

RWANDA GROUP TRUST
(A charitable trust registered in England and Wales under number 1074656)

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
For
The year ended 31st December 2023

OBJECTIVES OF THE TRUST

The trust was established by deed on December 9th 1998 to advance the education and relieve the poverty and sickness of people in Rwanda. The Trust took on the work of its predecessor organisation, The Rwanda Group, which had been working with the same objectives since 1983.

RWANDA

Rwanda is a small landlocked country in Central Africa. It has a predominantly rural population of approximately 14.1 million people. It is one of the most densely populated countries in Africa.

2023 saw the 29th anniversary of the 1994 genocide when an estimated one million people lost their lives. Much progress has been made in overcoming this disaster but there is still much more work required to complete the task.

Rwanda is a poor country with the bulk of its population living in considerable need. World Bank figures show the average life expectancy at birth as approx. 69 years with 26 out of every 1000 children dying before reaching their fifth birthday.

TRUSTEES

The trustees are responsible for the assets, administration and work of the Trust.

Mr Joseph Bamber RIP, together with his wife Rosemary, RIP, and fellow trustee Sister Mary McCarren FCJ, began the work in 1983 after a visit to Rwanda and seeing the difficulties under which its people laboured.

Mr Bamber has overseen the growth and remarkable achievements of the charity since its registration in 1998. However in December 2021 he announced his decision to retire as a trustee and, sadly he died in April 2022.

There are currently 7 trustees who meet together at least once per quarter. The current chair of the trust is Mr Michael Donlan.

The other trustees are Bernadette Roberts, Veronica Sanders, Mark Ibison and Myra Gregory, together with Mr Bamber's daughters, Judith Potts and Clare Spicer who became trustees on the death of their father in April 2022.

In addition we were delighted to announce that Bishop Paul Swarbrick of the Lancaster Catholic Diocese attended our October meeting and agreed to become a patron of the trust. We are extremely grateful to him for this honour.

STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVES OF THE TRUST

The donor strategy is to fill some of the many gaps in provision left by the major aid charities with relatively small but effective gifts. The help given is designed to be in the nature of help to friends by friends. This is being accomplished by –

- 1) Building friendships with communities, schools, individuals and families in need and providing help to them in this spirit.
- 2) Establishing committees of Rwandans in the provinces of Rwanda to advise on need, opportunities to help and to assist in the distribution of grants.

The trust works to achieve these objectives through the excellent co-operation of 4 committees – in Kigali, Cyangugu, Gikongoro and Nyundo.

The funding strategy of the Trust is to make Rwanda, its people and their difficulties known to wider audiences and to accept donations of cash and goods for resale from those sympathetic to the objectives of the Trust.

The administrative strategy is to keep the work of the Trust as simple as possible and incur a minimum of expense in carrying it out.

FUNDRAISING

This year the necessary change in our fund raising methods since the Covid pandemic resulted in a very successful year for the charity. Despite a year when disposable incomes were hit by a sharp rise in the cost of living the charity has prospered. We are particularly grateful to the Bamber family of our deceased founder Joe Bamber. They have enabled us to undertake a project to build a classroom as a legacy to Joe through a large family donation and a very successful sponsored event. Our thanks go out to them.

In addition our keep fit class continues to produce a successful regular income. The quarterly newsletter is well received and stimulates many donations. We also held market stalls through the warmer months, continued with internet sales, a very successful sponsored walk in the summer and equally successful Table Top sales in the Autumn all contributed to a strong growth in income.

INCOME

Cash donations for 2023 amounted to a total of £38,323 an increase of approx £17,926 on last year. This resulted in a gift aid refund of £7,272 Sales of donated items of £2,533 and bank interest of £39 resulted in a total income of £48,168

EXPENDITURE

In 2023 the Trust made grants of £26,000 to the four committees in Rwanda for distribution to the poorest in their communities as deemed appropriate by them and in accordance with the trust's objectives. The Trust also made grants of £8,565 towards various projects in Rwanda. The addition of bank charges of £175 resulted in a total expenditure of £34,740. The net increase of the charity's income over last year was approximately £13,428.

COMMUNICATION & FUTURE PLANS

Our foremost means of communication is now our quarterly newsletter. This has proved to be a very effective way of informing donors how their donations are being used to help the poorest of the poor.

We will also continue to hold our annual Lenten Appeal in the churches of the Lancaster diocese as well as publicity articles in the Lancaster Catholic Voice monthly periodical. Our website: rwandagrouptrust.org has a rising number of visitors.

We continue to produce information leaflets and submit articles in local magazines and newspapers as well as advertising in supermarkets

We are always looking for potential opportunities to promote our work in the wider community.

The trustees agreed, as last year, that our priority will continue to be our ongoing commitments and only to take on new projects when funds are available.

Finally I would like to thank all our volunteers, donors and supporters for their dedication resulting in such a successful year for the charity.

KEEPING IN TOUCH

The address of the Trust is: 17 Mayfield Road Ashton Preston, PR2 1EX

Email: rwandagrouptrust.org@gmail.com

Website: rwandagrouptrust.org

This Report was approved by the Trustees & Signed on their behalf by the chair

Michael Donlan.

20 April 2024

RWANDA GROUP TRUST
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 2023

RECEIPTS

	£	£	£
<u>Balances as at 31st December 2022</u>			
Santander current account		5689.78	
Santander savings account		20.03	
		<u>5709.81</u>	
 Sale of Goods	2533.60		
Donations Gift Aided	29784.90		
Donations Non Gift Aided	8085.81		
Gift Aided Small Donations	452.10		
Gift Aid Refund	7272.51		
Bank interest	39.70		
 <u>Total Income</u>	<u>48168.62</u>		
			<u>53878.43</u>

PAYMENTS

Bank Charges	175.00
Rwandan Projects	8565.00
Rwanda Committees	26000.00
 Total Expenses	<u>34740.00</u>

Bank Balances as at 31st December 2023

Santander current account	778.70	
Santander savings account	18359.73	
Total Bank Balances	<u>19138.43</u>	
		<u>53,878.43</u>

Ms A M Waddingham Independent Examiner Date

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Rwanda Group Trust

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Rwanda Group Trust (the Trust) for the year ended 31 December 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

Name:  Anne-Marie Waddingham ACA

Address: 4 Spruce Close, Fulwood, Preston, PR2 9WB

Date:

6/4/24