

Action Update- October 5

The Work Of Our Hands: Responding to Compound Crises in South Sudan



*Let your work be manifest to your servants, and your glorious power to their children.
Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us, and prosper for us the work of our hands--
O prosper the work of our hands! ~Psalm 90:16-17*

In South Sudan, a major protracted humanitarian crisis is unfolding, with nearly

70% of the population in need of urgent assistance. Tens of thousands of people are living in famine-like conditions and malnutrition is at critical levels, while more than 7 million are food insecure.

Multiple factors are contributing to the ongoing crisis of food security in the region: needs brought about by prolonged conflict, floods, desert locusts, and the ongoing economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic combine to cause widespread suffering. The situation has further deteriorated since April 2021, as 2.2 million people have had to leave their homes and live as refugees in neighboring countries. This is truly a crisis of compound disasters, with people affected by these complex events facing unmet vital needs.

Week of Compassion partners are responding to reach a target of 90,000 people with immediate food assistance; education; protection (particularly from sexual and gender-based violence); livelihood support; sanitation and hygiene; shelter; and cash support. Internally displaced people are particularly vulnerable at this time, so support for that population remains a high priority.

Around the world, Week of Compassion partners have long-term, on-ground experience and established coordination and networking mechanisms within local communities. Those long standing relationships are priceless when it comes to responding to a crisis of this magnitude. Implementing partners in South Sudan are well-versed in the local context and have the capacity to reach the most vulnerable groups throughout the region. The trust our partners have earned over time enables

them to respond effectively in even the hard-to-reach communities.

Households most affected by the floods will receive cash support to help rebuild their homes. The aim is to “build back better,” constructing stable shelters that are more weather-resistant and higher up off the ground. Improved construction will make these homes more durable and more likely to withstand future floods and other disasters.

In the midst of response to flooding and other crises, food remains among the most urgent needs. In fact, the country now faces the highest levels of food insecurity in its history. By working alongside and building the capacity of local communities, our partners in South Sudan work toward greater sustainability of life-saving interventions to promote long-term food security.

These community-based responses build resilience and capacity over time. Locally led programs are more sustainable and enable communities to recover more quickly following the impact of future disasters. Much like the improved construction practices, local food security programs address immediate needs while also establishing a foundation for a more stable future.

From floods and locusts to pandemic and widespread displacement, the factors that contribute to such suffering often seem insurmountable. ***But your support for Week of Compassion helps our partners to implement multi-faceted programs in communities facing immense challenges.*** As the Body of Christ, our activity in the world has the power to transform even the most desperate situations, enacting hope and bringing about new life. We lift up the prayer of the psalmist, that God might “prosper the work of our hands” and that this one Body be moved to feed the masses, proclaiming the goodness of God. May Christ’s loving compassion be made manifest in the generosity of our wider Church.

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Week of Compassion is the relief, refugee and development mission fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada.

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