



SUDAN RELIEF REVIEW

Bring the Gospel of Christ, and providing food, clean water, shelter, and medical care, to the people of South Sudan

Even if the fragile peace deal holds, war-torn South Sudan remains in dire need of lasting humanitarian relief efforts

As this issue of *Sudan Relief Review* goes to press, the government of South Sudan has signed a peace deal with the rebel forces to end the most recent fighting. If the peace deal remains in effect as you read this, please pray that it will continue and finally bring an end to the turmoil within this young country. If, on the other hand, the fighting has tragically resumed please pray that it will end soon. God's children in South Sudan have already suffered too much.

This peace deal is very fragile. The government delayed signing the agreement and has publicly stated it is unhappy with it. The government eventually did sign the peace deal, but only after the United Nations threatened immediate action if it didn't. Another disturbing sign is that several top commanders have split from the rebel leadership, claiming the signed accord means nothing to them, and that it does not mean it will end the fighting. And, although the conflict did not start as a tribal war between the Dinka and Nuer, each side appealed to clan loyalties to rally supporters and recruit soldiers. This gave the conflict a poisonous tribal dimension that may linger for some time.

Finally, it should also be noted that at least seven ceasefires have previously been agreed to since South Sudan broke away from Sudan in 2011. Most all were shattered within days – and sometimes within hours.



Life for God's children in South Sudan is a daily struggle just to survive. Sudan Relief Fund supporters help us save them and help them build a new nation out of the ashes of war.

But even if the peace deal does hold, a tremendous amount of humanitarian work must be done in South Sudan. The fighting in just the past two years saw several tens of thousands of South Sudanese killed, and more than 2.2 million have been displaced. A famine is ravaging parts of the country, especially in the states of Unity and Upper Nile. UNICEF warns that 50,000 children may die. USAID said that as many as 4.6 million people are facing life-threatening hunger.

In the months leading up to the peace agreement, the fighting grew so intense that many humanitarian organizations fled the country. The chaos was so horrific they feared for the safety of their aid workers. It reached the point where the Catholic Church is now the only group of any significance providing the people with food, medicine and other essential services. Since the Sudan Relief Fund supports many Church aid projects, our role in this ravaged nation has been crucial.

All this makes your generous support of the Sudan Relief Fund more vital than ever. Your prayerful gifts allow us to touch the lives of our brothers and sisters in Christ who long for a lasting peace. Through us, you help to heal their wounds, warm their hearts and give them hope for a better future. You will

find a reply form and envelope included with this issue of *Sudan Relief Review*. If you could spare another gift today, please know we would be most grateful. And may God bless you for your faithfulness and love for God's children in South Sudan.

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A MESSAGE FROM NEIL CORKERY

PRESIDENT OF THE SUDAN RELIEF FUND

Dear Friend in Christ,

Nzara Hospital is part of the Tombura-Yambio Diocese and is run by the Comboni nuns.

One of the nuns, Sister Sara, is the hospital's only doctor. She is on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, caring for her desperately ill patients.

Her heavy patient load is about to increase dramatically.

You see, the nearby government hospital is in the process of closing. An international aid group had operated it, but they left due to the recent violence and no one is taking their place. This means all those patients will soon be flooding into Nzara Hospital!

As a result, Nzara Hospital urgently needs a second doctor to help Sister Sara treat the sick. The hospital has found an excellent physician in Uganda who is willing to come. But the nuns need \$30,000 to cover the new doctor's salary for the next year.

Could I ask that you help the Sudan Relief Fund pay this unexpected cost? I pray you can...because your Christian charity today might save so many lives tomorrow. Thank you for any gift you can spare -- and may God bless you always.

Yours in faith,



Neil Corkery
President

**Bishop Eduardo Hiiboro
Kussala's new book
points the way forward
for South Sudan**



Bishop Kussala's new book emphasizes the crucial role reconciliation must play before South Sudan can prosper.

SRF provides funding to repair Bakhita Radio – South Sudan's first Catholic radio station

Founded in 2006, Bakhita Radio is based in Juba and belongs to the Archdiocese of Juba. It was the first Catholic radio station in the history of South Sudan, and reaches most areas in Greater Equatoria State. There is no TV here, yet almost everyone in the local population has a radio. This means the station plays an indispensable role in reaching the community, with programming that promotes faith, peace and reconciliation, and good governance.

Bakhita Radio broadcasts every day in English, Arabic and five local languages. Its overriding goal is evangelization. It accomplishes this mission by airing more than 40 different programs covering religious, human social and civic education. Every morning the radio opens with a reflection on the word of God. Every Sunday Mass is aired live, as a service to the elderly and those in the region with no Church near them.

In addition to its religious programming, Bakhita Radio is a trusted information source in the region. The station deals with difficult issues that other radio stations cannot tackle due to government censorship. This gives the station credibility in the eyes of the public.

Bakhita Radio is also recognized as the voice of the Catholic Church. As such, it can challenge the warring parties on the need to embrace peace. It runs a series of programs on the need for national healing and reconciliation, as well as others aimed at reducing the ethnic tensions that have fueled recent violence.

The station maintains a strong focus on the marginalized and dispossessed. It tackles the issue of poverty, including the need for quality health services and education in the poor rural areas. It broadcasts continuous educational programs for children. And it questions the impact of government policies on the poor, while also running programs on the rampant corruption in South Sudan.

Finally, Bakhita Radio also understands the critical importance of agriculture to the region. The station created programs especially for farmers – providing essential information about crop production and



Bakhita Radio offers comprehensive programming touching on every aspect of the people's spiritual and temporal lives.

how the Ministry of Agriculture can support those with small farms.

For all these reasons, when the Archdiocese of Juba required repairs to keep Bakhita Radio on the air, we provided the necessary funding. This Catholic radio station plays a unique part in spreading the love of Christ to God's children throughout Western Equatoria.

The New York Times praises the work of Dr. Tom Catena at Mother of Mercy Hospital

Nicholas Kristof of the *New York Times* traveled to the Nuba Mountains to get a firsthand look at Dr. Tom Catena's selfless service in caring for the sick. And he came away incredibly impressed, to say the least.

Sudan Relief Fund supporters have long known what Kristof found out. That Dr. Tom is a Catholic missionary and the only doctor at the 435-bed Mother of Mercy Hospital nestled in the Nuba Mountains in the far south of Sudan. He is the only doctor permanently based in the Nuba Mountains, with a population of more than half a million people. This is why *TIME* magazine included him in its 2015 list of the "100 Most Influential People" in the world, as we reported in the last issue of *Sudan Relief Review*.

Kristof marveled at the wide range of treatments Dr. Tom performs – everything from prying shrapnel out of patients and amputating limbs to delivering babies and removing appendixes. This is all done off the electrical grid, without running water, a telephone or even an X-ray machine. And it's all done under the constant threat of bombing.

"One reason I'm so impressed by Dr. Tom is that most of the world, including world leaders and humanitarians, have pretty much abandoned the people of the Nuba Mountains," Kristof writes. "That's the context in which Dr. Tom stands out for his principled commitment." Saying he's driven by his Catholic faith, Dr. Tom told Kristof, "I've been given benefits from the day I was born. A loving family. A great education. So I see it as an obligation, as a Christian and as a human being, to help."



The selfless work of Dr. Tom – here examining a leprosy patient and her malnourished child – is made possible by the sacrificial gifts donated by Sudan Relief Fund supporters.

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