

TOGETHER FOR SUDAN - The Bishop Mubarak Fund

Website: <http://www.togetherforsudan.org>

Registered UK Charity No. 1075852

OCTOBER 2007



Dear Friends of Sudan,

It is always for me both exhilarating and saddening to return to the Nuba Mountains. Exhilarating because the area is so beautiful and the people so endearing. Saddening because they have suffered so much and continue to experience enormous poverty and deprivation despite the arrival of peace in 2002. During a two week visit to Sudan in September I flew to Kadugli, capital of South Kordofan state, accompanied by Victor Gali Thomas, the senior Project Coordinator in Together for Sudan's Khartoum office. We found the area still transiting towards stability and the Nuba people as eager as always for education in whatever form could be offered.

Victor and I were met by Peter Simon Wani, TFS Field Manager, who may be the most popular man in Kadugli. Not just for his sincerity and compassion but for the doors he has opened for ordinary people, the poor and the illiterate, to better their lives. **Education means access to work, to new opportunities, to information, to empowerment, to a new way of life and possibly an escape from extreme poverty.** Peter cannot walk anywhere without being warmly greeted by any number of people.

For the past year and a half, TFS has been operating a very popular teacher training project in Kadugli but including as well Nuba teachers from the former SPLA controlled areas of the Nuba Mountains. **Together for Sudan trained more than 300 Nuba teachers and community leaders in 2006-7.** As the result of both demand and obvious need, we now plan to open a **Teaching Aids Centre** in our Kadugli office which will host classes and provide a resources library and other help for teachers developing their own materials.

But there is no shortage of needs in the Nuba Mountains. Since 2003 TFS has been associated with the Kadugli Girls Secondary School, a unique institution in the Nuba Mountains, through our "one meal a day" programme for students. With Together for Sudan encouragement, education authorities have now taken over this feeding programme and we are hoping to stay in partnership with the school by upgrading teachers and providing special bursaries for graduates who qualify for university.



Peter (R) and Victor (L) in the hills just outside Kadugli. Peter, a former student activist in Juba and Khartoum, has now worked for Together for Sudan in Kadugli for two years. Under his leadership communities have been rallied to set up kindergarten classes and women's literacy classes and begin to work together for a peaceful future. Peter hopes to get an internet connection into the TFS Kadugli office to enable him to communicate more easily with the TFS head office in Khartoum – and also to allow him to begin work on a masters degree in statistics.

WORKING TOGETHER TO CHANGE THE FUTURE

Our work began in 1996 in the IDP settlements surrounding Khartoum. **Together for Sudan remains committed to education for displaced and marginalized women and children as our priority service.** Two years ago TFS expanded to the Nuba Mountains. The availability of funding (here's where we count on you!) as well as our ability to monitor properly are also essential to the future direction of our work. **But the most persuasive factor in TFS work is what the Sudanese people say they need.**

Over the past two years it has become evident that we need to concentrate on what we do best and to **down size some of our education support projects.** Instability in the Khartoum area displaced settlements due to repatriation to southern homelands recently led to closure of the Breakfast Project. Currently, the Medicine Box project is being reduced due to monitoring difficulties. But public demand has made the TFS Eye Care Outreach and HIV/AIDS Awareness Outreach probably the most popular projects of any charity in the Khartoum area. TFS Eye Care Outreach recently expanded to the Nuba Mountains and we hope that the HIV/AIDS Awareness Outreach will be able to follow suit in this coming year.

Meanwhile, **the need to train kindergarten, basic school and adult literacy teachers has become the heart cry of communities** throughout the areas in which we work. TFS conducted six teacher training courses involving more than 150 teachers in the Khartoum area between July 2006 and August 2007 and will carry out three more before the end of 2007. Many of these trained teachers have already moved back to southern Sudan. From mid-2006 to mid-2007 eight similar teacher trainings involving over 300 teachers were conducted in the Nuba Mountains, with three more to be concluded before the end of the year. In response to popular demand, TFS has this year begun to offer **vocational training scholarships to young men as well as to women. The demand for education remains enormous.**

University scholarships, our first project, remain central to our work. Since 2002 109 TFS scholars have graduated from Sudanese universities and we expect to sponsor 271 university scholars during the 2007-8 academic year. This is one of our most expensive projects.



Working for Education at both ends of the Spectrum

On the left, President Gasim Badri of Ahfad University confers with Neimat Hussein, TFS Country Coordinator.
On the right, children in a TFS sponsored Kadugli kindergarten class sing a welcome.



LOOKING BACK AND LOOKING FORWARD

Silas Sworo Jojo, TFS Country Coordinator for the past seven years, has resigned and was replaced in September by **Neimat Hussein**, his deputy during the past three years. **Together for Sudan Trustees extend to Silas our great appreciation for his services to the Sudanese people through TFS and wish him well in his chosen work of community peace building.**

Neimat, a management graduate of Ahfad University, has worked with Together for Sudan for almost five years. Her vision for TFS is parallel to that of TFS Trustees: to concentrate on our core education work, including by continuing to emphasise training for basic, pre-school and literacy teachers, to expand our work in less developed areas such as Abyei, Upper Blue Nile and the Nuba Mountains and to expand our popular HIV/AIDS Awareness and Eye Care outreaches.

In addition to a new Country Coordinator, we also have a second Project Coordinator in the Khartoum office and a new Assistant Field Manager in the Kadugli office. **This is the strongest TFS team ever and we face the future with anticipation and confidence.** As well as new colleagues, we also have “new” and more suitable offices in both Khartoum and Kadugli and a “new” more spacious women’s hostel in Omdurman near Ahfad University. We depend on your contributions to help us continue to provide **“Power to the Powerless through Education.”** **Please support our life changing work by making a donation today!**

TFS LITERACY WORK BEGINS IN DARFUR

TFS rejoices over the long anticipated opening of woman’s literacy work in Darfur. In July 12 women and one man, Muslims as well as Christians, were trained as literacy teachers at a centre in El Fasher operated by the Good Shepherd Sisters. Teacher trainers sent by TFS from Khartoum were paid for by Refugees International Japan. One literacy class with 22 students has been set up since the training and others are expected to open soon, including in the IDP camps outside El Fasher. The three sisters who operate the centre, one each Irish, Egyptian and Sudanese, report that many people are now coming to the centre seeking to learn to read in Arabic as well as in English, Sudan’s second official language. Nearly 3,000 women have graduated from TFS literacy classes since 1998, including 570 this year. **Your contributions towards women’s literacy work in Khartoum State, South Kordofan and Darfur are urgently needed.**



First Together for Sudan literacy teachers training in Darfur

From the Treasurer Norman Swanney: My first year as TFS treasurer has been fascinating, if hard, work following take over from two distinguished long-serving treasurers, Dina Gillespie and Norman Jackson. One of the joys of my new honorary position is to receive many generous donations from supporters, both new and long standing. Without your generosity there just wouldn't be a Together for Sudan nor any of the life-changing assistance which our small team of project workers delivers so effectively. There is a family feel to this small but highly effective charity and it is a privilege to participate. Your regular support is the life-blood of TFS. Please fill in the enclosed standing order form if you can and, with Gift Aid, we can increase the value of your gift by 28p in every pound.

THE VALUE OF WORKING FOR “NOTHING”. The work of Together for Sudan is underpinned by volunteers who contribute their time and expertise. Many of them are Sudanese. Among them are TFS Patrons such as Ahfad University President Gasim Badri and Khartoum University Professor Yusuf Fadl Hasan both of whom sit on our university scholars selection committee and advise our educational projects. Professor Yusuf is also a signatory on our Khartoum bank account. Prominent surgeon Dr. Zakiieldin Ahmad is another bank signatory and recently agreed to join the HIV/AIDS Orphans selection committee. The law firm of Tijani and Medani has provided Together for Sudan with many hours of free legal service and one of their senior attorneys is also a TFS bank account signatory. Other professionals such as Dr. Nabila Radi who leads the TFS Eye Care Outreach project, probably puts in as much volunteer as paid professional service. Mr. Johnny Bodourian provides a car for me whenever I visit Khartoum and Mr. George Pagoulatos of the Acropole Hotel helps with travel arrangements and discounts as does Mrs. Huda Gillespie of Speed Bird Travel.

These friends of TFS are all Sudanese who love their country and long for its people to be educated, prosperous and living in peace. TFS is enormously indebted to them as well as to the many “semi-volunteers” who work for low salaries as our literacy, basic and kindergarten teachers and HIV/AIDS Awareness outreach teams. TFS relies on them and thanks them for the powerful impact they make towards community reconciliation by “Building Peace through Service”.

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



Lillian Craig Harris OBE
Director

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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.



Minallah Sebit, Office Accountant in Khartoum, is seen here taking good care of the cash. Please send a donation to Together for Sudan to thank her for her careful work and beautiful smile!