South Sudan gained independence in 2011 after a referendum passed with 99% of the vote, ending decades of brutal civil war between the north and south - the longest in Africa's history. After South Sudan saw its own civil war break out in 2013, famine, human rights violation have developed into an unprecedented refugee crisis. Although Peace Agreements have been signed, both sides have constantly broken the deal and the situation in South Sudan remains highly fragile.

Key individuals, Groups & Places

**Size:** 619,745 km²  
**Population:** 11.1 million  
**Continent:** Africa  
**Capital City:** Juba  
**President:** Salva Kiir Mayardit  
**Former Vice President:** Riek Machar  
**Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA):** Army of South Sudan  
**Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM):** Governing Party of South Sudan  
- 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

Key dates

1899 - 1955: Under British-Egyptian rule, South Sudan is part of Anglo-Egyptian Sudan  
1956: Sudan gains independence  
1983-2005: Civil War between north and south  
1989: Military coup puts Omar al-Bashir into power  
2005: Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) reached between north & south  
2011: Jan. - Referendum overwhelmingly in favour of independence  
2013: Civil war in South Sudan broke out  
2016: UN declared ethnic cleansing is underway  
2017: Feb. - Famine declared  
2018: Feb. - Famine no long declared  
Sept. - Peace agreement signed  
2019: Sept. - Machar arrived in the capital for talks with President Kiir, recommit to forming a Transitional Government by 12/11/2019

Political Conflict and Civil War

In December 2013, South Sudan saw a civil war erupt after President Kiir sacked his entire cabinet and accused Vice President of plotting to overthrow him. After being exiled, Machar formed a new anti-government faction of the SPLM, known as the Sudanese People’s Liberation Movement - In Opposition (SPLM-IO).

The political feud rapidly developed into a bitter conflict, with the UN declaring in 2016 that ethnic cleansing was underway. The war so far has seen tens of thousands dead, million displaced and desperately seeking refuge as well as extreme food insecurity and violation of human rights.

In September 2018, a peace Agreement, Revitalised Agreement, was signed. The deal has been broken repeatedly by both sides.

September 2019 saw Machar arrive in Juba for talks with Kiir concerning the outstanding issues of the deal. Although encouraging, the situation still remains highly fragile.
Humanitarian Crisis

The UNOCHA (UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs) has described South Sudan’s humanitarian crisis as being “of catastrophic proportions”. There are currently 1.82 million IDPs in South Sudan in addition to 2.3 million externally displaced people who have fled. In 2019, 7.2 million people are in need of aid, most due to threats of starvation.

Famine was declared in February 2017, officially ending a year later in 2018. However, the 2018 harvest saw inadequate rainfall which exacerbated the food shortage caused by the conflict. The only thing that is stopping an official famine being called, is the number of people affected by it. Around 6.9 million South Sudanese experiencing hunger, 1.8 million of those are set to face “emergency” food shortages.

The UN also demanded that all parties must allow ‘unhindered humanitarian access’. 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.’

Additionally, UN issued a press statement condemning “the heinous incidents of sexual and gender-based violence against women…in South Sudan.”

HART’s Partners in South Sudan

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. Currently, a new health clinic is being constructed on the East Bank. Aiming to treat over 500 patients a day, the centre will specialise in maternal healthcare and child immunisation.

Christian Action Relief & Development (CARD)

CARD is the emergency relief branch of the Diocese of Wau. CARD is able to ensure that vital and life-saving food aid is supplied for the most vulnerable people. Beneficiaries include lactating mothers, pregnant women, elderly and disabled people - most susceptible to famine due to not being able to scavenge our course food themselves.

Some useful links for more information:

UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs - www.unocha.org/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=lDSu8wlQG6c
'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

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