

ANNUAL REPORT
April 2009 – March 2010

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit.

All trustees give of their time freely and no trustee remuneration was paid in the year.

The trustees confirm that they have regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit and that we always ensure that the programmes we undertake are in line with our charitable objects and aims.

The Trust has established its grant making policy to achieve its objects for the public benefit to improve the lives of disabled and orphaned children and their families, and families in financial hardship in the North Kigezi Diocese.

The Trust carries out these objects by:

Funding the salaries of 13 Project staff

who work for the North Kigezi Diocese Growers, Orphans and Disabled Children's Project (NKD GOD's Children Project). During the year Rebecca Thorn, Trust Coordinator, carried out an extensive piece of work to review staff wages. Her report set out firstly to determine if and how much the wage rises should be (i.e. what would be a 'fair wage') and secondly to determine if and how wage rises could be funded (i.e. a 'fair and fundable wage')

The report initially concentrated on looking at the salaries of the 'main team' only i.e. the 7 staff based at the Project office. Following a decision on the 'main team' wages from the Trustees, the Project Manager made a similar investigation and decision on the wages of the cooks and matrons (6 in total), and her analysis and recommendation went into an Appendix. The report included a brief history of the project and its funding and reasons why there was a need for a wage increase.

It then looked at what the wages would be had they been increased by inflation from the beginning (1992) for the core workers of the 'main project team'. Secondly the report compared the wages of staff in other NGO's working in SW Uganda who are all funded by international donor organisations of varying sizes.

At the trustees meeting in June the report was discussed at length and a small wage increase was agreed. Following Rebecca's return to the UK the trustees all spent a weekend together in order to have more time to look at some of the fundamentals surrounding the Trust and to learn more about the Project in the form of a debrief from Rebecca. During the weekend the wages were discussed again and as Trust income had been very encouraging it

was decided at this stage to raise wages to the suggested 'fair wage' with which the report concluded.

The project staff's role in implementing all the activities undertaken is of course absolutely indispensable.

North Kigezi Diocese Growers' Orphans' and Disabled Children's Project

The activities currently carried out for the public benefit by the project staff can be broadly categorised into the following groups of programmes:

Surveys

There were a total of 1,001 new children with disabilities or chronic illness who were registered with the project in 2009. (January – December). Surgery

During 2009 - 10 there were 4 surgical camps held at Kisiizi hospital: two orthopaedic camps in May and November, and two plastic surgery camps in April and August. There were an average of 29 children operated on at each camp.

During 2009 there were also 54 children with conditions such as hydrocephalus and Spina bifida who were referred to hospitals other than Kisiizi in Kampala and Mbale to receive specialist consultation and, where funds permitted, operations.

Life Learning Skills' Clinics.

There are 9 Life Learning Skills clinics which are held every month with Evas, the Occupational therapist and Project Manager attending when able (otherwise they often meet without her of their own effort!) There are 6 of these clinics in Kanungu District (Kirima, Nyamwegabira, Kihembe, Butogota, Kihiihi & Rusoroza) and 3 in Rukungiri District (office, Bugangari, Nyabubale).

Some of the more profoundly disabled children have benefited this year from a 'pot' of money which was raised by a single donor after her visit to Uganda with Mission Direct. She later made a return visit to the Project and her fundraising efforts have enabled the Project staff to donate mattresses, jerry cans, and other essentials to some of the more needy children.

Medical Treatment for Children with Epilepsy and heart conditions.

30 children receive drugs to control their epilepsy which are collected from the Project office 4 times a year. There are also 8-10 heart patients who receive drugs quarterly.

Club Foot Clinics.

There are 2 fixed clinics in Kihiihi and in Rukungiri (office) and 1 mobile clinic which are held each month.

Education.

There are 50 deaf pupils at Nyakibale Deaf unit for whom the Project provide meals, accommodation and health care. There has been some discussion between Evas and the Head Teacher at Nyakibale regarding the future of the unit, these discussions are ongoing and no conclusions have yet been reached.

There are a further 20 children and young people at other Schools and University which are paid for by the Project.

Chilli Growing.

The trustees consider that the best long-term method of achieving the aim of the relief of financial hardship is through an income generating scheme which was devised to enable families with either orphaned or disabled children to meet some of the extra costs these children incurred. Families who join this scheme are taught to grow Birds Eye Chillies, and provided with the necessary equipment to do so. Chillies grow well under the banana trees which surround every rural home, so that no extra land is required to cultivate them. The Project Field Officers cover a large area on their motorbikes giving advice and support at every stage of the process, and when the harvest is collected, transport it to Kampala for export.

During the year a lot of thought has gone in to how to improve the yield and improve the chilli growing scheme, and although the budget does not allow for investment into the scheme at present this has given some impetus to the Project Staff as they look to the future.

The advancement of Religion

Project Team begin each day with a corporate act of worship together with the other Diocesan staff. The Project is addressed to the needs of widows, orphans and disabled children irrespective of their tribe or religious affiliation, and no attempt is made to force a child to change their religion. However both in the way in which they live their lives, and in their conversation Project staff aim to spiritually encourage the families with whom they work. The Team start clinics with prayer, and sometimes some Bible teaching.

Rebecca Thorn's visits to Uganda

As trustees we are in regular communication with the Project Team, so as to ensure that the work carried out by them reflects the charity's objects and thereby advances public benefit.

Rebecca Thorn gave up her job in December 08 to go out to Uganda on a self funded trip for 6 months. Rebecca was able to see all aspects of the Project from surgery to clinics; chilli buying to selling; team meetings and meetings with Project partners. This meant that she had a much better understanding of how the Project worked and of the team.

Rebecca's aims for her visit were essentially to learn about the difficulties which orphaned and disabled children and their families face in SW Uganda, and to learn about how the Project team supports them. She also hoped to help the Project staff with office skills (Excel, computer set up, accounting, expenses recording and management using her work experience.) The other main aims were to enable the 'window' between the Trust and the Project to be wide-open by passing a lot more information back and forth including communication resources from the Trust and photos, stories, stats, accounts and videos from the Project. This improved communication is evidenced by our website and newsletters. The channelling of information between Project staff and Trustees has become simpler and more effective, and methods are being worked on to improve things still further.

During her first visit Rebecca completed a detailed review of staff wages. She also put together footage to be made into a film, which is on the website.

Being there this year Rebecca was able to help the Project to improve on team meetings and budgeting. Blogging and twittering back to supporters generated extra funds including two of our biggest individual donations so far. She was also on hand to make arrangements for a boy with a heart defect who has since had a successful heart operation in Denmark funded by 'Chain of Hope'

A second visit to the Project enabled Rebecca to help the Project team to plan for 2010 and beyond. She focused on helping the Project team with two main objectives: Creating a budget for 2010, and putting together a huge plan for boosting the yield of all families in the chilli growing scheme. This plan was conceived with the Project staff and took the form of a grant application to Comic Relief. The budget was completed with whole team involvement and discussion during her visit, and has proved a very useful tool, not only to the Project staff, but to the trustees as they get to grips with the essential costs involved in running the Project.

The grant application required a lot of time spent writing up in the first 3 weeks after her return to the UK in time for the March 5th deadline. The application was not successful. However the time spent thinking through all the issues was very valuable, and helped both the Project staff and Rebecca as Trust Co-ordinator to have a vision for the future.

During her visit Rebecca was also able to set the scene for a lot of work on the Project accounts which was later carried out by Project staff member, Nelson alongside the previous Project Manager, Pat Gilmer.

Rebecca was involved in discussions with the Bishop about the formation of a Management Committee for the Project. This committee will comprise The Project Manager, The Head of Chilli Growing, The Diocesan Secretary, The Financial Advisor, Patrick Tugume, and two others, with the Trust Coordinator included when she is visiting. The committee will report back to the Diocese.

Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year

Families with disabled children in the North Kigezi Diocese in South West Uganda, which is very rural, and has a scattered population of subsistence farmers, have very limited access to help and support outside that which the Project is able to offer them.

During 2009 (January – December) There were a total of 1,001 new children with disabilities or chronic illness who were registered with the project. By December 2009 the total number of disabled children registered since 1995 (when the Project started) from the 4 Districts of Kanungu, Rukungiri, Kabale & Kisoro + a few from the surrounding districts of Bushenyi & Ntungamo came to a staggering 8,784!

These children and their families are offered counselling and support from the Project staff, and in many instances specific therapy or surgical treatment. The huge numbers of beneficiaries of our grant making programme are literally altering the way in which an entire community views those with a disability. Prior to the Project's inception families with disabled children had little hope for any improvement in their circumstances, and many were also shunned by their neighbours and their extended family.

During 2009 (January to December) a total of 114 children were operated on at the Project's surgical camps, and 54 other children were referred to hospitals in Kampala and Mbale to receive specialist consultation and, where funds permitted, operations.

There were 9 Life Learning Skills clinics held every month with Evas, the Occupational therapist and Project Manager attending when able. These act as parent support groups, as well as an opportunity to access advice from the occupational therapist. The very fact that parents with severely disabled children bring them to a public place each month is testimony to the positive effect that the Project is having. Previously these children were hidden away in their homes.

30 children received drugs to control their epilepsy which they collected from the Project office 4 times during the year. A further 8-10 heart patients received drugs quarterly.

Three club foot clinics were held each month for infants who were being treated using the Ponseti method.

Fifty deaf pupils at Nyakibale Deaf unit were provided with meals, accommodation and health care during the year. A further 20 children and young people at other Schools and University had their school fees paid for by the Project.

One of the highlights of the year has been to witness the success of one of the Project's oldest 'children', Nicholas Niwaabi, as he received his diploma in Counselling from Kabale University. Nicholas has cerebral palsy and was unable to walk until he was 10 years old. He

is now the only one in his family to have been to university. Other school leavers include Alex, and Phionah (who graduated from Mengo Primary School for the Physically Handicapped with an upper 2nd pass grade in the primary leaver's examination paper with no adjustment of the mark for her physical disability.)

The project's chilli growing scheme benefited 2,000 families during 2009. In September 09, at the end of the second season, the Project collected 85 bags of Bird Eye chillies weighing 35kg each. In the first season of 2010 (i.e. March) 52 bags were collected.

The financial statement for income and expenditure of the Trust for the financial year FY09-10 (1 April 09 to 31 March 10) can be viewed in a separate document.

Financial review of the Year

Income rose to £55,602 an increase of 28% in 2009 - 10, compared to £43,387 in 2008-9.

Income has been completely from donations this year. No grants were applied for during the year. Donors were a mix of organisations and individuals with churches making up the majority of organisations. Regular contributors increased as did one-off donations.

Grants to the Project totalled £51,414 this financial year. These grants were sent out approximately quarterly following Trustee meetings. The Project was to receive no extra funding from other sources this year for running surgical camps so there was a big push from Chilli Children to find this funding from within the UK and amazingly 4 camps were able to be financed. Each camp costs between £1,500 to £2,000 to fund for the Project so this was significant extra fundraising for Chilli Children.

For monthly general costs which covers all of the Project's activities and costs, except surgical camps, Chilli Children grants to the Project averaged at about £4,000 per month. This extra monthly funding compared to the previous year (£3,100) enabled backlog cases to be seen by doctors especially children with spine deformities and heart problems, enabled the wage rise for the staff and also improved the safety through repairs to vehicles, amongst many other things.

The financial statement does not take into account the large gifts of time given to the charity. The time of the fundraisers, Trust helpers and Trustees is a very valuable gift which comes not only from those individuals but also from their families and friends who witness that gift of time to help these children. But we know that giving enriches the life of the giver as well as the receiver so we see that at the end of this financial year we are all much richer in life!

