

SOUTH SUDAN

FACT SHEET 2017/18

South Sudan gained independence in 2011 after a referendum passed with 99% of the vote, ending decades of brutal civil war - the longest in Africa's history - between northern and southern forces in Sudan. South Sudan is now facing its own civil war, chronic food shortages and an unprecedented refugee crisis.

Key individuals, Groups & Places

Omar al-Bashir: Sudan's President
Salva Kiir Mayardit: South Sudan's President
Riek Machar: South Sudan's former Vice President
Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA): Army of South Sudan
Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM): Governing Party of South Sudan - which split in 2013 into the SPLM-Juba (led by Kiir) and SPLM-IO (led by Machar)
Dinka: Ethnic group to which President Kiir belongs
Nuer: Ethnic group to which Machar belongs
Juba: Capital City

Key dates

1983-2005: Civil War between northern and southern Sudanese forces
1989: Omar al-Bashir took power in Sudan by military coup
2005: Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) reached between north & south
2011: South Sudan gained independence
2013: Civil war in South Sudan broke out
2016: UN declared ethnic cleansing is underway
2017: Famine declared in February
2017: Number of refugees from South Sudan fleeing war reached 2 million



Political Conflict and Civil War

Civil war erupted in South Sudan in December 2013 when President Kiir sacked his entire cabinet and accused Vice President Machar of plotting to overthrow him. Exiled, Machar formed a new faction of the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) called the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement - In Opposition (SPLM-IO) as an anti-government force.

The political conflict quickly escalated into a full-blown civil war which has so far left thousands dead and millions more displaced, seeking refuge abroad, and food insecure.

President Kiir in May 2017 declared a unilateral ceasefire although, much like previous government-declared ceasefires, fighting has continued.

The government is pushing for general elections to take place in 2018 despite the ongoing crisis. South Sudan's political future is deeply unstable and uncertain.

Humanitarian Crisis

The UNOCHA (UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs) has described South Sudan's humanitarian crisis as being "of catastrophic proportions". As of June 2017 4.4 million people were reached with humanitarian assistance so far this year and it is estimated a further 1.8 million will be reached by the end of the year.

As of September 2017 the number of internally displaced people (IDPs) is at 1.87 million, the number of refugees in neighbouring countries is 2 million, and the number of people severely food insecure is 6 million.

Famine was declared in some parts of South Sudan in February 2017. By September 2017, the famine status was revoked and much devastation was avoided due to a rapid response by humanitarian aid teams but. due to the very specific definition of famine, more people are facing food insecurity today than before.

According to the UN, this man-made humanitarian disaster in South Sudan will not end 'unless we address all the factors that undermine food security and nutrition. Securing peaceful and inclusive societies is a necessary condition to end that.'

HART's Partners in South Sudan

Marol Academy, Luonyaker

Founded in 2007, the academy's mission is "girls must be educated equally with boys". South Sudan has the highest proportion of children out of school in the world, and girls in particular are more likely to miss out on basic education. HART supports the recruitment and training of volunteer teachers to provide a comprehensive curriculum of primary and secondary education.

Diocese of Wau

Covering two states, Western Bahr el Ghazal and Warrup State, the Diocese of Wau undertakes a broad range of humanitarian development programmes, such as food assistance and distribution of mosquito nets. They champion community organisations and campaigns for peace.

Some useful links for more information:

UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs - www.unocha.org/south-sudan

Amnesty - www.amnesty.org/en/countries/africa/south-sudan

Human Rights Watch - www.hrw.org/africa/south-sudan

UN Mission in South Sudan - <https://unmiss.unmissions.org>

UN Refugee Agency - <http://reporting.unhcr.org/node/2553>

'Saving South Sudan' documentary (2014) - www.youtube.com/watch?v=IDSu8wlQG6c

'South Sudan: A Failure to Act' documentary (2017) - www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p050skjh

Hart's partners and visit reports - www.hart-uk.org/locations/south-sudan

If you have any queries, please visit www.hart-uk.org or contact office@hart-uk.org