

Dear Friends,

In July TFS Trustees invited Country Coordinator Neimat Hussein to join us in Tunis for what proved a challenging and very useful weekend during which we reviewed TFS accomplishments and current challenges and made decisions for the way forward. The charity continues to have a specific and significant role to play in Sudan. In keeping with our motto Power to the Powerless Through Education, our work empowers thousands of disadvantaged Sudanese, helping prepare them for a better future for themselves and their children. We are filling gaps in several areas of education and reaching usually ignored people. As a result, we have the appreciation of impoverished and marginalised people and growing recognition and approval from educators and governmental officials.

Recent changes in office personnel and the phasing out of projects which are no longer urgently needed have made us a more professional charity. Our achievements over the past two years include extensive teacher training in Southern Kordofan and in the settlements for displaced people in the Khartoum area. A new Vocational Training Project allows us, for the first time, to educate men as well as women, and we expect that many of the trainees will contribute to the rebuilding of southern Sudan. Meanwhile, we have closed our university scholars hostel in Omdurman due to decreasing demand as other hostels have opened following our example. And the Solar Project is being reduced in the Khartoum area, where the electricity grid is expanding, allowing us to place more panels in the Nuba Mountains.

Lessons we have learned include the need for better monitoring of all projects and closer concentration on our core educational objectives while keeping carefully attuned to what disadvantaged people say they need. To this end we have responded with our Solar Project and Eye Care and HIV/AIDS Awareness outreaches. Building Peace Through Service, our second motto, is of equal importance to all the above and we continue to play a significant peacemaking role in bringing Christians and Muslims, as well as members of different tribes, together in service to one another. This, we believe, is a good beginning!

School boys and a few girls attend a Together for Sudan HIV/Aids Awareness Outreach at the Moral Self Reliance Basic School outside Khartoum. Many of these children should already be in secondary school but started late due to war and displacement.



VISIT TO SUDAN.

My October visit to Sudan was aimed to encourage TFS personnel, to strengthen ties with our local partners and to promote fundraising through embassies and international organisations in Khartoum. Fundraising both in Sudan and elsewhere remains our greatest challenge and TFS, as well as our Sudanese partners, struggle as prices rise and the gap grows between rich and poor. Despite these difficulties there was great rejoicing over the beginning of our new Vocational Training Project thanks to financial support from the Gordon College Memorial Trust Fund. In a grass shelter at bleak Mayo Angola displaced persons settlement outside Khartoum, I attended a session of the project's recently begun six months training which will allow 90 women (and ten men!) to become primary health workers in their communities. This much needed project will provide a chance for desperately poor displaced people from southern and eastern Sudan as well as Darfur to regain at least some control over their lives. "They love you," one of the teachers told me. But I know it is not TFS but life and their children to which the displaced people of Mayo Angola cling – and I respect and appreciate them much more than I can say.

While in Sudan I was also able to visit TFS literacy work in Darfur. Darfur is like any other place on earth except that there violence, greed, prejudice, inequality and wickedness seem more apparent. Yet in such circumstances compassion, grace and generosity also become more available both to those who suffer and to those who try to help. Neimat and I went to El Fasher in northern Darfur to check on progress in the Women's Literacy Project classes for which TFS had sent teacher trainers a year earlier. Due to security concerns and a very harsh and dangerous environment progress has been slow. But despite all odds, there were two classes functioning and other trained teachers -- and many perspective students – hopefully.

As TFS has no office in El Fasher, we stayed with the Good Shepherd sisters who have kindly agreed to promote TFS literacy work. There is no question of one religion against another, only of dedicated and heartbroken Muslim and Christian mothers trying to save and educate themselves and their remaining children. The project struggles as do the women and those who reach out to them. But hope exists in all our hearts and we are grateful to Refugees International Japan for funding our literacy efforts in Darfur.

In other developments, the Together for Sudan HIV/AIDS Awareness Outreach teams have been upgraded by UNAIDS and will concentrate on school children in this coming years. We are grateful to CAFOD for funding this project and also to ICING in Saudi Arabia whose funding will enable us to develop our Elementary Scholars Project for HIV/AIDS affected children. Sadly, both the Eye Care Outreach and the Teacher Training and Support Project are on hold as we await funding. That two of our most valuable and popular projects have gone dark even temporarily is a blow to hundreds of people. Can you help rekindle their hopes?



Displaced women outside El Fasher in Dafur discuss what becoming literate means to them.



OBJECTIVES OF TFS EDUCATION PROJECTS

University Scholarships Project *To empower disadvantaged, marginalised and displaced women through education. *To provide university scholarships to undergraduate women in economic need living in Sudan.

Scholarship Project to Support Elementary Education *To assist children whose parents and/or carers have died or been incapacitated by HIV/AIDS. *To concentrate on kindergarten and basic school education. *To encourage people living with HIV/AIDS.

Teacher Training and Support Project *To promote education for children disadvantaged by displacement, poverty and war. *To counter tribalism and religious antagonism and to enhance community cooperation by supporting people to work together for their children's education. *To train, monitor and pay teachers in self-help basic schools until such time as civil authorities are able to take over. *To help marginalised and displaced people keep open their basic self-help schools.

The Women's Literacy Project *To raise the educational level of disadvantaged Sudanese women without regard to religion or ethnic origin. *To enable disadvantaged women to engage in their children's education and find employment and a better life. *To work in response to public demand and in cooperation with community efforts.

Vocational Training Scholarships Project *To empower disadvantaged, marginalised and displaced adults through technical education. *To facilitate employment and income generating opportunities, in particular for those who have not been able to complete basic education. *To provide technical skills which will contribute to Sudan's development.

OBJECTIVES OF TFS EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT PROJECTS

Eye Care Outreach *To assist displaced and impoverished people by providing free eye examination, medication, corrective lenses, health education and surgical intervention. *To provide basic medications for non-eye related conditions as funding allows *To give priority to women, children and the elderly *To work in cooperation with local communities.

HIV/AIDS Awareness Outreach *To combat HIV/AIDS through education and in cooperation with community leaders using awareness outreaches. *To befriend and support through education people living with HIV/AIDS personally or in the family.

The Solar Project *To provide solar lighting panels for impoverished people living beyond the electricity grid. *To support education, income generation and community development. *To give priority to sites which will concentrate on literacy work *To promote community spirit and religious and ethnic tolerance by providing a facility which will enhance shared evening events.

From the TFS Treasurer, Norman Swanney

After two years in this job, it is a constant joy (and relief!) to me to hear from the band of regular TFS supporters whose cheques drop frequently through my letterbox and standing orders arrive faithfully in our bank account. We are also fortunate to have a useful 'Give Now' facility on our website which attracts occasional donations from all corners of the World.

Without this generous and loyal support we would, quite simply, be unable to operate. Thank you from all of us at TFS. It is a humbling experience to be able to translate your commitment and selfless care for others into the life-enhancing support we deliver to some of the poorest and most deprived people on the planet. If you would like to join our dedicated group of supporters please do not hesitate to fill in the Standing Order form enclosed with this newsletter.

In Memoriam

If you would like to support a particular project or give a gift to help our work in memory of a loved one, please do get in touch with the Treasurer (contact details below).



Leaving a gift for Sudan in your Will

Our work in Sudan relies entirely upon the generosity of kind supporters such as those reached by this newsletter. If anyone is considering a further gift by including TFS in their will, I hope this information might help with your decision.

If you have already made a Will

If you have already made a Will, but would like to leave a gift to TFS, you can do so by making a simple addition to your existing Will.. By adding a 'codicil' to your will you can include new instructions and delete old ones without having to go through the chore of revoking the whole Will.

If you have not already made a Will

If you do not have a Will at the moment, you may need to see a solicitor. Although you will have to pay a fee, you will receive sound professional advice and can be sure that your wishes are achieved.

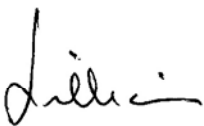
Two ways to give to TFS in your Will

- * You can give a gift of a fixed amount of money; OR
- * You can leave a share of what is left in your estate, once you have provided for your loved ones.

Where can I find out more?

If you think you could help with a gift in your Will and would like more information, please contact me at the contact details shown.

With appreciation for working with us to help the Sudanese towards a better future,



Lillian Craig Harris OBE
Director

P.S. Help us save postage by emailing our newsletters!
Send your email address to: adrianphomas@btinternet.com

And do consider whether you can help by signing the enclosed GiftAid and/or Direct Debit form. Make cheques payable to Together for Sudan and post to Norman Swanney, 33 Balmoral Road, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 OJS, England. *U.S. dollar cheques should be made payable to The Bishop Mubarak Fund and sent to the same address.*



Vocational training, a first for TFS, began in October at Mayo Angola IDP settlement outside Khartoum. The venue is a Catholic training centre and Muslim and Christian trainees, both women and men, are in a six-month course studying to become primary community health workers.