

## NEWS FROM SUDAN WEEK 14



For three months now, the people of Sudan have endured unspeakable suffering amid violence that is tearing their country apart.

The UN says “**Sudan is now one of the world’s most difficult places for humanitarian workers to operate.** Working with local organizations we are doing all we can to deliver life-saving supplies. But we cannot work under the barrel of a gun. We cannot replenish stores of food, water, and medicine whilst brazen looting continues. We cannot deliver if our staff are prevented from reaching people in need.”

Ultimately, Sudan’s suffering will end only when the fighting ends. Each day that the fighting continues, the misery deepens for Sudanese civilians. In western Sudan, where the paramilitary RSF is dominant, there are repeated reports of widespread sexual violence and ethnic cleansing.

Robert Hayward, former Christian Aid manager in Sudan, has an ex-colleague who has fled Khartoum and is now working in south-east Sudan helping refugees flee into Ethiopia. He writes:

*I’m totally desperate about the war trend in Sudan, and the involvement of militant groups, such as the Muslim Brotherhood and the RSF. The involvement of the Brotherhood in the conflict has brought a new wave of challenges and complexities. They are not trustworthy and all their outcome and output are against Islamic values, so they cannot win. On the other side, the RSF is notorious for its brutal tactics, accused of committing numerous human rights violations, including widespread violence against civilians. Their credibility to bring democracy is zero.*

*The Sudanese people have long yearned for democracy, hoping for a society that upholds their rights, fosters inclusivity, and promotes stability. However, the involvement of these militant groups in the civil war poses a significant threat to the realization of these aspirations. A victory for either could potentially escalate the conflict into a full-blown civil war. The consequences would be catastrophic, for Sudan. It could lead to **a prolonged period of violence, displacement, and the loss of countless lives.***

After early hopes for peace talks, his last sentence has begun to feel like the realistic view of the future. It’s noticeable that he refers to the Brotherhood and not to SAF, the Army. News reports have also mentioned that the Islamists are involved with the army, but his wording brings that into sharp relief.

### NEWS FROM THE CHURCH

In **Khartoum** state, the churches are almost entirely situated in poorer districts, away from the city centres where fighting has mainly been concentrated. There are signs that the fighting is spreading, with reports of shelling and deaths in Dar El Salaam neighbourhood in western Omdurman, and more districts in Khartoum North, but there is no direct church news as the cities are cut off.

**Kadugli** experienced a cautious calm on Thursday, after fierce fighting between SAF and the SPLM-North. The RSF controls the roads connecting Kadugli with wider Sudan. Heavy rain is aggravating the already dire humanitarian conditions in the area, which is also experiencing acute shortage of essential medicines and medical supplies. Costs for electricity has increased the financial burden

faced by patients. “The patients themselves are asked to contribute to these costs, as the hospital is forced to buy fuel for the generators on the black market, which leads to doubled treatment costs.”

More displaced people arrived in **El Obeid** after the RSF raided villages to its north. Battles between the RSF and SAF in the surroundings caused great damage to power lines and there has been a rapid deterioration of the living situation in El Obeid. Prices of basic consumer goods have become exorbitant. Commodities such as flour and soap are almost unobtainable.

Anne Russell of Leeds managed to speak with Bp Hassan and Bp Ismail in the last week – both **El Obeid and Kadugli** dioceses are in desperate straits, living in fear of random attacks from militias and short of food. Leeds are supplying funding for humanitarian aid.

**Wad Medani** continues to cope with people displaced from areas of fighting. Photos show families camped out in the cathedral grounds, which have extensive puddles due to the rains.



**Port Sudan's** situation is similar. Bp Abdu is attempting to set in motion their annual agricultural project which in previous years has been one of their financial lifelines. This contrasts with other places where all normal living and planning is destroyed.

Archbishop Ezekiel has received funding from the Anglican Communion Fund and Salisbury Diocese to establish the Provincial Office in Port Sudan, and has been able to channel relief funding out to four of the five dioceses. The Church Association has also sent a small amount of funding for relief, donations received from its supporters.

**We bring before you Lord the cries for help,  
the tears and vulnerability of your people.  
We bring before you the feeling of powerlessness,  
the deep fears and suffering of your people.  
Bless our brothers and sisters in Sudan.  
You know our needs and feel our pain:  
hear our cries and heal our wounds,  
in Jesus name.**

Al Jazeera have an excellent introductory 10 minute video,  
[www.aljazeera.com/program/start-here/2023/7/10/whats-happening-in-sudan-after-three-months-of-war-start-here-2](http://www.aljazeera.com/program/start-here/2023/7/10/whats-happening-in-sudan-after-three-months-of-war-start-here-2)