

Nadia Mosqueda
Ludington, MI, USA
Sudan, Conflict

Sudan, many conflicts and many solutions

Sudan is a country located in Africa with a population around 44 million people. Sudan has approximately 728 thousand miles of land, their most populated cities being Khartoum and Omdurman (*World Atlas*). Seventy percent of the land in Sudan is rural while 30% of the land is urban. For an even broader comparison, Sudan is three times the size of Texas. Typically Sudan has very dry winters and rainy summers. It can get very hot and the climate usually gravitates towards a tropical climate. Not only does Sudan struggle with it's dry climate, but in the driest areas they may sometimes struggle with sand/dust storms. Overall, Sudan has a lot of conflict revolving around political, economic and social issues which in turn causes problems for the people.

The economy is not exactly stable and a lot of people in Sudan are living in poor conditions/poverty. Their ranking between other countries regarding economy is below the average and has slightly continued to decrease over time. While the economy is not stable, there are also political and social issues. South Sudan wanted independence from the North but when South Sudan gained independence, more problems were created. One of the more bigger reasons for South Sudan wanting independence is the topic of religion and the freedom within that. One point five million people had died due to the war between North and South Sudan while many others fled to other countries for safety. South Sudan has many issues right now concerning violence with ethnic groups and politics, this leads to many people being hurt. For example, journalists who try to report on what is going on in South Sudan have been harassed and harmed (*Travel State Gov*).

A main reason why the economy is not stable and has not been stable is because of the war as well. The government has been more focused on the war than the people and how they are being affected. Because of the war and the unstable economy, prices for food and other basic needs have increased making it harder to afford. When most of their money is going towards food and basic necessities, some families are not able to send their kids to school or get school supplies either.

South Sudan has gotten the worse issues out of all of it. Because the country has been dealing with so much conflict, they do not have the time to fix the issues revolving around proper education, healthcare and better living situations. So many people have fled from South Sudan and Uganda now has almost 800,000 people from Sudan (*World Vision*). Some of the conflict has lessened throughout the years but it is still not 100% gone.

Typically the average family size in Sudan is around 6 people and their children usually live with the parents until they marry. Their diet usually consists of lots of meat like lamb, fish and chicken. If the families have farmland then they also have access to fresh vegetables and fruits. A lot of children ages 5-13 do not have access or attend school in Sudan due to the lack of acknowledgement of how important education is. Some families simply cannot afford to send their children to school and some families

believe that women should not attend school (*Borgen Project*). There are also challenges when it comes to healthcare in Sudan. If a family is able to get or have access to healthcare, it is extremely expensive. Around 14% of people living in Sudan do not have healthcare due to the shortage of healthcare workers (*Borgen Project*) which the government has tried to fix but this is still affecting the people heavily.

The access to clean water or water in general in Sudan is very troubling. A lot of Sudan is desert and very dry. Eighty percent of Sudan revolves around agriculture so the scarcity of water is very concerning (*Borgen Project*). Women and children sometimes have to go to far lengths in order to get water for their land and their household. Because of these water troubles, the people of Sudan have also had cases of people dying from certain diseases concerning the water. Not only do the people who live in Sudan have trouble accessing water, but they have trouble getting food too. If they do have food, most of the time it is not nutritious. The economy is not exactly stable which affects the food prices. Some families can not really afford a lot of the food or have the transportation to get it.

So far in Sudan, the economy has generally stayed the same while there are some programs set up trying to help the situation regarding food scarcity. This is still a huge issue because a lot of the families in Sudan still live in terrible conditions or live in poverty. To contribute to this problem, there are major problems in South Sudan politically and socially. A lot of these problems affect refugees and minorities the most, therefore refugees leave or have left Sudan due to the economic struggles and the diseases. Close to 2.3 million people who have lived in Sudan have left to neighboring countries (*Mercy Corps*).

Due to the political and social issues Sudan is still facing, around 12.5% of Sudan's people are now unemployed (*Borgen Project*). The conflict's that they are facing are heavily affecting their jobs and leave some people jobless. The thousands of people who worked in the oil industry were left jobless as well because of the collapse of the oil industry.

The environment in Sudan is not any better. Throughout the country they have to deal with deforestation, conflicts over resources, terrible sanitation, food scarcity and other import issues (*UN Environment Program*). Because of Sudan's lack of water and the fact that most of the country revolves around agriculture as well as farming, more and more families are losing their crops. The shortage of water they are able to get during dry seasons are not helping these cases.

Sudan also has issues with food pollution. In order for families to get cheap and quick access to food, vendors will sell food on the sidewalks. This food though often becomes exposed to car exhaust and flies, therefore contaminating the food and making other people sick. Around 40% of the people in Sudan are severely malnourished while 80% of their population can not afford or have access to nutritious food (*Borgen Project*).

There are some programs in Sudan that are working to solve some of these issues. The FAO or Food Agriculture Organization has created a program to help fix the food problems while another program called Action Against Hunger has raised thousands of dollars to assess and fix the food issues. They also have gathered teams to go to Sudan and try to help the water problems. Making sure that more and more families are able to have access to clean water. They have also tried to fix the healthcare problems and have tried to make sure that all of the families in Sudan are able to get healthcare.

I have also thought of ways to fix these issues that the people of Sudan have been facing. One of my solutions was to plant fruit trees, vegetable gardens as well as fruit gardens. That way families are able to get nutritious food. There are some cons to this solution though. Some families might not have land that has good enough soil to use. To fix this, maybe we could pair or connect a family that does not have good land/soil to a family that does. Essentially sharing the food that they are gardening. Another con to this is that it is a long term solution and will take some time to grow. So we would need to find a short term solution while the plants are still growing. To make it fair for the families who will share land, the other family could help out by farming and looking after the gardens. That way each family is contributing something.

One of my other solutions to these issues was to set up buildings and programs around Sudan. These buildings and programs could get people around the world to raise money and send essentials (toothpaste, soap, toilet paper, canned food, etc) that people need. They could then look at the family's income and how many people are in a family. There could be a line where if you are under it then you can go to these buildings and get the things you need. The money raised could help as well with trying to fix some of the water issues and food issues. These programs could have teams that people could volunteer for. These teams could be used to help build or rebuild small houses for the people in Sudan who are struggling to live or do not have houses at all.

With these programs, people around the world could additionally fund gallons of clean water for the time being. Because the climate is not exactly ideal and it can get very dry at certain times, we could build greenhouses to protect the plants. For each greenhouse/garden that is built we could store water that is only used for the plants. The money that is raised would furthermore be able to help fund the families that cannot afford to send their children to school.

Works Cited

- Aidam, B. (2021, March 22). *South Sudan: Hunger relief in Africa*. Action Against Hunger. www.actionagainsthunger.org/countries/africa/south-sudan.
- Alexander, L. (2020, March 31). *10 facts about health care in Sudan*. The Borgen Project. <https://borgenproject.org/health-care-in-sudan>
- McGinnis, A. (2019, March 9). *Environmental challenges in Sudan*. InfoNile. <https://infonile.org/en/2019/03/environmental-challenges-in-sudan/>.
- Muga, W. (2011, March 18). *Viewpoint: South Sudan jobs for Kenyans and Ugandans*. BBC News. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-12710718>.
- Murenzi, L. (2020). *Water in crisis - Spotlight SUDAN*. The Water Project. <https://thewaterproject.org/water-crisis/water-in-crisis-sudan>
- Reid, K. (2020, June 4). *South Sudan Conflict, HUNGER: Facts, FAQs, and how to help*. World Vision. <https://www.worldvision.org/refugees-news-stories/south-sudan-conflict-facts>.
- Ritchie, H., & Roser, M. (2020, November 28). *Sudan: Energy country profile*. Our World in Data. <https://ourworldindata.org/energy/country/sudan>.
- Sousa, G. (2017, April 25). *The biggest cities In Sudan*. WorldAtlas. <https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/the-biggest-cities-in-sudan.html>.
- Thelwell, K. (2019, December 17). *Top 10 facts about living conditions in Sudan*. The Borgen Project. <https://borgenproject.org/top-10-facts-about-living-conditions-in-sudan/>.
- Wallace, M. (2020). *South Sudan refugee crisis explained*. How to Help Refugees - Aid, Relief and www.unrefugees.org/news/south-sudan-refugee-crisis-explained/.

