.6.\(b\) of the EUAA Sudan Report – Country Focus \(February 2025\)](#) and section [2.5.2 of the EUAA Sudan report – Country Focus \(April 2024\)](#).

The United Nations Independent Fact-finding Mission to the Sudan (UN FFM) reported that sexual violence was also committed by members of the SAF in White Nile, Blue Nile, Khartoum and Northern State, including rape, sexual harassment, and sexualised torture, including in detention. Further, CRSV perpetrated by the SAF appeared to be underreported for fear of retaliation.[513](#)

○ **(b) Forced marriage**

The Council of Europe (CoE) in its resolution 1468 of 2005 defines forced marriage as ‘the union of two persons at least one of whom has not given their full and free consent to the marriage.’ In the same resolution, child marriage is defined as ‘the union of two persons at least one of whom is under 18 years of age’.[514](#)

While article 15 of the Sudanese interim constitution of Sudan of 2005 states that ‘no marriage shall be entered into without the free and full consent of its parties’,[515](#) the Personal Status Law for Muslims of 1991 does not define a minimum age of marriage, only mentioning puberty for women under section 34(1) and section 40(3), stating that a minor cannot be married without the permission of a judge.[516](#) Some sources noted that minority for a woman in this context was understood as under 10 years of age,[517](#) but this age does not appear to be explicitly stated in the Personal Status Law for Muslims.[518](#)

In November 2020, the Sudanese transitional government agreed to lift Sudan's reservations to the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, including a reservation on child marriage.[519](#) The Sudanese transitional government also approved a National Strategy and Action Plan for Ending Child Marriage (2020-2030) in Sudan. However, these initiatives were halted before resulting in legal reforms following the military coup in October 2021 and the subsequent war.[520](#)

According to UNICEF's most recent Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey data (2014), the percentage of women aged 20-24 married or in union before the age of 18 in Sudan was 34 %.[521](#) A 2022 UNICEF Fact Sheet on child marriage in the MENA region noted that 'the prevalence of female carers age 20-24 years who married at or before age 15 was 26.6 %'.[522](#) UNOCHA's Sudan Humanitarian Update of June-July 2025 noted that 'child marriage remains a significant problem'.[523](#) A 2025 research study conducted in Kassala state noted that child marriage had increased in the state as a consequence of the conflict, including due to returning to villages with stronger norms and customs.[524](#) Other sources noted that families were using child marriage as a 'coping mechanism' in facing financial issues and access to education.[525](#)

The UN FFM noted reports of forced marriages of girls as young as 12 involving members of the RSF, with instances of coercion, including 'killing or injuring family members' and threats against family members.[526](#) Forced marriage was often committed by members of the RSF in areas under the control of the paramilitary group.[527](#) Out of the 985 documented cases of SGBV by SIHA Network between January and December 2025, 9 % were cases of child marriage.[528](#)

○ (c) Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons'.[529](#)

While FGM was criminalised in Sudan in July 2020, and the law provides a penalty of 'three years' imprisonment and a fine or closing of the premises where the FGM took place',[530](#) it remained 'widely practiced'[531](#). FGM is reported to be a deeply rooted practice in Sudan. [532](#) Studies show a slight shift from the most prevalent type III to type I,[533](#) as well as variations in the age at which it is performed, and the medicalisation of the procedure, being performed by trained medical professionals.[534](#)

Due to the on-going conflict there were no recent figures on FGM in Sudan.⁵³⁵ The latest comprehensive data set found on FGM in Sudan dates back to the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) of 2014, conducted by the country's Central Bureau of Statistics, which noted that the practice was highly prevalent, with 86.6 % of women age 15-49 years reportedly having undergone FGM.⁵³⁶

In a 2022 report the FGM/C Research Initiative and Thomson Reuters Foundation did not find evidence of any judicial prosecution of FGM.⁵³⁷ In 2022, the independent media outlet Assafir Al-Arabi reported on an incident in which a person who sought to report a case of FGM to the police after the law criminalising FGM had been passed, was dismissed by the police officer at the station.⁵³⁸

For information specific to FGM on persons with diverse sex characteristics see section (c) under [2.8.2. Treatment by the authorities and societal attitudes](#).

○ **(d) Detention**

The SAF reportedly held women in prisons on accusations of collaboration with the RSF, while the RSF is reported to have transferred detainees, including women, to Darfur.⁵³⁹ Some of the women detained by the SAF were facing death sentences, in instances on accusation of 'collaboration with the RSF'.⁵⁴⁰

The UN FFM noted that arrests conducted by the SAF in areas they retook or at their checkpoints were mainly on the suspicion of collaboration with the RSF and lacked due process.⁵⁴¹ The UN FFM also reported on the detention of civilians by the RSF in areas under their control.⁵⁴²

Early 2026, the RSF was keeping over six-hundred women in detention in Korea prison in Nyala, South Darfur, including some pregnant and some with their children. Detention conditions within the prison were reported as dire and included incidents of exploitation of detainees.⁵⁴³ The RSF denied these allegations.⁵⁴⁴ In March 2026 three Sudanese female journalist and several women activists were arrested and detained without formal charges by the RSF in Nyala.⁵⁴⁵

Over 840 women, including pregnant women, had been detained by the SAF between August 2024 and December 2025 in Wad Madani, Gedaref, Port Sudan and Dilling, on accusations of collaboration with the RSF. The report noted that the number of women under RSF detention was unknown.⁵⁴⁶

On 9 January 2026, Abdel-Fattah Al-Burhan announced the immediate release of four-hundred women detained in Omdurman prison on public order charges, including

mothers detained with their children, and the dropping of all charges against them, as well as the review of cases of women detained on allegations of cooperation with the RSF.[547](#)

In early February 2026, two women were sentenced to death by stoning on charges of ‘adultery’ in Greater Khartoum and Blue Nile.[548](#) On 24 February 2026, the Court of Appeal reportedly reversed the sentence handed down in the Blue Nile State.[549](#)

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