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**Mission in a Wounded Country: South Sudan**

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When we consider mission in relation to wounds, one country with a profound experience of both is the world's newest nation: South Sudan. Following Sudan's independence from Britain in 1956, the Khartoum-based Arab Islamic elite sought to impose their identity, provoking resistance from areas where other religious and ethnic identities predominate, notably in the south. The result was decades of civil war. In the midst of widespread devastation, an unexpected development occurred – growing numbers embraced the Christian faith.

When South Sudan became independent in 2011, hopes for a peaceful future soon gave way to a new round of conflict. Around 400,000 people have been killed and more than 4 million displaced by the internal conflict that began in 2013. Church life continues to flourish, often functioning as the only source of hope for people living in demoralising circumstances.

The three lenses of power, inequality and vulnerability can deepen our understanding of mission in this deeply wounded country. Bishop Nathaniel Garang's analysis of the causes of conflict is that it is "all about power and greed for power." Meanwhile, when it appeared to be losing power, the church discovered the power of its faith. Though a richly resourced country, wealth is monopolised by the few at the expense of the many. Churches seeking to work for an inclusive and participatory society are compromised by their own divisions. Yet through their experience of vulnerability Christians discover the power of prayer and their vulnerability can become an instrument of transformation.