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REPORT OF MY VISIT TO JUBA - APRIL 2013

DISCOVERING JUBA

To fly to Juba, I preferred to do it via Ethiopia rather than Egypt.

During the stopover in Addis Ababa, I have time to observe the Ethiopians, who seem to me a civil and gentle people: airport employees greet each other by kissing and communicate by touching; they get aware that I seem lost and they direct me to the second terminal (not obvious), a smaller building where I can get my flight to Juba.

The weather is mild when we board the plane in the early morning. It is a Bombardier Q400 Data, the smallest aircraft of the Ethiopian Airlines fleet.

On the plane, except for a handful of Westerners and a group of fifteen Chinese, I am not sure that the other passengers are Southern Sudanese. I am somewhat surprised by the attitude of my



neighbours: one squashes my rucksack in the baggage compartment with his big bag, the other chews his gum by letting it be known to everyone, and my immediate neighbour awarded himself the armrest. Unfortunately, I shall have the opportunity during my stay to feel on certain occasions a little animosity not consistent with traditional Sudanese etiquette. Betram will explain to me that Juba includes people who have acquired during the past decades, different behavioural patterns: Southerners, repatriated settlers from neighbouring countries (East Africa in particular) and northern Sudan.

For now, seeing that there remain at the back some empty seats out of the 78 seats of the plane, I decide to isolate myself.

As we fly low, I can see the uninhabited areas.

The landing area (see photos) seems barely inhabited. Hence my surprise when I discovered an hour later that **the airport is almost in the city.**

ASASE – Swiss Association of Friends of Sister Emmanuelle

Betram greet me with Marline, the accountant. According to Betram, this airport (one of the smallest I've ever seen) has not changed in 40 years. A second terminal is still awaiting inauguration.

Luggage are discharged by hand and placed on the ground, but in the end, it's almost faster than conveyor belts! The visa formality takes a quarter of an hour. The luggage search is manual. Fortunately, Betram knows one of the customs officers, as well as one of the travellers who have arrived in the same plane as me. It will be like that throughout my stay: wherever you go, Betram meet someone he knows.

The sun is obscured by clouds.

It is the beginning of the rainy season.

Before I arrived, it rained almost five days without stopping. During the week, I shall experience only once a little shower.

Temperatures usually rub the 36 degrees in the shade.

Betram takes me in a Land Cruiser (1999) which belonged to his cousin, who died in late 2012 of a heart attack. He was the Ambassador of South Sudan to Kenya, which explains the right-hand drive vehicle, typical of many imported vehicles here. Betram has so far the use of this vehicle, without knowing for how long.

The father of this deceased cousin was a chief, one of the eighteen leaders of Jonglei state killed during the civil war in the late 60s.



They were executed in the bush for having collaborated with the Anya Nya rebels. All, except one of them who asked to be allowed to say his prayers before he was killed ... turned to Mecca, called a carpet and prostrated as required by the *salât* ...

It's Saturday, the streets of some neighbourhoods are deserted. Like (opposite) where is located the Buffalo Bank ... which is getting a new façade

through fees levied on every operation made by SVDP (©).

We are in the neighbourhood of large companies, ministries, embassies, the parliament of the state of Central Equatoria ... Here, even the Bishop's residence is surrounded by walls, and all walls are topped with barbed wire. In the 60-70 years, there were only hedges trees.

There are still trees in Juba, the city is not completely "concrete", but they were razed by the Sudanese army, especially in the "forest" to prevent the rebels from hiding there.

"If I were mayor of Juba" Betram said, "I would make a decree banning the secure fences. It is a matter of psychology: in fact, it increases the feeling of insecurity."

But this feeling is not totally unfounded: **with more than two out of three adults unemployed, the city registers each night numerous thefts.**

We pass the mausoleum of John Garang, the historic leader of the SPLA, who died in a helicopter crash in July 2005.

We take a road (see opposite) built two years ago.

The lamps are fitted with solar panels.

After several kilometres, we arrive at a military zone. *"The HQ buildings were donated by the U.S. Army, prefabricated and they do not hold water. Everything is built haphazardly (by Ugandans or Chinese) and without a sense for the long-term."*

Close to the long paved road are the *Boma* administrative services to which *our land* in Nyarjwa belongs. The *Boma* is the smallest administrative unit. A row above is the *Payam*. The *Payam* is divided into Northern / Southern Juba, more commonly known as the Northern / Southern Bari, after the name of the largest tribe in Juba at its origin. Stanislas Mogga is Bari. Betram is Dinka.

After ten minutes, we arrive at two unpaved roads. One goes to Wau, the capital of the state of Western Bahr el-Gazhal and third most populous in the country, 650 km north-west of Juba town.



We return to the centre, in the popular district of Malakia. Traffic is quite fluid. Two types of vehicles are predominant: 4x4 and motorbikes.

Betram tells me **that the training provided in vehicle repair in our centre in Lologo is extremely popular.**

For the current session, there were three times more requests than places available (60).

Many bikes are taxis. The fare is between 2 and 10 SSP (0.5 to 2.5 €).

Some bikes carry three people.

The South Sudanese ladies sit sidesaddle (see opposite). They differ in that from the Ugandan according to Betram...

He knows an orthopaedic surgeon who is overwhelmed with cases of motorcycle accidents.

The authorities tried to regulate the traffic of two-wheelers. A Minister of the Interior tried to limit their traffic zones to some streets as well as the number of passengers to one person, but he was forced to withdraw the decree after riots.



Betram stops at my request on the side to allow me to take a picture. A car stops behind us honking. It is an old acquaintance of Betram: a doctor who has successfully launched his own business in Juba. He now has a project of a private clinic which he would like to discuss with Betram. After studying medicine in Cuba, he lived in Canada. Betram's mother and sister residing in this country, the two Sudanese met there a few years ago. This young man is one of thousands of teenagers who made the "Red Army" sent to Cuba by the rebels during the war years, the eldest in order to undergo military training and fight back, the younger to follow a schooling curriculum: The brightest pursued higher education on the island.

This young man who trained in socialist countries, and who now declares himself resolutely capitalist, also had the chance to be the youngest son of a lawyer educated in England, who became one of the most famous in Africa in the 60s. After the Addis Ababa agreement in 1972, he had been part of the regional government (*High Executive Council*), and had acquired great popularity; he became *Chief Justice* of the Supreme Court of Southern Sudan and was seen as a potential rival to John Garang.



Within minutes, we are at the foot of the "mountain of Jesus", formerly called "the mountain of the devil" (see opposite).

Families settled there to extract stones they break by hand.

A stack of these stones is sold SSP 150 (€ 40).

For the foundations of the clinic Nyarjwa which required five trucks of gravel (see mounds on the left of the photo), SVDP got supplied from local companies

Near this site was erected a monument to the Unknown Soldier, where lie

those who died with John Garang.

Juba spreads across quickly and erratically

We travel on a track (see opposite) located in an area which, four years ago, belonged to the outskirts of the city.

A road project here should facilitate access to Lologo with a new bridge (funded by Japan) a few meters from our training centre.

But the people that live along this track will have to leave their precarious habitat.

Currently, Betram lives with a cousin who was Ambassador in Libya before the separation, and who is part of the Commission in charge of recent discussions between North and South Sudans.



However Betram is actually building a house that should be ready this summer.

He is also directly affected by the lack of visibility of urban planning.

He chose a site between Lologo and Nyarjwa (where lies the land vested for the herbal medicine program), "in a forest" as he says (i.e. in an uninhabited area). People were surprised at his choice. But he has been informed of an upcoming census of the plots of land in this area. *"If you leave the field without building anything on it, you might not have permission to build. It is even better than you physically occupy the house when they come. They give you a number. Then they wait for a road to be drawn. The road will eat some of the ground, but I investigated to make sure that it does not pass through the house itself. Because otherwise, they may well force you to move, without offering any compensation."*



One of the current problems related to uncontrolled urban development: waste

Land prices exploded.

In 2009, a plot of 400 m² in a residential area cost 10 000 SSP.

In 2011, it was 15,000 SSP. **Currently, it is between 60,000 (about € 15,800, or € 40 per m²) and 80 000 SSP (€ 21,000 or € 52 per m²),** depending on the zone.

"You take cities to people, not people to cities."

The slogan of John Garang unfortunately fizzled. How to rebuild the country? On what? From what basis? During the last twenty-five years of civil war, the villages were forsaken.

Those who remained in the South during the war are the most vulnerable group. Everything was destroyed in their living place.



The people who lived in refugee camps abroad, who were helped and cared for, also have great difficulty to start afresh here.

As for those returning from the North, they live in majority on the outskirts of Juba.

A home averages four children. Today it is already difficult to meet the basic needs of your spouse and your children, and virtually impossible for one person to support, as in the past, the entire extended family.

Here are some prices collected in a supermarket. This is not really significant because this kind of supermarket, quite rare in Juba, is hardly frequented by locals. Basically, it is much more expensive than in any supermarket at home.



A bottle of champagne: SSP 335 (85 €).

A 6kg washing machine: 4500 SSP (1155 €).

A leather sofa and two armchairs: 23 000 SSP (€ 5,900)

A pressure cooker: SSP 315 (81 €)

T-Shirt for men: 65 SSP (17 €)

A football: SSP 80 (32 €)

The price of gasoline (fully imported) at the pump is about 6 SSP (1.22 € / 1, 5 CHF) per litre.

A meal in a restaurant equally frequented by foreigners including local beer or water + main course costs between 6 and 13 €.

The only areas supplied with electricity are uptown.

But according to Betram, supply is less secure than when you are equipped with generators!

The lack of housing and the presence of international NGOs, have inflated hotel prices to an extent completely

disconnected from the quality of service offered. Betram struggled to find me a hotel to meet my demands: namely, bathroom with hot water and WIFI connection (to which he wisely added air conditioning) for \$ 100 a night (including breakfast) maximum.

See above the entrance to an expensive hotel (\$ 400 min) where African Presidents lodge when on visit¹.



Hotel Karibu Choma (well) chosen by Betram belongs to Eritreans.

It responds perfectly to my request, with television as an extra!

Yet what I see corroborates Betram's remarks on rough and flimsy construction quality: the hotel is practically new, but it already looks old and worn. In the bathroom, the shower floor is curled, the support of the knob does not hold.

I take my first breakfast at the bar/outdoor restaurant, with the constant hum of the generator, the cries of a customer behind me on the phone and no less constant noise of the television connected to Al Jazeera.

I learned my drinking Nescafe (no coffee) that a conference should be open in Doha about development in Darfur, and the first ones to be affected by these palaver are demonstrating in their camps: before the development (of the banking accounts of some apparatchiks more than that of their region), the displaced people in Darfur require to live simply safe...



Passage of a passport to a blissful marriage

Customers (Sudanese?) call for waitresses without hello nor thanks, but whistling, snapping fingers, barking or at best using the imperative.

More generally, there is a very macho attitude in men... Maybe the legacy of years spent in the armed rebellion.

When I return to my room, I find the chambermaid sitting on my bedside table watching TV she had switched on.

"Oh, you watch TV?" I tell her in English. She replies: "I thought there was a war."

¹ For the curious ones: <http://qualityhoteljuba.com>

The University of Juba is open:

Notably the faculties of medicine, law, animal resources, agriculture etc...

Approximately 2,000 students came from the University of Juba, which was relocated in Khartoum. To these are added those from other countries.

The old buildings (see photo of the entrance) being not up to the standards of a modern university, the relocation of the university is in progress. Several buildings are under construction along the paved road mentioned on page 3.



Betram said that to his knowledge, the postal service is no longer operational.

- *How do you do when you need to send something?*
- *We send someone.*

A man walks down the street, completely naked. Bertram tells me with a smile that he lives according to his tradition. Previously, he explains, a couple could not come to their wedding without showing themselves totally naked before.



It's Sunday, we go to the Cathedral Sainte-Therese.

We get there while a Mass in Arabic is underway, with the faithful following it from outside the church, for lack of space (see opposite).

The mass in Bari, which preceded it, is even more popular.

We wait for the mass in English that should follow. As it is extremely hot in this late morning, we take refuge in the car, equipped with air conditioning.

Opposite, we can see the buildings of St. Teresa, one of the few primary schools, funded by Johann Rauscher. **It is too far from Lologo for the smaller children to access it on foot, especially during the rainy season (which lasts 6 months).**

There is also a Comboni Secondary School next to the cathedral. Private schools.

"We have two ministries of education, I do not know how many managers ... Why? It's just positions awarded to some people to discourage them taking up arms ... In particular, those in the bush feel they deserve a reward for having fought for years. As a result, the ministers behave like small military leaders ...

Do you imagine that you can write to the President to say "I want this job?" "

While discussing, we did not see the time passing. The mass in English is about to start and the church is already filled.

Doubtful, I follow Betram jutting into the nave, and to my surprise, we both find a place. Mine is just before the transept.

I'm enjoying the fresh air flow created by the two open side doors and am rewarded with a floral scent the origin of which is mysterious ... maybe a nice joke of St. Therese of the Child Jesus, that I love so much, and to whom the cathedral is dedicated...



Just singing the Confiteor lasts 10 minutes! Fortunately, I like the Sudanese liturgical chants. The members of Legion of Mary care for the service (see opposite). The ululating fuses.

« Are my actions corresponding to my faith or not? Is my style of life bringing many people to believe the Christ or is chasing them away from the spirit of Jesus Christ? Selfishness. Selfishness is a great sin in our Church.»

The priest gives the example of a man who brings a poor man to give him clothes, but finding out that he has only new clothes, tells him to come back later, when he has recovered some old clothes somewhere. It reminds me of the suitcase that I brought, filled mostly with old clothes and toys recovered from my basement...

“We are taught to be spiritual, to be charitable, to care for one another, to listen to the suffering of our brothers and sisters, to forgive sins of our brothers and sisters, following the example of Jesus Christ who died just because of our sins.”

And he insists on forgiveness, making an allusion to the painful events of the past...

At the end of the homily, the faithful applaud.



We had lunch at Da Vinci Lodge Juba (see opposite), a restaurant on the Nile belonging to Italians.

The river banks were the first purchased by foreigners.

Contrary to what I feared, there are few mosquitoes in Juba at this time... But it's impossible to eat without the company of a dozen flies.

Betram meets another "cousin." In fact, it is at their grandparents' level that there were real first cousins.

I learn that it suffices that there exists a parental relationship in one of the eight previous generations for a marriage to be prohibited. This cousin is an academic who has gone underground during the war, then became a "diplomat" on behalf of John Garang.

Shortly after, it is the brother of the recently deceased cousin (already mentioned) that greets Betram.

I take this pleasant moment in the shade of a huge mango tree (see photo) to unravel the mystery of the names of Betram ...

Betram was born in 1962. At that time in the South, women gave birth at home. They went to the hospital only in case of a problem. But after her first child (Betram's eldest sister), his mother could no longer have children. Her husband, who was medical assistant, took her to Khartoum and she was given a treatment that worked.

But without the assistance of an English doctor of German origin named Betram, she would have died during childbirth.

She therefore named his son in honour of the gynaecologist. Moreover, at that time, any boy born with the help of a doctor was called Hakim, which means "doctor" or "wise."



As I hear Betram speak a dialect on the phone, I learned that in addition to Arabic, English and German, he speaks several Sudanese dialects learned during removals required by the work of his father.

There are only 200 kilometres of paved roads in Southern Sudan.

After riding on one of them yesterday, we take the other road to Nimule, which connects the 190 km between the South Sudanese capital and the Ugandan border.

Another paved road connects Gulu, in northern Uganda to the capital Kampala (320 km); but from the border to Gulu, there are 60 km of chaotic trails. All vehicles that we encounter are actually muddy.

Soon, the landscape becomes desert. This place, which Betram calls "the forest" is a plain of shrubs and bushes. Betram tells me that when he was a child, bushes like this were full of trees and all kinds of animals (lions, antelopes, gazelles) who came to the villages, and sometimes invaded them. The inhabitants killed them only when necessary.



The vocational training and community development center of Lologo is actually much closer to the centre of Juba I imagined.

There are two roads to get there. If it was in better shape, the shorter would join the cathedral in the centre in less than seven minutes.

When the next day, we take the longest (and most practical) of the roads to get to Lologo, Betram

shows me many simple homes that will be destroyed when the asphalt road that is being planned will be completed.

The Japanese who are to build the bridge warned the authorities that it will be up to them to deal with the compensation to residents.

As the government lacks money, the project is still pending.



Betram shows me a house (see opposite) on the roadside, which was constructed by five of our graduates.

The other way to get to Lologo is impractical for trucks. Yet it was the only way to access Lologo when the project began.

When the SVDP teams have received the first shipment of equipment delivered from northern Sudan by steamer, moving containers by truck was epic history ... If only to obtain from a crane rental company (Northern Sudanese, as no other company on site had what was needed) and from their driver that they agree to go through this very track.

I realize the courage and determination of the team here, and Betram in particular.

LOLOGO

In Lologo, at intersections, young taxi men await their client on their motorcycles.

As everywhere in Juba, the few small businesses are run by Ethiopians and Somalis.

Near the centre of SDVP, a school run by a Methodist organization called Bethel recently opened.

At around 14.30hrs, we see the children returning to their home in Lologo (see opposite). They come from St. Bakhita, St. Theresa, or a school in a nearby military garrison.



There are a few schools in the area, but not enough to educate tens of thousands of children in the area.



There are even public schools! Betram stops to take Yvonne (opposite), a schoolgirl of 18, which is in the final year of primary in a public school.

She has been living with her family for three years in Lologo. Previously, they lived 10 years in Khartoum, and resided for some time in Kotor, a district of Juba.

The issue of squatters on the land of SVDP has not been properly addressed by the people associated with the Archdiocese. Overall, the analysis of Betram is that they tend to be having an excess of "good heart" and act sympathetically.

On the one hand, these squatters are not in a vulnerable situation. Many of them belong to the community, and as such, were entitled to land elsewhere. But they prefer to stay close to the centre and Juba.

On the other hand, a committee was formed to address this difficult problem, composed of representatives of the Church and SVDP. "We

have named the woman who belongs to SVDP Juba Central Council, "Mama Lucy." And in fact, when she arrived with her report, I was very disappointed. Instead of seeing how to evict squatters, she said that after the CPA (Comprehensive Peace Agreement) in 2005, the ownership of the land returns to the people, to the communities². I told her that in this case, this argument was not valid. Are the grounds of the cathedral given back to the community? This does not apply to land that has been previously allocated. "

² And not to the State. To prevent the selling of country's land to foreign investors.

He gave her the example of Nyarjwa, where the community rights had a reason to be. This land belonged to no one, and was used for the needs of the community, such as grazing land or agriculture.

"But as regards the Lologo piece of land, which was given to the Church in the 80s, it's ridiculous. »

The Archbishop could not intervene, his stay in Italy having been extended for reasons of health. He has just come back to Juba.

Anyway, Betram no longer relies on people associated with the Church to solve this problem. It's too dangerous: *"The land which had been given by the Municipal Council to SVDP Central Council Juba was withdrawn because of this kind of reasoning and practice. People came, took possession of the land and built on it. Impossible to dislodge them. And when I looked at the papers, I realized that SVDP had been fooled. They did not even know to what place really matched the reference numbers of the land, while the land in question had been given to actual occupants with the correct numbers. "*



Two days before my arrival, there was a small inauguration ceremony for equipment received through donations from MIVA Austria and Hans Rauscher who was present: the tractor and the bricklaying machine. SVDP had invited the new Commissioner of Juba County.

"I told him that the land belonged to the Church, that people squatted

on it, and that the Church could not eject them; that we had many projects that we can not envisage because of this problem. He officially declared that there will be a census of the population squatting on the field, that a list will be established, and that those who have no right on the land will have to leave and that a plot of land elsewhere would be assigned to them."

THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CENTER

The entrance to the centre is on the road that continues straight up the access to the river. This is the road taken daily by the trucks when the fence was not yet built.

To the right of the road, you have the centre. On its left, some houses, some of which squat on the grounds of SVDP.

At the end of the road, beyond SVDP's centre, more houses and brickworks belonging to the community (see photo).



About bricks, the centre recently received **the bricklaying machine** funded by Johann Rauscher and by the Austrian government.

It was imported from South Africa with all the necessary equipment for optimal operation: a device for cutting brick-corners, a trailer to transport it, spare parts³, protective clothing.



The total cost by airfare⁴ (from Durban to Mombasa) and including training, was \$ 49,000 (of which \$ 39430 funded by Hans Rauscher).

It runs on diesel, requires two operators and can produce 3000 bricks per day.

It is primarily a tool for additional training in masonry.

For any SVDP construction project, it will help to reduce costs, since with it the bricks are baked and fit together (no need for cement, sand).

Finally, it can become a source of income as it produces quality bricks, more expensive than those traditionally sold on the market, but more attractive because they fit together.

It would need market research, including contacting potential customers.

In the immediate future, SVDP will contact the manufacturer of the machine to request them to send someone who will train five people to its use for 2 weeks.

³ That would have cost twice as much if SVDP had not ordered them with the machine.

⁴ By sea, it was only 46 € less, because it requires more insurance and handling.

The centre appeared to me as a place of breathing in an arid environment

First, there is plenty of space.

Look for instance as this playground (opposite) that children are enjoying.

All the buildings in the background are those of the eggs production unit.

This gives an idea of the overall space as the rest of the buildings are located on the right, out of frame.



Then this space is open to the outside: as shown in the photo on the previous page, the barrier is not opaque, it's a fence.

The daily presence of children who come to school in the centre, and that, three times a week, of the youngest who are benefiting from the Babies feeding program, contribute much to liven up the atmosphere with all their songs and cries in the morning when they play or repeat lessons.



Moreover, even if the presence of squatters is not wished, having these families just beside the centre (see photo) creates a different atmosphere than if the separation was clear.

It is evident to any visitor that the local populations have made this project theirs, and that they are proud of it.

Finally, there is the fact that SVDP has taken care from the

start to make the centre a small oasis of greenery, at least in the heart of the center. As a Westerner, I was particularly sensitive to this effort (!).

The agricultural activities of the centre have no commercial purpose. They can provide a complement to the food distributed to the 300 beneficiaries of the Babies Feeding Program (arugula, okra, mallow, desert grass, beans, corn).

The ground must be prepared so that when the rains come (April / May), it can be sown.

Then the people hopes that the amount and regularity of rainfall during the growth be favourable.

I tasted a fruit picked in the orchard, not quite ripe, totally unknown to me like a big lime, denser than apple.

As shown in the photo the water of the Bahr El Gebel river close by allows two gardeners maintain the ornamental plants.

Daniela Pamminger of Caritas Graz, arrived a few days after me, told me a little about **Johann Rauscher**.

He has been a teacher in a technical school in Austria for the last thirty years. According to her, this is a record of longevity, given that students of such schools can be deemed to be wearing.

But Johann managed even to involve some of them in his association ProSudan.

There is notably Anna, a young girl who came to settle in Juba and has developed schools in the area, with local communities. Under a big tree, I saw her give English lessons to children aged 8-9.

During his last visit to Juba a year ago, Johann Rauscher had contracted malaria. His health and morale had been affected. But his commitment to the Sudan (since 1986) is so strong that he managed to come back, more enthusiastic and active than ever.



He financed half the tractor (see opposite), the other half being funded by MIVA.

The tractor had been delivered to the centre a few days before my visit.

After testing it on the plots of the centre, technicians have identified a defect in the hydraulic system. They were trying to fix it during my stay.

Once repaired, it will divide the arable land in Lologo into parcels.

Then it will go to Nyarjwa to meet the needs of the agricultural and herbal medicine programs.

The chapel that existed when SVDP received the land was used last year as a classroom for training in sewing.

But since the new buildings were built to accommodate the trainees properly, the chapel houses some administrative offices (see opposite: the furniture made by the trainees in carpentry).

This is also more consistent, since it is next to all the other offices. Anyway, it was too small: many faithful used to remain outside.



But the community has complained: "Where will we pray now?". SVDP put them in contact with the Saint-Teresa parish that includes Lologo. The parish gave them some money and they were able to build this beautiful chapel (see opposite) in the centre, near the area where the activities for the children are taking place.

Now, every Sunday, a priest celebrates Mass in it, to the great joy of all people.

Betram organized a meeting in Juba with

the Vicar General of the Archdiocese.

The latter confides to us that he is concerned about the latest news from the Church in Northern Sudan. The government forces it to downsize. Anyway, the Church was reorganized and regrouped geographically, due to the significant decrease of the faithful. According to news received by the Vicar, you can now circulate in Khartoum a while without crossing any Southerner. I say hello to a priest who taught at the seminary in Kober, when I lived there during my visits to Khartoum.

Regarding the seminary activity, the repatriation to Juba happened gradually, starting with the first year (philosophy), then by the years of theology. Pending the completion of construction of the building of theology, students stay with their family, which is not ideal. For the years of philosophy, the organization is the responsibility of each parish. I ask the vicar if there has not been much of drop in vocations in recent years. He told me that this was a fact, but he was hopeful that these schooling years will have a positive impact for the country: the governors of Central, Eastern and Western Equatoria are alumni of the seminary!

Babies Feeding Program

Three times a week, a meal is served in the centre to about 500 children who are less than 6 years old. Some children are also enrolled in the school of the center, others do not.

I meet three women whose children are registered in the program. They live close to the centre (or on its land).

The meal distribution is often the only meal of the day for their children.

Rejina Donato Ladu (below) does not know her age.

She lived in a village in the south.



Four years ago, she joined her husband in Lologo, but he is now deceased.

She does not intend to register her children at the school centre because she does not even have enough to buy the minimum required (uniform, chair...).

Sarah Aliardo Koli (17) and John Joyce Nekedmos (21) arrived in Khartoum a year ago.

Sarah lived in Haj Yousif, Joyce in Mayo.

Their husbands do not work.

Their mothers live here, but their fathers are away: Sarah's father is a soldier in Khartoum; Joyce's lives in another southern state.

Apart from the baby she held in her arms, Joyce has two other children (5 and 2).

For her, life is harder in Juba than in Khartoum.

All draw water at the Centre.

Distribution of drinking water

The Centre is close to the River. The Centre collects its water, treats it and distributes it freely via the taps (see photo).

Access to drinking water is a problem for everyone in Lologo.

When it exists, the distribution of treated water via public pipes is irregular: once or twice a week.

A barrel of 20 litters cost 10 SSP (2.5 €). And users must also add tablets against viruses and bacteria.

I met two trainees who thought that the water supplied in the centre was not treated because it was not clean (residues...).



The school (kindergarten and first years of primary school)

Since the creation of the Babies Feeding program three years ago, SVDP told the Parents Council that any child who have benefitted from its services for the last 6 months should be in uniform in order to attend classes under the trees.

Parents participate by paying their children's uniform and a plastic chair, which they bring with them every day. Every child has a backpack and a registration card around the neck.

Sixty children aged 4-5 in green uniform, gathered under a tree, sing "Welcome, welcome! We are happy to see our teacher today!".

Further, a math class is given under the trees for children 8-9 years old, in yellow uniform. Anna will give them the next course in English.



Early in 2013, residents have built on the grounds of SVDP two classrooms in mud, wood and zinc plates: a temporary structure

since the Church does not have a formal plan to build schools.

In one of these rooms (see photo), 7-8 years old pupils copy an English text from the blackboard.

About 400 children from the neighbourhood benefit daily of this schooling.

Another community near Lologo imitated this action started in our centre.



Matdeu Tangun, one of six members of the Parents Council.

The Council is behind the school project and manages it.

The SVDP centre provides land, water and electricity. Matdeu reminds me of the importance of this school so that children do not hang out in the street, knowing that schools are rare.

He belongs to the community, was born in Lologo and never left this place. He lives 300 meters from the SVDP centre. He works at the Ministry of Infrastructure, in the "Water and sanitation" department.

He had worked in the Comboni brothers school which was located on the current site of the centre and which was destroyed during the war in the 90s.

His children had started school before the opening of the centre: they go to St. Teresa (one in primary 6th year, the other will be going to high school).

He told me that the centre has made Lologo famous throughout South Sudan. He wants the departure of squatters.

THE VOCATIONAL TRAINING

The session began on 11 February and ends in November.

The graduation ceremony will take place in December.

The consequences of the subcontracting training contract for UNIDO (UN)

Amar, an Iraqi who was the UNIDO technical manager, used to come every day to follow the training dispensed by the SVDP teams in 2012. And he was very satisfied.

As UNIDO has decided to offer a sewing machine worth € 230 to each graduates of the sewing program, Betram obtained from them that they also offer some to the graduates of the SVDP morning session. All 2012 graduates will receive their sewing machine at the graduation ceremony of UNIDO.



The constructions built this year (three large rooms: one for electricity, one for sewing and one for theoretical courses) weighed on costs but are beautiful (see photos on this page). The site chosen was a bit steep, so it necessitated solid foundations.

"I told Amar: "Why not provide an upgrading training to some graduates in electricity, masonry?" The idea was to select 30 graduates among those who got the best grades, and send them to a construction company to work under the supervision of engineers. I put them in contact with a Chinese company that had hired six of our graduates. But they were asking too high a price from UNIDO. Another company was considered, but it had no work in hand.



So I told Amar that graduates need to learn finishing stages. They know how to build. But they are not trained to the roofing, plumbing, flooring, painting, plastering... I proposed to Amar to make them work on the building under construction in the centre, and he agreed. "So 30 graduates of the previous session of UNIDO (25 masons and 5 electricians) are working at the centre in the afternoon (see photo), after the courses that are already provided in the rooms. The building should be completed in late April.

The UNIDO has financed the

whole costs: the three teachers who supervise the work, 30 workers and the materials (gravel, cement, sand, paint, roof etc...), i.e. \$ 23,000.

And thanks to UNIDO, those among our instructors who teach in Arabic will be sent (together with trainers working in the training programs of the public sector) to Egypt for higher level formation and as part of a state aid to South Sudan.

In addition, UNIDO finances the training of two female teachers who will train 50 women of Lologo to Household skills.

This is a new training funded by Caritas Graz (€ 27,000⁵, including € 15,000 by a private donor).

The goal is to teach these women, most of whom have land along the Nile, to poultry farming and transform manure into compost to grow food in the back of their homes.



The training of teachers funded by UNIDO will take place in May in Haifa, Israel, at the Golda Meir Mount Carmel International Training Centre for three weeks.

I also learned that the laser printer in Betram's office (see photo) was paid by UNIDO. Stanislas Mogga also has one in his office.

They are used by computer trainers when addressing the desktop publishing.

In addition, the certificates for the graduates are now printed on these printers.

UNIDO would have wanted SVDP to supervise another program in the state of Upper Nile.

Finally, note that SVDP helped UNESCO to find and hire trainers.

⁵ The following sessions could be made for much less (€ 5,000), since the tools have been purchased and the centre has plenty of compost, with our 5000 chickens! Women in other villages around Lologo could benefit from it.

Mathilda Aissa George (graduate in masonry of the UNIDO training)

Mathilda is 24 years old. She belongs to the group of UNIDO graduates who was chosen to complete the work of the last building constructed (see page 20).

Mathilda has always lived in the South. She lives alone in the centre. She left her village, where her mother and her two brothers lived, to come to Juba and go to school. Her father died when she was one month old. Her mother lost three other children from diseases.

She is in her second year of Public Administration at the University of Juba. Last year, during her months of training, she spearheaded simultaneously the masonry course and courses at the University.

To survive and pay fees to the University, she manufactures and sells alcohol.

Her phone rings during the interview: the ring is a religious hymn. Mathilda is very involved in her Catholic parish. She has participated in the creation of the primary school in the centre.

Her goal is to find a job in the administration and to convey her masonry skills to help the most vulnerable of her brothers and sisters. She has already built a house for an old lady.



James Malish Peter (left) et Samuel Justin Ladu, current trainees in auto mechanic



James has always lived in Southern Sudan.

He lives 10 kilometres from Juba.

He comes walking because he can not spend every day the public transport cost: he would have to take two buses, each costing 2 SSP. This would total 8 SSP (€ 2) per day. His salary does not allow it, so he walks three hours every day to come to attend the courses.

He is 29 years old.

He only terminated his

secondary education two years ago, because he was a soldier for nine years, since the age of 14. He is the eldest in a family of three sisters and two brothers, and feels responsible for them, as well as for his mother. He is married and has a three years child.

Samuel lives at 30 minutes walk from the SVDP centre. He is therefore one of the few trainees who live nearby. Many are those who live 15 km away. *"Because you need the knowledge, you have to wake up very early in the morning and you walk for at least two hours to reach this place. So this is a very big challenge that trainees face in this school. Even our teachers sometimes come walking."* He told me that students do not have the means to take the bus, the more so that they have to pay for the breakfast (in fact the only meal in the morning of the southerners, even the only meal of the day) they take at the Centre. And courses, which last up to 14h, are physical; students handle heavy things, and they need to eat in order not to faint.

Samuel is 35 years old. He is also the eldest of his family and lives with his mother and one of her sisters. His schooling has been chaotic. He too was in the SPLA (in the artillery). He returned to civilian life in 2010.

Neither of the two ever had any professional experience.

When I ask him what his plans are for after his training, James replies that it will depend.

If SVDP implements a more advanced mechanical training, he will take the course, because according to him the training he follows will not be enough to compete with foreign workers.



According to Samuel, the degree itself does not open any door. Especially as in garages and in all small enterprises, owners tend to hire relatives or acquaintances before hiring graduates. And when companies or NGOs needs mechanics, it is for one or maximum two positions.

Toolkits would be an effective lifeline. Each graduate could become self-employed, repairing vehicles of the people around him. Even if SVDP offers kits to only the more deserving, it could become useful for

others as well, because they can form together a group of two or three. But without tools, it is useless to form an association.

John Joseph Odur (left) and Joseph David Benjamin, trainers respectively in electricity and auto-mechanic

John is 39 years old, Joseph 40 years. They live in the same location, 15 km from the SVDP centre.

They come by public bus (3 bus, 10 SSP = € 2.5 per day). John would like the centre to provide every trainer a motorcycle, the most convenient means of transportation according to him, given the geographical dispersion of the twelve teachers.

John has five children, Joseph 6. They are struggling to make ends meet. You have to pay schooling of the children: even the public school is not for free.

Joseph tells me that education in secondary costs 1500 SSP per year (€ 375) and about half in primary⁶. And how to pay for care and medication when somebody catches malaria?



Predictably enough, they complain of low wages: the highest-paid teacher earns 1400 SSP (€ 350) per month. And they regret the abolition of the daily meal for all.

However, they are happy to soon receive upgrade training.

Both teach since the creation of their training in Lologo. Before that, they had the same job at Khartoum (where they had fled in 1986), at the Saint-Joseph establishment run by the Salesians of Don Bosco. John was the first instructor of the electricity

department there and Joseph taught there for 10 years. Both argue that the training dispensed in Lologo is stronger.

To introduce students to the future labour market, Joseph said he sends them at the end of their training for three weeks practice in garages.

As for John, he said that many of its graduates have been hired by the UNMIS (United Nations Mission in South Sudan), because he teaches them industrial techniques (three-phase motors) that are taught nowhere else.

According to Joseph, a "tool kit" could benefit many graduates: they would wait for the customer by the wayside. That would be the best way for them to start and to be gradually recognised by more established structures (garages, companies) that could recruit them in a second stage.

⁶ To be checked: I realized (when it came to the cost of a motorcycle) they tended to inflate costs.

Dominic Peter, Akol Oscar Morris et Sony Philip Odoho (from left to right), graduates

When he was in training at the Centre, it used to take four hours walking to Dominic to come every morning! At nightfall he usually managed a lift back part of the way.

He has always lived in the South. He has two wives⁷ and five children.

When he obtained in December 2011 (third session) his degree in Masonry, he partnered informally with a classmate. They worked seven months for an engineer, but they were not well paid. They then associated with a third



companion trainee. Their first building was a house of 64 m². They made some 25 000 SSP (€ 6,300) and divided this by three.

The opportunities are through word-of-mouth: people see a realization and ask their phone number. They are paid by the week to avoid excessive debts. Today, he says he can personally save 15,000 SSP (€ 3,800) per month! Incredulous, I make him repeat the number twice.

Akol is 19 years old. He lives in High Malakal, the popular district in the centre of Juba. He is a graduate in electricity of the first session (April 2010). Since December 2012 he works for the

Masonry workshop



South African group RMA that provides products and services to economies in transition (building infrastructure etc...). He shows me the enterprise card he wears around his neck.

The company, which released him for the morning, phones the centre twice to make sure he is not passing a job interview! He is paid 350 (€ 90) per month. When you compare with Dominic, it is easy to understand the fears of his employers!

Sony is 24 years old. He graduated in masonry on the first session. After doing some work around through acquaintances,

he was tested by UNMIS on its practical and theoretical knowledge during one-day long interviews. Employers have asked for the certificate only just before signing the contract (one year renewable). He started in early 2012 with a monthly salary of 2000 SSP (500 €) and is currently at 3500 SSP (€ 870) per month.

He is very grateful to SVDP, because he was able to marry and buy two plots of land to build his own house.

⁷ It is quite common here, even among Christians!

THE EGGS PRODUCTION UNIT

SVDP is the only eggs producer in Juba, apart from small family poultry and farm belonging to the Speaker of the House who raises chickens for meat.

Currently, the total number of chicks purchased is 5000, but it is only the first batch of 2,000 heads that is old enough for laying. These are the hens that you see in the picture opposite. In the building reserved for battery farming, there are two alleys like this with cages on each side.



Brown hens are a variety less suitable than black. They are larger and also farmed for meat.

The 3000 other chicks do not ultimately have all been delivered on the same day: about half came in early March, and the other half a week later.

Fortunately, in an annex to the dedicated battery farming building, there are two separate areas for the breeding ground of chicks (photo), until they are old enough to lay (4 months and a half).



As there will be a period where the poultry breeding ground will no longer be occupied by laying hens, Betram would like to make it profitable by reiterating the experience of the broiler farm, which operating cycle is much faster and for which there is a high demand on the market.

Solar panels are used to provide lighting for hens night and day. As I'm worried about their lack of sleep (☺) Betram explains that the activity of chickens depends directly on what they see. "As long as they

see food, they eat. They are never full. In villages, it is said that the chickens eat more than elephants."

It is Grace who is in charge of the program. She studied at the University of Juba. She specializes in animal nutrition. She worked for the Ministry of Animal Resources that has had an unhappy experience in laying hens. Betram took her on from the Ministry.

She seems very serious, committed and effective.

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Grace is assisted by Emmanuel, a technician who knows how to use (and to maintain) the food grinder to prepare the suitable powder from stored ingredients. Both also are in charge of deliveries.

The current production rate is 1.25 crates (30 eggs) per day for 100 hens⁸.

As a reminder, the assumption for the business plan was 3.16 crates.

As Betram told me the number of the current productivity with satisfaction, I'm still a little confused ... until I realize that the forecast (updated and based on actual data) of two crates of 100 hens announced in the report sent in February to the State of Geneva was a the result of a misunderstanding on my part (Betram gave a figure forecast for 5000 hens, not 2000).

Customers who have established a contractual relationship with SVDP do not pay on delivery but a few days later.

These are restaurants, hotels (Hotel South Sudan, New Sudan Hotel...).

The other type of clientele consists of



Emmanuel (in the back in yellow) delivers the eggs in a Small restaurant in Juba



One-week production

small groceries in Lologo or Juba.

The selling price for the first type of client is usually the market price, that is to say 18 SSP (€ 4.6) the crate (15 cents of € per egg).

For local small grocery stores it is 16 SSP.

Distribution requires frequent deliveries and in scattered locations. Despite daily requests, for obvious reasons, Grace is grouping deliveries every two or three days.

It is obvious that the current mode of delivery can not continue. As suggested in the "Problems" section on page 29, the acquisition of a delivery vehicle seems essential.

Currently, Grace and Emmanuel are using the Toyota pickup. It already has to be in operation (it is often in need of repair), available (this is the only vehicle in the centre), and that a person entitled to drive it (Mogga, Betram... ?) be also available.

⁸ Statistics compiled from the number of chicks purchased. The mortality rate is about 10%.

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The last day, we went to lunch at the New Sudan Hotel for which restaurant SVDP is the exclusive supplier of eggs.

The hotel has thirty rooms. The cheapest is \$ 350.

The owners are Muslims. The restaurant does not sell beer.

The decor is a sad cry (neon, transparent plastic table set, pseudo-chic chairs, and the inevitable TV with volume up).

The toilets are impassable.



Emmanuel preparing food chickens with grinder

We meet in the hotel three girls who were trained at the "hospitality" program of UNIDO provided in our Lologo center and who were hired here. They are obviously hard at work preparing a feast in the hotel. See hereunder, the photo of one of them.



We eat without any cutlery, by covering our *injeras* (huge slabs of Ethiopian bread made from teff flour) with various soups: *molloriyha*, *bahmia*, minced meat, and another one, milk-based. With a bottle of water, the bill is 8 € per person.

Lino, the boy in charge of inventory management at the hotel, joins us at the table.

He orders 10 crates per day at SVDP, 70 crates per week.

They are normally delivered every two days (20 crates).

The day before, they had ordered 40 more crates, for a special occasion.

For Lino, it was the sale price that was first decisive in the hotel's choice of SVDP as a supplier: 16 SSP per crate (or 1 SSP less than the previous provider).

Then, according to Lino, experience has shown that SVDP held much better to the delivery schedule than the previous provider and the amounts requested were always available.

However, the head chef had complained of the non-uniformity in the size of eggs

provided.

This hotel represents a turnover of about € 1,150 per month for SVDP (SSP 4480).

THE DIFFICULTIES

Difficulty 1: supply of materials and equipment

Overall, as there is virtually no supplier in South Sudan and as trade relations with the North were cut for 18 months, SVDP had to get needed supplies from neighbouring countries (Uganda, Ethiopia, Kenya). "Suppliers of these countries are always trying to rip you off," complains Betram. Now when we visit these companies to retrieve the ordered equipment we ask them to unpack everything. One day we went to a store and ordered some equipment. As they did not have the necessary



Daniela Pamminer (Caritas Graz) and Betram in a bar in Juba

amount for many items, they placed an order for them, and we left. When we came back to pay, I told Martin to open the boxes. In a carton with uniforms for trainees, eight items were missing. In another box containing tools, twelve items were missing. Needless to say we no longer work with them. But it takes up all your energy.

Same as regards the supplier of battery cages. The price initially announced in fact did not correspond to the actual price, it was only for the 6 pieces they had on site. When we placed an order for seven times more cages, they said "we have to see with Israel how much it costs", and they have eventually increased the price (!).

When borders with North Sudan are reopened, I hope to import from Khartoum, even if it is further away... Suppliers are more reliable. With people from SVDP Khartoum as our correspondents, I'm sure it will be more fluid."



Containers used as storage in the Lologo center

To this problem regarding suppliers one can add that of the administrative burdens.

For example, to reduce costs, SVDP had decided to import the battery cages at the same time as the materials required for the next training session of the Training Program.

"Everything arrived in Entebbe, Uganda. Clearance procedures

were reasonable: \$ 350. All was put in a place, but we were not ready. Normally, each year, we ask the renewal of our tax exemption in advance.



But the system was changed because of friction between the government of South Sudan and the State of Central Equatoria, at the border. Before that, in addition to the customs unit at the border, which belonged to the Government of South Sudan, the state had its own unit elsewhere, 25 km from here. There was double taxation. It was not considered a customs fee, but hey, it was finally 40% of the total! The government said:

"Enough is enough, it raises prices". It affected our job because by the time they came to agree, they stopped all imports ... and exemptions as well. Our order remained two weeks in Entebbe. But the storage price of the consignment depends on the weight and time: a little over \$ 100 per day per kg. In the end, we paid \$ 1,600 more. In other words, we lost what we had saved on transport by taking everything at the same time.

Anyway, we had no choice: rent a truck, keep the material sealed... and leave the rented truck for several days at the border would have been worse.

I had to refer to the ministry. The Minister was not there and nothing could be done, he had to sign the final copy of the exemption. I yelled. Someone finally signed for the Minister. "

Difficulty 2: Transportation needs

Apart from the Land Cruiser used by Betram (which he is not sure to have indefinitely at his disposal), SVDP currently has only one vehicle: the Toyota pickup (opposite), bought new (from Japan via Singapore) in 2009. It has been used so much, with heavy loads on very bumpy roads, that it is now in poor condition and requires regular maintenance.



In January 2013, ASASE transferred € 25,000 for the purchase of a 4x4 in Uganda which should arrive in June. Originally, it was for Betram. But as long as he can use the Land Cruiser, the new vehicle will be driven by a driver (it is necessary for a company car).

Another vehicle financed by MIVA and Pro Sudan (€ 26 000), a Toyota Land Cruiser, will arrive in July.

But it will be used in Nyarjwa for the needs of the agricultural and herbal medicine projects.

Even with these additional vehicles, the fleet of SVDP is very inadequate to the needs.

The needs in the first place of most trainees and employees of the centre, who live far away (in general it is those who have returned from northern Sudan who live in remote outlying areas). This is a real problem, which interferes with the proper taking of the



Motos-taxis await client at a crossroad in Lologo

courses by the trainees, as I could assess it the day I visited the sewing class: a dozen students were absent because of transportation problems.

Within a few years, the planned road and bridge in the neighbourhood will facilitate access to the centre, but for now, people arrive sweaty and already exhausted in the centre.

There is also the needs of future employees, especially those with proven qualification that Betram must find quickly (see next page): such skilled people are rare, expensive, in high demand and often subject the acceptance of the position offered to the promise of being transported daily to their workplace.

This is also the reason why the fleet is the first investment of most NGOs in Juba.

The tax exemption enjoyed by SVDP enables it to buy vehicles at lower prices abroad.

For the transport of people, a van or a minibus would be the better pick. A used van (dating from the beginning of this century) purchased in Uganda, would be about € 17,000.

For studies conducted by the follow-up officer (see following pages), a motorcycle seems necessary (900 €).



For the distribution of eggs, this type of motorcycle trailer would be appropriate. It costs about 4000 €.



The highest item in the operating costs of the eggs production program is food for hens. If communications with the North Sudan⁹ do not improve and SVDP continues to import these ingredients, it would be preferable to buy stocks three times a year rather than two like we did this year, in order to facilitate conservation. To rent a truck would cost then € 4600 per year. But with € 14,000, you can buy a truck capable of transporting the 25 tons of ingredients necessary.

To own a truck will give SVDP more flexibility in managing

supplies: SVDP being exempt from customs duties, one can imagine more trips per year.

Difficulty 3: The recruitment of competent staff

Hiring an assistant for Betram is expected this year. It is essential, as Betram is continuously requested and interrupted despite his willingness to delegate.

Two types of profiles present themselves:

The "ready to run" person, which has a similar previous experience and is accustomed to working in this environment. These people have often been recruited by large companies, institutions and NGOs. If by chance they are available, their wage claims are exorbitant.

Chol, a former employee of SVDP Khartoum, who works at the Ministry of Oil, gain 13 000 SSP (over € 3,000) per month!

Betram tried to poach Ding, a former "street child" from SVDP Khartoum program, and who became responsible for the SVDP computer training for several years in Khartoum. But Ding became a sought after IT specialist in Juba and Betram had not the means of convincing him to join SVDP...

"This is far from the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul," said Betram. "All seek only money, or have requirements even before they have started work."

Betram has someone in mind: a woman who was recommended to him and seems perfect for the job. He met her, she will be available in June, but she is earning SSP 6000 (€ 1,500) per month and has already stated she demanded that SVDP provides her with a mean of daily transport to and from work.

The other profile is made of young people to be trained. Betram already tried with two candidates who have been disappointing. "The younger generation, even if they speak English properly, they do not know how to write it." In this category, remains a young candidate that is to be tested eventually.

⁹ It would be by steamer. It takes two weeks from Kosti to Juba. (When the project started in 2009, there were security problems, the material had been sequestered for some time, and evening navigation was forbidden). But the algae may constitute obstacles to navigation on the Nile.



The other post that has not yet been provided for in a final way, is the follow-up officer.

John Kennedy Khamis (right), who was hired a year ago, has not been up to expectations, far from it.

I met him and my impressions matched Betram's assessment: too passive and not at all reliable for a job that requires a dynamic, honest¹⁰ and rigorous person.

John Kennedy' post has been reassigned and he is now supervisor of the vocational training program. He lives near the center. In the morning, he



must make sure that the workshops are in order, that the classes are ready and functional. If a teacher cannot come, he is notified and must look for an alternative... etc. Betram forces him to make a weekly report. But he does not write well. It was the job of Stanislas Mogga in Khartoum. Mogga is John Kennedy's direct boss, but apparently he has some difficulties in managing him.



It is Charly (left), younger and more dynamic, who took over the position of follow-up officer.

Betram encouraged him to be active and independent. He asked him to come back with data and prepare himself the statistics.

Charly is apparently able to write in English.

His survey field is limited to graduates of last promotion (end of 2012).

Charly said he required a telephone and transportation. His work does require extensive travel. Especially since Betram rightly insists that he meets people *firsthand*, and not only telephone surveys (too many possible biased replies).

But Betram told him to work first and then he would consider his demands. He expects early May, the results of its first weeks of investigation to determine whether or not to keep him at this post: in which case, it will be necessary to provide Charly with additional equipment (motorcycle? phone cards?).

He gave us a brief report of his first weeks of investigation. He contacted 80 graduates by phone and met with 21 of them. He visited three companies that have hired graduates

of last promotion: including Caterpillar, which has hired 10 with permanent contracts and 10 others for 3 months, and White Bull, an industrial brewer that hired 10 masons and 15 electricians. Charly distributed forms in these companies and should return to recuperate them back.

¹⁰ JKK tells me allegedly contacted 600 graduates of previous promotions. He shows me a page of statistics which was a joke.

ENCOURAGING PROGRESS AND RESULTS

The staff (especially administrative) has been strengthened

In October 2012, SVDP hired Sara Gabriel for the post of accountant. She had worked at the Ahfad University for Women in Khartoum.

Jean Claude François, a member of ASASE's Committee and approved auditor in Geneva, spent 10 days in early November in Lologo to train them in WinBiz accounting software.

Very soon it became clear that Marlin Gabriel Ganda (right), formerly Kamal's secretary, who works at the Centre since its inception and who also followed the training, was more comfortable with the software and general accounting.

This observation was followed by a permutation of positions: Marline became accountant and Sara secretary to Stanislaus Mogga. At present Sara works part time. The busiest times for her are at the registration and the closing of sessions (organizing the graduation ceremony...).

This reallocation of posts struck me as very wise: Marline immersed herself in her work of accounting and is learning to master the WinBiz software which improves budgetary control and financial reporting.

During my stay, she had no internet access in her office because her PC could not connect to Wi-Fi, and the technician called to fix the cable was overdue. Furthermore she should also get a PC camera and a microphone to be able to join via



Sign indicating the beginning of the SVDP piece of land in Lologo, with a mention of the support from the State of Geneva



Skype, if need be, our Treasurer, Florence Rivolet. In the meantime, some questions remain regarding certain accounting entries for 2012¹¹.

In any case, in early May, 2012 financial statements will be sent to the external audit firm for approval. After searching in vain for a serious local firm Betram finally opted for an English auditor firm with offices in Khartoum¹² and Juba, even if their fees (€ 4500) are higher than those that had been budgeted.

¹¹ ASASE has a direct access to accounts via a disk storage space on the Internet.

¹² He had audited accounts SVDP Khartoum a few years ago.

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For two other hires budgeted for 2013, the Director of Personnel and Internal Auditor (to audit the accounting records), positions have been currently filled.

Betram appointed two members of SVDP Central Council of Juba that have been paid as consultants with allowances. They have recently been employed part-time (three days per week) for 1000 SSP (€ 250) per month.

By making them aware of their responsibilities, these appointments are intended to improve productivity (which apparently was poor) and the relationship between the Lologo staff and the members of the Central Council board.

I met Charles Lokoba, the General Secretary of SVDP Juba Central Council, who is the Director of Personnel at the Lologo center: he intervenes notably when there are contracts to sign, people who leave, change in legislation, salary increases... Charles has always lived here in Juba. He works as Director of Human Resources in a company.

He explains to me how the St. Vincent de Paul Society operates.

There are at least twenty volunteers by "conference" (local grade in the Vincentian organization). The volunteers for the 18 conferences in Juba and 3 conferences of its periphery meet once a year to distribute visits to the most vulnerable (widows, orphans, the elderly) to help them clean their house, possibly give them shelter, food.

Trainers wearing the T-shirts offered by ASASE



Bread and eggs saleswomen in Lologo

Another position was budgeted to strengthen the training and make it more responsive to the needs of trainees who want to create small businesses.

Training conducted on behalf of UNIDO has allowed a week of training on this topic. The courses were reserved for the most motivated trainees.

And in the curriculum of all courses of the current session of SVDP, it is planned to provide an entrepreneurship course of four weeks at the end of training.

A title of "Teacher of the Year" is awarded to two trainers at the end of sessions, based on various criteria, including the attendance of trainees...

The training is appreciated by local economic stakeholders

Some examples:

Earlier this year, a company that provides electrical wiring sent a letter to the Centre to hire 20 graduates of the 2012 session because they had previously employed a graduate of SVDP and that it was their best element.

Betram remembers: *"In the ex-presidential residence (now a residence for guests), there was an electrical problem. The company that performed the work told them that it was the generator that was faulty. Someone told them about our centre. They asked for a trainer who went there with five students. They diagnosed a different problem: it was the wiring that was faulty. They changed it."*

"In 2010, when I returned to my village, a church was built on the remains of a magicians house (!) by Ugandan workers. The result was deplorable. Today the Church systematically employs our graduates for its construction projects."



The SVDP staff of the Lologo center



Juro Petrou Hassen a woman who graduated in masonry in the first session in April 2010, created a construction company.

Opposite:

Trainers in Computer are divided into two groups: courses in Arabic and English courses.

Each course lasts three months.

So in a nine-months session, there are three courses.

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We met Andrew Mayen Akwak, the Deputy General Manager of the Buffalo Commercial Bank, one of two national banks, with the Ivory Bank.

The manager was absent these days.

At the creation of the project, an account had been opened in the Ivory Bank, in local currency (SDG at the time).

When ASASE began direct transfers, the choice fell on the Buffalo Bank, which has more international connection (the German Commerzbank).

Apart from the Ethiopian Banks (see photo), there are no foreign banks in Juba.

The official exchange rate for 1\$ is 2.96 SSP. But SVDP has managed since February 2012 to change its dollars for the South Sudanese pounds at the "Forex", a currency exchange authorized to practice informally a rate equivalent to the "unofficial" market rate of 3.70 SSP for \$ 1.

The commissions charged by the Buffalo Bank to SVDP are 0.5% for transfers received from abroad and 1.5% on withdrawals or transfers debited.

Daniela and I try to encourage Mr. Akwak to make an effort on these fees, explaining that we have to convince our donors in this period of crisis that donations allocated to Southern Sudan have a good "value for money" compared to other recipient countries (such as North Sudan for example!).



Mogga next to the tree planted, during the opening ceremony, by former Vice-President Joseph Lago

He confirmed that the bank wishes to support the great work done by the centre Lologo, but for the moment, the lack of infrastructure has costs that are deferred on to the customer, including for the distribution of foreign currency notes (insurance costs, transportation ...). He assures us that these fees should fall with the reconstruction of the country.

We went to the Ministry of the Local State Government to meet Stephen Mady Michael, the new Commissioner of the Juba County.

Two men arrived after us rush into his office before us.

Finally he receives us for twenty minutes. Despite the TV on my back, we can communicate.

Mogga hands him a list of 43 families squatting on SVDP's Lologo land. The Commissioner promises to do something when he will get a clear statement of the plot boundaries.

As he mentions the possibility of providing SVDP land to develop its activities, I explained to him the project of university dormitories. He proposes a land 2 km from Juba. SVDP must make a formal request.

PROJECTS

Agricultural and herbal medicine production in Nyarjwa

Located 25 km from Juba (40 minutes in a 4x4!) Nyarjwa is a place where about 500 people live in four villages scattered under several hills. All poor and isolated villages (see photos). The only visible presence of the state is a training centre for fire-fighters.

It was there in October 2011 that SVDP received from the local community a plot of 126 hectares for a herbal medicine project.

In 2012, Caritas Graz has also decided to fund the



launch of a farm project to improve the self-financing possibilities of SVDP.



We met the "Sultan", the chief of the community (here opposite). He is very satisfied because SVDP kept its word: the construction of the clinic promised in exchange for the provision of land should be completed within a month. By starting with this, SVDP showed that priority has been given to respect its commitment to the community.

Between the clinic and the main road, there are 700 m uninhabited who are not part of our land. For now, trucks must meander through the trees to access the land. A direct passage to our field should be drawn in. It has already been done, but shrubs and bushes are growing fast if the path is not often taken.

There is an urbanization plan (with a school etc...). But in the meantime, so that the space between the road and our land be protected from the appetites of investors who could get a plot from the Commissioner, the villagers gave a plot to the governor who has built a long fence along the main road to indicate that the land is occupied and not available for sale.

Concerning the delimitation of our land, the solution set is a hedge of cactus (it will take years). Barbed wire can eventually be added (the perimeter is enormous, but it is not expensive). But it should not be necessary: it is planned to guard the premises, but the best security is to have people on the spot in activity.

What remains to be done in the clinic (here opposite): the ceiling, roof, floor, doors and windows, plastering, electrical wiring¹³ and plumbing.

The clinic will include an entrance hall with reception, a waiting room, a consultation room, room for brief hospitalizations (4 beds)

a room dedicated to gynaecological examinations (4 beds), a laboratory, a storage room for medicines,

and a pharmacy with a window through which drugs will be given.

The toilets are outside.



I wonder if the sheets for the roof, which seem to me to be a kind of aluminium, will not make an *oven effect*. It is explained to me that vents are provided in the ceiling, that there is a good height for ventilation and that roofs with traditional vegetation require more maintenance.



I met Martin (photo), a Lologo trainer who oversees the work being done by a team of six workers.

They began in mid-February.

For the foundations, they brought trainees from the centre. It was not easy to transport the teams to this spot.

In this regard, Martin is annoyed: they stole his bike in Juba.

The soil is clay, very dark, with thorns everywhere.

We'll have to cut, uproot

¹³ SVDP bought two new generators in 2012: one funded by UNIDO and ASASE. It is not used at the moment. It will be used in Lologo alternately with the UNIDO one when the oldest generator (third) will be assigned to the clinic.

ASASE – Swiss Association of Friends of Sister Emmanuelle

to prepare the ground that has never been used for agricultural purposes. The villagers can participate in cleaning the ground, but they will not do the job voluntarily.

From May to December, the river (see opposite, five minutes by car) is in flood.

But to ensure a continuous supply of water (if only for the clinic), a well shall have to be dug nearby.

The subsoil water is not deep. An Egyptian engineer came at the time of the visit of Jean Claude last year. His company uses a method for locating groundwater and determine the best place to dig.



There should be a pump, tank height and digging with the tractor in a tilted channel to send water to crops and medicinal plants nursery (in fact the soil is cultivated between medicinal plants). One should foresee pipes for the clinic.

The estimate presented by the Egyptian Society for researching the best place to dig, the drilling of wells, the pump and the tank is 46 000 €. Caritas Graz could pay up to € 10,000.

Betram (below) wants to move forward on projects even if the water is not assured. Now, as the rainy season begins, he would:



he would:

- make straight trenches to the contours of the land,
- plant there some cacti;
- prepare a part of the land to rain fed agriculture (tilling the surface where there are no shrubs and bushes);
- plant corn and peanuts;
- Plant the 10 selected medicinal plants (some trees may remain in the nursery for a year or two).

In terms of labour, you need someone to oversee the work, the tractor driver and labourers to clear the ground.

These costs will be financed by Caritas Graz who pledged € 50,000 in 2013.

For now, € 15,000 was spent including € 4,000 in transportation costs of the tractor.

Caritas is also committed up to € 50,000 for a chicken farm centre. But according to Betram it is insufficient: only the infrastructure to build would cost € 135,000, without any operational costs.

The location of this farm will be located far enough away from the clinic. It will consist of four wooden houses designed by a company involved by Johann Rauscher. These are models of prefabricated houses designed for emergencies. The company, which needs to



Inside the clinic



Mogga buy some water in a small shop in Lologo

be tested in a tropical environment, pays roughly one and a half house.

Caritas finance the rest (25 000 €).

This farm project meets a real need in the local market.

With difficulties since its inception, the government raised import taxes. He also established a Commission for quality control of imported food (chicken from Brazil etc...), which discovered hundreds of tons of out of date products etc... Local production will therefore be competitive on the market.

The project of dormitories for students

Lologo land is not intended to accommodate these dormitories since it belongs to the Church and for such a real estate project, SVDP will not depend on the goodwill of a new Bishop in a few years.

In Southern Sudan, the land was constitutionally given to indigenous people before the creation of the country to prevent it from being sold to foreign investors (if it remained the property of the government authorities).

If, for example Betram returned to Jonglei, he could receive a piece of the original community. But today's communities have become unstable.

In Juba, there is more land available.

The Commissioner told us about a land 2 km from Juba. This is to be explored.

Betram knows many compatriots living in Juba now and who have worked in student residences in Kenya or elsewhere...

His sister-in-law is a professor at the University of Juba and his brother-in-law is a pharmacist and dean of student affairs. All these connections can be useful in the development of the project.

THE DAY OF MY DEPARTURE

The day of my departure coincides with the arrival in Juba of Omar al-Bashir, the President of North Sudan. This is his first visit since the creation of South Sudan.

He landed with a delegation of 65 people.

Many downtown streets are closed to traffic, as well as the ones leading to the airport.

Betram overrides, and here we are the only car driving on a tree-lined avenue in which lay handfuls of soldiers! At 300 meters from the airport, we stop next to three Russians dragging their suitcases behind them and we embark them at the back of the pickup.

At the airport, Betram asks an acquaintance (!) to take care of registering my luggage and have my passport stamped to exit the country. I appreciate all the more the interpersonal skills of Betram as it is the hottest day of my stay. Before me, some Swedes are sweating heavily...

Armed with my boarding passes, Betram then leads me to a VIP lounge with air conditioning where the young guard asks me if I have a diplomatic passport. No, I have Betram...

Until the end, Betram, Mogga, Marline and all the team of SVDP Lologo centre have looked after me with exceptional kindness.

On the last day, they did me the honour to gather at the centre (all wearing the ASASE T-Shirt!) to enable me plant a small tree. A symbolic gesture that I performed with a lot of emotion and joy, on behalf of the whole team of the Swiss Association of Friends of Sister Emmanuelle, in particular its President, who, I hope, will soon have the satisfaction of seeing the fruits of his never ending efforts since the inception of these programs in South Sudan.



I'm happy to have had the opportunity during my stay to know a little better Daniela Pamminger of Caritas Graz, our loyal partner in all these projects.

This first visit to Juba has strengthened my faith: **what is done here, with great courage and tenacity, promotes the development of life and hope for hundreds of people.**

Congratulations to the entire team of SVDP and also to all those Southerners who do not give up in the face of adversity. To all, THANK YOU AND YALLAH, FORWARD!

Patrick Bittar, Director of ASASE