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 **THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND**  

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Diocese of Leeds

To all Clergy in the Diocese of Leeds

July 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

## **Sudan Emergency appeal**

The coronavirus pandemic has caused massive disruption across the globe, including here in England. We need no reminder of the costs of this. Imagine, then, the impact on a country such as Sudan. Our brothers and sisters in our link dioceses there have no recourse to support for very basic needs other than external agencies. Their situation is more than challenging as the Church, under the leadership of Archbishop Ezekiel (with whom I speak frequently), seeks to feed the increasing number of poor, dispossessed and desperate people. The pandemic has led to rapid increase in unemployment and rampant inflation, pushing the purchase of even basic food beyond the reach of many people.

We have been linked with Sudan for around forty years. So, I am launching an emergency appeal right cross the Diocese of Leeds to support our brothers and sisters there. We are asking, on behalf of Archbishop Ezekiel, for funds for emergency food and supplies for those across the country who rely on the church for support or survival. The need is urgent and is increasing in severity:

- More than 9.6 million people are in need of urgent help with food – that is one in four of the population.
- The inflation rate has surged to 136% in June alone. This includes the price of food basics such as bread, grains and cooking oil, as well as water, fuel and cooking gas.

Our partner church is deeply shaken by the effects of the coronavirus. Archbishop Ezekiel says that his people claim “they would rather die of a virus than of hunger”. The lockdown has cut people off from any income, leaving entire families and communities in dire need. The majority of Christians are the poorest of the poor, living in long-term displacement camps, in crowded townships with no medical facilities and no running water. The Church in Sudan has no financial reserves to meet this crisis.

Our Leeds Diocesan Link is one of the very few sources of support that Christians have in Sudan. The Link has already given emergency relief grants since March of £22,580 but we urgently need to give more. It may be hard to believe, but there are no state benefits or free medical help and no free education. All western aid agencies were thrown out of the country years ago by the last dictatorship which was itself overthrown last spring. The new government and its economic capacity is fragile. The DEC Appeal is not able to cover Sudan as agencies have no partners there.

Archbishop Ezekiel tells us that he has been praying for us during our lockdown. He is so thankful for the help we have given so far, which he has used to help buy food such as flour, grains and cooking oil. These have been made into food packs distributed to families by the Mothers Union throughout the country. Many of you may have met their key leaders, Mama Sameira and Mama Heweya, last year when they visited our diocese.



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During the UK lockdown many of us have not spent as much as we would normally do if we had been travelling out and about. Of course, many people here have lost their income and security, and not everybody will be able to give; but many have been able to save during lockdown here. We can show our gratitude to God by being generous towards the Church in Sudan a special gift to help the church in Sudan. Large amounts are needed there, but even small amounts make a difference. The funds raised will go for emergency food, water, medical supplies, and any other emergency help that local churches may identify themselves.

- £25 could help buy an emergency food pack for a one family. Perhaps that equates to a meal out for two not taken over lockdown.
- £50 could pay for fuel to help the Sudan Mothers Union safely distribute food and emergency supplies in the townships. Perhaps the cost of a tank of fuel saved during lockdown here.
- £500 could help provide a church with weeks of emergency funding to support their families in crisis.

To give, you will find information <https://www.leeds.anglican.org/finance/donations> or you can simply make a cheque payable to 'Leeds DBF', posting it to Leeds DBF, 17-19 York Place, Leeds LS1 2EX with a note saying it is 'for Sudan emergency'.

Prayers, a short video and the latest news will be on the website, so please keep checking there. This will be a short term emergency appeal (until the end of August), so please share this need as soon as you are able and with as many people as you can.

With my thanks and prayers.

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