



**FRIENDS OF
IBBA GIRLS SCHOOL
SOUTH SUDAN**

NEWSLETTER
July 2015

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moneygiving

If you feel you're able to contribute please do so through our link [HERE](#) to Virgin Money Giving! Every contribution counts and anything you do will make a huge difference to our cause! Thank you, from all of us.

Girls Education for Independence



Happy Independence Day South Sudan from everyone at Friends of Ibba Girls School

July 9 2015 Newsletter

Today Thursday July 9 is the 4th anniversary of South Sudan's independence. It is hard to celebrate while this young country still struggles with so much division and conflict (See 4 below).

However, Ibba Girls Boarding School (IGBS) continues to be a small beacon of light and hope in the wider darkness. Follow the 5 links below:

1. An encouraging progress report from Vicky Dratia, director of studies, on life at IGBS – including healthy competition between Elephant, Zebra and Tiger houses!
 2. Photos and report from architect Malcolm Worby and contractor Joseph Anzeti on progress with the building work, including a wonderful thatched roof kitchen, and staff/guest accommodation.
 3. More generous donations from loyal Friends and supporters, and the latest FIGS fund-raising challenge – Dormitory 3 before Feb 2016!
 4. Discussion of the political and economic conflict which sadly still undermines the country's peace and development. Michelle Obama endorses the crucial importance of girls education.
 5. Profiles of Felicity and Georgia at Leapfrog PR who give FIGS pro bono help with all our communications, including this Newsletter.
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1 - Progress Report on Year 2 Term One

By Ajidiru Vicky Dratia, Director Of Studies, Ibba Girls School



“The school opened for the academic year 2015 on the 1st Feb 2015 with 83 pupils, in Primary 4 and Primary 5. The teaching and learning activities were carried out; and two tests were given as forms of assessment and evaluation of the teaching and learning process. Meetings were held to discuss the pupils' health, social and

hygiene needs which contribute to academic progress. Social activities were organized as well. More details of all this below...

Academic Progress:

- Teaching and learning activities were well attended to, with most of the teachers teaching the syllabus coverage required for the first term in the various subjects. This was aided by the sufficient time and number of hours of contact with the learners because of the boarding school setting.
- Text books and teaching learning materials were not adequate in all primary five subjects, thus the subject teachers had to improvise. The pupils had to share reading materials. This contributed to the limited access to instructional materials.
- Two separate tests were done by the learners as forms of assessment. The first was mid term test and the second end of term test. These tests were meant to motivate the learners to revise the topics taught by the teachers in the classrooms.
- Prefects were elected in various posts ranging from the head girl to class prefects, and oriented in their roles and responsibilities to help the administration in management and also to train the girls in leadership skills.
- Holiday work was given to the learners to keep them revising their books during the holiday and their parents/guardians are expected to supervise the children as they do the work.
- Scholastic material were received from the County Education Department to boost teaching and learning in the two classes in the school.



Discipline:

- The learners were generally well disciplined, although there were a few cases in which some pupils fought and showed some anti-social behaviour.
- Vernacular speaking on the school compound by the learners has reduced, thus promoting English language speaking and improving on their spoken English

Social Activities:

- The pupils participated in a friendly football match with St Peters primary school which ended in draw. A second football match was scheduled with Ibba central primary school but was not played.
- Inter class competitive debates were done between primary four and five with primary five class winning in all the competitions. This helped in developing their speaking skills.

Clubs/ Houses:

- A Peace Club was formed to foster peace and unity among the learners to integrate them regardless of their tribal and cultural backgrounds. World Relief organization's education department will conduct training in counselling and leadership skills for the members next term.
- Three different houses, Elephant, Tiger and Zebra were formed, comprising 27 members each, in order to mix the girls in their different ages and ability, and to provide a favourable ground for competitive activities on an inter house basis.
- Inter house competition for music dance and drama was held on the 14/5/2015, where Zebra house emerged the winner, Elephant second and Tiger third. The children showed a lot of interest and participated actively and displayed talents and skills which when developed will benefit the girls in the future.



Conclusions and Recommendations:

In general all school activities were well attended to for the beginning of a year. We now hope to introduce and implement more programs to benefit both the learners and the teachers. These may include trainings in some areas for staff, career guidance and counselling for learners among others.

Recommendation:

- Teaching learning materials especially text books be acquired to promote teaching and learning in the class room, and access to reading material.
- Have competitive inter house activities to develop the girls' skills in various activities, talent discovery and development as well as inter personal skills.

Footnote about the textbooks (JB): We are in detailed discussion with the South Sudan government, the UK's Department for International Development (DFID), the Girls Education for South Sudan (GESS) programme, and with Rank Xerox, about how to get an adequate supply of text books for use by IGBS students and teachers, linked to the South Sudan curriculum.

2. Building a High Quality School - Step by Step

Our plan is to work in partnership with the South Sudan Trustees and Board of Governors to build and develop IGBS on a step by step modular basis over the next 7 years.

This means enrolling an additional 40 ten year old girls each year until 2022, when the school will reach its planned capacity of 360 students aged 10 to 18 years, in 9 classes from Primary 4 to 8 and then from Senior 1 to 4.

So when the new cohort of 40 girls arrives at the start of each school year in February we need to be ready with an extra classroom, dormitory, wash block, toilets, kitchen space, and all the other facilities to keep a boarding school running safely and happily – plus an extra teacher and matron of course.



Generous donations from Friends like you means that this year we have been able to build:

- a second dormitory and wash block for 40 girls
- a kitchen extension
- an additional water storage tank
- a mechanical water bore hole (funded by Fields of Life)

- additional staff/guest accommodation on site (funded by the McKenna Charitable Foundation)

Our architect Malcolm Worby worked closely with the FIGS and IGBS Trustees and Board of Governors to carry out a rigorous process of competitive tendering between 5 builders from Western Equatoria State.



By this process Joseph Anzeti and the United Brothers Consortium (UBC) were selected as providing the best cost and quality, and have carried out the above building work to a high quality – see the photos.

Our next priority is to build, equip and staff a 3rd dormitory to be ready to provide a safe home for the 3rd cohort of 40 ten year old students who will arrive next February 2016.

3. Investing in a Safe Home at IGBS for Every Girl



The dormitory, the matron and the cooks, form a very important part of life at IGBS, providing a safe home and a caring community for each girl for the whole 9 years they are at Ibba Girls Boarding School.

This loving residential school community also helps them to concentrate on their learning, as many of them come from distant villages across Western Equatoria State, still devastated by poverty, ill-health and the legacy of conflict.

Building, equipping and staffing each dormitory at IGBS is expensive, because South Sudan's post-conflict economy is still very uncertain and its infrastructure (e.g roads, water, sanitation, electricity, transport, skills, business, trade) are very basic indeed.

Even using as much local materials and labour as possible, the costs of importing materials and goods (e.g roofing) from Uganda are high.

Here is a broad breakdown of the costs:

- Building the dormitory and wash block for 40 girls, plus matron's quarters £95k
- 40 locally made metal bunk beds and wooden cupboards £11,400
- Mattresses, bed-linen, towels etc for £40 girls £4,000
- Matron: £1,100 per year for 9 years = £9,900

Total £120,300

This amounts to a cost of around £3000 per student - a very worthwhile investment to provide each of the 40 girls with a safe caring home for the whole 9 years they are at IGBS.

We have already received the following donations or pledges towards the costs of next year's dormitory and wash block:

- St Nicolas Church, Nottingham: £10,924
- Hugh Paget £10,000
- Jean Hartley £5,000
- John Benington £5,000
- Dawn Hart sponsored cycle ride on Sat Aug 8 – Target £1000. £815 raised

Dormitory if we can find:

- 50 people willing to give £273.50 each
- 40 people willing to give £547 each
- 30 people willing to give £1,094 each
- 10 people willing to give £2,187 each

We need to raise these funds by the beginning of September if we are to get the dormitory built and fitted out in time for the arrival of the additional 40 girls in February.

We will publish a written record of all those who fund a place, or a share of a place, for a girl in their 2016 dormitory home (unless you prefer to remain anonymous).

4. The Search for Peace, Justice and Stability

Sadly the 4th anniversary of South Sudan's independence is marked by continued volatility in many parts of the country. The political conflicts which broke out in December 2013 have still not been resolved, and the peace talks at national and international level have stalled without resolution.

The national government is therefore unable to offer unifying leadership, and sporadic conflict is still breaking out in many parts of the country. Many thousands have fled their towns and villages, food is scarce and prices are soaring.

Mercifully, the government of Western Equatoria State where Ibba Girls Boarding School (IGBS) is based, is still firmly committed to resolving conflicts and to promoting peace.

The Governor of Western Equatoria state, Joseph Bakosoro, spoke at the opening of Ibba Girls School in June 2014, about the benefits of education in "normalising" society after the 50 years of war with the North, and demonstrating what peace looks like in practice.

A year later, in June this year, he went to Maridi where some troubles had broken out, and re-affirmed his commitment to preventing any escalation of conflict.



The deputy governor of WES, Hon Sapana Abuyi, (and chair of the Trustees for Ibba Girls School), and the state minister for education, Hon Pia Philip (also a Trustee and active supporter of IGBS) both speak of the importance of investing in girls education to help promote better understanding between people from different tribes and parts of the country.



World leaders are also increasingly endorsing the importance of girls' education in lifting people and communities out of violence, poverty and injustice. Judith Ugwumadu reported as follows in Public Finance International in June

"US First Lady Michelle Obama announced yesterday a \$200m plan to educate young girls in developing countries, warning that it was now a serious public health issue'.

"Attending Mulberry School for Girls in east London on Tuesday, she talked about the 'heartbreaking' injustice of the more than 62 million girls around the world who are out of school.



"Obama said the US and UK planned to work together to improve access to education for adolescent girls in poor countries.

"This is not just a moral issue — it is a serious public health issue,' she told pupils at the Tower Hamlets school ahead of a trip to Downing Street...

"Girls who attend secondary school marry and have children later, have lower rates of maternal and infant mortality and HIV/Aids, and are more likely to immunise their children. It is a national security issue, as education is one of the best weapons we have in the fight against violent extremism. And girls' education is an urgent economic issue.

"DFID's international development secretary Justine Greening, who welcomed Obama to London, also spoke to pupils at the school about the importance of education for both girls and boys.

"She said it was a 'tragedy' that there are millions of children in the world who have never been to school, while some don't make it to secondary school.

"Greening added that DFID was committed to continue supporting 11 million children in developing countries through school over the next five years."

5. Warm Thanks to Leapfrog PR!

FIGS has no full time staff and depends for all its work on the generosity of people who give their time as well as their money on a voluntary basis.

We will shortly publish a list of all our volunteers on the FIGS website. Here we highlight the work of Felicity Read and Georgia Clancy from Leapfrog PR who (together with Totality Marketing – to be featured next month) look after our PR and communications, including preparing and mailing these Newsletters.

Felicity Read, Managing Director, Leapfrog PR



At Leapfrog PR we have supported FIGS since 2011 when John did a great job in bringing his friends and colleagues on board with the mission to achieve Bridget's vision of a boarding school for girls in Ibba.

My family has had the privilege of hosting Bridget (and others from Ibba) and learning more about her incredible journey which has made us all the more determined to help where we can - including my son Ed visiting Ibba for the opening ceremony last year and helping to make the Totality film featured on the website.

I'm passionate about women's rights and the importance in a global context of girls achieving education in order to lift themselves and their families out of poverty – partly instilled by the culture at Newnham College Cambridge, walking the same corridors as those women who fought hard for women's education not that long ago here in the UK. Every girl, regardless of creed, colour or circumstances has the right to realise her potential.

We've supported FIGS in a number of ways over the years providing PR and digital marketing support and are happy (but not content) that there are now 80 girls being

safely educated at Ibba Girls Boarding School. We're proud to be part of the campaign to raise funds to ensure that the next class intake is properly resourced, and the next and the next until we reach full capacity in 2022!

As well as running Leapfrog, I'm kept busy with the logistical and tax demands of my family, a Cotswold garden and have recently become a slave to my Fitbit.

Georgia Clancy, Senior Account Executive, Leapfrog PR



Hello, I'm Georgia and as a Senior Account Executive at Leapfrog PR I support FIGS with newsletters, social media and raising the charity's profile.

It was during my undergraduate degree at the University of Exeter, where I studied Politics and International Relations, that my interest in gender issues was ignited. During this time I explored topics such as the gender pay gap, the disproportionate way in which women are affected by poverty, development policies and the positive impact that empowering young women and girls can have in their families and communities.

After this, I worked in public relations and social media for a year, before returning to education and completing a master's degree in Gender and International Relations at the University of Bristol.

I have now found my way to Leapfrog PR where I am thrilled to be supporting FIGS in their mission to provide girls education in South Sudan.

Outside of work I like to cook, harness my inner calm with Yoga and follow the Formula 1 championship!

Giving



Did you know that you can give regularly to FIGS via [Stewardship](#), and make one-off donations via the FIGS [Give.net webpage](#)?

These are in addition to [Virgin Money Giving](#), an online giving platform which accepts monthly donations, or setting up a [standing order](#) directly with your bank or writing a cheque.

If you wish to [sponsor a group](#) of students the level of sponsorship recommended is [£27 per month](#) (plus Gift Aid). While higher than some child sponsorship schemes, it still does not meet the full costs of running a residential school in the challenging conditions of South Sudan – where in addition to the classroom teaching, we provide a safe, caring living environment which enables the girl-students to learn without the pressure of heavy domestic duties or, even worse, early marriage and childbirth. This means providing dormitories, beds, matrons, cooks, food, water, internet, transport, security, pastoral care – as well as teachers and other staff living on-site around the clock.

We hope that you feel able to support FIGS in a manner that works for you.

Should you have any further questions, please contact Chernise, our Student Sponsorships Coordinator, at chernise.neo@gmail.com.

Of course we are continuing our fundraising for capital cost - for the buildings and resources required for the next in-take of 40 girls in March 2016. If you feel you're able to contribute please do so by clicking on the 'Donate' button below! Every contribution counts and anything you do will make a huge difference to our cause!

Thank you!

With our best wishes and warm thanks for your continued support and generosity.

John Benington Chair, on behalf of the Trustees and Friends of Ibba Girls School

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