

STTC Newsletter - July 2022

Solidarity Teacher Training College, Yambio, South Sudan



Welcome to the New Students

This month STTC welcomes thirty-seven new students from different parts of South Sudan and Nuba Mountains. They belong to different tribes, states, religions, language, and cultures. These young women and men with a passion for teaching are ready to commit full-time to professional learning and school practice for the next two years. STTC offers a completely free, quality and holistic education along with full board and lodging. STTC is proud to witness the rapid increase in the number of female candidates joining the program at each intake.



Safeguarding Workshop

The Safeguarding workshop with all new tutors and new students is given top priority by the college administration. The principal Br Chris Soosai brought Year 1 Semester 1 and the new tutors, Ngaluku and Justin, step by step through the Solidarity with South Sudan, Safeguarding of Minors and Vulnerable Adults Policy (June 2021). Each element of the policy is explained at length, illustrated with examples, and tested through question-and-answer so that nobody can claim ignorance of what is meant. Sufficient time is given to allow for real engagement, and to underscore the seriousness of the matter. The participants are to be commended for their attention and openness. It was a valuable day.

Diploma Course

A long-term dream was realized at STTC when the first cohort of fifteen students started the Diploma in Education on 18 July 2022. The programme is open to graduates of STTC and elsewhere with a strong academic record and relevant classroom experience. The first intake includes Certificate-holders from the teacher training colleges in Maridi, Yei and Rumbur as well as STTC graduates. The structure and content of the new Diploma is based on the 'Initial Teacher Training Diploma, Syllabus and Guidance, South Sudan' prepared by the Curriculum Foundation (UK) for the Ministry for General Education and Instruction, Juba. We wish the first batch of students good luck.





Increase in Student Population

More young people opting for teacher training is a healthy sign. The younger generation starts realizing the fact that South Sudan needs more qualified teachers if it is to reach its potential. STTC is proud of playing a major role in capacity building through training teachers for the primary school sector. Currently, STTC has 134 students - 51 female and 83 male students. Soon there will be equal number of male and female students. A great advantage for students joining STTC is to get opportunities to be sent to other countries on scholarship to pursue higher education; some also have the chance to advance their qualifications to degree level at international universities through distance learning, such as with the Open University (UK).

Creative Games & Fun

Early Childhood education lays the foundation for life-long learning. Student teachers at STTC apply the theories of 'learning through play' in their lesson planning and organize games and play activities suited to very young learners. The Certificate students now undertake Early Childhood school practice in Year 1, while the Diploma students have Early Childhood Development as a subject elective. This aspect of teacher education matters hugely in South Sudan because of the very large population aged 0-5 years. Student Teachers are given ample opportunities to innovate new games so that they use them to play with the kids during school practice.



Independence Day Celebration

On 9th July, STTC celebrated the country's eleventh Independence Day with a well-organized scout parade outside the college campus which delighted our young neighbours. This was followed by a flag-raising ceremony and a special gathering to remember the freedom martyrs and the sacrifices they made for the country. Students expressed their gratitude for the developments and vowed to commit themselves to the process of nation building. They also prayed for a bright future for the new nation, most especially peace, unity and the welfare of the poor. The rich cultural traditions of South Sudan were celebrated in the programme of the day.

New Student President

An election for the new student president and their leadership team was conducted as we began a new semester. Leadership training is part of the holistic education in the teacher training program. Encouraging and empowering women to take up leadership roles is particularly emphasized. The election is also a practice in democracy, conducted in a good-humoured but serious manner. Ms Kojo Jenet, a Year-Two-Semester-One student, was elected as the student president of the college and Mr James Cham Wilson, a Year-One-Semester-Two student, as the vice president. Along with their leadership team, they have promised solemnly to work for peace, unity and inclusion, and for the overall welfare of the college.



Plating Trees

Students and staff of the college thanked the outgoing student leadership team headed by Hafish Muhammed the president and Selina Hayati Simon the vice president for their dedicated service to the college. They have done an outstanding job organizing all the student activities and keeping the college in order. To honour their time in leadership, the outgoing team planted trees and shrubs throughout the campus. Care of the environment is part of the holistic education at STTC and by enhancing the campus Hafish's team will be remembered into the future.



Football Match

Football is a popular game in South Sudan, and most certainly in STTC. Student teams, both men and women, play matches with outside football clubs as well as among themselves. History was made at the recent men's match held between the newly-arrived students and the seniors. To the surprise of everyone the new students put up an excellent show and defeated the seniors by 4:3 goals, the first time ever at STTC. The college has found some excellent players and they will be great assets to the college. The forthcoming women's match will be keenly fought; the senior girls have seen the warning signs.



Solidarity Community

The STTC community is comprised of women and men religious from various continents, congregations, charisms, cultures and educational backgrounds. Living together with vast differences is a great blessing for the members of the community as well as for our fellow-tutors, staff and students. All community members are united in spirit for the one common cause - educating the young people to become teachers. The current seven-member multi-congregational community is made up of people from Ireland, Peru, Taiwan, India, Nigeria and South Sudan and from seven religious congregations.



Evaluation of STTC Programs

STTC undertook the annual evaluation of its programs and administration. Four key areas were assessed: academic affairs, administration, student resident life, and infrastructural development. The participatory assessment process comprising of the community members and staff was facilitated by Sr Scholastica Ngada. Participants shared their views on what went well and what needs to be improved, with further opportunities to contribute over the coming weeks. Major infrastructural developments were proposed in view of the increase in the number of students on the full-time Certificate (mode 1), its extension to a weekend and school holiday program (mode 2), the successful launch of the Diploma program, and the Inservice workshops for teachers around the country.

