

Church leaders in Sudan call on the international community to act to prevent famine.

Following the outbreak of conflict in Sudan nearly a year ago, 25 million people - including 14 million children - now need humanitarian assistance and support, according to the [UN](#). 9 million have been displaced from their homes making Sudan the largest displacement crisis in the world.

Damage to infrastructure has impacted access to food, water, healthcare services, and even banking. Sudan now teeters on the edge of a famine, with the outlook worsened by the upcoming rainy season, lasting from June through to November. This is a concern as the Horn of Africa is heavily climate affected and therefore prone to severe flooding.

Since the outbreak of violence Caritas partners in Sudan have distributed food at 17 gathering points for internally displaced people, as well as delivering multipurpose cash assistance, water and hygiene services, and gender-based violence protection. Partners also have access to remote border towns in Chad and South Sudan, enabling them to support those displaced overseas.

As late as the end of last year, one partner reported seeing 4,200 refugees arrive there each day, around 90% of them women and girls. Concerningly for women and girls the need for gender-based violence services in Sudan is expected to increase to 6.9 million people in 2024, up from 4.2 million in 2023 and one million in 2022.

Church leaders in Sudan say political support is required to improve the humanitarian situation. In a statement the **Sudan Catholic Bishops Conference** raised concerns “the international community has forgotten the Sudan crisis” and called on the Caritas network across the world to “engage their respective governments, donors, and the wider international community to urgently pick up and advocate for the needed resources to avert the looming famine.”

Kirsty Robertson, CEO of Caritas Australia said, “the outlook is dire for displaced people in and around Sudan, especially women and girls. As such, we continue to call on our government to undertake diplomatic action to improve aid access through agreed humanitarian corridors or a ceasefire. We do take solace in the breadth of our partner network in the region, many of whom have years if not decades of experience there. Their tireless work ensures the generosity of our supporters here in Australia is felt by the people across the region.”

On the 19th of March Kirsty Roberston, CEO of Caritas Australia spoke at an event on the Sudan Crisis at Parliament House, hosted by the Sudanese Australian Advocacy Network (SAAN).

To support Caritas Australia’s Sudan Crisis Appeal, visit www.caritas.org.au/sudan or call 1800 024 413 toll free.

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