

Emergency Response Rooms in Sudan

By salih mustafa

Background

- Resistance Committees after 2018 revolution
- Hybrid role: political + services
- Shift back to revolutionary action after Oct 2021 coup
- War in April 2023: no space for politics, rising humanitarian needs
- Creation of Emergency Response Rooms (ERRs)

What are ERRs?

- Grassroots volunteer networks
- Use digital platforms for coordination
- Provide urgent community services: evacuation, food, water, shelter
- Temporary emergency structures, not permanent institutions

Why did ERRs emerge?

- Collapse of state institutions
- Withdrawal of many NGOs
- Revival of Nafeer tradition + modern digital tools
- Flexible and fast grassroots responses

Interaction with International Actors

- Field level: some recognition but limited support
- Funding restrictions and security concerns
- Political and Diplomatic level: ERRs often misunderstood
- Filled gaps left by slow international aid

Key Dynamics

- Strengths: trust, fast action, strong networks
- Challenges: targeting of volunteers, shortages, internet cuts
- Informal structures → weak accountability
- Strong yet fragile at the same time

Conclusion

- Humanitarian response can come from communities
- ERRs are temporary, not permanent NGOs
- Recognizing their role is key for recovery
- Communities lead in shaping Sudan's future

