

Agriculture in South Sudan: Source of Conflict as well as Basis for Peace



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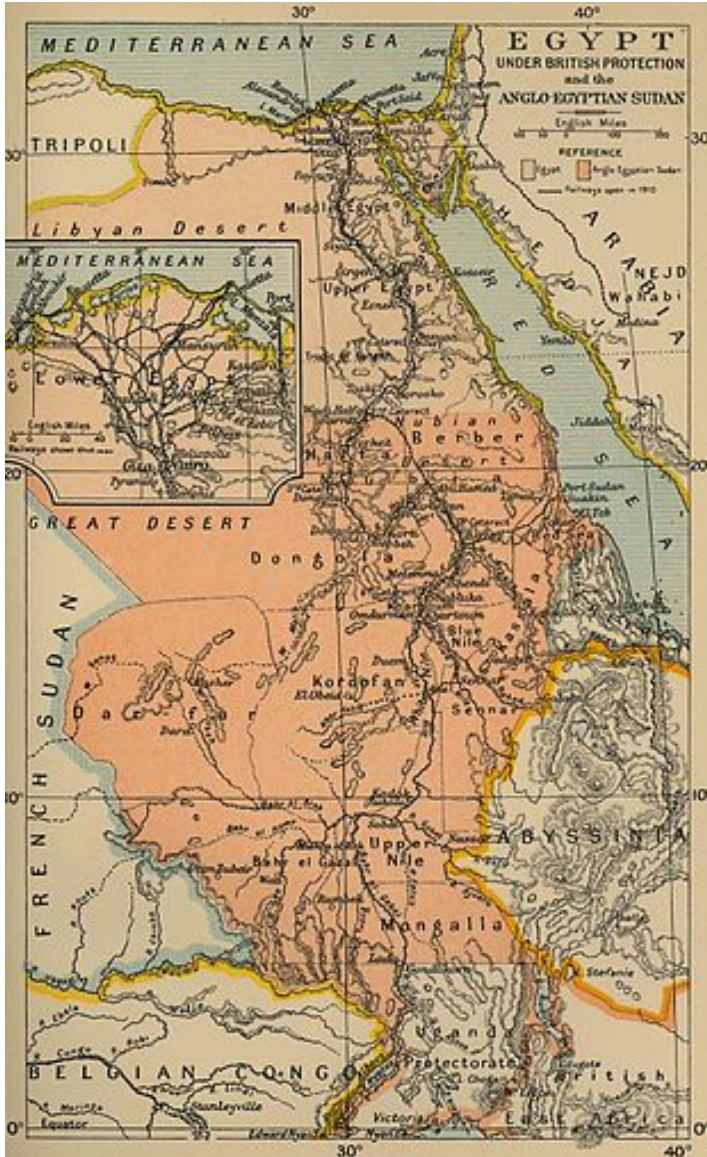
General Background: Republic of South Sudan



Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coat_of_arms_of_South_Sudan

- Location: Central Africa: South of Sudan, North of Uganda, west of Ethiopia and east of the Central African Republic.
- Population: 12.58 million
- Size: 239,285 square miles: Roughly the size of all the south eastern United States
- Government: Democracy
- President: Salva Kiir Mayardit

Background: History



- Ancient times: Part of the Kush Empire of Egypt; after the Empire's fall became a collection of tribes and kingdoms
- Modern times: Ottoman invaded South Sudan in 17th century and made it a colony
- Ottoman's extracted over 2 million blacks from the country as slaves over the course of 200 years (1820-1898)
- Eventually became part of Anglo-Egyptian Sudan (map to left) after it was seized with Egypt and Sudan by Great Britain (1899-1955)
- Anglo-Egyptian Sudan was dissolved in 1955 and became two separate countries: Sudan (South Sudan and Sudan currently) and Egypt.
- First Sudanese civil war broke out from 1955-1972
- Peace agreement occurred from 1972-1983

Background: History (continued)



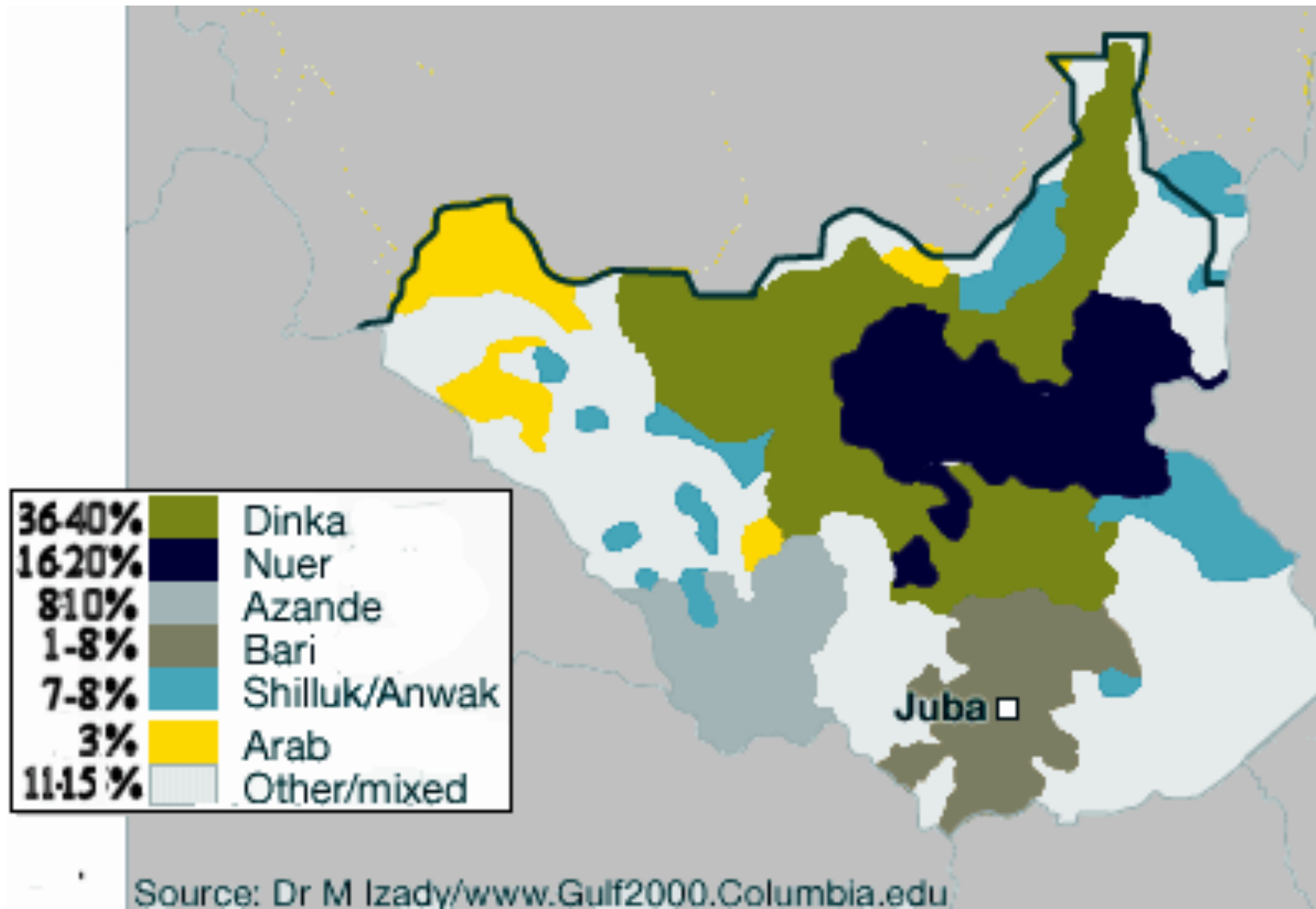
Retrieved from <https://www.jww.org/conflict-areas/sudan/north-south-conflict/>

- Second Civil war: From 1983-2005
 - Resulted in semi-autonomy for south Sudan
- Transition government lasted from 2005-2011 when south Sudan gained full independence
- Conflict resumed in 2013 with President Kiir accusing his VP, Riek Machar of attempting to overthrow the government
- Machar fled to lead the Sudanese Peoples Liberation Army - In Opposition (SPLA IO) and war was ignited for the next few years
- In August 2018, after five years of brutal civil war a power sharing agreement was made between Machar and Kiir that would end the war with shared government eff. 11-12-2019.
- Deadline occurred and passed without new gov't established. New deadline is +100 days

Background: Tribes/Ethnicities

- 60 tribes and 80 linguistic partitions
- Largest groups are:
 - Dinka (38.8%)- Upper Nile and Bahr El Ghazal states; tradition of pastoralism and subsistence farming to survive
 - President Kiir is Dinka
 - Nuer (27.6%)- Upper Nile state; long-standing conflicts with Dinka over land and cattle disputes for grazing and water
 - Former VP Machar is Nuer
 - Azande (6%)- Central Equatoria and Western Bahr Al-Ghazal states
 - Shilluk (3%)- Lives along the banks of the White Nile river in Upper Nile state; ruled by a monarchy (with a King) but acts akin to a state government

Background: Tribes (map)



Retrieved from
<https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/south-sudan-tribes.htm>

Background: Tribes/Ethnicities

Rank	Ethnic Group	Share of Population in South Sudan
1	Dinka	36%
2	Nuer	16%
3	Azande	6%
4	Bari	4%
5	Shilluk	3%
6	Toposa	2%
7	Otuho	2%
8	Luo	1%
9	Moru	1%
10	Murle	1%
	Other Ethnic Groups	28%

Background: Economics



- Overall GDP is 2.904 billion USD (2016). This is roughly \$237.44 per person, or among the lowest in the entire world
- Natural Resources- Timber, Zinc, Copper, Gold, Silver, Chromium, Mica, Tungsten, Iron and Petroleum
- The Natural Resources of South Sudan allow it to have the potential of becoming one of the most powerful countries in Africa if it can resolve its internal conflicts
- Oil - Prior to independence, South Sudan produced 85% of oil from combined territories of Sudan and SS. 100% of this oil is transported to Sudan via pipeline. There, 50% of this oil is refined and stays in Sudan and another 40% goes to outside countries (almost entirely China).
- 80% of the entire GDP is from oil
- 70% (or more) of the entire budget is for military; very difficult to obtain accurate values

Background: Agriculture

- Heavily reliant on agriculture due to thousands of years of tradition
- Almost all of South Sudan is fertile and is one of the most fertile countries in the world
- Crops produced are cotton, groundnuts (peanuts), sorghum, millet, wheat, gum Arabic, sugarcane, cassava (tapioca), mangos, papaya, bananas, sweet potatoes, and sesame
- Only a small handful of crops produced are exported as most of them are used for sustenance by local tribes

Background: Agriculture (Farming and Pastoralism)

- **Farming** - Raising crops
- **Pastoralist** - Raising cows without a fixed or centralized location (herds move as needed for natural grazing)
- 79% of population lives in rural areas living a pastoralist lifestyle or farming and fishing; rest of the population lives in five or six towns/cities
- Vast majority of crops used for sustenance, and not profit
- Primarily Nilotic cattle; several tribal sub-types are Murle, Taposa, Mongalla, & Anwak
- No “ranches” whatsoever in South Sudan; millions of cattle are maintained in herds by their owners and keepers on a family, community or tribal basis
- Estimated 11.7 million cattle (cows only-goats and sheep excluded)
- No cattle processing plants in entire country other than local slaughter houses in a few “cities”
- No processing of cattle parts (leather, etc.) in entire country
- No frozen food or canning factories in entire country

Background: Pastoralism



Source: Kyle Thaller -- South Sudan trip - August 2019

Causes of Conflict: Land Claims

- Cattle grazing changes with seasons, and people move to different lands depending on season
- The better the land, the more food there is for cattle
 - This causes different tribes to cross other tribal lands
- Consequently, tribal conflict erupts over land in order to feed their cattle
- Tribes steal cattle from each other by making raids
- Raids were previously less bloody, but due to the rise of conventional weapons, tribal wars over cattle sometimes result in whole villages being slaughtered

Cattle Raiding

Retrieved from
<https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2016/12/kenya-cattle-raids-deadlier-161212152024718.html>



Causes of Conflict: Wealth from Cattle

- Cattle is used as a form of currency in South Sudan; in rural areas it is considered the only form of currency in South Sudan
- Cattle are used as a sign of prestige, wealth and status
 - The more cattle a person has, the more respected and wealthy that person is
 - Cattle are used as a source of bride wealth, in order to marry the man has to have a certain number of cattle to give to the brides family as a dowry
- Many children do not go to school because of tribal/family responsibilities to watch the cattle
- Since independence political and military elites have used resources gained during the war to acquire massive herds of cattle, therefore, increasing their own prestige, status and wealth.
 - The herds, in turn are used to cultivate networks of supporters by paying bride wealth for their soldiers by giving them cattle to pay the bride wealth and allowing them to marry. This secures their allegiance in case of conflict
- Cattle are also used as a tool of war. Cattle are used as an incentive to fight, so soldiers can increase their own status, prestige, pay bride wealth and get married by stealing the cattle

Wealth from Cattle

Retrieved from
<http://www.ipsnews.net/2014/05/south-sudans-livestock-outnumbering-people-ruining-environment/>



Causes of Conflict: Years upon Years of Violence caused by Cattle versus Farming

- Cattle are rarely killed, due to being seen as a sign of prestige and status
 - Meat is eaten from time to time
 - Blood from cattle is often mixed with milk for sustenance
- The more cattle a person has, the greater his respected and reverence
- This consequently makes cattle over-populate
- As a result of over-population, cattle are often moved onto someone else's land not to cause conflict on purpose, but just to keep the cattle alive
- This, in turn causes conflict and tribal wars
- Due to cattle being so revered, South Sudan imports meat from Uganda to feed the country. Amazing, but true!
- **As of now, cattle nearly outnumber the population of South Sudan and something has to be done about this problem or hunger, war, economic poverty and inter-tribal conflict/war will get worse**

Cattle are Revered as a Tradition in South Sudan



To left from
<https://correspondent.afp.com/beauty-within-chaos>

Conclusions

- Culture has not really changed much over past several hundred years for vast majority of people in South Sudan
- Fights and conflicts now include guns and explosives primarily because they are available. In years past, people only had spears, sticks and rocks.
- Cattle is used as status and monetary equivalent, with little to no incentive to change
- Vast majority of people don't really care about federalist or central government pride. Instead, they are focused on their families, communities and tribal needs
- Individual people don't own land, nor does the government. The tribes own the land. This is major source of conflict between tribes and central gov't.
- Climate changes, be they permanent or temporary have made the situation worse for pastoralists because there are so many cattle, and the continual need for water and grazing these millions of large animals

Cattle in South Sudan

Source: Kyle Thaller -- South Sudan trip - August 2019



Potential Solution: Cattle Bank

- Cattle Bank - Series of “banks” throughout the country. Each *Cattle Bank Branch* would be similar to a 1,000-acre conventional cattle ranch, but with a few additional items.
 - Land for grazing
 - Constant access to water
 - Slaughter house
 - Other manufacturing for leather goods, etc.
 - Access to roads
 - Refrigeration/freezer facility
 - Independent power
- These banks would house the vast majority of the cattle for tribes within vicinity of the bank
 - All cattle from all tribes treated the same, be they from Dinka, Nuer, Shilluk, etc.
- The people at the banks would not be government workers nor would they be all from the same tribe.
 - The Bank would have a name and brand similar to cell phones. All people respect these independent brands, as they have nothing to do with the government or with a particular tribe
 - Therefore, people will not have anger or compelling reason to steal the cattle from the Bank, and will trust the Bank to feed and take care of their cattle as well as other tribes’ cattle

Cattle Bank; Solution (continued)



Retrieved from
<https://www.african ceremonies.com/Collections/Dinka/38>

Cattle Bank; Solution (continued)

- Deposits: The tribes would drop off the cattle at the bank. The bank would then enter the quantity into the account books.
- Withdrawals: When the owner needs the cattle for bride wealth or a religious ceremony, the owner could come back use them and drop them back off.
- So, where do all of the extra cattle go?
 - Not all cattle would be housed in this bank
 - The most impressive and important cattle for breeding will be kept and used to strengthen the Bank's herd
 - The rest will be slaughtered and used for meat, leather, and other by products.
 - Financial profits on a fractional basis go to each tribe or family that deposited cattle; the more cattle that have been dropped off, the more that person/tribe receives in money.

Cattle slaughter house (Uganda); Part of Cattle Solution



Retrieved from
<http://www.fao.org/emergencies/fao-in-action/stories/stories-detail/en/c/279307/>

Overall Benefits of Cattle Bank

- This solution allows the South Sudanese tribesmen to keep their most revered cattle as a sign of prestige, and to maintain their cultural heritage.
- Solution also allows millions of cattle to be removed from landscape
 - Provides money to tribe
 - No need to have children watch the herd
 - Jobs (normal ranch jobs, slaughter house, transportation, etc.) are created
 - No need to roam onto a farmer's land for grazing or water
 - Herd and breed is strengthened by the Cattle Bank keeping only the best beasts
- Major source of conflict is removed
- South Sudan also now more self sufficient
- South Sudan has greater GDP and more trained workers

Benefit of Cattle Bank; Peace . . . and Education



Retrieved from
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