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Newsletter Hilde van der Draai

Assist South Sudan In Strengthening Teachers in Christ February 2015

Dear all,

On the fifth of January I returned to South Sudan after celebrating Christmas in the Netherlands. This year we are working together with 5 new colleagues, these are students who graduated last year. At the beginning of the year we divided our roles in the department successfully and since the beginning we are flowing well.

On the 27th of January I celebrated that I am alive for 29 years. In this culture people do not celebrate birthdays, so I decided to organize my own party. I invited all female students together with their children. We had some snacks and drinks, while we were sharing our dreams and vision for women in South Sudan. It was a very special gathering in which the ladies shared what touched them personally. It is such a blessing to be able to be part of the fulfilment of their dreams.

On my birthday I also received the news that child-soldiers were released in South Sudan. This is great news, however the UN and other organisations realized that it is a challenge for them to facilitate all the needs of the children.

The children want to go to school, but the question is who will teach these children since there are hardly teachers in the schools. That is again a confirmation of our work. We teach teachers who can guide learners in their learning process. It is our prayer that through our students children will undergo a transformation process which will help them to follow Jesus in their lives.

This last month students and colleagues told me details about the situation in Nuba Mountains and the refugee-camp nearby. It touched me to hear how people suffer due to violence, bombardments, lack of food, drinking water, medication and education. The government did not even allow our students to enter their communities with camera's, because they were afraid that bad pictures would be published. The desire to start an in-service teacher training in the refugee-camp is growing in the heart of students, some of my colleagues and myself. Pray with us for the provision of the right people and other needs to implement our vision. Through Christian education it is our prayer to give the people hope for a better future.

Praise!

***Thank God for the new school year and the new students!**

*** Last year our student Andrew couldn't come because of the conflict, but this year he came and will graduate!**

*** Thank God for all the parties we celebrated this month!**

*** Thank God for our 5 new colleagues and for all other graduated students who are blessing the children and people they are working with.**

Prayers..

*** Pray with us that our students will discover during their time in the college who Jesus and how to follow Him in their life.**

*** Pray with us for the families of our students. Many students receive the news that their wife and children are ill. And sadly one of our students lost his brother in a conflict.**

*** Pray with us for the people in Nuba-Mountains and for our vision to start a teacher training in the refugee camp near by.**



New students

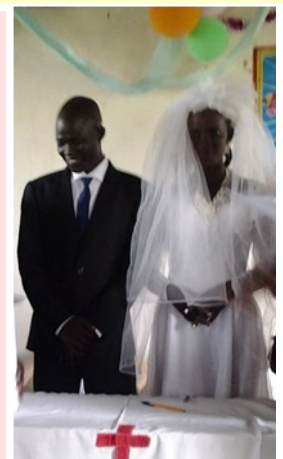
We started a new school year with 125 full-time students and 45 part-time students. Since the first year full-time class has 65 students, we realize that we as lecturers are challenged to keep the quality despite the big number of students. We are blessed with our 5 new colleagues who are helping us!

Graduated students

Some of our graduated students are still applying for jobs, while most of them have already a job. There are 4 graduated students who teach in a primary school of an orphanage. Others received a promotion in the school where they were working before they completed their studies. The students who graduated in 2013 are also doing great! Some of them started a primary- and secondary school in unreachable rural areas.

Geria's wedding!

At the beginning of this year we had a party! Our third year student Geria got married in the place called Kajo Keji. I attended the wedding together with some colleagues. We helped the couple with preparing and decorating the wedding place. This was the first wedding in the church. Our principal encouraged the people during his preaching to conduct wedding parties more often. He explained that married couples should not only strengthen each other physically, but also spiritually and emotionally. This was an eye-opener for many people and therefore the wedding was an inspiring event.



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