

Sudan

Republic of the Sudan/Jamhuryat as-Sudan

James A. Crumpacker, Area Coordinator

Population: 41,200,000

Area: 967,494 sq. mi.

Capital: Khartoum

Languages: Arabic (official), Nubian, Ta Bedawie, diverse dialects of Nilotic, Nilo-Hamitic, Sudanic languages, English

Religions: Sunni Islam, 70% (in north); indigenous beliefs, 25%; Christian, 5% (mostly in south and Khartoum)

Missionaries appointed to Sudan: Patrick and Jean Groves

Sudan is the largest and one of the most diverse countries in Africa. It is home to deserts, mountain ranges, swamps, and rain forests. Apart from an 11-year period of peace, it has been torn by civil war between the mainly Arab Muslim north and the black animist and Christian south since independence in 1956. Talks aimed at ending the conflict were held in Kenya in 2003 and 2004.

The country's name comes from the Arabic *bilad al-sudan*, or land of the blacks. Arabic is the official language, and Islam is the religion of the state. Nevertheless the country has a large non-Arabic speaking and non-Muslim population which has rejected attempts by the government in Khartoum to impose Islamic shari'ah law on the country as a whole.

The Sudan is a new field for the UPCI. Patrick and Jean Groves received their appointment March 2004.