



## **BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS FOR KIDS FOR KIDS 20 YEARS OF PROVIDING REAL LASTING HELP – SUSTAINABILITY IN PRACTISE**

**2021 is a special year for Kids for Kids, it is our 20<sup>th</sup> birthday!**

### **A message from our Founder and CEO, Patricia Parker MBE**

Kids for Kids celebrates 20 years of helping the forgotten children of Darfur on 8<sup>th</sup> March this year - two decades in which we have transformed the lives of over 550,000 people in 105 villages in one of the most inaccessible places in the world. A journey that started with a young boy's seven hour walk for water across the deserts of Darfur, to a handpump miles from his home.

I was shocked not just to find a nine-year-old undertaking this exhausting and onerous duty for his family, but even more so when I learnt that under Darfur there is one of the largest aquifers in Africa. At that time other agencies were present in Darfur but none was providing what I consider the right of every child, indeed of every human being, clean fresh water close to their homes.

Since 2001 Kids for Kids' unique package of sustainable projects has transformed the lives of children across North Darfur. There was, and still is, virtually no health care in villages. Not just for humans but for their animals too, which they rely on. As Joanna Lumley OBE, who is Patron of our charity, says "The health of the animals is closely linked to the health of the children." Kids for Kids provides not just basic health care – village midwives, first-aid workers and drugs, plus paravets and veterinary drugs for the animals and much more – but the key project is a Goat Loan. Five nanny goats are lent to the poorest families in a village for two years, then they pass on the same number of healthy offspring to another family. Beneficiaries are chosen democratically by the village. By the time rotation is due the little flock will have grown and not only does it mean the children have access to goat's milk and all its valuable protein, minerals and vitamins, but the mothers have an income for the first time in their lives. "I was able to make decisions for my family myself" says Asma, Ibrahim's mother. "It transformed my life and my children grew up healthy." Many children grow up stunted because of lack of protein, this also compromises bones, teeth and even brain cells. Osman Kibir, former Governor of North Darfur said "Kids for Kids' Goat Loans improve the IQ of our children".

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This year, whilst we celebrate what we have achieved to date, we have had to re-evaluate our policy of adopting new villages each year. Inflation is out of control in Sudan. People are struggling to feed their children and starvation is a spectre in almost every village. With the cancellation of all our events we have fewer funds just when we need them most. The cost of everything is spiralling in Darfur. I have a horror of raising the hopes of people and then to find we cannot fulfil our promises. This year, therefore, Kids for Kids will not only provide supplementary food for families, and extend its Soap Appeal to help fight Covid, but will concentrate on supporting projects with the greatest need, but also ensuring long term benefits. Our aim is to provide real measurable sustainable help so that the prospect not for individual families, but whole villages, are improved. No other organisations support these isolated communities. Every child should have the chance of a better, more prosperous future. Kids for Kids gives mothers hope. For 20 years we have remained steadfast in our determination to improve the lives of children long term.

The UN has introduced the Sustainable Development Goals, these address the challenges people in third world countries still face. From poverty to inequality, to climate change and lack of healthcare and education, I am proud to say these issues always have and always will be what Kids for Kids works to prevent through our range of projects. We have had 20 years of putting the aims of the world into practise.

Whilst Kids for Kids is celebrating an important milestone, it is also a reminder that after 20 years there are still children and families in desperate need in Darfur. Since the overthrow of the 30-year government of Omar Bashir in 2019 Sudan has been suffering an economic crisis. Inflation is now over 250%. As always it is the most vulnerable who suffer. Children and families are surviving on a single meal of assida a day.

In many countries there are foodbanks that support people in need, but in Darfur this lifeline does not exist. Kids for Kids is the only organisation working in Darfur to support families living in remote villages in this most desperate time of need.

We understand that times are tough for many people across the world, but in Darfur children lead lives beyond poverty. No child should be forgotten. Please can you help this year? Kids for Kids is showing that real sustainable help is possible.

To donate to Kids for Kids: <https://www.kidsforkids.org.uk/kids-kids-gift-list/>



[www.kidsforkids.org.uk](http://www.kidsforkids.org.uk)

[contact@kidsforkids.org.uk](mailto:contact@kidsforkids.org.uk)

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