

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

Development 2024



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ABOUT US

Solidarity is a project of UISG and USG, both the female and male Unions of Superiors General, initiated at the request of the Conference of Bishops of Sudan, supported by over 260 congregations, private donors and international agencies with funding, personnel, and expertise.

Together, congregations work in harmony to accompany and empower the people of South Sudan helping to heal the wounds caused by the armed conflict, and walking together towards a better future. In all of our projects and initiatives, we endeavour to prevent gender violence and we are particularly careful to ensure that South Sudanese women and girls have equal access to education and training.



OUR VISION

Solidarity with South Sudan envisions a just, peaceful and inclusive South Sudan where all people and communities are empowered to lead and develop themselves and their country along with the local church as an active participant in this transformation.

OUR MISSION

Solidarity empowers, equips and accompanies people in South Sudan with a focus on women to become dedicated, service-oriented practitioners in primary education, health, agriculture and pastoral services throughout the country. In doing this, Solidarity continues to collaborate with the Sudan and South Sudan Catholic Bishops' Conference.

By developing capacities in people and institutions, Solidarity aims to create a sustainable future in which the people of South Sudan become agents of change in their society, living and promoting the values of the Gospel.

As an inter-congregational collaborative commitment, Solidarity promotes harmonious intercultural living, witnessing to the Gospel.



Message from the **PRESIDENT**

The Synod on Synodality, currently shaping the global Church, centres on three key aspects: communion, participation, and mission. These elements are not just theological ideas but practical guidelines for the Church's work today. Since its inception, the Solidarity with South Sudan project has embodied and promoted these principles. This 2023 report demonstrates how the project continues to nurture communion, encourage participation, and drive its mission in one of the world's most challenging contexts.

Communion, within the framework of Solidarity with South Sudan, is the profound connection that unites people from diverse backgrounds in a shared mission. The project has become a beacon of hope, bridging distances and cultural differences. This report highlights the project's success in fostering unity, working hand in hand with local communities and international partners to build understanding and cooperation. The efforts of our team on the ground, supported by the prayers and resources of many, are a powerful testimony to communion in action.

Participation is central to the Solidarity with South Sudan project. The initiative has consistently emphasized the importance of involving all stakeholders in decision-making, from local leaders and communities to international donors and religious congregations. This inclusive approach ensures that the project remains responsive to the genuine needs of the people it serves.

The Annual Report 2023 offers numerous examples of how participation has been realized through collaborative efforts, shared responsibilities, and the active involvement of local communities in shaping the project's direction and priorities.



Message from the **PRESIDENT**

Mission, the third aspect of Synodality, is the driving force behind everything that Solidarity with South Sudan does. The project's mission goes beyond immediate relief; it aims to empower communities to build a sustainable future. In 2023, this mission was evident in ongoing efforts to provide education, healthcare, sustainable farming and food security, women empowerment, peace building and pastoral support in South Sudan. The report highlights progress in these areas and the challenges that remain as the project strives to bring lasting change to the lives of the South Sudanese people.

We extend our deep gratitude to all those who make this mission possible: the institutions and the agencies that offer unwavering support, the religious congregations committed to sending some of their finest members, and especially our brothers and sisters in South Sudan, who bring the project to life each day with their dedication and resilience. Special thanks go to Father Jim Greene, MAfr, who will complete his time as Executive Director in March after two consecutive three-year terms. Father Jim has led the project with remarkable generosity and dedication, and we are profoundly grateful for his service. Lastly, we remember with deep affection Father David Gentry, who completed his role as Mission Promoter in June and sadly passed away in August. We thank God for the gift of Father David's life and commend him to the tender care of the Virgin Mary. His kindness, commitment, and unwavering support were the hallmarks of his life and work.

Fraternally,
Emili Turú, President

Message from the **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**



While this report is intended to give information about the year 2023, I would like to focus on some of our plans for the future.

In December 2023, the Annual Assembly of Solidarity, held in Rome, endorsed the Strategic Plan for 2023 to 2027. A large part of this plan is about consolidating and deepening the achievements made by Solidarity in the past. It speaks about strengthening the links between Solidarity and the member congregations worldwide and especially with USG/UISG. It aims to enhance the links with the South Sudan Bishops conference and the local church. Sustainability is a significant theme in the plan, recognizing the importance having institutions that are well established, managed by professionally trained local personnel and that are financially durable. In all this, there is a lot of important work that remains to be done.

There are some new initiatives foreseen in the plan as well. Regarding the training of primary school teachers, the plan asks that we put more emphasis on the training of existing primary school teachers countrywide. In the past there were initiatives in Bor and Old Fangok, among other places. Presently, there is a well-established Inservice program in Yambio. Now we wish to launch a program in Wau, which we hope will run for a number of years. This proposal follows on from a recent Diocesan Pastoral Synod there that prioritized education and the support of teachers in the diocese. Wau is also the second largest city in South Sudan with a large number of primary schools, all within reachable distance for teachers who will teach in their schools in the morning and receive formation in the afternoons.

Message from the **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**



Another plan, also based in Wau, concerns the Catholic Health Training Institute (CHTI). Presently, we offer a well-regarded diploma in Nursing and another in Midwifery, with about 40 students graduating every year. As part of the development of the Health service in South Sudan, we would now like to offer an optional degree program in nursing and midwifery. The idea is still at an early stage, but shows how needs are changing in this country, 13 years after independence. This is a natural progression and one that we wish to be part of.

One enduring challenge within Solidarity is the finding of competent and experienced personnel to support the developing nature of this inter-congregational initiative. In 2019, when I became Executive Director, we had no serving member from the Indian subcontinent, although previously there had been. Now there are six members. There were three African members working in Solidarity at that time, now there are nine. We have new international and regional congregations offering personnel, while some of the established members had to reluctantly reduce their commitment. All this is part of the evolving nature of Solidarity, and is something to be welcomed as it contributes to an ever-enriching diversity. To both new congregations and those who have been committed over the years, we ask for your continued support. While finances are always important and necessary, the lifeblood of any religious initiative is the personnel who serve. We continue to be in need of your support.

Fr Jim Greene, M.Afr.

PROJECTS in SOUTH SUDAN



**Sustainable Agricultural Project
(Riimenze)**

**Solidarity Teachers Training
College (Yambio)**



**Catholic Health Training Institute
(Wau)**



**Pastoral Project
(all around South Sudan)**

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL PROJECT

Riimenze is located in Western Equatoria State, a highly fertile area of South Sudan with immense potential for agricultural endeavors. Despite its agricultural promise, the area remains underdeveloped due to recurring armed conflicts, frequent flooding, and the subsequent displacement of people.

The Sustainable Agricultural Project (SAP-R) in Riimenze primarily aims to secure livelihoods. The farm itself employs approximately 20 permanent workers, and numerous temporary workers from nearby communities. It provides income and training opportunity, especially for women. Workshops on farm planning, seeding, plant and environmental protection, crop rotation, propagation, post-harvest handling, livestock, marketing, and micro-enterprise startup are conducted for local growers. Over half of the workshop participants are women.

SAP-R also operates a nutrition program targeting women and their children to prevent and combat child malnutrition through improved nutrition practices and optimized agricultural and household resource utilization. A new multi-year phase began in 2024; by 2027, the project aims to enhance the dietary habits of 810 families, comprising 3,240 children, totaling 4,050 direct and indirect beneficiaries who will have balanced daily home meals.

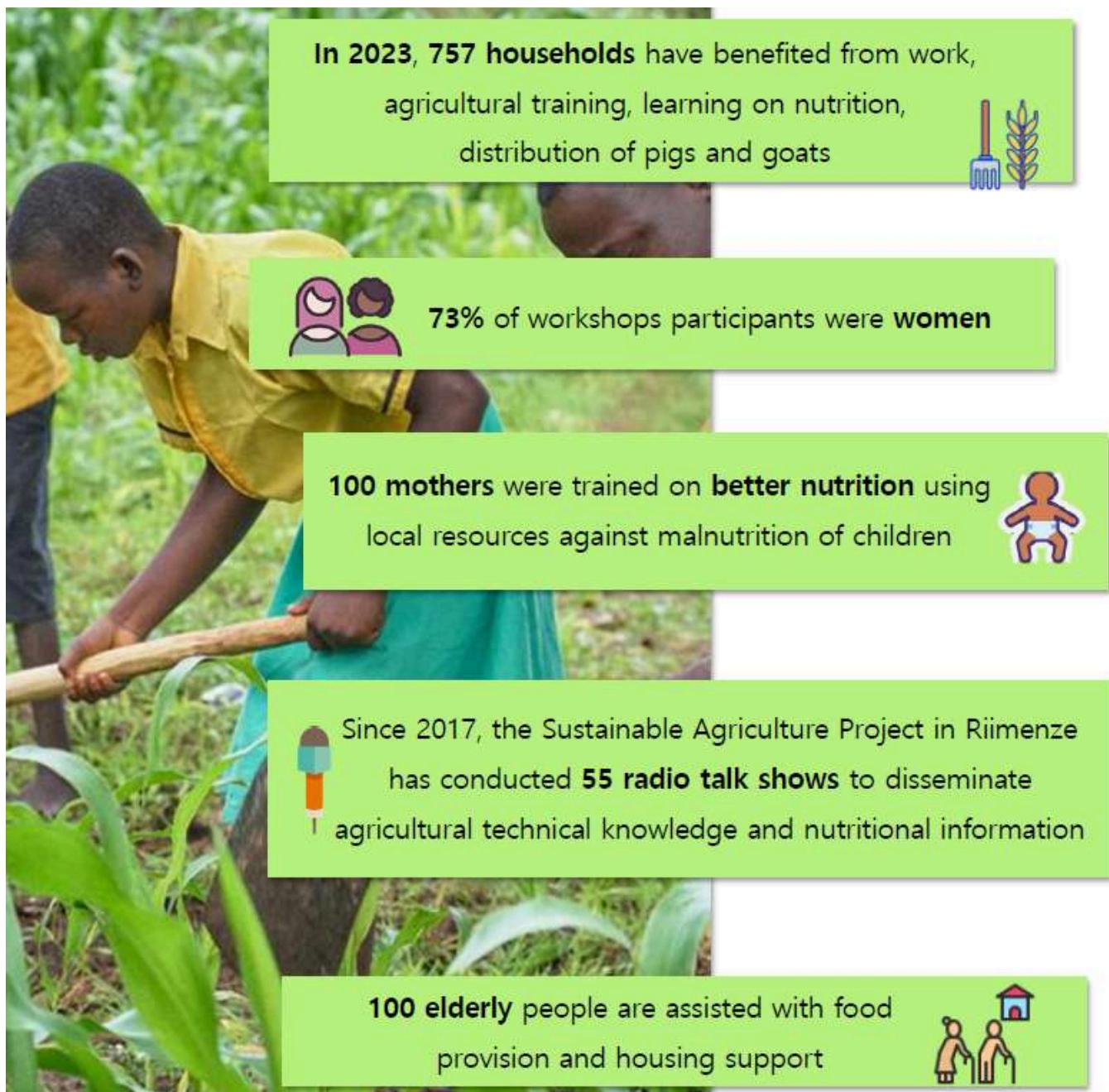
Additionally, bi-monthly radio talk shows disseminate agricultural technical knowledge and information on good nutrition and hygiene practices to the broader public.

The food from the Riimenze farm is also sold to the Solidarity Teacher Training College in Yambio to support student nutrition.

The Solidarity Sustainable Agricultural Project main goal is to enhance the livelihood opportunities of the smallholder households in Western Equatoria State, South Sudan, who have been affected by the post war situations and internal conflicts in South Sudan, ensuring environmentally friendly approaches and contributing to environmental protection.

The environmentally friendly approach is based on the implementation of climate-smart farming methods and controlled integrated breeding.

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL PROJECT



In 2023, 757 households have benefited from work, agricultural training, learning on nutrition, distribution of pigs and goats



73% of workshops participants were **women**



100 mothers were trained on **better nutrition** using local resources against malnutrition of children



Since 2017, the Sustainable Agriculture Project in Riimenze has conducted **55 radio talk shows** to disseminate agricultural technical knowledge and nutritional information



100 elderly people are assisted with food provision and housing support



SOLIDARITY TEACHERS TRAINING COLLEGE



The Solidarity Teacher Training College (STTC) in Yambio, the capital of Western Equatoria State, is a community dedicated to fostering the next generation of teachers.

The STTC curriculum is designed to equip students with the essential skills for effective teaching, encompassing professional studies, English, mathematics, science, social studies, Christian religious education, physical and health education, and art and music.

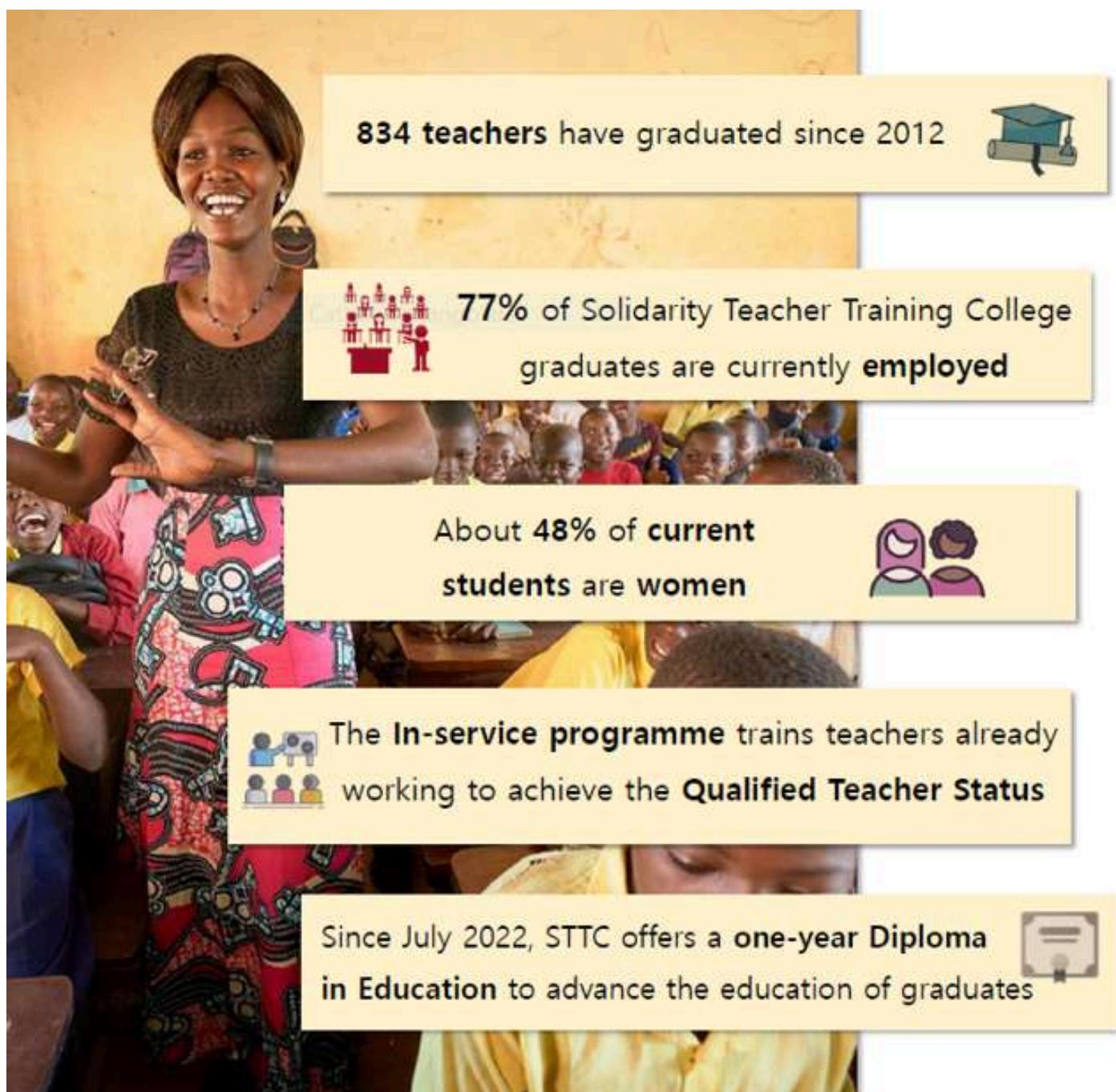
The STTC offers tailored courses to meet the diverse needs of aspiring educators. The Pre-service course, a two-year residential program, is ideal for young students seeking to become primary school teachers. Students undergo rigorous academic training, including semester examinations and a final assessment, culminating in a nationally recognized primary school teaching certificate. Upon graduation, students complete a two-month internship in local primary schools. Notably, 48% of the STTC student body is female, reflecting a significant step towards gender equality in education.

The In-Service course is designed for teachers who are already employed in primary schools but lack formal qualifications. This non-residential program ensures consistent study materials for all participants.

The STTC student community is a microcosm of South Sudan, representing a diverse range of regions and cultural backgrounds. The college is committed to fostering peaceful coexistence and promoting understanding among different tribal groups. The international tutor community plays a crucial role in cultivating a positive model of unity, collaboration, and mutual enrichment.

In July 2022, the STTC launched a new one-year Diploma program, further enhancing the qualifications of its graduates. This program is open to both STTC alumni and tutors from other training institutions with equivalent certifications. In June 2023, the first cohort of 15 students successfully completed the Diploma program.

SOLIDARITY TEACHERS TRAINING COLLEGE



834 teachers have graduated since 2012 

77% of Solidarity Teacher Training College graduates are currently **employed** 

About 48% of current students are women 

The In-service programme trains teachers already working to achieve the **Qualified Teacher Status** 

Since July 2022, STTC offers a **one-year Diploma in Education** to advance the education of graduates 

CATHOLIC HEALTH TRAINING INSTITUTE



The Catholic Health Training Institute (CHTI) in Wau has been a cornerstone of healthcare education in South Sudan since 2010.

Offering Diploma programs in Nursing (RN) and Midwifery (RM), CHTI provides students with three years of rigorous academic training and clinical experience. Graduates emerge as skilled professionals prepared to meet the critical healthcare needs of their country.

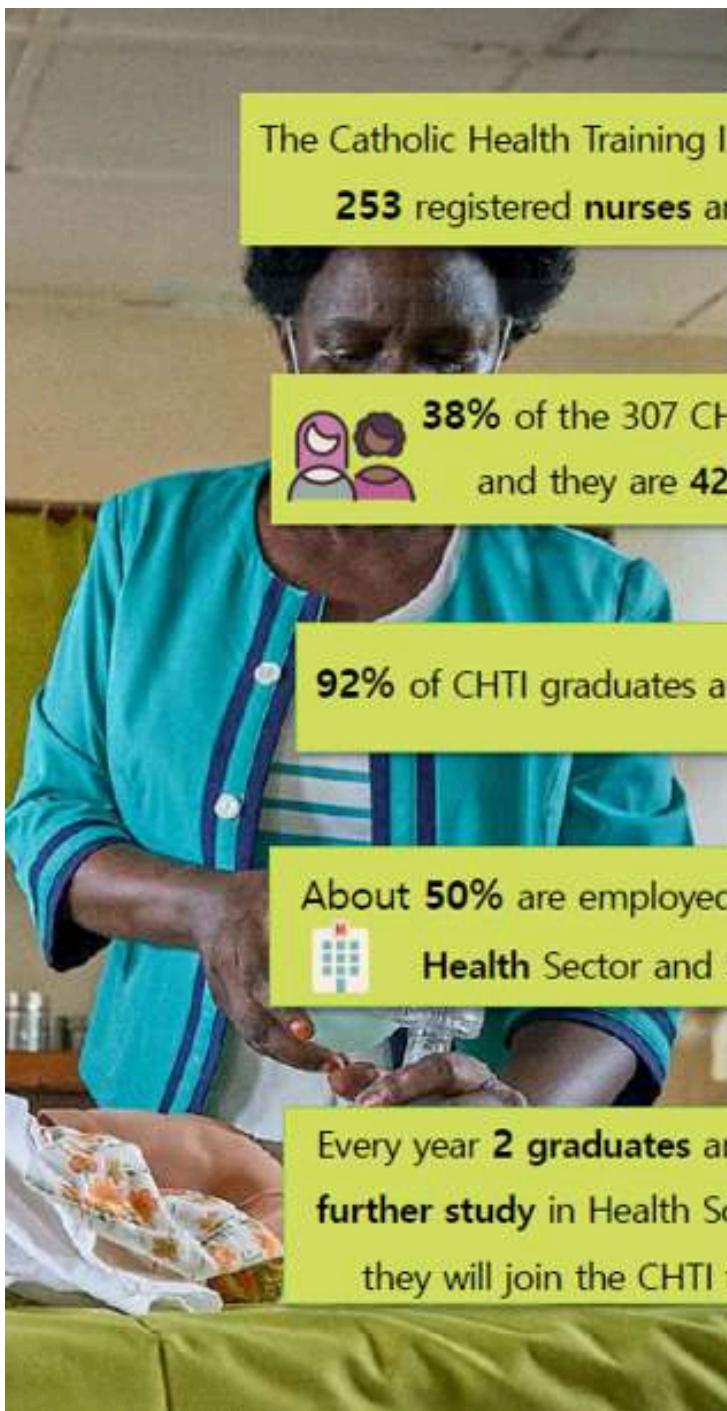
South Sudan faces a pressing shortage of qualified nurses and midwives, making CHTI's contribution invaluable. The institute's curriculum is aligned with the Ministry of Health's priorities, ensuring that graduates are equipped to deliver high-quality care. CHTI graduates constitute a substantial 22% of South Sudan's healthcare workforce, with 92% currently employed in public and private facilities, Mission Hospitals or healthrelated NGOs.

Despite the challenges posed by ongoing conflicts, CHTI has remained steadfast in its commitment to education. Its resilience and dedication have earned it widespread respect within the local and regional communities. CHTI's commitment to serving people of all ethnicities and faiths during the struggle for independence has solidified its reputation as a beacon of hope.

CHTI attracts students from across South Sudan, fostering a sense of community and preparing them for their future roles. The institute's annual workshops on topics such as interpersonal relationships, conflict resolution, and trauma healing reinforce the importance of building a harmonious and resilient society.

CHTI actively encourages women to pursue healthcare careers, recognizing the transformative impact they can have on individuals, families, and the nation as a whole. While the current female enrollment stands at 42%, the institute aims to increase this percentage and further empower women in the healthcare sector.

CATHOLIC HEALTH TRAINING INSTITUTE



The Catholic Health Training Institute has graduated
253 registered **nurses** and **140** midwives



38% of the 307 CHTI graduates are **women**
and they are **42%** of current students



92% of CHTI graduates are currently **employed**



About **50%** are employed in the **Public and Private**
Health Sector and **50%** in **Mission Hospitals**



Every year **2** graduates are sent abroad for
further study in Health Science. At the end
they will join the CHTI team, as tutors



PASTORAL PROJECT

The Solidarity with South Sudan Pastoral Team is headquartered at the aptly named Good Shepherd Peace Center (GSPC) in Kit. This international, inter-congregational team is dedicated to empowering South Sudanese people through pastoral programs that promote justice and peace.

The Center offers retreats, ongoing formation for priests, and training for catechists, with a particular focus on families, women, young people, and children.

Through committed lay people, diocesan priests, and religious, the local Church is actively engaged in supporting victims of displacement and fostering trauma healing and reconciliation within affected communities. The Solidarity Pastoral Team works closely with the National South Sudanese Pastoral Coordinator to enhance the skills of diocesan Pastoral Directors and their teams.

The Solidarity Pastoral Team plays a vital role in the ongoing formation (OGF) of clergy, religious, and lay men and women, emphasizing Catholic Social Teaching and the African Synod. By investing in the local Church, the team recognizes its unique capacity to initiate a process of cultural and spiritual transformation that embraces, protects, promotes, and integrates diverse ethnic identities.

The pastoral team's reach extends to all seven dioceses in South Sudan: Juba, Wau, Bentiu-Malakal, Yei, Torit, Tombura-Yambio, and Rumbek. Their work is making a tangible impact on communities throughout the country.

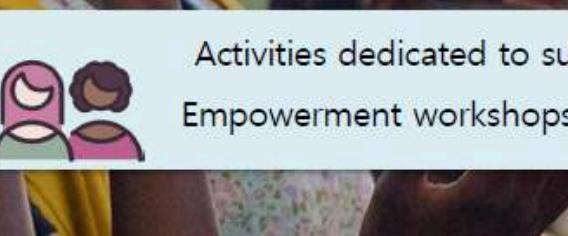
PASTORAL PROJECT



Trauma healing workshops and training of facilitators, in response to the needs of a population affected by years of conflict: **3633** participants

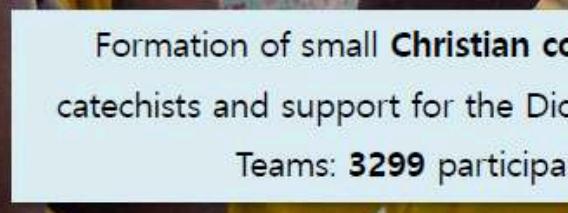


Peace-building and Youth activities centred on empowerment, leadership and reconciliation



Activities dedicated to supporting **women**.

Empowerment workshops: **3280** participants



Formation of small **Christian communities**, catechists and support for the Diocesan Pastoral Teams: **3299** participants



3880 religious **men** and **women** conducted their **retreats** and moments of prayer in the **Good Shepherd Peace Center** in Kit

STRATEGIC PLAN

2023-2027

As outlined in the book “Collaborative Mission in South Sudan – towards a new paradigm”, three phases have evolved in the development of Solidarity with South Sudan.

- Initial Phase: Corresponding to the period of Patricia Murray IBVM as Executive Director based in Rome, from 2009 – 2013, was one of pioneering and rapid establishment with political stability in South Sudan and a steady stream of religious and lay volunteers.
- Phase Two: Corresponding to the period of Bill Firman, FSC as Executive Director who was based in South Sudan from 2014 to early 2019. This was one of steering Solidarity’s activities during a time of violence and civil war in South Sudan, but was aided by the presence of a stable number of religious present in the country and the commitment of their sending congregations.
- Third Phase: Corresponding to the period of Jim Greene, M.Afr. as Executive Director based in South Sudan from April 2019 and continuing, is one marked by a fragile transitional political accord in the country, co-existing with ongoing sub-national conflict and violence. This period saw the continued development of the Catholic church in South Sudan with the appointment of six new Bishops to lead their Dioceses and the continued greater participation of international congregations in the life of the church.

Currently, there are 51 congregations present in the country. COVID impeded the development of many of Solidarity’s activities resulting in the temporary closure of three of its four projects between 2020-2021. There has been an increased transition in Solidarity membership with the last two sisters of the pioneering group leaving the country in July 2023. Currently the longest standing member of Solidarity arrived in January 2019. This has led to a certain diminishment of institutional memory and an increasing need to recruit new members from international congregations.

The aim of the new strategic plan is to guide the next phase of Solidarity’s development within the parameters of the existing MoU with the Bishops Conference which will come to a conclusion in 2027.

2023 IN REVIEW

Total Income 2023

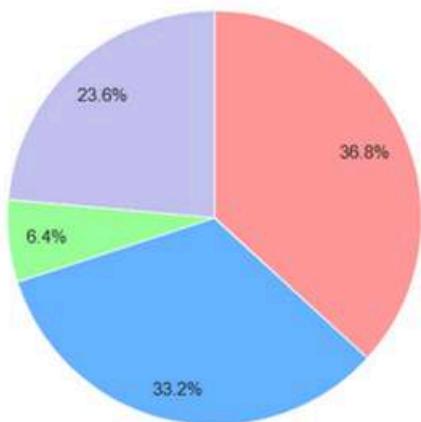
\$ 2.135.207

Total Expenditure 2023

\$ 1.951.778

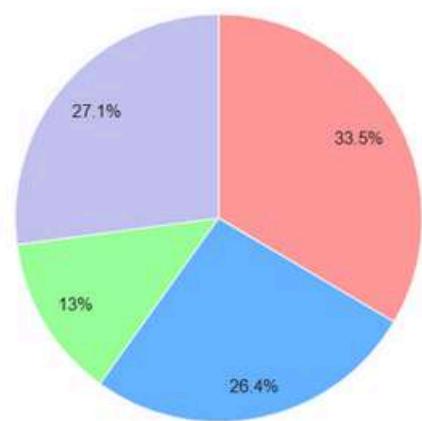


Breakdown Income 2023



- CHTI
- STTC
- Pastoral + Juba office
- SAP

Breakdown Expenditure 2023



SPECIAL THANKS



Solidarity's greatest achievement lies in its commitment to living up to its name by accompanying the people of South Sudan. This impact is evident at the individual level. Through workshops and training, participants have not only acquired professional skills as teachers, farmers, catechists, nurses, and midwives, but also essential life skills that benefit their personal and family lives. They have expressed gratitude for learning valuable qualities from Solidarity Community members, such as commitment, patience, cooperation, and punctuality.

In one of the world's most fragile regions, Solidarity has been a steadfast companion to the people of South Sudan. A representative of the Diocese of Tombura-Yambio aptly stated, "The highest award we can give Solidarity is their unwavering presence. They chose to stay, demonstrating their commitment and sacrifice, and putting into action the gospel values that they claim to uphold." We could only have achieved these results with your generous support!

For this reason, thanks again!

HOW TO SUPPORT US



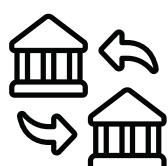
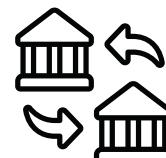
PAYPAL

https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=SS4KCG2T3W3TU



BANK TRANSFERS IN EUROS

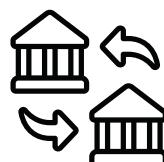
Account name: Solidarity Projects Italy ONLUS-ETS
IBAN IT22 P030 6909 6061 0000 0066 112
Swift code BCITITMM



BANK TRANSFERS IN USD
Account name: Solidarity Projects Italy ONLUS-ETS
IBAN IT28 K030 6909 6061 6100 9358 110
Swift code BCITITMM

BANK TRANSFERS IN GBP

Account name: Solidarity Projects Ltd
IBAN GB49 HBUK 4040 1001 569 856
Account nbr 569 856
Sort code 40-40-10



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