

South Sudan

Ethnicity in South Sudan

Group selection

The following groups are coded in South Sudan: **Dinka**, **Nuer**, **Azande**, **Toposa**, **Shilluk**, **Murle**, **Anyuak**, **Mundari**, **Didinga**, and **Bari**.

Power relations

2011-2013

The political life in South Sudan is dominated by the two largest ethnic groups **Dinka** and **Nuer**. The Dinka is the largest group and is the senior partner in the government and holds most of the highest positions in the administration. The President - Salva Kiir - is from this group and the South Sudanese government is structured in a very hierarchical manner, which gives him extensive power. The Nuer are the second largest group, holding some important positions, and are therefore coded as a junior partner. The highest Nuer official is Riek Machar, Vice-President of South Sudan. (Machar was sacked in July 2013 but as the coding starts at the beginning of each year, this does not affect the 2013 coding). The Nuer and Dinka domination is extensive and gives little room for other ethnic groups. In South Sudan, the **Murle** community is much stigmatized and a dominant perception among many ethnic groups is that this group consists of "brutal savages". Due to the profound political repercussions of this social stigmatization, the group is coded as discriminated.

2014-2017

Since the end of 2013, South Sudan has been devastated by civil war. This war pits the government against the Sudan People's Liberation/Movement - In Opposition (SPLM/A-IO). The war's prime cause is a crisis of governance as the incumbent president, Salva Kiir, has become more and more authoritarian. In July 2013, President Kiir sacked his entire government including Vice-President Riek Machar who was replaced with James Wani Igga from the **Bari** community. Although being in control over the Vice-Presidency since July 2013, the Bari community is coded as powerless since the community still has very limited political power in South Sudan.

The civil war that has been ongoing since 2013 has primarily pitted Nuer against Dinka since the SPLM/A-IO primarily consist of Nuer and the Dinka is leading the government. However, it is important to note that there have always been some Nuer fighting with the government and some Dinka fighting for the rebels. Although Riek Machar (Nuer) was sacked in 2013 other Nuer leaders have been part of the government. In August 2015, the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (ARCSS) was signed and a new position of “First Vice President” was created. This position was given to Taban Deng Gai (a Nuer). Hence, despite fighting each other fiercely for much of the time period, the Dinka are coded as senior partner and the Nuer as junior partner for the entire time period 2014-2017.

Political status of ethnic groups in South Sudan

From 2011 until 2013

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Dinka	0.4	SENIOR PARTNER
Nuer	0.2	JUNIOR PARTNER
Azande	0.1	POWERLESS
Toposa	0.08	POWERLESS
Shilluk	0.05	POWERLESS
Murle	0.04	DISCRIMINATED
Anyuak	0.015	POWERLESS
Mundari	0.015	POWERLESS
Didinga	0.01	POWERLESS
Bari	0.01	POWERLESS



Figure 829: Political status of ethnic groups in South Sudan during 2011-2013.

From 2014 until 2017

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Dinka	0.4	SENIOR PARTNER
Nuer	0.2	JUNIOR PARTNER
Azande	0.1	POWERLESS
Toposa	0.08	POWERLESS
Shilluk	0.05	POWERLESS
Murle	0.04	DISCRIMINATED
Mundari	0.015	POWERLESS
Didinga	0.01	POWERLESS
Bari	0.01	POWERLESS
Anyuak	0.0015	POWERLESS



Figure 830: Political status of ethnic groups in South Sudan during 2014-2017.

Geographical coverage of ethnic groups in South Sudan

From 2011 until 2017

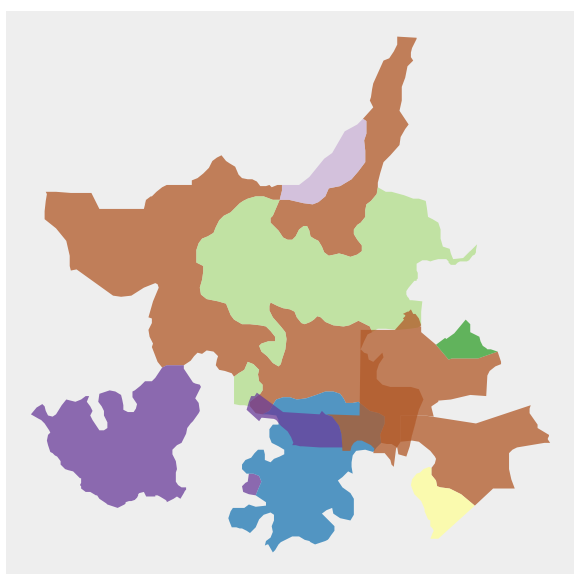


Figure 831: Map of ethnic groups in South Sudan during 2011-2017.

Group name	Area in km ²	Type
Dinka	137 878	Regionally based
Nuer	80 801	Regionally based
Azande	45 943	Regionally based
Bari	45 558	Regionally based
Murle	36 719	Regionally based
Toposa	25 577	Regionally based
Shilluk	9382	Regionally based
Mundari	7870	Regionally based
Didinga	7059	Regionally based
Anyuak	3863	Regionally based

Table 284: List of ethnic groups in South Sudan during 2011-2017.

Conflicts in South Sudan

Starting on 2011-08-19

Side A	Side B	Group name	Start	Claim	Recruitment	Support
Government of South Sudan	SSDM/A		2011-08-19			
Government of South Sudan	SSLM/A		2011-10-08			
Government of South Sudan	SSDM/A - Cobra Faction	Anyuak	2013-04-26	Explicit	Yes	No
Government of South Sudan	SSDM/A - Cobra Faction	Murle	2013-04-26	Explicit	Yes	No
Government of South Sudan	SPLM/A In Opposition	Nuer	2013-12-14	Presumed	Yes	Yes

Starting on 2012-03-26

Side A	Side B	Group name	Start	Claim	Recruitment	Support
Government of South Sudan	Government of Sudan		2012-03-26			