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LETTER TO FRIENDS OF SISTER EMMANUELLE

N°146

CHRISTMAS 2021

« Everyone must find where to lead their fight so that there is more joy in the world. The world is like a mirror: if you give joy, you receive it. Giving makes life exhilarating, it makes us understand that we are alive and brothers and sisters of all the people around us. »

Dear Friends,

My 15 days visit to Juba in October went very well. After two years, I was happy to meet the teams of our local partner, the Saint-Vincent-de-Paul Society, Juba (SVDP), and to be able to see how the programs work. The most painful moments endured were arriving and departing at the airport! Although it has come a long way since my first visit, it is still probably one of the worst international airports (THE worst, according to a UNDP employee who was traveling next to me on my return trip!).

While moving along in the city, the hopes raised by the installation, one year and a half ago, of an electricity network, are quickly lost at the sight of the **streets plunged into darkness at nightfall**, even in the few streets in the city center which had been illuminated for a few months. In addition, connection and the price of kWh are very expensive and many organizations are turning to generators again.

However, **I did not feel a particularly tense climate of insecurity**, especially when compared to Sudan, shaken by a coup during my visit. Still, it is now forbidden to take photos or to film without government authorization (issued at a prohibitive cost), and it is better to be careful and limit your movements; however one evening, accompanied by a member of SVDP, I could walk without apprehension in the slum of Lologo (see photo).

Regarding **the Covid epidemic**, while all SVDP administrative staff are vaccinated, some trainers are still not. The population remains very reluctant, despite the free vaccines given by foreign states. Vaccination centers set up by IsraAid (an Israeli NGO supported by WHO) in a camp for displaced people in the capital were dismantled after a week for lack of requests! People are more affected by common diseases like malaria.



Once again I've noticed **that for the local population, Juba is certainly one of the most expensive cities in the world and that for the SVDP teams, everything is complicated**: the sanitary constraints in the classrooms; a slow and erratic internet connection despite its very high cost; travel slowed down by rough roads or maintenance work (two months!) on the single bridge in the city: we took 5 hours round trip to visit the Be In Hope home for street children, in Rajaf, 15km from Juba!

As **the trainings** started later this year, following the confinement that had interrupted the previous session, the schedules were reinforced during the year by an additional daily hour and the Saturday. **The courses are thus now finalized.** The exams phase and the graduation ceremony are postponed until early next year, but at least the 14th session can start in March.

I was able to meet several trainees and graduates, and in particular a graduate of the first batch of Welding training inaugurated in 2020: he had already found a job in the Jebel market (opposite: a current trainee of the Welding section).

The Household training (agricultural) could not be provided this year. The submission of a project supported by the Austrian Agency for Development and intended for displaced populations in the camps of the capital took a long time and delayed some actions. This project, which began in September, lasts until March 2024 and mainly includes food aid, hygiene measures, violence prevention as well as numerous training courses.

Next year, Household training is expected to benefit around 120 people, mostly displaced people.



A new training in refrigeration and air conditioning should begin in 2022 with a tailor-made course developed with UNICEF: three successive two-month sessions (from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) for 60 (3 x 20) government technicians in charge of vaccinations. The government will pay for the accommodation and transport of the trainees. SVDP will be able to keep the equipment and material (more than half of the total budget) and organize training in accordance with its usual standards from 2023.

2021 has not been a good year for some Income Generating Programs.

At the Nyarjwa farm, crops were affected by irregular and insufficient rainfalls which forced SVDP to sow the maize three times; after the third sowing in August, the fall armyworm - a pest that has devastated African cereal crops for several years - has had time to multiply.

Next year, SVDP will diversify its crops, including planting fruit trees and eucalyptus, to lessen the effects of such setbacks.

The poultry program was put on standby this year due to the inability to find suppliers of nutritional concentrates for laying hens. With the pandemic and the blockage of the Suez Canal by a stuck ship at the end of March, containers from Holland or Ireland no longer landed in Uganda or Kenya. The poultry unit will resume in 2022 by redirecting to the local level its supply of food and nutritional supplements.

The **micro-credit** activity has been redesigned and will resume in 2022, mainly targeting graduates from previous sessions who have already set up a small business. This will facilitate the evaluation of the projects presented and limit the risks of non-repayment.

Maintenance work will be undertaken at the beginning of the year at the Saint Vincent Health Care Center to repair cracks in the walls and replace the false ceilings in some rooms with more storm-resistant ceilings.

Betram, SVDP's programs coordinator, was finally able to travel to Australia in early December to see his wife and six children after two years (!). He was subjected to a week of confinement in Canberra, but he can now spend six weeks with his family in Adelaide.

You will find more detailed information in my visit report which will soon be available on our website.

A big thank you for your donations: **with 200 CHF you are offering a year of schooling to a former street boy from our home** (supplies, uniform and snack included)!!

We wish you a very beautiful Christmas, full of divine graces!

Patrick Bittar
Director of ASASE

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'P. Bittar', is written over the printed name and title of the Director of ASASE.