



NEWS RELEASE

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THE WORLD MUST DO MORE FOR SOUTH SUDAN SAYS CHRISTIAN AID AS FAMINE IS DECLARED

- Humanitarian catastrophe escalating as world watches
- Resilient South Sudanese have 'exhausted their coping mechanisms'

The international community must do more to resolve the crisis in South Sudan, Christian Aid has warned following the declaration of famine in parts of the country.

The famine – the world's first since 2011 – was formally announced on Monday in parts of Unity State, where some 100,000 people are facing starvation. A further 1 million are classified as being on the brink of famine.

Without immediate action, the crisis will continue to claim lives.

Speaking from Juba, Christian Aid's South Sudan country manager Rosie Crowther said: 'For many, many months Christian Aid and our local partners have been sounding the alarm about the escalating humanitarian catastrophe here in South Sudan. Our worst fears have now become a devastating reality.

'After more than three years of conflict and insecurity, we have seen communities stretched to breaking point. The economy has collapsed, malnutrition has soared and hunger has taken a firm hold. Some [3.4 million](#) women, men and children are displaced from their homes.

'I have witnessed first-hand the incredible resilience of South Sudanese people in the face of so many crises. However, many people have now exhausted their coping mechanisms. As a result, tens of thousands could die of starvation, and millions do not know where their next meal is coming from.

'Tragically, this crisis was utterly preventable. This declaration of famine in Unity State is a harsh wake-up call. The international community must do more to address the plight of the South Sudanese people. The situation will continue to deteriorate rapidly if we don't act now. We can, and must, do more.'

This crisis is the result of over three years of conflict in the world's newest nation. Although steps towards peace are finally being taken, violence and instability continue amidst severe humanitarian needs.

Christian Aid partners have been providing aid to families displaced or affected by ongoing violence in Unity State for some time. Christian Aid is ready to intensify its emergency response, and has issued a plea for extra funds for its [South Sudan crisis appeal](#).

Rosie Crowther said: 'Our local partners have courageously continued to provide humanitarian assistance in some of the worst-affected and most remote parts of South Sudan: they have stuck with communities even after other aid agencies have left. We will keep supporting them to help those now on the brink of catastrophe.'

'However, any short-term relief efforts must be accompanied by long-term efforts to bring lasting and sustainable peace. That's why Christian Aid and our partners here will continue helping South Sudanese communities and leaders to take concrete steps towards peace and reconciliation. We will continue to stand alongside the people of South Sudan.'

In Unity State, Christian Aid partner UNIDO has been distributing fishing gear to give people an immediate means of finding nutritious food. UNIDO is also repairing boreholes to provide access to safe water, as well as providing shelter materials, seeds and farming tools to families.

A total of 1.9 million individuals are internally displaced in South Sudan, while some 1.5 million are refugees in neighbouring countries, UN figures show. The World Food Programme is distributing food aid, while humanitarian organisations have appealed [for US\\$1.6bn](#) to assist 5.8 million South Sudanese people in 2017.

To find out more about Christian Aid's crisis appeal for South Sudan, visit their website.

Notes to Editors:

1. Christian Aid works in some of the world's poorest communities in around 40 countries at any one time. We act where there is great need, regardless of religion, helping people to live a full life, free from poverty. We provide urgent, practical and effective assistance in tackling the root causes of poverty as well as its effects.

2. Christian Aid's core belief is that the world can and must be changed so that poverty is ended: this is what we stand for. Everything we do is about ending poverty and injustice: swiftly, effectively, sustainably. Our strategy document [Partnership for Change](#) explains how we set about this task.

3. Christian Aid is a member of [ACT Alliance](#), a global coalition of more than 130 churches and church-related organisations that work together in humanitarian assistance, advocacy and development.

Contact: Tomilola Ajayi

Spokesperson: Rosie Crowther, Country Programme Manager - South Sudan

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