

## MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDER

**Dear Friend,**



Sudan is out of the news. It is hard to understand why, when civilian houses are being shelled and looted and over 4 ½ million people had fled the country by June. It is no light thing to leave everything you own and flee your home, yet when bullets fly through the window of your house you have no alternative. You flee. I am being asked if we are able to help, or should people wait to support us. Please do not wait. We need to be ready to help the minute it is possible. Waiting will endanger children's lives. I can understand the concerns – that whatever is provided might not reach where it should, or perhaps even be destroyed, or stolen. That is of course possible – but I am more proud than I can say, that because we work directly with the communities themselves, in all these years, every single thing we have funded is proving sustainable to this day and there has been ongoing violence in Darfur since 2003.

**Our handpumps are close to villages.** Elsewhere countless women and children have been attacked over the years – raped and worse – on their walk to water. Having water close at hand (even a few miles makes a massive difference) saves lives. I am more humbled than I can possibly say at the thought that Kids for Kids' projects are now proving to be more valuable than we could ever have imagined. Can you begin to think what it means to have midwifery in your village when health care has broken down across the country? Even where hospitals have not been occupied by the military, they cannot get supplies. Medical care has vanished. In Khartoum, in one month alone 27,000 women were expecting babies, but with no medical care possible. 70 babies died in one week. Others died from starvation. Our little goats – we've provided well over 60,000 in the past 23 years – are giving milk to children where there is no other source of protein. Mosquito nets cut down the incidence of malaria by two thirds. I could go on.



**To bring you up to date with the current situation.** Fighting is rampant between the army, headed by General Burhan, and the Rapid Support Force, the former Janjaweed (the Devils on Horseback). There is a complete disregard for civilian lives or property. Violence has turned into genocide again in Darfur. Darfur is huge – the size of France. Our villages are in North Darfur where security is better. Banks are beginning to open, the market is working and I have just heard that an enormous convoy of emergency aid has been delivered from Khartoum by the UN. That is for internally displaced people in the camps, not for villagers. They receive help from no one – except us.

We are in the middle of discussions with local Darfurians (village leaders) about their emergency needs (we have to save lives first before we look to the future to provide more sustainable projects). We have to have funds ready the instant we know we can do something. Hence our Emergency Appeal is desperately needed.



The same applies to water. It has always been one of the hardest projects to manage, as the drill and team running it, is often not available. Last year, thankfully, we were able to give an instant go ahead and 13 handpumps were funded from our water fund, which it had taken ages to build up. One village had been waiting since 2016 for a handpump. Can you imagine the joy? Without that water fund we would have lost the opportunity to give the go ahead.

I have been asked if our villages are targeted because of what we provide. That doesn't happen because all our projects are low key – goats, donkeys, chickens are not high-status animals like camels, horses, cows, sheep. Farm tools, mosquito nets, blankets, transform lives, but are not wanted by soldiers. You don't steal midwives, first aid workers or veterinary paravets. What has been happening is that people have been moving to our villages because they know they will have a better chance. **So, at the same time as trying desperately to build our Emergency Fund, I am also determined to adopt more villages as soon as we possibly can – but I need the funds to do so.**

One of the biggest problems across the whole country is soaring inflation. Food items have gone up 500%. We have to provide the basics. Everything is in short supply and beyond the means of ordinary people. You can see why we need to fundraise urgently, and how difficult it is to budget. For the first time the prices in our Gift List can only be estimates. One thing however – we will never say we will support families, then let them down. When life is so fragile hope is what keeps people going.



**Please – can you help?** Support for the Greatest Need will give me the resources we need. Would you take on a Challenge for us in 2024 (I am struggling through the Step-Ups for Kids for Kids right now!)? Please will you ask your Rotary Club, your children's school, your local church, to support us - or even just do your Christmas shopping online through Easy Fundraising, Give as you Live or the Giving Machine? I would love you to join me at our Fishing Day on 21<sup>st</sup> October in Surrey (you can still book tickets here - <https://www.kidsforkids.org.uk/event/fly-fishing-2023/>). Or why not invite people to share coffee or a glass of wine or two with you – and at the same time donate just £5 each to Kids for Kids? I very much hope to see you on 6<sup>th</sup> December at our Candlelit Christmas Concert.

We are approaching Christmas. It is a time to get together – and it is the perfect time to think of children.

**People have faith in Kids for Kids. We will not walk away. We have never been needed more.**

May I wish you a truly happy Christmas and a peaceful 2024.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Patricia". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined.

Patricia Parker OBE  
Founder



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