

Hands of Mercy: Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts:

1st April 2020 - 31st March 2021

CHARITY INFORMATION

CHARITY NAME: Hands of Mercy International
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1097434
CHARITY'S PRINCIPAL ADDRESS: c/o St. Thomas' Church Office, Luton, LU2 7UL

CHARITY TRUSTEES WHO MANAGED THE CHARITY DURING THE REPORTING YEAR

Samantha Graham	Chair
Keith Barter	Treasurer
David Alexander	
Frances Gunn	
Sarah Savill	
Robert Gunn	
Sally Escoto (until 22 nd July 2020)	

Linda Clitheroe also commenced as the charity's administrator on 1st July 2020. However, she is not appointed as a trustee.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

TYPE OF GOVERNING DOCUMENT: Trust Deed
HOW THE CHARITY IS CONSTITUTED: With 4-7 trustees - meeting 4/5 times a year
TRUSTEE SELECTION METHOD: By resolution of the trustees passed at a convened trustees' meeting

SUMMARY OF THE OBJECTS OF THE CHARITY SET OUT IN ITS GOVERNING DOCUMENT

To apply the Trust income in the Philippines for:

- The advancement of education
- The relief of poverty

SUMMARY OF THE MAIN ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT IN RELATION TO THESE OBJECTS

Seven programmes of compassion are provided through Hands of Mercy International which supports families and children living in poverty in Metro Manila, Mandaluyong and Baguio in the Philippines. These are:

1. **Supplementary Feeding Programme** - providing food to undernourished children

2. **Family Support Programme** – providing the poorest of families with supplementary food assistance
3. **Home Improvement Programme** – providing families with the necessary help and resources to help repair their dilapidated homes
4. **Child Sponsorship Programme** – enabling children to attend school or college and receive help with their health needs
5. **Surgical Treatment Programme** – providing funding towards surgical treatment
6. **Disabled Therapy Programme** – providing vital physiotherapy and support to disabled children
7. **Prescription Medicine Programme** – providing funding for essential medicine

SUMMARY OF THE MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE CHARITY DURING THE YEAR

The Philippines has experienced unprecedented challenges during the year due to the worldwide spread of the Coronavirus. The Philippines entered into a national lockdown on 15th March 2020 and has continued to be in lockdown throughout the year.

This has had a significant impact on the Philippines and the squatter communities which the charity supports. Many wage-earners have lost their jobs and money to purchase food has been in scarce supply. Due to the emergency nature of the crisis, charity funds have been focused on providing families and children with food support, medicine support and emergency assistance with bills.

In addition, the charity increased its distribution of food support to families in the squatter communities. The following compassion programmes have continued during the financial year:

- Child Sponsorship Programme – over 100 children continued to be sponsored for their education and health needs. Where children were not able to enrol in the new school year due to Covid, or had to study from home, the sponsorship has supported access to WiFi, plus children's health needs and additional food for them and their families
- Family Support Programme – over 50 of the poorest families received supplementary food every month through the Family Support Programme. In addition, a couple of thousand emergency food parcels were distributed throughout the year to families in need as a result of the Covid lockdown
- Supplementary Feeding Programme – this continued to serve meals to underweight and malnourished children and found new ways of distributing the food during the lockdown.
- Prescription Medicine Programme – this has continued to be well utilised during the year to provide essential medicine for families and children

The focus on providing food and emergency bill support has meant that some programmes have been paused during the lockdown period – namely the

Disabled Therapy Programme, Surgical Treatment Programme and the Home Improvement Programme.

The livelihood programme (Icthus) has continued to run. It is now in its sixth year of operation (having started in 2015). It has continued to provide a way for the Filipino community to become more self-reliant. For the staff employed by Icthus, it has been a lifeline during the pandemic and lockdown.

The Philippines was not immune to typhoons, flooding and fires during the year. There were two major fires affecting one of the communities during the year. Heavy rainfall was also experienced, although thankfully the squatter communities avoided the worst of the flooding.

The Trustees held a successful fundraising campaign to raise additional funds for the Philippines. Many churches and individuals in the United Kingdom have continued to support the compassion work through prayer, child and family sponsorship and donations. One supporter held an online fundraising concert for Hands of Mercy.

In addition, after much searching and prayer, the charity took on board a part-time administrator who commenced on 1st July 2020 in a self-employed capacity. This was a significant step for the charity and allowed the incumbent administrator, Frances Gunn to retire. Donations from a supporter couple has kindly provided the funding for the administrator's role for the first year.

BRIEF STATEMENT OF THE CHARITY'S POLICY ON RESERVES

A percentage of the money given for the humanitarian compassion programmes is held in a contingency fund at the HSBC.

All the trustees approved the Trustees' Annual Report on: Tuesday 15th December 2021