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Routes, protection incidents and future intentions of people displaced by the Sudan war

Since the outbreak of war in Sudan in April 2023, over 6.2 million people have been internally displaced, and over 1.8 million have crossed borders, including approximately 564,000 to South Sudan and 111,000 to Ethiopia as of 20 February 2024.¹ This infographic examines the movements, experiences, protection abuses and future intentions of refugees and migrants still in Sudan, as well as those who have been displaced to South Sudan and Ethiopia. In adopting a comparative, multi-country approach, it aims to inform regional and routes-based programming.

METHODOLOGY

SAMPLE SIZE & CRITERIA:

- 688 refugees and migrants (32% Ethiopians, 27% Eritreans, 21% South Sudanese, 19% Sudanese and 1% Somalis)
- 18 years old and above
- Sudanese inside Sudan (IDPs) were not surveyed
- All respondents had been in Sudan when the war began on 15 April
- For surveys in Sudan, displacement was not a precondition for being surveyed to gain insight into the experiences and onward movement intentions of those not yet displaced

DATA COLLECTION SITES:

Addis Ababa (Ethiopia); Juba (South Sudan); Gedaref city, Kassala State (Kassala city and Shagarab refugee camp), Port Sudan and other locations (Sudan)

DATA COLLECTION PERIOD:

5 August - 31 December 2023

METHODOLOGY:

Face-to-face surveys in Addis Ababa and Juba; phone surveys in Sudan²

Key findings

- The majority (59%) of respondents in Sudan, Ethiopia and South Sudan had **escaped war in Khartoum**.
- People faced multiple challenges on their journeys, **most encountering active fighting** (80%).
- **Most respondents (70%) experienced abuse and/or injury since the outbreak of war**, including witnessing death, experiencing physical violence and robbery. Nearly all South Sudanese (99%) and Sudanese (94%) respondents reported experiencing protection incidents as compared to 53% of Ethiopians and 52% of Eritreans.
- **71% of respondents in Sudan reported feeling unsafe**. In contrast, 96% in Ethiopia and 94% in South Sudan reported feeling somewhat to very safe.
- Respondents reported **a lack of access to housing, cash and food as key challenges** in locations of interview in Sudan, Ethiopia and South Sudan. This did not vary by nationality.
- **45% of respondents interviewed in Sudan planned to move across borders within three months**, with 66% (118 out of 180) intending to reach Egypt. Another 27% were unsure about their movement plans, suggesting that how the war and security situation unfolds in Sudan may determine their onward movement decision-making.
- **Few respondents in Addis Ababa (9%) and Juba (18%) intend to move onward to another country in the next three months**, as most plan to stay in their country of interview.
- **90% of Sudanese interviewed in South Sudan and Ethiopia said they would return to Sudan** if the conflict ended. In contrast, 80% of other nationalities said they would **not return to Sudan under any circumstances**. Just 2% of other nationalities, all of whom were interviewed in Juba, intended to return to their countries of origin.

Respondents profiles

Sex distributions of respondents



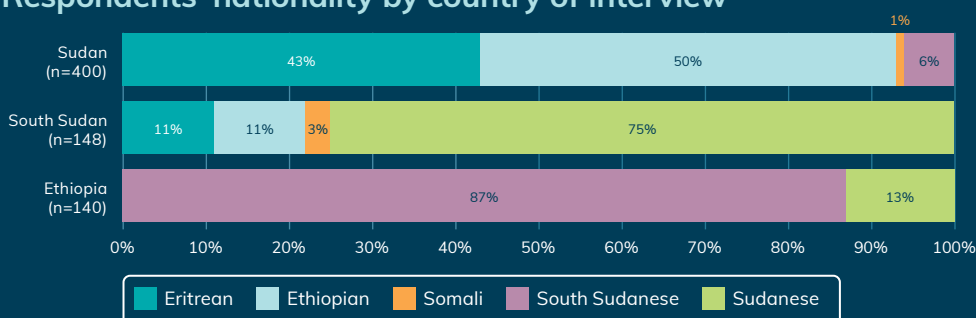
Other sample characteristics

- 58% of the respondents were interviewed in Sudan, 22% in South Sudan and 20% in Ethiopia.
- In Sudan and Ethiopia, 58% of respondents were youth (18-24 years), whereas in South Sudan, the majority were adults aged over 25 (88%).

Note: The 4Mi sample is purposive. Data presented in this snapshot cannot be considered as representative of the full population.

In South Sudan, 62% were moving with children under their care, followed by **26% in Ethiopia** and **23% in Sudan**.

Respondents' nationality by country of interview

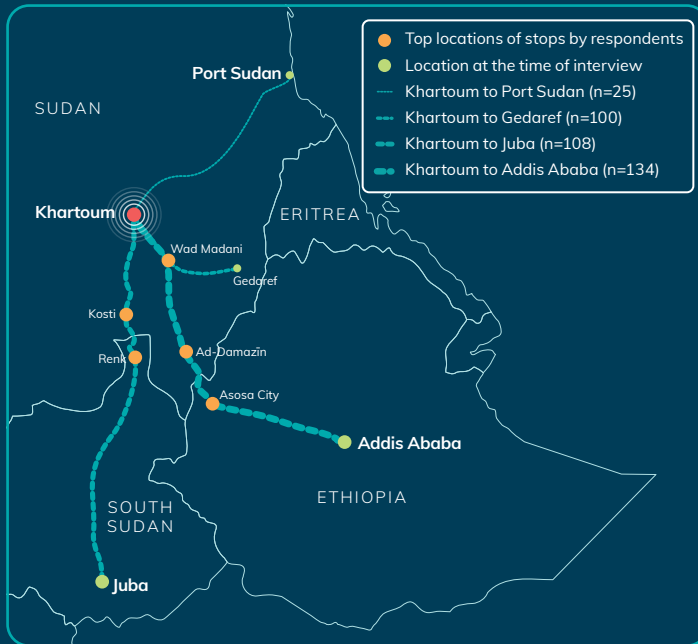


¹ IOM DTM (2024, February). [Sudan Weekly Displacement Snapshot 21](#).

² 4Mi tool collects data with refugees and migrants and therefore Sudanese nationals were not interviewed in Sudan. For more information visit www.mixedmigration.org/4mi. 1

Routes to Eastern Sudan, Addis Ababa and Juba

Top routes taken by respondents fleeing war in Khartoum (n=367)*



- Overall, most (59%; 403/688) respondents had been in Khartoum when the war erupted.
- 96% of respondents in Addis Ababa and 73% in Juba had fled from Khartoum.
- 40% of those interviewed in eastern Sudan fled from Khartoum. The majority were already living in the east when war broke out.
- Of the 264 respondents interviewed in Gedaref State, 47% were from Khartoum, 7% from Kassala State, 5% from Al Jazira and 1% from Sennar. The remaining 40% had been in Gedaref State since before the start of the war.
- Of the 64 respondents interviewed in Kassala State, 60 had been there since before the start of the war.
- In contrast, 58/61 respondents interviewed in Red Sea State had arrived after the outbreak of war, with 25 originating from Khartoum, followed by Kassala State (11), South Darfur (9), Gedaref State (7), Al Jazira (3), Central Darfur (2) and West Kordofan (1).

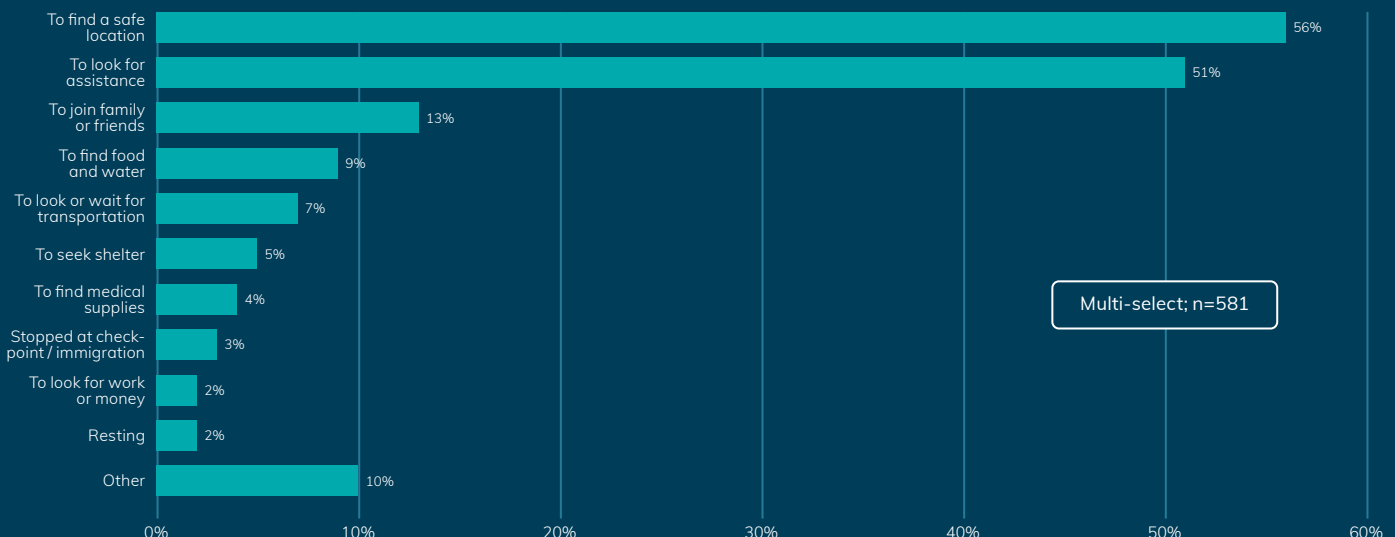
*Besides these top routes, some respondents fled from Khartoum to Um-Gargour camp (10), Tunaydbah camp (8), Wad Madani (7) Um-Rakouba camp (6), Shagarab refugee camp (2) and Ad Damazine (2). One respondent had not left Khartoum.

Disclaimer: This map is for illustration purposes only. The boundaries and names shown, and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by MMC.

Places where refugees and migrants stopped and reasons for stopping along the routes

- Of the refugees and migrants surveyed in Sudan who had moved since the outbreak of war, 23% (54/231) stopped³ along their journey to their current location.
- By contrast, most respondents interviewed in Addis Ababa (99%) and Juba (60%) had stopped, **more often in towns close to the borders**.
- Respondents in Addis Ababa (n=138) had most often stopped in **Ad Damazin** in Sudan (75%) and **Asosa City** in Ethiopia (73%). Respondents in Juba (n=88), stopped in **Kosti** in Sudan (43%) and **Renk** in South Sudan (50%). The top two reasons for stopping in these locations were to find safety and assistance.
- The reasons for stopping varied by nationality.** Sudanese respondents stopped primarily for assistance (67% of 230 stops), while other nationalities stopped mainly for safety (72% of 351 stops).

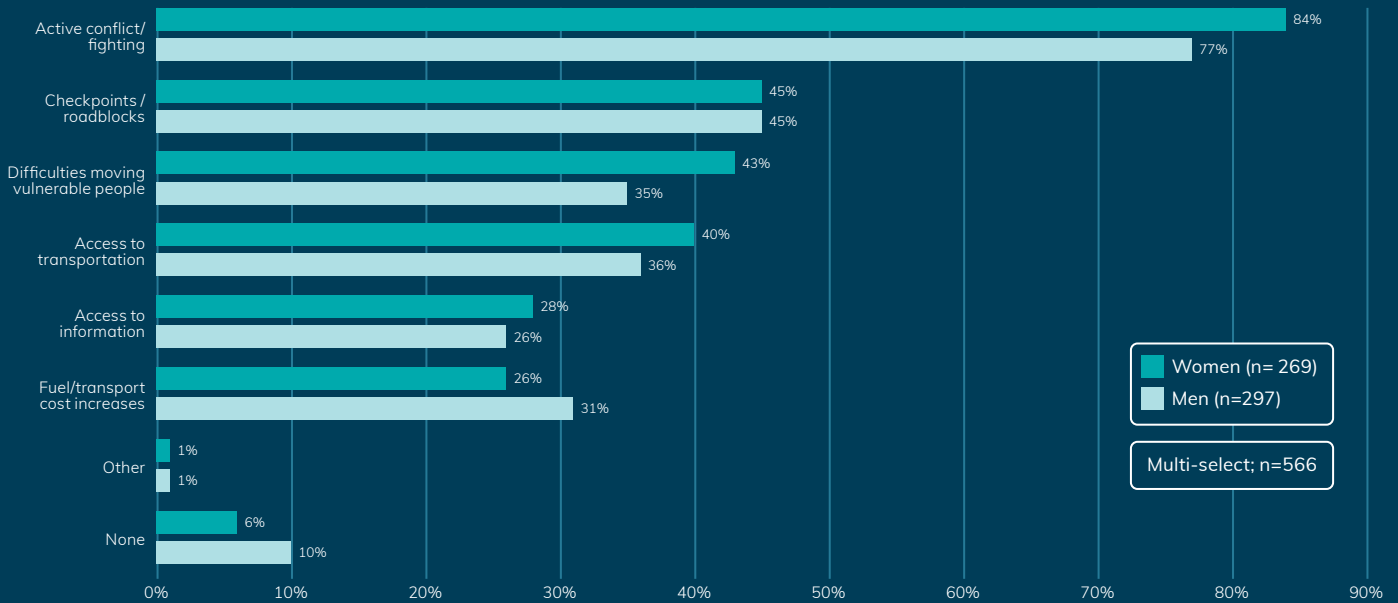
Reasons for stopping reported by respondents in Sudan, Ethiopia and South Sudan (total stops)



³ Due to the global nature of the 4Mi survey and the difference in various mixed movement routes globally, MMC does not define stopping. Instead, respondents are asked to list up to 5 of the longest stops they made on the journey.

Challenges along the journey

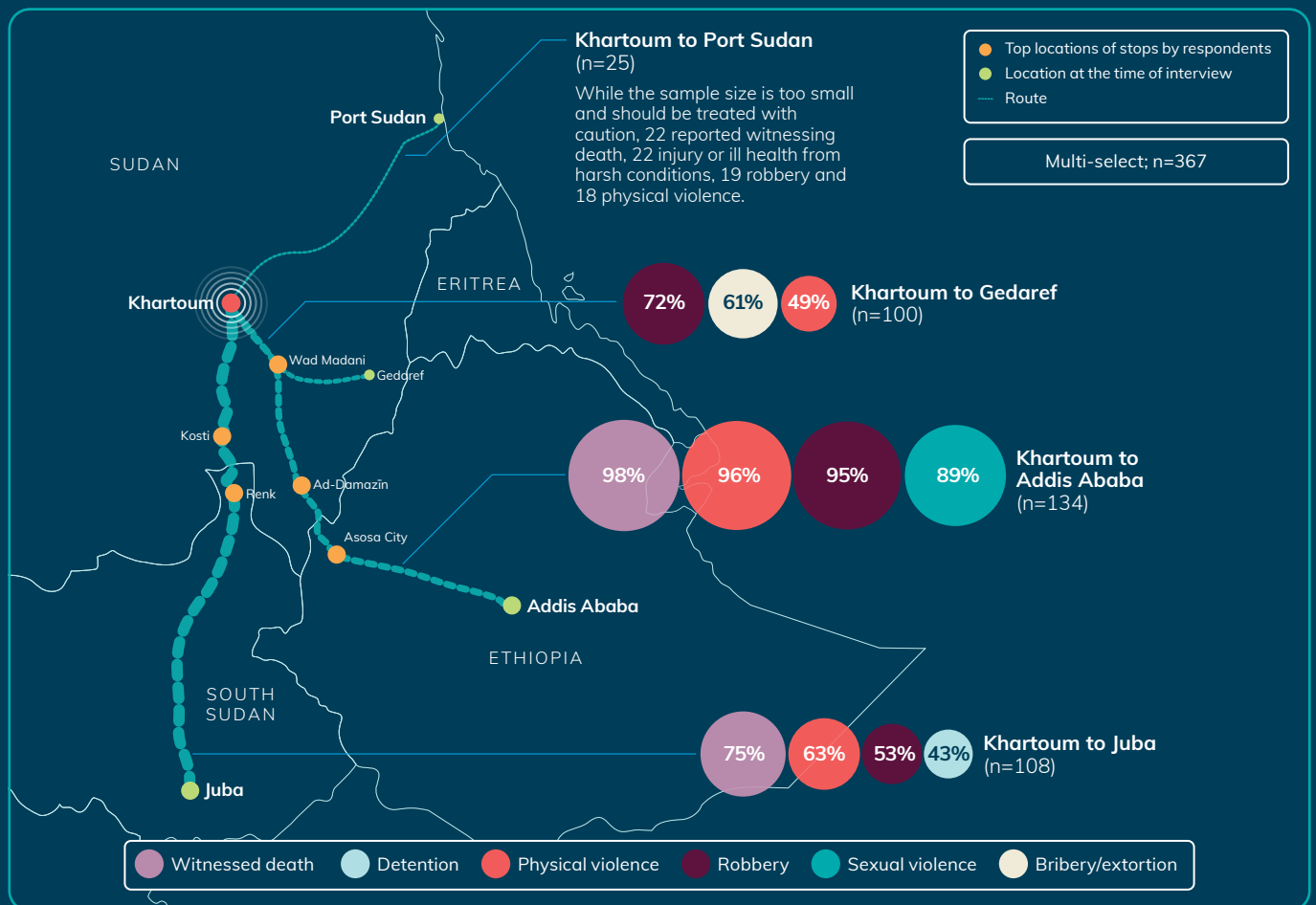
What were the main challenges in leaving the location you were in when the war began?



* Reported challenges were similar across different nationalities and age cohorts.

High exposure to abuse and injury along the route and in locations of interview since the outbreak of war

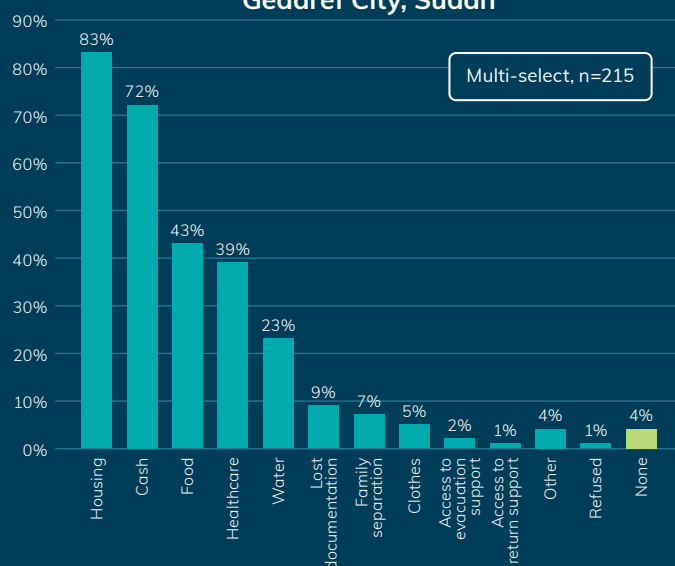
Protection incidents witnessed or experienced by respondents fleeing Khartoum through the top 4 routes



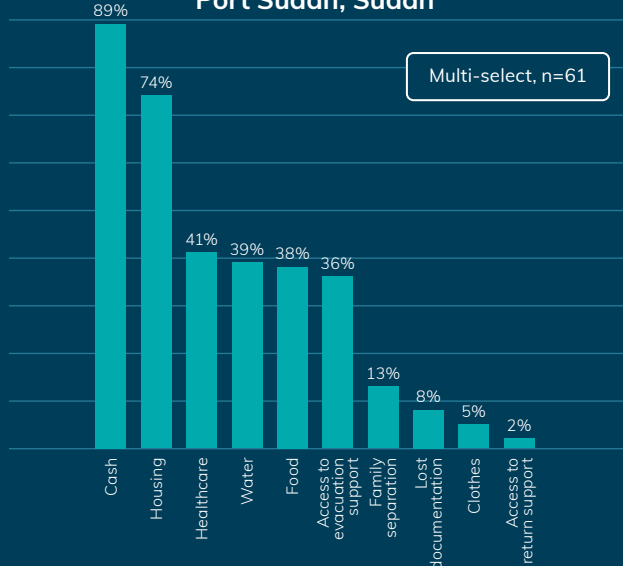
Challenges in Gedaref city, Port Sudan, Addis Ababa and Juba

What are the current challenges you face?

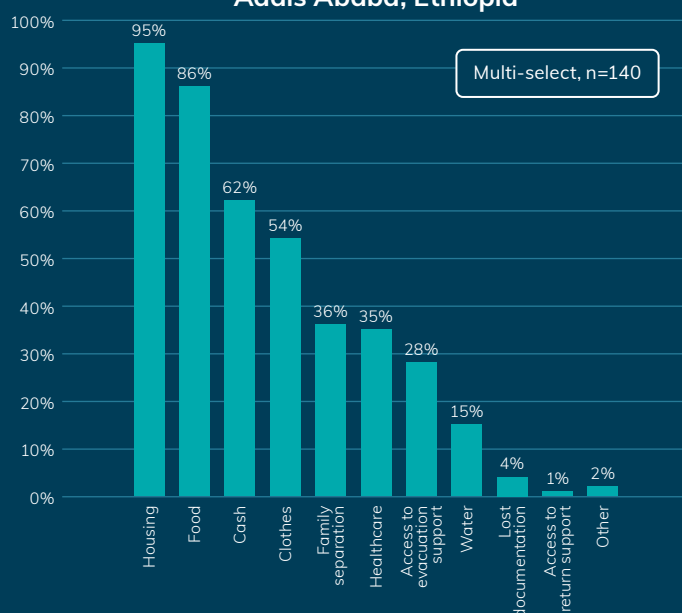
Gedaref City, Sudan



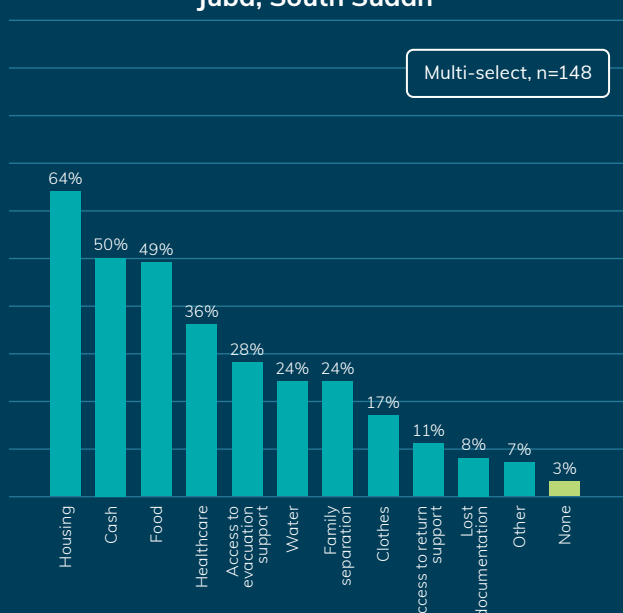
Port Sudan, Sudan



Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

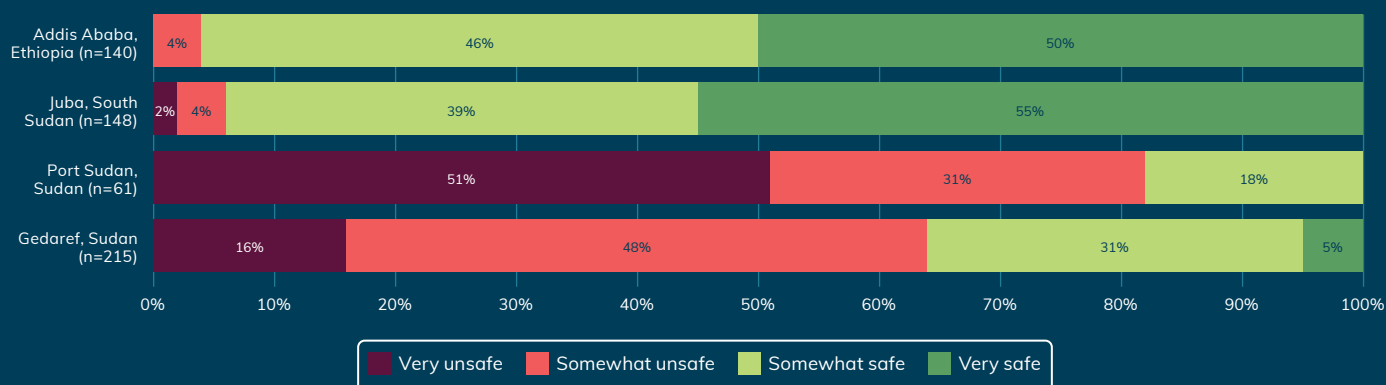


Juba, South Sudan



- Irrespective of the interview location or country, individuals fleeing the conflict in Sudan encountered barriers in accessing essential services. These include difficulties in accessing housing, cash, food and healthcare.
- No major differences were observed between men and women and different age cohorts.

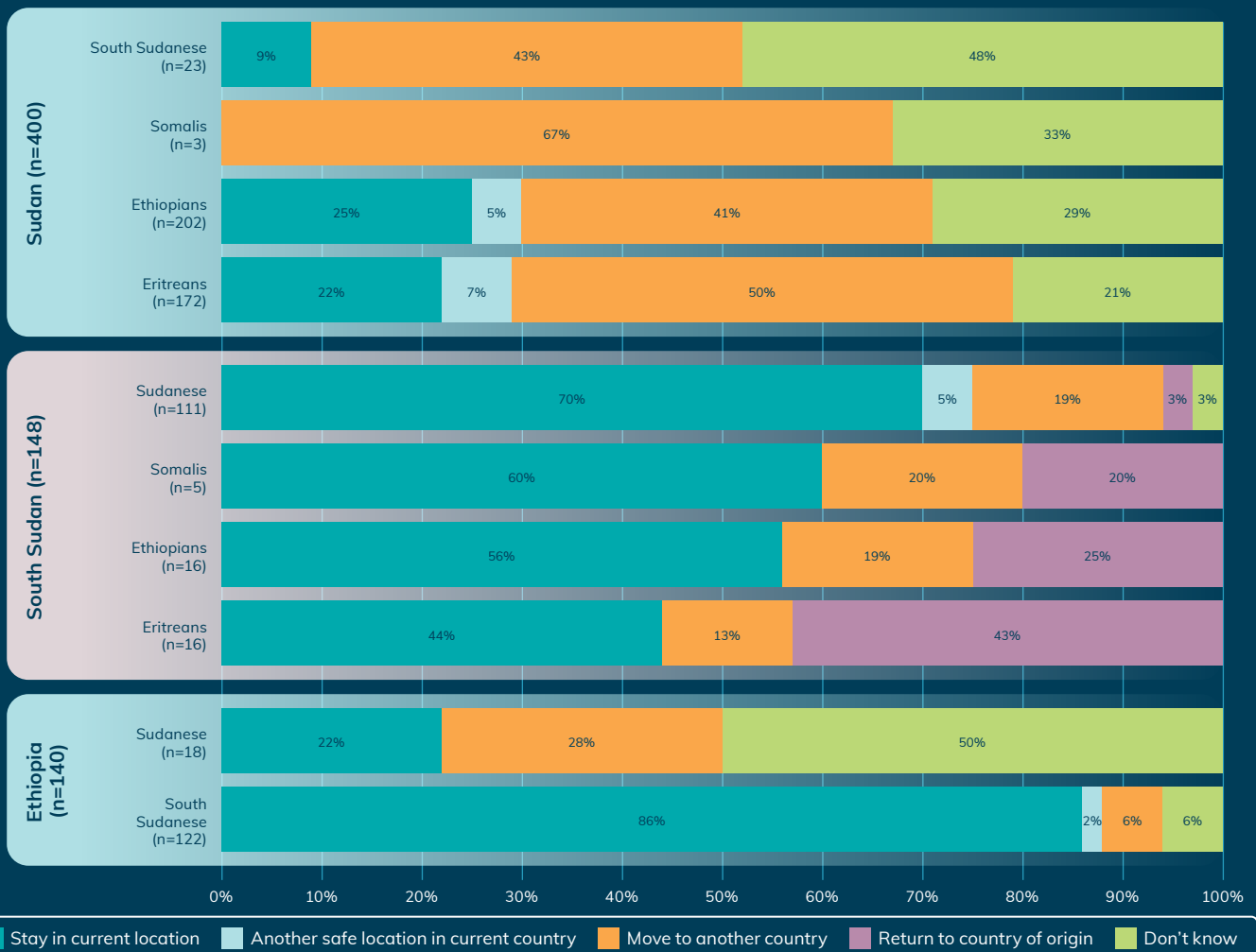
To what extent do you feel safe in your current location?



Onward movement intentions in the next 3 months

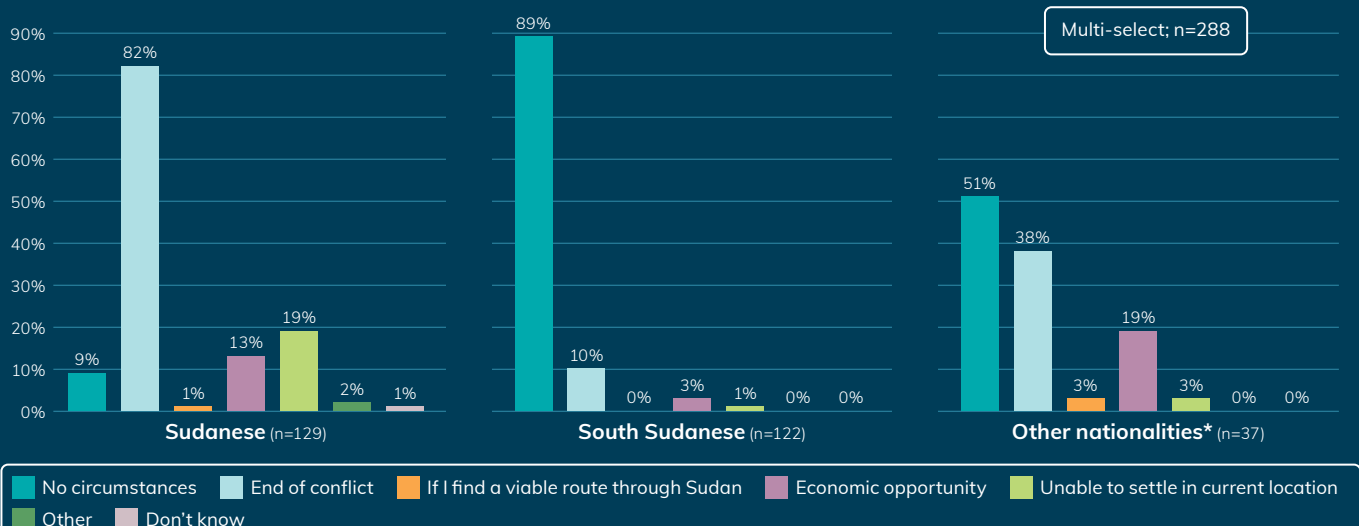
What are your movement intentions within the next 3 months?

(by country of interview and nationality; n=688)



- 45% of respondents in Sudan planned to relocate to another country within three months of their interview, with Egypt being the preferred destination for 66%. 27% were unsure of their next steps, and 23% planned to stay in their current location. In contrast, most respondents in Addis Ababa (78%) and South Sudan (66%) intended to remain in their interview locations.
- In terms of overall movement aspirations, the majority (80%) expressed a desire to move out of the region, with Europe (30%), Canada (22%) and the United States of America (16%) being the top preferred destinations.

For respondents interviewed in Addis Ababa and Juba: under what circumstances would you return to Sudan?



*Other nationalities include 16 Eritreans, 16 Ethiopians and 5 Somalis.

Note on Terminology

MMC applies the term “[mixed migration](#)” to refer to cross-border movements of people, including refugees fleeing persecution and conflict, victims of trafficking and people seeking better lives and economic opportunities. UNHCR and IOM - among other refugee protection actors - apply the term “mixed movement”, defined as: the cross-border movement of people, generally in an irregular manner, involving individuals and groups who travel alongside each other, using similar routes and means of transport or facilitators, but for different reasons. People travelling as part of mixed movements have different needs and profiles, and may include asylum-seekers, refugees, victims of trafficking, unaccompanied or separated children, stateless persons and migrants (including migrants in irregular situations or migrants in vulnerable situations). In light of the partnership between UNHCR, IOM and MMC in publishing this snapshot, the term “mixed movement” is used.



4Mi data collection

4Mi is the Mixed Migration Centre's flagship primary data collection system, an innovative approach that helps fill knowledge gaps and inform policy and response regarding the nature of mixed migratory movements and the protection risks for migrants on the move. 4Mi field enumerators are currently collecting data through direct interviews with migrants in Asia and the Pacific, Eastern and Southern Africa, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, North Africa, and West Africa.

Note that the sampling approach means that the findings derived from the surveyed sample provide rich insights, but the figures cannot be used to make inferences about the total population. See more 4Mi analysis and details on methodology at: www.mixedmigration.org/4mi

