



River of Life Foundation - Newsletter January 2015

Situation in South Sudan

Since December 2013, from the moment when heavy fighting broke out between rival groups, the harrowing situation in South Sudan has been at crisis point. Refugees who had returned home found themselves forced to flee once again. In the meantime, at least 1.3 million people have left their homes, of which at least 350,000 have fled across the border to Ethiopia, Sudan, Kenya or Uganda. Many are living in refugee camps where there is a lack of basic facilities, including clean drinking water and food. In addition to this, the psychological burden is extreme: many people have lost family members to violence and starvation. But however unstable the political situation is and however unsafe the environment, we on the committee of River of Life are committed to pursuing our goal of building a health centre in Wanding to help make it possible for people to return to their home villages in the land of their birth. In the past year we have in particular devoted ourselves to raising funds and sponsorship and will continue to do this until the situation in Wanding is sufficiently stable to enable us to start with the construction work.

Collaboration with other aid organisations

Last year, in reaction to the war in South Sudan, River of Life took the initiative in joining together with other South Sudanese organizations in the Netherlands in order to promote and maintain unity with each other. Together with NAP 1325 (National Action Plan for the United States Security Council, Resolution 1325, on women, peace and security). MeBuZa, Initiatives of Change, ADPC (African Diaspora Policy Centre) and other partners, a taskforce was put into action to organize activities for the target group concerned. Thus, amongst other things, several statements have been formulated and sent to relevant influential leaders who have the capability to bring about an end to the war, and a lobbying letter forwarded to the Dutch government and the EU. In addition to this, contact has been made with organizations such as Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders), Warchild and ZOA International refugee organization (stands for Zuid Oost Azië/South East Asia, a Christian organization), all of whom are active in South Sudan. We have received a monetary contribution from the latter organization to support their project to supply clean drinking water to refugee camps.

Project Update: 'Wanding Health Centre'

We have made a good start by organizing various activities, including an information evening with an auction, a benefit dinner and a collection on 'charity day' (read more about this below) to raise funds for the Wanding Health Centre Project. As already mentioned, in the coming year we shall continue to place the emphasis on finding sponsorship and raising funds for this project. The architectural plans are complete, planning permission has been granted and co-operation of the government obtained. The war has made communication with the government and our partners in South Sudan much more difficult and we have had to put the building plans on ice for the time being. As soon as the situation has improved and safety can be guaranteed, construction can be started.

Successful evening for emergency aid

River of Life can look back on a successful inaugural information and donation evening to raise funds for emergency help in South Sudan. The event took place in February 2014 in Amsterdam. Two guest speakers from South Sudan spoke about the current situation there:

River of Life

Who are we?

We are a group of enthusiasts and volunteers who under the leadership of Sarah Nyachan Bayak Tut (originally from South Sudan) want to help the current and future generations of the people of South Sudan to live a successful life in society. Our work is based on a Christian philosophy.

Vision

Our goal is to stimulate and support the people of South Sudan in helping to create a peaceful society where people are able to live side-by-side in harmony. We aim to do this by providing medical care, education, work and enterprise opportunities.

Motto

'Care for, educate and equip South Sudan'
Our message is that commitment and engagement will lead to educating and equipping South Sudan.

Aim

River of Life aims to make it possible for refugees to return to their home villages by making available healthcare, education, work and enterprise opportunities.





Sunday Chot, representative of the South Sudanese Embassy, and Yar Paul, former resident of one of the refugee camps in Malakal and chairman of our partner organization YARD. One of the most pressing current needs in South Sudan is for clean drinking water. River of Life would like to help meet this need and, thanks to the visitors to the information evening, the proceeds of the auction made a significant contribution to bringing clean drinking water to South Sudan.

Benefit Dinner a huge success!

On Saturday 21 June 2014, River of Life held a benefit dinner. A diverse programme had been put together, as well as an abundant array of South Sudanese dishes. The food was delicious and the programme very entertaining. The group 'The Boney M Revue' sang a rousing song for us, there was a presentation about the plans for the Health Centre and a thought-provoking poem was read out to us. During the meal another auction was held and there was a special fashion show with South Sudanese clothes and accessories and atmospheric music. All our guests thoroughly enjoyed themselves, money was raised and River of Life was delighted with the result: a very successful evening! Our thanks to all participants and in particular to the Passie School in Amsterdam who allowed us to use their facilities.

Charity Day in Krimpen aan de IJssel

On 29 November 2014, River of Life took part in the Charity Day organized by the Immanuel Church in Krimpen an den IJssel. Seven charities had the opportunity to introduce themselves by way of a stall selling various items to raise money for their good cause. Afterwards, River of Life held a dinner for which tickets had been sold in advance. We were able to sell some artwork and also some African jewellery. The dinner was a huge success, at least 90 people enjoyed a delicious South Sudanese meal.

Developments

Wilde Ganzen (means 'Wild Geese' and is an organization fighting poverty around the globe.) has approved an extension of six months which gives us the opportunity to continue to profit from their offer to double the income of River of Life.

For the coming period we have arranged a number of sponsorship activities, including two big benefit dinners (Saturday 7 March and Saturday 30 May 2015). In addition to this, there is the opportunity to have Sudanese food prepared in your own home by River of Life volunteers. The money raised will go towards the Wandering Health Centre Project. If you would like to take part, please contact us – the details can be found in the right hand column of this newsletter!

Wanted

We are looking for volunteers who are willing to put their talent, time and/or money at the disposal of River of Life. We are in particular looking for people who are able to promote the charity. We have some excellent leaflets available for this. We are also looking for people who are willing to collect money and help out at benefit dinners. In addition to this, we also need young volunteers to organize sponsorship activities at their sports clubs, schools, churches and any other clubs. Are you inspired by River of Life and would you like to find a way of supporting our work? Get in touch via mail or telephone or just make a donation to our charity! The details of our bank account can be found in the right hand column of this newsletter! River of Life would be delighted to visit your organization, church, school or any other gathering in order to give a presentation about the charity and our work! Please let us know if you are interested!



River of Life

Agenda

Sat 7 March & Sat 30 May 2015

Benefit dinners with South Sudanese food and various contributions

Location: to be announced on the website

Donations

Money can be deposited in the bank account of River of Life, marked 'General' or 'Health Centre Project'.

IBAN NL43 ABNA 62287720
For 3 Euros you can become a member of the Family Club – please mail us for a membership form!

River of Life is ANBI

registered, so your donations are tax-deductible!

Contact

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Your support is vital in enabling River of Life to fulfil its mission to help people who live in extreme poverty in South Sudan

