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# MONITOR



SEPTEMBER 2025

# ETHIOPIA

## ‘I FELT HELPLESS’: ETHIOPIAN DOCTORS HELD, HARASSED FOR SEEKING BETTER PAY

### AMONG THE LOWEST-PAID MEDICS IN EAST AFRICA, ETHIOPIA’S DOCTORS FACE STATE CRACKDOWN IN STRIKE FOR BETTER WORKING CONDITIONS.

2<sup>ND</sup> SEPTEMBER 2025

In a hospital in Ethiopia’s capital, Addis Ababa, in mid-May, Tewodros\* was at work treating patients when two police officers barged into the emergency room. Earlier that same month, the doctor had participated in a public sector health workers’ strike, protesting poor working conditions and low pay.

The government had immediately declared the strike illegal, setting the stage for a tense standoff with the country’s health professionals. The emergency room where Tewodros was working was one of the places where that played out.

The officers said they were taking him in for questioning but gave no reason, Tewodros says. They grabbed him and pulled him out of the ward. His colleagues tried to intervene, but the police ignored them and took him to a nearby station, where he was held for more than three weeks.

“That was the moment I felt helpless. That was the moment I was ashamed of my country,” Tewodros told Al Jazeera, recounting the incident.

His detention was only the beginning of his ordeal. He says he was crammed into a cell with 15 other people. They weren’t permitted

to wash, and he never got to see or speak with his family. Al Jazeera reached out to Ethiopia’s police for a response to the accusations, but they did not reply.

The strike was led by the Ethiopian Health Professionals Movement (EHPM), a loose collective of doctors that had formed in 2019. On May 19, they issued a 12-point list of demands to the government, including requests for fair salaries, health insurance, transport support and improved workplace conditions. When the deadline passed with no meaningful engagement from authorities, hundreds of doctors began walking out of hospitals across the country.

The Ethiopian government adopted “repressive tactics” against the striking doctors, according to rights groups, arresting 47 people throughout Ethiopia within a few days, and dozens more over the following weeks.

Tewodros was one of more than 140 doctors arrested in a sweeping crackdown in May and June, according to the EHPM. They launched a website, Health Voice Ethiopia, to track their arrested colleagues, how long they were detained for, and when they were released.

All the doctors have since been released, and the strikes have ended following a government promise to address their concerns, though no concrete commitments have been made, the doctors say.

## PAID \$60 A MONTH

Ethiopia's doctors are among the lowest-paid in East Africa, according to World Bank figures, with some earning as little as \$60 a month, compared with neighbouring Kenya, where doctors expect to be paid closer to \$1,800.

One Ethiopian pathologist, who spent time working in Hargeisa, the capital of the self-declared republic of Somaliland, told the BBC her \$2,500 monthly salary there was enough to cover that of 20 of her colleagues back home. She was later arrested.

Doctors have reported difficulties paying rent, eating, covering transport costs and an inability to afford healthcare for themselves.

Al Jazeera interviewed half a dozen doctors – some of whom were arrested for participating in the strike – who cited biting inflation, stagnant wages and extremely difficult working conditions as having pushed them to take industrial action.

One doctor said he spends well more than two-thirds of his \$73 monthly salary on rent, and turns to what he called “side hustles”, such as content creation for local businesses. Other doctors, he added, work at pharmacies and even as Uber drivers to make it through the month.

“The government should stop harassing and jailing healthcare workers and their representatives and finally engage with them in a meaningful dialogue about their complaints,” Laetitia Bader, the Horn of Africa director at Human Rights Watch, told Al Jazeera.

Ethiopia's federal police said the detained doctors had organised an “illegal strike” and accused them of endangering patients' lives.

“I am not really able to take care of myself, let alone think about a family,” he said. “I struggle to travel to work, it is hard to eat, and being a doctor isn't a job that leaves much time. We have to work extremely hard just to get by. We had higher expectations.”

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed said in June that his government was aware doctors are “being crushed by life”, an acknowledgement of their difficulties. But he accused those striking of being “political opportunists” and “politicians in white coats”.

Ethiopia has faced soaring inflation since floating its currency last year, sharply eroding the value of wages as consumer prices in the capital have surged. Ethiopia's currency, the birr, hit an all-time low of 174 to the US dollar in black markets in July, a sign that despite reassurance from the central bank that inflation would subside, the economy remains fragile.

The country is also still recovering from the combined impacts of COVID-19 and a

devastating two-year war in the northern Tigray region, which, according to one [report](#),

is expected to result in cumulative losses of nearly \$125bn to Ethiopia's economy by 2027.

These overlapping crises have placed immense strain on Ethiopia's already fragile public services, and the health sector is among the hardest hit.

## 30-HOUR SHIFTS; FIXED SALARIES

For the country's doctors, whose salaries are fixed and paid in birr, the effects of inflation and currency depreciation have been particularly severe, and many find themselves unable to meet even their most basic needs.

When they arrive at work, they often face long, gruelling shifts as long as 30 hours in some cases, are understaffed, and lack the equipment needed to carry out their duties.

The roots of the issues in Ethiopia's healthcare system go back to its attempt to address an earlier shortage of qualified doctors. In 2003, Ethiopia had [0.26 physicians](#) per 10,000 people, lower than Kenya, which had 1.38 doctors per 10,000 and Eritrea which had 0.42.

The government was then led by Meles Zenawi, once a medical student himself, who announced it would begin working towards the goal of universal healthcare coverage, through the expansion of health insurance, but also access to doctors.

The government adopted a "flooding policy" to address the shortage, rapidly increasing enrolment in medical courses and expanding the number of medical schools in the country.

According to World Health Organization (WHO) figures, the policy succeeded, increasing the number of doctors in the country by 851 percent in just a decade, from an estimated 1,936 to 18,413.

Yet, despite the significant increase in the number of doctors during those years, successive governments have been unable to raise doctors' salaries to competitive levels, in a country that already ranks among Africa's lowest in gross domestic product per capita. Coupled with a health sector heavily reliant on aid and a period of high inflation, the real value of doctors' salaries has been steadily eroded.

Mulugeta Gebrehiwot, an Ethiopia researcher at the World Peace Foundation, said the government has shifted its focus to "vanity infrastructure projects", such as reshaping the capital's skyline, abandoning the development ethos of earlier administrations. "They're more focused on the way things look," he told Al Jazeera.

## TRUCK DRIVERS CAN EARN MORE

"This was the only way to make our voices heard," Tewodros said about the strikes. He said he is now seriously considering leaving the medical profession for better-paid jobs in the country's service sector.

"One of my relatives is employed as a truck driver and earns about \$250 per month, which

is more than three times my salary as a medical doctor.”

Dagwami Mulugeta is a doctor who left Ethiopia during the sweeping arrests in May; he has since settled in the United States. He left shortly after two friends of his were arrested and his Facebook profile was hacked, fearing he would be next due to his role in organising and supporting the strike.

“We have to make such a huge sacrifice, and at the end we’re not paid fairly and have to struggle to cover basic costs,” he said, telling Al Jazeera he and many of his colleagues feel unrewarded for the time they have dedicated to the profession.

Many doctors leave the country, and those who do not go abroad leave the job, he added.

In 2019, when he entered the profession, he said doctors had to work 36-hour shifts with little to no sleep, and had to treat patients with outdated equipment, if what they needed was available. This triggered strikes back then, which helped reduce their hours to 30 per shift in most government hospitals, but without significant changes to their salaries.

“There were some improvements,” says

Dagwami, “but overall the conditions for doctors didn’t improve enough.”

Lulit\* is a doctor who left medicine for humanitarian work. “There was more hope back then,” she said of the 2019 strikes she participated in. She said many doctors had expected Prime Minister Abiy – who had branded himself as a reformist at the time – to meet their demands. “There was a compromise, but doctors were left disappointed and their problems built up,” she said.

The most prominent doctor arrested in the strikes was Daniel Fentaneh, a resident in gynaecology and obstetrics and a lecturer at Bahir Dar University in northwest Ethiopia, who was detained at the end of June and is regarded by some of his colleagues as a [Che Guevara](#)-like figure.

He played a key role in rallying his colleagues during the strikes and was charged with “inciting, mobilising, and organising”.

Rights groups like Amnesty International called for his “unconditional release”, which followed 27 days later. But his detention was a major blow to the morale of his fellow doctors, and the EHPM said his arrest was a “shameful betrayal of justice and conscience”.

## ‘WE DON’T WANT TO LEAVE OUR JOBS’

A 2020 study by a group of Ethiopian academics found that just more than half of Ethiopian doctors were satisfied with their jobs, while only 6.8 percent of those surveyed said they were satisfied with their income. Another study conducted in 2022 found that approximately six out of 10 doctors in the country were considering leaving their jobs.

Ethiopia allocated 8.3 percent of its budget to healthcare in 2023 and 2024, an increase from the previous year. However, the UN children’s fund UNICEF notes that due to higher inflation and a weaker birr, the real

value of this allocation has declined. It also remains well below the 15 percent target set by the 2001 Abuja Declaration, in which African Union countries pledged to allocate that share of their national budgets to health.

This compounds challenges related to recruitment and retention of staff.

Ethiopia was lauded for the dramatic expansion of its healthcare system in the early 2000s, led by then health minister Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, who later became director-general of the WHO. Between 2000 and 2019, the share of facility births rose from 5 percent to 48 percent, full childhood vaccination coverage tripled, and between 1990 and 2013, maternal deaths per 100,000 live births dropped from 1,400 to 420.

But for a new generation of medical professionals, the legacy of that progress sits uneasily alongside new realities. Dagwami, who recently completed his training, says he knows of many doctors who have left the field for more lucrative sectors, from social media management to founding their own companies.

"Doctors are passionate about their work," he said, "and we don't want to leave our jobs. But these working conditions make life hard for us and endanger patients. It isn't good for anybody."

In late June, Abiy held a meeting with a selected group of health workers, attempting to strike an uneasy balance between acknowledging their "valid concerns" about salaries with launching verbal attacks on those who took industrial action. The prime minister said the striking doctors do not understand what it means to provide a service or how to build a nation. "These are

Source: [‘I felt helpless’: Ethiopian doctors held, harassed for seeking better pay | Poverty and Development News | Al Jazeera](#)

people who reduce everything, from science museums to high schools, to salaries," he said.

Dagwami said "witnessing the condescension, public belittling, and imprisonment of dedicated professionals was one of the most heartwrenching and unparalleled experiences of my life."

Doctors tried to be "constructive" and "solutions-oriented", but the government did not rise to the occasion, he feels.

Al Jazeera reached out to the government in Addis Ababa for a response, but received no reply.

The doctors are currently waiting for the government to deliver its response to a commitment it made to address the issues they have raised. But on the Health Voice website – that was set up to track the arrests and release of their colleagues – a clock steadily ticks down.

If their concerns are not addressed before time runs out, they have pledged to go back on strike.

*\*Some names have been changed at the doctors' requests, out of concern that speaking out could lead to arrest.*

# FROM HAILE SELASSIE TO CROWDFUNDING, HOW ETHIOPIA'S GERD DAM WAS BORN

## AFTER DECADES OF WORK, FUNDING DELAYS, POLITICAL UPHEAVAL AND REGIONAL PUSHBACK, THE GRAND ETHIOPIAN RENAISSANCE DAM IS INAUGURATED.

9<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2025

Abdulahakim Shamsuddin was 14 and in high school in the city of Dire Dawa when he first heard that he could contribute to the building of a dam on the Blue Nile.

The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, known by its acronym GERD, was pitched as Ethiopia's most ambitious infrastructure venture, which promised to harness the river's power to propel Ethiopia to reliable energy access and prosperity.

Not long after then-Prime Minister Meles Zenawi announced the project in April 2011, Shamsuddin's teacher gave a presentation on the dam and its significance and encouraged students to give small contributions for its construction, then estimated at \$4.5bn. Across the country, everyone – from civil servants to shoe shiners – pitched in.

The government turned to Ethiopians like Shamsuddin to help crowdsource the dam's funding to plug financing gaps, giving everyone, even children, a stake in the project's success.

In an interview filmed beside the dam last week, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed [said](#): "Previous generations dreamed of harnessing the Abbay River [Blue Nile], but their efforts were constrained. Today, that vision has come to life."

Nearly 14 years on, Shamsuddin's modest contribution is among millions that have helped deliver Africa's largest hydroelectric project, [inaugurated on Tuesday](#), two days before the Ethiopian New Year.

"You can guess when you participate in something from your childhood and see your work and success growing up how it feels," said Shamsuddin, who is now a doctor in Dire Dawa. "That's what makes the current moment special."

Ethiopia's journey – from Zenawi's laying of the first ceremonial stone in 2011 to the completion of the GERD – has been anything but straightforward, yet it marks the culmination of a project that was a century in the making.

## FROM DREAM TO DESIGN

The earliest mentions of a plan to build a dam across the Nile date back to the early 1900s when the United Kingdom and Italy, major colonial powers in northeast Africa, considered and then abandoned plans to build one along the Blue Nile in the northwest of the country.

The idea gained momentum after the United States withdrew funding for the Aswan Dam from an increasingly assertive, pro-Soviet Egypt in the 1950s. Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie, the US's principal African ally, commissioned the US Bureau of Reclamation to study possible sites for a dam.

"However generously Ethiopia may be prepared to share this tremendous God-given wealth of hers with friendly neighbouring countries," Selassie said in 1957, "it is Ethiopia's primary and sacred duty to develop her water resources in the interest of her own rapidly expanding population and economy."

These plans were met with concern in Egypt and Sudan, which were worried that a major dam could reduce the river's flow and the amount of freshwater available for irrigation and other uses.

In 1929, the UK, which then ruled Sudan, concluded a treaty with Egypt that gave Cairo the largest allocation of the Nile's waters and a block on upstream construction projects. After Sudan's independence in 1956, it agreed a new treaty with Egypt in 1959 that essentially established their exclusive control over Nile water usage while excluding other riparian

"The Ethiopia we inherited was dark and rural," Mulugeta Gebrehiwot, an Ethiopia researcher at the World Peace Foundation, a peace research institute at Tufts University in the US, who also worked in the government in the late 1990s, told Al Jazeera. To this day, despite major advances, about [60 million](#) Ethiopians have no electricity.

states from decision-making.

Ethiopia wasn't a party to either agreement and rejected both. "Despite contributing so much to the river, Ethiopia uses virtually none of it," [wrote](#) Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, who served as Ethiopia's foreign minister from 2012 to 2016.

As different Ethiopian governments came and went over the following decades, the idea for a dam lay dormant until it was taken up by the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), a left-wing coalition of several ethnic parties that formally launched the project in April 2011 to much fanfare.

Zenawi, who led the EPRDF, believed "development was a matter of national survival". Bereket Simon, an information minister in 2014, said "poverty and backwardness are the number one enemy" and called for the country to be on a war footing.

To this end, the government sought to create conditions in which poverty could be eradicated by facilitating growth, which involved [expanding healthcare](#), education and infrastructure and, crucially, enhancing access to energy.

## HYDROPOWER LEADER

Ethiopia is considered “Africa’s water tower” because of the generous precipitation it enjoys and its many rivers, and hydropower would play a large role in remedying its chronic energy shortages. Several dams were completed in the early 2000s, making the country Africa’s leading hydroelectricity producer. But the idea of constructing a far larger dam across the Nile really began to take shape only in the late 2000s.

“Around the late 2000s, the technical capacity, political will and financial conditions aligned to enable the then-ruling EPRDF to kick-start construction,” said Biruk Terrefe, a lecturer on African politics at the University of Bayreuth in Germany who researches infrastructure projects.

After laying GERD’s first cornerstone in 2011, Zenawi said in a speech: “No matter how poor we are, in the Ethiopian traditions of resolve, the Ethiopian people will pay any sacrifice.”

The [overwhelming majority of the dam](#) was funded through Ethiopia’s state institutions, but an official told state media that from 2023 to 2024 alone an estimated 1.712 billion birr (roughly \$21m) was raised by Ethiopians. From 2022 to 2025, another official [said](#), Ethiopia’s diaspora contributed \$10m.

Public sector workers contributed parts of their salaries, and bonds were issued to Ethiopians who wished to lend. The main message about GERD was that it would be funded entirely at home.

“The dam has had the unique power to galvanise Ethiopians despite major internal fault lines,” Terrefe told Al Jazeera. “It’s been a source of collective pride across the political spectrum for many who have contributed to its construction.”

“These contributions weren’t coming from people with deep pockets. The public rallied behind the project because they believed it would change the country’s future,” Mulugeta said.

Abdifatah Hussein Abdi, an MP with the ruling Prosperity Party in the regional parliament of Ethiopia’s Somali state, a historically marginal region, said he forfeited about 3 to 4 percent of his salary for the project while working in the municipality of Jigjiga for more than a decade. “There were regular electricity shortages in my district, and I wanted to help, but also on a national level, we felt it would move the country forward,” he told Al Jazeera.

Musa Sheko Mengi, a prominent activist rallying support for GERD in the capital, Addis Ababa, said he has invested in half a dozen bonds because he considers the dam a “gateway to hope” for Ethiopia.

“Most of our citizens live in darkness. We hope this dam will mark the beginning of a new era in Ethiopia,” he said.

## DEBT, DELAYS AND POLITICAL ROADBLOCKS

Zenawi died in 2012, a year after the construction of GERD started. His tenure was characterised by rapid growth but also great repression, and after his death, the EPRDF began to fragment.

The country also accumulated unsustainable amounts of foreign debt to fund other infrastructure projects, which jeopardised the state-led model of development.

Abiy came to power in 2018 promising "[deep reform](#)", including opening Ethiopia's economy to the private sector and allowing greater political freedoms.

Although the dam was roughly two-thirds complete when he took office, progress on the project faced serious setbacks in his early years. Just four months after Abiy came to power, the dam's chief engineer, Simegnaw Bekele, was found dead in the centre of the capital. Police said he died by suicide.

Abiy blamed many of Ethiopia's problems on the previous government, which was dominated by the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), and methodically removed officials he believed were close to the party

Officials working on the dam estimated that it could generate up to \$1bn in revenue through energy exports.

### 'THREAT' TO THE REGION?

Although Ethiopian officials have repeatedly insisted that the dam will not harm the interests of downstream countries, this has not alleviated their concerns. Egypt and Sudan fear it could undermine their access to the river and have knock-on impacts for agriculture and urban water supplies. They issued a joint statement last week describing the dam as a "threat".

Sudan has two major tributaries of the Nile within its borders, which merge in Khartoum. Egypt, by contrast, relies almost entirely on the single river after this confluence for more than 90 percent of its freshwater and

from office. This included dozens of officials in state-run companies that were contracted to complete parts of the dam who were arrested in 2018 on corruption charges.

At the time, Abiy said the project might take up to a decade to complete at the rate it was moving.

Conflicts also spread across the country, culminating in the two-year [Tigray war](#), which began in November 2020 and became one of the deadliest conflicts of the 21st century with some estimates placing the death toll as high as 600,000.

Despite further delays and funding shortages, the GERD was eventually completed in July although it has been generating power since 2022. In 2024, the dam was meeting 16 percent of Ethiopia's electricity needs, according to officials working on it.

has tended to take a stronger position on Ethiopia's dam.

In 2013, Mohamed Kamel Amr, who was Egypt's foreign minister at the time, put it

starkly when he said: "No Nile, no Egypt". Successive Egyptian presidents from Gamal Abdel Nasser to Mohamed Morsi have even threatened military action if an agreement is not reached between the countries on fair water usage.

Talks have been stop-start since the project began in 2011, but they have not produced an agreement that addresses the concerns of all parties. A small breakthrough took place in 2015 when a declaration of principles was signed, recognising Ethiopia's right to build the dam and committing the three countries to equitable use, no significant harm and further agreements on filling and operation.

But this wasn't followed up, and by July 2020, Ethiopia began its first filling of the GERD's reservoir, which is estimated to be around the size of Greater London.

"Egypt is seeking a fair system to regulate usage of the Nile, especially during drought years, as the country needs a minimum flow," said Abbas Shakary, a geologist at Cairo University. It is already one of the world's driest countries and is struggling with water scarcity due to rising temperatures.

In the past, the major sticking point was how fast the dam would be filled. That issue and the dam's existence more broadly are now "a fait accompli", said Biruk Terrefe, the politics lecturer.

"The underlying conflict is about trust and the incompatible historical claims on the Nile," he added. "Ideally, the next step would be to re-engage multilaterally through the Nile Basin Initiative, the African Union and other regional players."

Source: [From Haile Selassie to crowdfunding, how Ethiopia's GERD dam was born | Energy News | Al Jazeera](#)

# KENYA

## KIAMBU COUNTY OFFERS HEALTH SERVICES DESPITE STRIKE

SEPTEMBER 30<sup>TH</sup> 2025

Health services across Kiambu County have continued without interruption despite the ongoing nationwide doctors' strike.

Hospitals remain open and fully functional, with additional staffing and resources ensuring patients continue to receive treatment. Kiambu has a total of 123 hospitals, 14 of which are Level 4 and above facilities.

According to the County Health Department Chief Officer Dr Patrick Nyaga, these 14 hospitals were fully equipped within the first week of the strike and additional medical workers were deployed to reinforce operations. Today, they continue to run smoothly, offering services 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

There are approximately 200 doctors serving in these facilities, distributed across both internship centers and other county hospitals. Four of the hospitals have been certified by the Kenya Medical Practitioners and Dentists Council (KMPDC) as internship centers, while the other 10, though not internship centers, remain staffed with qualified doctors providing care to residents.

The strike has largely affected consultant doctors, some senior doctors, and selected pharmacies. However, Dr Nyaga notes that service delivery at county hospitals has not been compromised.

Nyaga said the county has hired 145 doctors to enhance health care provision. Besides, he explained that 52 doctors did not join the

strike from the onset, while close to 90 others have since abandoned the industrial action and resumed duty.

He dismissed reports suggesting that healthcare in Kiambu had been paralyzed, attributing them to misinformation. "The only complaints out there are related to the KMPDU doctors' strike. KMPDU has been at the forefront of misinforming the public about healthcare services in Kiambu. We have been giving services at normal levels for as long as we can remember," he stated.

Patients at Kiambu Referral Hospital confirmed that services have been running as usual. "I was worried when I heard about the doctors' strike, but when I came here, I was treated quickly and the doctors were available. For us as patients, the services are still going on," said Teresa Wakarima, a patient at the hospital.

County officials say their focus remains on ensuring uninterrupted delivery of health services, even as negotiations continue at the national level.

The situation in Kiambu demonstrates how strategic staffing, timely communication, and institutional preparedness can help safeguard essential public services in the face of industrial action.

Source: [Kiambu County offers Health Services despite strike – Kenya News Agency](#)

# RWANDA

## RWANDA'S CABINET RESOLUTION SPURS MAJOR FOREST AND LAND RESTORATION EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE CLIMATE GOALS AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

SEPTEMBER 15<sup>TH</sup> 2025

**Kigali, Rwanda** — On Monday, 15 September 2025, Rwanda's Cabinet announced a bold push to transform the country's landscape and reinforce its climate resilience through an array of large-scale forest and land restoration projects.

These initiatives align with Rwanda's commitment to sustainable development, biodiversity conservation, and climate change mitigation, which are vital to securing the country's ecological and economic future.

As of mid-2024, Rwanda's forest cover stands at approximately 724,695 hectares, or 30.4% of the nation's total land area, according to the Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA). The country's forests comprise a diverse mix, including plantations (53.5%), natural mountain rainforests (18.1%), wooded savannas (22.3%), and other ecosystems. These ecosystems are essential for maintaining biodiversity, regulating climate, and supporting local livelihoods.

Recognizing the need to restore degraded lands, Rwanda has embarked on several ambitious projects. One major initiative led by the Rwanda Forestry Authority (RFA), supported by the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), aims to rehabilitate 60,000 hectares of degraded landscapes in the Eastern Province, covering districts such as Kirehe, Ngoma, Bugesera, Rwamagana, Kayonza, Gatsibo, and Nyagatare. This effort involves community-based programs of agroforestry, afforestation, reforestation, and planting along rivers and highways, along with promoting clean cooking technologies for

100,000 households. The goal is to enhance local livelihoods, food, and water security while increasing forest cover.

In addition, the Congo Nile Divide (CND) project, with funding from the Green Climate Fund, seeks to restore 5,000 hectares of forests within Nyungwe and Gishwati-Mukura National Parks in the same districts. This project emphasizes ecological restoration through agroforestry, silvopastoral systems, and riverbank rehabilitation, bolstering biodiversity and enhancing climate resilience for vulnerable rural communities. Support for climate-smart farming and value chains — including honey, avocados, and horticulture — are also central to this initiative, further encouraging sustainable economic development.

Several other key efforts complement these projects. The COMBIO initiative focuses on protecting biodiversity and reducing vulnerability to climate change through community-led conservation in Kirehe and Nyagatare districts, supported by the Rwanda Environment Management Authority. Meanwhile, TREPA is working toward restoring 60,000 hectares of croplands, silvo-pastoral lands, and private woodlots, emphasizing community participation and land management best practices.

Since 2011, Rwanda committed to bringing under restoration two million hectares of land by 2030 under the Bonn Challenge. With these current projects, the country is making substantial progress in its quest to restore one-third of its land to sustainable, productive

ecosystems. The initiatives directly support Rwanda's broader goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, conserve biodiversity, and improve the resilience of its most vulnerable populations—including subsistence farmers, women, and pastoralists—to climate impacts.

*Source:* [Rwanda's Cabinet Resolution Spurs Major Forest and Land Restoration Efforts to Achieve Climate Goals and Biodiversity Conservation | TOP AFRICA NEWS](#)

# SUDAN

## SUDAN RESCUERS PULL 370 BODIES FROM DARFUR LANDSLIDES, MANY REMAIN TRAPPED

**THE BODIES OF 370 PEOPLE HAVE BEEN RECOVERED AND BURIED AFTER A LANDSLIDE STRUCK THE REMOTE SUDANESE VILLAGE OF TARASIN AFTER HEAVY RAIN.**

SEPTEMBER 4<sup>TH</sup> 2025

Authorities have recovered the bodies of hundreds of people killed [in a landslide](#) at a remote mountainous village over the weekend in the western Sudanese region of Darfur, which is controlled by rebels.

Ibrahim Suleiman, a senior official in the civilian administration of Daramo locality, where the village of Tarasin is located, reported in a video released by the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A) on Thursday that 370 bodies had been recovered and buried.

Many others remain trapped under debris or were swept away by floodwaters, he added.

The August 31 landslide that followed days of heavy rainfall in Tarasin, in the Marrah Mountains, could have possibly killed as many as 1,000 people, Mohamed Abdel-Rahman al-Nair, a spokesperson for the SLM/A, which controls the region, previously told the AP news agency.

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) had a similar death toll estimate, but said it was difficult to confirm the magnitude of the tragedy because the area is hard to reach.

The UN has said that efforts have been mobilised to support the affected area, located more than 900 kilometres (560 miles) west of the capital, Khartoum.

Al-Nair said in a statement on Thursday that the landslide caused a "catastrophic humanitarian situation" that required a rapid response from the international community to provide food and shelter for those who have lost everything.

The Marrah Mountains region is a volcanic area with a height of more than 3,000 metres (9,840 feet) at its summit. The mountain chain is a World Heritage Site and is known for its lower temperatures and higher rainfall than its surroundings, according to UNICEF.

A small-scale landslide hit the area in 2018, killing at least 19 people and injuring dozens of others, according to the now-disbanded United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur.

The tragedy comes amid the ongoing civil

war that erupted in April 2023 in the capital city, Khartoum. The conflict spread across the country after simmering tensions escalated

between the Sudanese army and its rival paramilitary Rapid Support Forces.

The conflict has killed tens of thousands and displaced some 12 million people. Famine has spread in parts of Darfur and southern Sudan, while cholera has affected large areas of the country, with Darfur hit hardest.

Source: [Sudan rescuers pull 370 bodies from Darfur landslides, many remain trapped | News | Al Jazeera](#)

## FATHER REUNITED WITH FAMILY IN SUDAN AFTER AL JAZEERA NEWS REPORT

### FATMA ALI AND HER CHILDREN FIND HOPE AFTER REUNITING WITH HUSBAND AND FATHER SHAMOUN IDRIS AMID SUDAN'S ONGOING HUMANITARIAN CRISIS.

SEPTEMBER 14<sup>TH</sup> 2025

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A [Sudanese father](#) who had lost contact with his wife for 18 months has been reunited with his family after recognising them in an Al Jazeera news report.

Shamoun Idris lived with his wife, Fatma Ali, and their children in Sudan's capital, Khartoum, until the city became a battleground between Sudan's regular army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in August 2023, a few months after the war in Sudan started.

As the war intensified and shelling increased near their home, the couple decided that Fatma would try to escape Khartoum with their children. Shamoun would stay behind and protect the house as RSF forces advanced, looting homes and attacking civilians.

"I decided that they should leave," Shamoun told Al Jazeera's Mohamed Vall, who reported on the initial story featuring Fatma and their children. "I stayed behind to guard the house. We thought the war would end soon and they would be able to return."

But soon after, and with the violence in the capital increasing, Idris was also forced to flee. In the process, both Shamoun and Fatma lost their phones and were unable to contact each other, with no knowledge of where the other was.

The couple became two of the 7,700 Sudanese people searching for missing relatives, according to the International Committee of the Red Cross.

"I kept telling the children he was somewhere, just unable to reach us, but, in fact, I was completely at a loss, and I was wondering what really happened to him. I couldn't focus on the children or on him being missing," said Fatma.

## REUNION

Fatma and the children eventually reached Sennar, south of Khartoum, where they sheltered in a school.

Meanwhile, Shamoun searched for them in vain, until he eventually saw an Al Jazeera news report from February about missing relatives.

In the report was his wife, Fatma.

"I said, 'Man, this is my family!' I said, 'I swear, it's my family.' It was such a huge surprise," Shamoun said.

As Fatma listened to her husband tell the story of their recent reunion, she began to cry, overwhelmed with the emotion of Shamoun's absence.

She said her hope now is for the family to rebuild their lives. "I hope we can go back and return to our previous life. I knew my children would be OK as long as I was with them, but for

their father to be gone, that was a real problem."

"Our children went to school and were very happy. Not one of our children was out of school; they even went to private schools, not public ones," she said. "Now, it's been more than two years since they saw the inside of a classroom, except as somewhere to shelter."

Since being reunited, Shamoun has found a small plot of land in Sennar, where he has built a little shack for the family.

It has no door to keep out rain, wind or sun, but thousands of other displaced people in Sudan do not have any shelter at all.

For now, Shamoun and Fatma are grateful for the little privacy and freedom it provides, and for being together.

Source: [Father reunited with family in Sudan after Al Jazeera news report](#) | [Sudan war News](#) | [Al Jazeera](#)

## WAR IN SUDAN: HUMANITARIAN, FIGHTING, CONTROL DEVELOPMENTS, SEPTEMBER 2025

### CIVIL WAR IN SUDAN BETWEEN THE SAF AND THE RSF HAS RESISTED PROPOSALS FOR ITS END.

SEPTEMBER 30<sup>TH</sup> 2025

The civil war in Sudan between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) paramilitary is now well into its third year and has created the world's most serious humanitarian disaster.

Estimates suggest the death toll is in the tens of thousands from combat alone, while thousands more have died from disease and hunger brought on by the war.

This month saw a few key military updates, as the humanitarian situation continues to deteriorate:

## FIGHTING AND MILITARY CONTROL

- Observers are awaiting the return of Sudan's wartime government, which had relocated to Port Sudan, to the Khartoum capital region.
- The RSF controls most of the vast western region of Darfur, except for North Darfur's capital, el-Fasher, where SAF has its last Darfur garrison. The paramilitary is besieging el-Fasher in hopes of controlling all of Darfur, erecting huge sand berms around it from the north, west and east, effectively creating a "kill-box", according to satellite imagery obtained by the Yale Humanitarian Research Hub.
- But analysts say the RSF is on the back foot and the SAF is making gains around el-Fasher, advancing from the north as far as Bakhit (150km, or 90 miles, from el-Fasher).
- On September 19, an RSF drone killed more than 70 people in el-Fasher, marking it one of the "bloodiest days in the city since the RSF started its siege in May last year", according to Al Jazeera's Hiba Morgan, reporting from Khartoum.
- RSF also controls much of Kordofan to the south, with the help of Abdelaziz al-Hilu's Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N), giving it cross-border access to South Sudan.
- However, SAF still controls el-Obeid, the most strategic city in North Kordofan, which it needs to hold to keep the RSF from threatening central Sudan.
- SAF achieved a strategic victory in North Kordofan when it took Umm Sumeima, about 60km (37 miles) west of el-Obeid on September 26, and Bara, 62km (39 miles) north, on September 11, after months of fierce battles some analysts described as "Mad Max-like".
- A landslide in early September reportedly killed more than 1,000 people in Tarasin in the Marrah Mountains in Central Darfur. An official from the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A) released a video on September 4 saying 370 bodies had been recovered and buried.
- Famine has taken hold in places like el-Fasher and the nearby Zamzam displacement camp, where the RSF has trapped an estimated 260,000 civilians, including 130,000 children.
- According to the World Food Programme, a total of 24.6 million people, about half of the population, are suffering acute food shortages, while 637,000 face devastating levels of hunger.
- Aid convoys from the United Nations and nongovernmental organisations rarely reach Darfur due to road closures and bureaucratic impediments. Rights groups and activists accuse both sides of weaponising food.
- Meanwhile, the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) said Sudan is facing its worst cholera outbreak in years due to the country's war-devastated infrastructure. In one area of the capital, more than 5,000 cases of malaria, typhoid and dengue fever, accompanied by dozens of deaths, have been reported in the past month, Hiba Morgan reported on September 23.
- Sudanese refugees are also dying in the Mediterranean Sea as they try to escape the war, with at least 50 dying after a vessel carrying Sudanese refugees caught fire in the Mediterranean Sea.

## DIPLOMACY AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

- UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said on September 20 that “the parties must return to the negotiating table and find a sustainable solution to the conflict.”
- The European Union applied restrictive measures against two companies, Alkhaleej Bank and Red Rock Mining Company. Alkhaleej Bank is “owned by companies linked to family members of RSF Commander Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo and plays an essential role in financing RSF operations”, the EU Council said, while Red Rock is “involved in facilitating the production of weapons and vehicles for the SAF”.
- Restrictive measures were also applied to two individuals, SAF military commander Abu Aqla Mohamed Kaikal, who defected to the RSF before rejoining the SAF in 2024, and RSF military field commander, Hussein Barsham, who the council said led “operations that have resulted in mass atrocities, including targeted killings, ethnic violence, forced displacement and violence against civilians, particularly in Darfur and other conflict-affected regions of Sudan”.
- Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and the United States have presented a proposal to end the war, which calls for a three-month humanitarian truce followed by a permanent ceasefire, then a nine-month transitional period whereby a broad-based civilian-led government would be granted power.
- Until now, all proposals to end the war have failed.

Source: [War in Sudan: Humanitarian, fighting, control developments, September 2025 | Sudan war | Al Jazeera](#)



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