



UNDER TREE SCHOOLS

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Dear Friends

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The girls with the bags donated by Sue Beeson

This letter comes with very warm greetings to you from our school in Malek Alel, Southern Sudan, which Joseph visited last month. It seems that the school began only recently but in fact the girls started their **THIRD academic year** in April! As a result of your support, the school is well established and a key part of the town of Malek Alel. So thank you very much.

Now that **Southern Sudan is to be independent on 9th July**, more people are returning from the north of Sudan to the South. On the whole the South is stable, but the region of Abyei has seen attacks. As the border is closing, less can be imported easily from the north, and already supplies in shops are shrinking. Also, there is a fuel shortage. As Malek Alel lies relatively near to the border, the influx of people means that the school is growing in numbers – this year 345 girls are enrolled in the school (compared to 219 last year) and 47 children are in the nursery.



Joseph with our youngest pupil

There have been a few changes among the teachers but most of the team are the same, a tribute to the good management of our Headmaster, Bak. He is continuing his work to strengthen the quality of teaching; all the teachers attended a local training course in March before the new school year began thanks to Franciscan Aid who provided the funds for UTS teacher training this year. It was lovely to receive letters to some of our children in the UK from girls at the school. It is a real sign of their progress in writing and in English.



Year 8 Class



Letters and pictures sent by the children at Cullen Primary School

Last year we began courses of **adult education** in the school held in the afternoons after the children have left for the day. This is continuing and developing this year and both men and women are coming for lessons.



Adult education students

Joseph was delighted to find that **our chaplain** held a service of baptism for nine people, all ages! There are now weekly services of worship at the school for a growing congregation of local people. A church in Switzerland has donated an electronic bible school, so

every Sunday people from the school and the local community meet to go through the presentations that now can be easily shown thanks to generous grants from our supporters who enabled the school to buy and install **solar power!** Joseph and Glenn spent a busy week in Nairobi arranging for the purchase and shipping of the equipment. This involved much rushing around to arrange customs clearance, payments, flights and a visa for Anthony, the engineer from the company supplying the equipment. With the panels



Nine people being baptised by the School Chaplain

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Anthony installing the batteries

installed and working all the classrooms, administration areas and living huts can now be lit at night. This is a very useful step forward in enabling our buildings to be fully used. At the same time we also have the means to run our computers, so at last we have email, which will help us with administration, and the internet, which will be a very useful tool for training.

The girls get a free lunch every day, courtesy of the World Food Programme, but we have felt the need for a proper **kitchen and dining hall** to prepare the food hygienically and provide shelter for the girls as they eat it. Again as a result of your support the building is now nearly complete, and the school will shortly be able to use it.



The existing kitchen



Class 1 pupils having lunch

We are planning to start a farm, to provide food and income for the school and to be a training aid, and its first stage, a **chicken coop**, is being started. But we had another huge wind while Joseph was in Malek Alel, which blew down a tree, and threatened to lift roofs. So we are giving priority to securing the roofs more effectively, and we will then progress further with the farm, as funds become available.

Our trustees will be meeting soon to look ahead to future strategy for the school and we will write further when they take their decisions.

Meanwhile do look at our new website which gives details of the school and our progress. There is new material especially aimed for schools to use - do encourage schools in your area to have a look at it. And let us have your thoughts on how we can improve our contacts with you. We are keen to make new contacts with further schools, churches and other groups. We can offer them a relationship with a school and community in Africa, a direct link with a part of the world not many are in touch with. We are happy to come and meet interested people or groups.

On behalf of the community in Malek Alel, many thanks!

God's blessings

Karin and Joseph Ayok-Loewenberg



The whole school says "Thank-you!"