

Education is the future for the children of Yei

Mongo has a new primary school, and the focus is now on getting textbooks and training teachers to raise the standard of the education the children there will receive.

Shortage of trained teachers is a major problem across Southern Sudan, but one school which is bucking the trend is Immanuel Primary School (David Cromie stands outside the school, right) close to Yei Cathedral. Here the results are the best in Yei County, and although it is still holiday time the Primary Sevens are back at Immanuel preparing for their exams when the Connor team visits. Some of the boys are pictured below with Bishop Hilary.



P7s here can be aged up to 19. Graduating from primary school simply means the child or young adult has completed seven years of education. The shocking fact is that a woman in Southern Sudan is more likely to die in pregnancy or childbirth than to complete her primary education.

At Immanuel we meet Abraham, aged 19, (right with Archdeacon Stephen Forde) who shows us some of the work he has been doing. Abraham spent much of his childhood living in the bush as the civil war raged in the towns and villages of Southern Sudan. He now hopes to go to secondary school, but fears his family will not be able to afford the £75 per term fee. His aspiration is to be a teacher himself.



The head teacher at Immanuel, Wani Angelo, explains that the school was built with funding from CMS Ireland. It has 624 pupils, and was the first new school to be built in Yei Diocese. Bishop Hilary is justly proud of its achievement.

“This school is the best, the pupils are well disciplined and perform well,” he said. “In church schools we do not just teach academics, we teach discipline, morals and religion.” He paid tribute to the school’s 17 teachers who

he admitted were paid less than those in government schools but who stayed because of their great 'spirit of commitment.'

Government policy is that every child in Southern Sudan should attend school, even if classes are held under a mango tree. But the Bishop said probably only 60 per cent are able to attend. The good news however, is that there is now a teacher training college in Yei.



A new nursery school, built by funds raised by CMS England Mission Partner Carolyn Murray, and run by Yei MU, was open for registration on the team's final day in Yei. Parents were arriving with the children aged five and six to sign them up for their pre-school education. It is a sign that things are looking up for the children of this war damaged diocese. With financial and prayerful

support, more teachers can be trained and the children can hope for a brighter future.

