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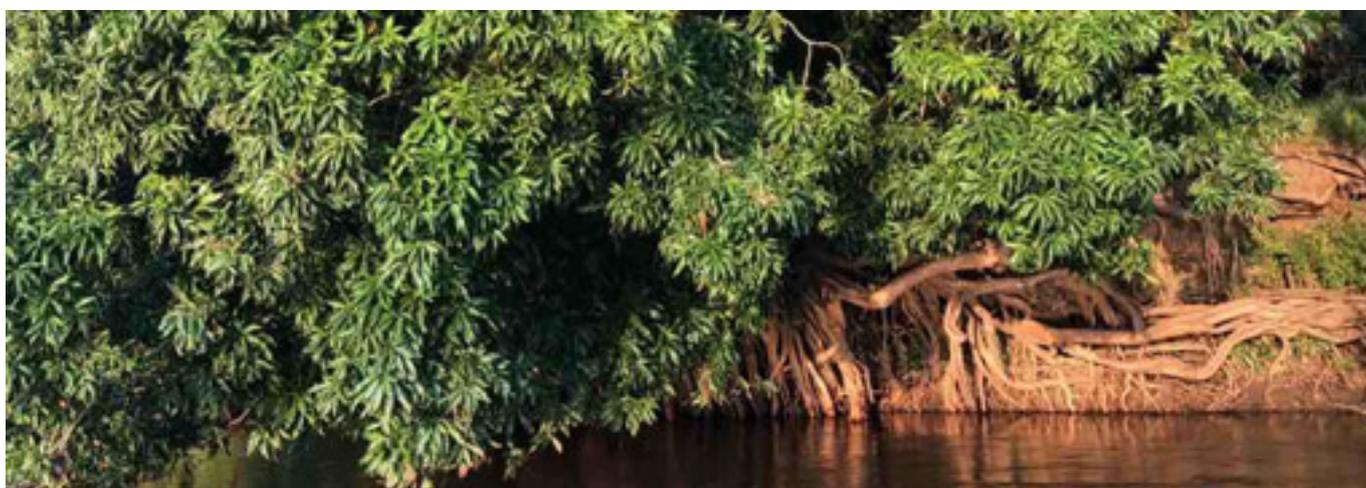
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## VISIT REPORT JUBA - SEPTEMBER 2018



### Abréviations

BIH	Be In Hope
CFPDC	Centre de Formation Professionnelle et de Développement Communautaire
VT CDC	Vocational Training and Community Development Centre
SVHCC	Saint Vincent Health Care Center (in Nyarjwa)
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
MIVA	Missionary Vehicles Association
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières
WFP	World Food Program
IGP	Income Generating Program
HHF	Health awareness / Hygiene / First Aid
SSP	South Sudanese Pound (Livre Sud Soudanaise)
SVDP	Saint Vincent de Paul Society Juba
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNMISS	United Nations Mission In South Sudan

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## 1. THE CONTEXT

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### 1.1. The peace agreement

It is estimated that the civil war that broke out in Juba five years ago killed 380,000 people.

Unlike the previous peace agreements, which were broken the same day by the reality on the ground, the agreements signed this summer seem to be taken more seriously by the different signatories.

In previous episodes, IGAD (regional grouping of eight East African countries<sup>1</sup>) did not have enough power of persuasion. Neighboring countries engaged in the discussions had differing opinion. Some said that it was necessary to begin with the dismissal of President Salva Kiir. The Ugandans did not agree, and protected the president in Juba against the armies of his opponent Riek Machar. Kenyans were not united, but divided, between the two parties involved in the South Sudan conflict. In short, each belligerent had its support in neighboring countries.

This time, all the IGAD countries were involved in a common peaceful goal, which resulted in the choice of meeting places for the discussions that took place last summer: Addis Ababa (Ethiopia), Khartoum (Sudan), and Kampala (Uganda). Today all countries support the peace process, not one or other of the conflicting parties.

In fact, rebels can no longer find shelters and reinforcements in neighboring countries (Uganda, Sudan, Ethiopia). And the government fears the UN forces, which have been armed since a year.

The signatories must form a transitional government that will be in power for a period of 3 years. It will be composed of 35 ministers - 20 from the Salva Kiir group and nine from the Riek Machar group, the rest to represent the other minority ethnic groups." *The agreement deals with the problems of form but not enough of the substance. It's a put-in job, but why not* ", commented in August Roland Marchal, CNRS researcher. Riek Machar will soon return to Juba and resume his status as vice-president. There will be four other vice-presidents.

In early August, Salva Kiir highlighted the challenges posed by the composition of such a transitional government. " *Look at the size of the government, look at the size of Parliament, how can you pay them? Where to install them?* ".

### 1.2. The political and security context

On the first Saturday of my stay, a soldier fired on UN troops in Yei (in the south-west of the country).

The state does not know the actual number of soldiers in its army.

Regional commanders manage lists of their troops. They present these lists to the government to receive funds for the payment of their pay. And no one controls the declared workforce. Most generals are millionaires.

Kiir knows it. He recently said: " *We can no longer tolerate the generals who are only in their homes.* " *However he has his hands tied up*: he knows that these corrupt military protect him.

But he also knows that soldiers, who are not paid for months, risk rebelling against the government<sup>2</sup>

All warlords want to become governors to access resources.

When they do not get what they want, they rebel. A few years ago, one of them had committed illegalities and was found guilty. The judge's house was then attacked, and the convict released by the army.

It is the same with most members of the government: when Kiir fires one (always for personal attacks), he rebels. Now, Kiir attacks them if they rebel.

For example, Paul Malong, the former *Chief of Staff*, was fired because he was considered too arrogant in his public speeches. And Malong's replacement works to build a national army including all the tribes

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<sup>1</sup> Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan and Uganda.

<sup>2</sup> Remember that The Nuers used to make up 75% of the army before the civil war.

(in addition to the main tribes that are the Dinkas, Nuers, Shilluks and the 8 tribes that speak Bari). Also planned is the dissolution of the SPLA and militias. But once again, the loyalty that prevails is personal loyalty to the president.

The eleven soldiers who committed atrocities in a hotel for expatriates in 2016 (including the rape of a woman and the murder of a journalist) were imprisoned. It is the Ministry of Defense that will pay the compensation to the hotel and the victims. For the murder, it is 51 cows, according to the customary laws of Nuers and Dinkas.

According to a recent presidential decree, anyone who fires a bullet without reason can be prosecuted. When Betram greeted me in his university guest house (see photo) where he has been living now for more than two years (after having, during the battle, left his house, located in a neighborhood considered too dangerous), he tells me that the tenants asked the soldiers who were previously stationed to leave, because they were more disturbing than reassuring. They fired without real reason.



On the road to Nyarjwa, after Gudele, when we get closer to the pilot farm, every 200m, there are patrols, because the president's farm is not far away as well as a military training center. Apart from the army and the police, there is National Security, Internal Security and External Security. Members of the National Security, like the *Mujahedin* of Omar el Bashir in Sudan, are called upon when something is interfering with the system. They are forces loyal to the system, more than to the nation. They are well armed, better than the army. They arrest political opponents and question them at the *Blue House*.

### 1.3. The economic and social context

South Sudan is ranked among the countries with the most **corruption**. Impunity reigns, and in this regard, nothing indicates that this will change. When President Kiir went to the United States, they showed him a list of 75 members of the governing body (list which included Kiir himself and Machar's names) who had captured all the resources of the country, with an estimated misappropriation encrypted in millions for each. *"Do something about these people,"* Kiir was recommended. Kiir did not divulge this list when he returned to the country. And the parliament, aware, did not want to launch a procedure of impeachment of the president.

The resumption or not of the fighting, the atmosphere on the markets, reflect the way in which the meetings of the belligerents take place.

This time, **people believe in the return of peace.**

Displaced rural people have returned to their villages. There are fewer children begging on the streets.

**Inflation** is lower than in previous years.

**The exchange rate for SVDP is 200 SSP / \$** (the budgets were established on the basis of an exchange rate of 184 SSP / \$).

Fitiye, one of the drivers of SVDP, takes us to Nyarjwa. On the road, **service stations are back in business** since a month. The government has formalized the black market price. Gasoline costs about 270 SSP/l (\$1.35/l). But some "officials" obtain their gasoline through a direct channel, at the fixed (and subsidized) rate that prevailed before (22 SSP/l, or \$0.11/l). *"Before,"* remembers Betram, the local SVDP coordinator, *"we could line up in front of the stations for four days. And when you arrived at the pump, there was no more gas and you had to wait for a new supply the week after!"*

**Some oil fields have resumed their activity.** Six VTDCD graduates were hired (at very good salaries) by the Nile Petroleum Company in August in Falluj, Northern Upper Nile State, the only oil field that continued to operate during the civil war. All those in Unity State had closed.

To get out of the (bad) deal negotiated with Sudan, South Sudanese will have to build their own refineries. Neither the Americans nor the English nor the Russians accepted. France looks elsewhere. It will be the Chinese.



We stop at Gudele II to buy some food. The "II" after the name of a neighborhood - such as Lologo II, where the VTCCDC is located - refers to the extension of a neighborhood following the return of displaced people from Khartoum. In these neighborhoods therefore live mainly former inhabitants of (North) Sudan.



**The Chinese have rushed into the breach left by the withdrawal of Western countries**. They practice systematically *land grabbing*. They disembark, address the communities, and promise them, in exchange for their land, community projects that are never realized or that are carried out anyhow (houses built oddly, schools whose roof flies ...). In Nyarjwa, where the SVDP pilot farm is located, the community rebelled, the agreement having been disregarded.

It is also the Chinese who exploit the sand quarries in the region to make bricks. They have the monopoly of this trade.

To give an idea of the **living conditions of the SVDP directors**, at Betram's apartment, the air conditioning does not work, neither do the hot water tank or the TV in his room. But things are improving: the year before he had electricity only 2 hours a day; now, until 10pm.

William Takido, his deputy, rents 40 minutes from Lologo, a two-room house without water, without electricity, but he is happy because it is not expensive: 2000 SSP / month (\$ 10!). The SVDP minibus picks him up at around 7am, he arrives at the VTCCDC at 8 am. He does not have a car, but he knows how to drive. He is separated from his wife to whom he pays a monthly pension of 18,000 SSP (\$ 90). She has a hair salon in Konya Konya, a lively district of Juba. They have three children.

Remember that according to local custom, to get married, the man must pay a dowry<sup>3</sup> to the parents of his fiancée. And if he does not pay, he can go to jail.

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<sup>3</sup> In late October, a 17-year-old girl was the subject of a Facebook auction organized by her family. Five people participated, including senior government officials. One businessman won the bid by offering the family 500 cows, three luxury cars and \$ 10,000. The wedding took place on November 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**Everyone here wants to go to higher education.** The Koreans had a project of Training Center at the University of Juba. In 2014, the university invited Betram to a meeting that led nowhere. When support for American universities at Juba University came to a halt, Betram was also invited. He made a comment that only moderately pleased the management: " *When the buildings were built, it was supposed to be a center of technical education, not academic,* " he said. *And that's the kind of training the country needs. All the old technical schools have been transformed into universities, and in the same buildings. Thus most of the technical schools disappeared."*

We met **Nyiel Gordon Kuol**, Betram's younger half-sister <sup>4</sup> . She is Assistant Professor at John Garang University in the Faculty of Science and Technology.

But it was on her work as **volunteer president of the Federation of Businesswomen** that we interviewed her. The goal of this federation, founded in 2013, is to help women get paid work.

" *Officially, women should have 35% of positions, but this is not the case. 40% of South Sudanese are literate.*

*We contact women who are educated and we urge companies to hire them, or the government to give them import contracts on rice, lentils, sugar.*

*We help illiterate women by teaching them (in all dialects) the minimum arithmetic necessary for a small business activity.*

*We also helped women entrepreneurs in their import business: we organized trips to Dubai, China, Turkey; some have been in Kenya, others in Argentina.*

*We have participated in conferences, particularly in Egypt, to listen to the testimonials of business-women and look for partnerships. And during our travels, there are often fairs where we present traditional products such as honey.*

*We have created a Women's Achievement Award for women whose street tea business had been successfully run, or the first female airline pilot (for Fly Dubai), or the first elected governor. But we do not forget the men: we awarded a prize to the governor of Jonglei State (now the Minister of Defense). He had built stalls on land he had, and gave them to women. We also awarded it to the mayor of Juba, who had built small structures along the roads, with umbrellas, for the benefit of street vendors.*

*The plunge in the price of the South Sudan pound had a devastating effect for women who had tried to set up small businesses in a country where everything is imported: their economies suddenly lost value. We hope that with peace, the exchange rate will stabilize.*

*Our Federation had 450 women (the majority being of modest class), but many could not renew their registration because their business suffered from these disastrous economic conditions.*

*Nevertheless practically all our operating budget<sup>5</sup> is funded by our members. We only receive a few small, punctual help from some ministries. Neither the UN nor Oxfam helped us. The Chinese Embassy gave us computers.*



<sup>4</sup> Daughter of the second wife of his father.

<sup>5</sup> Two persons currently employed instead of 8 previously. Plus the rent of the office.

*Many NGOs come here and give trainings to start a business, but if you have no capital, it leads nowhere: in order to borrow, banks require some property to mortgage. There would be a lot to do, for example, in food processing, with small loans to help women get started.*

*Our goal, by promoting the work of women, is to change attitudes on the problems of marriages of minors (14/15 years), forced marriages, violence against women, because these phenomena are related to the fact that women have no income. Poverty often breeds domestic violence. Parents have the habit of pushing their daughters to get married to get a dowry.*

*Regarding the schooling of girls, the government has not yet passed from words to action.*

*Here, culturally, parents favor the education of their sons because they are supposed to support them. Which in reality is not the case: It is often the girls who take care of the parents. Furthermore, in the mindset of the parents, the girl will get married, thus becoming the property of someone else. So we pass this message to parents: if your daughters work, it will on the one hand to educate your grandchildren, regardless of their sex, and on the other hand, you will enjoy income that will not be punctual, unlike the dowry. And we say to women : do not stay home, go out and go to work.*

*And we also say: if your girls are educated, they can better ensure the health of their children.*

*We do not want to revolutionize men and their power, but we want to encourage gender equality in society."*



**What about the media?** Newspapers survive by practicing a form of self-censorship.

There are four radios: a governmental one, one related to the Church, one to the UN, and one to civil society. All come or have come to the Lologo VTDC. That of the UN came twice before the 2016 crisis. It is under pressure from the government because it was a critical voice.

There are two TVs, one state-owned and one private, of mediocre quality.

**The Church may also be a victim of insecurity**, as will be sadly witnessed by the assassination in mid-November, following an attempted kidnapping, of a Jesuit priest in a state in the center of the country.

On the first Sunday, when we leave Mass (office in Arabic) at Kator Cathedral in Juba, we have to wait several minutes before we can get out of the car park because an armada of vehicles and soldiers arrive for the next office, in English. It's probably the escort of the president or a senior government official. I especially remember one of the texts of the day (Letter of Saint James, 2, 15-16) which reminded me of the foundations of my mission: *"If one of you says to them:" Go in peace! Get warm, and eat your fill! Without giving them what they need to live, what is it for? So faith, if it is not implemented, is indeed dead."*

## 2.THE LOLOGO VTDC - VOCATIONAL TRAINING

### 2.1. Welcoming new visitors and progress made

This year, I had the pleasure of making my visit at the same time as Lucienne Bittar - member of the ASASE Executive Committee - and two members of our French partner Sister Emmanuelle's Operation Orange, Patrick Cuinet, the President, and Jean Roussineau, member of Relais Anjou. This visit was for the three of them there first to South Sudan.

I think they will remember for a long time the welcome they received when they joined the VTDC in Lologo. I had arrived a few days before. They had just arrived, and after a very short night in Cairo and the delays of their flight, their state of fatigue had to accentuate their impression of hallucination and the emotion felt in the sight of the hundreds of people who were singing together, songs written in their honor, with the names of each one being mentioned!



It is through this incredible hedge of honor that they entered the VTDC and discovered, in stride, the different workshops and classrooms.

The 7 courses taught in the VTDC have continued throughout the years without any particular problem and I will mention here only the **evolutions observed in the training workshops**, which correspond to what was planned for this first year of phase IV (2018-2020).

In Sewing, the number of apprentices this year includes 28 women and 3 men with disabilities.

In First Aid, the tool kits<sup>6</sup> which will be distributed to the most deserving apprentices in December will be further improved compared to last year.

In Household training, kits will this year include pesticide sprays and more varieties of seeds.

In Electricity, we could admire the new electrical panels (see photo page 12).

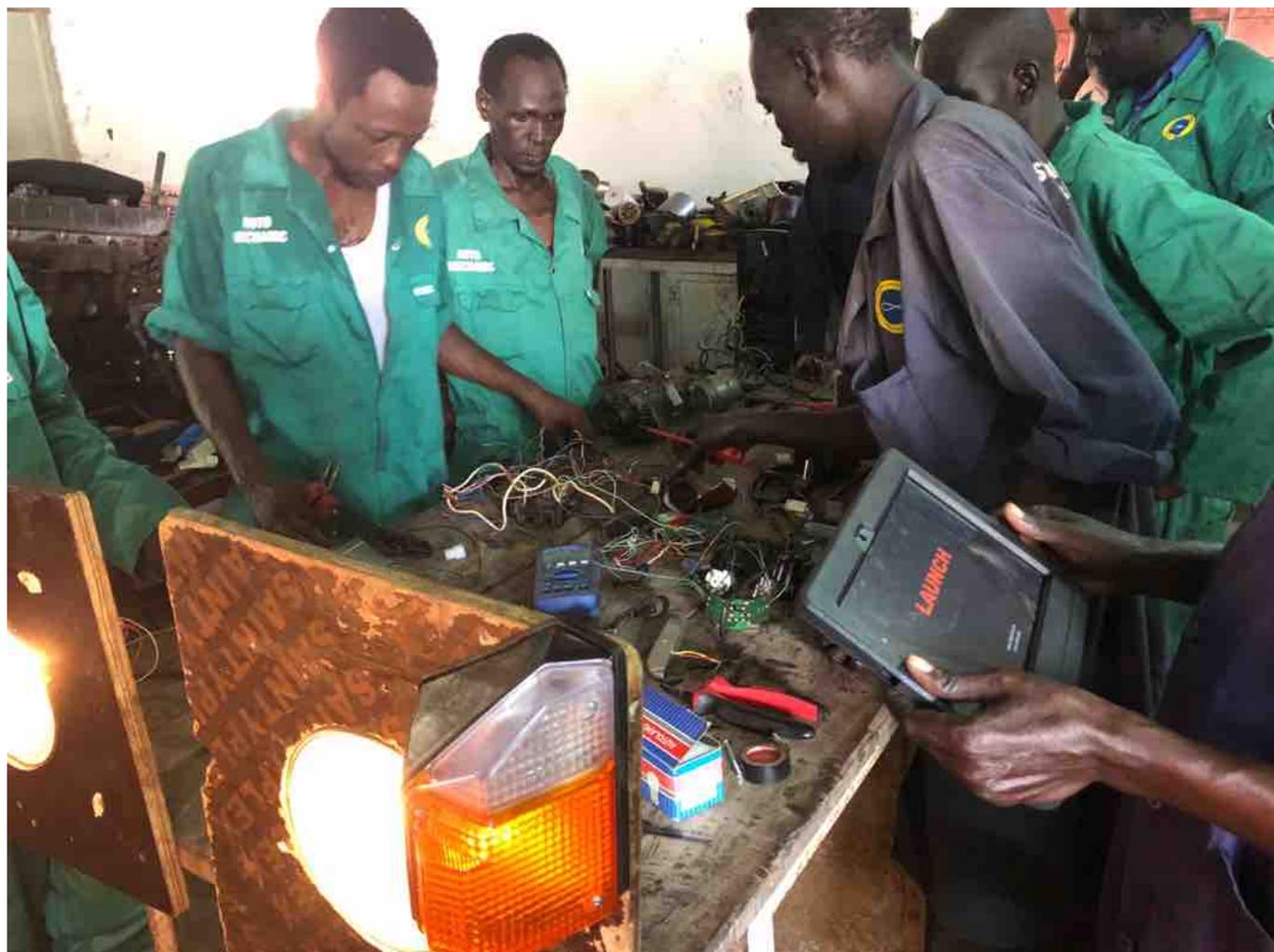
In Masonry, we found that the plumbing component is being taught.

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<sup>6</sup> Tool kits were purchased in Uganda in November. It was the SVDP truck that made the race.

In Computer Science, the sessions were extended to deepen apprentices' initiation: instead of three sessions of 3 months, it is given in two sessions of 4.5 months.

In Auto Repair, the introduction of electronics this year is going very well (see photo).



## 2.2. Perspectives

Following a suggestion from our lead donor, the Canton of Geneva, SVDP will study the relevance of **creating an organization bringing together VTDCDC graduates.**

During a meeting at the Service of International Solidarity of the State of Geneva at the beginning of October, the initial questions that will determine the orientation of this eventual project were asked.

First of all, it is a question of defining what will be the main objective of this organization. Provide a meeting point between employees and employers? Respond to growing demands (in quantity and quality, with the return to peace and development of the region) of employers? Control the quality of work done here or there? Establish a reference scale of the skills of its members? In any case, it will be more than a network of former apprentices of the VTDCDC.

Betram pointed out that graduates are often already organized in small groups when they decide to partner in business.

Then it will be a question of defining the quality of the members of the organization, beyond that of the graduates precisely.

From these initial reflections should emerge the choice of the form of the organization (association, union, cooperative) and its organization (by profession, rules of procedure etc.)

Finally, this new structure would be created with the approval of the government and would benefit from the expertise of nationals of other countries, such as Kenya.

Betram has already met a certain William, president of the Trade Union Association, who has previous experience in Khartoum.

One of the great news for the VT CDC graduates and the development of Juba is the start of the **establishment of a power grid in Juba.**

During our travels in the city, we often saw teams of workers erecting pylons along the tracks.

This project, which should have started in August 2015 and originally benefited from funding from the African Development Bank, was postponed due to the civil war.

**I met two electrical graduates from the last batch (2017): Emmanuel Muto and Kamal Osman at their itinerant workplace** (see opposite).

Four other VT CDC graduates were working elsewhere for the same Chinese company.

Their job is to erect the pylons and wire them.

Previously, Emmanuel worked for the Vivacell telephone network. When the government decided in late March to close the network of this Lebanese company for non-payment of the operating license (\$ 66 million of arrears), Emmanuel first began his own business.

Then he received a phone call informing him that the China Power Company was looking for qualified electrical technicians.

He successfully completed the job interviews and started a six-month trial period.

During this trial period he was paid 10,000 SSP / month (\$ 50).

In October, Emmanuel had to be hired under contract at a higher salary.



When I met him, he worked as a team with another graduate, Kamal. Kamal's trial period being only three months, I asked the site supervisor to explain these disparities. He replied: "*With the Chinese, it depends on their mood. If they are good moods, they set the trial period to three months.*"

Finally, in accordance with the action plan established for this phase IV, **the teaching of welding techniques will be introduced next year in Electricity training.**

The integration of related techniques into some training programs (Plumbing in Masonry training and Electricity welding) corresponds to a demand in the labor market: SVDP has noted that graduates with a variety of technical skills are more likely to find a job than those with specialized expertise.

The introduction of this new technique requires the construction of a workshop that meets safety standards: all-metal workshop, with high ceiling and well ventilated.

The Austrian partner Pro Sudan, which had financed the welding machine a few years ago, had offered to



finance this new building up to \$ 25,000, but having had difficulties in raising funds, it can no longer meet this need.

At the end of October, ASASE has sent \$ 27,000, as a prepayment of a 2019 donation, to allow the start of the construction of this welding shop as of now.

### 2.3. Graduates follow-up

First, **some punctual information** collected during our meetings and discussions.

Nyiel Gordon Kuol (cf p.7) praises the work of SVDP. She calls the graduates of the Center "Engineers". "*They're called like that because they do engineering work,*" she says.

She tells me the story of Deng, their nephew, who lived in Australia. There, he had stopped the university and there was no future for him. He came to South Sudan on vacation, and decided to integrate the Masonry training in Lologo. His diploma in hand, he went to Kigali, Rwanda, to do another year of improvement. When he returned to South Sudan, he was able to manage many missions, and was awarded several contracts. He went back to Australia where he is currently working for a construction company.

She also mentions the case of another nephew, Ajak, 19, who was enrolled at the University of Juba. He took Electricity training at VTDC. He is currently working a lot in South Sudan, particularly in the oil sector.

I met **the new Graduate Tracker Jackson Kenyi**, who replaces Charly, who had not progressed as requested.

Jackson works with Isaac, his assistant.

Jackson has experience in statistics: he worked at the Ministry of Social Development, in partnership with UNICEF. Also was part of the team that worked for the Central Council of SVDP Juba<sup>7</sup> ... he was secretary and as such, he was often in the office.

After his trial period, Betram did not intend to keep him. But Mogga (the director of the training program) and William (Betram's assistant) hired him while Betram was away.

Today, Betram remains dubious. On the plus side, Jackson does not alter the data presented.

He has his own computer.

However he would need help to interpret the results, even after two months of testing. I told Betram not to fully understand what interpretation he was talking about, the results collected speaking for themselves.

The other weak point is his shyness, his lack of initiative. He is waiting for the instructions. For a job that is essentially field work and contact with people, it's problematic.

In the brief interview I had with him, he was asking for a motorcycle. But what about the bike we had financed five years ago for his predecessor? Betram then explained to me that while he was traveling, the managers passed the bike to one of the drivers who was having trouble getting from his house to the farm. It should have been a temporary arrangement, but as so often in this kind of situation, Betram told me, it has become a given.



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<sup>7</sup> It is the officially leading authority of SVDP Juba. In reality, it only manages the missions related to the community outreach caritative work of the Conferences, mainly with volunteers. These missions, which correspond to the most common vocation of the Saint Vincent de Paul Societies around the world, only commit micro-budgets each year financed exclusively by SVP England & Wales. Missions that hire paid staff (such as food distribution in IDP camps) are managed by the Juba SVDP teams which we follow.

Furthermore I learned that Jackson has a motorcycle (for personal use) for which SVDP pays him gas. He even asked that it be repaired at VT CDC, which was done free of charge (cost: 20 000 SSP, or \$ 100).

Another point: it is imperative he be formed in the use of Excel.

He is currently working on the long-term survey of graduates from all previous sessions. One of the difficulties he encounters is related to the closure of the VivaCell mobile phone company (see p.11). Now this network, used by 900,000 subscribers, represented more than a third of the numbers of graduates' database. Some call back and we get their number. Otherwise, there are still those who use the only two remaining networks, MTN and Zain.

## 2.4. Graduates' testimonies

### Achiek Achol, 2017 computer graduate

Achiek is 25 years old. Before the training, she finished high school and stayed home. She could not afford to go to university.

After graduating, she applied for a position with the NGO World Vision and was hired. She did not know anything about computers until she was taught. What she learned was crucial because she uses a computer to collect data, write reports and send them by email to her boss. *"I would not have gotten this job if I had not done my training," she says.*



I met her (left on the photo) while working on the same project (supported by WFP) as the one for which SVDP Juba lent its VT CDC infrastructure last year. World Vision has settled this time in another centre and welcomes candidates seeking a monthly financial assistance. Each beneficiary receives a card. Each month, when the person comes to receive cash assistance (\$ 45), his identification is verified with his fingerprints.

Achiek's monthly salary is 37,000 SSP (\$ 185). She is happy to have this job.

She is not married, but she is in charge of her younger brothers, who are currently refugees in Kenya, in Kakuma camp.

At the same time, she was able to enroll at the university where, in the afternoon, she attends Peace and



Conflict Resolution courses.

### **Michael Jollet, 2017 Masonry graduate**

Michael, 23, has been with the PowerChina Co. since April.

This is his first job after graduating.

He digs holes and fill them with cement and aggregates allowing another team to plant the pylons.

Before his training, Michael did not have regular work, and took odd jobs.

He was educated until the third year of secondary school (the second last year according to the curriculum of the country). He says he voluntarily stopped because he wanted to become a technician.

He is very satisfied with the training he has received at the VTDC.

His trial period at PowerChina Co. was supposed to be 3 months. But his employers have always postponed since he was hired the establishment of a contract of employment from week to week.

He earns 15,000 SSP per month (\$ 75).

Michael has a companion. He is waiting to earn a better living before getting married.

## **2.5. Training of trainers**

Last year, it was the English-speaking trainers who received training in Uganda.

For Arabic-speaking trainers (8 to 10 employees), the training will take place in Egypt, Cairo, for three weeks from mid-February 2019.

The cost (about \$ 1500) will be significantly lower than the training in Uganda where the offer included accommodation and food (at a prohibitive price, \$ 4500 in total, while "it was not even good").

In Egypt, beneficiaries will go to a student building belonging to the Church. Food will be charged at only \$ 10 / person.

It is through the contacts of Brother Michel Fleury, the French donor very involved with us on the Be In Hope program, that SVDP was able to obtain this opportunity.

## 2.6. Microcredit

I met a group of **five 2017 Household training graduates** who benefited from a microcredit in March of 350 000 SSP (\$ 1750). Each group of borrowers chose a name: theirs is "Nyaret".

They are cultivating land close to the river near Rajaf, the village where the BIH program for street children is located.

Santurlina Wasuk (pictured on the left), the spokeswoman of their group, proudly showed me the products of their crops: corn, cassava, eggplant, lemons, grapefruit, papayas, guavas, green pepper.

They also showed me plots where cabbages and sweet potatoes of seven different varieties were grown.

The micro-credit allowed them to contribute to the purchase of a small generator, a pump and pipes to allow, from the nearby river, a constant irrigation, and sufficient water to extend the cultivated area. Previously, they carried water manually.

The money they obtained also allowed them to buy seeds, hire a dozen people (half of them men), and rent motorbikes to transport the crops to the markets of Rajaf and Juba!

The final maturity of the loan will be in early January (9 months). But, as for all borrowing groups, they must repay the loaned capital in three installments (quarterly). When I met them in September, they had repaid 27% of the capital, i.e. 94,500 SSP (\$ 472).

This is their first year of activity and they have the ambition to develop it further.

Santurlina tells me that the revenues obtained during the rainy season (then at its end) are lower than during the dry season, because of a greater offer on the markets and therefore lower prices. She therefore



thinks that their incomes will increase in the months that follow. They showed me the nurseries in anticipation of the dry season.

They wanted to offer us their baskets of harvested products, but we bought them from them.

Honestly, I found this group of recipients absolutely thrilling! If all groups could be so effective!...

**Other micro-credit beneficiaries: the *Good Friends Group* , made up of five 2017 VTDC Auto**



**Repair graduates.**

Their spokesman, Alex Santo, was absent when I came to visit the garage they created along the road, very close to the Kator Cathedral in Juba. As they told me, it's a very busy crossing passage.

Their group received the loan of 350 000 SSP (\$ 1750) in August, their small garage was barely in its second month of activity.

They were able to buy equipment for tire maintenance and repair (including a used compressor), which accounts for most of their sales at the moment (repair price for a normal tire: 500 SSP, or \$ 2.5, double for a big truck tires), This activity also is a publicity for other types of service, such as brake repair etc...

They also sell cleaning products: motor oil, bulbs, spare parts,

**To date, seven groups of five graduates have benefited from a micro-credit for 9 months.**

Recall that this is the first year that SVDP is implementing this system, and that loans are in South Sudanese pound. Fortunately, this year, the value of the pound has not deteriorated too much, and inflation has not been comparable to previous years (see p.5). Refunds (also in SSP obviously) will not accuse too much loss of value.

The committee in charge of this program within SVDP is vigilant on a risk: *"the groups have projects of activities and then they end up selling onions because it is supposedly more profitable"*. So there is a follow-up work to be done. On the other hand, my meeting with two other groups (including the one presented next page) will question some of the work done upstream by the SVDP allocation committee: the location of the small business run by each of these two groups was very bad (isolated, in a very poor neighborhood...).

One of these **other microcredit groups** was the **Six Stars group** formed by five 2017 graduates of the **Sewing training**.

I only met four, one being sick.

In mid-March, they received 350 000 SSP (\$ 1750).



They used their capital to buy fabrics, yarn, and to pay for the maintenance of the sewing machines received in December 2017 at the graduation ceremony.

Their stall is located in the slum of Lologo, a few minutes from VTDCD.

One of them was making trousers, another a dress, always from purchased fabrics, and without a specific order. A customer, who had chosen a fabric, was waiting to buy a purple *galabeya* at 3500 SSP (\$ 17.5).

Group spokeswoman Eva Marcello complains that business is not working well.

The total turnover of a day can be only 5000 SSP (\$ 25). No way to reinvest: everything goes into the current expenses of their families (they have children).

She thinks (rightly) that their location is not good and would prefer to be in the center of Juba. Already, Lologo is a poor district of Juba, but in addition their shop is in a little frequented lane. But why did they choose this place? Because the monthly rent is only 5000 SSP (\$ 25) against 20 000 SSP (\$ 100) in the Juba markets, and with 6 months to pay in advance. That would have meant that a third of their loan would have been used to pay the rent for their shop.

Furthermore they would like to have machines that can do heavier sewing jobs, like bed sheets and so on. When I met them, they had repaid 80 000 SSP (\$ 400), that's 23% of the capital.

### 3. THE IGPs

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The new sales manager is expected to be hired before the end of the year.

#### 3.1. The guest house

We have (the four visitors) inaugurated the guest house located in the VTCDC.



**We were very pleasantly surprised:** the four rooms (some with double beds, others two single beds) were very nice, well equipped (air conditioning, fan, mosquito net, bedside lamps). All the furniture (bed, cupboards, tables, chairs) come from the carpentry workshop of the Center.

Each room has a bathroom, with a hot water tank.

The living room is large, with TV room and a large table, a fridge and air conditioning.

SVDP would like to pave 720 m<sup>2</sup> around the building, to avoid run-off in rainy weather, and allow any cars to park, or at least drop off people with luggage (useful in rainy weather). The estimated cost is high: between \$ 20 and \$ 38/m<sup>2</sup>.

Before the paving stones, it is necessary to put an aggregate of the rocks, from the red soil of the mountains, forming a compact base so that the stones do not move.

To limit the cost of these developments, there would be the possibility of using only this coating. As there is a bit of slope, it will not hold water, and it will limit the mud in rainy weather.

The whole area (guest house, gardens and restaurant) is surrounded by a barbed fence. In the evening, Sam, an armed guardian, stood guard. We felt safe.

During the day, 22-year-old Sunday Fall remained at the front desk, behind an office on the porch of the entrance.

Mathilda (Ekissa), the maid, made the rooms every day and offered to wash our clothes.



The guest house also has a kitchen, but we did not use it because we had our meals, prepared by Lisa, in a **small restaurant built next door** in a garden well maintained by Gabriel and Soka (who limps because he received a bullet). The place is a haven of peace and greenery that we enjoyed.

When there are no visitors, this restaurant functions as a canteen for SVDP employees.

The kitchen of the restaurant is well equipped: fridge, plates, oven, there is even a microwave, which was sometimes useful in the evening to warm up the dishes prepared by Lisa.

Another attraction of this guest house is its location: right in front of Saint Vincent School and the VTCDC Chapel. This is the first year I stayed after 5 pm at the VTCDC, when all employees, apprentices and students left. We had the pleasure of seeing, at that moment, inhabitants, men, women, children, come and repeat songs and dances, in the soft light of the end of the day, in anticipation of the feast of Saint Vincent de Paul. September 27th.

This offered many opportunities to meet the neighboring population a little, knowing that it is still not recommended to walk around without being accompanied by SVDP employees living in the area.

I suggested to SVDP to register the guest house on the Trip Advisor website. The place may be of interest to ordinary visitors (currently rather NGO employees, for lack of tourists!). In terms of services and environment, it competes without problem with some hotels.

The only drawback is the location: Lologo is a little out of the way, and to access the VTDC, you have to drive for a good quarter of an hour on broken tracks.

The price for the night has yet to be adjusted. Betram was talking about \$50 / night. I came from a hotel in Juba (Amarat Hotel ) where I paid \$ 80, which is not expensive for Juba. But I believe that SVDP could ask for a little more, knowing that the second generator has to work every night and that Betram was a little surprised by the consumption that it induced.

### 3.2. The garment workshop

The team of the workshop is composed of the chief and three assistants, former apprentices (see photo opposite).



The turnover of this workshop should also reach about 2 million SSP this year, or \$ 10,000.

### 3.3. Truck rental

**This IGP should finally be able to see its activity take off.**

Not only because of the gradual resumption of normal traffic if the peace conditions are confirmed, but also because SVDP has corrected a big concern with the driver employed until last year.

SVDP realized that he was dishonest and that his embezzlement had plagued the PGR's profitability from the beginning.

He was a Ugandan hired to facilitate border crossings.

SVDP discovered that it was getting along with the lessors. Regularly, the truck was supposedly damaged on the road. "The driver was asking for spare parts," says Betram, "sometimes for several hundred dollars, and in the end we had " offered " the race to customers. Once, new batteries were stolen during a shutdown supposedly for lack of fuel. "

They replaced the driver with a driver from the existing team. *"Before, a return trip to Uganda took 14 days. There were lots of problems. Now it takes 3 days. And for a trip to Kampala, he asked for four barrels of fuel. Today, not even a barrel !"*

From January to September, the truck had made four trips to Uganda (including two for SVDP), and three to South Sudan.



Revenue for the year is expected to reach 1.5 million SSP, or about \$ 7,500.

### 3.4. Wooden furniture

**This IGP is successful** and to meet the demand, it currently has four employees: Antony (the young carpenter), Peter (older), Daniel (assistant, graduate) and Bol (carpenter).

The photo below shows the desks made for a public school (a 100-piece contract obtained with the municipality of Juba).

A professor from the University has fully furnished his house with wooden furniture produced by the workshop.

The wood comes from the forest of the Yei region, 130 km southwest of Juba. But the traffickers export it to Uganda and repatriate it. It is heavily taxed upon entry into the country.

The turnover of the workshop is expected to reach about 2 million SSP this year, or \$ 10,000.

### 3.5. Poultry production

**This IGP was put on hold at the beginning of the year**, after more than half of the last flock of laying hens (purchased in 2017) were decimated.

*"After a month and a half, their feathers began to fall; soon some chickens were completely naked, " says Betram. "And they were being pecked by the others, who came to get blood. They were hurt. With moisture, they died. Every day, we had about ten deaths."*

As a result, those who survived only laid 9 months in 2017 and could not be sold for their meat.

The problem according to SVDP is primarily related to the poor quality of the imported food: it was not well balanced. *"Ugandan or Kenyan suppliers cheated. And it was not possible to compensate for the lack of essential nutrients with vaccines. "*

In addition, the breed of hens was not of Dutch origin, like the first batch, of 2017, but came from Eastern Europe (Poland ...). The suppliers said there were no Dutch hens available on the market. *"In real fact the Dutch are more expensive and are less profitable for the intermediary. And in Uganda, Eastern European breeds adapt well, unlike South Sudan. "*

For chickens reared for their meat, it was the same problem: the breeding cycle, which was supposed to start in June 2017, was postponed until September because of a problem with the suppliers, then again in December, when SVDP agreed to take a breed that was not desired initially .They were small, even after 4 months, whereas normally they can be sold after two and a half months. *"They want to push you to buy what they want,"* says Betram.

**In December<sup>8</sup> 2018, SVDP intends to order everything directly from Holland:** chicks, food (corn, soya), food supplements (which encourage the laying) and vaccines. Everything would go through Mombasa, Kenya. Import taxes will be cheaper than via Uganda.

The freight would be through an agent in Uganda with whom SVDP has been working for 3 years for importing machine and other items.

SVDP **would also like to organize the henhouses** to avoid heat or cold (with the proximity of the Nile).

Finally, it is a question of **enforcing hygiene instructions** in a systematic way. Managers (even Mogga) did not respect them. For example, bathing your feet in a treated water bath before entering the poultry houses, and wearing special slippers. *"One day, I arrived there,"* said Betram, *"and discovered that access was open to anyone who wanted to see the chicks we had brought."*

*Chiks one day old are sensitive to humidity.*



<sup>8</sup> One-day-old chicks are sensitive to humidity. *Therefore it is recommended not to order them between August and October.*

This IGP is delicate in terms of production, but very promising at the commercial level. As Nyiel Gordon Kuol (see page 7), who was selling eggs for SVDP, says, "*the eggs produced are much better than those that are imported I only started eating eggs again when SVDP produced them locally. And the price was well fixed: not too expensive, just below the market price. I have already found someone who will interface with hotels in Juba, who have already agreed to provide themselves at SVDP. Through my Federation, I will have access to a big market. And it is the women who cook! I look forward to the resumption of the program.*"

### 3.6. The pilot farm

This was my first stay in Juba during the rainy season. I admit I have not seen much difference with the dry season. Admittedly, it was rather late in the rainy season, but all the same! Admittedly it rained also for two nights. But it was always short and scattered showers: it had rained three days before my arrival, but in Juba, not in Rajaf, for example.

For some years now, the effects of climate change have worsened, with periods of drought lasting longer during the rainy season.



At the pilot farm in Nyarjwa, **rainfall deficit resulted in a reduction of cultivated area compared to the planned plan.**

8 ha were planted this year, twice.

Corn was first planted in March and harvested in July.

It is on this harvest that the employees of the farm were working during our visit (cf cleaning on the photo below). We saw bags of 50kg grains stored (see photo on next page). This first harvest should give in the end about fifty bags.

The second time, they planted in July. The germination was good, but then the rain stopped. When they sowed again, given the progress of the rainy season, they decided to decrease the areas.

Recent rains had opened the crops, which were very dry due to a lack of rain for 15 days. If something comes out, it will be at the end of November.

Jean Roussineau estimated that there was only one hectare of maize grown and one of market gardening.

Without irrigation, one could theoretically cultivate 16 ha maximum on the 60 ha that have been fenced.

Basically the land would need irrigation 4 to 5 months a year, especially in the dry season, but also to compensate for the gaps during the wet season. We could have two crops, shifting by one month.

**The initial plan for irrigation by the agricultural well had to be completely reviewed.**

Four years ago, the geologist of the drilling company who did the geophysical analysis of the water table said that there was 10m<sup>3</sup> / h.

The two wells (the SVHC and the one for agriculture) were drilled in 2014. The flow rate was measured: 4.2m<sup>3</sup> / h. The drilling company questioned the capacity of the pump.



Then there were problems with nomadic cattle herds, the agricultural well was damaged, a new well was drilled and so on.

Betram, who was suspicious of the opinion of drilling company experts, consulted Caritas in 2017. Caritas said: there is a pump that has a good capacity, we will arrange with Miva to acquire it and send it. The new pump arrived in January 2018, was installed and tested: it did not improve the flow. Whereas for corn, it would need a flow of 60 m<sup>3</sup> / h!

Betram consulted Norbert Demmelbauer, an Austrian expert who has worked all over South Sudan and lives there for half of the year<sup>9</sup>: according to him, we will never get more from this well. There is not enough water in the basement.

<sup>9</sup> I come back to his study on page 27.

*"According to my experience in Africa," says Jean Roussineau, "a well is an adventure every time. There is no certainty, even in France. Well if you take the Beauce region, the water table is 5 or 6 meters. They have as much water as they want. But the use is extremely regulated. "Betram adds:" The Chinese have dug a well for Lologo one who was supposed to give water for 20 years. A two million project. Two weeks later, there was no more water. You can pump all the water and you will not have any more after. Rainwater in South Sudan is harvested from soil in Somalia."*

**This serious disappointment did not call into question the validity of the pilot farm project.**

*Jean noted, " It's a flat plot of land. A little clayey, a little sandy at times, but it is not an eroded soil with an incultivable shell. These are cultivable soils. The proof is the growing grass, which people use to make roofs and which they call "Sudan grass". It is a kind of sorghum. It is beautiful grass and if it grows, it is that the substrate of the farm exists and that it must be cultivable. We do not have rocks in every corner etc. The project is therefore valid.*

*Afterwards, what you cultivate, and the time needed to set the stage, are two other questions that must be asked."*

Since July, **vegetable** farming has been poor due to lack of rains.

The current location of plots where vegetables is grown was chosen because the soil is lighter there. However these crops could be moved closer to the "center" of the field.

Jean noticed that the water was overflowing from the SVHC reservoir. This water could therefore be advantageously used to irrigate a small 2.5 ha vegetable garden near the SVHC.

Another 2.5 ha vegetable area could be cultivated near the agricultural well and irrigated by pouring into channels from a slightly raised tank.

Finally SVDP has the project to build two greenhouses around the well, to start the market gardening plants, improve the seeds, and protect the crops from the sun, by irrigating them with the water of the agricultural well, whose flow will suffice.

**What about orchards?** We have seen those who survived the destruction by animal herds in previous years. We tasted guavas (photo below). There are also papaw-trees.

Fruit trees consume less water than other crops, especially cereals.

But the exploitation of an orchard takes time to start: the current trees, planted five years ago, gave their first fruits only last year.

And it is necessary to bring surplus value by transforming the harvests, otherwise it is not very profitable. For Nyiel Gordon Kuol (cf p.7), encouraging South Sudanese women to adopt food *processing* techniques is a priority for their organization: how to preserve and condition food<sup>10</sup>, and especially fruits (mangoes, papayas...). She herself was trained in China on solar drying techniques (with or without dryers). In any case, fruit trees (banana, guava trees) could be planted along the stream flowing to the east<sup>11</sup>.



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<sup>10</sup> In South Sudan, people eat a lot of dried meat and fish.

<sup>11</sup> This stream can overflow, as happened this year, which forced SVDP to move the fence by a few meters.

In addition, the directors of the farm always have in mind the phytotherapeutic project for which some trees were planted a few years ago, like the acacias in the shade of which we had lunch (see photo).

**Corn and sorghum** are consumed by everyone in the country, more than cassava.

Local food is 80% based on these cereals.

Sorghum cultivation is less water intensive than maize, but unlike sorghum, corn kernels are shrouded



and thus protected from birds, who crave sweet sorghum grains. *"To fight against birds, locals erect small wooden structures,"* explains Betram. *"They send their children on them to drive away birds when they come in the morning and in the evening. Children often miss school because of that."* There is also the possibility of spraying chemicals

A bag of flour of 20 kgs is sold SSP 15'000 (\$75) to retailers.

For sale to UN agencies, 50kg bags are used

***"The only solution, if you want to grow corn and sorghum, is irrigation by the river."***

This is the conclusion of the preliminary study by Norbert Demmelbauer and Johannes Winkler, done on the spot and financed by SVDP Juba.

The river in question is located west of the field, 900m from its center. 300 meters are off the field.

The level of this river can vary by several meters from one year to another: this year, the level was 2 to 3 m lower than last year.

To cultivate 40ha of cereals, the daily flow required is 600 to 700m<sup>3</sup>.

This option will require:

- building a large reservoir (excavation with rocks), to prevent the risk of drying.
- burying pipes (deep enough so that they are not damaged during plowing) from the river to the center of the land;
- obtaining the agreement of the local community for the installation of pipelines under the 300 m located off the ground: an agreement in principle has already been given to SVDP;

- installing next to the river a pump (in height, for floods), with a filter for the sand, and a source of energy
- either solar panels (which pose maintenance problems and which are a privileged target of robbers in uniform), or a generator with a power of 60kva<sup>12</sup>- all protected by barriers and a guardian from the village<sup>13</sup>.



For irrigation in the field, the purchase of an automatic *sprinkler system* was considered. But it would take a mobile machine that can circulate between the plants. Too complicated and too expensive<sup>14</sup>, this option was abandoned in favor of a traditional irrigation system: "*channel irrigation*", in French "method by channel to the line", with a slight slope; the floors are flattened by pulling heavy metal beams 4m wide with a metal edge underneath which digs the ground a little.

SVDP has a preference for the generator option, which would reduce the initial investment costs of around € 40,000 compared to the solar panels option. The cost of a generator in Uganda is around € 12,000.

Given these initial choices, the estimated cost for the installation of this equipment and a first phase of exploitation on 20ha of corn is € 100,000.

The following year, 40 000 € will be necessary to exploit additional 20ha.

According to Jean Roussineau, if we reach yields of 2.5 tons per hectare, that will be good, knowing that current yields are 1 ton / ha and that in Uganda, we reach 3 tons / ha (but we are at a higher altitude, there is more rain)<sup>15</sup>.

### **The investment plan needs to be updated to reflect these changes.**

The 22.5 m<sup>3</sup> reservoir planned in the initial configuration was not built and will not be built in this form, as mentioned at the top of the previous page.

SVDP kept the \$ 12,000 in reserve.

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<sup>12</sup> Like that of the SVHCC.

<sup>13</sup> It was helpful when the SVHCC was attacked by seven armed guys (from the Mandaris tribe) who wanted to loot the fridge. The guard, who spoke their dialect, brought them to their senses.

<sup>14</sup> € 22,000 more expensive than the traditional method.

<sup>15</sup> In France, the yield is 10 to 12 tons / ha.

A low capacity mill was purchased this year \$ 4000.

That leaves \$ 11,000 out of the \$ 15,000 sent for this investment, but another larger mill is needed, and SVDP purchased a gin that was not planned.

Both threshers were purchased (\$ 4000 transferred).

All this material, purchased in Kampala, Uganda, will not be delivered to Juba until early December.

Dryers have not been ordered yet. It is an essential investment because if the corn does not dry enough, it is likely to be invaded by parasites.

For now corn is dried in a wooden crib (see photo). But this traditional technique has disadvantages: bird damage, rodents, ear rot, dry matter losses due to grain respiration and the development of parasitic fungi etc.

The choice of a dryer model was not yet fixed by Betram. *"Ugandan manufacturing (modeled after the American model Maize Easy Dryer) is stronger than Chinese, and you have a maintenance guarantee, for spare parts too,"* he explained. *"The problem with Ugandan dryers is that they work with wood. Where to find coal or wood? "And according to John Roussineau," they are adapted to small family farms, but in our case, it would take too much time." For Betram," Chinese dryers seem simpler, they run on diesel, but you*



*throw them away when they don't function properly..*

*When I go to Australia in January, I will go through China (Hong Kong or Singapore). I know someone there. If I find the right machine, I can have it put in a container the same evening."*

The dumper to transport the crops has not been ordered yet. The \$ 7,000 sent this year according to the budget are in reserve at SVDP Juba but will not be enough given the latest data collected by Betram: *"the dumper sold in Uganda between \$ 5,000 and \$ 7,000 are scrap made in the 90's. The best are 2.5 tons and sold for a minimum of \$ 16,000, but no guarantee as to the suitability of engine conditions. We*

discussed with Jean the possibility of buying it in Dubai, which would be more profitable in the long term. The cost would not be less than \$ 15,000 considering the year of manufacture of the vehicle and shipping costs."

The 40m<sup>2</sup> storage room was not built. The \$ 17,000 sent this year is in reserve. The need to build a much larger shed is evident today, to store grains and sacks of flour protecting them from pests (rats, insects...) and rain, and to house all the equipment (machine and tractor). "In case the flour is not sold after a month, you fumigate in the storage area," explains Jean.

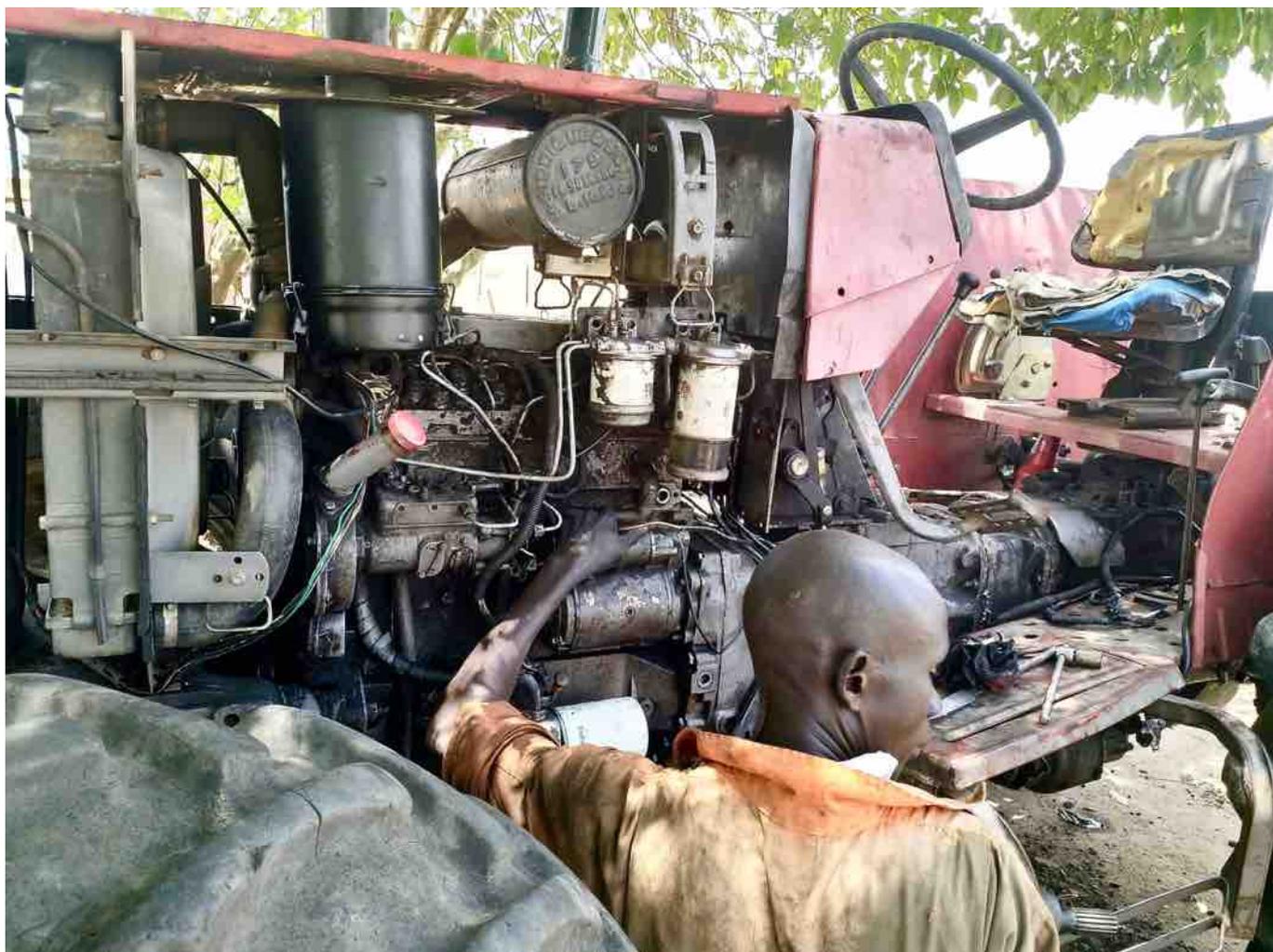
The area of the shed should be approximately 600m<sup>2</sup> (20mx30m).

There would be a drying chamber, a room with the threshing machine and a storage area (20x15), completely closed (one door), with ventilation in height (the wall does not rise to the ceiling), well protected. Construction began in November. The cost is estimated at \$ 35,000.

Another investment that was not included in the original financing plan was the replacement of the tractor. Funded by MIVA and ProSudan in 2013, the 80hp tractor of Pakistani origin is in poor condition (see photo). "We need a more powerful one, at least 120 hp" says Jean. "If you plow with a tractor of insufficient power, your engine breaks down constantly."

Instead of having a screw plow, like the current tractor, the new one will have to have a particular plow, a chisel (very fine teeth) which will allow better clearing and maintenance ...

Since returning to Anjou, Jean has been trying to find a used tractor of a good Western brand (like a Massey Ferguson). Indeed, if SVDP passes again by MIVA, Betram will not have the choice of the model and the delay of reception in Juba will be too long. But for Betram and Jean, this new tractor is the top priority: it is necessary that the whole plot be ready at the end of February at the time of the arrival of the



first rains. Grain sowing will be done in March.

The cost, including transportation costs, is estimated at between \$ 20,000 and \$ 40,000.

**We met with the team hired this year to manage this farm pilot project on a daily basis, and John in particular exchanged with the three main employees of the farm." *The three guys I saw seemed ok to me. We exchanged well. There is a human basis that seems correct to me. The organization of work in South Sudan is not a pyramidal structure like in Europe. Each one has his own skills. Pasquale Levi is the director of the farm .He is more specialized in cereals. Francis Phaniel, his deputy, is an agronomist who presents a good radio program for farmers. He has good theoretical and practical knowledge. Steven Matx is also an agronomist, and tends to grow vegetables. Their referents in the offices of SVDP in Juba are different depending on the problems encountered.***

They sleep on the spot. Later, they will sleep in the wooden houses. The problem for the moment is the lack of water on this part of the land where these houses are located. To cook, bringing water so far is complicated.

There are currently two guards day and night.

Jean explained to Betram that it was essential that they establish a 15-day forecast of what they had to do



and a report of the previous fortnight.

*"They told me about permaculture<sup>16</sup>" says Jean. I told them, guys, Permaculture is stuff for Parisian boobies. What we have to do is grow organically without using too much pesticides. And I reminded them something (there were about twenty women there): the organization of the farm must take into account the fact that it can be copied, used, by the farmers of the region. And for this reason the irrigation project must not be a huge project. "This last remark of John refers to a farm developed with governmental cooperation he went to visit with Betram: the Lado Irrigated Scheme. They planted as early as March. They use Israeli irrigation technology (drip) and make two harvests of corn a year (150,000 bags).*

**In the short term, therefore, we expect the following information from SVDP:**

- An update of the farm financing plan, with an accounting remark between expenses and donations received.
- The start of bi-monthly communications of the actions undertaken. We have been informed of the bad news of the lack of water in the water table only once there. It could have been done in June. If this seemed

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<sup>16</sup> An ethical approach to build sustainable human settlements and farming systems by imitating the workings of nature and by drawing inspiration from tradition.

to us understandable (Betram wanted to present us on the spot the alternative plan built with the Austrian experts), it puts our partners of Operation Orange in difficulty: the Relais Anjou had presented this summer a request for regional subsidy for specific investments, such as the reservoir of the initial plan (\$ 12,000 for a first tranche planned for the end of the year). If the application is agreed, Jacques Langlais will have to explain the changes in the plan.

**In the medium term, here are some remarks from the numerous working meetings that took place with the Relais Anjou of Operation Orange during the visit of Betram to Angers in October:**

- According to soil analyzes carried out in France thanks to Jean, it appeared that the soil (as often in tropical region) is poor in assimilable phosphate by plants. It is rich in organic phosphate which must be



transformed into assimilable phosphate. *"Using phosphate fertilizers is not the best solution because it can damage soil fertility,"* explains Jean. *"To increase the phosphate content, you have to do some sort of compost. But to make compost for the entire plot, you would have to resort to the surrounding villages. And that would require controlling the temperature. This method can be used for growing vegetables. But the idea for cereals, is to leave the straw (the branches of the corn ...) on the ground and when the tractor passes, it shreds and with the first rains, it breaks down."*

- Another problem: the growth of a plant, *Sudan grass* (cf top of p.26) higher than corn, which suffocates the corn. If you bine manually, it will mobilize a considerable staff. Therefore it will be necessary to make a specific herbicide treatment before planting corn.

- The crop that could be introduced in rotation is soyabeans. This would help create synergies with the poultry program: the hens would have a mixed soy (protein) and corn (carbohydrate) diet.

- Training of farmers in the vicinity of the pilot farm remains an important part of the overall project. Given the delay in starting an irrigated agriculture, it is not known at present if these formations will start in 2020, as originally planned; but there is space outside the fenced area, which could be used for this purpose.

**Various alternatives have already been explored for financing the works of the irrigation system:**

- During the visit of Betram in October, I went with him to Veolia headquarters in the Paris region where we met Jean-Marie Thierry, an engineer, friend of Patrick Cuinet.

In mid-November, Betram sent a request for financial assistance to the Veolia Foundation.

- We have also been together at the Paris headquarters of SVDP International where we met again Bruno Fabre, the project manager of CIAD, where we met, for the first time, its president Bertrand Ousset. The vocation of SVDP International is not intended to fund development programs; Rather it aims to coordinate SVDPs programs around the world. So far, the only funds made available to them through CIAD were for urgent causes<sup>17</sup>. But this internal policy is evolving and they are trying to develop an allocation of funds for development projects, the case of SVDP Juba being for them emblematic, an example of what they want to support in the future! This was once more confirmed to me by Bertrand Ousset when I saw him again in early November.

Result: At the end of October, SVDP Juba received € 15,000 for the pilot farm and will receive an additional € 15,000 in early 2019.

- Jacques Langlais also hopes to finance the second phase of the irrigation project (2020) by the five Rotary clubs in Angers.



A big thank you to our partners at Operation Orange, whose contribution to this pilot farm project is very important.

Returning from Juba, Jean even went to Uganda, to a tropical agriculture research center at a university; he has also been to see suppliers of equipment and seeds.

#### **4. THE LOLOGO VTDC – OTHER COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES**

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<sup>17</sup> CIAD nevertheless already sent funds in 2016 for the camps of displaced (14 000 €) and for the construction of the guest house (25 000 €). In 2017, they agreed to participate in the BIH program (€ 12,000).

#### 4.1. An oasis

The fact that my visit this year takes place at the end of the rainy season and that during a part of my stay I am staying in the guesthouse of the VTCDC, allowed me to see this place in a different light and more favorably.

When you arrive at the muddy (or dusty) tracks of Lologo, the VTCDC appears like an oasis of greenery: big trees offer their branches to the birds who chirp in the morning, and their shadows to the tea vendors and their customers; shrubs, carefully carved by Benjamin, guide the visitor along the paths and to the offices; colorful flower beds, maintained daily by Gabriel and Soka, delight here and there the eyes; and **many small plots planted and cultivated by EFF apprentices or nursery staff** show that SVDP has been able to combine the enjoyable with the useful.

Thus, as seen in the photo opposite, near the future buildings of the school are grown gombo (also called "bamia" or "okra") and cassava ("kassava").

On other plots of land elsewhere are grown okra and other vegetables.



The harvested products are used for the child feeding program that SVDP provides within the VTCDC, as well as for the staff canteen, near the guest house (see p.20).

I have also seen **improvements in some small infrastructure** in the VTCDC: new latrines for apprentices, funded by World Vision<sup>18</sup> in return for making the Center available in March 2017; or the new facility (about \$ 15,000, funded in 2017), powered by solar panels, for filtering and distributing water to the thousands of children and adults who attend the VTCDC daily.

Finally, SVDP has **development projects to better geographically separate the various activities within the Center**, which leads to the future displacement of certain activities in currently unused areas of the Lologo site: the chapel will be rebuilt larger and in hard, given the influx, on Sundays with the desired financial support of the Austrian partner Missio; and the primary school will also be moved (see next page).

#### 4.2. The Saint Vincent School

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<sup>18</sup> SVDP has also obtained from the NGO a monthly allotment of 200\$ each month to the chief of the Lologo community for a redistribution to the most needy.

Remember that this school, initially created and managed by the local community is **since 2015 years exclusively supported by our Austrian partners**: Hilfswerk in 2015, Caritas Graz in 2016 and Missio, Caritas Graz and Hilfswerk since 2017.

In 2018, Caritas Graz and Hilfswerk donated about \$ 102,000 and Missio \$ 49,000. These large amounts are used to ensure the functioning of the school (salary of teachers, purchase of school supplies), the training of teachers, the distribution of a daily snack to students and the construction of a first building in hard, that I have already seen erected in the slightly out-of-the-way area of the VTCDC, which will soon house the school and the new chapel. The construction of three other new buildings for the school is planned for 2019.

**This school is a stunning success of the SVDP community development project in Juba.**



It is one of the few institutions to meet the enormous need of the region, with an estimated 2.2 million out-of-school children in the country and the majority living in Juba and its surrounding areas. Unlike other schools in the area, the school is financially affordable even for the poor, and it has continued to operate during those war years, helping to create a sense of stability for the local population.

Finally, Saint Vincent School is one of two schools in Juba that scored 100% success on the end of primary exam last year. Recall that 2017 was the first year that the school welcomed its students in the last year of primary (P8).

And of the 43 students in this first class, all went on to secondary school in different schools in Juba, Kator (Comboni), Gudele, or Lologo (Martyrs International, a private school, which costs 5000 SSP, or \$ 25, per year).

This year, the P8 class has 62 students. The best student is Richard. He is 11 years old.

## **5. OTHER PROGRAMS OF SVDP JUBA**

## 5.1. The Saint Vincent Health Care Centre

The operating operation of this Center is about \$ 54,200 this year.

26% of the funding comes from the Saint Vincent de Paul Society England & Wales, the rest from ASASE, whose donors are: the Coromandel Foundation (58% of the total), the Papoose Foundation (10%) and the municipalities (6%).

Opération Orange donations focused this year on the professional training program and the IGPs (especially on the pilot farm), but Operation Orange has been a historic partner of this Center.

Patrick Cuinet, the president of Operation Orange, a retired orthopedic surgeon since a year, discovered the SVHCC in Nyarjwa, which Operation Orange has been supporting since the creation, with satisfaction. He gave the antibiotics, bandages and painkillers he had brought with him from France.

Here is his testimony: *"There were twenty patients. Many children. Feverish. Moms lying on a mat breastfeeding.*

*It was very clean, spick and span. Unbelievable!*

*The pharmacy is full of malaria drugs, which represents the vast majority of diseases treated at this time, according to statistics provided by the doctor we met. I also saw drugs for urinary tract infections and*



*general antibiotics.*

*Other diseases treated in this rainy season are bronchitis and pneumonia.*

*I also saw the midwife, the laboratory (they produce the thick drop, to identify on the blade the type of malaria), the pharmacist a woman, who charges a small fee, and that's fine. "Because if you do not charge, you would have plenty of people who will come for nothing," the doctor remarked very accurately. Furthermore, even a symbolic contribution establishes a healthier relationship between the population and the service rendered.*

*The doctor, who teaches at the Sabah Children's Hospital, brought his young apprentices to the SVHC for two months to learn on the ground, as we do with the interns at home."*

Remember that the representative of the Ministry of Health - a doctor who had worked in England for 22 years - said, on the day of the inauguration of the SVHC, that it was the most advanced and cleanest Health Center that he had ever seen in the country.

We have better understood the relevance of this assertion when, at the request of Patrick Cuinet, **we have visited the public adult hospital in Juba.**

The experience was overwhelming: blood on the floor, a throaty smell, patients crammed in the same room, medical staff lacking everything, including drugs (distributed free of charge) and hardware, the few existing instruments being obsolete or damaged.

An unfortunate dentist requested that we furnish him with adequate instruments ...

One of the doctors responsible showed us machines offered by the Chinese: they do not function: they have been waiting for nine months for the Chinese to come back with the software.

Although often poorly finalized, Chinese aid has become ubiquitous given the tense environment in recent years between the government and the western community. They are currently financing the construction of a hospital: one for surgical consultations and a maternity ward.

Before the outbreak of the internal conflict in late 2013, health expenditure accounted for only 3% of the national budget, and 80% of health and basic services in South Sudan were already provided by non-governmental organizations. Just imagine the current situation while 60% of oil revenues are allocated to the defense budget.

The presence of MSF teams especially in the country is one of the largest in the world for the NGO<sup>19</sup>.

90% of South Sudanese give birth without any medical help. The country has the highest maternal mortality rate in childbirth: 1 in 48 (more than 200 times more than in Switzerland). It was, before the war, the first cause of female mortality in the country.

Finally, as I write these lines, **SVDP is visited by a pharmacist who is a member of Pharmacists Without Borders Switzerland**, who came to Juba on an exploratory mission to see how the NGO can support the SVHCC in the future.



<sup>19</sup> More than 3,000 South Sudanese work, together with 300 foreign aid workers, for the NGO in the country.

## 5.2. The BIH (Be In Hope) program

Our street children's home is located in Rajaf, a village half an hour from Juba.

Rajaf is one of the main places of celebration for the Catholic Church who is preparing to celebrate in 2019 the 100th anniversary of its establishment in the region: it is here that the first missionaries settled and erected a church, which was originally the cathedral of the diocese.

**At each visit, I see improvements in the operation of this program, especially at the human level:** the relations between the 20 beneficiaries and the supervisory staff are obviously very good. We feel that children are serene, calm and proud of their evolution within the program.



Martin, the social worker, is present in the home from Tuesday to Thursday. He sleeps on the spot. If necessary, he returns other days. He helps, especially the new boys, in their schooling, most of them never having been to school before.

The foster parents, Nyawella Gwang Kiir and his wife Veronica, tell us that children do well in school and at home.

Amar, the driver, drives the boys every day to St Tereza School in Juba.

William Akej is in the offices of SVDP in Lologo, and provides the link with the administrative direction.

Improvements in the overall atmosphere are also the result of the SVDP's deliberate choice to give **priority to hosting orphaned and under-10 boys. Thus, the ten new beneficiaries who left the street in January 2018 became fully integrated.**

Everyone of them knows that at age 18, they will have to leave the program and be reunited with their family or relatives. However, they have the option of staying an extra year if they take vocational training at the VTDC in Lologo. At the end of this training year, they must leave the home.

As experience has shown that some are more inclined to favor the continuation of their schooling, SVDP strives to make them aware of the rules of the VT CDC that a lack of attendance at classes would lead to their exclusion from training ... and therefore BIH program.

The boys are accommodated in the rooms according to their age.

They grow plots of land around the home and consume the crops: eggplant, corn, sweet potatoes and okra (photo below).



During our stay, the boys were invited (along with other children of their age) to a kind of weekend seminar organized by sisters of Solidarity in South Sudan to heal the impact of psycho-traumatic experiences.

There are two buildings in the Be In Hope compound that belong to the church and have not been used until now: a Health Center and classrooms for seminarists. Their reuse for a few months is temporary, until the buildings are completed, just a little further.

**The program's minibus** has been overused and needs to be replaced as it is now too expensive to maintain. When he went to Austria last June, Betram asked MIVA, who agreed, to finance 50% of the purchase and import of a new Toyota Hiace (total cost: € 27,000). The rest was financed in November by ASASE (21%), ProSudan (18.5%) and SVDP Juba (10.5%).

**The generator** purchased in Uganda (and assembled in Lebanon) is no longer working well. Every so often it needs to be repaired by Lologo technicians. And there is a problem of spare parts. It cost them nearly \$ 5,000 this year! ASASE sent \$ 11,000 at the end of October for the purchase of another generator, 20Kva for the needs of the home (light + pump for the well).

One of the boys, 17-year-old Pasquale, had been diagnosed with TB for two months. He was under treatment and quarantine among acquaintances, to avoid the contagion of his comrades of the home. The mycobacterium tuberculosis is an infectious agent that is transmitted by air, via droplets containing bacteria and exhaled by coughing of the patient.

Composed of an antibiotic combination, Pasquale's treatment must be followed for at least six months. Tuberculosis is one of the top ten causes of death in the world. However about 90-95% of infected people will not develop the disease, their immune system being able to fight the bacteria that is responsible.



I met the ten new beneficiaries this year, and I was struck to learn that many have lost their parents because of alcohol: Sorghum alcohol, whose consumption can be deadly. *"To test it, manufacturers put it in the mouth,"* tells me Betram. *"If they do not spit it out right away, it's because its alcohol content is not high enough!"*

I asked some boys how they projected themselves a decade from now. Ajuol Bol, 18, in the last year of primary school, wants to become an electrician. Ajuol was appointed "prefect" in the internal organization of the home: in the absence of Nyawella, he represents the authority and makes the link between the school and the social workers.

Paul Allafi (18) would like to become an engineer, Luol Gor Malek (15), a doctor, James Aguer (14), an airline pilot, Francis Ladu (13) a mechanic, and Angelo (11), a priest.

I was lucky to be able to play football with the boys. 😊

A small visit report dedicated to this program with photos of each beneficiary has been written and is available on request or downloadable from the ASASE website.

This year's program donors were SVDP England & Wales (21%), SVDP International, via CIAD (20%), Hilfswerk (8%) and ASASE (48%).

This program is unique in Juba. About 100 orphans are cared for by a government program in Juba, but *"they eat only beans, exclusively,"* says Betram.

An anecdote that highlights the hopes we put in this program: at the airport, I saw a former beneficiary of the Sahafa home (which we had supported in Khartoum for years): she became a South Sudanese ambassador to Nigeria.

## 6. SVDP JUBA

### 6.1. Rose, public relations officer

Rose started working in early May. She is Kenyan. When I met her, it was her first month as a hired employee. She had completed her probationary period.

Her first few months were quite satisfying, but according to Betram she must persevere in her efforts.

Its main mission is to develop the local network of SVDP, as much for professional training as for the IGPS with companies and NGOs present locally.

It was by going to a forum that SVDP obtained the contract with the municipality of Juba for the carpentry workshop (school desks, cf p.22). SVDP will join an association (for \$ 50 per year), allowing it to be a full member and officially invited to forums. This will allow SVDP to be aware of the subsidies, particularly from the UN. Before being officially accepted, SVDP will have to make a presentation.

Many NGOs are present at these forums: Care International, Medair, Médecins Sans Frontières, Unicef ... The only local NGO is the South Sudanese Red Cross.

Apart from the presence in these forums, SVDP will also benefit from other ancillary services: security notifications (but Betram tells me he is better informed than them!), Flight reservations service, or evacuation if necessary in the dangerous areas.

Rose is under William's supervision.

As she is doing well in English writing, she has also been charged with the redaction of the reports to Austrian backers.

Rose has a normal salary, compared to the SVDP salary grid.

There remains a gray area concerning her mission, which remains to be better circumscribed. Rose was recommended by the Diocese of Rumbek. In fact, she is supposed to work also for the Austrian partner ProSudan on the projects he finances in Rumbek, with the diocese, or in Juba (St Tereza school in Kator). But these are programs that have nothing to do with SVDP. Furthermore SVDP does not know at all how much is paid by Hans Rauscher, the president of ProSudan, whose donations have always been punctual. This situation must be clarified and if there is an activity outside SVDP, it must be defined more accurately. Rose was previously a trainer: she helped women set up an independent activity. She said she wanted to help them make necklaces, bags, that could be sold for IGPs. I told her that the creation of a new IGP is not on the agenda and that she should focus on its networking mission.

Rose is under William's supervision.

As she is doing well in English writing, she has also been charged with the redaction of the reports to Austrian backers.



## 6.2. Relations with the authorities

As indicated on p.5, the liter of gasoline is sold at about 270 SSP (\$ 1.35). In early October, **SVDP obtained an authorisation to buy 3000 liters per month at 60 SSP (\$ 0.30) per liter .**

Only a few government institutions such as the ministries of defense, the interior, or foreign affairs, as well as parliament, have the same privilege.

This represents almost 65% of the monthly gasoline consumption of SVDP for all of its programs.

This request had been submitted to the authorities a while ago.

As an organization linked to the Church, SVDP depends, for all that is related to tax exemption, of the office of religious affairs of the president<sup>20</sup>.

It is difficult to find your way in this administrative organization. *"For example," says Betram, "If SVDP had projects outside of Juba (which is currently not the case) and if we wanted to bring in visitors, it would require special permission from the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs."*



## 6.3. Relations with the Church

In 2019, the Church will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Church in Juba. It is the new (for two years) parish priest of Kator, where is located the VTDCDC, which is in charge of organizing the festivities. However, he regularly urged SVDP to ensure that program beneficiaries contribute to this celebration through donations. Betram stood firm. Because apprentices and students do not have money; and that SVDP and its programs do not depend on the Church. Recently, he calmed the priest by saying that all employees had agreed to pay part of their salary for four months, contributing 150,000 SSP (\$ 750). Betram gives 8000 SSP for example (\$ 40).

In October, ASASE donated \$ 2,000 to SVDP to enable them donate this sum to the Church for the celebration of this anniversary.

<sup>20</sup> It used to be the Ministry of Labor before.

On the day of the official centenary launch on October 30, SVDP was invited, and Bishop Paulino and Auxiliary Bishop Santo expressed their gratitude for this outstanding contribution.

#### 6.4. Relations with banks

When SVDP emptied its Buffalo accounts at the beginning of the year to transfer its holdings to Ecobank, the balance on the Buffalo's statements was incorrect. SVDP reported it and, after an investigation, the bank blamed it on a computer error.

#### 6.5. Relations with auditors

According to Marlene, the accountant, the work with the auditor is going well. He came in June and September.

At first, he had to establish rules and procedures, now he just checks that they are followed.

#### 6.6. Internal management

**The priority must be for Betram to find a deputy** who is able to replace him in his absence. Which is not the case with William, who lacks natural authority, skill and ambition.

Betram knows some people who might be interested in the job and who might be up to the job, but they are Dinkas. Unfortunately, the management of human resources must take into account **tribal rivalries**.

Bol, the new director of human resources, hired in 2018, is dinka. He worked before for the university. Betram is happy with him: *"Every employee has a file now. Bol manages the social contributions that are paid to the state each month. I send him when there are cases to settle with the departments.*

*And this year, we hired two young Dinka women: Sunday Fall [who was at the reception of the guest house, but it was only a temporary job] and Awak, the administrative secretary " [photo opposite ]. If I still propose the hiring of a Dinka person, it may create problems ... especially in this position. "*



Awak was secretary in the administration of vocational training a few years ago. Then she went to Kenya to study. When the carpentry training was stopped, Peter, one of the trainers, was kept for the furniture manufacturing IGP and Moses, the other trainer, was put in the training secretary's office. It is Moses who manages the database of vocational training. He is one of the few who is comfortable with computers.

With regard to the administrative staff (for the technical staff, it is completely different), it seems to me, year after year, that few are really committed, motivated, hardworking and efficient employees.

Betram says it differently: *"Employees, even so-called managers or directors, have only a very limited ambition."*

For some time Marlene, the accountant, was leaving at 1 pm to pick up her child when she left school. It was decided to send a driver every day to pick up the kid. Alice, her assistant gives satisfaction.

The next election for the National Council presidency will take place in 2019. Betram would like to count on the support of Mogga and William. But none seems ready to be a candidate.

\*

The second Sunday at Mass, one of the readings<sup>21</sup> was extensively commented by the officiant, who addressed the faithful with vigor, given the context: *"Where do the wars come from, where do the conflicts come from? Is it not precisely all these wishes that lead their fight in you? You are full of lusts and you get nothing, so you kill; you are jealous and you cannot achieve your ends, so you come into conflict and you make war."*

This same afternoon, it is with the hope of the restoration of a lasting peace, that I left the country.

I was very happy to share these moments with Lucienne, Jean and Patrick: it has further consolidated the ties that unite us in our efforts to finance the actions of SVDP Juba.

To the SVDP teams, especially Betram, whose commitment and determination commands admiration, I renew my warm thanks for their welcome, availability and confidence.

And to all the Friends or donors who follow us and support us, I say, " *Yallah*, let's continue!".



**Patrick Bittar**  
**Director of ASASE**  
**November 2018**

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<sup>21</sup> Letter of Saint James, 4, 1

