

# 2022

ANNUAL REPORT







## CONTENTS

President's Message	3
Program Spotlights:	
Healthcare and Medicine	5
Clean Water & Refugee Aid	6
Education	9
Spotlight:	
Missionary Sisters of Charity	10
Financials	12
Meet the Team	14



# DEAR FRIEND IN CHRIST,



**Neil Corkery**  
President  
Sudan Relief Fund

“What I can do, you cannot. What you can do, I cannot.  
But together we can do something beautiful for God.”

These words from Mother Teresa are simultaneously profound and simple, much like the woman herself. In the face of such crises as the ongoing ones in South Sudan, it is easy to feel hopeless, even despairing. What can anyone do in the face of such great need and suffering? The answer is that there isn't much that any one of us can do, but together—and most importantly, with faith the size of a mustard seed nourished by God's grace—we can do enormous and beautiful things. Mother Teresa's own Sisters are a shining example of this, with their work for orphans in Rumbek. With the help of Sudan Relief Fund (SRF), these wonderful women help children come to know that they are loved not only by others, but ultimately by God.

There is no price tag that could be put on such an invaluable gift. And yet such gifts do require material, as well as spiritual, support. In 2022, with your partnership, SRF continued to provide exactly that support, and even expanded it, to aid our partners' work with the most vulnerable of our brothers and sisters. In 2023 we have the opportunity to do even more.

It is true: no one of us can do much, if anything, alone. That is why I am so grateful to you and to our partners for the work we do together. It truly is something beautiful.



Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "N. A. Corkery".

Neil Corkery





MEDICAL CARE FROM SUDAN RELIEF FUND  
MEANS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN  
LIFE AND DEATH.





# HEALTHCARE AND MEDICINE

## Life Saving Care in the Nuba Mountains

Mother of Mercy Hospital, the sole surgical clinic in a region of over 750,000 people, continued to provide critical and life-saving care in 2022, thanks to the partnership of SRF supporters and the heroic leadership of Dr. Tom Catena. Dr. Tom is the hospital's only resident surgeon, and works tirelessly, on-call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week!

With an expanded surgical and maternity ward and a new nurse training center, Mother of Mercy in 2022 saw Dr. Tom caring for more patients and saving more lives than ever before. Over 75,000 outpatients received treatment, including 2,000 surgeries, 5,000 prenatal checkups, and malnutrition care for more than 9,000 children. Significantly, hundreds of critically-needed eye surgeries were provided via the new clinic that had been completed in 2021.

SRF has also been able to provide medicine to local clinics — often little more than huts or shacks — throughout this region, one of the world's remotest, where roads can be impassible for whole months at a time. SRF was able to coordinate multiple shipments last year, each containing over 15 tons of medicine, bringing vital healthcare closer to those who need it.

## Malou Leper Colony

Outside of the Cross itself, Jesus Christ set perhaps no more poignant example of charity for his disciples than through His welcome and compassion for lepers. At the Malou Leper Colony in Rumbek, which SRF fully supports, we hope to follow Christ's example, by caring for these poor outcasts of the community who are so particularly loved by God.

When we first arrived and began building the colony, its residents were literally naked, lacking basic resources of shelter and food, having resorted even to eating grass! Now, the 5,000-person community has shelter, emergency food aid, newly built wells, and a medical clinic and maternity ward. The lepers radiate joy and gratitude in spite of their afflictions, chiefly due to the Christian love and welcome they receive thanks to your partnership.

## Safe Motherhood Project

In 2022, SRF continued working with Catholic Medical Mission Board to confront the challenges of maternal and infant mortality in Nzara, South Sudan. The statistics are harrowing: South Sudan ranks as having some of the highest national infant, early childhood, and maternal mortality rates in the world. The



vast majority of these fatalities are in resource-poor regions, and nearly all of them are preventable, provided adequate maternal and neo-natal care.

With your support, we have been able to help bring precisely such life-giving assistance to mothers and their babies in South Sudan through the Safe Motherhood Project.

More can be said for this initiative than the fact of thousands of lives saved, however. For we are meant to have not only life, but life abundant. The assistance you have helped bring to so many vulnerable mothers has restored **joy and peace**, along with safety, to that moment which should be the happiest, rather than one of the most fearful, in a woman's life: the welcoming of a new child.



# CLEAN WATER & REFUGEE AID

## Clean Water and Sanitation

Access to clean water is a basic necessity of life, something many of us take completely for granted. Yet, for more than half the population of South Sudan, this access simply does not exist. Several dire and life-threatening consequences arise from such a situation. Thirsting families in some cases turn to contaminated water sources, facing the risk of contracting waterborne diseases like cholera or typhoid, or else contracting malaria from the mosquitos swarming the stagnant pools to which desperation forces people. In other cases, needy people, particularly women and young girls, face risks of violence on the road as they must journey to far away water sources to bring back containers weighing up to fifty pounds when full, simply to provide for their families.

Sudan Relief Fund is working to address this monumental problem through the digging of wells, the installation of solar operated water pumps, and the building of hygienic latrines for sanitary waste removal. We bring this aid to where it is needed most, particularly Tombura in the South Sudanese state of Western Equatoria.

Tombura has seen a significant increase in Internally Displaced People (IDPs) due to recent conflict in the region. It is also a region covered largely by rain forests, but which

experiences a punishing dry season in which water becomes much more difficult to find. There is little infrastructure here, with such poor roadways that it takes hours to drive just a dozen miles. It is precisely these factors combined, however, that make SRF's efforts to bring sanitation and clean water here so impactful. Just a handful of strategically placed boreholes drilled in this area can lead to clean water access for hundreds of thousands of individuals!

Apart from the many wells your partnership has enabled SRF to build in Tombura and throughout South Sudan, we have also collaborated with Catholic Medical Mission Board each year on the WASH program - standing for clean water, sanitation, and hygiene. This project helps provide additional infrastructure for healthy and safe water use, such as handwashing stations, water storage tanks, and rainwater collection systems.

## Internally Displaced Persons

Sudan Relief Fund in 2022 continued our support for the many refugee camps throughout Western Equatoria. Fleeing from violence with only what they could carry, nearly 100,000 internally displaced persons have been forced to seek refuge in this region. However, due to the infrastructure challenges already described, a majority still face food insecurity, inadequate shelter, lack of medicine, and other dire threats. These problems

have been exacerbated by global affairs and rising costs, with basic staples like maize flour, beans, oil, and salt having risen in price, sometimes by as much as over 200%! Through our full support of refugee camps like the one in Ezo County—one of the country's largest—Sudan Relief Fund has provided emergency food supplies, housing goods like blankets and wash basins, and many other necessities to thousands of the most desperate, especially children, nursing mothers, and the elderly.

## Other Refugee Aid


Apart from providing essential water access, SRF has partnered with the Catholic Diocese of Tombura-Yambio and the Catholic Organization for Development and Peace to provide other resources and infrastructure for sustainability throughout Western Equatoria, a region that has seen a significant uptick in violence in the last two years. This work includes the funding of emergency food supplies, housing, and transportation. Already our work has helped thousands of households suffering from severe hunger, lack of medication, and poor living conditions, but many more thousands remain in need. Your continued partnership will help us expand these efforts in the months and years to come.



REFUGEE KITS GIVE  
FAMILIES WHO LOST  
EVERYTHING A CHANCE  
TO START OVER.







SUDAN RELIEF FUND IS HELPING  
GIRLS ATTEND SCHOOL IN A  
SOCIETY THAT HAS LONG DENIED  
THEM THIS OPPORTUNITY.



# EDUCATION

Sudan Relief Fund is committed not only to saving lives, but to empowering those we serve to live more joyful and abundant lives. A key component in this mission is education. With the generous partnership and support of our donors, we are investing in the future of South Sudan, helping to raise up the next generation of leaders, ensuring they receive a quality education and the mentorship needed for their human flourishing.

The Catholic University of South Sudan, the only Catholic university in the country, has two locations which provide quality education in subject areas diverse as the fine arts, the social sciences, agriculture, environmental science, and more. A majority of graduates from this institution go on to become teachers at primary schools throughout the country, which means investment in this institution achieves a compounded impact for the country's long-term prosperity. In 2022, SRF provided increased funding for scholarships and operating expenses to the University.

Also in 2022, SRF renewed our support for the Solidarity Teacher Training College (STTC) in Yambio, in collaboration with our partner organization, Solidarity for South Sudan. This institution provides a two-year certificate program followed by a teacher internship program, providing much-needed skilled classroom teachers for a nation with one of the lower literacy rates in

the world, where fewer than one in three school aged children actually attend school. With your generous support, we are helping to turn the tide and provide a brighter future for the children of South Sudan.

An additional area of focus for SRF is parity in educational opportunity for women in the country. Women's and girls' education still faces challenges from stigma and negative stereotypes here. As a result, only two to three percent of the female population ever go on to secondary school, while only 30% receive even just a primary education. We are working to confront these challenges head on. In 2022, SRF continued its support of the Loreto Girls' Secondary School in Rumbek, with scholarship funding and the building of a new boarding facility for teachers. Another way we are addressing these disparities is by supporting the training of new female teachers to serve as mentors and role models for young girls. At the Solidarity Teacher Training College, from among over 700 graduates so far, 18% have been women. We hope, with your help, to raise this number even higher in coming years.

Additionally, in 2022, with the help of your partnership we constructed a new multi-purpose hall at Our Lady of Assumption Primary School in Riminze. Now, the school's 800+ children have a safe place to gather for meals and worship



services, and the community has a much-needed gathering space.

The impact that education, and the role of teachers in particular, makes in the lives of young people cannot be overstated. Worldwide survey data has found that, second only to family members, the most significant influence in most people's lives is credited to a teacher! One good teacher can change hundreds, even thousands, of children's lives over the course of a career, by providing a good example and encouragement. We are committed to empowering these invaluable role models for the next generation in South Sudan, upon whose skills and ingenuity the future hopes of the nation rests.





The Missionary Sisters of Charity care for the most vulnerable. Each baby is taken in and loved.

## MISSIONARY SISTERS OF CHARITY

“They are a mirror of God’s love.” This is how one missionary nurse describes the seven Missionary Sisters of Charity serving the community of Rumbek in South Sudan.

The Sisters, members of the order founded by Mother Teresa, run the Pan Ngath Orphanage and Women’s Shelter, the only orphanage in Rumbek that accepts infant children. Many of these arrive severely malnourished, days or even mere hours from death. Some are born to mothers who are themselves undernourished, unable to produce sufficient milk to nurse them. Many others do not have a mother: orphans from birth, owing to the still startlingly high risk of maternal mortality in South Sudan. The country remains one of the most dangerous places in the world to have a baby. The Sisters welcome these smallest and most vulnerable of God’s children into their care, and work tirelessly to provide for them, serving 18-hour days as a rule. Even when they break from work, it is only to fulfill the other all-important duty incumbent on their vocation: prayer.

The Sisters themselves live in meager poverty, accompanying the charges put into their care by the very lifestyle they lead. The community shares a single mobile phone among all seven Sisters. Each takes vacation only once in ten years!

The area outside the orphanage is crowded with aunts, grandmothers, and sisters of children whose mothers died bringing them into the world. They sit on the ground there, shaded under a mango tree, awaiting help. Some children are brought by their mothers themselves, often young teen mothers whose pregnancies come as a result of sexual assault. It is often a situation of girls, still really children themselves, caring for and raising these other children. The Sisters provide not only life-saving nourishment and loving care for the babies, but safety and shelter for these girls and young women.

So many of the desperately needy come seeking the Sisters’ help that the orphanage is becoming overcrowded, already caring for over 75 babies. But Sister Phelance, one of the Sisters serving at the orphanage, is confident that their mission will not falter. Calling the orphanage “a home of hope,” she says that the Sisters thank God for the help of Sudan Relief Fund and our partners, whose support enables them to continue reaching out to so many women and babies in need. Sister Phelance places her hands together in a gesture of prayer, and quotes Mother Teresa’s famous words: “Together we can do something beautiful for God.”

One story that best exemplifies that motto of Mother Teresa is the story of baby Awan. Born premature at six months, Awan’s mother died in childbirth, and the child was brought to the Sisters at Pan Ngath. Such a premature



birth presents challenges in any part of the world; add to this the strain of malnourishment and lack of adequate medical care, and it can mean an almost certain death sentence for a child here. Yet, with the help of your partnership and the Sisters' tireless loving care, Baby Awan not only survived, but is now a happy and flourishing child of nearly a year old. This truly is how, together, we can do something beautiful for God!

The Missionaries of Charity consider "homes for the abandoned" to be one of distinctive "works of love" of their Order, following Mother Teresa's example. Of this particular kind of ministry, and the people who seek it, Mother Teresa said:

*" First of all we want to make them feel that they are wanted, we want them to know that there are people who really love them, who really want them, at least for the few hours that they have to live, to know human and divine love. That they too may know that they are the children of God, and that they are not forgotten and they are loved and cared about... "*

The Sisters serving in Rumbek fulfill this mission perfectly. Some of the poor babes they welcome last no more than a few hours in the Sisters' arms. Many of the children, by the grace of God, are patiently nursed back to health. The Sisters know they cannot determine every outcome. They do ensure, however, that every child knows only tenderness and love for all of his or her days, however long or short those may be. These little ones, precious in the eyes of the Lord, are held precious in the heart of these Sisters, too. The Sisters are, truly, "a mirror of God's love."



No one is turned away. The Pan Ngath Orphanage is the only facility in Rumbek who will care for these abandoned and orphaned babies.



# FINANCIALS

Your generosity in 2022 played a vital role in saving lives and providing hope to our South Sudanese brothers and sisters in Christ. Last year, Sudan Relief Fund received \$5.6 million from the support of its generous donors, including two generous bequests. We make it a priority to keep our staff costs low and our overhead limited so that your contributions have a maximum impact. In fact, last year alone we provided \$3.5 million in aid to essential projects throughout South Sudan. Together, we served and strengthened South Sudan by meeting the immediate humanitarian needs



of its people, while also looking towards the future by establishing institutions of civil society. We're committed to building on this momentum in 2023.

We offer up a special thanks to members of the Sudan Relief Fund Mercy Society, who showed their commitment to the people of South Sudan through personal contributions of \$1,000 or more in 2022. In addition, Sudan Relief Fund is thankful for the kindness and generosity of our numerous foundation partners who continue to make this work possible.



- **REFUGEE AID: \$1,148,237**
- **HEALTHCARE AND MEDICINE: \$1,165,247**
- **EDUCATION: \$1,171,216**

**TOTAL IMPACT: \$3,484,700**





A HOPEFUL FUTURE.  
YOUR GIFTS OF FOOD, CLOTHING,  
SHELTER, MEDICAL CARE, AND  
EDUCATION, FREE THEM TO BE LITTLE  
CHILDREN AS GOD INTENDED.



# MEET THE TEAM

## BISHOP KUSSALA

Bishop of Tombura-Yambio Diocese in South Sudan



Eduardo Hiiboro Kussala is the Catholic bishop of Tombura-Yambio diocese in South Sudan. When he was nine months old, his mother was killed when their village was attacked and destroyed. He lived with his grandmother

in a refugee camp for five years and when they returned to Sudan they lived in the Sudanese Internal Displaced Persons Camp. These early experiences shaped Bishop Kussala's passionate dedication to peace.

During the Sudanese civil war he was involved in providing pastoral services to over 42,000 Sudanese refugees in the Central African Republic, and was head teacher of a secondary school in the refugee's camp. In 2008, Pope Benedict XVI appointed him bishop of the Diocese of Tombura-Yambio. The diocese he serves struggles with extreme poverty and only 2% of the population have completed primary school.

Bishop Kussala holds an MA in bioethics in addition to government politics and international relations, and a PhD in moral theology. He is the author of several articles and three books. His latest book, *Reconciliation, Healing and Peace in South Sudan: Reflections on the Way Forward*, focuses on the importance of learning from the mistakes of the past to prevent them in the future. He emphasizes that faith plays a fundamental role in the process of preserving the nation for future generations.

Bishop Kussala is also Chancellor of the Catholic University of South Sudan, which was built and is supported by Sudan Relief Fund. It is the only university in South Sudan still functioning and graduating students, thanks to the continued financial support of SRF.

Bishop Kussala served as president of the Sudan Catholic Bishops' Conference from 2016-2019. He serves now as bishop of the faithful in Tombura-Yambio.

## NEIL CORKERY

President



Since joining Sudan Relief Fund in 2005, Neil has traveled frequently and extensively to South Sudan, developing close working relationships with bishops and numerous groups

working in the country, especially: Solidarity with South Sudan; Aid to the Church in Need; Catholic Medical Missionary Board; and various religious congregations such as the Comboni Missionaries, the Jesuits, the Congregation of Christian Brothers, the Congregation of the Holy Spirit (Spiritans), and various Franciscan communities. In his travels throughout South Sudan, Neil has met with and learned from caregivers, doctors, relief aid workers, and local civilians to better understand the country's most urgent needs and challenges. With support from donors, Neil is dedicated to providing help, peace, and hope for the future by striving to fulfill immediate needs and aiding in authentic, integral human development necessary for long-term growth and stability.



## DAVID DETTONI

Director of Operations



Before joining Sudan Relief Fund as Director of Operations, David served with the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), a United States

Federal Government commission created by Congress to advise the president and Congress on policies to promote international religious freedom. Mr. Dettoni has led many official delegations to the African continent, including to countries such as Nigeria, Sudan, South Sudan, and Eritrea; he has developed a unique expertise on persecution, the religious dimension to ongoing conflicts in the region, and to religiously-motivated violence/terrorism. He also served as the co-staff director of the Congressional Human Rights Caucus.

## MATT SMITH

Vice President, Strategic Partnerships and Development



A graduate of Baylor University and Princeton Theological Seminary, Matt's entire professional career has been spent in the nonprofit sector out of

a desire to "help the least of these" (Matthew 25:40). After spending years as a fundraising consultant for a variety of nonprofits, he joined Sudan Relief Fund in 2022 with a goal to bring lasting change to the world's newest country. In his role as Vice President, Strategic Partnerships and Development, Matt serves as an advocate for the vision and mission of Sudan Relief Fund and oversees fundraising strategy. He considers it a privilege to bring individuals into close relationship with the organization by connecting their giving to Sudan Relief Fund's work on the ground in South Sudan. In addition, Matt works closely with the President in cultivating partner relationships both domestically and internationally. Above all, he finds joy in listening and learning from others.

## FRED OTIENO

Program Coordinator, South Sudan



Fred Otieno is of Kenyan nationality and a former religious brother. Fred holds a Bachelor's Degree in Sustainable Human Development, and a Masters Degree in Project Planning and Management. For

the last four years, Fred has overseen Sudan Relief Fund projects in the Catholic Diocese of Tombura-Yambio. During this time, he has been responsible for identifying the different interventions of various projects and linking them with Sudan Relief Fund.

Fred currently oversees projects in other dioceses of South Sudan. He says: "Sudan Relief Fund creates a positive transformation in the lives of marginalized people, thereby promoting their human dignity. This is a true manifestation of Christ discipleship. Sudan Relief Fund is a Godly driven organization, and this is my motivation in living the Gospel daily. God bless Sudan Relief Fund and all of the donors who support this organization."





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