

Reference and administration details

Charity name: Network for a Better World
Other names Charity is known by: N4BW
Registered Charity Number: 1151571
Charity's principal address: St Vincent's School, Yew Tree Lane, Liverpool, L12 9HN

Contact: Mrs Barbara Charles
Telephone: 0151 228 9968
Website: www.n4bw.org.uk
Email: enquiries@n4bw.org.uk

Names of trustees who managed the charity during 2023:

Mr Andrew Clark (Chair)
Mrs Mary Clark (Data Protection)
Ms Sheila Cogley (Safeguarding)
Ms Alice Davidson (Founder and main fundraiser)
Ms Marian Kearney (Projects & Publicity)

Principal Bankers: The Co-operative Bank,
PO Box 250, Delf House, Skelmersdale, WN8 6WT

Independent Examiner: Dominic Ion

Structure, governance and management

Governing Document

Network for a Better World became a registered charity on 10th April 2013 under a trust deed signed on 4th February 2013 and operated in accordance with the provisions of that document.

Trustees

Network for a Better World appoints trustees according to skills and experience, especially relevant experience of working in the developing world. The trustees administer the charity and take decisions on the deployment of funds and human resources to meet the charitable objectives of N4BW. The trustees who served during the year are listed above.

Officers

In addition to the trustees a number of other officers are appointed to assist with the organisation and administration of the charity. Together with the trustees they form the management team and regularly attend or report to quarterly meetings.

Secretary and Administration Officer: Mrs Barbara Charles
Treasurer: Professor Ken Holden.

Active Supporters

A number of other people attend meetings regularly and play an active part in fundraising, promotional activities and short-term volunteering overseas.

Meetings

Trustee meetings are held quarterly with an Annual General meeting held usually in the spring. At the AGM all trustees present will vote for the office bearers. The annual accounts will also be presented and a review of the organisation's yearly objective will take place. The organisation will also agree on priorities for the next year. In 2023 the trustees met 5 times and the AGM was held in July.

Induction and training

Induction and training is through attendance at trustee meetings and the Annual General Meeting. All trustees, officers and supporters give their time voluntarily and receive no remuneration or other benefits. Volunteers receive induction and training prior to travelling overseas and are required to hold a DBS Clearance. N4BW is registered with CSAS (Catholic Safeguarding Advisory Service). This means that we are able to process DBS checks for our volunteers rather than relying on other agencies. There is a Safeguarding policy which all trustees, officers, active members and volunteers are required to follow. This includes a reporting procedure in case of any safeguarding issues occurring either in the UK or in our overseas field of operations. To date no safeguarding incidents requiring investigation have been reported.

Objectives and activities

The objects of the charity are:

- (1) The prevention or relief of poverty anywhere in the world by providing grants, items and services to individuals in need and/or charities, or other organisations working to prevent or relieve poverty.
- (2) The prevention or relief of poverty anywhere in the world by providing or assisting in the provision of education, training, healthcare projects, and all the necessary support designed to enable individuals to generate a sustainable income and be self-sufficient.

Public Benefit

The objects of the charity are to act as a forum for the missionary members to promote their aims and objectives within the wider context of the Roman Catholic Church of England and Wales. When planning the activities of the charity, the trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. Our humanitarian work in the developing world is primarily focused on the relief of poverty and sustainable development to enable disadvantaged people to support themselves and their families. Although we are a lay missionary organisation we make no distinction in the religion or cultural background of our beneficiaries and seek to help people of all faiths or none.

Overview of Activities in 2023

In addition to disaster relief for the community following Cyclone Freddy we have continued our work with schools, mainly in the primary sector, improving existing classrooms, building new blocks and toilet facilities and providing desks and benches for older classes. A new initiative to provide fuel efficient stoves is proving successful in schools. Management training for headteachers and senior staff has continued together with subject-specific curriculum support. Community work too, has continued with craft workshops, support for kitchen gardens, tree-planting and entrepreneurial initiatives. Other activities include support for families with disabled members and the local prison.

Achievements and Performance in 2023

Cyclone Freddy. The early part of the year was dominated by news of the devastation caused by Storm Freddy in Southern Malawi during February & March. Over 1000 people died and thousands of families were displaced, many in the area we cover. Roads were impassable, schools were closed and used to shelter and feed the homeless. Initially we sent £10,000 for emergency food and repairs. Later in the year we funded the cost of building new homes for two elderly women who had lost everything.

School Improvements.

In the past 5-6 years our main focus has been on supporting schools, in particular the primary sector. Our work involves not only improvements to school buildings, the provision of school furniture and other resources but also providing teacher training and supporting initiatives in partnership with the Education Authority to address the problem of absenteeism.

a) Building Work. In 2023 we provided new classroom blocks for three primary schools to accommodate the increasing number of children attending schools. This has eased overcrowding and enabled the schools to recruit more teachers. Where we have been unable to provide new buildings, we have funded the refurbishment of several schools by replacing or repositioning windows to create more light, damp-proofing, repairing floors, re-plastering and re painting walls and chalkboards, and creating storage space. Additionally, we have provided new toilets for schools where existing facilities were totally inadequate.

b) Classroom desks.

Few classrooms in the primary schools we support have desks for the children. Mostly the 100 or so children in each classroom sit on the floor with books resting on their knees. Over the last few years we have worked with schools to renovate some of the desks they already had but were broken through constant wear and tear. In 2023, having sourced a durable design, we installed new desks and benches in five classrooms for older learners. Our aim over the next 2-3 years is to provide every one of the 20 primary schools in our area with desks for Standards 7 and 8 (exam classes).

c) Work with headteachers, teachers and learners.

Over the course of the year volunteers delivered teacher training sessions in Maths, English, Biology, Financial Management and First Aid. Several headteachers attended management training and subject-specific resource packs were developed and distributed. Sensory toys and teaching aids were delivered to the Special Needs Adviser for use in schools to support children with special needs. Despite the improvements to the fabric of schools and support for staff, one area of concern remains: the number of children who drop out of school early, often to help with the family garden, look after younger siblings or increasingly in the case of young girls, to engage in early marriage. We have supported an initiative by the local priest to tackle the problems by bringing together schools, chiefs, village heads, parents, teachers and health officials.

School & Village Kitchen Gardens.

Following our successful pilot with kitchen gardens in schools, this has now been extended to several villages in the area. Prospective participants submit a request to the local chief and agree to prepare the land and build a protective fence around the growing area. In 2023 we helped 30 families develop kitchen gardens, training them in horticulture and providing ongoing support as their kitchen gardens developed.

Combating Climate Change.

Many N4BW projects since 2013 are directly concerned with equipping and empowering local people to improve their environment and adapt to and cope with climate change. These include:

a) Solar lamps.

This project was started over 10 years ago and is still running. We estimate that around 6000 families now benefit from the use of a solar lamp in their homes.

b) Tree planting.

An offshoot of our earlier irrigation project has been the development of a tree nursery run by the manager. The seedlings are purchased by N4BW and distributed to schools and villages to help combat climate change. Following the successful pilot in February 2019 it has now become an annual event: - 'Tree Planting Day'. Teachers and learners are taught tree planting techniques. In 2023 100 trees, including fruit trees, were delivered to each school, providing both shade and nourishment.

c) Eco stoves.

In 2023 we installed fuel-efficient stoves in 11 schools to replace the ones previously used to prepare school meals. It is hoped that a smaller version will eventually become the standard in homes, thus reducing the amount of wood burned by up to 50%.

Other projects.

N4BW has been able to engage with the local community via a number of other initiatives:

a) Disability Support. One of our volunteers, a Nurse Trainer followed up on families with disabled children she had visited previously and identified necessary actions needed for each family. This included the provision of walking aids and in one case, a wheelchair.

b) Adult literacy. These classes started over 10 years ago continue with the help of the local sisters. The women meet in the training room attached to our volunteer house.

c) Craft workshops. The women who attend the literacy classes have also benefitted from workshops run by some of our volunteers. These include dressmaking, knitting, crochet and embroidery. Several sewing machines have been donated and are being put to good use to make items to sell.

d) Sports Leagues. A football league has been running successfully for over 10 years. A netball league was started initially but for various reasons was discontinued after 2 years. In February 2023 One of our volunteers gave it a fresh impetus with the support of some funding from her home town.

d) Support for Mikuyu Prison.

Over the year we made our usual small gifts of sweets, toiletries and footwear to the prisoners which are always gratefully received. At Christmas the young men enjoyed a hearty goat stew instead of their normal daily dish of maize porridge. We also provided sanitary knits to a women's branch which had recently opened in the same area. One of our volunteers received funding to provide sewing machines and tailoring training for the prison, thus enabling the inmates to learn a skill to enable them to earn a living once they are released. This initiative has been very much welcomed by the prison authorities who see it as a positive development likely to reduce the chance of re-offending. We have recently been sent photos of dresses made by the young men with their newly acquired skills.

Priorities for the future

Our focus in 2024 will continue to be on education since there is still much to be done in this area, including completion of at least one further planned classroom building project.

We will also continue to support the disabled and disadvantaged groups in the community. With the opening of a new clinic in the community we are ready to assist with staff training and support.

We also hope to build on the success of the kitchen garden scheme, address the practical problems and extend to a wider area.

We welcome the development of entrepreneurial initiatives enabled by the craft workshops and hope that some of these will generate incomes for the participants.

In 2021 three of our trustees retired and we became concerned about the future viability of our operations in Malawi. However, following the success of our Parish Appeals programmes in 2022 and 2023 we are delighted to welcome 7 new volunteers with relevant skills and experience and committed to contributing to our work. Three of these visited Sitima in 2023 to and a further four plan to visit in 2024. This gives us confidence that the continuity of our work is secured at least for the time being.

Sources of funding

As registered members of the CMU (Catholic Missionary Union of England and Wales) we have an annual programme of mission appeals in designated parishes. The purpose is not only to raise funds but to promote the missionary aspect of our work and encourage support from people who are inspired by our endeavours.

Other regular sources of funding have continued:

- Standing orders
- Sponsored events by individuals
- 59 Club - lucky numbers scheme
- One-off donations
- Internet fundraising

Accounting

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy the financial position of the trust and ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charity Commission's SORP 2005.

Reserves Policy

The General Reserve represents the free funds of the charity which are not designated for particular purposes. It is the policy of the trustees to maintain reserves at an adequate level, being at least 12 months' expenditure. The trustees continue to monitor the level of free reserves and believe that the charity will be able to fulfil its objectives in the short to medium term.

Risk Management

The trustees have considered the risks to which the charity is exposed and have reviewed those risks and established systems and procedures to manage them. The trustees consider the principal risks to be related to an inability to provide the necessary continuity of funding to enable the projects to continue.

Financial Outcome

For the financial year ending 31 December 2023 the charity's income was £40,027 and the charity's spending was £68,998. The bank balance on 31 December 2023 was £26,733 which included substantial amounts earmarked for further building and community projects.

Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature:

A. C. Clark

Full Name:

ANDREW CLARK

Position:

CHAIRPERSON

Date:

21/04/24



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

NETWORK FOR A BETTER WORLD

On accounts for the year
ended

31st December 2023

Charity no
(if any)

1151591

Set out on pages

1 - 4

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 December 2023

As the charity's trustees, 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 which gives me cause to believe that, in any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view, which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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.

** Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.*

Signed:

Date:

22nd July 2024

Name:

IAN DOMINIC ION

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):

FCPFA

Address:

9 Oakmere Drive

Greasby WIRRAL Merseyside CH49 2RU

Section B**Disclosure**

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.

None.

Network for a Better World Financial Statement 2023 (£)

	2023	2023	2022	2022
Income				
Personal Donations	14,126.50		7,590.01	
HMRC Gift Aid Refund	3,792.12		2,226.77	
CMU Parish Appeals	5,824.20		2,736.96	
Other Corporate Donations	6,842.50		3,252.50	
Internet Fundraising	2,222.15		1,183.88	
Total Donations & Fundraising		32,807.47		16,990.12
Deposit Account Interest		375.03		73.78
59 Club Gross Income		6,845.00		6,475.00
Total Income		40,027.50		23,538.90
Expenditure				
Irrigation Expenditure	0		2,716.00	
Famine Relief Expenditure	9,892.00		0	
Community & Health Projects	10,734.99		489.00	
Education Projects Expenditure:	43,410.66		33,695.39	
N4BW Small Projects	809.21		516.00	
Bessie's Place	325.45		2,193.00	
Total Charitable Expenditure		65,172.31		39,609.39
Catholic Missionary Union	243.77		329.69	
Computer & Internet Expenses	98.93		88.62	
Bank Charges	138.15		162.00	
Total Costs		480.85		580.31
59 Club Prizes		3,345.00		3,230.00
Total Expenditure		68,998.16		43,419.70
Deficit		-28,970.66		-19,880.80

Network for a Better World Balance Sheet at 31st Dec 2023 (£)

ASSETS	2023	2022
UK Coop Current Account	2,002.65	5,830.66
UK Coop Deposit Account	22,000.00	49,073.78
Malawi Bank Current Account	488.17	368.80
Malawi Cash in hand	242.54	325.12
Prepayments	2,000.00	0
Total Assets	26,733.36	55,598.36

LIABILITIES

Accounts Payable	0	0
Total Liabilities	0	0

ASSETS LESS LIABILITIES**REPRESENTED BY:**

Opening balances 1st January	55,598.36	76,182.97
Current year earnings (surplus/deficit)	-28,970.66	-19,880.80
Exchange rate effect (surplus/deficit)	105.66	-703.81
Total	26,733.36	55,598.36



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A

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