



UNDER TREE SCHOOLS

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Dear Friends

We've reached another very exciting milestone in the life of our new school in Malek, Southern Sudan.

The first full year of the Ayok Anei* school ended at Christmas, and after the long holiday the second year successfully started in May. A bit of a delay because the state wanted all their teachers to help run the polling in the General Election in April!

So now we have 321 girls registered for the new school year (aged 6-15). As many of them are responsible in the day time for their smaller brothers and sisters, we also have 114 of them in a nursery school at the same time. The pupils were all given a new dress as school uniform when they registered.



The pupils are divided into eight classes, depending partly on their age. But many of them are in the first year of the curriculum because they have not had schooling before, or because they are repeating the first year's work. The school is open in the mornings, and after classes all the children get a midday meal before they set off for home. We are grateful to the World Food Programme for supplying the food for this meal.



We now have a photo of our headteacher, Elias Bak Bak Anei, with his wife Mary. We are very proud of Bak's leadership of the school over its first year and his enthusiasm to continue in this role into the future.



He has put together a team of teachers who are state approved, so they have had training and they will be paid by the state. Not all the teachers were on hand when we took this photo, but here is a selection of the team! Doong, who has lead responsibility for the first year of pupils, is back row left. Flora who teaches Arabic to the older children is back row right and Yohana, who teaches maths and science to years 6-8 is front row middle.

We have completed eight classrooms, teachers' offices, 12 accommodation huts for staff and visitors and a big hut used by the teachers for meetings (and by the nursery during the rainy season) together with toilet blocks for staff and pupils, and a large cleared area for sports. There is a small vegetable plot now, located by the borehole. Sadly the roof was blown off the newer classroom block in March in a freak storm. A replacement roof is now securely back on, but the cost of that work has taken most of our money away from other projects.



Next steps

High on our priority list now is to build a proper kitchen to cook the children's meals and to provide a sheltered area where they can eat them. We need to install solar equipment to generate electricity to power lighting and computers – we have been given most of the money for the equipment by St Mary's Church Barnes, but there is the cost of transporting it from Nairobi to find. Then we want to build another block which can serve as a library and a permanent base for use of computers, and a chapel.. Joseph wants to help the school become more self sufficient in food and we are considering how we could help them start a farm. The farm could also provide vocational training for the people of Malek in agricultural techniques. We can begin these projects when we have the income.



The new Administration Building

Joseph went out to the school in May with Peter Boyling our administrator and his wife Claire. They report that Bak and his staff were looking forward to the new school year. They left money for the running costs of the school for the four months May to August. Our first obligation from now on of course is to provide them enough funds for future running costs. In current circumstances we need at least £2500 per month; this will cover salaries of the non-teaching staff and stationery and other educational supplies, as well as fuel and maintenance of the truck.

Support

It would be wonderful to develop links between the school in Malek and schools in this country. If you can suggest to a school – or a church - near you that they might like to consider us as a project we would be very pleased. Do let us know how you get on. As a start they might like to look at our website, which we are in the process of updating at the moment. We can then offer them more material of course. And if you know of a charitable trust that might be interested in giving us a grant do speak to them. We can provide whatever information they would need. You can get access to the photos that Peter and Claire brought home from Malek (see link at foot of letter).

If you can make a donation towards developing the school, could you please send it to our Treasurer Dr Ian Sykes at 11 Foinavon Close, Rowley Regis, West Midlands, B65 8QB. If you pay income tax we can get an extra 28% from the Government if you sign a Gift Aid declaration, which you can print off our website, so please do that if you can.



Annual meeting – 16 October 2010

Our next annual supporters meeting will be on 16 October, and it will be in Kidderminster. We will send you details closer to the date, but please put the date in your diary. Kidderminster may be more convenient for you to reach than London has been in past years! It is easy to get to by train and the church is five minutes walk from the station. We hope too that we will be able to welcome representatives from our supporters in Switzerland who are so generous to us.

At the AGM on that day we will say goodbye to our chairman of trustees Rev Ross Collins who is stepping down after doing marvellous things for us over the years. His successor will be Dr Ian Sykes. So we need a new Treasurer and we think we may already have found one! How organized is that!

Together with the community in Malek, many of you have played a part in enabling us to reach this stage in the birth and life of the Ayok Anei school. A very big THANK YOU to all of you and we look forward to a continuing relationship with you.

God's blessings

Karin and Joseph Ayok-Loewenberg

* We have called our school the Ayok Anei school after Joseph's father, who was the first teacher to work in Malek. It is also exciting that Joseph's father's school in Malek (where Joseph was born), which was destroyed in the war, is now being rebuilt by the state and will be a secondary school.

Link to the photos: http://picasaweb.google.com/115086958146582124125/MalekForWeb_May2010#