



# The famine in South Sudan



## WHAT HAS SOCIETY OF SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL DONE ON THIS SITUATION? Reports from our members in Juba.

### LATEST NEWS

**22<sup>nd</sup> March 2017**

It's not possible for us to visit Juba at the moment because HM Foreign and Commonwealth Office advise against all travel to Juba. As a result, we haven't visited either for the last 3 years. However, our funding partners in Geneva who provide a substantial share of the funds needed by the SVP, have visited in the last few weeks and we expect a full and detailed report soon. In addition, because of our close relationship with our members we are in constant contact through email and Skype almost daily. We are grateful to Patrick Bittar of The Swiss Association of the Friends of Sister Emmanuelle (ASASE) for sending us his initial brief notes on his visit in the last two weeks.

**It is important for us to realise that the onset of famine is exacerbated by the continuing civil unrest.**

*Please be aware that these notes have been quickly translated from French to English.*

1. The country's reserves of hard currencies is NIL: Local prices have escalated in a very violent fashion, especially for all imported goods.
2. Banks are refusing to partake of their \$ and allow NGO's and people to get funds at current rates. They want them to change \$ at official rate. This lack of SSP (South Sudanese Pounds) available is a drag on all work.
3. Petrol has become a scarce resource! Between NOV and JAN the price for 100 litres went up to 12'000.- SSP as some tankers were deviated by militias and sold in CONGO!! Since the price went down to 7'500 SSP, still extremely extensive
4. Since the July clashes, SVDP has been unable to fill its cars at petrol stations. It had to resort to buying on the black market.
5. Water tanks have also become scarce and prices have gone up for same reasons
6. All solar panels on the roads have been stolen and the roads are dark at night
7. Electricity is very haphazard. The Japanese who were active on the infrastructure level (roads, electricity and the bridge near Lologo) have decided to stop and quit.
8. Many NGO's have closed down after the July events for security reasons and for costs as the authorities have decided to tax foreign expatriates.
9. Authorities have also decided to increase landing rights on the few airline still using the Juba airport. Many airlines decided to cancel the flights

However Patrick has been impressed by what SVDP members are doing despite enormous, various and daily difficulties.

He added: The scarcity of food is obvious everywhere: I could see the difference, even in the hotel where I was: I went there two years ago, and now there were not any buffet proposed, and some days, there were no beef and they proposed goat meat instead. Most of Juba inhabitants do with only one meal per day, and it is very often made of local beans. In this context, the resumption three months ago, of the Poultry program (at a small scale for the moment) is very encouraging, as the demand for eggs and chicken is high. The beneficiaries of the Street Children Program (that SVP UK, together with CIAD this year, is funding) could be well nourished with products of the broiler first batch. Also, you can imagine how the well dug last year within the home is useful. And, despite many difficulties encountered with authorities (to get the proper and sole GPS device to set the land boundaries) and local population (after the death of the local chief, they tried to bargain additional things from SVDP), SVDP has finally been able to start erecting the fence of the big agricultural land (120 ha) in Nyarjwa. This agricultural income generating project is also obviously one of the big asset for our local partner in the future.

Incidentally, I can also tell you that I've seen the one and only fire engine of the city... which is out of order.

Among the latest good news, the LOLOGO Center has been chosen by the NGO WorldVision and the World Food Program to implement a program aiming the elderly. They started today by registering the target population, who came within the Center, and they will give them a monthly allocation. According to the persons in charge in WorldVision, the Lologo Center is the best of the few centers where they operate, in terms of security, logistics, organization, links with the community etc

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**Email received 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2017**

Dear Brother Ian,

Greetings and I hope this e-mail finds you well. I have written an attached information about the famine in South Sudan and I am just confirming the reality. The famine is not just in Unity State but the whole Country is affected and the people are surviving at the mercy of God. Detail information are attached and I look forward to any clarification or more information that may be needed by you.

Charles Loboka Lomugun. (President, Juba Central Council)

*The attachment read:*

The Society of Saint Vincent De Paul is doing what it can through the Twinnage and Refugee fund. Conferences are doing their level best to give possible assistance to their beneficiaries in the form of food items, medication, clothing, erection of shelters, counselling, Schooling etc. On the side of Refugees, we have two big camps – Mahad and Kworijik. We provide food items and health education. On 20th of February 2017 at 7.00 pm we received a telephone call from the Mahad camp telling us fire burnt 164 Tents belonging to 164 households, one child of seven years died could not be rescued and

70 sustained injuries from fire burnt, we visited the site and saw it for ourselves. Together with the Community we are looking out for possible ways to get more tents for those whose tents got burnt. Secondly, to see if they can be relocated or not because the space they are occupying belong to School.

Because of the number of reasons mentioned above, many are fleeing daily to Uganda, Kenya, Zaire and some to the capital Juba. Yet the same situation prevails. Worse still children are not able to go to Schools – especially in Juba. Prices are rocketing up daily and salaries are not being paid for three



months and if it comes it cannot sustain the family for two days. How people are surviving in Juba is on the mercy of God.

Meanwhile Unity State – is unsecured, Society cannot reach there event other Humanitarian Organization. The only solution is peace. It is our prayer that Society of Saint Vincent De Paul can also help to play a role of bring peace in South Sudan as it continue to support our Twinnage and Refugees.

TO HELP - PLEASE SEND DONATIONS FOR THE DISASTER FUND.