



## Latest news - December 2023

Dear Friends, as we come to the end of another year, we wanted to say a very big thank you to all those who have prayed for us. God has been faithful and once again has exceeded our expectations as to what He can enable us to do. A big thank you also to those who made a monthly gift to The Brickworks through the year, or who had made a one-off donation. We so appreciate your support which enables the charity to do what it does in South Sudan and Uganda. There have been many highlights:

- Supporting the Martha Clinic (right) for another year, paying some salaries and providing most of its medicines.
- Supporting three primary schools in a refugee settlement in Uganda, serving 3,500 children.
- Funding Martha Eye Clinic and enabling a cataract camp to be organised with 110 successful cataract operations completed.
- Helping 33 teachers to train at Yei Teacher Training College and KajoKeji Christian College.
- Helping the Bishop Allison Theological College to return to Yei from its temporary home in exile in Uganda.
- Paying the fees of four students to train as Clinical Officer, Nurses and Midwife.
- Making a visit to Yei with two doctors from Winchester, providing training for nursing students and Martha staff. Preaching in Yei Cathedral.
- Funding a one-year discipleship training programme for 100 youth leaders in refugee settlements in northern Uganda as well as funding various training workshops for clergy and laity.
- Giving some financial support to the Keliko language Bible translation project being led by the Diocese of Panyana (see the photo on page 2 of a delighted woman receiving a New Testament in her mother tongue).
- Providing 100 school desks to some church primary schools in Yei, as well as funding a latrine and repairing a borehole.



The start of 2024 marks a change to the areas in which we operate. Up until 2016, we worked exclusively in South Sudan. From the middle of 2016, due to the insecurity in Central Equatoria, more than a million South Sudanese fled to refugee camps in northern Uganda. This included the offices of the Dioceses of KajoKeji, Panyana and Morobo, the relocation of the KajoKeji Health Training Institute and the Bishop Allison Theological College. Our partner, FAITH South Sudan, also moved its work to Arua, Uganda. The Brickworks responded by helping where it had existing partnerships with organisations now in exile and we began to support four under-tree schools in the Palorinya refugee settlement.

We anticipated that this crisis would not last long, but we were wrong. Some areas around Yei are still insecure. Nevertheless, refugees are returning home in larger and larger numbers and the Diocese of

KajoKeji is now back in South Sudan and it has re-opened some of its church schools. The Bishop Allison Theological College returned to Yei 12 months ago.

In the light of this movement back to South Sudan, The Brickworks gave its partners notice 12 months ago of its intention to cease supporting projects in Uganda but to focus the work on the returning refugees together with those who remained in South Sudan throughout the conflict.

At their last meeting, the trustees agreed the details of the support it would give in the coming year. We thought we would share this with you.

➤ Martha Clinic running costs and medicines	£34,800	
➤ Eye Clinic running costs, medicines and cataract camp	£17,600	63% Health
➤ Health Students fees etc	£ 4,000	
➤ Teacher training course fees and support	£13,560	15% Education
➤ Discipleship training for young people in Yei	£ 7,200	
➤ Support for theological training	£ 3,600	20% Church
➤ Other training for clergy and laity	£ 6,800	
➤ Vehicle maintenance *, bank charges and sundry	<u>£ 1,500</u>	2% Other
➤ Total	£89,060	

We aim to keep a minimum reserve for emergencies of £10,000.

You can see that nearly two thirds of our expenditure next year will be to continue to support the Diocese of Yei Martha Primary Health Centre and Eye Clinic. Quite simply, it could not function without this significant level of support. We are very grateful to St Michael’s Church and to the Bradley Stoke Evangelical Church for significant contributions towards this cost. We have students who are part-way through their teacher training courses and so we need to continue to pay their fees. We are very grateful to the UK charity African Revival for its funding of the teacher training. Lastly, we are a Christian charity and the trustees want to maintain a good level of support to the discipleship training courses that will be run by our partner, FAITH SSD, and to the training for clergy and laity run by our church partners.

Since we started The Brickworks in 2009, we have trusted God to supply what was needed and He has done that, often in ways that far exceeded our expectations. We know that those who receive this letter pray for us and we hope that you will continue to do so. To those who give, thank you very much indeed.

We are thinking of making another visit to Yei in September 2024. If you would like to consider possibly joining us, please get in touch. Even for a visit of less than a week, the cost will be around £2,000.

On behalf of the Trustees and those who we work with in South Sudan, who may be helped in the coming year, may we wish you a very Happy Christmas.

Thank you so much. John and Poppy Spens



\* Just to clarify, it was fantastic that Samaritans Purse donated an old vehicle to The Brickworks in 2018 and this requires ongoing maintenance and repair. It is looked after by FAITH Uganda and used for its ministry among refugees.