



Dear Friends

June 2022

Latest news

The Brickworks was founded in 2008 to work exclusively in the very needy nation of South Sudan. After many years of civil war, its health statistics were among the worst in the world. Very high levels of maternal mortality, few qualified doctors and nurses, few trained teachers, few homes had access to clean water or a latrine and many children were dying before their fifth birthday. UNICEF announced in 2016 that more teenage girls die in childbirth than finish secondary school. The needs are enormous.

Over the last fourteen years, The Brickworks has worked in partnership with the Episcopal Church of South Sudan (ECSS) to help it to make a difference. This has meant investing in church schools, to improve classrooms like the one in the photo, and to build new ones. The Martha Clinic in Yei has also been supported to ensure that a quality service can be delivered by qualified clinical staff, many of whom had their training sponsored by The Brickworks. Its ante-natal clinic has recently expanded and the team carries out many deliveries successfully.

The Diocese of Yei strongly believes in holistic ministry and that its people deserve decent schools and decent health facilities. This was the rationale for opening the Martha Eye Clinic which was open for several years before it was forced to close in 2016 due to insecurity. The staff were among the many who fled for safety to Uganda and are now living in refugee settlements. In 2019 it became safe for them to return and the Eye clinic re-opened. This is the only specialist eye clinic in the whole area and people travel for miles for eye treatment or for spectacles. Annual cataract camps are organised and funded by The Brickworks and to date more than 1000 successful cataract operations have been performed, restoring sight to many blind patients, such as this woman.

The Martha Children's Ward, which was built with funding from The Brickworks also closed in 2016. We heard last week that it has now fully re-opened and we hope this is another sign that things are beginning to return to normal.



There is a huge shortage of trained teachers in South Sudan and the Bishop of Yei has asked The Brickworks to sponsor the training of as many teachers as possible. With help from another UK charity, African Revival, this year The Brickworks has awarded full scholarships to a record number of 23 teachers, studying for the Diploma of Education. The photos show ten of the teachers who this year received scholarships from The Brickworks and Almay Pitia who completed his course a few years' ago and returned as Head Teacher of the primary school in his village. This year, The Brickworks is also sponsoring a midwife and two nurses at the Yei School of Nursing.



There are a variety of ways that The Brickworks tries to help the church to make a difference in very tough conditions, where so many of its people are away from their normal homes and living in refugee settlements.



The Brickworks helps support the Bishop Allison Theological College, which trains ECSS clergy. The college was forced into exile in Uganda in 2017 but now that the situation in South Sudan is more stable, the College plans to return to Yei in January 2023.

The Brickworks sees the training of laity as just as important and recently funded a course for church treasurers (see photo), and the training of church youth leaders in the refugee settlements and at the cathedral in Yei. All this training is delivered by local church leaders and the aim is to strengthen the South Sudanese church.



We are so grateful for the amazing support and the prayerful interest that you all show in the work of The Brickworks. Through your support, we have been able to continue to provide significant resources for the ECSS church in South Sudan and to those in exile in the refugee camps in northern Uganda. We fund some primary schools in the refugee settlements, catering for over 4,000 primary school children, and as mentioned above, try to support the churches in the refugee settlements with a variety of training programmes. We long for the time when the refugees can return home to resume their lives with their families in a peaceful South Sudan. As we wrote last time, Jesus urged his disciples always to pray and not give up. (Luke 18.1). So let us continue to uphold our sisters and brothers in prayer as they struggle with so many challenges.

John and Poppy Spens and the Trustees