



Mission Partner of the Month – May 2024

The Brickworks was founded in 2008 to work exclusively in the very needy nation of South Sudan. After many years of civil war, its health statistics are the worst in the world. It has very high levels of maternal mortality, few qualified doctors and nurses, few trained teachers, few homes have access to clean water or a latrine and many children die before their fifth birthday. UNICEF announced in 2016 that more teenage girls die in childbirth than finish primary school. Many people live on less than the equivalent of \$1 US dollar per day. Food prices have doubled in the last six months.



Over the last fifteen years, The Brickworks has worked in partnership with the Episcopal Church of South Sudan (ECSSS) to help it to make a difference. A key partnership is with the ECSSS Diocese of Yei, South Sudan, where John and Poppy Spens worked from 2006 until 2011. The Diocese of Yei strongly believes in holistic ministry and that its people deserve decent schools and decent health facilities. This has meant supporting a busy clinic and investing in church schools, to improve classrooms and to build new ones.



There was insecurity in South Sudan in 2016 and many people fled to refugee camps in Uganda. Only recently, have people started to return home. However, during the years in exile, land became overgrown and homes were looted and damaged. One primary school where The Brickworks had provided new classrooms found that windows, doors and desks had been stolen during the armed conflict. Funds were provided for the repair

and repainting of the classrooms and the school will re-open for returning refugee children in May.

Very few teachers have a qualification so this year The Brickworks is funding 20 teachers on the Certificate of Education course, mainly at the Yei Teacher Training College.

The Martha Primary Health Care Centre (right) is managed by the Diocese of Yei and treats around 20,000 patients a year and offers consultations, laboratory tests, a pharmacy, immunisations, HIV testing/counselling, family planning, ante natal care, deliveries, and post-natal care. The Brickworks currently funds the salaries of clinic staff, purchases medicines and the training of a midwife and two nurses.



The Martha Clinic also has a specialist eye department. This is the only specialist eye clinic in the whole area and people travel many miles for eye treatment or for spectacles. The Diocese of Yei is very grateful to St Michael's for the funds it has agreed to provide for the running of the Eye clinic for the next two years until March 2026. Annual cataract camps are organised and funded by The Brickworks and to date more than 1100 successful cataract operations have been performed, restoring sight to many patients who previously could hardly see. In early March this year, 105 patients received cataract surgery.



Although supporting the Diocesan health facilities is the main priority for The Brickworks, it also aims to strengthen the church by investing in discipleship training for youth leaders, theological training for clergy at a local Bible College and helping several Dioceses to provide practical training for both clergy and laity. The training is delivered by local church leaders. This photo was taken at the discipleship training week in January, where many young people rededicated their lives to Jesus Christ.



With funds given by St Michael's, The Brickworks helped fund a project led by Bishop Seme Nigo (who visited St Michael's in 2022) to translate the Bible into the Keliko language. The photo shows the Bishop handing a New Testament to a member of the Mothers Union. Work to translate the Old Testament continues and John and Poppy met the translators when they visited last September. They are planning another visit to South Sudan this autumn, taking with them Iain Nash and Jess Mead, from St Michael's.

Thank you, St Michael's Church, for your amazing support.

Please pray:

- 1. For the work of the Martha Primary Health Care Centre.**
- 2. That the road from Uganda remains safe for medicine delivery to Yei.**
- 3. For the youth leader training in the Dioceses of Yei, Panyana and Morobo**
- 4. For peace in South Sudan so that more refugees can return home.**
- 5. For the health and education students in their studies.**
- 6. For the team visiting Yei in South Sudan in the Autumn.**

St Michael's Church Link: John and Poppy Spens.

Website: www.thebrickworks.org.uk