



Sudanese Reformed Churches General Synod

Juba, South Sudan

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UPDATE SOUTH SUDAN CRISIS (20th October, 2015)

Background

The twenty months conflict in South Sudan triggered by a political difference within the ruling party has devastated lives of millions and has caused immense human suffering of South Sudanese. The features of this brutal conflict and fighting are forced populations displacement, burning villages, killing civilians, shooting, beating, hanging, rapes, burning people alive, abductions of women and children for forced labor, cattle raiding and destruction of food and humanitarian supplies.

Notably, South Sudan was already a fragile state with weak government institutions, lack of rule of law and high poverty rate before the current crisis. Because of the escalating violence the situation continues to deteriorate further. All over the country people are being affected by food insecurity, malnutrition, disease outbreaks and threats to lives. Furthermore as situation gets worsen basic services such health, education, water and sanitation are in low coverage in some areas and completely non-existence in other areas. Subsequently, people are now dying because of hunger and acute food shortage.

Up-to-date, the conflict and fighting have killed more than 80,000 people; have caused 2.2 million people to flee their homes in search of safety and humanitarian assistance. More than 1.6 million are internally displaced persons and 619,000 have fled across the border as refugees to Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan and Uganda.

Last August, 2015 a peace agreement was reached by the conflicting parties. However in spite of this the war has increased in intensity in Unity State, Upper Nile State, Western Equatoria State and areas around Juba. Military clashes and cattle raiding are still continuing in number of places across the country which indicates it is already a shaky agreement.

IPDs and Refugees figures (Based on recent UN data)

1. The number of internal displaced peoples (IDPs) within South Sudan is estimated at 1.6 million people.
2. The number of South Sudanese refugees who fled to the neighboring countries is about 619,000 (Ethiopia; Kenya; Sudan and Uganda).
3. The number of people seeking protection in United Nations civilian protection sites is 200,000 across six sites.
4. 4.6 million peoples are already food insecure and facing famine.

SRC Current Situation

SRC has been greatly affected by the conflict and fighting in South Sudan. SRC members in Malakal, Bor and Bentiu are living inside United Nation Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) civilian protection camps. They cannot get out of the camps and if they do they get killed by soldiers and armed men. The above mentioned towns are completely deserted and destroyed. In Juba the capital city of South Sudan, some of SRC members are living in two UN civilian protection camps for their safety and protection. Living condition in those sites is miserable as health, water, sanitation and hygiene are concerned. They are entirely depended on humanitarian assistance since they lost all their property and jobs during the fighting. Other SRC members fled across the borders to the neighboring countries as refugees. With escalation of violence and economic collapse humanitarian situation continues to deteriorate day by day.

In spite of all these situations, SRC 10 pastors and 18 evangelists are laboring sacrificially trusting the GOOD LORD of his mercy, grace and protection. They are engaged in evangelism, pastoral care, trauma counseling and leading small groups in camps. Through their labor in the last twenty months **832** souls came to the Lord and have joined the churches in camps. This is the promise and hope that Lord is in control and at work even at difficult and miserable situations.

In term of infrastructure SRC had lost all that she used to possess. Bor, Malakal and Bentiu are already deserted towns there is nothing that SRC can do till peace comes back to South Sudan. In Juba although the situation is unpredictable SRC is exerting all efforts to rebuild the shade that was used by Juba Sudanese Reformed Church before the conflict. The main objective of this rebuilding is to have a shade for worship and Christian activities particularly war trauma counseling. The estimated construction cost of this shade is SSP36744 = US\$11555.

In 2015, 1140 SRC members have received food assistance and reached with livelihoods support. The basic relief items given out were plastic sheets, blankets, mosquito nets, beans, rice, wheat flour, cooking oil, sugar and milk powder to children. This support was made

possible by generous diaconal response of Reformed Churches in South Africa, Christian Reformed World Mission Eastern & Southern African and Christ's Children Foundation.

It is worth mentioning that this year the number of people SRC is serving has increased to 1970 plus 283 widows and orphans that received trauma healing counseling and support. The increase came as result of gospel witness carried out among the IPDs.

Diaconal Response

The below mentioned churches and church based organization and individual have responded generously toward SRC humanitarian need. Their kind support has saved lives of people who could have died of hunger, malnutrition and other hunger related diseases.

1. Reformed Churches in South Africa (GKSA) donated sum of US\$14333 and likewise Christ's Children Foundation donated sum of US\$14333 totaling to sum of US\$28,666. This fund was used between February and May, 2015 to purchase basic relief items.
2. Christian Reformed World Mission (CRWM) Eastern & Southern Africa donated sum of US\$ 9988. This fund is being used between September and October, 2015 to purchase basic relief items.
3. Dr. Peter Lillback President of Westminster Seminary donated sum of US\$988 to purchase some chairs and property that were lost during the fighting in 2014.

SRC Urgent Needs

1. Diaconal aid (relief) for the needy in South Sudan particularly SRC members who are in UNMISS civilian protection sites across the country.
2. Diaconal support to twenty eight (28) SRC displaced leaders: (10) pastors and (18) evangelists who are serving sacrificially in Juba; Malakal ; Bentiu; Bor; Ethiopia; Sudan and Kenya.
3. Evangelism in the war affected areas (IDPs camps) and in refugee camps in (Ethiopia, Sudan, Kenya and Uganda).
4. Bibles and Reformed Christian literatures.
5. Engagement in the ministry of trauma healing, reconciliation and peace.

Prayer Requests

1. Political settlement of South Sudan conflict being mediated by IGAD in Addis Ababa.
2. Diaconal aid for the needy in South Sudan particularly SRC members.
3. SRC to play her evangelistic and prophetic role at war time in South Sudan.
4. Safety of SRC leaders as they labor in IDPs and refugee camps (they are serving in areas of high risks and uncertainty).