



HOLY TRINITY PEACE VILLAGE KURON NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2022



Holy Trinity Peace Village Kuron Staff at Annual General Meeting and Capacity Building.

Bits and Pieces

Since returning from Christmas and New Year holidays, all staff have been working hard to organize the communities and get programs moving in 2022. The administration organized the first General Staff meeting and Capacity Building facilitated by the Program Manager and Human Resource Officer. Topics for briefing were on the organization policies, donors supporting HTPVK and the financial status of the Peace Village.

UNMISS—Eastern Equatoria and Boma government officials arrived in Kuron on Sunday 20th Feb. They had discussions with HTPVK staff and visited with some of the local people.

The Finance Department has concluded the annual Audits for Stromme Foundation and are preparing for further actions in the future. Many procedural systems have been reinforced through staff capacity building.

Two Board members: Dr. Margaret Itto, the deputy chair of the board and Hon. Titus Lokwachuma, came to attend the Youth Retreat to promote peaceful co-existence among the Kraal Youth of Greater Kapoeta and Greater Pibor Administrative area. The two board members had a chance to visit both the Primary and Secondary schools and the health facility. They encouraged staff in these departments to work hard and showing true love that they offer their services to the community. At St. Thomas Secondary School, the board members and HTPVK Program Manager discussed the plan for construction of a new classrooms block and toilet jointly funded by Caritas Austria and ProSudan Association.



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African Proverb:

The inside of a person is a sacred text. Anonymous

Meaning: Listening to others and understanding them is a sacred obligation from God. Don't judge simply by religion, gender, or ethnicity. Look into the heart and see the goodness of each person.

Prayer Requests

Bishop Paride Taban continues to improve under treatment in Nairobi. We pray for everyone's health.

For peace in the world.

For the students to do well on their exams.

Peace Academy

Since the floods of 2020, The Peace Academy was damaged and lost power and water. Now the facilities have received a thorough cleaning and maintenance this month. The center was used for the Youth Peace Retreat Feb.23 to 25.2022. Over 100 people were in attendance including Board members, UNMISS and Govt. Officials from Eastern Equatoria and GPAA.



Infrastructure

The Multi-Purpose Prayer Hall has made great progress and is now almost at roofing stage. The community has been helping the workers every day in bringing the aggregates, rocks and sorting of stones for mixing.



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Peace Building



On the 7th of Feb.2022, Kuron Peace Team went to Boma with some of the Peace Committee members to attend a Peace Rally.

Honorable Governor of Eastern Equatoria State, Louis Lobong came with his cabinet on a chopper from Torit. Accompanying him were the Chief Administrator for Greater Pibor Administrative Area and his cabinet. The objective was to pacify the people as rumors floated that the Murle people were organizing to raid the Toposa as revenge for an earlier Toposa raid. The people of Murle felt angry and wanted payback.

The two leaders urged the people not to attempt to conduct a raid as the impacts would be devastating to both parties. They requested the Murle youth to find a positive way to resolve their differences that arose on account of some Toposa youths stealing cows from them. As a result of the meeting, the leaders asked for another meeting to be held on the 24/25 of February. About 30 youth from Kuron area attended. The meeting concluded on a good note and the team returned to Kuron on the 8th of Feb.

A monthly community meeting for Peace was held on 15.Feb.2022. Women, youth, Chiefs and elders from the five (5) zones in Kuron attended. There were free and open discussions about the on-going issues of cattle stealing, abductions and violence in the community.

A peace camp was held from 21.Feb. to 23. Feb. in Kuron at the Peace Academy. Sixty (60) youth from the Toposa, Murle, Jie and Kachipo attended. Leaders from Boma, Narus and Torit were also present.

The purpose is to reach out to the youth in the kraals. They sit together and talk over the possible ways of co-existing without resorting to violence. In Toposa fashion, there were social events such as dancing, football matches and a night of sitting around a bonfire with discussion.



Boma has held a similar event on the 25th of February and the same youth participated.



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LT: Secondary students enthusiastic about this term studies.

RT: Students arrive at school after 14 hours on the road from Narus.



Primary School

Class Eight celebrated their farewell party in Matara which was held Sunday the 13th before they took their final exams. The day was colourful and there was entertainment from secondary students and primary pupils wishing the candidates success in their exams. Program Manager and HR gave speeches encouraging the candidates take exams as the normal class work that they do.

Secondary School

There are 44 students studying in the Secondary School. There is hope for several more buildings to be built such as: Boys and Girls Dormitories, Latrines, Kitchen, Classrooms.

Above Lt: Students sit for exams.

RT: Girls receive school supplies from AVSI



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Nursery School

The Nursery School Building in Matara received a roof, windows and doors. The children have started to hold their classes in this new facility. This is the first time they have had a real classroom and building. Rain will not disrupt classes now. This sort of development encourages more children to attend and makes the parents proud to send their children.



Above: Nursery School Children came in large numbers to participate in the classes in the new classroom



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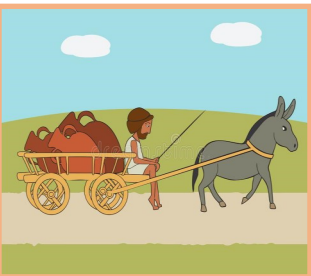
Agriculture – Livelihoods

Agriculture and Livelihoods activities fall under HTPV Strategic Goal No. 5 (**Enhancing Livelihoods Security**) which is part of the over-all Peace Strengthening programs in the area. This month saw the beginning of activities for 2022 beginning with community mobilization and inception meetings.

Under the EU program, two IGA groups were formed. One of 30 youth will carry out income generating activities such as beekeeping and crop / vegetable production. They will have follow-up meetings later.

Another group of 40 elders were involved in agricultural and farming activities of Animal Traction technology which is funded by Caritas Austria. Workshops were held to show the participants how to construct the Animal Carts. The meetings combined two important elements in that project; beneficiary feedback mechanisms and Covid-19 awareness to maintain an alertness amongst the population of this disease and encourage attentiveness and caution to the prevention of its spread.

Livelihood Project staff encouraged the beneficiaries to always feel free and share any project information at the Peace Village main office for the purpose of transparency. Field visits by the program team and in the community meeting is a place for our beneficiaries to give feedback to Peace Village.



Upper RT: Mr. Juma Chelimo meets farmers in the village to organize the activities.

Middle RT: Assembling animal traction components.

Left: Group of local Toposa Farmers for training in sustainable farming.



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Some Supporters of HTPVK Programs:

Personal contributions from His Excellency, President Salva Kiir Mayardit, President of the Republic of South Sudan

1. European Commission - EU
2. Norwegian Church Aid (NCA)
3. Norwegian Friends of Kuron
4. Norwegian Embassy
5. PAX for Peace Nederland
6. Stromme Foundation Norway
7. Catholic Relief Services (CRS)
8. Friends of Sister Emmanuelle (FOSE)
9. South Sudan National Ministry of Health - (Health Pool Fund)
10. Caritas Austria
11. ProSudan Association Austria
12. Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls (USA)
13. Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration (USA)
14. South Sudan Council of Churches (SSCC)
15. Diocese of Mainz, Germany
16. Missio Austria
17. World Food Programme (WFP), South Sudan
18. UN Mission in South Sudan
19. Initiative Pater Stephen



Upper Rt: HTPVK Staff in Capacity Building Meeting.

Upper Middle: Local Toposa staff attend Capacity Building Meeting.

Lt: Staff Capacity Building Meeting.



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SAVING LIVES

Follow-up on Ms. Napir Shipatia at Primary Health Care Centre MATARA



Behold, children are a blessing from the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. Psalm 127:3

On 25.November.2021, Kuron Peace Village published a story about a miracle of birth. A young Toposa mother, Ms. Napir Shipatia, was in severe danger of dying and her unborn child with her. There was a problem with labor and the child would not come out. She had to be taken immediately by vehicle to Kapoeta Hospital where an emergency C-Section was done and she and her new baby boy were both saved.

Recently, we visited with Ms. Napir in Namuton Village to see how she is getting on. Ms. Napir related her story to the HTPVK staff. As Napir spoke, she proudly held the very healthy looking Nokolong close to her. This is her second child and she seems to beam with pride at her "miracle" baby. Napir tells her story:



Midwife Patricia and Ms. Napir with newborn boy, Nakolong

I am the one who was saved by the good people of Matara Health Centre. I wanted to deliver the baby in my village because that is our tradition. All the women and men said I should do it that way. I am a mother once already so I knew there was a problem with this second child. I was in too much pain and the baby would not come out. I came to the centre because I knew the people there would do their best to help me. I especially knew Midwife Patricia because she had visited us in the village some times.



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All the staff at the Health Centre took interest in my problem. They checked me good. They told me we have to go to a far away place to get the right care. I agreed but I had no energy to resist. All the people of my village thought they would not see me again because they knew that this situation means the mother and child will die. They had seen it so many times before. Many of our mothers die. When I left, they thought it was the last time to see me.



Above: Maternal & Child Health Education Session at PHCC

It was because of Matara Health Centre and Kuron Peace Village. They arranged that vehicle so fast. We were on that terrible road for the longest time. The pain in my womb was the worst on the road as the bumps and bounces made me suffer for the entire time. I put my trust in God and I was prepared to die. Midwife Patricia kept encouraging me to be strong. She told me to keep drinking and relaxing. It is because of her that I am alive.

When we arrived at that hospital it was not for me to say anything. I was exhausted. I had no strength.

I trusted God and Midwife Patricia. She was my only friend there because I don't know anyone. I couldn't understand their language. Only Midwife Patricia could talk to me as she is Toposa. I watched the people talk and then move me here and there. Midwife Patricia had to bathe me for the surgery. I didn't understand anything and I was a bit scared. Everything was different to me. But Midwife Patricia assured me it would be alright.

They made my body to not feel anything. I just laid quiet. Suddenly I find my baby there! We were alive! The baby boy was healthy. He started to suck at my breast and I felt good. It hurts where I was cut but it is better now. I thank God for the good health workers at the Hospital and Matara PHCC and their help in keeping me and my baby alive.

The staff in Kapoeta hospital were all nice to me. There was only one person who could speak my language. This was strange for me as I have never been there before. The food was the best. I had lots to eat and it tasted much better than the food we eat here in the kraal. I wish I could make such food but we are poor.



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Patricia was very generous to me and my mother in law who went with me. She selflessly gave of her own money to pay for food for myself and my mother in law. I am poor and had no money for such things. Midwife Patricia also buys candies with her own money and gives to the children when she visits our villages for health education and vaccinations. She really cares for us.

During my time in the Kapoeta Hospital, I learned the importance of keeping myself and my baby clean. They made us bathe every day. At first, I didn't know why but now I understand the advantages.

Now I try to keep myself and my baby as clean as possible. We don't have so much water in the Namuton Kraal. This was the first time I was in a vehicle. The first time I was so far from home. The first time to be around different people. So the whole time was new to me. But I don't want to go back unless Midwife Patricia comes with me. I would be scared to do that alone.

I stayed two weeks and then returned with a Kuron Peace Village vehicle. Everyone in the village was so happy to see me. They thought I was dead when I left. They didn't expect me to return. They were shocked to see us. Usually my people believe that a C-Section means death to at least mother or child. So they couldn't believe I was still there.

Now I tell all the others to keep as clean as they can. I tell them to take their children to the Health Centre before it is too late. I tell them that this PHCC is for us and they know the real medicine. Not like that of the witch doctor. I have changed my attitude and I will tell others about the good things at the Matara Primary Health Care Centre. They should listen to the staff there.



Midwife Patricia attends Out Patient Clinic

COMMENT by Ms. Napil of Namuton Village 2022: *"I am so thankful that the PHCC is there and they can help us Toposa stay alive and our children too. I named my baby Nakolong after Midwife Patricia in honor of her great service to me." (Editors note: while we were in the village, it was obvious everyone in Namuton knew Midwife Patricia and respected her for her work. She certainly is highly respected by the villagers in that area.)*

(Sources: interview of Ms. Napir, Villagers, and Midwife Patricia in Namuton Village 5.Jan.2022 edited by Gabe Hurrish)



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