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Sudan, Conflict and Hunger.

### **Sudan: An approach to end conflict and hunger.**

Poverty has been an ongoing issue that throughout the years has changed in definition. The country of Sudan was established in 1881, it was a growing and prospering country. That was until 1962 when a civil war began, this is when things began taking a turn in a different direction. One of the main reasons for poverty across Sudan is conflict. Conflict destroys lands and towns, creating food insecurity which leads to poverty. Poverty and hunger in Sudan cost millions of innocent lives over many years. Poverty is not only affecting millions of people in Sudan but also millions of people around the world and will continue to do so until solutions are fabricated and tailored to each region. My goal is to contribute to the abolishment of poverty. As a result, to minimize and end poverty so that people from all over will experience less food insecurity.

In order to combat the issues that its people are faced with one must understand the demographics of a country. Sudan is a country with a population of 43.85 million people with 35% of the population living in urban areas and 64.75% residing in rural areas. (“Sudan Population (2022)”) Sudan currently has 20 million hectares of land that is cultivated which is equivalent to 49,420,176 acres which totals about 13% of their land. Sudan also has religions, 91% of Sudan’s people are Muslim, 5.4 % are Christian, and 2.8% follow folk religions. Sudan has a Presidential Republic leadership and a government of Executive, Judicial, and Legislative branches just like America. This helps keep things in order but still can lead to conflict, which is not healthy for Sudan. Sudan is a one-party country and given the pattern, will never be more than a one-party country.

Families in Sudan have many roles per family member, for a young Sudanese, their schooling only lasts from ages six through thirteen. As they grow older they will get a job in agriculture, industry, commerce, or in government offices. These young individuals will work to be paid minimum wage. The minimum wage is 3,000 Sudanese pounds a month which is equal to \$6.75 in American currency which is barely enough to buy seeds for growing crops, food, or healthcare with prices so high. (“Minimum wage - Sudan”) Women in Sudan are isolated to their homes as housekeepers, while the men work in agriculture. Sudanese were once known as smart, educated people. Sadly, during the years of instability and conflicts, the education system dwindled and many of the very talented people fled the country because there were no chances for skilled people to prosper in Sudan. The salaries for skilled workers in Sudan are very poor and political loyalty is the main measure for creating a successful career.

Mandy Moore recounts her visit to Sudan: “In 2009, I traveled to South Sudan with my organization PSI. While there, I visited a local school and met with a group of children who had formed a water club. The group learned about how to treat their drinking water and use proper hygiene practices, such as washing their hands before eating or after going to the bathroom.”- Mandy Moore, an actress who visited Sudan with her organization. (Moore) In Sudan, only 68% of Sudanese have access to clean water, 93% don’t have toilets, and only 53% have little electricity. Only a small 14% of the Sudanese population have healthcare because it is so overpriced and understaffed. There are only 23 healthcare workers per 10,000 people in Sudan. This leaves so many sick or injured people without treatment or enough treatment, which causes them to suffer or die. Sudan has a tropical climate so it is 64 degrees or higher year round so it

never really gets cold, and the country has a geography that mostly includes mountains and hills that suddenly rise from deserts and clay plains. Sudanese normally grow their food, hunt, or pick fruit off of trees as their source of energy or ways to get food. Sudanese have access to very little amounts of land to grow their own food. On average, they have a typical farm size of 0.4 hectares - 1.7 hectares which is the equivalent to 0.98 acres - 4.2 acres in American measurements to grow crops. Major crops grown are cotton, peanuts (groundnuts), sesame, gum arabic, millet, sorghum, and sugarcane. A typical family of five or six would get small rations of for each day, if they get lucky. Sudan also produces commodities to export for revenue such as petroleum, livestock, cotton, gum arabic, sorghum, and sugarcane. The typical family diet consists of aseeda dukun, gum arabic, peanuts, and flatbread which they cook over a fire with large pots. Although not common, sometimes they get to indulge in small rations of sugarcane. The Sudanese normally share their meals inside their homes which are round clay yurts with sticks and straw that form the roofs over their heads. Families build these yurts themselves because they don't have the financial means to pay for contractors to build it for them. There are roughly 115 languages spoken in Sudan, but the official language of the Sudanese people is Arabic. ("Sudan: Information on whether Nuba is a language or dialect and whether it is spoken only in the Sudan" 1) Unfortunately, it is common for Sudanese families to experience many barriers, these include: minimal access to food, unlivable wages, unusable land, poor education, and basic humanitarian services.

Sudanese face challenges such as lack of sustainable agriculture practices which affects their ability to effectively grow crops and raise livestock, contaminated water supply, poor sanitation practices which affect their ability to stay healthy and maintain healthy hygiene habits, and lastly, conflict, which destroys their land so they can't grow crops. "The extremely high levels of hunger across South Sudan are caused entirely by man-made conflict," says Simon Cammelbeek, WFP's Acting Country Director in Sudan. ("Conflict pushes South Sudanese into hunger – more than 6 million people face desperate food shortages") (North) Sudan's ally, Egypt, aids them when they are at war with South Sudan states, such as, Lakes, Jonglei, upper Nile, and Western Bahr El Ghazal, (North) Sudan's mortal enemies. It is a constant power struggle within these Sudan states because of the political elite who manipulated ethnic divisions and grievances. Ethnic divisions and grievances hurt Sudan in many ways as they create inner conflict among the states of Sudan. These issues destroy everything that the Sudanese have worked for or repaired. Sudan leaders felt as if others had done them wrong, this is what led them to war in 2013. (Aufiero) These problems affected Sudan by destroying their land, polluting the soil, and filling water sources with metals and toxic materials which leads to difficulty growing crops profitably. As a result, they end up with less food to supply to their family and less income because they can not sell any of the crops that they do grow as they barely have enough to feed their families.

Action Against Hunger is an organization that saves the lives of malnourished children. They ensure everyone can access clean water, food, training and healthcare. These topics are so severe that over 6 million people are affected world wide. Everyone battles pests, droughts, and floods around the world and on an everyday basis. Pest, droughts, and floods are some of the main causes of food scarcity not only in Sudan but all around the world. Pests live off of and eat the crops resulting in the crop diminishing, floods drown and destroy the crops, and droughts leave the crops with no way to get nutrients. As a result, there is little or no food for the Sudanese to harvest, sell, or provide to them or their families to eat. Which then leaves no food for families and their children whom it affects the most. A child dies of hunger related causes every 10 seconds because of the incapability to grow plants because of pests, floods, and droughts. In turn, this leaves women, men, and elderly with nowhere to turn to provide for their families resulting in people feeling stressed which is not good for their mental health nor physical health.

Morgan Brittany, an actor that once visited Sudan stated, "I played with a real nasty little girl but most of the roles I had up until then were very sweet and very nice." Most Sudanese families suffer from malnutrition, lack of hygiene, health care and hunger. Sudanese don't have good hygiene practices because they don't have access to running water, let alone clean water. "My daughter was dying," says Achoc in Maluakon, a village in Northern Bahr El Ghazal, South Sudan. Atong, now one year old, suffered from pneumonia because, according to her mother, she was born outside and exposed to the elements of the wind. (Arango) They only have the rivers that are nearby but the Nile river is full of toxic chemicals that the government pollutes which is not healthy so they have to rely on other sources to supply them with water. Food security not only affects the people of Sudan but the environment too. The environment is negatively affected by pollution, causing water shortages, affecting fish and aquatic plants, and causing soil erosion. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations is an organization that provides food and healthcare to people all around the world to promote sustainable agriculture. They do their best to help everyone around the world with poverty but poverty and hunger are worsening. Trends are not appearing to get better and require urgent action or millions of people's lives are at risk.

Sudan is in need of multiple things but mostly in need of hunger and conflict to end. My main goal is to help get Sudan and its people out of poverty and get them back on their feet so they can live more comfortable lives. I have come up with three solutions to hopefully prevent/ stop hunger and conflict in Sudan. The first thing I would like to address is flooding because it causes the crops to be killed which then causes hunger because the Sudanese can't harvest the crops to feed themselves or their families. Sudanese have always had a problem with flooding that has wiped out their crops again and again so I have come up with a solution that could save their lands and so many crops. We could build levees to stop floods from taking out the Sudanese crops and land. Some pros to building levees are less flooding, more available land for habitation, inexpensive to build, they provide protection from invaders, and they provide a waterway for fertile soil from the river to be used for agriculture, they also would help protect the greenhouses that I have suggested we start to build. Now just like other things everything has disadvantages and some disadvantages to building levees are they can fail and flood areas but they do not fail often, and they can increase water speed which then can cause erosion. Levees have more physical advantages than disadvantages which is good because levees also require low management and last for decades. Conflict is the next topic that I would like to address because it is the main reason that Sudan is in poverty. Sudan gets into a lot of wars which then leads to their lands being destroyed which then means they can't grow or produce their crops. Sudan fights over land with other countries because they need it for herding, growing crops, and building homes for their population that is rapidly growing everyday. My solution would be to set land boundaries and for the Sudanese government to talk to other countries' leaders about trading for land, food, or other supplies. The pros are that everyone is content, it limits physical contact between nearby nationalities of countries, and land owners know where their properties lie and they don't have to worry about anyone taking their land. As well as the levees, the conflict terms have some disadvantages to which are they can be crossed, and they may change over time. Sudan leaders would need to come up with an approximate manner to get all of their enemies to meet so they can have a meeting over the topic. My third and final solution/ recommendation that I would like to address is over crops and how they are destroyed by pests. In Sudan, because pests destroy so many Sudanese crops, if the floods or droughts don't destroy them first, we could build green houses. So, if we could build greenhouses they would grow Sudanese crops so pests and floods don't destroy their crops. Some pros are they can provide crops all year round, no pests eating crops, correct temperature for crops to grow correctly, and plenty of sun. Greenhouses also provide a proper climate for crop production. Greenhouses

will grow normal sudaneese crops such as cotton, peanuts (groundnuts), sesame, gum arabic, millet, sorghum, and sugarcane as well as some fruits and vegetables that we could send some seeds that we could teach them to grow. Some disadvantages are they can tend to be really expensive to build and heat. To provide heat we could use solar panels and wire them into heat lamps or air conditioning units then connect or put them in the greenhouses. These three solutions would help with over ninety percent of the country's needs with growing crops, hunger, and conflict.

Nonprofits such as Mercy Corps, Peace Corps, Thirst project, and Water for South Sudan would mostly manage this project along with help from partnerships, crowdfunding, and donations which would help to fund the project. Mercy Corps humanitarians are already in place in Sudan, with a small shift on their focus, they could begin to address these problems in order to create solutions for the people of Sudan. We would need to get a team from the peace corps to teach the sudaneese people to communicate and effectively address the problems at hand with their government in order to work towards their solution. We could also have the Thirst Project help us, their mission is to build a socially-conscious generation of young people who will help end the global water crisis. They do this by educating students about it and activating them. Also to build real water projects all over the world. Water for South Sudan partners with the villages and people they serve. They teach availability of water, coupled with basic hygiene information. The result is a village renewed by their own efforts and people that have new freedoms to change their lives, without the worries of polluted water. Sudanese people have many cultural norms that we organizations and volunteers will have to be aware of when interacting with them.. Sudanese often show behaviors of resilience, self-restraint and physical courage. Even when they are hurting, the people of Sudan will hide behind these behaviors to mask the trials and pain they experience.

As to how I would suggest the Sudanese people begin implementing the plans I have described, I would suggest that we send a group of people that specialize in areas such as analytics, communications, land issues, and environmental specialists to help the sudaneese leaders understand how these ideas can help get Sudan out of poverty. We could also suggest to the sudaneese how building greenhouses could help them grow crops and get more food for their familys or for them to market and sell to make money. As to explain why we want to build levees or how we are going to start the process we could show them the equipment and construction plans on what we wish to do, as well as tell them that we want to build the levees to help stop flooding so they don't have to worry if their crops or homes are going to be ruined. This project can also be very sustainable if the Sudanese set some laws in order to take care of the things they have, take care of the land, and not destroy it by getting into more wars. It also makes them appropriate for this solution because they are low maintenance and the sudaneese people would have to do very little learning to build and maintain these it is easy, affordable useful, and sustainable. Although greenhouses may require more maintenance, it will not be hard to show and teach the sudaneese people how to maintain the greenhouses. Various non-profits would be crucial to implementing my plan by helping to communicate with the government to get these ideas in motion and begin building to make Sudan a better place and stop hunger and conflict for good.

In conclusion, poverty has been an ongoing issue throughout the years. Greenhouses, levees, and the utilization of the non profits previously mentioned in Sudan are three solutions/ recommendations that will help end poverty, hunger, and conflict in Sudan. These problems are costing millions of innocent lives but there is hope that things will get better. These options are not only affordable but efficient and will hopefully make Sudan a better place. I've come to discover that Sudan is a country which, once it gets hold of you, does not let go and I hope for the better to come for Sudan. Poverty is not only affecting millions of people in Sudan but also millions of people around the world and will continue to do so until

solutions are fabricated and tailored to each region. Studies have shown that by 2030 the poverty rate will increase by 63% if we don't do something to stop it right now. Bringing an end to poverty will also help bring an end to hunger and lack of basic necessities. A world with little to no hunger can positively impact our economies, health, education, equality and social development. I will do anything in my power to help organizations and leaders around the world to put an end to poverty in Sudan as well as many other countries around the world.

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