

Sudan Humanitarian Flash Update #10



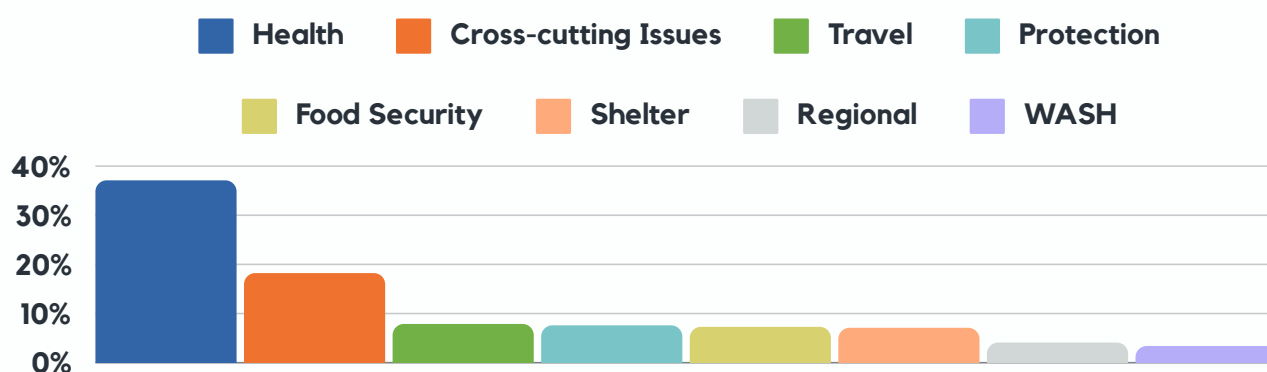
26 SEPTEMBER 2024

INTRODUCTION

Between 25 June and 20 August 2024, Internews collected 406 comments, perceptions, and rumors in Arabic and English shared by people affected by conflict in Sudan on social media platforms, including Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), WhatsApp, LinkedIn, and Reddit. In this edition of the Sudan Humanitarian Flash Update, we highlight the information needs and priorities of people affected by conflict and displacement from Sennar state. The report addresses treatment rumors and the continuous search for health information, including a reliance on peer-to-peer information sharing. We look at the priorities and information preferences shared by women and explore perceptions of aid and an increasing need for accountability channels.

***Content note:** *Language from community data contains sentiments and wording that may be upsetting and triggering for some people. Data is included verbatim to retain the exact meaning, sentiments and language used by community members.*

SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS BY THEME



Cross-cutting issues highlight a need for more information about humanitarian services and aid organizations. With the rainy season, there's a need to repair damaged homes in Northern state and IDP shelters or Camps, like Zam Zam IDP Camp, and for plastic sheeting to protect newly displaced people living out in the open in AlGedaref town.

RELYING ON PEERS FOR HEALTH INFORMATION

Access to healthcare and life-saving health information remains critical for people affected by conflict, with 37% of overall social media posts focusing on health. Individuals rely on social media platforms to access information about diseases and ways to prevent and treat them, due to limited information from official sources, difficulty in accessing care, expensive medications, shortages of medications, and a shortage of medical facilities.

With scarce healthcare options, many have turned to social media for support. For instance, the public Facebook group **الطبيب السوداني أسأل** (Ask a Sudanese Doctor) offers its 111k members an opportunity to seek guidance from healthcare professionals. However, not all questions and information needs are able to be addressed by identified healthcare professionals, and are instead answered by community members.

"Peace be upon you I'm asking if this is a normal inflammation from dust or conjunctivitis for a four-year-old child what is the treatment because there's no way to see a doctor can we get something from the pharmacy"

Woman, Facebook

By the end of July, individuals noted night blindness was spreading across Khartoum and other states, some turned to social media to seek further understanding about the illness. Comments about the causes began to circulate, coupled with a growing demand for information about night blindness, its triggers and treatments. The absence of verified information can foster a fertile environment to the spread of speculative information about diseases and their treatment.

" One of the reasons is poor nutrition and lack of protein they take vitamins and vitamin A I guess..in Omdurman Ombada most of the youth are affected may God lift this affliction from them and heal them "

Woman, Facebook

"It is noticeable that night blindness is spreading among citizens in the conflict areas of Khartoum almost all of our people in Khartoum are currently affected by it currently it is said that the lack of proper food is the reason and it is also said that the anti-aircraft weapons and general air pollution are the cause what exactly is the reason and what is the treatment for those who completely refuse to leave"

Woman, Facebook, Dongola - Northern

Social media posts also highlighted the need for more information about a Conjunctivitis outbreak in Khartoum, White Nile, and Northern states where individuals asked about its symptoms and remedies, and shared unverified remedies. On Facebook page "التلات حبات ما علاج للنزلة" (The three pills are not a treatment for a cold) with 724 K members, an individual shared a screenshot of a doctor's document about the symptoms and preventative measures for the disease.

" Soak Panadol in water then close your eyes and have someone wipe your eyelid and above your eye lie down and sleep"

Woman, Facebook

"My treatment is warm tea a teaspoon of regular white vinegar wash and compresses "

Woman, Facebook

"... There's an eye disease currently spreading in Sudan the disease is essentially conjunctivitis and its treatment is available in pharmacies (The treatment is Amiflox drops + Prozelin) you feel like a stone or something has hit your eye and you might not even realize it's a disease you keep rubbing your eye and it becomes inflamed the disease is contagious the infected person must wash their hands with Dettol soap or any regular soap .. guys inform your neighbors and raise awareness about the treatment .. we ask God to protect everyone 🙏"

Woman, Facebook

Following WHO's global declaration of the Mpox emergency, some individuals sought information about its symptoms. Social media users turned to public Facebook spaces discussing health to learn about the transmission methods and preventive measures for Mpox. For example, a woman inquired on Facebook whether contracting chickenpox confers immunity against Mpox.

"Tell us now we are in conflict areas what we should do if we get infected God forbid"

Woman, Facebook

"What are the symptoms of Monkeypox.. ! Because there are widespread infections"

Man, 36-45, Facebook

"Write for us about the disease whether there is a vaccine or not how it is transmitted and the methods of prevention"

Woman, Facebook

People are also searching for preventative measures and local remedies to treat Scorpion stings, due to barriers in accessing medical care and antivenom. Some posts online recommended massaging the bite site with salt and consuming lemon juice. While most of these treatments pose no immediate harm, a few high-risk remedies were shared, such as cutting the skin with a blade, which could potentially lead to infection, and serious illness or even death if proper medical intervention is not sought or available.

"Tie above and below the sting first cut the sting area but do not make a deep wound.If you don't have any cuts in your mouth suck from the sting area or use the AlUshar Milk (Calotropis Procera) or ginger..."

Woman, Facebook

"In need of a quantity of antivenom for scorpions for humanitarian work Please guide me to where it can be found as those who guide towards good deeds are like the doers themselves "

Woman, Facebook, AlGureir - River Nile

"Cut the area with a new blade and suck the blood from the sting area.. May God heal you and grant you wellness"

Woman, Facebook

Many inquire about dialysis centers, hospitals, and specialist clinicians nationwide. As individuals are displaced to unfamiliar places, there is a demand for information about clinic operating hours, locations, and service fees. Moreover, numerous appeals have been made to cover the medical costs of conflict-related injuries, including amputations, head trauma, and treatment for long-term effects such as vision and hearing impairments. There is also a need for information about prosthetic limbs, underscoring the need for rehabilitation services.

"I am asking about a gynecologist urgently in Kassala how much is the ticket price and where exactly is it located I am displaced and I do not know the places please"

Woman, Facebook, Kassala

"Peace be upon you I am asking if there is a center for prosthetic limbs working in states...And their numbers"

Facebook

"📌📌 Emergency need 📌📌

Our sick aunt (M) due to her presence in the area of shelling and clashes for the entire past period... *Unfortunately, the ear was damaged* There was a deterioration in her hearing, and she now needs a hearing aid, otherwise she will have a hearing defect..."

Woman, Facebook

Since the conflict began, there has been a persistent demand for donations of medications given widespread shortages. In Omdurman, insulin shortages have resulted in fatalities, with urgent needs extending to Kassala for older people in shelters, and AlGedaref and AlGurri in Khartoum. Beyond insulin, essential medicines for dengue fever, schistosomiasis, and scorpion bites are also scarce, and the meningitis outbreak in Burri further worsens the situation.

"#Kassala

There is an urgent need for mixed insulin and injections
For the elderly at the Industrial School shelter center
The insulin they have spoiled due to the lack of refrigerators..."

Woman, 26-35, Facebook, Kassala

“Central Clinic : Increasing cases of meningitis in the region recording ten cases with a severe shortage of medicines...Work is underway to develop a preventive plan against the disease to ease the treatment process due to the scarcity of the serum and its high prices...”

AlBarari Emergency Room, Facebook, AlBarari - Khartoum

The need for in-person and online mental health consultations and timely information about psychosocial supports persists, including types of therapies (such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy), urgent information and support for individuals with suicidal ideation, availability and location of mental health hospitals.

“I need a specialist number as soon as possible very very urgent for someone who has a bit and commit suicide ...we don't own a penny

🔴🔴🔴🔴🔴🔴🔴🔴”

Woman, Facebook

“Is there a mental hospital in Atbara or Shendi??? Private or public”

Woman, Facebook, River Nile

“#Save_Al-Geneina_Initiative Unfortunately the Trauma Center has stopped working All the amount we need monthly to provide the only psychological support service in a camp with 260 thousand Sudanese refugees in Adre Chad is 3,000 dollars stand with us...”

Woman, Twitter, Adre - Chad

Overall, 50% of social media posts were shared by women, compared to 27% shared by men. Women sought information about health, housing and clean drinking water. The need for cash support is prevalent in the posts related to health, such as appeals for donations to cover the costs of C-sections in Omdurman, Sinja, and AlManagil. Moreover, the crisis of not being able to access essential hygiene and basic pain management products, like sanitary pads and painkillers, has worsened, making necessities unaffordable and compelling women to rely on unsafe alternatives, like expired sanitary pads. This underscores the urgent need for targeted assistance to address these critical gaps in care for displaced women and girls, and those remaining in conflict areas.

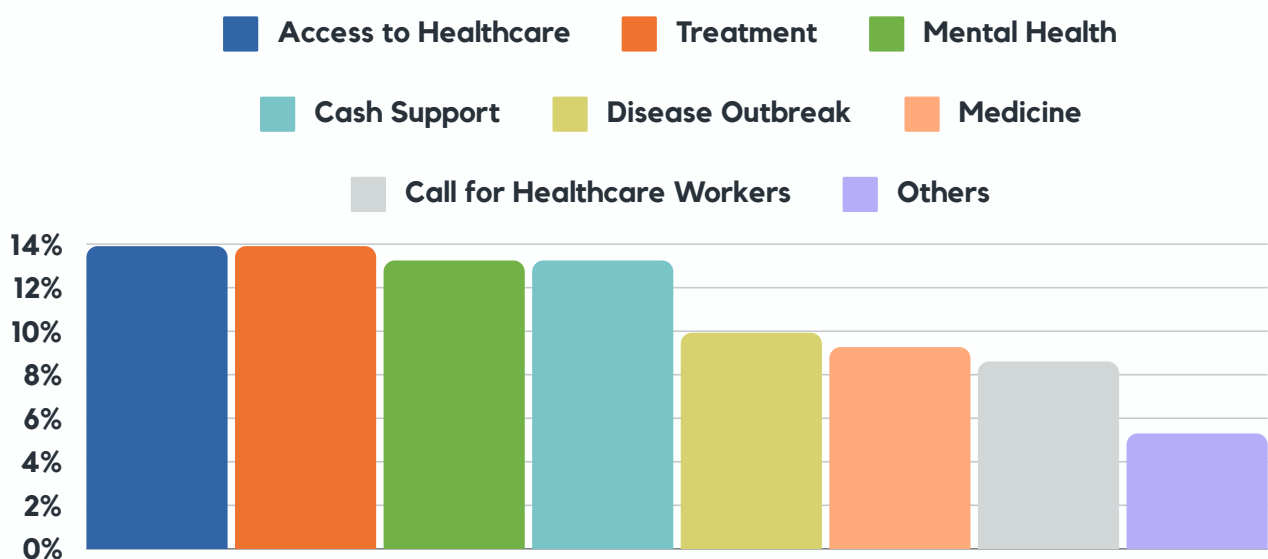
“It was the worst period thank God suddenly Always became a luxury and very expensive and we were suffering a lot to collect the money for it and even the existing one expired and it was bad and instead of each one of us having a specific type that suits her and doesn’t causes allergies we could no longer believe it when we found it [pads] no matter what type it was 😊💔 other than that the period as a whole is shameful in the area we were displaced to even pain should be experienced in silence”

Woman, 26-35, Facebook

“🕒 We have a need for a caesarean section alone, the conditions are very bad, it is in Omdurman and it is difficult to pay for it I need the money for the operation + a box of medications scheduled for delivery... They reduced her fees from 182 to 160 thousand pounds + 45 thousand and 900 pounds for the carton fees..”

Woman, 26-35, Facebook, Omdurman - Khartoum

BREAKDOWN OF HEALTH POSTS



This chart represents the breakdown of 151 health posts out of 406 posts. Since the outbreak of the conflict, health continues to be one of the priority needs for people in Sudan.

MOBILIZING FOOD SUPPORT ONLINE

Humanitarian access for aid deliveries remains limited, especially in remote and conflict areas. In July, some social media users reacted with caution to the announcement of a digital self-registration cash support program launched by the World Food Programme (WFP) in Khartoum. Several individual accounts shared fake and unverified links on Facebook asking people to register to receive aid from WFP and Qatar Charity. Some viewed these links with suspicion and feared it was a means to collect demographic information. This type of misinformation can affect participation in actual relief programs and prevent individuals from receiving much-needed assistance.

"Peace be upon you sisters is this food program true and who received the money some people said it's a scam and others said it's an international plan please tell us what's going on and who took the steps"

Woman, Facebook

"I wanted to share the link with my family but I thought maybe they want to count the people who are still standing strong and know their number I struggled to clear my intentions it's better not to let them know the areas we are staying in because it asks for the location."

Woman, Facebook

"Beware of links from the World Food Programme and Qatar Charity 🇸🇦"

Woman, Facebook, Omdurman - Khartoum

Following the closure of the actual registration for the WFP program, individuals on Facebook inquired about the distribution and if others received support. Increasingly, there is a demand for information about relief services and how to access support from humanitarian organizations.

"...Girls I'm asking if anyone knows the numbers of an organization for humanitarian aid in the Nile River State because here we are oppressed [treated unfairly] and the people of the committees do not deliver aid to us...And I would be very thankful."

Woman, Facebook, River Nile

“...I am asking about the United Nations organization distributing cash to the displaced in Dongola how far have they reached”

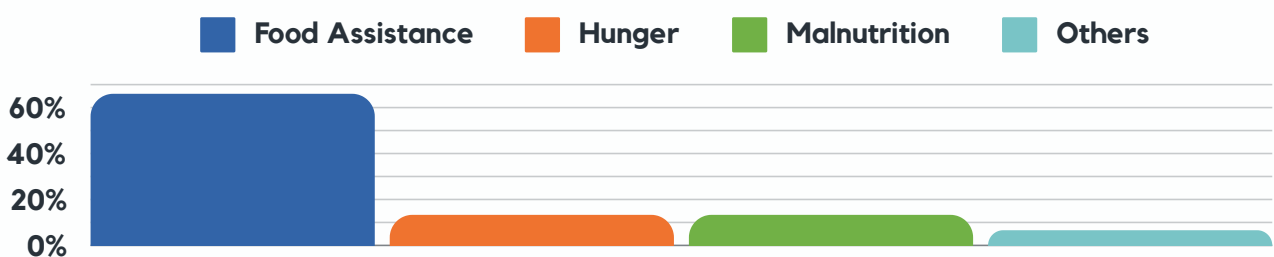
Woman, Facebook, Dongola - Northern

Social media has become an important tool for raising awareness and mobilizing support for food security initiatives, like community-run kitchens. Various posts and campaigns continue to call for donations and highlight the urgent needs of different communities. Hashtags such as #SaveSudan, #EyesOnDarfur, #KeepEyesOnSudan, and #SudanFamine are used in drawing attention to the food security crisis in Sudan. These hashtags are also used to share updates, stories, and urgent appeals for assistance.

The hashtag #Save_ALGenina_Initiative is used to shed light on the needs of refugees in Adre and highlight the cessation of daily meals in the camps due to lack of support. Similarly, posts tagged under #Ombada_Emergency_Room and #Janoob_AlHezam_Emergency_Room have brought attention to the closure of community kitchens (Takaya) in parts of Khartoum.

The conflict has significantly worsened malnutrition, especially among children, and the situation is further aggravated by the complete interruption of therapeutic food supplies in some areas, such as Tullus locality in South Darfur. Posts on social media from internally displaced people (IDP) located in various camps highlight rumors and reports circulating about the alarming rate of child mortality due to malnutrition.

BREAKDOWN OF FOOD SECURITY POSTS



The need for food assistance persists, including for food supplies and cash support. For instance, in Atbara, River Nile, the Children’s Welfare Home appealed for milk. Social media posts highlight individuals experiencing hunger in AlFitehab and Ombada in Khartoum, and the Nuba Mountains.

“According to refugees and displaced persons; two children die in Kalma camp for displaced people every 12 hours due to malnutrition. There is no power but from God.. There is no power but from God #Sudan_Famine”

Man, Twitter, Kalma Camp - South Darfur

“Director of the Nutrition Department at the Ministry of Health in South #Darfur...: 4 children suffering from malnutrition died in “Tullus” locality last week, and the administration is facing a complete interruption of therapeutic food for children suffering from malnutrition, and a deterioration in the health conditions of children suffering from malnutrition...”

Twitter, Tullus - South Darfur

The disruption of regular food supply has led to an increased reliance on community kitchens (Takaya) and humanitarian aid. However, the Takaya are struggling to meet the overwhelming demand, such as Bahri and Ombada kitchens which were forced to shut down their operations due to financial constraints, leaving thousands without a reliable food source. Previous **Internews flash updates** have highlighted potential mental health impact of having little to no food for a long period of time, or the horror of living in a besieged area without reliable access to food.

“🇸🇩 Ombada Emergency Room:

We announce the suspension of 45 kitchens out of 50 due to lack of financial support. May God help the country and the people...”

Ummbada Emergency Room, Facebook, Ummbada - Khartoum

“The situation here has become very tight and the population density in the area is extremely high unfortunately the initiative is no longer able to cover even half of these numbers...We expanded the initiative and started providing fava beans and lentils to other entities that prepare these meals and we distribute them in hopes of covering these numbers but unfortunately we are still unable to do so

We need your help young people 🙏...”

Woman, 26-35, Twitter, AlThawra - Omdurman

PROTECTION

Social media posts and discussion continue to demonstrate that the protection of civilian lives and property are a key priority for people affected by conflict. Critical infrastructure, including health centers and food distribution points, have been targeted and the safety of civilians is severely compromised. Targeting of vital infrastructure is worsening the humanitarian crisis in the country. For example, the World Food Program's center in Abu Shouk IDP camp, which cares for malnourished children, was shelled in AlFashir. Hospitals have been impacted, like the Iqra Specialist Hospital in AlFashir, which provided emergency care.

"#Stop_Targeting_Hospitals_and Medical_Staff less than 24 hours after our joy at the reopening of the Maternity Hospital in Omdurman...The hospital was bombed with a great number of shells and it destroyed the hospital ..."

Man, 46-60, Twitter

There is an urgent need for help online for those that have lost contact with their loved ones. Internews previous [Humanitarian Flash Update](#) highlighted key information needs and risks families face in their quest to find their missing loved ones. People are pleading for connections with the International Committee of the Red Cross and other organizations to assist in reconnecting them with their loved ones. Those who have lost contact with their family members, ask others to help bring visibility to posts with information and photos of the missing by sharing them. Notably, the number of community posts about missing people from Sennar has increased since the conflict broke out.

"My brother was arrested...in Sharg AlNeel and after that they took him to AlRiyadh and then he disappeared. He is a doctor and they said they might have him working in a hospital, how can we know his whereabouts? Or if there is someone who can help us or knows any information"

Twitter

"Please people if there is anyone who can put me in touch with any official or doctor in the Red Cross or any organization please help me"

Woman, Facebook

"1029 MISSING CIVILIANS●

Sennar state youth association has just released the information of missing citizens from Sinja city which came out to be 1029 in total!!!

#KeepEyesOnSudan"

Woman, 26-35, Twitter, Sinja - Sennar

THE SEARCH FOR SHELTER AND SAFE ROUTES

When residents are forced to flee conflict and violence, there is an urgent need for reliable and timely information on the safety and accessibility of travel routes. For example, in Sennar posts seeking information about safe routes and appealing for evacuation support began circulating online as residents tried to flee the emerging conflict. Violence against civilians, looting of markets and homes, and the dire lack of basic necessities like safety, healthcare, and means of transportation, triggered the start of waves of displacement from Sennar.

"Safe roads out of Sinja and Sennar Safe villages. Does anyone have the ability to help with his car open his house..."

Woman, 26-35, Twitter - Sennar

I am asking after the fall of Jebel Muwayya... What is the alternative to the Rabak - Sennar - Port Sudan road??"

Man, Twitter - Sennar

"Sinja Bridge is it open people please help us?!"

Facebook, Sinja - Sennar

To support mobility of people fleeing the conflict, in addition to information about safe movement, there is also a need for clear guidance on accessing government services, such as obtaining a national identification number, and navigating visa procedures for neighboring countries, like Egypt and Ethiopia. The lack of reliable information surrounding these processes, in addition to concerns about the safety and living conditions for Sudanese refugees abroad, exacerbates challenges faced by those displaced or seeking to leave or return to Sudan.

"...I'm asking if the person can issue the national number in Omdurman and if yes where exactly?...❤️"

Facebook, Omdurman - Khartoum

"Peace be upon you I would like to ask if there are people who went and surrendered themselves to Abu Simbil will they travel or not? If I went and surrendered myself will I travel or not?"

Man, Facebook, Abu Simbil - Egypt

With the rise in prices of home rentals across Sudan, individuals continue to look for inexpensive and free-of-charge housing options, as well as IDP shelter centers. It is worth noting that most of the appeals for housing information were from those affected by conflict in AlGezira and Sennar, including individuals and families that have endured multiple displacements. Some shared appeals for urgent housing support for the more vulnerable, like women, children, and those that are living in the streets.

"Peace be upon you who has a house and is travelling please let me stay in it. I came as a displaced person"

Woman, Facebook, AlGedaref - AlGedaref

"Salam. A need for housing even if one room for a displaced woman in Kosti or Rabak they are a small family of a mother and 3 children now they are staying on the street"

Man, Facebook, Kosti - White Nile

"...I'm a displaced person from Khartoum...We were displaced from Madani to Sennar and I am now displaced again...This time we want to go to Port Sudan so I want to know if there are any empty shelter centers..."

Woman, Facebook, Port Sudan - Red Sea

"People of Gedaref I hope you stand with me. An urgent need for the displaced people of Sinja for a house for rent at a reasonable or cheap price even if a hut and a bathroom quickly and they have a dialysis patient and they are not comfortable to stay with people..."

Woman, Facebook, AlGedaref - AlGedaref

"Peace and mercy of God

Remaining: 20,000 pounds

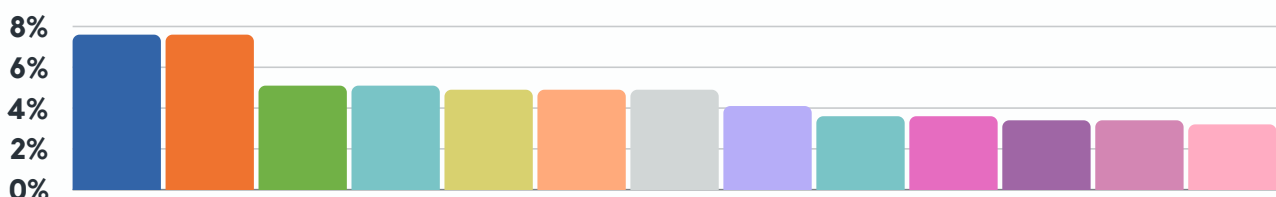
We have a need for two displaced families in Atbara for 5 beds because the heat brings out scorpions and twice their children were stung due to lying on the ground 😞 ...The value of the item is 250,000 Sudanese pounds.

* 🟡 We reached: 230,000 pounds*

Remaining: 20,000 pounds"

Man, Twitter, Atbara - River Nile

BREAKDOWN OF SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS BY ISSUE



Social media users complained that aid is being looted, and not reaching them. In reaction to news regarding the opening of the Adre border, some individuals suspect that humanitarian assistance may be a guise for military support.

With the increase in torrential rains and flooding in parts of the country, there is more demand for information about emergency shelter and appeals for cash support to help repair damaged homes.

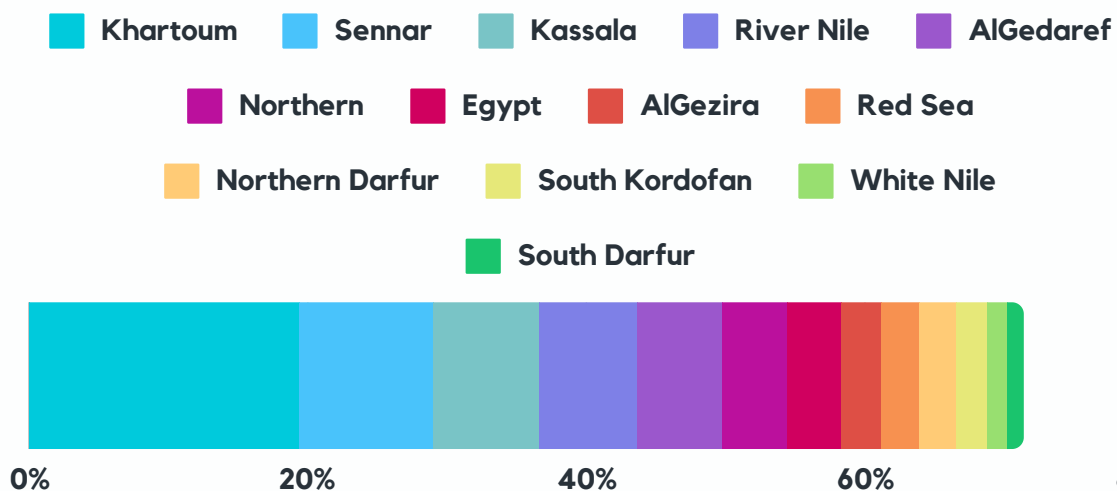
“...Our sister is currently in Shendi the school she’s in refused to open a classroom to shelter them at least during the rain...if there is any organization or school or person who can offer her and her children a solution please contact me privately ..”

Woman, 36 to 45, Facebook, Shendi - River Nile

“ ● #urgent_need...We have a family living in Omdurman and their affairs are very bad. Their house collapsed because of the rain. There are seven children and only one mother in the house, and their father is sick. They need a good amount of money to fix their affairs...”

Woman, Facebook, Omdurman - Khartoum

BREAKDOWN OF SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS BY GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATIONS

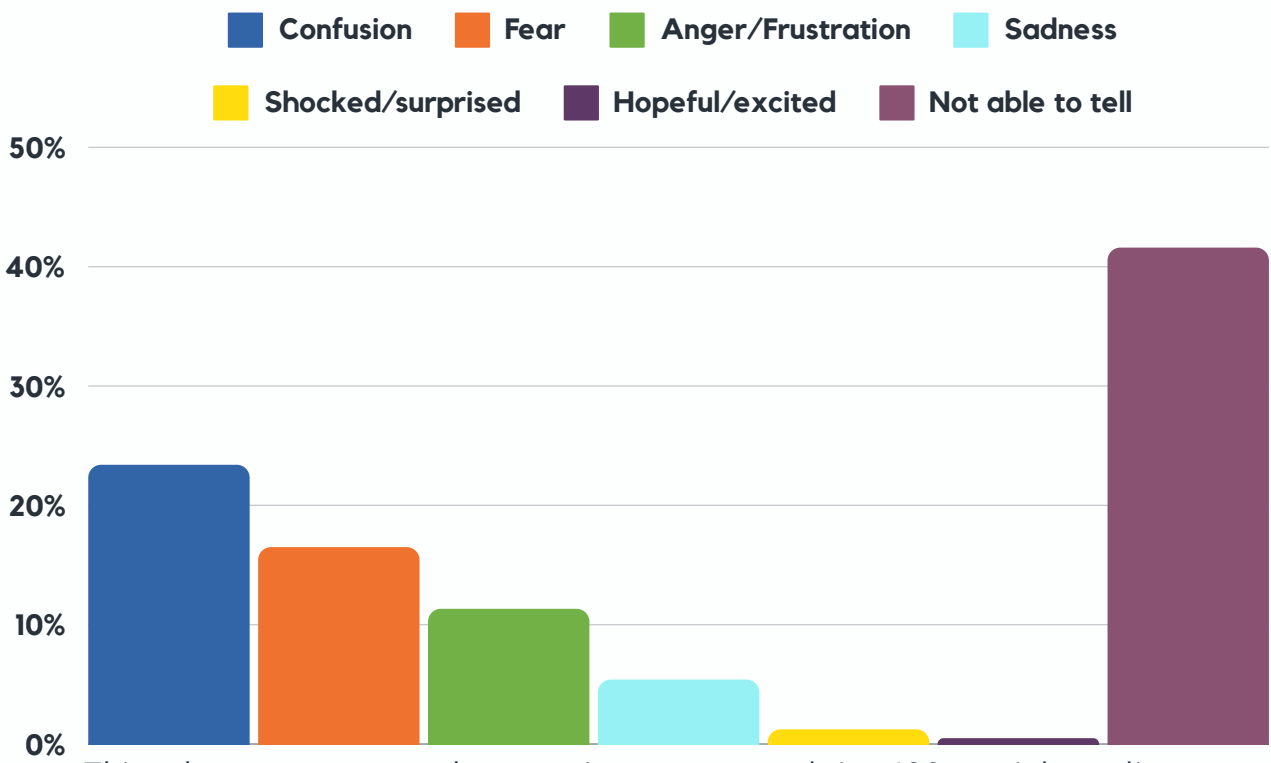


Over 40 percent of posts shared by individuals in Khartoum are from Omdurman, with questions about operational hospitals and available healthcare services, as well as appeals for donations to purchase food supplies. With the outbreak of conflict in Sennar by the end of June 2024, there was a surge in posts seeking information about safe travel routes and individuals looking for missing loved ones. Similar to Khartoum, in Kassala there was a demand for information about health services.

SENTIMENT ANALYSIS

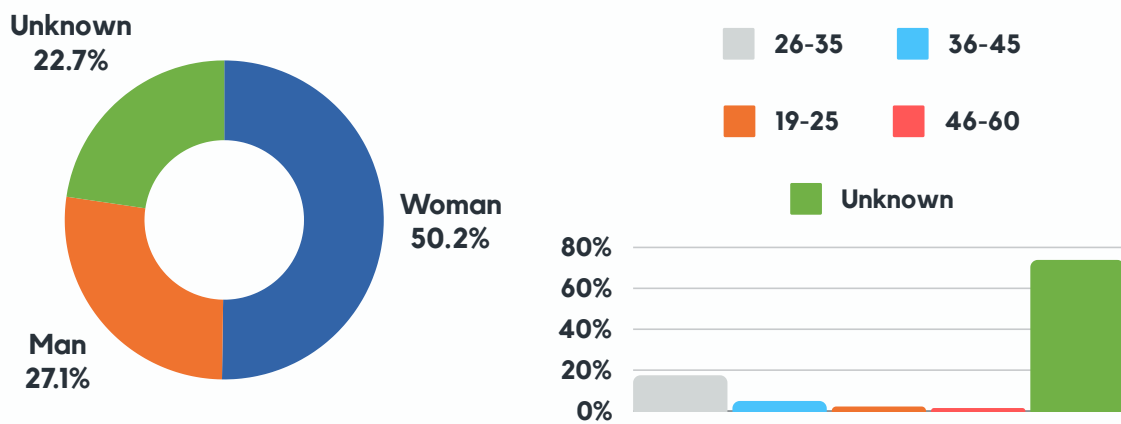
Sentiment analysis helps us understand the feelings expressed behind a text or image shared in online communities. In this period of social listening, we observed three dominant sentiments: fear, confusion and anger. Posts exuding fear are those highlighting a distressing situation that can be tied to insecurity, violence, and health crises, such as the displacement of civilians from Sennar, with reports of missing people from Sinja. Posts expressing confusion mostly revolve around uncertainty and a need for help or information, such as aid distribution processes, safe routes, and the causes of night blindness. Posts expressing anger or frustration can be seen when individuals perceive a lack of health or humanitarian support, and forcible and repeated displacement.

SENTIMENT ANALYSIS



This chart represents the emotions expressed in 406 social media posts, collected from 25 June to 20 August 2024.

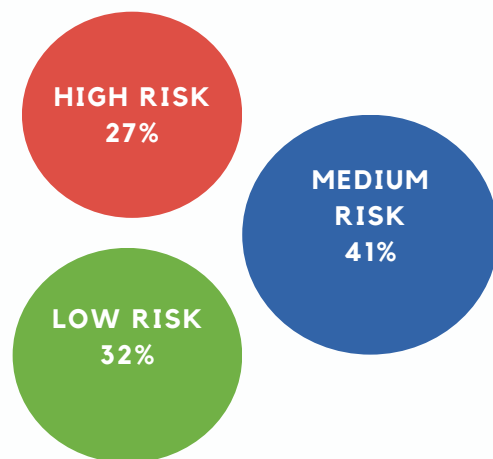
SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS BY AGE AND GENDER



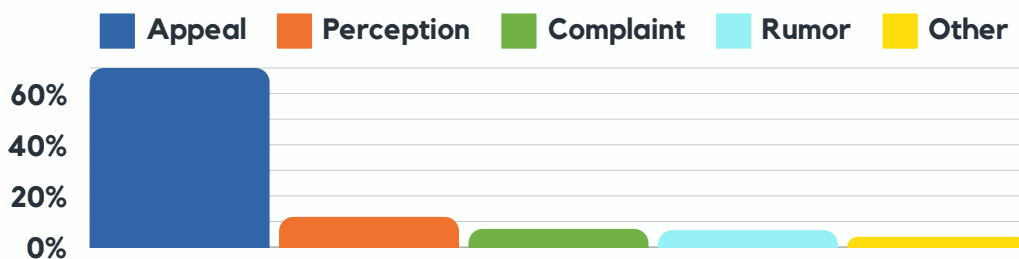
About 25 percent of posts shared by women were collected from private women groups. The depicted demographic information may not accurately reflect the demographics of those who hold these concerns, as some individuals rely on those with internet connectivity to share their concerns.

POSTS BY RISK LEVEL

High risk posts are those that pose a potential for harm. For example, a post containing hate speech against groups of civilians can potentially incite physical harm. Also, a WhatsApp audio message allegedly of a healthcare worker encouraging people to come to the Maternity Hospital in Omdurman, after it was confirmed it had been targeted, can endanger women and their families.



SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS BY TYPE



This is the breakdown of 406 social media posts by type of data. Appeals represent requests for different types of support, like food, shelter, and health. Appeals also included 116 questions, representing various information needs. Overall 63 posts were collected from private accounts/groups, while 343 posts were collected from public accounts/pages/groups.

How can Social Media Listening contribute to Accountability?

Internews' timely social media listening activities can help humanitarian organizations plan and adapt their programs and activities, to ensure they are responding to communities' needs and priorities and identifying harmful misinformation or information gaps. Listening attentively to people's concerns through social media, and understanding their priorities allows people affected by the conflict to influence and shape the humanitarian response to ensure it remains relevant and responsive to needs that are voiced. Social media listening is one way to ensure accountable humanitarian support is being provided.

Internews Methodology

Internews' analysts gather feedback, concerns, and rumors posted on social media by individuals affected by conflict and displacement in Sudan. The example posts featured in this report are representative of the most common concerns seen across the data set. All data is collected in the original language and categorized by theme to support analysis that aligns with and supports humanitarian coordination mechanisms and response.

To access the anonymized data set that supports this analysis, please contact Asia Kambal, akambal@internews.org.