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LETTER TO FRIENDS OF SISTER EMMANUELLE

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« Everywhere and always, relentlessly search for the remedy that relieves, and sow the seeds of hope: it invigorates, and your love can work miracles.»

Dear Friends,

In this month of June, our association is celebrating its 45th anniversary!

Forty-five years of commitment to serving the populations of some of the poorest countries in the world. This anniversary is also an opportunity to celebrate your generosity: thanks to your faithful support, hundreds of thousands of deprived children and adults from Egypt, Sudan, then from South Sudan and Haiti, have received support enabling them to change by themselves the conditions of their lives and stand on their own two feet with hope and dignity.

During our General Assembly on May 30, in the presence of those responsible for our programs in South Sudan and Haiti, we reported that the good results for the 2023 financial year made it possible to compensate for the previous year deficits of donations compared to our commitments.

Our 2023 accounts have indeed benefited from some exceptional donations, notably **two legacies** from donors who wished to continue their generous support beyond their life here on earth.

For those who would like to make such arrangements, remember that your donations are tax deductible, and that legacies are exempt from inheritance tax.

At the end of May, we had the pleasure of welcoming in Geneva representatives of the Sister Emmanuelle associations in Europe: Asmae and Opération Orange in France, Hilfswerk in Austria and Sister Emmanuelle Belgium. Though different in size and operation, all these associations carry out tremendous work in line with our common inspiration. This was an opportunity to share our experiences and strengthen our ties, opening up perspectives for joint action. *Yallah, forward!*

During his visit in May, Betram, the programs coordinator in South Sudan, gave us news of the actions undertaken there by our local partner, the Saint-Vincent-de-Paul Society, Juba (SVDP).

For a historical reminder of the problems endured by the population of the country, **I invite you to read an article published on the Swiss Catholic portal *cath.ch*, based on an interview with Betram** carried out in Geneva: <https://www.cath.ch/newsf/dans-un-soudan-du-sud-meurtri-les-eglises-construisent-lunite/>



From left to right : Betram Gordon Kuol (Programs Coordinator in South Sudan), Monique d'Hérouville (Assistant President of Opération Orange de SE), Christophe Etien (Director of SE-Belgium), Waltraud Liebig (Director of Hilfswerk-SE), Patrick Bittar (Director of ASASE), Florence Rivollet (President of ASASE) and Adrien Sallez (Magaging Director of Asmae-SE).

The situation in **South Sudan** is deplorable: the country **has been classified by the IMF as the poorest in the world in 2024, considering GDP per capita in purchasing power parity.**

Indeed, the constant fall of the pound (value divided by 600 since the creation of the country!) accelerated further in 2024, going from 988 SSP/\$ on January 1 to 3000 SSP/\$ in May! As everything is imported into the country, this induces inflation which seriously affects the purchasing power of the population. In one year, the prices of food and construction materials have increased between 33% and 80%.

The State goes into debt, just to pay its employees (months late): the oil revenues of the next twenty years have already been sold abroad.

In addition, the main pipeline transporting crude to Sudan for export has not been operating since February: a technical problem has not been resolved due to complications linked to the insecurity induced by the war in Sudan.

Therefore, in search of new sources of non-oil revenue, the government canceled in March all tax exemptions for imports. The system gave rise to numerous abuses, from companies which imported alcohol, for example. The government therefore preferred to cancel all the exemptions and re-examine each request.

That of SVDP was finally accepted at the end of May, at the cost of multiple efforts by the staff and disruptions to the schedule of certain activities.

Thus, the start-up of the new poultry breeding unit (the construction of which, on the land of the Nyarjwa farm, was completed at the end of April) will be delayed by two months.

The chicks' food was finally delivered at the end of May, before the chicks (in June), for safety purposes. Remember that this new poultry unit is one of the 7 income-generating programs (IGP) intended to improve the self-financing, by SVDP, of its development programs, such as vocational training.

The 9 training courses offered at the Lologo Center show a record number of trainees this year: 448, including 42% women.

As every year, the number of applicants at the start of the year was much higher (namely twice) than the places offered, reflecting the strong demand from young people for these one-year training courses, the real impact of which on their life is observed each year during a survey of a sample of graduates from previous sessions.

The new building of the Saint-Vincent nursery and primary school in Lologo was completed in January. During its inauguration in February in the presence of its Austrian donors, the Minister of Education fell for the pupils' desks (in wood and metal) made by two new carpenters from the Wooden Furniture Manufacturing workshop (another IGP). As public schools in Juba do not have them, the ministry signed with SVDP in May a first order for 300 desks. With a reduced class size thanks to these new buildings, and the distribution of a snack, the 1000 students now benefit from good instruction conditions.



Betram and his team do an extraordinary job. But they know that **without you, nothing would be possible**, and their gratitude to you is immense.

Many thanks in advance for your support and donations!

For legacies, you can contact our Treasurer, Lionel Teminian, who is a tax specialist and will be able to provide you with information: teminian@cofigen.ch

Patrick Bittar
Director