



## **Darfur for Dummies: Getting to know the facts**

### **What is Darfur?**

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Darfur is the western region of Sudan, Africa. Darfur is not a country in itself. The region was home to about 6 million people and is about the size of France.

### **Where is Darfur?**

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### **Who lives in Darfur?**

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Darfur is home to racially mixed tribes of settled peasants, who identify as African, and nomadic herders, who identify as Arab. The majority of people in both groups are Muslim.

### **What is happening in Darfur?**

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The situation is very complicated but it can be summarised in brief. Government neglect has left the people throughout Sudan poor and voiceless. In February 2003, the non-Arab ethnic groups of Darfur launched an uprising against the Khartoum government. The government responded by implementing their campaign of genocide, enlisting the help of Arab militia in Darfur called the Janjaweed.

The dispute is racial, not religious: Muslim Arab Sudanese are killing Muslim black Sudanese.

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## **Who are the Janjaweed?**

The Janjaweed are the armed militia supported by the Sudanese Government to carry out the genocide, alongside and independent of, the Sudanese Army.

## **How is the violence being conducted?**

**A typical situation is this:** The Janjaweed will enter a village on horse or camel back. They then set about causing as much mayhem and terror as possible: destroying houses and buildings, shooting the men, gang raping the women and children and shooting any who try to escape. The village is generally destroyed, families dispersed and separated, most killed. Those who manage to escape then attempt the long journey to an IDP (Internally displaced persons) camp.

Essentially however, there are now very few functioning villages left in the Darfur region as most of them have been systematically attacked in this way. Google Earth and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum have collaborated to let you see the destruction for yourself. You can zoom in on destroyed villages, houses and schools and see exactly the damage that is being done. Visit: <http://www.ushmm.org/googleearth/projects/darfur/>

## **Who has been affected so far?**

Up to 400,000 people have died due as a result of direct attacks and conflict induced malnutrition and disease. The vast majority of these have been women, children and civilian men.

More than 3 million people have been displaced and are living in IDP camps

More than 350,000 people are deprived of humanitarian support due to the threat of attack faced by aid workers. Thousands starve each month due to the Sudanese government impeding humanitarian aid efforts

A further 4 million Darfuri residents are dependant on limited international humanitarian assistance. The violence is now spilling onto neighbouring Eastern Chad.

## **Why is the situation allowed to continue?**

Although the Sudanese Government have committed to allowing a 26,000 strong peacekeeper force into the region they have continually showed their contempt for the people of Darfur. This shows a blatant disregard by the Sudanese Government of UN Security Council Resolution 1674, which gives the international community the '**Responsibility to Protect**' civilians from genocide when governments fail to do so.

**For more information, ideas on what you can do and why we need to act now visit:**

**[www.DarfurAustralia.org](http://www.DarfurAustralia.org)**