

Press Release

# The Flying Start for Sudan

## Norwegian missionary pleads for training materials for rapidly growing Sudanese church

Alkmaar, the Netherlands, 20 April 2010

Norwegian missionary Jan Ernst Gabrielsen is highlighting the great need for biblical teaching in Sudan. The media regularly reports on the economic and political instability of this country, torn by civil war, with millions of displaced residents. Virtually unknown however is the rise of the Christian church in both the southern and the northern part of the country and the increasing openness to the Gospel among the Muslim section of the population.

This explosive growth of the church in Sudan poses a new problem for its leaders : How do you make all these new believers into genuine followers of Jesus? How do you give sound and accessible Biblical teaching to so many new Christians?

Jan Ernst Gabrielsen describes the problem succinctly: "The Sudanese church is great in enthusiasm but limited in knowledge." Since 1996 he has visited Sudan at least once a quarter for three to four weeks in order to train church leaders through popular seminars. In different regions leaders come from far and wide to receive a few days of intensive training in Biblical doctrines and spiritual leadership. Gabrielsen says: "It is very rewarding. They absorb knowledge like a sponge and return to their churches full of enthusiasm. There they teach their people what they themselves have learned, with very positive results. When I later return for a follow-up seminar, almost everyone has a story about how their church has grown in both number and depth due to the teaching."

Part of his mission is the distribution of Bible study material. Listening to a speaker is important, but ministers must also be able to take literature with them for personal study and as teaching material for when they do the teaching themselves. For his leadership training courses Gabrielsen makes use of the material from Equip, John Maxwell's Christian training institute. Equip has granted him permission to print and distribute the Arabic translation of the material in the Sudan, which he also does on a large scale. The printing costs are largely paid for with donations to missions.

Education in the field of leadership is not the only thing that a young, rapidly growing church needs. There is also a need for structured training in the basics of Christian life. New believers need a “starter class,” especially since many of them have no Bible knowledge. Christians should also be trained in explaining to others how one becomes a Christian and what the first steps that God expects of you are.

Gabrielsen: “What we need is an Arabic translation of *The Flying Start*, which the Dutch publisher Arrowz has already published in Dutch, English and Spanish. *The Flying Start* is a foundation course on paper and that is exactly what the Sudanese churches need to be able to set up their own foundation course. It is complete, highly accessible and can be distributed on a large scale because of the compact shape and relatively low printing costs. ”

“That is why I started the project “The Flying Start for Sudan” together with Arrowz Publishing House. The cost of one copy plus the supporting training materials is € 2.50. The goal is to raise € 25,000,=, so that we can spread 10,000 copies of The Flying Start in Arabic.”

The passionate Norwegian missionary summarizes his story with the words: "This is a unique period in the history of Sudan with great opportunities for Christian missions. How long this period will last we do not know, but what we do know is that the Christians in Sudan need this material now. There is a clear urgency and I call on everyone to do his or her part. "

Whoever donates ten Arabic copies will receive a free Dutch copy. Publisher Arrowz gives a free copy of *The Flying Start* to anyone who transfers € 25, = or more to bank account number 3350435 of Stichting Nieuwe Kracht with the note “The Flying Start for Sudan.” (Nieuwe Kracht is an ANBI-charity. Gifts given by those under Dutch fiscal law are tax deductible.) For more information see [www.victoriousliving.eu](http://www.victoriousliving.eu) under ‘Projects’.

**Note for editors (not for publication):**

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