



SIGN Field Reports are a new way to take you with us as we walk the world!

South Sudan: Juba Teaching Hospital

The youngest country in the world, South Sudan, remains burdened by the effects of the 22-year Sudan civil war and the current South Sudan civil war. According to Human Rights Watch, key infrastructure in the country like clinics, hospitals, and schools have been abandoned and destroyed in the conflicts. Violence has also prevented humanitarian aid and essential supplies from reaching those who need it most. For example, the only teaching hospital, which is located in Juba, is often without power because there is no oil to use as fuel for the generators. Patients are asked to bring fuel for power if they need surgery. With the most recent war, nearly 3.5 million of the 12 million population are displaced, and nearly 10 percent of the population has migrated to refugee camps in nearby countries to escape the conflict.

We are impressed by the dedication of medical workers we've met who are returning to South Sudan from their training abroad. They are committed to care for the injured poor who remain. Their mission to care for their fellow countrymen is noble, especially when they will have the skills and education to practice medicine anywhere in the world.

We first became involved with South Sudan in 2011 through Dr. Akau, who returned to South Sudan from Norway where he had completed medical school and orthopaedic training, *(continued on back)*

There are two orthopaedic surgeons for 12 million people in South Sudan!



★ Juba Teaching Hospital

Dr. Akau (left) and Dr. James are the first two ortho surgeons in South Sudan. Soon, five more surgeons will finish their training and return to South Sudan.



South Sudan: Juba Teaching Hospital



(continued from front) and had a comfortable practice. His dream is to build an orthopaedic program for his young nation. Upon his arrival, South Sudan's orthopaedic capacity grew to two orthopaedic surgeons for the entire nation of 12 million people. Dr. Akau and Dr. James were located in Juba and worked at the Juba Teaching Hospital. Within the first year they recruited five young doctors fresh out of medical school to pursue training in orthopaedic surgery.

Helping Residents Achieve Education

SIGN asked two busy East African SIGN Programs to consider applications from Dr. Festo and Dr. Mapuor into their residency programs. Both are nearly finished with their training and will be returning to South Sudan by the end of the year.

During our recent visit to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, we met another two of the five South Sudanese doctors who chose to specialize in orthopaedics. One was getting his training at Black Lion Hospital and the other at St. Paul Hospital. We also learned that the fifth surgeon is receiving his orthopaedic training at another SIGN Program called KCMC in Moshi, Tanzania.

Every one of the surgeons in training we met were intelligent, hardworking, quiet spoken, and clearly



Dr. Mapuor thanks Nathan and Elaine Balfou for sponsoring his residency.

driven to return home to help their people. All of them will be home within the next two to three years and are well prepared to perform much needed surgery. Even with their return, there will be far fewer doctors than are needed, but their arrival will dramatically improve access to care for those in need.

Plans for the future

According to Dr. Mapuor, some of the returning surgeons will remain in Juba where the majority of the population lives and most injuries occur. Others, like himself, will volunteer to move to areas outside of Juba so that patients in the outer regions will have faster access to surgical care. As these residents return, requests will come to start SIGN Programs in their future hospitals. Surgeons in South Sudan, Ethiopia, Tanzania, and all over the world depend on SIGN to assist them with implementation of their own plans for building orthopaedic trauma capacity within their countries. We want to honor their requests.

We hope to continue to find like-minded partners who can assist with restoring medical facilities and in supporting the supply of SIGN Products for their hospitals.



*Dr. Mapuor demonstrates how to use the **SIGN** Slot-finder.*

