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Under Tree Schools is a Registered Charitable Incorporated Organisation No 1117679
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Dear Supporters

June 2025

We hope you will be interested to know how the school is progressing.

The girls keep wanting to come to school! We have just received the results of the exams at the end of the first term a few weeks ago. 511 girls took the exams – a remarkable number, certainly a rather higher figure than in past years. Of course, there will have been some pupils who were not able for whatever reason to get to school for the exams, but who have attended classes. And this number does not include the pre-school boys and girls that the girls bring with them each day. There were 64 of them – and they got end of term exams too!

The school is a well-ordered administration. Each girl is marked on each of the subjects they take and marked as pass or fail. 436 passed and 139 failed. So the school is not afraid of telling girls where they can do better.

In fact, the staff themselves are also subject to training courses and marking, with help to develop where they need to.

In the last newsletter (on our website) we explained how we were responding to the high inflation nationally in South Sudan. We continue to do the best we can to check that the wages we pay to the staff keep pace with the rising prices in South Sudanese Pounds. The headteacher has confirmed to us that we are paying an appropriate amount against the increases in price of a basket of key food items.

In the last newsletter we reported that there were hiccups late last year in the delivery of free food for the girls' daily lunch. Now we understand that this year normal service has been resumed and the World Food Programme is delivering consignments to enable hot lunches each day to be given to the girls before they go home.



Our sewing classes continue, and the girls tailor their own school uniform.

This gives them tailoring skills that can bring them income later in life.

Our policy has been to do whatever we can to encourage girls to come to school by helping to overcome the disadvantages they may face. We have been sending money for some years now for the school to give hygiene kits to the older girls, so that they feel comfortable to come to school. The funds we have recently sent are for the 380 girls identified to us by the teachers. The funds we have recently sent are for the 380 girls identified to us by the teachers. Many girls start their education later, because for example they are required to help at home. So in P1 there can be a variety of ages in the starting P1 classes. Therefore, in P8 there would be teenagers.

Another incentive we can offer is to encourage girls who have completed their years at our school to go on to secondary school, to continue their education towards careers. We have just sent funds for 129 girls for this year - 21 are now in the fourth year of secondary school, 19 in the third year, 30 in the second year and 59 in the first year. It is good that the numbers going on to secondary school are continuing to increase.

You probably know that Malek-Alel is out in the countryside, and indeed the nearest big town, Aweil, the state capital of Northern Bahr-El-Gazal, is also short of some services. For expert medical care it is necessary to travel to the capital Juba. This makes it hard for our people to get the care they need. We learnt recently that our long-standing IT teacher Angelo has had tonsillitis for three years, and has been unable to teach for three months because of it. As an exceptional situation we funded Angelo to travel to Juba to get medical treatment. He is now able to begin teaching IT again. At the moment he teaches IT to 24 girls from each of years 5-8. The headmaster also wants him to teach IT to the teachers, but he does not yet have the time to do that.

While in Juba he was able to buy a replacement printer - needed for printing exam papers etc - and a TV for the teachers' common room. Both had failed. We have found it to be the case over the years that this sort of electrical equipment does not last as long in the South Sudan climate as in Europe.



So we are always learning about our school and its people. But we learn most when one of our trustees can go out to the school and talk to them in person. We hope that Helen Chauncy will be able to fit this into her busy life as a teacher in London, before too long.

We should report that Geoffrey Barnett our chair of trustees has just retired, as he said he would at this point when he first took on the role at the start of 2020. We are very grateful to him for leading us over the last years. We are most pleased that Dan Sullam, one of our newer trustees, has agreed to take over as chair. Tom Wright has joined us in the last year, and we welcome him.

We are as you know totally dependent on your generosity in funding the school. Thank you so much for your individual donations and for those given by organisations with your encouragement. They are vital to the mission of the charity. We continue to receive very generous donations from our devoted group of supporters in Switzerland, as well as from the Belron Ronnie Lubner Charitable Foundation, St Mary's Church Barnes, and others.

Do encourage others of your friends to make a continuing donation to help the future of the girls at our school. Donations, one off or regular, can be made through our website, at no administrative cost to you or us, and of course we can normally recover Gift Aid on top of the donation.
<https://www.undertreeschools.org/support-us.html>

Thank you all for enabling our school to continue its important work.

We send you our best wishes

Dan Sullam, Peter Boyling, Helen Chauncy, Tom Wright
Trustees of the Under Tree Schools Charity

