

The Trust for Child Soldiers

Annual Report April 2024 to March 2025

Charity Commission Number 1144484

Objectives:

- (i) To relieve the sick and promote good health in particular but not exclusively by promoting the psychosocial wellbeing and social inclusion of children and youth experiencing psychological distress as a result of armed conflict in Africa.
- (ii) To relieve poverty and distress amongst children and youth affected by armed conflict in Africa, generally and individually, by provision of grants, items, services or facilities to those in need.
- (iii) To undertake research and publish the useful results on issues affecting the psychological welfare and security of children and youth affected by conflict in Africa and the rest of the world, in order to advance public education.

The Trust has pursued objectives (i) and (ii) in the financial year.

Activities and public benefits

The Trust has carried out its work in the vicinity of the city of Gulu, northern Uganda, and has made 168 grants benefitting 118 households to the value of £16,035 during the financial year and provided medical assistance to 261 individuals to the value of £5,565, as well as 853 individual consultations for our beneficiaries at St Philips Health Centre, to the value of £4,566. In addition, many hours of volunteer input have been directed at assisting beneficiaries in a number of ways. 95% of our expenditure was in the form of direct grants to beneficiaries.

Report on Activities

Throughout the year, the Trust held twice-weekly clinics, when people are able to drop in to request assistance. Timings of clinics were selected to coincide with when a doctor is on duty at St Philips Health Centre should people come with complex medical issues. When the Trust is in a financial position to make substantial livelihood grants, typically of the order of £100-£200, or school sponsorship of the order of £150-400 annually, to new beneficiaries, the team does due diligence regarding requests through home visits by to establish the facts about the level of need and circumstances of the individual or family concerned. The team will then discuss the available information and make a decision. Where the request is for costly medical treatment, including transfers to medical facilities in other parts of the country, we will usually send the person concerned to St Philips Health Centre for a second opinion, and to establish the viability of the proposed treatment.

General grants

In the course of the year, we have supported a total of 54 school children with education costs, 24 girls and 29 boys. 24 are children to whom we have made an on-going commitment to cover their school fees and other requirements, while the others we have supported with one off or top-up payments to cover shortfalls. Education was our largest grant category at £9,852.

We have supported the livelihoods of 21 individuals, 16 women and five men, with business grants totalling £1,652. We have also helped 18 women and 11 men with small grants for a wide variety of reasons including things such as help with funeral expenses, help with legal issues including engaging lawyers and visiting relatives in prison, roof repair and wheelchair repair. These other grants totalled £2,005. We helped 15 women and one man, together with their children, to relocate, usually to stay with relatives in rural communities where they would have access to farmland and receive more support, at a cost of £298.

In addition, we made emergency/subsistence grants totalling £2,228 to 39 women and 10 men. Usually these were single-parent families struggling to cover food or accommodation costs. Most were one-off payments but for five families we provided monthly assistance throughout the year of, in most cases, about £22, to assist with food or rent costs.

This range of contributions reflect our commitment to a model of direct giving, where we make grants based on the specific, self-identified needs of households. Our expenditure on general grants represented a reduction of 5% on 2023-24.

Medical grants

We gave a total of £5,576 in medical grants to 261 individuals for a wide range of conditions and procedures, including sickle cell disease, cancer treatments and operations, broken limbs, obstetric problems, and many more conditions. Major expenses include the surgical, medical and support costs for a boy and a young man both suffering from severe osteomyelitis.

In addition, we have given 853 vouchers for consultations at St Philips Health Centre to a value of £4,566. We try to ensure that these are given to people who would not otherwise be able to afford to access healthcare. Our current system does not record the number of individuals helped as there will be some overlaps with the above 261, and some have had multiple consultations. Our overall medical expenditure of £10,142 has increased by around 33% on 2023-24.

Registered Office

The Trust's registered office during the year was Garden Flat, 6 Old Devonshire Road, London SW12 9RB.

Structure, governance and management

The Trust's governing document is the trust deed of 27th October 2011.

The Trust is governed by the trustees. New trustees are invited to join on the basis of expressed interest and relevant skills following a vote of the existing trustees.

A minimum of two trustee meetings take place each year.

During the year no trustees joined or left. Diana Birkett continued as Chair.

Trustees who served during the year were:

1. Diana Birkett (Chair)
2. Julian Hopwood
3. Eliana Lafone
4. Sophie Mylan
5. Charles Ogeno
6. Anna Phillips
7. Helen Saunders
8. Kim Silburn

Administration

Joseph Okello has continued to make a major contribution to the Trust's work as our administrator and bookkeeper and is also heavily involved in supporting beneficiaries. He leads on our bi-weekly drop-in clinics, assisted by Jackie Aciro, Rubangakene Ernest and Julian Hopwood.

Volunteers

Volunteers Jackie Aciro, Jacky Atingo, Rubangakene Ernest and Dick Kinyera have worked extensively through the year in many capacities and made important contributions to the support of particular beneficiaries.

Jeppe Lerche Larsen, a Danish volunteer, has produced a short film about the Trust's beneficiaries to illustrate our work for distribution to donors. The beneficiaries, Oroma Beatrice, Oweknyinga Jonathan and Apiyo Maureen and her son Erick, very generously gave their time, access to their lives and permission to distribute the film to former donors and through our website. Others helped, including Rubangakene Ernest, who translated the dialogue for the sub-titles, and Eliana Lafone who assisted with editing. Jackie Aciro, Joseph Okello and Julian Hopwood assisted with production.

Financial review: financial position, relevant policies adopted and concerns or risks

Income for the year was £30,687, and expenditure was £28,031. Income increased by 11% and expenditure increased by 7% on 2023-24. Reserves at the years end stand at £5,573, an increase of

91% from 31 March 24. Monthly standing orders in March 2025 totalled £529, a decrease of 30% primarily due to the ending in September 2024 of a major donation paid monthly over three years.

Restricted funds

The Trust has two restricted funds:

Medical Fund

One donor stipulated that their donation of £314 should be used for medical purposes. Medical expenditure (excluding on St Phillips vouchers) was £5,576, resulting in no balance of funds.

Education Fund

During the year, £2,000 was received as a single donation for the Education Fund, which had a balance of £2,635 at the start of the financial year. Total expenditure on the eleven families included in the fund was £6,912. £2,277 was transferred from unrestricted funds to the Education fund to cover the balance.

Gift Aid

We were able to claim a total of £4,172.63 in Gift Aid for donations made in 2023-24 and are able to claim £5,976.01 for donations made in 2024-25 in 2025-26.

Risk

The Trust's financial position has continued to strengthen and our work to expand. This is the second year our income has exceeded £25,000, so our accounts must again be examined by an independent person. We are very grateful to Malcolm Forbes for giving his time as a volunteer to examine the accounts for 2023-24.

29% of our income was in the form of predictable standing-order donations, 57% were one-off donations, and 14% Gift Aid tax reimbursements from the previous year. This leaves us in the position of needing to continue to actively fundraise in order to maintain our level of operation and, in particular, we need to increase our predictable income to ensure we can cover our school fees commitments and likely health spending.

Signed on behalf of the trustees



Diana Birkett, Chair

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

Report to the trustees of The Trust for Child Soldiers Charity no 1144484

On accounts for the year ended 31st March 2025 as set out on page 6

Responsibilities and basis of report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31st March 2025.

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 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 which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

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

Signed:  Date: 30th October 2025

Name: Malcolm Forbes

60 Beechdale Road
London SW2 2BE

Statement of Financial Activities¹

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES				
for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025				
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Apr 2024 - Mar 2025	Total Apr 2023 - Mar 2024
	£	£	£	£
INCOMING RESOURCES				
<i>Activities to further the charity's objects</i>				
Donations and legacies	24,200	2,314	26,514	24,581
Gift Aid	4,173	-	4,173	3,141
Transfers between funds	(2,277)	2,277	-	-
Total incoming resources	26,096	4,591	30,687	27,722
RESOURCES EXPENDED				
<i>Charitable expenditure</i>				
168 grants disbursed to 118 households to relieve poverty	9,167	6,912	16,079	16,957
Medical assistance to 261 individuals	5,576	314	5,890	4,700
Medical assistance through 853 clinic consultations	4,566	-	4,566	3,114
Activity costs	960	-	960	1,395
Management and administration	536	-	536	89
Total resources expended	20,805	7,226	28,031	26,254
FUND BALANCES AT 1 April 2024	282	2,635	2,917	1,450
FUND BALANCES AT 31 March 2025	5,573	-	5,573	2,917

Statement of assets and liabilities on 31st March 2025			
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds
Cash in hand	44	-	-
Funds in bank	5,529	-	-
Total cash funds	5,573	-	-
Other monetary assets	-	-	-
Investment assets	-	-	-
Assets retained for the charity's own use	-	-	-
Liabilities	-	-	-

Signed on behalf of the trustees

Diana Birkett

Diana Birkett, Chair

¹ These have been drawn up according to the Charity Commission Standard of Recommended Practice (SORP) for small charities.