

# Projects Delivering Hope - Annual Report

For the year April 1<sup>st</sup> 2021 to March 31<sup>st</sup> 2022



Projects Delivering Hope is a Christian charity founded in 2018 by three friends with a deeply felt concern for the people of South Sudan, and a desire to put their faith into action in practical ways. Our focus is to establish and deliver time and cost bound projects providing short term aid to help the South Sudanese support themselves in the long term. A number of examples of such projects are described below. We deliver these projects through local partners that we know and trust from our previous work in South Sudan. Currently we have three operating partners. 1) The Diocese of Kajo Keji. 2) Kajo Keji Christian College. 3) Smile Children's Charity Village.

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**2021 Highlights** 2021 was a year of great challenges but also opportunities. Once again, sadly, trustees were unable to travel to Uganda or South Sudan due to Covid but other opportunities to serve presented themselves and we have been busily engaged in supporting them through the epidemic. These included:

### 1. Seeds for returning refugees

After 3 years as refugees, conditions became more difficult on the camps with UNHCR food rations cut by up to 50%. By early 2021, 78,000 people had returned from Uganda to Kajo Keji in South Sudan and many had no support and had to rebuild their lives from scratch. Many returned to find their homes and lands ransacked as a result of the civil war and the usual cycle of seedtime and harvest had been interrupted leaving them with no resources to grow food. We responded to this urgent need by raising £8,633 to provide them with seeds and hand tools in order to become self-sufficient again. This was enough to provide 500 vulnerable families with resources to grow beans, nuts, casava and maize. This was partly funded by St James' Church, Devizes with whom we are mission partners. We were also grateful to singer Jonathan Veira, who invited Andrew Robertson to join him live on his regular Sunday



evening YouTube show and interviewed him about the seeds project to an online audience of several hundred. Over £2,500 was given as a result.

Seeds provide food not just for the current year but for the long term. This help was warmly received, and we received much positive feedback via our operating partner, the Diocese of Kajo Keji.

*“Thank you for the support for the first harvest of ground nuts. I’m expecting a bean harvest in the coming months and have ground nut seeds for the next season... may God bless the donors”,*

**Pena Moses, a farmer from Limi Boma**

*“I’m very happy for what has been done. I urge all those who have benefited to focus on sustaining what we have started. I am getting ready to prepare land by January 2022 and I encourage others to do the same if we are to realise good produce next year”*

**Tongu Amos**

*“I am happy I can get maize grains to feed my family and store some seeds for next planting season”*

**Kiden, a farmer from Gbongoroko, Kinyiba**

*“I have harvested my ground nuts and maize. I am very happy I will not need to buy seeds next year as I’m going to store some of my produce.” Ngolija Simon*

## **2. Kajo Keji Christian College.**

Early in 2021, we completed a merger with the Friends of Kajo Keji Christian College. This had been set up by former college administrator Cathie Rutter who had subsequently retired to the UK. Cathie now serves on our Board of Trustees with special responsibility for our relationship with the college. The college is led by principal Rev. James Lule who is an inspirational and dedicated leader. The college trains Anglican clergy, lay pastors, schoolteachers and management courses. There are over 100 students. To celebrate this new relationship, we provided a grant of \$2,000 from our general fund to cover the cost of rewiring the office and the library. The building had undergone significant damage during the civil war, and this work had to be completed before the college could move back from Uganda where they had set up temporary facilities. Later in the year we were delighted to receive a donation of £2,000 from the Holtham Family Trust (via Bishop Nicholas – former Bishop of Salisbury) which was sent to the college to replace stolen solar panels to power the computer system. Further funding was provided by Holy Trinity Ripon to provide latrines.

## **3. Charcoal Bread Ovens**

Following our initial project in 2021, a further 10 (total 20) charcoal bread ovens were provided with funds raised by our supporters. The charcoal bread ovens were manufactured locally and distributed to ten Mothers' Union groups. These groups have now set up local community savings groups. They have received training in bread making and in managing the 'business' and are now able to support their families and local communities.



#### **4. Business Training and Savings Groups**

It has sadly not been possible for us to run a 2<sup>nd</sup> business training workshop since the first one in 2019 due to Covid related travel restrictions. However, we agreed to extend the annual grant to the Diocese of Kajo Keji towards the employment of a Savings Group Facilitator by one year in order to provide extra support. This has allowed the groups to receive additional help, support and encouragement throughout the pandemic. In line with Five Talents policy however, the grant will conclude at the end of March 2022 as it is considered that after 3 years of support, the groups should be self-sustaining. Trustees hope to make a trip over to north Uganda in the next 12 months for meetings with our partners and to assess the need for a further training workshop.

#### **5. Home Vegetable growing**



At the request of the Mother's Union, we provided a grant of £2,000 to mobilise and train 100 young mothers in vegetable gardening so they could establish small businesses, selling vegetables as well as feeding their families. It makes use of the small

plots of land provided by the United Nations in the Ugandan refugee camps.

The project achieved:-

- Much needed food for 1000's of South Sudanese people in refugee camps.

- An income for 100 women
- Equipped women in urban farming, providing useful life skills
- Empowered women with entrepreneurial skills, as they worked together and established savings groups.



## 6. Smile Children's Charity Village

The Smile Village was set up in early 2021 and provided us with a new and additional South Sudanese operating partner. It is led by Francis Candiga, who was known previously to 2 of the trustees. He is passionate about



the welfare of children and has dedicated his life to help meet their physical, emotional and spiritual needs. While working on the refugee camps in Uganda, Francis identified a number of children and young people who had been orphaned during the civil war and subsequent resulting hardships. Some of the older girls had become pregnant and left school early with no visible means of support. Using his own funds, Francis purchased a piece of land in Uganda in an area where many South Sudanese people had settled. He converted an existing building into accommodation and erected other buildings in which he now houses and educates over 30 children and young people. PDH initially provided him with a one-off grant of £1,000 to cover the cost of fencing and water tanks. Subsequently, we agreed to fund 2 projects.



The first was to train 25 girls in hairdressing and tailoring, so that when they leave the village (some with babies) they will have the skills with which to earn a living. £4,800 was raised and sent to Francis who has now commenced the training course which will last 9 months. Trustees have been invited to the graduation ceremony in February 2023 and we hope to attend. We are grateful to St Paul's, Salisbury, who made this project the focus of the offering at one of their carol services when over £1,500 was raised. We also received a donation from a young couple as a contribution from their wedding gifts.

The second project was to raise £4,800 to set up a chicken farm within the Smile Village. This will be run as a business to help provide a sustainable financial future for the Village. The farm will commence with 1,000 chicks and provide employment for one person. No funding has as yet been received so this will be our first project in the new financial year.

## **Administration and Finance**

The merger with the Friends of Kajo Keji College has increased the size and scope of our work as well as our administration costs and turnover. We are pleased to have appointed Charlotte Bell as our administrator at the beginning of 2021 and this coincided with the merger and the resulting extra work. Our turnover increased from around £23,000 in 2020/21 to over £37,000 in 2021/22. This increase requires us to commission an independent examination of our accounts before they can be submitted to the Charity Commission. This is in hand.

Conscious of our need to comply with legislation we have now developed and adopted a Safeguarding Policy, Code of Conduct for trustees and volunteers and a Self-Disclosure Declaration Form.

In 2022/23 we will implement a new bookkeeping system.

## **Main challenges of 2021**

### **1. Communication.**

One of our main challenges is communication. We regularly try various methods of communication such as emails, Zoom and WhatsApp. However, the challenges of poor connection speeds, coupled with the South Sudanese somewhat 'relaxed' cultural attitude to communication, does occasionally frustrate us, especially when trying to obtain feedback on completed projects. This has been made worse this year by not being able to visit and have face to face conversations. It has become increasingly apparent however, that this varies from partner to partner. While we find difficulty in communicating with one particular partner, the other two are much more keen to report back and are in regular touch with us.

### **2. Fund Raising**

All charities' fund-raising efforts have been affected by Covid during 2021 and PDH is no exception. We fish from a relatively small pool and were it not for some larger sums from individuals, grant making bodies and church partnerships, we would have struggled to meet

our commitments. We are conscious that our objectives are rather niche as they are restricted to benefiting South Sudanese people only, and this is against a backdrop of massive need in the world, especially with the terrible invasion of Ukraine by Russian forces. It is difficult to raise funds in these circumstances, although it must be remembered that the needs of one nation do not lessen the needs of another.

We are excited to be hosting a fund and awareness raising concert in April 2022 when our friend Jonathan Veira will present his one man 'Unlockdown' show in Devizes. Ticket sales are going well and break-even point has already been reached.

### **3. A mixed audience**

We have always been conscious that our volunteers, supporters and funding partners come from a wide range of backgrounds, many Christian but many others with no faith or another faith. As many of our projects are 'humanitarian' in nature, we encourage this wide range of support. However, we also recognise that support comes from three churches and many individual Christians and we therefore want to unashamedly communicate the fact that we are a Christian charity. While our project information and fund-raising materials do not mention our faith, our 'Faith Community' page on the website provides materials and suggestions for prayer.

We are grateful to be supported by the four partner churches from which the Trustees come. These are St James' Church, Devizes, the Wellspring Benefice, St Paul's Church Salisbury and Holy Trinity Ripon.

## **Conclusion.**

We hope that this report has been helpful and informative. We have tried to convey the excitement we feel at the progress we have made and are continuing to make. We are still a tiny charity with a turnover of just over £37,000. However, our costs are very low, and we have sent over £30,000 of this to our beneficiaries with all the administrative costs paid from our general fund and the bulk of the balance held in restricted funds.

Further information is available from our website. <http://projectsdeliveringhope.org.uk/>.

**Andrew Robertson – Trustee and CEO**  
**9th March 2022**