



Reverend Hassan John stands in the remains of his church, following another attack this year.

NIGERIA

Christian communities in Nigeria's middle-belt continue to be the target of Fulani militia insurgencies as the group migrates southwards and Boko Haram draws police attention towards the north-east region.

Ideological and "land-grabbing" motivations are believed to be the reason for violent attacks by Fulani militia against local Christian communities. The Fulani militia's new technique of high frequency attacks with low death tolls has shielded the events from the international spotlight and made civilians increasingly vulnerable.

Baroness Cox and HART's Project Co-ordinator David Thomas recently returned from a swift visit to Jos. Meeting with several of HART's partners including Reverend Hassan John, they heard about the dire situation facing Christians in Plateau State. Most worrying is the magnitude of killings by the Fulani compared to previous years.

From January-June 2018, 6,000 people were killed according to the Christian Association of Nigeria, which is the same amount as the total number of people killed in 2015-2017.

Rev. Hassan told HART that the Fulani militia use cattle herder boys (aged 8-12) to scout villages and ask questions to ascertain whether the community have vigilantes; many do. The Fulani then use this information to coordinate their attacks, starting with the vigilantes who have guns. According to local reports, the Army know where the Fulani bases are, yet concern themselves with de-arming the vigilantes whilst no Fulani have ever been arrested.



17,000 people are currently living in displacement camps following insurgencies by Fulani militia and are not able to return home as the Fulani remain in their villages. Caroline and David met displaced women who fled after vicious attacks in June when 14 villages were targeted, killing over 200 people.

'M' is from Ngor Village where the most violent attack took place, killing 120 people.

"The attackers approached, they were burning homes and shouting "Allahu Akbar". Those who couldn't escape were burnt in their homes.

My sister was raped and her wrists cut off before she was shot in the heart. My brother, his wife and their 6 children were tied up and their throats slit. 10 others in their house were burnt alive.

Many fled into the mosque and the [Fulani] Militia ordered the Imam to bring out Christians but he refused. He said they would have to kill him first and that he had lived with Christians for 35 years and was never harmed so he would not allow them to be killed."

Please visit our website to download the full visit report.

STATE OF EMERGENCY

The Sudanese Government has recognised a state of emergency in Blue Nile and South Kordofan, known as the Two Areas, appealing to the UN in September to deliver humanitarian aid and support. Conditions are worsening as both regions are host to new and prolonged situations of displacement. With crisis levels of food shortages, lack of shelter, restricted access to health services and localised violence, the safety of many displaced people is under threat.

Mediation efforts have been stalled since 2016, as SPLM-N (Sudan People's Liberation Movement - North) officials demand aid to be delivered through external systems due to mistrust of the Government in the capital, Khartoum. Acceptance by SPLM-N of a UN proposal to deliver aid to the areas they control could lead to a permanent ceasefire and access to humanitarian aid for the Two Areas. Addressing the crises in Blue Nile and South Kordofan is a monumental challenge that will require much support and humanitarian assistance.

Due to the difficulties of aid reaching vulnerable families in Blue Nile state, the £50,000 raised by HART earlier this year provided vital life-saving food. Our partner, Benjamin, was able to successfully deliver bags of sorghum (common grain) and cooking oil to displaced people in Wadaka who were at risk of starvation. There are still food shortages in Blue Nile, however the host community and displaced people are working together to plant and harvest crops to survive.



Bags of Sorghum before they were handed out to families in Wadaka



David is in a garden maintained by the two women on the left. Rosaria (blue top) is the founder and director of HIAM Health.

A recent visit to HART's partner HIAM Health in Timor-Leste was an opportunity to see the inspirational work that the in-country NGO has done this year.

Timor-Leste has one of the worst rates of malnutrition in the world and child stunting is of significant concern. HIAM Health's integrated approach to malnutrition focuses on education in health care, hygiene and nutrition, as well as a residential rehabilitation clinic for malnourished children. The NGO empowers women to develop their own food production, providing their families with more diverse and nutritionally-rich food.

Project coordinator David Thomas has compiled a photo diary and report from the visit which is now available to read on our website.



David and Caroline being shown the gardens at the Rehabilitation Centre in the capital, Dili.



David travelled to remote areas in Timor-Leste to meet the communities who are working with HIAM Health. This community has received a water tank and a man-made fish pond and is working with HIAM to turn their gardens into commercial businesses to benefit other communities.



 **BURMA**

LOI TAI LENG LEARNS ENGLISH

Our Trustee Jo Russell and her sister-in-law Fran Sluman raised £10,000 to help Loi Tai Leng displacement camp set up a much-needed English Language Programme. Fran, who is an experienced English as a Foreign Language teacher, has travelled to Loi Tai Leng to help initiate the programme.

Fran met HART's partner Shan Women's Action Network (SWAN) who support displaced people from Shan State, before setting off to the school which is located on the Thai-Shan border. They took a truck full of provisions needed by students such as food and stationary supplies.

On Fran's first day she was overwhelmed yet delighted when 50 students turned up to her after school

"I told my leader that I want to go to Loi Tai Leng. If I had the opportunity I want to stay in school."

Hong Seng Leng, 18



conversation class! The ability to speak English is vital for these students who have been driven out of their villages in Shan State by the Burmese military. They are more likely to get a place in Thai universities and access safe and legal work if they can speak English.

Over 800 children attend the school, over half of whom board either because they have been orphaned or abandoned due to the conflict, or because the school is too far to travel to every day from their villages but is their only access to education.

Fran asked the students to write messages about their lives to help improve their written English. Many have never had a foreign teacher before and were excited for the opportunity.



"We [Shan children] have no chance to study at school like other children because [we have] no rights and no opportunity to learn."

Yi Mung, 22

"Politics was destroyed by Burmese military. The constitution of the Shan State was written by Burmese military themselves. It's not the people's voices"

20 YEARS OF INSPIRATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS

In September, the HART team visited Nagorno-Karabakh to celebrate the 20th anniversary of The Lady Cox Rehabilitation Centre.

Visiting the Centre's founder Vardan Tadevosyan and his dedicated team of health workers, HART was overwhelmed to see the progress of the internationally-recognised Centre as it expands its therapeutic repertoire and continues to improve diagnoses of patients with physical and mental disabilities. As the only rehabilitation facility in the region, continued support for Vardan and his team is crucial: constraints in funding and space limit the provision of care to only 10 per cent of those who could benefit from therapy, education and occupational activities.

Caroline dancing with the staff from the Lady Cox Rehabilitation Centre



The Lady Cox Rehabilitation Centre strongly advocates for the rights of people with disabilities whilst providing life-changing therapies to its patients. Battling against a traditional culture of discrimination, Vardan and his team are at the forefront of the struggle to dismantle the prejudices that prevent people with disabilities from becoming active members of society. The Centre employs many of its patients and provides work-related therapies to help break the stigma. The best testimony to the achievements of Vardan and his team was given by one of the patients:

"The Rehabilitation Centre is a family. Even if a person is feeling spiritually depressed or feeling lost, here he can regain himself".

#VAN4VARDAN

We are fundraising to help Vardan buy a second-hand specially adapted vehicle to transport patients with wheelchairs safely and securely.

Vardan loves to take patients on day-trips around Stepanakert, the capital of Nagorno-Karabakh where the Centre is located, championing the participation of disabled people in society and helping them to build confidence in public spaces. The van would also be used to transport patients from their homes to the Centre to receive treatment, which is currently costly and difficult for families to do.

The second-hand vehicle will have space for 2 wheelchairs to be safely lifted into the van and securely fastened to the floor, providing a comfortable ride for patients. 8-10 other persons will also fit in the van so that the staff and other patients can accompany them on the journey.

Donate online:

Visit our JustGiving page:

www.justgiving.com/campaign/Van4Vardan

Donate by Post:

Complete the enclosed donation form and tick the box for 'Vardan's Van'

An example of the van the Centre needs



ANA HIT ERDYAN:

"I am Tigran's mother. My son is 21 years old and has cerebral palsy. Tigran's transportation is completely dependent on vehicles which are often not safe and limit his opportunities to go out. This prevents Tigran from adapting to new social environments and negatively affects the quality of the treatment as he can't always reach the Centre."

Anything you can give to support this project will be greatly appreciated!



Anahit and Tigran Verdyan with Baroness Cox.

NOTICE board



HART PRIZE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

On 1st of November we officially launched the HART Prize for Human Rights competition 2019. The prize gives young people interested in human rights and global affairs a platform to explore these issues and to express their thoughts and concerns through essays or creative entries such as poetry and sculpture.

Last year we received 221 entries, each offering a unique take on the situations that our partners and their communities face, from comparing the moral quandary faced by Churchill and Aung San Suu Kyi to a poetic apology for whining about having to go to school.

The Prize is open to young people between 11 to 25 years old, divided into three age categories. Prizes include Tea at the House of Lords with Caroline and work experience in the HART office. All entrants receive a certificate which is useful for their portfolio of interests and achievements.

If you are interested in entering the competition or learning more, please visit our website:

www.hart-uk.org/humanrightsprize

The deadline for application is Monday 4th March. We look forward to receiving your entries. Good luck!

HART HERO

Congratulations and many thanks to our supporter Kate Bradley who hosted a Mad Hatter's Tea Party in September at her school in California and raised \$1552 for HART. During the party, Kate's guests ate delicious HART-themed cakes and listened to her talk about HART's work.

"The event went great in that I was able to show my schoolmates all the important causes that HART advocates and fundraises for. I realised the ripple effect that raising awareness has –after the fundraiser, the Asian Student Union held a meeting on the Rohingya crisis, and the Human Rights Watch club held a meeting on food insecurities in Sudan. So overall, a very positive impact."

SAVE THE DATE

 Christmas Carol Service and Concert
11th December

Our Christmas concert will take place on Tuesday 11th December at St Cyprian's Church (near Baker Street) at 7pm.

Join us for a festive evening with performances from the Armenian Komitas Choir, and the Saint Martin Singers

As is customary, during the interval we will serve mince pies and mulled wine, with the opportunity to buy Christmas cards and other HART gifts.

We hope to see you there!

COUNTRY BRIEFINGS

We know it can be hard to keep up with international news, especially when it comes to the countries where our partners are based. The conflicts which rage on in Sudan, South Sudan, Eastern Myanmar and others, are underreported in mainstream media, making them hard to follow.

That's why we've put together a briefing for each country and will do so every 3 months to keep you updated with the political and humanitarian situations.

Find the downloadable briefings on our website.



CATCHING UP WITH CAROLINE

IN PARLIAMENT

Caroline has recently spoken in the House of Lords to question how the UK Government is working with the international community to protect and provide for vulnerable people in Sudan. Caroline has also posed written questions regarding the protection of freedom of belief for Christians in Sudan, and the UK Government's response to the blocking of humanitarian aid in Burma.



'ARTSAKH'S ANGEL'

On the 7th October, Caroline was recognised for her efforts in advocating justice and freedom for all people as The Armenian National Committee of America-Western Region (ANCA-WR) bestowed its 2018 "Advocate for Justice" award to HART's Founder.

"Over the course of three decades, Baroness Caroline Cox has consistently utilised her powerful voice and all resources at her disposal to bring peace and justice to the Armenian people of Artsakh and to highlight the aggressive actions of the Azeri government" stated Nora Hovsepien, Chair of ANCA-WR.

The award ceremony took place in the Beverly Hill Hilton Hotel in California. A video of her acceptance speech can be found on our website.

VISITING HART AUSTRALASIA

In August, Caroline was invited to Australia by our sister charity HART Australasia for a lecture tour. There, Caroline followed a rigorous schedule of speaking engagements in schools and churches as well as numerous press interviews.

Caroline had the opportunity to share the HART message on a visit that took her to various cities around Australia, including Sydney, Gold Coast, Brisbane, Melbourne and Canberra.

In Canberra, she met with the President of the Senate, The Hon Scott Ryan, and Senator Abetz as well as other Australian Christian Parliamentarians including Kevin Andrews MP (pictured). Lady Cox took this opportunity to attend question time in the House of Representatives.

Another highlight of her rollercoaster visit was a dinner hosted by the Armenian community in Sydney in support of HART's work in Nagorno-Karabakh.

"It was a privilege to have the opportunity to share HART's vision and the inspirational achievements of our partners with such a wide range of people in Australia. Everywhere, people were moved and impressed by those achievements and I hope very much that this will enable HART Australasia to grow and to develop the work of HART in that great country."



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