



Partnership
News
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Teso Development Trust
partnering with communities in Teso, Uganda

Welcome to the Spring 2025 TDT Newsletter

The past few months in TDT seem to have been dominated by visits. A group from TDT visited Teso in October/November last year and the contents of this newsletter are in large part drawn from what we found. We are also planning for a visit this summer by Rt Rev Kosea Odongo, Bishop of Soroti, and his wife Grace, who have a busy schedule as they meet UK supporters. Both visits have reminded me of the great warmth there is towards TDT among our partners and donors. On the autumn visit our partners in Uganda clearly appreciated the work of TDT as a low overhead, volunteer led, grant-making charity. Similarly, in organising the visit of Bishop Kosea, I am encouraged by the great heart that the supporters I encounter have for the people of Teso and the work of TDT.

Needs in Teso remain great. A regular theme on our visit was the re-emergence of malnutrition in some of the poorest areas. We visited some households that had received relief because of flooding last year and were reminded of the knife edge of survival that so many in Teso experience as a day-to-day reality. More information on the communities we work with is available on our new, volunteer built, website www.teso.org.uk.

Individual donors, faithfully giving by standing order, provide the bedrock for TDT's work. If you are a regular donor, can I ask if you would be prepared to review the level of your giving to counter the impact of inflation? In the past five years UK inflation has been 16.6% but in Uganda it has been 23.2%. While I recognise that we all face cost of living pressures, if you could consider an increase in regular donations, the cumulative effect would allow us to continue to make a difference in the places of greatest need. The relevant forms are enclosed and please contact our administrator, Carmel, if you need any support or advice on this process.

Thank you all, as ever, for your unstinting prayers, support and encouragement for the work of Teso Development Trust.

Andrew Third, Chair, Teso Development Trust

Health Projects



Kumi Compassionate Fund supports the most vulnerable in society with their hospital bills, often children, the elderly and single parents. To try and make it possible for the fund to help as many people as possible, only the most desperate cases are supported and patients are asked to cover what they can. TDT now also sends out an additional £75 per quarter for petty cash as sometimes patients are so poor even covering basics, such as soap or bus tickets to return home, can be a challenge. Photos, from top left, show Joseph Otim, 1 year old, who is being treated for clubfoot; Emmanuel Donyu, 2 years old, who was treated at the hospital for severe pneumonia, Stephen Otim, 5 months old, who is pictured with his father as his mother died due to preeclampsia related complications. He was treated for severe malaria and a bacterial infection. Francis Ojama, 13 years old, who underwent surgery for muscle fibrosis which prevented him from sitting, squatting or walking well and Evelyne Ihabu, 16 years old, who underwent an emergency cesarean section at the hospital. The patients were supported with amounts ranging from £25 to £110 depending on the overall cost of their treatment and the amount they were able to pay themselves.



At Ngora Freda Carr hospital the incinerator (photos on the right), the latest project that TDT supported at the hospital, is now complete and in use.



St Peter's College is a very different campus to the one I encountered in 2005. After cumulative fund raising efforts, it was a joy to be at the college and to see the completion and consecration of the two new classrooms and staff room. This will enormously improve what the college has to offer. Additionally, new furnishings, a computer, printer and internet access have also been provided. College resources have been incredibly stretched, as, over the last year, 158 lay readers came for the two year training and in early February, a new intake arrived. There is an exuberance in the diocese of Soroti, the Bishop of Soroti, Kosea Odongo, along with all the diocesan staff and the St. Peters College council have been incredibly supportive of the college but there is much less happiness in that of Kumi.

Bishop Michael Okwi and the Kumi Diocese are facing great challenges so our prayers must be that God gives them the wisdom needed for leadership. It is an incredible joy to be with the staff and students and I want to pay special tribute to the college principal, the Revd Boniface Esomu, who has overseen all the college's recent developments. The Lay Readers, many of whom are in the picture below, are vital to the leadership of village churches. (Article written by Robert de Berry. Photo below shows from the left Tim Britton, Robert de Berry, Bishop Kosea, the Emorimor (the elected King of Teso), with other clergy from the diocese and the Lay Readers).



BIDS Foundation UK AID Project

We visited two of the communities that were part of the project with BIDS Foundation, Olio and Awiylec, both of which were demonstrating the usual benefits from clean water supply; more time to start small businesses and work in the fields, relief from the diseases linked to drinking and using dirty water, reduced domestic violence, children can go to school easily and can go to school clean. The Local Council 1 representative from the community in Olio had been unsuccessfully petitioning the sub county for a long time for the community to be given a borehole as they were using swamp water which they had to walk 1.5km to collect. His hard work paid off however as when BIDS approached the local government about the project they immediately suggested Olio as a beneficiary.



The boreholes at Olio (above) and Awiylec (left)

We also met 3 of the young people who were trained as Community Based Builders (CBBs) who reported that they still use their skills. Often when one finds work they will call the others to come and join them at the site. Some have even travelled as far as Kampala where they get paid significantly more. The programme has promoted community spirit and a sense of pride in the young people as the builders work together and are still supporting the elderly and the wider community.

Photo right shows Moses, Francis and Owita who are all Community Based Builders. Francis, the boy in the centre, 22 years old, said that he is proud to be able to be able to earn money and to now be able afford to buy items like his own clothes, especially as he was a drop out from primary school. Below right is Nora, 90 years old from Olio Village, who was very excited to tell us how she now only has to take her 5 litre jerry can outside her front door to collect water. Below is one of the latrines and a wash room built by the CBBs.



As well as the immediate positive benefits of clean water provision, the success of many of TDT's other projects is often linked to clean water; without access to clean water any farming project is a challenge and it isn't possible to cultivate kitchen gardens or so easily rear livestock that also need water.

Time saved is also a valuable commodity when it comes to starting small businesses. Jennifer, age 34 and pictured above right in the white head wrap, from Olio Village, buys jackfruit locally in the village now she has more time and sells it in town in slices for a profit. She usually buys one fruit for 5000 UGX but can sell one slice for 1500 UGX. She uses the money she earns for school fees or household items.



PAG South Water Projects



The photos top left and below left show Oluka Perpetua Well and Perpetua herself, who the well was named after as she allowed for it to be constructed on her land.



Above right and right is Darlington Well and a bath for the geese that was constructed once the well was put in.



Left a cabbage garden established next to Okeret Well. The community reported that they no longer need to buy vegetables for themselves and can sell the surplus for a good profit.

Opungurei Borehole (right) and Asilanga Well (bottom), shown in the photos, are both projects completed by **PAG Central**. As a follow on project to the water provision an SHG group (Self Help Group)

is then set up in the village. Margaret, the elderly lady in the red dress on the right is part of the Self Help group in Opungurei. She has taken loans to buy tomatoes, avocados and ripe bananas which she then sells on at a profit. She uses this profit to buy school items for her grandchildren, to buy extra stock or for medical treatment. Anything left over she saves with the group. She says the water has made a big difference to the health of the community and saves precious time that she can now spend on her business. The Self Help Groups are popular as they allow people access to capital for the start up of small businesses and make it much easier for them to plan for and to meet the costs of everyday living.



PAG North Odiding Project

The project in Odiding is at the end of its first year and has been highly successful. We met a handful of the beneficiaries and were walked through their activities.

Regina Aaca has 4 children. She was left by her husband as a result of the poverty they lived in however thanks to the project she has been able to completely change her circumstances. Whereas she used to farm in a subsistence way to survive the year she now has a variety of crops which can be eaten, sold or stored for the dry season. Initially she made a good profit from sesame seed which she invested in sheep, poultry, vegetables and a passionfruit plant. Regina has also borrowed funds from the VSLA (Village Savings and Loans) group that she is part of to invest in crops and livestock. The training not only allows her to buy crops and livestock but also to look after them properly so that they thrive.





Thomas Ochul is a Lay Reader for the Church of Uganda. Similarly to Regina he also made a good profit from sesame seed at the outset which he then invested in vegetables, poultry, sheep, goats and pigs. His main focus for income however are the poultry and pigs. He has 48 chickens, 25 turkeys and 4 pigs. The largest turkeys can be sold for 120,000 UGX (£27), a pig for 150,000 UGX (£34) and a chicken for 45,000 UGX (£10). He is also a member of the VSLA group and therefore has access to funds to cover emergencies.

Irene, right, has 14 grandchildren and is the Chairperson of the VSLA group. As her particular interest is in cloth she set up her own small shop selling material which she purchases in Soroti and then sells for a profit. She can make a 2000 UGX profit on each piece sold. It is popular with the local ladies and she has now re-stocked 4 times.





Grace and Peter Ikopu have established large and successful kitchen gardens with tomatoes, aubergine and maize as a result of the project. They also grow peanuts, millet and sesame seed and have invested in quails and chickens. Previously they used to simply scatter seeds giving a poor result whereas now they plant in rows and the results are much better. They have harvested 450kg of sesame seed, 200kg of millet and

28 sacks of peanuts. A kilo of sesame seed can be sold for 6000 UGX (£1.40). They are also part of the VSLA Group.



It was obvious from the time spent with the community in Odiding that the project has made a massive difference to the community's wellbeing. Following the visits a party was hosted for the visiting team which 390 community members attended and included singing, dancing, cake cutting and a drama sketch to welcome the visitors and celebrate the success of the project.



Education



TDT is supporting two schools at the moment, Aminit High School, which is a Church of Uganda secondary school and Atilinga Primary School in Apopong.

Aminit High School has changed significantly since TDT was first introduced to it and now has over 300 pupils. Government funding has built four classrooms, some latrines and an administration block in addition to the seven classrooms funded by TDT in collaboration with the community. There are now 26 members of staff and teaching on all key subjects and the school is expecting a significant intake for the next school year. The Ugandan Government is paying teachers' salaries as a result of TDT's work at the school. The most recent block of

funding sent by TDT was for the provision of desks. A big thank you goes to St Peter's Church in Ruddington who are dedicated supporters of the school.



Since our visit to Uganda in October the roof has now been added to the four classroom block at Atilinga school, which is also build on land owned by the Church

of Uganda. There are currently 180 pupils at the school spread across classes P4-P7 with 6 teachers and 1 cook. The next priority is to provide desks, a teacher's table and chair and a blackboard for each class. Some provision has been sent for P6 but funds are needed to provide for the rest of the year groups. John Patrick Omoding, the Chairman of the school, anticipates up to 500 children joining the school from the surrounding area.

In previous years TDT has worked with donors to put in latrines for the school and a borehole in the village of Apopong which are still being well maintained.



Relief Support

Last year TDT sent some funds as relief support where heavy rains had caused flooding in the south and central sub-districts. The support went to the most vulnerable - the elderly, disabled or single parent families. Households received posho flour, beans, tarpaulins and mosquito nets. Now the water levels have receded again households could be seen using the tarpaulins to dry crops (originally put on the floor of the home so the household could avoid sleeping in the wet rising up from the ground). One lady, who was taking care of several orphaned grandchildren, was hiring out her tarpaulin to other members of the community in order to make a small profit, an income it was obvious was greatly needed.



Left; the beneficiaries of Kangole sub county in an ecstatic mood after receiving their relief items (a bar of soap, a mosquito net and a tarpaulin) and above one of the beneficiaries in her home with her grandchildren.

Prayer Points

We give thanks for the successful TDT visit in 2024 and the warm welcome for the team by the communities and for the relationships that have been formed.

We give thanks for all of the TDT donors and their continued faithful giving; we couldn't do what we do without you!

Pray for the planning and visit of Bishop Kosea and his wife Grace to the UK later this year.

The Anglican and PAG Bishops and the other church leaders, for God's guidance as they face many difficult decisions.

The Principal, staff and students at St Peter's College for Lay Readers.

For the health of Annet, who leads the Mother's Union projects with Soroti Diocese, that she stays well and is able to start the next phase of the sanitary pads training.

For funding for aid and development work in Teso in the light of significant cuts to support from western donor governments.

God's blessing on all our partners, the TDT Management Committee and the work planned for the year ahead.





Contact Us

For more information about our projects or how you can partner with us please contact

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You can also give securely online at www.justgiving.com/tesodevelopment

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