



**Ruth Radley**  
CMS Mission Partner  
(Sudan)

Link Letter No 7 April 2010

**Dear friends,**

**Greetings to you all!**

As I write I am only a few weeks away from leaving Yei for my first home assignment leave. I can't believe that the time is here, my schedule is starting to look very tight already! There is a list of where I will be visiting on the CMS website; please feel free to contact me or the church concerned if you want to join us (<http://www.cms-uk.org/GetInvolved/Linkchurches/MissionpartnersintheUK/tabid/498/language/en-GB/Default.aspx>)

### **Drama at 30,000 feet...**

Following on from my last link letter, I was planning on going to Boma with Mary and Elly to integrate children's ministry with the PAP (Participatory Awakening Programme). You will be glad to know that the pilots didn't get lost, and that we didn't land in the swampy area instead of the landing strip!

So you might say that it was quite a successful trip; however, not only did we not land in the swamp, we actually didn't land at all! The flight is about two hours from Juba, where we began our journey. Communication in Sudan is often difficult at the best of times, and just before we took off one of the passengers travelling with us used her satellite phone to ring colleagues in Boma to get a weather report. It was fine there – so off we took! Travelling in a small world food programme plane means that there is no airhostess helping us, just pilots giving the seven of us in the plane updates etc. We reached Boma, but by this time the weather had changed dramatically and we were now in a storm – the plane was really being

**Ruth Radley (CMS-YEI)**  
**C/O: MAF**  
**PO Box 1**  
**Kampala**  
**Uganda**  
**[ruthieradley@gmail.com](mailto:ruthieradley@gmail.com)**



**Devotions in the new nursery school**  
**- see text overleaf**



**Our beds outside in Adol**



**In one of the new classrooms**

thrown about a bit and the rain was heavy. I am thankfully not really worried about such flights, but poor old Mary was looking a little bit white I have to say!

After circling a couple of times, the pilot turned around to face us and announced that we were going back to Juba as he was not willing to attempt a landing – the airstrip is only mud, so it would be bad! There is not much one can do in this situation – if the pilot tells me it is unsafe, I am quite happy to take his advice even though it was frustrating! Mary and Elly flew the following week, but I was unable to go as I had a workshop here in Yei. It looked like they were going to be stuck there for Christmas, as their plane never arrived but another NGO had chartered a plane, which thankfully Mary and Elly were able to use to get back to Juba! Life is certainly never dull! But I didn't see a single animal!

### **Rewarding work**

However, I nearly did get to see an African animal in Sudan! The end of January saw me travelling to Adol (close to Rumbek) to act as a facilitator for a workshop there. This area saw horrific clan clashes over Christmas and we were unsure if I would be able to go to do the workshop at all as the participants would not attend if the insecurity lasted. However, things had calmed down and we were able to proceed. Whilst facilitating the workshop in Adol, I discovered just how used I was to working with my group here in Yei, and also how used to me they had become! This was challenging work indeed!

But there were some lovely participants who really seemed to want to learn more. I was touched by the pastors, and the way that the younger girls on the training were able to approach them and learn

together. It was a joy to relax with them all; quite often the lunch was very late, but I heard no complaining! In fact, one afternoon the girls all started singing and dancing, which was lovely! Even the men joined in at the end and the Sudanese are the highest jumpers I think I have ever seen! Jumping during singing and praise is very common here. We had fun making puppets, and doing other interactive things together.

### **Heat...**

Adol is HOT! In fact, it is so hot that we all slept outside! I didn't sleep so well the first night, as God forgot to turn the lights off for me – the moon is unbelievably bright. So for the next night, I wore an eye mask from a plane and bingo – I slept the best I have ever slept in Sudan! However, the dogs howl periodically when they smell the hyena nearby, but thankfully it has never (yet!) got into the compound!

### **Nursery life**

In my last link letter, I told you about the nursery school that had been built. Well, the children have moved into it! It was SUCH a joy to take the first devotion of the year; the children were all on new mats, which meant that there was enough space for them all to sit comfortably and not be all squashed up together, which helps them learn. In the weeks before Lent, we looked at why we need Easter, so we started with Creation, Adam and Eve, Christmas and so on. The children are, as ever, excessively affirming – shouting to me and running when they see me! In the weeks before I leave, I hope to work with the teachers in

helping them to plan some devotions for the time when I am not here, which would be fantastic indeed!

### Empowering others

Talking about children, I received some very exciting news that has made me so excited to be coming back here in a few months. You may recall me saying I feel that my role is more to help people see for themselves what needs doing for children, and to be empowered to successfully identify and intervene where needed. Last July, I did some facilitation for the PAP programme on child rights, and participation. When we teach child rights, we take a strong line on the responsibilities that each child has as well. We do not advocate rights without responsibility. If we are able to help our children to understand this, we are helping them to grow into good members of the community – always thinking of others first.

This is a platform for so many things to do with children, protection, participation and a great programme called *child to child* – which helps children to identify and work on improving issues within their communities, mainly in health and development. It is all exciting stuff!

Anyway, last July I facilitated two sessions, lasting no more than four hours (I think it was actually less than this!), and then a couple of weeks ago some of our partners were visiting and were taken to Goja, one of our communities here. They came back bursting with

excitement over what they had heard. Since my facilitation, the community workers I had worked with have been very proactive on behalf of children. As a community they have decided that all children should be going to school, and parents who choose to keep their children away are fined! There had also been a problem with children and alcohol, but now adults are not allowing the children to drink, and parents are taking a more proactive approach in knowing where their children are, and preventing them from going to places that were not helpful for them to be. The community workers are also making house calls where there are seen to be problems in order to see how they can assist and help the situation. We are excited, because I didn't prompt them to do this – they took the training and applied it to their own setting, and decided for themselves what the issues in the community were. They are now working toward improving it.

In my next term here, we have already decided that we will work with children's workers in the areas that PAP is working in, as these people are mobilised and working to better their communities with the resources that they *have* available. We hope that this training will be more holistic than the training we have currently carried out, looking at the child as

### Facilitating for the PAP participants last year



### Singing and dancing whilst waiting for lunch



a whole and not just the 'spiritual soul' part. Jesus is interested in us as whole people, not one little area. We hope also that this will be more 'children's ministry' training than 'Sunday school training'. Who knows where it will lead! It is exciting!

### Developing relationships

I also have continued to facilitate at the teacher training college, and I love it! We have had an in-service training happening. The majority of teachers here in Sudan are not trained but are people who have seen a need, and are doing the best they can. The in-service training is for such teachers, given in their holidays and where they can come and receive training. They were a wonderful bunch and it was great to facilitate with them. One of the students is now bringing me water daily, as a thank you, and wants to do more work in my compound. This will be paid work, but it is good to build a relationship with him more. We will at some stage have a bit of a theological discussion I hope (after comments he made), and he is now quite happy to come down here, enter my house and sit for a chat. I love these times, as I deeply value the relationships I am making here. He seems to think deeply about such things and knows the huge impact that he will have on children's lives once he has qualified.

### Lent devotions

I have also been involved in writing devotions for Lent. Each location in Across shares 30 minutes together each morning for a time of singing, prayer and studying the bible. We are trialling following the same scripture each day, instead of doing our own thing. I have been preparing these devotions with a colleague, and pleasantly realised how much I enjoyed doing them (apart from when it was against the clock in finishing them on time!).

For the first day we wrote a devotion on the scripture about Jesus being tempted in the wilderness, and we devised a short skit with the devil appearing ready for his part, complete with a mask that had been made for the occasion! Fantastic! We will see if this will lead us into sharing the same devotion on a longer period. I also celebrated Lent here by getting up early to make a pile of pancakes for my colleagues to share over tea break. I took one pancake in a frying pan, and insisted

that before they could eat any they had to flip it first! It was an hilarious time and I loved it!

As I end this first term of service in Sudan, I really want to thank you so much for your support. My title is that of a mission partner, not a missionary (I hate that term, for me it conjures up images that are not so helpful....!) and I do feel part of a partnership. I am working in partnership with the church here, which is a true privilege, not one to be taken lightly. I am also in partnership with the church back home, who so faithfully pray for me and encourage me in so many ways. Thank you for your part in that. I look forward to seeing many of you in person to thank you for your part in God's work here in Southern Sudan.

Take care, and may God bless you all!

*Ruth xx*



**Mbaraza flipping a pancake**

[www.cms-uk.org](http://www.cms-uk.org)



Church Mission Society

Watlington Road, Oxford, OX4 6BZ Tel: 01865 787400 Fax: 01865 776375  
Email: [info@cms-uk.org](mailto:info@cms-uk.org) [www.cms-uk.org](http://www.cms-uk.org) Registered Charity Number 220297  
General Secretary: The Rev Canon Tim Dakin