

## The Annual General Meeting

11 September 2021



This year's AGM included participants from South Sudan, Dubai, USA and UK. ECSSSUP's patron, Caroline Welby, also joined us. We now have an Advisory Board in addition to the Board of Trustees. Three members of the Advisory Board – Alex Simm, Nic Ramsden and Suzy Voga – shared a little about themselves and why they are committed to partnering with The Episcopal University of South Sudan (TEU). Eeva John, the Chair of Trustees showed an animation which included new developments. There was also a video to explain the work. Both of these will be available on the ECSSSUP website in due course ([www.ecsssup.org](http://www.ecsssup.org)).

A number of participants joined us from South Sudan. Ron Hart, a trustee, interviewed TEU's Financial Manager, Vicky Aluur, who said that what made the university special were the Christian values underpinning its vision and its mission to bring diverse people to learn together. She also emphasised the importance of enabling women to access higher education: she reminded us that to educate a woman is to educate a family. The Principal of Kajo Keji Christian College (one of TEU's participating colleges), James Lule, was also interviewed. The college has returned to South Sudan, having had to move to Uganda for safety for several years. James echoed the need for access to higher education in South Sudan.

Hanna John, a trustee, and Revd Dr Joseph Bilal, the Acting Deputy Vice Chancellor of TEU, updated us on developments in the past year. The land at Rokon has been legally acquired by TEU for its central campus, a professional survey has been completed, and test drilling for a borehole has commenced, only to be thwarted by the rainy season. The Charity EMI which offers engineering, architectural and construction expertise has agreed to do work in partnership with TEU to design the new Rokon campus and assist with project management.

TEU staff have worked hard to consolidate the financial systems and academic curricula of all the participating colleges, constructing a detailed budget, and having the accounts successfully audited.

A grant from ECSSSUP has enabled TEU to buy a Land Cruiser. TEU has also purchased a Toyota Hiace minibus and is fundraising locally to cover the extra cost. The efforts for government registration and accreditation of the university continue - syllabi have been accepted, the new law faculty agreed, but the Government of South Sudan is now insisting on all higher degrees to be validated by the government of the country in which the university is located - not easy when travel is difficult, especially during the pandemic.

In the UK we have been working to prepare for major funding applications to institutional donors. But in the meantime we need to keep paying TEU staff and covering the ongoing administration and legal costs. Regular donations are essential to this work and much gratitude was expressed for faithful supporters.

Finally, Eeva appealed for help:

- we are going to need a new treasurer/secretary when our treasurer retires in December
- we need £80K p.a. for salaries, but present regular giving is £25K, could you help?
- We need people to help promote the vision and reach a wider audience for support.

The meeting ended with thanks to everyone who had joined the meeting and thanks for all that has been achieved.