

Strategic Giving 2023 – Widows in South Sudan

The Miracle of a Cow

BY **ELEANOR CHUN**

IN 2011, South Sudan became the youngest nation in the world. But unlike the joy that comes from the birth of something new, the country soon descended into civil war. The violence forced many to flee their homes to find safety. Those who returned years later found their homes had been burned down and their cattle gone. Having already grieved the loss of home and a sense of security, many women were made widows when their husbands died in the conflict. These women are often the most powerless and vulnerable in their communities. The widows must care for their children on their own while having to start over from scratch with few supports. Without a source of income and already marginalized as women in society, finding hope is difficult.

With their partner, the Faith Evangelical Baptist Church (FEBAC) of South Sudan, Canadian Baptist Ministries (CBM) is determined to minister with the practical message of God's love. Together with the help of ministries like Baptist Women, they can reach the most vulnerable and bring a reason to hope by empowering these women and providing for their most basic needs. It all begins with delivering a cow to each family.

Cattle are precious in the Melut County region of South Sudan, as raising livestock and subsistence agriculture are the primary means for earning income. CBM and its



partners invest in the lives of these women by providing each household with a cow. This one cow provides milk for the family with the extra sold at the market and in time, the cow produces calves so the women can grow their herd for greater production and income generation.

Inaya

Inaya* is a single mother of four children. She lost her husband when armed groups moved through her region

killing civilians. Inaya and her children escaped and lived for years as internally displaced persons in another region. She was so grateful to receive her cow that she broke down in tears.

“I am happy for the cow that I was given, and I will take good care of it so that it can produce many calves in the future. I thank FEBAC and CBM for this project and choosing me and the other widows to be recipients of the cows. You have done what the Bible says – that we should help those who do not have anything to pay you back. Only God will reward you in heaven,” she shares.

Inaya sees the Church as a truly caring community, one that prays for one another for God’s provisions and protection. Her prayer is for peace and stability in her country, so she and her children aren’t forced to flee their home ever again.

“On behalf of all the beneficiary widows I thank CBM and the people of Canada for providing us with cows for livelihoods. You are true children of God. The people of South Sudan owe you a debt of gratitude,” says Inaya.

Samara

Samara* is also a widow. She lives in Pigi County and describes receiving a cow as a miracle. She too lost her husband and must provide for her four children on her

own. Without an education and lacking in employable skills, she has often foraged for her food from other farms during harvest season. When she is able to work in manual labour she is paid in grain.

“I am extremely happy for the donation of a cow for my children. Cows as we know in South Sudan are very expensive and can only be afforded by those who have means. I have never imagined that I would own a cow or cows one day. But now the people of God have made it possible for me. May God bless you with long life in return for your good heart!” she says.

Despite the discouraging situation in South Sudan, she hopes the church will continue to bless and help the women find their way to escape poverty. She knows she is only one of many.

“I thank CBM and the people of Canada for providing the funds that were used to purchase the cows for us and encourage you to continue doing the same for others like me.”

With a single cow, these women are empowered and better able to provide for their children. Thank you for your prayerful support of the widows of South Sudan as they rebuild their lives. 🕊

Eleanor Chun, freelance writer, CBM

*Names changed to protect privacy.

CBWOQ Strategic Giving 2023

As part of CBWOQ’s strategic giving program, we’ve committed \$15,000 to this **Livestock for Widows** project in South Sudan. Thank you for raising awareness and funds throughout the year. Visit our international projects page at baptistwomen.com/causes to learn more about the difference you have made in the lives of vulnerable women, youth and children at risk through your support of overseas projects like these.



Widows receive their gifts of cows

PHOTO COURTESY OF CBM