



*“for I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”* **Jeremiah 29:11**

Fall 2017 Newsletter

The Republic of South Sudan became independent from Sudan on July 9, 2011, but its short history has been marred by civil war. On July 9, 2017 South Sudan celebrated its sixth anniversary as an independent country. For many South Sudanese, the independence of the Republic of South Sudan was to be a new era to finally enjoy economic privileges, democratic rights and civil liberties that they had long been deprived of by North Sudan. Yet after 6 years, it's still extremely difficult for the people to access adequate food sources and other necessities as well as access to clean water.

Just two years after independence, South Sudan entered into conflict. The 2013-2016 civil war displaced nearly 2 million people. In July 2017, the humanitarian situation in South Sudan continued to deteriorate. Fighting between armed actors in parts of Greater Equatoria and Upper Nile drove further population displacement. The number of people displaced was 3.9 million, comprising the IDPs and nearly 2 million who have fled as refugees to neighboring countries.



According to a UN OCHA August report, increasing insecurity combined with late and poor rains are reducing harvests from the current cropping season, compounding South Sudan's food crisis, latest analyses indicate. South Sudan's food insecurity has reached unprecedented levels, with some 1.7 million people—the highest ever number—on the brink of famine in June and July. Some 6 million people estimated to be severely food insecure. According to early warning analysis by the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWSNET), Emergency level of food insecurity will persist as fighting continues to affect humanitarian assistance and trade flows. The analysis published in August said conflict is disrupting typical agricultural activities in all regions of South Sudan with regions known for producing staple crops hardest hit.

An outbreak of fall armyworm was also reported in July. Experts warned that the crop-eating caterpillars, reported in four major agricultural regions may further damage South Sudanese farming, exacerbating the country's food crisis. The daily challenges facing families in South Sudan is each day is safety, security, putting food on the table, sending their children to school mainly in neighboring countries if they can afford, find jobs to make decent living, health services, and find clean water.

In response to the humanitarian crisis, South Sudan Voices of Hope has been focusing efforts on providing much needed humanitarian assistance. In June 2017, Kenneth Elisapana, Executive Director & Founder of South Sudan Voices of Hope took a mission trip to Juba, South Sudan. Kenneth accomplished three objectives in this mission;

- Provide much needed humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable in the Internal displaced camps in Juba,
- Met with the national, church and community leaders to listen, learn, and understand root causes of the ongoing internal conflict and way forward for peace and political settlement in the country, and
- Discuss sustainable economic development projects.

In this mission trip, we financially supported the humanitarian efforts of four of our partner organizations, as well as work with Sudan Widows, and Orphans Relief & Development Agency (SWORDA), headed by John Okech, Assistant to the Vice President of the Republic of South Sudan, to provide food staples, mosquito nets, shoes, etc. to people of an IDP camp (see newsletter article in the National newspaper). Our trip was extremely successful...and we are very grateful for those of you who supported this mission.



# Gumbo IDPs appeal for more food aid



By Sworo Charles Elisha

At least 200 of the 19,000 IDPs at Gumbo received food and nonfood items on Thursday this week.

South Sudan Widows and Orphans, Relief and Development Agency (SSWORDA) in partnership with South Sudan Voice of Hope, donated 300 bags of rice, 250 mosquito nets and 180 slippers to the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Gumbo at Don Bosco Parish compound.

South Sudan Widows, Orphans Relief and Development is a local nongovernment organization working in the field of humanitarian sector.

The Country Director of John Okech Okello encouraged the IDPs in Gumbo and those in other parts of the country to remain hopeful as the situation might change for the better in the future.

There are about nineteen thousand internally displaced persons (IDPs) who are in dire need of humanitarian assistance such as food, shelter, water and medicines.

The IDPs appreciated the donation of SSWORDA and its partner Voice for Hope although it was just a drop into the sea.

They appealed for more food, shelter, water and other nonfood items as they are in desperate need of more assistance.

In response, Okello he said would partner with other local and international organizations operating in the country in order to render more humanitarian aid to the people affected by the 2013 crisis including vulnerable communities.

"This distribution is still the beginning. More items will be brought to you since the number is big," Okello said.

He said the objective of his organization is to strengthen the livelihoods of the IDPs, returnees and other vulnerable communities in the country through advocacy for their rights so that they can achieve food security.

Okello called on people of goodwill or good Samaritans to support IDPs and vulnerable people by providing an enabling environment for sustainable peace, security, and citizens' decision making at local and national level to protect their political, economic, social and cultural rights in the country.

He said the vision of his organization is work for vulnerable members of the community and build capabilities of the people to meet their livelihoods.

"The mission is to improve the wellbeing of the vulnerable populations especially widows and orphans through integrated emergency and developmental programmes," he said.

He said his organization would focus on food security and livelihoods improvement, environmental protection, peace building and conflict mitigation, gender mainstreaming, HIV/AIDS and child protection.

Both Okello and the executive Director of Voice of Hope, Kenneth Charigwa Elisapana appreciated the national government for initiating National Dialogue to end the ongoing conflict in the country so that peace would be achieved in order to create space for all NGOs to operate without fear.

## What can we do?

### Learn:

- Read reports from Doctors Without Borders, UN OCHA
- Keep up with news from South Sudan

### Pray:

- For the men, women and children of South Sudan
- Pray for the work of South Sudan Voices of Hope and all organizations providing humanitarian assistance
- Pray for the implementation of the peace agreement signed on August 2015.
- Genuine negotiations and a sustainable agreement
- Forgiveness and Reconciliation
- Unity among the South Sudanese people

### Do:

- Financially support the work of South Sudan Voices of Hope and our partners in providing humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable in South Sudan
- Support partners of South Sudan Voices of Hope:
  - **Notting Hill Decorative Hardware** (nottinghill-usa.com): high end hand crafted kitchen cabinet hardware
  - **Chazerly Designs** (crystalhouse.com): fine crystals, awards, gifts and engraving services

*For more information, to schedule a speaking engagement, to learn about ways you can be part of the*

*organization, or to make a donation, contact*  
*Kenneth Elisapana*  
*(773-315-5495,*

*k.elisapana@southsudanhope.org)*

*or*

*Rev. Tony Asta (708-705-8669,*  
*[t.asta@southsudanhope.org](mailto:t.asta@southsudanhope.org))*

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*South Sudan Voices of Hope*  
*PO Box 4603, Wheaton, Ill*  
*60189*