



Conflict Factsheet

Conflict between Beni Halba and Gimir in Sudan

Type of conflict
Sub

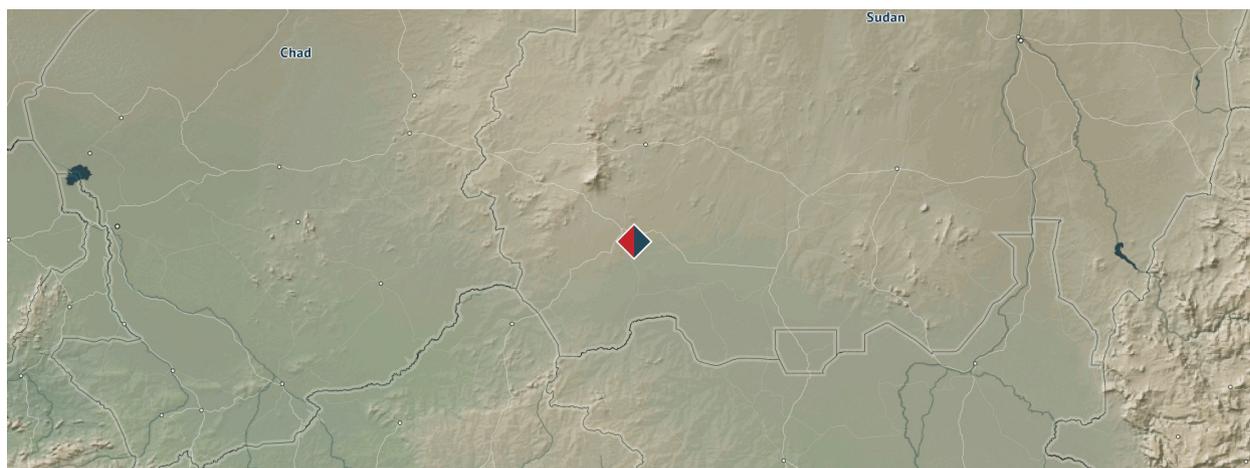
Intensity
3

Conflict Locality
Northern Africa

Time
1944– 2014

Countries
Sudan

Resources
Agricultural / Pastoral Land



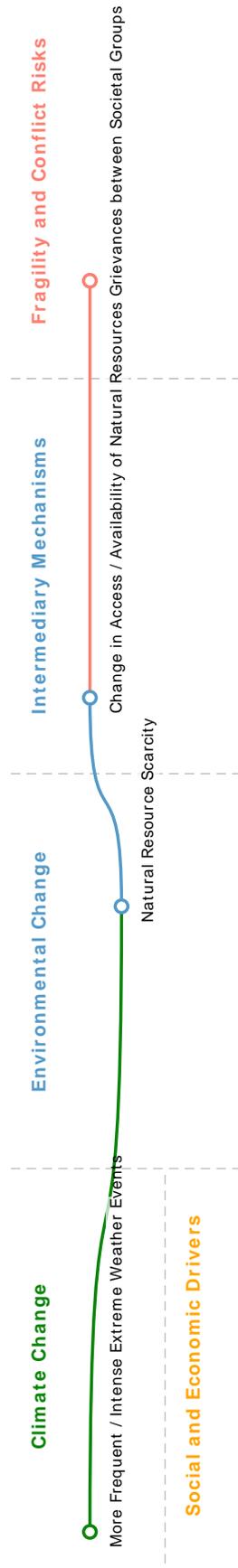
Local resource
competition

Conflict Summary

Desertification, deforestation and environmental degradation have exacerbated resource conflicts between the Beni Halba and Gimir communities. Clashes over land between both communities in 2013 killed more than 160 people.



Conceptual Model



Context Factors



Agricultural / Pastoral Land

Water-stressed Area

History of Conflict
Low Level of Economic Development
Political Marginalization
Weak Institutions



Conflict History

Beni Halba and Gimir are pastoralist communities with Arab identity inhabiting South Darfur. Disputes between the communities, primarily over land, have occurred in the past but could often be solved by ways of traditional mediation. In 2013, however, the two communities fought each other fiercely over contested land. The fighting started in early March and the two communities clashed several times throughout the year, leaving more than 160 people dead ([UCDP, 2015](#)). Armed forces, which had been sent to the area by the central government to create a buffer zone between the two communities, had retreated, thereby making the outbreak of violence possible. Sources reported that attacks by Beni Halba were supported by the “Central Reserve Forces”, also known as “Abu Tira”, a pro-government militia. After the clashes, both sides accused each other of breaking a recent peace treaty, of which several had been signed and broken in the years prior to the incident in 2013 ([Radio Dabanga, 2013](#); [CORI, 2013](#); [UCDP, 2015](#)).

Competition over scarce land

Land is an increasingly scarce resource in western Sudan due to a variety of factors such as desertification, deforestation and environmental degradation. Ensuing competition over arable and grazing land, in turn, is one of the major factors leading to (often violent) conflict between local communities. In the present case, the Gimir accused the Beni Halba of trying to oust them from areas they had lived on for centuries, while the latter claimed the area for themselves. The disputed land is of particular importance for both animal husbandry and the production of gum arabic ([Pantuliano, 2007](#); [UN News Centre, 2007](#); [Reeves, 2013](#); [der Standard, 2013](#)).

The role of the Government of Sudan

In addition, representatives of the Gimir community accused the central government of supporting the Beni Halba, of which Sudan's Second Vice President at the time- al-Haj Adam Youssef - originates from. Sources reported that on several occasions, government security forces that were supposed to protect the Gimir either did not intervene during the attacks by Beni Halba or retreated shortly before the attacks started. Furthermore, it has been reported that border guards and Central Reserve Forces were involved in the attacks ([CORI, 2013](#); [UCDP, 2015](#)).

Resolution Efforts

Numerous peace treaties have been signed between the two communities throughout their conflictual history. However, the truces were usually broken after a short period of time. In 2014, after a year of negotiations between the leaders of the two communities, a reconciliation agreement was signed on March 17, in Nyala, South Darfur, in the presence of Sudan's second Vice-President, Hassabu Mohamed Abdalrahman. Both delegations confirmed their full commitment to implement the terms of the agreement ([Radio Dabanga, 2014](#)). Since then no more violent clashes have been reported.



Intensities & Influences



INTENSITIES

International / Geopolitical Intensity



Human Suffering



INFLUENCES

Environmental Influences



Societal Influences



Violent Conflict

Yes



Salience with nation

Municipal



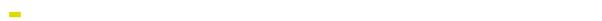
Mass displacement

Less than 100.000 and less than 10% of the country's population are displaced within the country.



Cross Border Mass Displacement

No



Resolution Success

Reduction in Violence

Violence has ceded completely.



Reduction in geographical scope

There has been no reduction in geographical scope.



Increased capacity to address grievance in the future

There is no increased capacity to address grievances in the future.



Grievance Resolution

Grievances have been partially addressed.



Causal Attribution of Decrease in Conflict Intensity

Decrease in conflict intensity at least partially the result of conflict resolution strategies.





Entry Points for Resilience and Peace Building

Treaty/agreement

A reconciliation agreement was signed between the leaders of both communities in 2014.

3

Resources and Materials

References with URL

[Uppsala Conflict Data Program \(Date of retrieval: 2015/05/18\) UCDP Conflict Encyclopedia: www.ucdp.uu.se/database, Uppsala University](http://www.ucdp.uu.se/database)

[Radio Dabanga \(2013\). Accusations of 'genocide' as Beni Halba, Gimir clash again in South Darfur](#)

[Country of origin research and information \(2013\). CORI Research Analysis, Fighting between Beni Halba and Gimir in and around Katayla locality.](#)

[Pantuliano, S. \(2007\). The land question: Sudan's peace nemesis.](#)

[UN News Centre \(2007\). UN report says environmental degradation triggering tensions in Sudan.](#)

[Reeves, E. \(2013\). South Sudan: Dams, Droughts, Desertification and Water Wars](#)

[der Standard \(2013\). Berichte über 130 Tote bei Kämpfen in Darfur](#)

[Radio Dabanga \(2014\). Beni Halba-Gimir reconciliation agreement in South Darfur](#)

Further information

<https://factbook.ecc-platform.org/conflicts/natural-resource-competition-darfur-beni-halba-vs-gimir>