

## The Challenge for Education in South Sudan



CASS representatives Jane Roy and Glen Pearson recently returned from a fact-finding research trip to Africa (January 2004) regarding educational needs in south Sudan. Their findings:

- 1,700 primary schools exist in south Sudan. Virtually all of these schools operate under difficult circumstances of poor facilities, inadequate supplies and lack of qualified teachers.
- Total enrollment in these 1,700 schools stands at 350,000. This represents **only 20%** of school-aged children.
- Of the 1,700 schools, **50%** are held in the outdoors, leaving them susceptible to inclement weather, especially during the rainy season.
- There is a very low enrollment rate for girls in the schools, making up only **26%** of total primary enrollment in primary schools. In the upper grades they form about **21%** of total primary enrollment.
- Aweil East has the lowest enrollment rate in all of south Sudan.

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*CANADIAN AID FOR SOUTHERN SUDAN is a Canadian development and human rights organization, registered with Revenue Canada*

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## The Need for a Canadian Presence in Sudan

As a result of a nationwide campaign to involve Canadian citizens in the fight against slavery, representatives Jane Roy and Glen Pearson journeyed to southern Sudan in May 1999 accompanied by several media groups, including CBC television. As a result of that journey, images of the reality of modern-day slavery were played out on thousands of television sets across the country. The public response demanded something be done.

Since that initial trip this husband and wife team have returned to Africa twenty times in cooperation with the leaders of southern Sudan. They have been accompanied by other media groups on these trips as well. Their May/2000 trip became the cover story for *Maclean's* magazine. In slightly over five years they raised the profile of southern Sudan in Canadian awareness.

Perhaps the most significant trip was in April/2001, when Glen Pearson and Jane Roy were accompanied by member of parliament Joe Fontana, presently parliamentary secretary to Prime Minister Paul Martin. For the first time a Canadian politician visited those areas of southern Sudan where the devastation was greatest.

Fontana spoke with returned slaves and heard of their joy at being reunited with their families. He held personal interviews with people recently displaced and heard of their need for medical attention and education. Those discussions formed the basis for what was to follow.

*"I came, I saw and I listened. After all I have seen, coupled with the remarkable courage of these devastated people, my life will never be the same. It's time to go back and let Canadians know what's happening here."*

... MP Joe Fontana, April 2001

It was during this trip that southern leaders made a poignant request of the three Canadians. "Would the Canadian people be willing to invest their energies in the proper schooling of the literally hundreds of thousands of children who have been traumatized by 20 years of war?" It was a question that had to be taken seriously and upon their return, Jane Roy and Glen Pearson made the decision to start the CANADIAN AID FOR SOUTHERN SUDAN (CASS) agency. A registered charitable organization, CASS seeks to bring vital Canadian resources to the startling needs of the war-ravaged men, women and children of southern Sudan.

But there is more. CANADIAN AID FOR SOUTHERN SUDAN will continue in its efforts to appraise Canadian politicians of the ongoing injustices in the African war-torn country and to continue introducing media to the story of the millions of men, women and children in southern Sudan desperately in need of educational programs. This pamphlet will seek to assist you to learn how you can become involved in one of the modern world's greatest fights to establish human rights and to build schools in one of the world's most neglected areas.



*We need your help*

## THE NEED

The children of south Sudan face significant challenges. Opportunities for personal development are few, as twenty years of civil war continue to cause disruption. Along with the need for education, school-aged children, who now number in the millions, often face severe



*Jane Roy and Glen Pearson with school children in Sudan*

physical challenges. Victims of rape, beatings and other inhuman treatment, men, women and children look to education as their one means of improving their situation. Parents most often lack the adult education programs required to expand their productive capacity and improve their communities. Yet resources are few and the opportunity exists for Canadians to make a clear difference.

CANADIAN AID FOR SOUTHERN SUDAN has, in cooperation with the government of southern Sudan, begun to establish primary schools. In addition, CASS has launched the YMCA/YWCA in south Sudan and initiated women's empowerment classes.

## THE PLAN

CANADIAN AID FOR SOUTHERN SUDAN is a Canadian-based development and human rights organization that has brought attention to southern Sudanese needs by taking such media groups as CBC television, *Maclean's* magazine, the *London Free Press* and independent documentary crews to southern Sudan to witness the realities firsthand. At the same time, CASS continues to meet with federal politicians and committees to appraise them on the human rights and development needs in that region. CASS representatives Glen Pearson and Jane Roy are volunteers who travel to Sudan each year to assist in this process. CASS seeks to carry out five main objectives.

- To investigate further the institution of slavery in Sudan and assist in its abolition
- To educate the war-ravaged children and the communities in which they settle through the establishment and maintenance of primary schools
- To establish "Abuk's Herd" - a resource designed to provide returning families with enough goats to re-establish their lives.
- To assist in the rehabilitation of former child soldiers and slaves once they have been demobilized and liberated and to continue building branches of the YM/YWCA
- To elevate the status of women and girls to the place of equal partners in community life through appropriate education



*First goats from "Abuk's Herd"*

## THE OPPORTUNITY

For the beleaguered people of south Sudan the time has never been better for development. Ongoing peace talks between north and south Sudan have come tantalizingly close to a conclusion and as a result the south of Sudan is experiencing a sense of hope that hasn't been felt for over 20 years.

CANADIAN AID FOR SOUTHERN SUDAN is intent on expanding its programs in the remarkably fluid situation in an effort to take advantage of the goodwill expressed by both sides in the conflict. Early in 2004 we have launched "Abuk's Herd," along with special initiatives around the rehabilitation of child soldiers and women's literacy classes. But primarily our focus for the coming months will be on the construction of two primary schools in the Aweil East area of the south, an area with the lowest enrollment in the entire south. Former child soldiers will assist in the construction of the classrooms. With the challenge before us we need your help and interest.



*CASS representatives meet with Prime Minister Paul Martin in Ottawa. Catch the story by visiting*

[www.casscanada.net](http://www.casscanada.net)

## HELP US MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN SUDAN

You can help provide needed resources to the people of south Sudan. Here are some ways you can assist:

- Sanitation per child per year - **\$5**
- YMCA/YWCA membership for one year (provides t-shirt, and access to recreational programming) - **\$10**
- School supplies per child per year - **\$12**
- Price of one goat - **\$30**
- Grain grinder for feeding one family - **\$35**
- Rehabilitation program for former child slaves/soldiers - **\$70**
- Schooling for one year - **\$100**

**Your contribution is tax-deductible.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Online donation—[www.casscanada.net](http://www.casscanada.net)

**Canadian Aid for Southern Sudan**