



# HOLY TRINITY PEACE VILLAGE KURON NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2022



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## *Bits and Pieces*

### 21. September 2022 INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE

A three day sports competition was organized by the Peace Department. Several teams were formed from the students and staff and local communities. Matches were held and a good time was had by all. **(See next page for pictures)**



The arrival of the September rains has offered challenges to the logistics team of HTPVK. Swollen rivers have caused delays of up to 5 days as the vehicles must wait for flowing water to recede and sticky mud to dry out. The deteriorating condition of the roads causes much wear and tear on the vehicles. Repairs and maintenance are on-going. Fuel shortages also led to some challenges but the situation has been resolved. Road repair work is now going on at critical junctures in the road. **( Left: flooded roads making travel difficult)**

On the other hand, the rains are a relief to the farmers of Kauto County as the sorghum is miraculously recovering. It is amazing to see the sorghum recover from being very dry to ripening. Toposa farmers are busy harvesting at the end of September.



Mr. Per Nordmark, Peace Village Board Member **( left )** visited for a couple of weeks. It has been a few years since Per has been in Kuron and he was surprised with the developments. He had meetings and discussions with staff and facilitated an on-line ZOOM Donor Conference. This was a comprehensive meeting to discuss plans, funding and ways forward. Many Donors and supporters participated in the meeting with good results.

Around the Guest House, a new latrine was begun, fencing was improved in various places and trees were trimmed. Some trees were planted around the Kuron compound and at the Primary School. **( Right: Teacher Anthony Minga protects a seedling )**



OPRD and ANDREA FOODS have suspended all food assistance programs in this area for the month of September due to thefts. A theft occurred in early September of Emergency Food from a village near Nakubuze. The perpetrators remain unknown. ACROSS provided a workshop to farmers on food security and distributed seeds and some jerry cans.



13 indigenous trees were planted at the Primary School and 15 additional trees were planted in Katanya and Matara area. **Left:** Mr. Omal and Mr. Emmanuel explain making a door to Mr. Per Nordmark at the Vocational Training Centre.

**Comment by Toposa Woman Elder:** *“Women are doing better than before. We now attend meetings and we can speak. Our words are even taken into consideration by the men. But in the case of men’s work, ( cows, security, planning the movements ) the women know to stay quiet.”*



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**Left:** Sorghum crop before the September rains began. **Right:** Same sorghum crop after two weeks of rain. This variety of sorghum is particularly suited for semi-arid climates. The Toposa know this and prefer this variety of seed. Due to the timely arrival of limited rain in September, the people will have at least some harvest.



**Health Positive Outcomes:** Over time fewer and fewer people are going to Namuron (witchdoctors) and they are more confident in the service and treatment of the PHCC staff. Fewer children are being brought late as the parents are now aware that early treatment leads to better health. They are aware that at the first sign of fever, diarrhea, or vomiting they must bring the child quickly. This is a change from previous years when many babies died due to late arrival at the PHCC. Constant education has raised the awareness of the people. Most clients keep themselves and their children cleaner.



**Left:** Midwife, Alia Beatrice and Lab Tech, Albert Enzama check recently delivered supplies at the PHCC.



Above, left, below: pictures of International Day of Peace Sports Activities



**Left:** Swollen Kuron River after rains intensified in September.



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## Vocational Training

Vehicle repair and maintenance training continued with Br. John as Facilitator. (right) There are 6 in this class and 6 in the driving class. What they lack are start up kits for the graduates. A structure was constructed on the old Carter Centre for Construction workers. The Second Classroom structure continues with plastering. The Third Classroom structure is making the foundation. There are plans for a dormitory, kitchen and latrine as well as a fence for security.



**Left:** Br. John Ogenda and Mr. Mawa Augustine check out materials for the construction projects.

**Right:** Mr. Peter Ayella does "bush" repair on the road to Nachodokopele as the roads are very difficult on the vehicles.



**Security Report:** A local fight broke out in Nakabuse and a man was accidentally killed when a rock hit his head. Three days later, 5 small children in that same area drowned in the flood waters. There was a vehicle looted south of Kuron Peace Village. Good news is that violence related to cattle thefts has reduced greatly.

**Positive Outcome:** There have been no serious problems between the Jie and Toposa for almost five years now.



## Peace Building

A Sports Peace Activity in Nyanyangachor was slightly delayed due to rains. The boys football team had to walk many hours to Nyanyangachor as the vehicle broke down along the way. Kuron lost the match 0-1 but a good time was had by all.

A Peace Dialogue meeting was held in Nachodokopele 9-11 Sept. to finalize the return of seven stolen Jie cows. This was the initiative of the Toposa community leaders to maintain good relationships between the two groups.

A workshop on Toposa Culture and Values for HTPVK staff was provided by Mr. Lokii and Mr. Alfred on Saturday.17.Sept. ( picture left ) This was essential in helping staff from outside to understand and appreciate the Toposa people with whom they work.



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**Positive Comment, A woman sharing experiences with animal traction:** *"...Open up your minds. We have accepted this project. Now we would like you, our neighbors ( Lereboi ), to also benefit from this project..."*



## Livelihoods

Life skills and vocational training was held for Bonga Girls in bead making. ( picture above left ) There are 108 members. CMSG had a follow-up meeting and has 145,000 SSP cash in their account. Many other community meetings were held to mobilize and follow up with the people. Two workers were hired to maintain the Banana and Teak Plantations. Planting of trees was done in Matara and the Primary School area. Mr. Juma Chelimo, Livelihoods, held a Workshop on 17.Sept. in Lereboi Village for Investing in Local Production. ( Picture above right ) Br. Francis Xavier and Mr. Okori Emmanuel attended a one week Monitoring and Evaluation Training in Juba sponsored by Stromme Foundation.



## Primary Health Care Centre

ANDREA FOODS has decided to temporarily halt food supplement programs in the Kauto area due to the looting of food by some criminals among the locals. They continue with usual programs in Nachodokopele and Nyan-yangachor areas. A lack of essential supplies this month has led to fewer lab tests to confirm diseases. On 20.Sept. CCM—AMREF arrived with much needed medical supplies and medicines to the facility.

### Primary Health Centre Statistics for September 2022

Total Outpatient ( calculations)	838
Under 5	277
Adult	561
Total Inpatient	156
Under 5	105
Adult	51
Lab Tests	236
03 people were treated successfully for Khalazar.	
01 Child birth in the Centre in September	
No deaths were recorded at the Centre in September	

**Upper Left:** Nurse Simon treats a boy with Khalazar.  
**Right:** Nurse Amvelio prepares an injection.

**Comment by a Toposa Woman:**  
*"...We like to use the (mosquito) nets. Our men take them to the kraals and we are left with nothing. Our children always have malaria. We would like more nets..."*



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## Secondary School

Classes began on 14. September. There are 75 total students. For the first time registration has taken place for those entering Secondary 1. So far 26 ( 11 F ) are registered in S1. There are now three streams in the Secondary School. Construction continues on the second and third classroom buildings. **(right)** A place for a latrine was cleared and construction is to begin soon. There is a plan for a fence around the entire compound.



## Primary & Nursery School

Registration and transportation of students was successfully done. A meeting with teachers and PTA and Baba Mama was held. Classes began on 12. September. There are 381 Primary students ( 64 F ) with a few to arrive yet. From 18. Sept to 21. Sept. the students were active in football competitions as part of Athletics Days.

The Kuron Nursery has 67 pupils as of September in four levels. Some have not yet reported.



### Select 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. AVSI International
8. Catholic Relief Services (CRS)
9. Friends of Sister Emmanuelle (FOSE)
10. South Sudan National Ministry of Health - (Health Pool Fund)
11. Caritas Austria
12. ProSudan Association - Austria
13. Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls (USA)
14. Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration (USA)
15. South Sudan Council of Churches (SSCC)
16. Diocese of Mainz, Germany
17. Missio—Austria
18. World Food Programme (WFP), South Sudan
19. UN Mission in South Sudan
20. Initiative Pater Stephen
21. Mennonite Central Committee (MCC)
22. People's Republic of China Embassy—Juba
23. Many individual supporters



**Above:** Third classroom structure at Matara Sec. School.

**Left:** Primary School students arrive at Kuron from Kapoeta.

**Grinding Machine:** Income from grinding in the first 3 weeks of September amounts to over 25,000 SSP cash plus another 24,000 SSP from schools.

Income is used for maintenance and repair. It also covers the cost of fuel, oil and grease for the Grinding Machine.

**Positive Outcomes:** "...In 2006, girls were not allowed to attend schools. Now there are many of them studying. Years ago we had to lock the doors of the schools and really keep an eye on men who would come with canes to beat the girls. Now it is not like that anymore..."



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## **SUCCESS STORY** **A Man with a Mission** **From HTPVK Primary to HTPVK Staff** **Amvelio Lotabo Lootuk**

*How much better to acquire wisdom than gold. Proverbs 16:16*

I am twenty seven years old and the sixth child of ten ( 7 boys and 3 girls). Three of my siblings have already passed. My father was a catechist in the Catholic Parish of Namurupus. My father was in favor of education. No one in the entire clan had ever been educated. I was the only one. Today, there are other young ones from my clan in the Primary School.

I joined Peace Village St. Thomas Primary School in 2005. This was the first year that Kuron Peace Village opened a Primary School and I was so little but determined to study. There were two groups at the school and only a handful of teachers. I was put in the Primary One group.



*Figure 2 The first Primary School in Kuron where Lotouk studied.*

When my father unexpectedly passed, my mother, the second of four wives, was defenseless as the father's relatives took everything away from her except the children. She was desperate to save her children.

Typical Toposa childhoods include playing in the bush, hunting for small animals, and taking care of cattle and goats. My childhood ended when my mother became destitute. I had to grow up fast.

I was so young in school when dad died. Suddenly, I was struggling to pay for all the stuff I needed and the school fees. I would stay in the Peace Village and do casual labor during the school breaks to earn money. It was actually a hard life, which I will never forget. My uncles wanted to take me out of school to look after cattle. I resisted with all my might and told them I wanted to study.



*Figure 1 Amvelio proud of graduating as a Registered Nurse*



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After eight years of primary, I went to Loa Secondary School. I was sponsored by Dr. Margaret Itto, a Board member of the Kuron Peace Village. There were eight of us sponsored like that but I was the only one to graduate in 2017. I found that it was so easy that I had everything paid for now. I could relax and focus on my studies instead of the constant worry about money. My God helped me with these wonderful supporters.

At that time, I was supposed to sit for exams, but we had a big scare in 2016 when the civil war broke out. This delayed me one year. When that war broke out, we students had to run to the refugee camps in Uganda. We had nothing. We arrived tired, hungry and with only the clothes that we were wearing. Dr. Itto knew where we were and she called us back to Torit after some days. We stayed with her for a few days and then we were sent to Kapoeta. There was fighting all around. A boy like me could easily be captured and used as an unwilling foot soldier.



Figure 3 Bishop Paride Taban greets children at Primary School in 2005

In 2017 I was able to sit for the exams and my marks were very good. I was proud of myself for all the years of hard work, uncertainty and struggle. After that, I went to Peace Village and served as an intern for one year in the Peace Department. I wanted to become a nurse because I liked science when I was in Secondary School. My father always admired health workers. I kept that in mind all those years and when I mentioned this to Emeritus Bishop Paride Taban, he gave me the chance to go to Wau and study nursing. I like the idea of saving lives instead of killing for cattle raiding.



In January 2019, I went to Wau and attended the Community Health Training Institute (CHTI). Peace Village sponsored me. My first impression of the CHTI was how great it was in that compound. Water was everywhere, even in my room! I never had that before. It was like I was dreaming and living a rich life. We had electricity and food and it was delicious. My colleagues were from all over the country and I found this very intriguing. People were very social and kind and I was blessed to have such classmates.

I remember something Dr. Thomas, from Catholic Secretariat of South Sudan, said to me. He told me since I am the first in my community to come to CHTI, I have to change myself first and then return to change my people.

Figure 4 Amelio (It) on duty at the Comboni Hospital in Wau



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Figure 5 At CHTI with colleagues and Teachers. Mr. Amvelio is second from the left

At first it was hard for me to keep the time. Everything in CHTI was done punctually. If you were even five minutes late you would find trouble. We had to learn how to sit in classes many hours. For me, as a Toposa, that was a big challenge to my cultural background.

The student diversity was so impressive. I had in mind from previous stories that Nuer and Dinka were hostile. But I found my colleagues were the most social and kind. This is one thing that has left an indelible impression on me. When I first

went to Wau, I thought I would be lonely and like an outcast. The reality was that the people there were so good to me. We were all just like a big family. I will never forget that lesson. Even at our graduation, so many people came to support us and congratulate us and they took the time to come to that ceremony.

During my three and one half years in Wau, what impressed me was how much everything was available. There was meat, fruits and vegetables in surplus. In my area, we were always hungry, but in Wau we were fed well. I learned all these different foods and it was part of my cultural education and expanding my mind.

Tutors were always ready to help the students and they were very hard working. They were committed to their work. This made the entire compound environment conducive to learning. We did our practical work at the Comboni Hospital and it was well organized.

I feel my education at CHTI was one of the best in South Sudan. When we compared our work in the hospitals with those from other schools, we found that we were better prepared and instructed. We had a demonstration room at the institute that was outstanding and fully equipped. On final exams, the CHTI students were always the best even though we are not allowed to cheat, even a little. I thank our teachers for being so professional and strict with us as it made us the best.



Figure 6 Amvelio explains medicines to a patient



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Figure 7 Fr. Matthew Hauman Health Center in Matara

In 2022 I graduated as a Registered Nurse. My research and final grades were at 94 which I saw on the National Registrar's list as the highest in the nation. I am proud of that because I worked so hard for it.

Now, today, years later, those same uncles who tried to take me out of school, are happy to see the benefits of my struggles and education. There is a little increase in the educational levels in my community. However, there are still no others from my immediate family in school. I want to help my siblings and their children to attend school.

I have just recently returned to Holy Trinity Peace Village - Kuron working at the Fr Matthew Haumann Primary Health Care Centre. (about 280 km north of Kapoeta Town) The life here is tough. There are many challenges. It is not like Wau or the CHTI. We workers suffer the hardships of isolation, lack of water, and shortage of supplies. But I see this also as part of my journey. God took me from poverty and gave me all those opportunities. I learned that I could do anything as long as I keep my strong will power and determination. I am now thinking to support many of my family and clan members. I want them to also have a chance to be educated. Of course, in the future, I want my own family and land. However, right now I am focused on my work and my people. We must all help to build this country into a united and peaceful place.

Above all, I thank God, the Almighty for providing me with the strength, courage, hope, and guidance during times when it seemed to be impossible and difficult to finish my study as well as guidance in conducting this research study. Secondly, I would like to convey my sincere gratitude to His Lordship Bishop Paride Taban and the Holy Trinity Peace Village Kuron for giving me this privilege to have the scholarship and all the financial support they rendered to me throughout my study period and this research study. ( From Amvelio's research paper )

My greatest thanks also go to my family members especially my late father, Joseph Lootuk, my mother, Irene Lokorot, and all my siblings and relatives for the care and support they gave to me up to this state of my life.

( Source: Interview 08.July.2022 gabe hurrish)



Figure 8 Amvelio checks the medicine for the patients



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