PN-ABG-594

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SUDAN:
THE 1985 GROWING SEASON

A Special Briefing

Prepared January 22, 1986
by the NOAA/NESDIS
Assessment and Information Services Center

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Washington DC 20235
202-634-1821

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Regional Production (%) of Grain Crops in Sudan
(Average for 1979-1984)

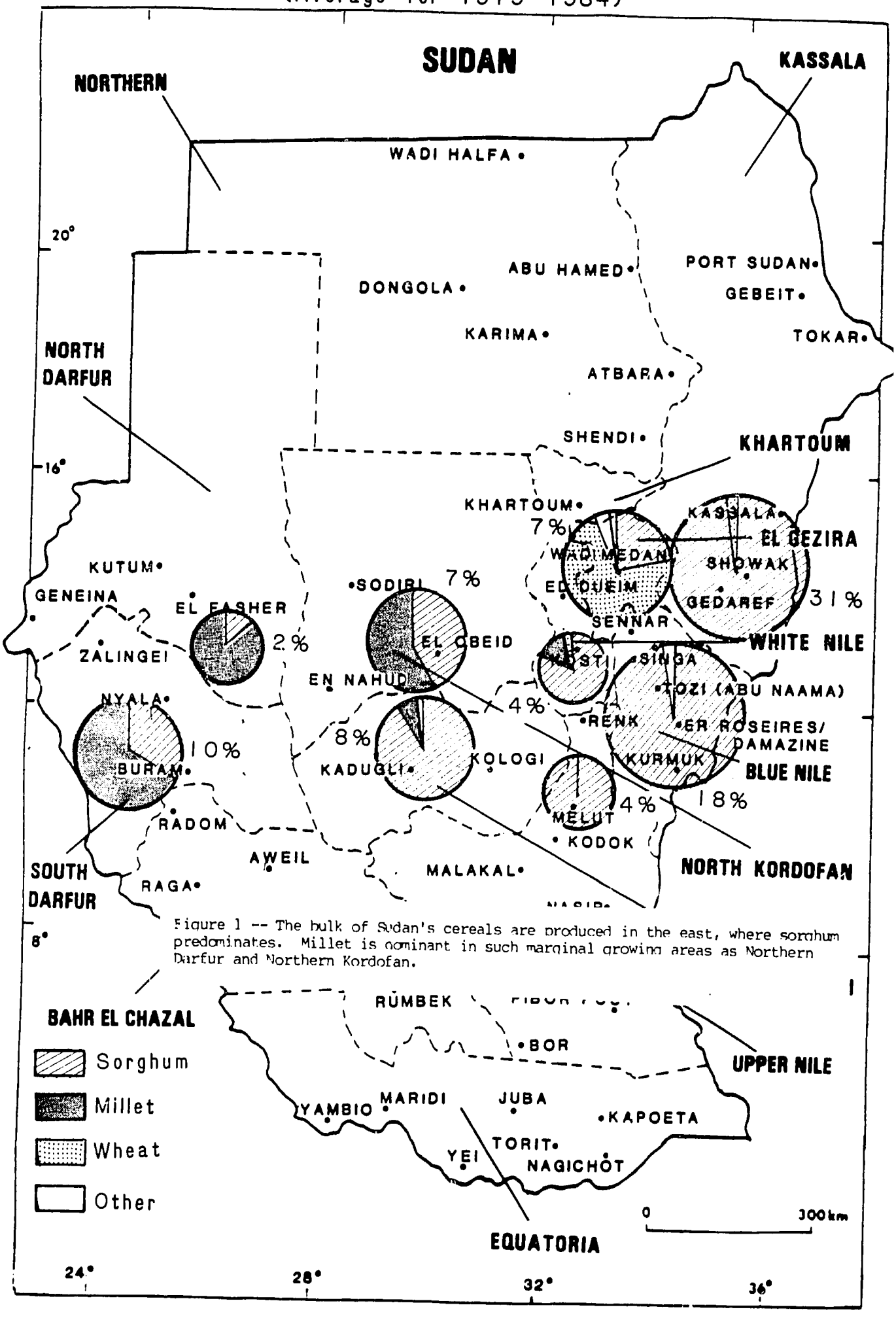

Figure 1 -- The bulk of Sudan's cereals are produced in the east, where sorghum predominates. Millet is dominant in such marginal growing areas as Northern Darfur and Northern Kordofan.

1985 May–September Cumulative Rainfall (mm)
Sudan's Cereal Zone

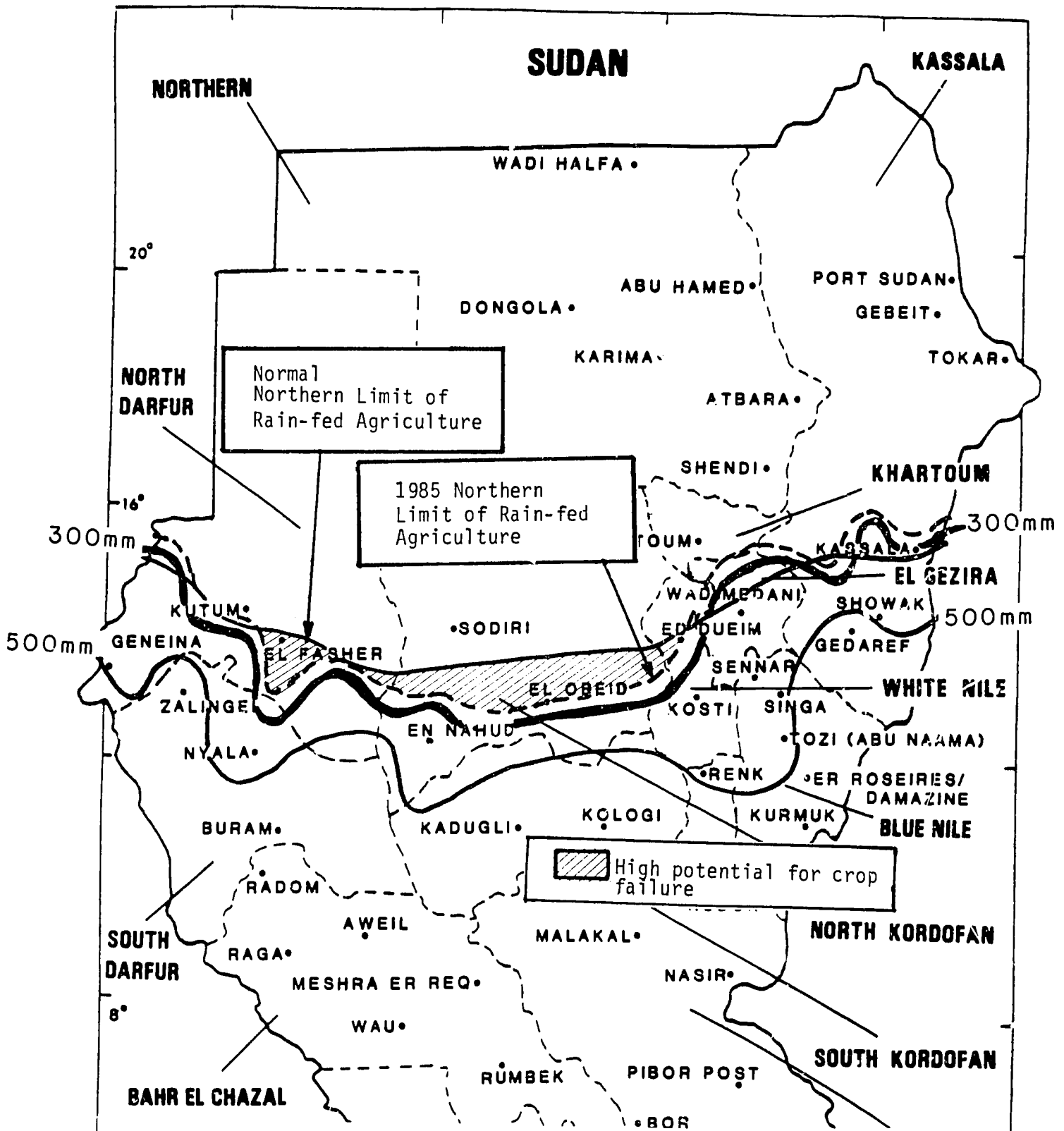

Figure 2 -- This map depicts total rainfall during the May-September period in 1985 for Sudan's grain belt. Rain-fed cereals require a minimum of 200-250 mm of rain. This "northern limit of agriculture" is shown for 1985 and for a "normal" year. The 1985 contours are estimated from reported rainfall amounts (supplied to NOAA/AISC by Sudan's meteorological service) and vegetation patterns derived from NOAA-9 satellite (AVHRR) data. Note the likelihood for crop failures in Northern Kordofan (north of El Obeid) and in parts of Northern Darfur (near El Fasher). Also note the potential for crop production farther north than normal in western Darfur and in parts of Kassala province.

1985 May–September Cumulative Rainfall

% Normal

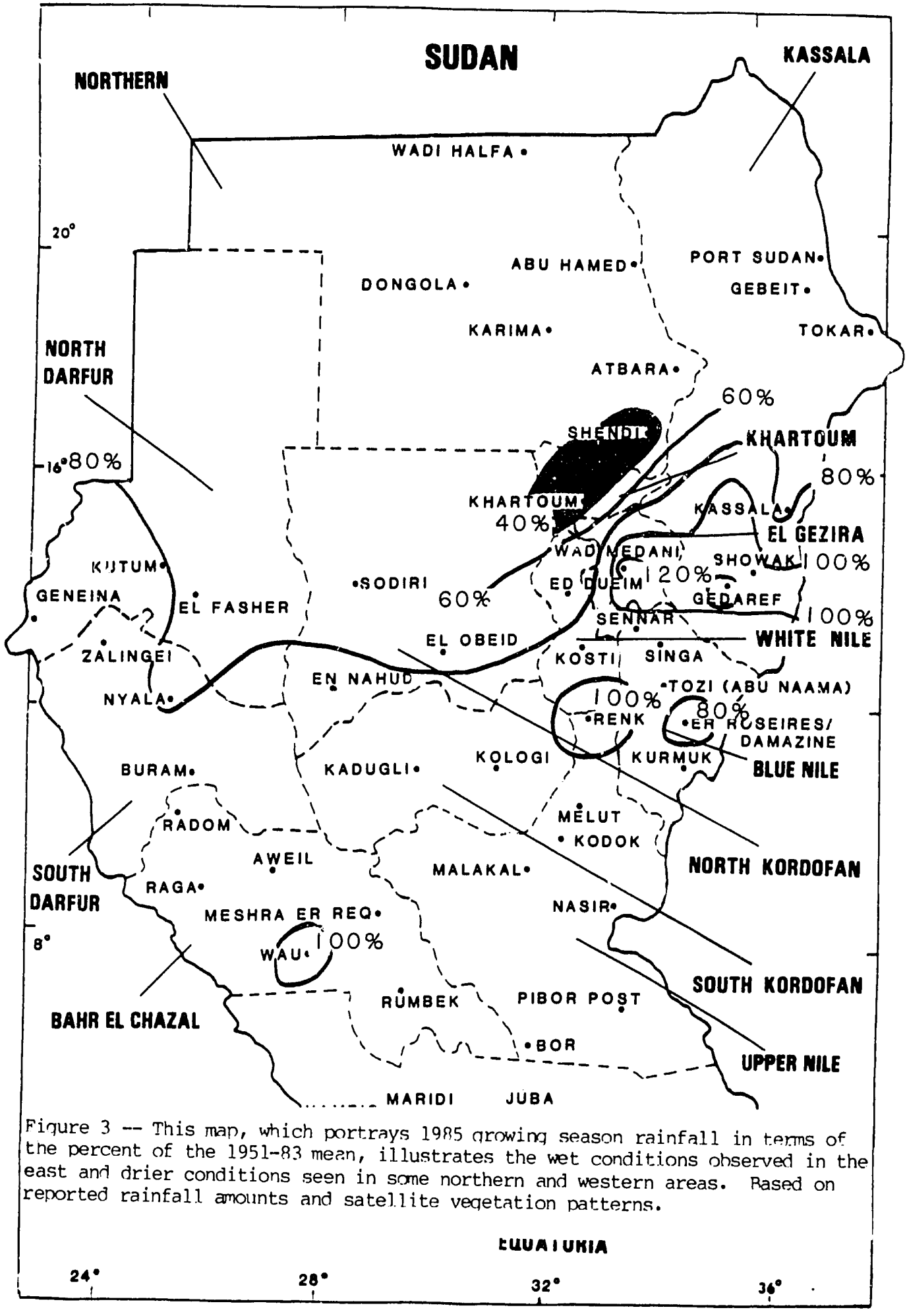

Figure 3 -- This map, which portrays 1985 growing season rainfall in terms of the percent of the 1951-83 mean, illustrates the wet conditions observed in the east and drier conditions seen in some northern and western areas. Based on reported rainfall amounts and satellite vegetation patterns.

1984 May–September Cumulative Rainfall

% Normal

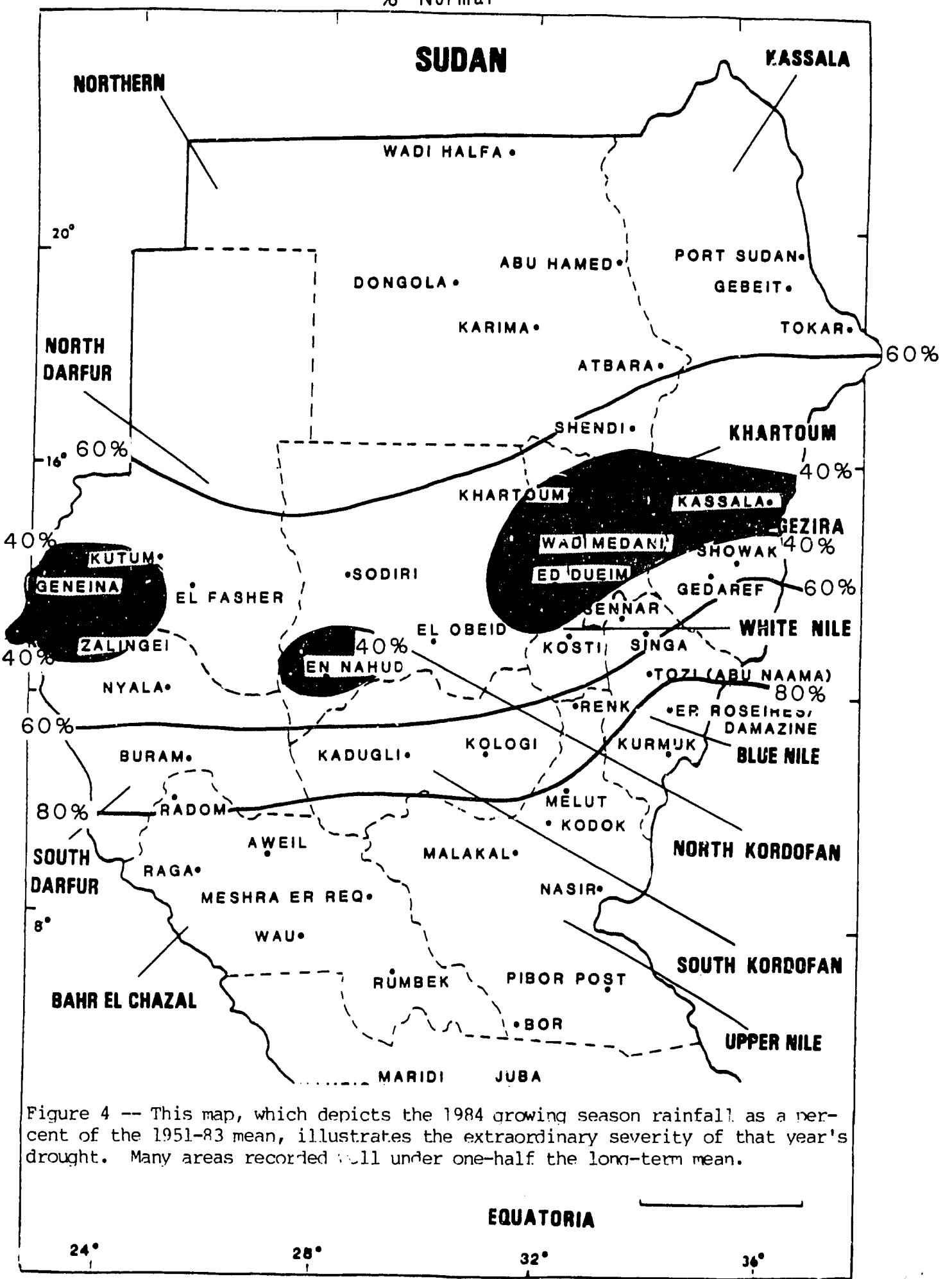

Figure 4 -- This map, which depicts the 1984 growing season rainfall as a percent of the 1951-83 mean, illustrates the extraordinary severity of that year's drought. Many areas recorded well under one-half the long-term mean.

Areal Distribution of Rainfall (% of normal) in 1985
SUDAN

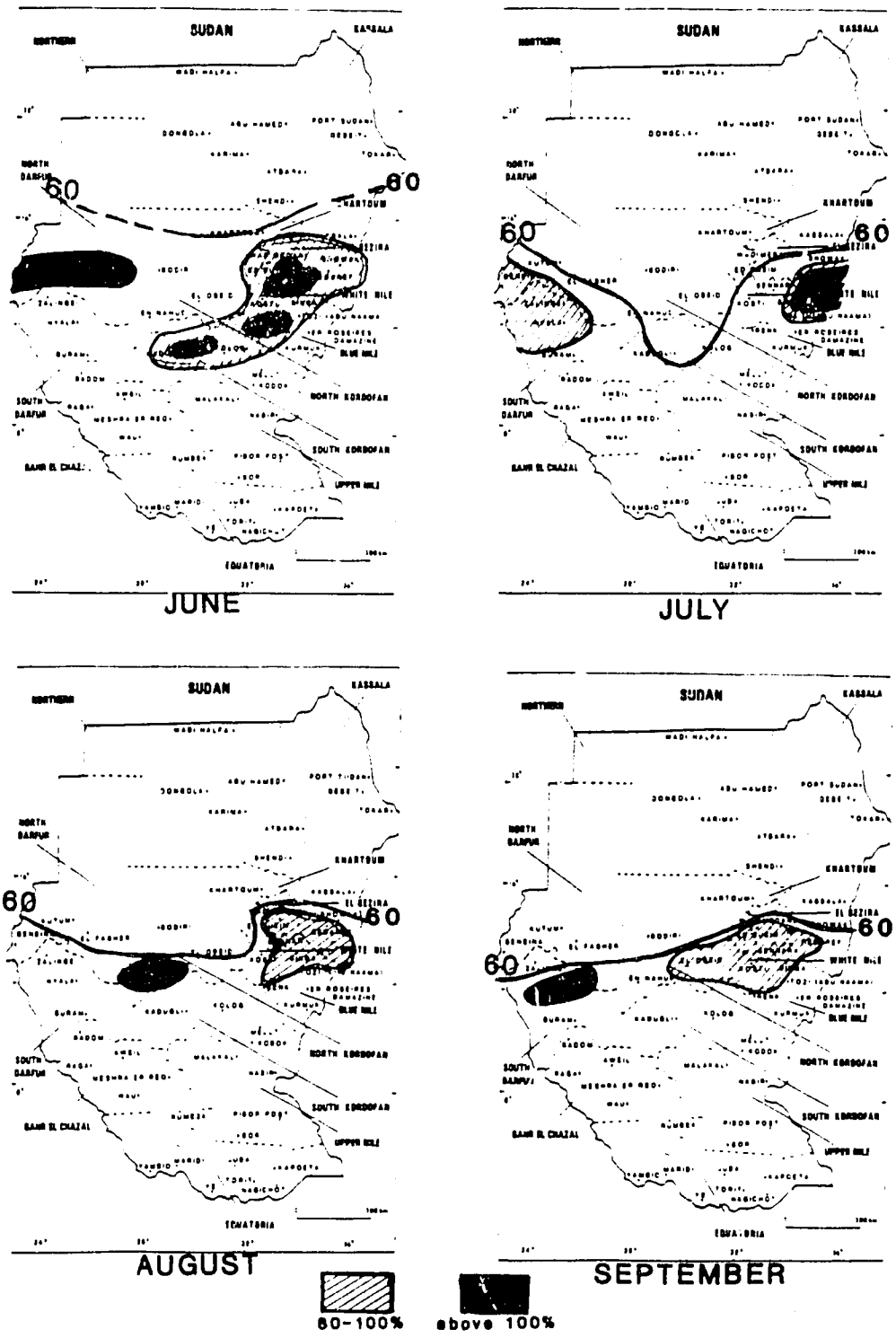

Figure 5 — Abundant June rainfall in N. Darfur, S. Kordofan, the Nile regions, and Kassala brought favorable conditions for early growth of millet and sorghum, though excessive moisture created a few problems. On the other hand, the rains ended early in some areas (note September map). Even in the east, which generally received favorable rainfall amounts for the season as a whole, the early cessation of rains reduced yields in Kassala north of Gedaref. (Based on Sudan government rainfall data).

Percentile of 1985 May–September cumulative rainfall

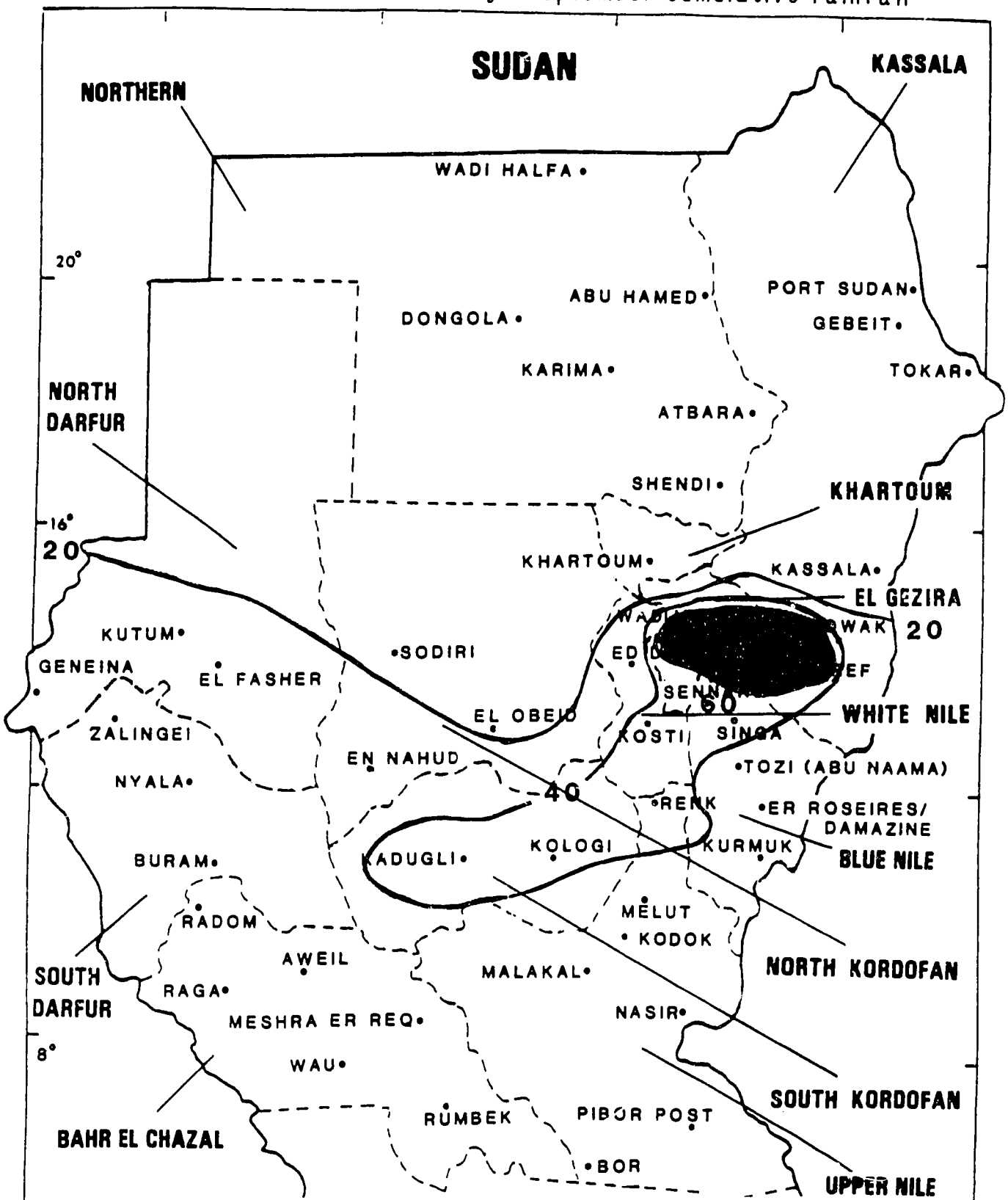

Figure 6 -- This map portrays the 1985 Sudan rainfall in terms of probabilities (percentiles). Near-record rainfall (greater than 80th percentile) resulted in high yield potential in Gezira and Kassala provinces in the east. Rainfall, however, in many areas of Darfur and N. Kordofan, was near or below the 33rd percentile, indicating two out of three years would be expected to be wetter than this one. (Data derived from Sudan government rainfall totals).