



FRIENDS OF
IBBA GIRLS SCHOOL
SOUTH SUDAN

NEWSLETTER
November 2015

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DONATE NOW



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

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moneygiving

If you feel you're able to contribute please do so through our link [HERE](#) to Virgin Money Giving! Every contribution counts and anything you do will make a huge difference to our cause! Thank you, from all of us.



Better To Light A Candle Than Curse The Darkness

Dear Friends

Please come and join us for two wonderful events taking place in Coventry this misty November. But book up straightaway, as places are filling up very fast. And read some of our other news below – both sad and hopeful. Don't curse the darkness, but help us keep a small candle alight in Ibba...

November 11,12 and 13, Rising 15: The Hard Road To Hope

A global conference on peace and reconciliation, with keynote speeches by Hilary Benn, Gordon Brown etc and a FIGS session on the Wed afternoon on the challenges of girls education for peace-making, with our friends Jacob Lagu, Josephine Yanga, Pamela Lomoro, and Nyakor Riam.

Special discount prices and booking details [here](#).

Saturday November 21: FIGS Annual Meeting in Coventry from 12 noon

Come and join other FIGS supporters and volunteers for a wonderful day together in central Coventry, from 12 noon till 5pm, followed by an optional curry at 5:30pm. This is the high-spot of the year for FIGS. Highlights of the day include light lunch on arrival, and

- A video and Skype call with students and staff at Ibba Girls School
- Stories from several South Sudanese people living in the UK
- Margaret Eddershaw performs her latest African poetry (buy her book)
- Mark Simmons, chief exec of CORD, on education for peace-making
- Progress reports on the building programme, students and staffing, school development, finances, and fund-raising
- Opportunities to sponsor IGBS students for their schooling.
- Sign up for our Big Give event on Dec 4 and 5 2015
- Buy FIGS [Christmas cards](#).
- Optional curry together at 5:30pm (book in advance)

(Details and directions [here](#). Reserve your place by e-mailing zsofiailona@googlemail.com)

Other features in this Newsletter include

1. The sad and complex and continuing insecurity in South Sudan, and the positive call by the bishops and religious leaders for truth, peace and reconciliation.
2. The resilience of the staff and students who have kept the school going “as normal” throughout the troubles. Read Vicky’s report on their recent parents day.
3. The moving story of IGBS student Hellen Beneths.
4. Progress reports on donations and fund-raising.
5. Details of this year’s Big Give campaign.
6. Appointment of 3 new FIGS Trustees, with an introduction this month to Dr Pamela Lomoro.

Warm best wishes,

John

On behalf of the Trustees and Friends of Ibba Girls School

1 - Better to Light a Candle than Curse the Darkness



We can't pretend that the news coming out of South Sudan over the past few weeks is encouraging. The political and ethnic conflicts which have torn the country apart since 2013 have finally spilled over into Western Equatoria State.

Pastoralists from the devastated northern states have brought their cattle to Western Equatoria in search of grass, and tensions have erupted between them and local people who depend on the land for their food. Unemployed young men

have then formed gangs of “arrow boys” to defend their crops and culture, and conflict between pastoralists and agriculturalists has escalated.

This localised conflict then was exacerbated by the apparent lack of effectiveness or neutrality of the armed forces who were brought in to quell the outbreak of rioting and robbery, and a further round of tension developed.

The new Governor of Western Equatoria State, Major General Patrick Zamoj, has tried to restore law and order, bringing in further troops, and things now appear to be settling down, except around Mundri, where there is a major humanitarian crisis.

Strong public calls for truth, peace and reconciliation have been made by the bishops and leaders of all faiths and denominations.

We have sadly therefore had to postpone our visit to Ibba with FIGS volunteer teachers (planned for the last week of October and the first week of November). We have re-scheduled this visit to the start of the next school year in February, in the hope that things will have calmed down by then.

In this complex and uncertain context it is remarkable that the Governors and staff have managed to keep Ibba Girls School open and working “as normal” throughout these troubled times. We applaud their commitment and resilience.

FIGS Trustees have already approved the funding, and a local builder has been contracted, to build the third dormitory, in readiness for the arrival of the next 40 ten year old students in Feb 2016. We hope and pray that this will be a more peaceful year.

2. Vicky's Report

IGBS Director of Studies, Vicky Dratia, give us her report on the school's recent parents day.

Read the full report on our [website](#).



3. Hellen Beneths



This month we hear from a new P4 student – Hellen Beneths.

Hellen has 4 siblings and her parents do not work as her mother is blind and her father is lame. Her family decided to send her to Ibba Girls Boarding School to give Hellen access to a high standard of teaching and learning. She was happy to move to a school without boys, without harsh punishment, and where she gets three meals a day.

When we interviewed Hellen about what she likes about Ibba Girls' School this is what she had to say:

“I like studies, reading, computer lessons, drama, the food, and the accommodation. It’s a good environment for my studies. The best thing is the teaching. I’ve learned to open and save files on the computer, about history, about personal hygiene, how to measure, and done lots of reading. After lessons, I enjoy reading and physical activity. My best friends are Dorish and Eunice.”

It’s great to hear how Hellen is thriving at IGBS, free from the domestic

responsibilities she had at home, and in an environment that encourages her appetite to learn.

4. Progress reports on donations and fundraising

We continue to be very thankful for the generosity of **all of you**, as Friends and supporters of the girl students in Ibba. It is your gifts that keep the school open, safe, and developing – THANK YOU!

To read more about our donors, [click here](#).



5. The Big Give Campaign



Double your donation to Ibba girl students, from Friday 4th December 12 noon

Following the success of last year, we are again taking part in the Big Give, the UK's biggest match funding campaign, starting on Friday 4th December 2015 at 12 noon. Any donation of between £5 and £5,000 at this time will be matched pound for pound while funds last, and all donations and match funds will go towards building the next classrooms, dormitory, and assembly hall, and other essential infrastructure for Ibba Girls Boarding School.

You can view our project and make your donation [here](#) (but match funds will not be live until 4th December 12 noon):

Match funds will be available on a first come first served basis from Friday 4th December 2015 at 12 noon until funds run out, or until the campaign closes at 5pm on Monday 14th December 2015, whichever is sooner. So do book Friday 4th December at 12 noon into your diary now, to have the best chance of doubling your donation.

As with last year, if you intend to give £500 or more, please would you notify us, so that we can predict how much is likely to be raised. You can do this, or ask any questions that you have, by emailing Chernise on chernise.neo@gmail.com.

7. Three New FIGS Trustees

FIGS has appointed Cynthia Bower, Pamela Lomoro, and Julia Sanders as additional Trustees, and we will introduce them to you over the next few Newsletters. This month it is Pamela Lomoro's turn.

Read her remarkable story, which illustrates the long hard road to hope through education, [here](#).



SPECIFIC NEEDS

We now have 34 student sponsors for IGBS. Our generous and committed student sponsors give at least £27 a month, often more, to ensure that our girl

students have food, books, stationary, basic healthcare, and other necessities, which enables them to live and to learn at the school. In return, student sponsors receive progress reports on the girl students, a copy of our annual School Review or Report, and an invitation to the FIGS Annual Meeting.

We would like to have a student sponsor for every one of our 83 girl students at Ibba Girls Boarding School. Could you give the gift of education to a girl in South Sudan? If so, please sign up [here](#) today to give £27 or more a month.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Annual Meeting in Coventry, Saturday 21st November

LAST CALL to book in for the Annual Meeting in Coventry on Saturday 21st November. Don't miss your chance to connect with students, staff and supporters of the school by emailing zsofiailona@googlemail.com ASAP. Full details and directions can be found [here](#).

RISING 2015 in Coventry, 11th -13th November

Coming up very soon, on the 11th, 12th and 13th November in Coventry. The theme of this major global peace forum is A Hard Road to Hope.

[Click here](#) to book a discounted place.

Thank you!

With our best wishes and warm thanks,

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

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