



**FRIENDS OF
IBBA GIRLS SCHOOL
SOUTH SUDAN**

July 2016

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DONATE NOW



Cheques Payable to: Friends of Ibba Girls School
Send to: 12 Ash Grove, Chinley, High Peak, SK23
6BQ

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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.



5th Anniversary of Independence

July 2016

Dear Friends,

1. This **Saturday July 9**, we stand in solidarity with our friends in South Sudan on the 5th anniversary of their independence as a nation – although our hearts are heavy with sadness for the suffering and pain they still face (read more below).
2. Nevertheless FIGS will be joining many South Sudanese people from the UK diaspora at a wonderful gathering on Saturday in London. This is organised by our good friend and supporter Nyakor Riam who is also on the cover of Black Beauty this month.
3. **FIGS are also proud to celebrate its first 5 years work in South Sudan.**
We were set up as a UK charity in 2011 following a visit to the UK by 3 community leaders from Ibba: Commissioner Bridget Nagomoro, Bishop Wilson Kamani, and Fr Stephen Kumyangi. Over the past 5 years we have worked closely together with them and other community leaders and the state government. We can together now celebrate the practical achievements, which have led to the school being opened in 2014, and is now in its third year with 120 students – a small beacon of light and hope in this scarred country.
4. The best seeds of hope lie in the 120 students now at the school, who will be the future leaders of their communities and of their nation. Director of Studies **Vicky Dratia sent us a report** and photos only this morning.
5. **Seba's Story** - Primary 6 student, Seba, tells about her time at IGBS.
6. **Millions and miracles** - one of the most amazing achievements of the past 5 years is that the generosity of over 700 individuals, churches, schools and small to medium trusts and foundations has led to FIGS raising £1million to support the building, staffing and running of the school.

Read more on each of these points below...

1. The Long Painful Struggle for Independence and Peace

On its 5th anniversary South Sudan, the newest country on earth, faces many tensions and divisions. The Transitional Government of National Unity (TGoNU) is still struggling to establish full security, the rule of law, a stable economy (currently heavily over-dependent upon oil), and an inclusive democratic process.

We know from the history of peace-building after conflict (e.g Northern Ireland, South Africa, Iraq) how hard it is to make the transition from military to civilian rule, and to establish a sense of common national purpose which can harness all the different conflicting interests behind a strategy for physical, political economic and social development for the whole country.

The hope for South Sudan at present seems to lie in the number of committed people working together on practical programmes for water, sanitation, food, health, education, and community development. We are proud that Ibba Girls School is one of these small signs of hope.

2. Celebrate with us in London - Sat 9th July

Celebrating
THE PEOPLE
OF THE REPUBLIC OF
SOUTH SUDAN

SAT 9TH JULY
@ 2 West End Lane,
Kilburn NW6 4NT
5PM-10.30PM

£5 ENTRY
(first 50 people receive
one complimentary
drink & South Sudan
Oyee Wristband)

**South Sudanese
cuisine for sale**
Beverages for sale

WWW.TAMAMGLOBAL.COM | 07708 895296

This is organised by our good friend and supporter Nyakor Riam “to celebrate the culture of the beautiful people of ROSS. We feel it's important to unite our people by

sharing our culture, talents, knowledge & businesses with each other & our host communities.” Nyakor was born in Jonglie State but her family had to flee when the war broke out and she has been in London since 1985. She is a University trained nurse, and is also now developing a promising modelling career. She is the cover girl on Black Beauty magazine this month.



Tamam Global on Twitter

twitter.com

"#wcw Nyakor Riam is the covergirl for @BlackBeautyMag blackbeautymag #southsudanebeauty #southsudantalent #ross"

3. FIGS is also 5 years old!

FIGS was set up as a charity in 2011. In the 5 years since then, working closely with the Trustees, Board of Governors and staff at IGBS we have:

- Appointed a “green” architect, Malcolm Worby, to design the 73 acre site and buildings on sustainable principles, using natural resources, local materials and labour wherever possible – mud bricks made on site; indigenous wood; solar electricity; solar pumped water, giving Ibba its first ever taps.
- Raised sufficient funding to build the first classroom block, dormitories, showers, toilets, kitchen, staff accommodation, so that the school can be fully residential and serve the needs of girls coming from long distances across Western Equatoria State.



- Appointed an excellent team of African staff - head teacher, Richard Aluma, director of studies Vicky Dratia, finance manager Sonaa Santino, classroom teachers Yoane, Agnes and Fabiano, matrons, nurse, driver, cooks, cleaners, groundsmen and security staff. We pay and train our staff very well, and expect from them high standards, continuous improvement, and long service.
- Opened the school in 2014 to its first 40 ten year old girls, with a great public celebration - speeches, dancing and feasting with 300 representatives from the local community, the churches of all denominations, the state and national government.

NEXT STEPS – A 10 YEAR PLAN

- IGBS is now in its 3rd year, with 120 girls in Primary 4, 5 and 6. The plan is to enrol an additional 40 ten year old students each February until 2022, when it reaches its planned capacity of 360 girls aged 10 to 18+, in Primary 4 to 8 and Senior 1 to 4, when they will leave for University, professional training or other leadership roles. Excellence without elitism.
- We therefore need to build an additional classroom, dormitory, toilets and washing facilities; to appoint an additional classroom teacher and matron; and to upgrade the infrastructure each year for the next 6 years. The costs are high (about £350k capital plus £150k revenue per year), because the devastation left by the 50 year war of independence means that many

materials have to be imported at great difficulty and expense.

- FIGS so far has raised over **£1million** in donations from over 700 individuals, churches, schools, and small family trusts. Our business plan for the next 10 years involves an increasing percentage of funds coming from within South Sudan, and small income generating businesses linked to the school (e.g agriculture; fish farming; goats; honey; repair trades; residential training centre).
- However, we also face some more immediate needs – to raise £75,000 to build a new block of 3 classrooms in time for the next 40 ten year old girls arriving in February 2017 (and classroom capacity for the following two years).

4. Vicky's Report

I'm pleased to inform you that the school is running well. We completed the mid term tests yesterday, are marking, teaching and preparing the girls for music dance and drama scheduled for 17/7/2016 concurrent with the parents visitation day. We have received 140 books from the Education department to aid the teaching of social studies. Each title has 20 copies these are:

- Julius Nyerere; John Garang; Jomo Kenyatta; Barack Obama; Kwame Nkrumah; Nelson Mandela; Fly Eagle Fly

We are grateful for this support which will help the girls to read the stories of these great leaders. Here are some photos taken with the girls this morning,

God bless you,
Vicky Dratia



5. Seba's story



Seba James, Primary 6 student, tells us about her experience of being a student at Ibba Girls Boarding School (IGBS) since it opened in 2014.

I come from Nzara County. My father is a driver and the rest of my family are farmers. I have one brother and six sisters who are all in school.

When I first joined the school in 2014, it was very hard for me to speak, read and write English, as well as to understand the teachers in class. But slowly I have gotten better. The best things last year were practising reading and speaking English, and learning about computers. I can remember some things we learnt last year, like in Science where we learnt that there are eight planets. In Social Studies we learnt about early people from the Stone Age.

In December I was not happy to go home as I thought we should continue with our studies. But I also felt happy when I remembered that I was going to see my sisters and my mother. When at home, I taught my sisters all that I had learnt at IGBS. Even my elder sister, who is in a more senior class, learnt some spellings of words from me. When coming back to IGBS, I left my story- and spelling books at home for them. All of them said they also want to come and learn at IGBS like me.

Before I came back to IGBS this year I said to myself that I must study very hard, so that I pass at the best grade. But my worry was about how I would come back this year if my father did not receive his salary to pay for school fees and transport. In the end we travelled with my father on a motorbike he borrowed and it took about five hours to reach IGBS. When we arrived, we found that we were two days early and there was no one to receive us. We waited at the house of my relative in Ibba. When I came back on opening day I was very happy to meet friends once again.

My favourite subjects are Social Studies and Agriculture. The hardest subject is still English grammar. So far this year, I have learnt new things like the botanical names

of crops in Agriculture, punctuation marks in English and about early peoples in Social Studies. My best friend is called Angelina. I like to play after class and do revision in the evening. My suggestions for improving our school are to have a dining room, a food store, and a swimming pool!

6. MILLIONS AND MIRACLES

One of the most amazing achievements of the past 5 years is that the generosity of over 700 individuals, churches, schools and small to medium trusts and foundations has led to FIGS raising **£1million** to support the building, staffing and running of the school.

See our [website](#) for a list of our core funders to who we send heartfelt thanks.

Here are some of the latest fund-raising ventures by FIGS supporters and volunteers:

- [Joyce Carr Doughty Trust](#) gave us a further grant for a lockable food store and bicycles for some of our wonderful support staff to get to work at the school.



- [The Austin Bailey Foundation](#) has donated £400 for seeds and tools to support the growing of food at the school – this not only cultivates the students skills but also helps to reduce the school's food bill. Thanks to Zsofia Ilona for drafting this funding bid.
- [Margaret Eddershaw](#) has organised another [poetry reading](#) for FIGS – but this time in Nafplion, Greece! [Halcyon Days & Desert Nights](#), was held at the Fougaro Arts Centre, Nafplion, Greece, on Friday, July 1st 2016. Readers were: Margaret Eddershaw, poet, Virginia Kagkou, translator, and Gill McEvoy and Jenny Elliott, Poets in Residence at the Harvard Center for Hellenic Studies, Nafplion. The programme included: Margaret's poems inspired by Greece, also read in Greek by Virginia, Gill's poems, recently published in CABOODLE (anthology of 6 poets), Jenny's poems from her prize-winning pamphlet, MAKKIN-WIRES and Margaret's African poems from *Riding the Rainbow*. The event raised £200!



- [James Barrett](#) wrote a wonderful inspirational article for the Kindness Initiative and donated again to FIGS as a further act of kindness, you can read it [here](#).
- [Mary Twidell](#) is donating the proceeds from sale of her old car to FIGS!
- [The Cotswold Times](#) published a 2 page spread with photos to support John

- Benington's 75th birthday appeal, you can read it, [here](#).
- [John Benington's 75th birthday appeal](#) has so far raised over £11,000 with Gift Aid, and with more promised in the pipeline. See our [website](#) for the list of donors so far.
 - [Mig Kerr](#) asked guests at her 60th birthday Ceilidh to donate to FIGS and IGBS. You can still donate, [here](#).
 - [Jean Hartley](#) is climbing the Alps for FIGS, going across a number of mountain ranges from Germany to Italy. You can sponsor Jean, [here](#).

So we have lots to be thankful for in the first 5 years of Ibba Girls School. What we are doing together is a drop in the ocean of need in South Sudan, but it is already producing ripples out into the lives of the 120 students, their families, and the communities. We look forward to the next 5 years with hope and expectation. Thank you for celebrating with us and the people of South Sudan.

Thank you!

With our best wishes and warm thanks,

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

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