



Partnership News Issue 75
Autumn 2025



Teso Development Trust
partnering with communities in Teso, Uganda

Letter from the TDT Chair

A major focus of the TDT committee over the past year has been on developing more formal yet still dynamic relationships with our partners in Uganda. As a result we now have Memoranda of Understanding in place with all our major partners, detailing the objectives and mechanics of the partnership, and for every project for which a grant is given, a project agreement gives details for the support to be given and the outputs and outcomes that are expected from the project to which the partner is held accountable.

But as well as regularising the partnerships in this way we are also taking steps to enable two-way communications with our partners, meeting them online to hear about their perspectives and priorities, and taking the opportunity to hear more about the broader context in Teso. Within this newsletter you will find an article giving you more information about our partners and the work we do with them. We hope this will help your understanding and inform your prayers.

As part of this momentum to interact more deeply with our partners, we enjoyed the company of Rt Rev Kosea Odongo, COU Bishop of Soroti and his wife Grace for three weeks this summer. On their tour of the UK, Bishop Kosea and Grace met many TDT supporters and their church fellowships and we learned from each other about the needs and possibilities that we can address in our partnership.

The recent swingeing cuts to aid by western governments are forecast to fall particularly heavily on the poor in sub-Saharan Africa. We are very grateful that through the generosity of TDT supporters we can continue to bring hope to the communities in Teso that our partners identify as being in greatest need.

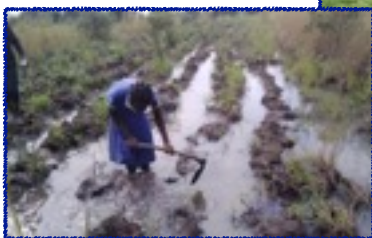
Andrew Third

Chair, Teso Development Trust

(Front Cover photo shows the community in Asilang where TDT funded a borehole through PAG Central)

Flooding in Teso

As this edition went to press we received news of widespread flooding in Teso following prolonged heavy rains. Heavy rains and hail with only short dry spells in between cause water logging in fields and destroy crops. In certain areas roads have also become impassable. In particular districts in Kumi and the north - Kapelebyong, Amuria and Katakwi have been affected. Crops are rotting in the fields and farmers are either unable to harvest them or, if they are they are able to harvest something, storing the crops is a challenge as their homes are also under water. In addition to this stagnant water becomes a breeding ground for mosquitoes causing high rates of malaria and other water borne diseases. Funds have been sent to help 3 of the worst affected communities via our partner PAG North, Odimai, Osilon and Okerai A, with mosquito nets, tarpaulins and emergency food supplies and we are in discussion with our partners in other districts to see which other communities are in urgent need of support. Photos show villagers in Amuria inspecting their water-logged crops and homes and on the far right the abandoned houses and the school in Tajar in Kumi District which are underwater.



Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.' Mt 25v40

In an interview in June*, the Trade Minister Douglas Alexander, when speaking about overseas aid, said that “public consent has been withdrawn.” Aid, he said, “is not just fiscally challenged, it's culturally challenged as well. Even if the money weren't tight, the argument would have to be made.”

There is some evidence that this argument is beginning to be lost in our churches as well. When I talk about the work of TDT I am increasingly asked ‘shouldn't we be looking to help the poor in our own country first?’ Retired missionaries have also commented how hard it is today to foster an international perspective in local churches. As Christians, our responsibility to care for the poor cannot be limited by national boundaries. There is a huge difference between poverty in the West and poverty in places like Teso.

In Teso more than 50% of people subsist on less than £1.59 per day. More than a third of households have children of school age who are not attending school. 85% don't have access to electricity. 90% don't have access to adequate private toilets. Child labour is present in 38% of households. 40% of households don't have any transport or communications assets. 79% of households have homes with unimproved walls or roof or floor. More than 30% of households have more than a 30-minute trip to access clean water. **

We need to clearly make the case for overseas giving in our churches to continue to support the poorest of our brothers and sisters in Teso and elsewhere overseas.

Andrew Third, Chair, TDT

* <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c1wpr39zg5xo>

** Source: Ugandan Bureau of Statistics 2022 using the methodology of the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative

Our Partners in Teso

A fundamental principle of TDT's work in Teso is that we undertake no direct projects, so all work is undertaken by trusted partners. These partners must be registered as NGO's by the Ugandan Government, or as in the case of the Church of Uganda, have an equivalent legal status and they must have a clearly stated Christian ethos. We have a partnership agreement in place with each organisation. The significance of our partners is such that we would like to give our supporters an outline of who they are.

Church of Uganda, Soroti Diocese

Our longest standing partner, COU Soroti Diocese is led by Rt Rev Kosea Odongo, Bishop of Soroti, supported by his Diocesan Secretary, Rev. Canon Sam Ediau. Our work with Soroti Diocese includes a significant commitment to the development of St Peter's Theological College which is key to the training of Lay Readers for the diocese in Kumi and Soroti (photo left shows Robert de Berry outside new college buildings with Rev Boniface Esomu, the college director) and ongoing work with the Mother's Union in the areas of child sexual hygiene education, adult literacy and other community projects. (photo right)



Church of Uganda, Kumi Diocese

Work with Bishop Michael Okwii Esakhan, and his Diocesan Secretary, Rev Canon Simon Peter Omoding, principally revolves around our support for work at Ngora Freda Carr and Kumi Hospitals. Kumi Hospital (photo left shows the Bishop with the hospital team outside the

hospital) has for many years successfully managed a Compassionate Fund supporting the poorest patients to cover their hospital bills. Photo right shows Ngora Freda Carr hospital where various projects have run to improve the overall infrastructure of the hospital.



Church of Uganda, TEDDO

Other development work in Soroti and Kumi Dioceses is undertaken by our partner Teso Dioceses Planning and Development Office (TEDDO) headed by Executive Director Moses Egayu. Recently we have worked with TEDDO on school building and water projects. Photos are of Aminit High School. The main focus of our work through TEDDO in the last few years.



Pentecostal Assemblies of God, Uganda

Our partnership arrangements with the Pentecostal church are held at national level with Presiding Bishop Simon Peter Emiau and Bishop Franco Onaga, General Secretary. Operational relationships are with Development Managers in Teso, Simon Patrick Olupot (North Teso Pastorate), Patrick Onaga (Central Teso Pastorate) and Charles Amaitum (South Teso Pastorate). PAG have a strong record of

delivering water and development projects with TDT funding, focussed around agricultural training and savings and loans schemes and we also support pastor training activities in some pastorates. Photos from left to right show Simon Patrick from PAG North, the team at PAG South and PAG Central.



BIDS Foundation

BIDS Foundation (Building Community Initiatives for Development and Self Reliance) is a regional NGO founded by a group of Christian businessmen keen to relieve poverty in Teso. Its field management team consists of David Okello and Sam Emenyu. Most recently BIDS was the TDT delivery partner for a water and sanitation programme in the Kalaki area, funded by the UK government under a small charities scheme, and achieving an excellent report from the scheme assessors. Photos are from this most recent project conducted in 4 villages in Kalaki district. The principal directors and field management team are Sam in the white t-shirt in the left photograph and David in the blue shirt on the far right of the right hand photo.





Bishop Kosea and Grace Odongo's Visit to the UK

It was wonderful to welcome Bishop Kosea and his wife, Grace to our neck of the woods. This was their first visit to England and they were very impressive, energetic and occasionally hilarious, making significant effort to engage with, encourage and inspire the various groups and individuals they met.

Their visit started with the morning service at St Peter's Church in Ruddington, Nottinghamshire, on the 22nd June, where both were interviewed, and Bishop Kosea preached on Galatians 6:1-10. They were very well received and made a good impact on people. Their willingness to go round and chat with individuals during the bring and share meal after the service was very much appreciated.

Over the following few days time was spent at the local primary school in Ruddington, St Peter's, and meeting with the Church Army HQ in Sheffield and Bishop Paul at Southwell. Visits to Southwell Minster and Lincoln Cathedral also formed part of the day. Grace in particular, being deputy head of a primary school in Soroti, found the time at the school particularly rewarding and took back many ideas with her to Soroti.

This was followed by some equally rewarding visits with congregations in the West Midlands from where Bishop Kosea and Grace moved south.

God's timing was perfect as the visit to Winchester Cathedral coincided with an evening Service of Ordination. (photo right)



Kosea and Grace were accompanied by Hugh, Martin, Pat and Christine from TDT and some time of fellowship was enjoyed exploring Winchester before meeting with the Bishop of Winchester and his wife. Following a tour of the Cathedral which was conducted by Bishop Philip, the Bishops prepared for the evening service. There was a congregation of over 1000 in the Cathedral and Bishop Kosea played his part by giving the Gospel reading, assisting with Holy Communion and the Ordinations. The highlight was listening to Bishop Kosea pronounce the Blessing in Iteso. This will likely have been the first time that this language will have been spoken in a service in the Cathedral. As Bishop Kosea said “history has been made”.

In Bournemouth there were visits to the local Foodbank (Bishop Kosea is now considering whether a project on a similar basis could be done in Soroti) and to the NHS Chaplaincy team based at Royal Bournemouth Hospital. (Photos right and below right). The hospital visit was a great time of blessing and encouragement and was enjoyed by all who were there. This included the Hospital Communications Team and representatives from the Diversity & Ethnicity Department.



Overall there was a very packed agenda as the time in Bournemouth was followed up with a few days visiting Canterbury Cathedral, Salisbury Cathedral and various connections in London, Swindon, Oxford and Pewsey with Robert de Berry. Bishop Kosea gave a talk to the congregation in Pewsey on Sunday evening. It was a great time!

The visit ended back where it had started with many lunches and evening events in Ruddington to which various visitors travelled to meet with Kosea and Grace. Overall we



were all so blessed by the visit which was memorable and we pray that stronger and new links have been made which will bring more support for TDT and Teso.

Upon their return to Teso there was a warm welcome home as Kosea and Grace were reunited with their people. Reflecting on their visit Kosea said "We saw so much love for people and for God. We felt encouraged, refreshed and well cared for during our stay". They hope to return again in the future!

Photo right shows Bishop Kosea and Grace attending an open house garden party held in Bournemouth.



Kumi Compassionate Fund

Paying medical bills and school fees are often the two priorities for families when they talk about the advantages of VSLA groups or the benefits from agriculture and other projects that improve their income levels. The poorest families however still struggle to cover the costs of medical care, in particular when expensive treatments, such as surgery, are required. The Compassionate Fund was established to relieve some of this burden from families as well as the hospital.



Emmanuel, left, needed surgery for a deep head wound inflicted in an encounter with a gang when walking home in the evening. His family managed to cover half the cost of this medical bills. (£65) They were very grateful to receive support to cover the remaining amount.

Pius, pictured with his mother who is a widow, fell and broke his arm. The mother recently lost her husband and Pius has mental health issues meaning the situation of the family is not good. They managed to cover one third of the total medical bill (£82) and the Compassionate Fund covered the rest.



Bashir, left, needed surgery on his leg as a result of multiple fractures from a road accident. He stayed in Kumi Hospital for several months for treatment. The total cost came to 3,983,700 UGX which is around £866. Bashir managed to pay 2,985,000 UGX (£649) and the Compassionate Fund covered the final 998,700 UGX (£217).

Water

TDT has been consistently supporting the construction of wells and boreholes in Teso for the last 30 years. In the last 5 years alone 73 projects have been completed benefitting 41,743 people at a cost of £123,602. This is approximately £3 per beneficiary.



Photos from top:
Aponong borehole,
Darlington Well and
Osokotoit well.

Clean water has many benefits beyond the immediate ones of reduced levels of disease and saved time. Improved overall personal hygiene and the ability to clean clothes make school attendance for children easier, improves self-esteem and social confidence. Women and children are kept safe as there is no need for long journeys carrying water in the very early morning or late evening, or the risk of children falling into open wells. Levels of domestic violence reduce as the stress on households is reduced. Readily available water also means there is enough for vegetable growing and livestock. Time saved can be dedicated to farming and other income generating activities. Water points often become important focal points in the community - places to exchange information and advice or occasionally for small markets.



Boreholes are more expensive to construct than shallow wells or spring protections as they require the expertise of contractors to locate a suitable spot and then drill down to the water table using specialist equipment. They are however necessary in the northern parts of Teso

where the water table is much lower. Spring protections and hand dug wells are much simpler to complete as water can be found either already at surface level or not too far below it. In these instances the community themselves are often involved in the digging! At each water source a Water User Committee is set up whose responsibility it is to oversee the source and collect monthly contributions from the community for its maintenance. It is expected that the community themselves will be able to manage water sources and pay for any minor repairs for the foreseeable future without needing any major outside interventions.



From top right around Kotolut spring protection, Borupe Shallow Well, Adokodoi borehole (left) and Orapak Borehole bottom right.



Giving and Legacies

If you have been a supporter of the Teso Development Trust you will already have a strong legacy in the Teso Region of Uganda through the work that has been undertaken with your support. Faithful giving from our ongoing supporters is what helps us to keep



making a difference in Teso. Your contributions have helped sink wells, start businesses, provided life-changing operations and medical treatment or given vital education.

If you leave a gift in your Will however, your impact on Teso will continue as you give TDT the power to change yet more lives in this needy area of the Africa that you have shown such care for in the past. A legacy gift can be the most important gift you will ever make and will reflect the things that matter to you most. If you decide to make a legacy gift to TDT we will ensure that your legacy is used to provide for the vulnerable in Teso, to help them and their families build less fragile lives. Legacy gifts are exempt for the purposes of Inheritance Tax.

We would be very grateful if you could let us know that you are planning to leave a gift to TDT in your Will. This will enable us to recognise your kindness appropriately and to make sure that you remain fully engaged in the activities of the Trust and our plans for the future.

Please contact Carmel either by email or on the phone if you would like any further advice on this - admin@teso.org.uk or 0800 731 3460.

Prayer Points

Please give thanks for

- The visit to the UK of Bishop Kosea and Grace Odongo which gave the opportunity for bonds of friendship to be strengthened through our mutual love of God. Also the hosts who so generously opened their homes and all those who helped to make the visit such a success.
- Our partners in Teso, Uganda. The Bishops, their teams and church families.
- TDT supporters for their continued faithful and generous giving.
- Carmel, TDT Administrator (and the only staff member) for all her dedication and hard work helping to keep us all in order.



Pray for

- All the Teso villagers affected by the recent flooding causing them to lose homes, crops, livelihoods and blocked access roads.
- For safety and protection for the church field staff as they travel long distances to reach remote and less accessible villages.
- For all the Teso people as they face climate change challenges and all its damaging effects. Lord, please give them strength.
- Andrew, TDT Chair and the Executive Management Committee for wisdom and the making of good decisions and for the preparations for our next meeting and AGM in October.

AGM

This year TDT will be holding the AGM on the 11th October on Zoom at 12pm for an hour. Among other business there will be some brief topic reports on some of the project areas. If you would be interested in joining us please contact Carmel - admin@teso.org.uk for the log in details.



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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