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

November 2025

Below you will find an update on latest developments at our school since our June newsletter.

Over the summer South Sudan has continued to suffer from great inflation in the costs of food and other things that households need. This has reduced the value of the wages we have been sending, and to prevent this happening we ensure that the wages are calculated in US dollars. But prices have risen so much so that this is not enough. So from the summer we have increased the wages in dollars, to at least the level we are informed that other private schools in South Sudan pay.

We have also doubled the amount we send for each of the categories of running costs, because it is important that the school can pay for a range of expenses like paper, transport, minor repairs, refreshments for the girls who do sports, and veterinary costs of their herd of cattle.

One of those expenses is the meat that we want the school to buy, so that the girls get meat in one of their lunches every month. They buy a bullock, and the five cooks prepare the meat in the compound, to go with the vegetables that the international aid organisation Welt Hunger Hilfe supplies to the school for their daily meal. Apparently WHH has recently provided the school with a new oven to cook the food. We have seen in the news that not all the schools in South Sudan now get free food from international organisations, so our school is perhaps lucky to continue to get this free donation from the international community. WHH pays 24 million SSP per month to buy the food they give the school free. At current exchange rates, this is over \$4000 a month. This support from WHH means that UTS has funds to buy other important things for the school.





We've seen the results of the exams at the end of the second term. 505 children took the exams. 62 were in the pre-school (which includes boys as well as girls). 45 girls are in the top year, year 8, so will be taking their school leaving exams at the end of this current third term. That is rather more than in previous years. So all the 21 teachers are very busy.

We continue to pay for the older girls' hygiene costs, so that they are comfortable coming to school. And of course, we pay the fees of secondary schools that our top year of girls wish to go on to when they finish at the school in Malek-Alel. We have recently heard from the school how the parents of the girls are encouraging their daughters to go on to secondary school, to give them choices for their future lives. The parents have said how grateful they are to our charity for supporting their girls and making their futures possible.



The vision that Joseph Ayok had over 20 years ago - to give the girls a choice of future rather than starting a family at the age of 15 - has been achieved! We want to continue to enable the school to provide this wonderful opportunity for the future of the people of their part of South Sudan.

As well as the wages and basic running costs, we are asked from time to time by the school to pay for other needs. The school is powered by solar electricity, and there were problems with it as a result of severe storms. We have of course funded the replacement of parts of the electrical system where necessary.

Indeed, lots of things do not last for ever at the school. The furniture in the school and in the chapel has been broken by its constant use. We have been asked to buy a chain saw to help them cut wood to replace damaged chairs and tables. We agreed to do that, as it means that local people can then help with the repair; and we do not need to pay the higher cost of workers who possess such tools.

The school teaches some of the older girls the use of laptop computers, so that they learn how to use a keyboard. But we learn that the school does not have access for its laptops to a Wifi signal which would enable the girls to learn how to use the internet. We are told that the most economical way to provide the internet to the 6 laptops the school owns is to link in to the Starlink satellite system. We have just sent the school funds to buy the system. We look forward to hearing how it is working for them.

And art is part of school life too – here is some clay work



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, which are vital to our mission. We continue to receive most generous support from the very committed group in Switzerland: the 20th anniversary of the start of their association is next spring, and two of our trustees will visit them to join their celebrations.

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

We have just completed our annual report and accounts for the last financial year. The accounts are on the Charity Commission website if you want to see them. Our Charity Commission reference number is 1117679.

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

We send you our warm wishes, especially in the coming season of Advent and Christmas.

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