



Dear Friends,

I cannot tell you how happy I am to be sending you the invitation to our beautiful Candlelit Christmas Concert this year. When Roz Kamaryc, Head of Queen's Gate School, whose lovely choirs lead our music, told me that our concert needed to be the earliest it has ever been – 29th November – as they were breaking up early, I was concerned. But how lovely to really launch this special time of year in the true spirit of Christmas. Our dear friend and Patron **Julie Etchingam** will be leading us through the evening, and we have a special treat – wonderful **Eamonn Holmes** will be with us again. I have missed him! He is our Guest of Honour, and I have broken tradition and asked him to say a few words as to why Kids for Kids means so much to him. To make the evening perfect, Timothy West and Lord Cope will be with us too. It would not be the same without them.

I am so proud of Kids for Kids. You will know what a worrying time this year has been in Darfur; the worst I have known. Warnings of encroaching famine in the villages were ignored by both governments and aid agencies. But because of our supporters, Kids for Kids was able not only to provide families with flour for themselves and supplementary fodder to keep their animals alive across the frightening hungry months during the searing heat of summer in Darfur, but – and this is why Kids for Kids is so different – to look ahead, and make sure each of those families had seed to plant the moment the rains arrived. **This is what makes Kids for Kids unique – we do all we can to prevent catastrophes.** I have not heard of any other organisation, anywhere, thinking in this way.

Without your support, many families would now be in mourning for loved ones lost to starvation. Instead, hundreds of families can start 2019 knowing that they will have something to eat thanks to the seed we have provided. It is too early to know how many other families, who had to eat their seed to survive, may need our help in 2019, but I know I can count on you to help to provide emergency aid, if no one else responds. It is a huge responsibility when people say their only hope is Kids for Kids.

Sustainable aid is the way ahead. Of course, sustainable projects are our priority and we continue to do as much as we can to help children long term. I still feel very humble when I look at our Gift List and see how simple, how basic even, are the things we are raising funds to provide, and yet how life changing they are. In the villages of Darfur these are the means to lift families onto the first rung of the ladder out of poverty. We started with the ambition to provide water near to villages, and goats so children had milk. Back in 2001 I did not realise how a little flock of goats would also empower the poorest mothers in every village we adopt. One mother told me that owning two blankets meant she had household assets and was listened to in village meetings. She had become a woman of consequence.

There are now village leaders who are women thanks to them having the means to build up a livelihood, make decisions for their families for the first time in their lives and, in their turn, they are helping their own communities.

So – please GIVE A GOAT THIS CHRISTMAS! And don't stop there – please tell everyone, this is what we should all have in our Christmas Stockings. Let's see how many we can provide! You will of course receive a beautiful Christmas Certificate – what more could you want!

When you receive your gift, please do think what your goat will mean in Darfur, but I have bad news for you. We can no longer afford to provide six goats for each family as prices are soaring in Darfur – inflation is nearly 70%. It is hard to contemplate. We must make sure we buy the best animals and to find good billy goats we have been paying £65, and sometimes even more. We need billy goats of course – but we are now sharing them between three families.

Our pilot project to see if this will work has been successful. Although prices are rising steeply in Darfur, sterling is currently strong. This means that we are paying £50 for a nanny goat, although this may change after Brexit, if sterling weakens. I am therefore asking for FIVE NANNY GOATS for each family at £250, plus a billy goat at £66. To support a family therefore, making sure they have access to a good billy goat, I am budgeting for £272 for each family, to include a third of a billy!

You cannot make a better investment – every two years the nanny goats' little kids will be passed on to another family. More and more children will drink milk from your goats, and more and more mothers will gain a voice in their communities. To make this transformation with just £272 is still a bargain!

What a Happy Christmas this will be to all the families we can help!

One way to make sure that we can do more is to donate during **The Big Give doubling campaign**. We need to ensure we match the £26,000 required to secure the maximum doubling – which will enable us to spend a massive £52,000 to help families in Darfur by empowering women. The time and dates to donate are from 12 noon (midday) on 27th November to 12 noon (midday) 4th December. It may be worth checking with us, particularly in the last few days so we can let you know the total raised to confirm your donation will be doubled. Once we have reached that amount donations will attract a fee. Do ring me on 07957206440 or email patricia@kidsforkids.org.uk

It is difficult to put into words how grateful I am to our **Children's Champions** and **Regular Givers**. Knowing that I can count on funds, especially this worrying year, makes an indescribable difference. How can I plan if I have no idea how much we will receive? The Champions, who have chosen to support our water and kindergarten projects, have not only transformed village life this year, but for countless years to come. The fourth fresh intake of children are starting school in our first Kindergarten at Abu Nahla and in five more Kids for Kids' villages children started school for the very first time in September. These are miracles which were beyond the dreams of mothers in Darfur when I first went there in 2001. Who would have thought that Kids for Kids could do anything like this? Receiving regular support, even small amounts, make a massive difference to how I can plan, and the coming months will, I fear, be very challenging.

I very much hope you will be coming to our wonderful Candlelit Christmas Concert in London, on Thursday 29th November. I can promise you beautiful music, and a perfect start to Christmas. We have the most wonderful surprises in store for you. And please don't forget to **Give a Goat this Christmas to transform children's health and empower women in a region in desperate need of help.**

Happy Christmas!



Patricia Parker MBE
Founder



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