

Quaker Congo Partnership UK

Charity number 1159781

Annual Report for the year ending 31st December 2024

Reference and administrative information

Trustees who served during 2024

Nick Tischler (service ends 31.12.24)

Lynn Norbury (service ends 31.12.24)

Catherine Putz (service ends 31.12.24)

Fred Ashmore

Ian Tod (Service laid down 26 October 2024)

Helen Horton (Appointed 12 February 2024 until 31.12.27)

Dennis Tracey

Julie Yates

Patricia Skeet

Registered Address

Friends Meeting House, 6 Mount Street, Manchester, M2 5NS.

Bankers

Co-operative Bank, 70/72 Cross Street, Manchester, M2 4JG

Website

<http://www.quakercongo.org.uk>

Introduction

Quaker Congo Partnership UK (QCP) is a Quaker charity which works in partnership with CEEACO, Communauté des Eglises Evangeliques des Amis au Congo (the Community of Evangelical Friends'¹ Churches in Congo). It was registered as an independent charity in January 2015. QCP has had a partnership relationship with CEEACO for some 15 years.

The very difficult conditions of life and work in South Kivu are well publicised in the media. This is a potentially flourishing and wealthy area where progress has lagged due to a combination of past war, recent armed conflict, the presence of conflict minerals and the historic weakness of government structures. Many Quakers feel led to support the work of QCP.

The area in which we are currently supporting projects is in the town of Uvira and 50km to the south to Abeka in the province of South Kivu.

The projects under this partnership are in four areas:-

- Hospital and health supporting the Centre Hospitalier Abeka
- CEPAP Centre for, Peace, Education and Psychological Support
- AWID Action for Women's Integral Development
- Water pipeline to serve the village of Mukwezi

Partnership really does describe our relationship, and plans are worked out jointly rather than being dictated by the UK trustees.

During 2024 we have continued to work in groups of three/four trustees and associates who take a particular interest in each area of work.

Charitable purposes, Activities for the public benefit.

The objects of the charity are: To improve the physical and mental health and education and relieve the poverty of people of the Great Lakes Region of Africa and in particular those in the area of the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo.

Trustees have developed this broad objective to more specific work as follows.

- To promote the furtherance of peace, equality and human rights in that area.
- To raise funds and provide grants, mentoring and general assistance to hospitals, schools, formal and informal groups and individuals in order to further such objects, in particular supporting community projects run by the Communauté des Eglises Evangéliques des Amis au Congo (CEEACO).

Structure, Governance and Management

The charity's Trust Deed was accepted by the Charity Commission at the time of registration in 2015 and updated in 2022 by minute of the Trustees dated 19 September 2022.

There must be not less than 6 nor more than 14 Trustees. Manchester & Warrington ~~and~~ Area Quaker Meeting and Cambridgeshire Area Quaker Meetings have the right to appoint trustees. New Trustees can be appointed by the existing trustees at a formal meeting. A trustee can be reappointed on no more than two occasions to give an unbroken term of service as a trustee not

¹ It is common practice for Quakers to refer to themselves as Friends, based on the formal title of the Society as The Religious Society of Friends of the Truth.

exceeding nine years. That person cannot be reappointed as a trustee until one year has elapsed after the last period of service.

Trustee Meetings of QCP are held in the manner of Quakers with decisions agreed by the meeting recorded in contemporaneous minutes. The practice is explained in the Quakers Book of Discipline, Quaker Faith and Practice 5th Edition (Britain Yearly Meeting). Trustees meet online using Zoom and in blended meetings which are mostly in person with distant trustees taking part using Zoom facilities, as allowed by our governing document.

Links with CEEACO are through a CEEACO project committee which oversees the projects we are supporting. We have made a series of three-year agreements whereby we promise to send a certain sum every six months to be used in an agreed way. The latest three-year agreement was signed in October 2022 and was recently extended to 30th June 2025. Our plan to renew this agreement has been delayed by active armed conflict in North and South Kivu but we are confident it will be renewed. CEEACO send us quarterly accounts showing how the money has been spent and narrative accounts from their project leaders describing the work done and the difference it has made. Trustees of the charity make efforts to visit our partners in the Democratic Republic of the Congo regularly and there was a visit in July 2024 by our Co-Clerk and her husband. Trustees maintain regular contact with partners' managers and workers through email, social media and internet-based conversation. There are regular exchanges of reports and records of meetings that affect the shared work. The working language of such exchanges is usually French (the European language used in the DRC) and QCP provides translated versions of documents in English.

Achievements and Performance in 2024

The brief descriptions of recent work and activities with CEEACO is expanded in the latest Newsletter on our website (<https://quakercongo.org.uk>). Trustees and volunteers can provide fuller information and conduct presentations to those who are interested in our areas of work. There is a contact page on our website.

Hospital and public health

The CHA, supported by QCP, plays a vital role in providing healthcare and medical treatment to the local community. In collaboration with the Zone de Santé, we continue to provide a share of support to salaries of key staff in the 45 bedded Abeka Hospital (CHA). Activity here remains steady with approximately 600 outpatient attendances, 250 admissions and 60 deliveries (of which approximately 20% are Caesarean Sections) per month.

The main morbidities remain malaria, anaemia, respiratory infections, and malnutrition.

The hospital faces ongoing challenges. A new toilet and shower block is under construction, but additional funds are needed to complete a paediatric ward. The World Bank has donated substantial additional equipment which needs to be installed and provided with power supply and proper accommodation. We see this as a next major challenge for QCP in its work to improve health care in the community where our partners have a major role.

The pipeline under construction to supply clean water to Mukwezi is expected to have significant public health benefits and we are working with the hospital to explore ways of measuring the impact.

CEPAP Centre for Peace, Education and Psychological Assistance.

2024 was a year of development and learning for our partners in DRC working for peace and as agents for change. The CEPAP project is building peace, working with young people, preventing sexual violence and providing one to one psychological support. There is an enthusiastic and committed team working for peace led by Isaac Saidi. This year they were joined by two new CEPAP staff members EMMANUEL and CHRISTOSPHE on the middle plateau drawn from young volunteers who are members of Peace committees.

The ongoing activities are support to Youth Peace Committees, Clubs Amis des Filles (school-based clubs working to prevent sexual violence) and counselling in the hospital in Abeka. There is a Youth Peace Council with representatives from different groups.

Turning The Tide

A major project this year was the Turning The Tide training. The first four-day phase took place in February and the second seven-day residential course at the end of July. Turning the Tide (TTT) is an approach that links peacebuilding with nonviolent campaigning. It seeks to equip and support people to address root causes of violence with nonviolent tools. It encourages and enhances the power to think and act as a team in order to achieve change. Two groups of young people (one in the territory of Fizi and the other in Uvira) will be responsible for developing the TTT approach in their respective areas. Some of the issues they have already identified include: Insecurity, Unemployment amongst youths, Poor infrastructure- roads, Land disputes, Domestic violence, Boundary disputes, Limited resources, Environment, Impunity.

After the first phase participants were left expecting more, inspired and challenged to take action for change and above all empowered to speak out for justice in their communities. At the end of the workshop there was a group of peace actors willing to challenge injustices and ready to take time to identify and analyse issues affecting them.

The second phase in July focused on Training the Trainers to enable the team to start applying and sharing the skills and knowledge of nonviolence with others in their respective communities. It included Transformative Mediation a new approach to conflict transformation and management. There was increased confidence in the use of TTT tools amongst the participants. They appreciated the importance of working together for sustainable peace and social change. They all worked in pairs for delivery practice sessions and developed practical action plans in their locality groups- Fizi and Uvira.

Training for young women to become teachers

Twenty young women and girls took part in a workshop to encourage them to train as teachers in conjunction with Ministry of National Education. It included practical placements and as a result 5 young women have started their teacher training. We have funded the work.

Prevention of violence and prejudice towards people presumed to be witches

A workshop took place on 27th March and was attended by 48 people. 'The meeting was of exceptional value, as it was held in a time of need; that is, people felt the need for a meeting to discuss specific issues of deadly violence.' There is ongoing work on this issue e.g. monitoring, prevention and raising awareness.

Youth Peace Council and campaigns

Meeting the Youth Peace Council was a highlight of the visit from Trustee Catherine Putz and her husband Mark Holtom in early July. Members of the Youth Peace Council feel they have been raised from their sleep to work for peace. They were keen to organise an event for International day of Peace which due to lack of funding did not take place. They have also submitted a proposal for an environmental tree planting and agriculture project; they want to take action on impact of climate change in their local areas. The young people in youth peace committees work for peace; protection of peace, prevention and resolution of generational conflicts that can lead to intercommunity conflicts. A meeting was held in October to examine in depth the use of different approaches to practising Peace. The President of the Youth Peace Council presented a short report in which he highlighted various youth peace actions. There are 20 committees with 151 young members who are involved in peace building work and 12 Ami de Filles clubs in secondary schools. He called for courage, because lasting peace is possible if young people will agree to live in peace.

The Youth Peace Council sets their own priorities. They were pleased to get SMART mobile phones which will help them communicate with each other and to send reports and photos. Funding was secured for a replacement motorbike for the CEPAP team.

Testimonies and videos.

We regularly receive testimonies and videos about the positive impact of the work; for example, a girl welcomed back to school following a pregnancy.

Counselling: Experienced counsellors continue to offer psychological assistance to patients at the hospital in Abeka. This service has been endorsed by managers of the Nundu health zone. The team provide a listening ear to people in the community with trauma and also to reduce fear and panic due to war and insecurity. We foresee a high demand for these services following the militia violence early in 2025 which has affected many in the CEEACO community and their neighbours in all areas of North Kivu and South Kivu.

AWID Action for Women's Integral Development.

AWID Association of Women's Integral Development aims to improve women's livelihood through seed grants, training and teaching of literacy and numeracy. QCP has worked for 10 years with very disadvantaged women associated with CEEACO. Many of the women project members are heads of family, regularly supporting 10 dependents, including elderly and disabled family as well as their children. They have largely missed formal education, and many lack literacy and numeracy. Domestic and sexual violence is widespread. Women are particularly vulnerable during the current violent unrest, with attacks by roaming militias and raids since January 2025.

Agricultural development - Agriculture remains a cornerstone of the project work. Recent activities focused on maintaining cassava and fruit tree crops, including orange and lemon trees. Regular weeding was carried out and protection of the plants from pests, particularly green aphids. Efforts to secure farmland were also emphasised and fences were repaired to prevent animals from wandering into crop areas and damaging plants. These practices not only ensure better yields but also strengthen local food security and provide valuable income sources.

Skill building and economic empowerment – Professional skills training is opening doors to economic self-sufficiency within the community. Soap-making continues to be a successful initiative, with proceeds from sales reinvested to sustain the project. The team has also begun raising awareness around juice production, encouraging community members to explore this as a new source of income.

Tailoring and sewing empowering young women – The tailoring and sewing programme provides another valuable avenue for skill development, particularly for young women. To support the growth of this programme the project is actively seeking funds for three treadle sewing machines to enable the young women to set up on their own. Meanwhile the project will continue to train and mentor new trainees in tailoring to start their journey to economic independence through the mastery of a practical trade.

Education – Initiatives within the project aim to address literacy and numeracy for women who missed out on basic education. Local training, delivered through women's agriculture, tailoring and soap programmes are underway. This enables the most marginalised women and families to pursue literacy education fostering greater independence and opportunity. Additionally, the project is raising funds to cover the school fees for orphans and other vulnerable children, ensuring that financial barriers do not prevent them from receiving an education.

Livestock farming – the livestock farming programme has also seen encouraging growth. From January to March, the project had eight goats but four new births have increased the herd to twelve. This small-scale livestock farming is another way the community can improve food security, generate income, and diversify livelihoods.

Through these coordinated efforts in agriculture, skill-building, education and livestock farming the AWID project in DRC is providing essential support to its women members. By offering economic opportunities, improving food security and investing in education the initiative is helping families to build more stable, self-sufficient lives in a challenging environment.

Water pipeline for Mukwezi village.

In 2024 Trustees agreed that the funds in hand were adequate for the project to begin. We agreed with the contractor to execute the work in three phases:-

- Laying of the main pipeline to the first borne fontaine (water point) north of Mukwezi
- Completion of laying pipe, river crossings, civil works for the 18 borne Fontaines.
- Installation of borne fontaines, filling of the pipeline, completion works, final reporting.

At the end of 2024 the materials were in hand in a dedicated store under supervision. The contractor's workforce, mostly local, dug 4 km of trench, laid pipe and backfilled ready for the next phase.

Work was interrupted because of fighting in the region which stopped all services including banking. At the time of writing in early April 2025, conditions are more stable, the second phase of work is reported complete. We have transferred funds to cover the third phase of work, and the third phase

is in progress. Some local young people were introduced to the workforce for the second phase at the request of Mukwezi residents.

We look forward hopefully to seeing a complete working pipeline and to seeing the health benefits of a clean water supply for people of Mukwezi.

Security situation in Eastern Congo

The security situation in eastern Congo remains very adverse marked by the recent capture by the M23 group of the important cities of Goma and Bukavu. CEEACO's members in these cities have been severely affected. QCP has raised funds for relief but faces difficulties in making them useful due to the civil disorder which includes banks.

Finance report

Our income this year was £90412 (2023: £78099) from a combination of Quaker donations with Gift Aid (£58103 [2023: £60322]) and grants from trusts (£27800 [2023: £15660]). Expenditure exceeded income by £7453 for the year [2023 income exceeded expenditure by £24354].

We carried forward unrestricted funds of £25,447. We have maintained our regular giving to CEEACO of approximately £30,000 each year, which is divided between support for the Centre Hospitalier Abeka, peace work (CEPAP), women's development work. We have received additional funding from trusts for

- A grant of £4000 from Quaker Peace and Social Witness for Turning the Tide training and youth peace committees
- a payment of £4500 from the British Yearly Meeting international conciliation group to fund Turning the Tide training

Our finances remain heavily dependent on continuing gifts and grants. The needs of our partners members remain large, our aspirational budgets must be carefully judged, and serious fundraising is essential if we are to achieve our commitments. Significant funding has been raised during the period for the water pipeline for Mukwezi from a mixture of grants (£800 from Just Trust and £23000 from Kingston Quaker Meeting) and donations from individuals. The work started on site in November 2024 and payments for Phase 1 were made before the year end. Phase 2 is under way at the time of writing (March 2025) and the project is expected to be completed in April 2025.

Trustees consider that Quaker Congo Partnership continues to be a going concern with suitable reserves for our liabilities and generally appropriate funds for our commitments.

Reserves policy

Trustees have agreed that the principal purpose of our reserves is to allow us to respond to emergencies in the unsettled and deprived area where our work is carried out in partnership with CEEACO. Our total reserves at 31/12/24 were £25,447. This sum includes two designated reserve funds. One is set at £5,000 and QCP would like to increase this reserve so that it can cover one half yearly payment to CEEACO of about £15,000. The second designated reserve at 31/12/24 is £18,919, representing funds which have been set aside for the completion of the Mukwezi water project in early 2025. The total agreed budget for the 3 phases of the water project was \$90,000, about £73,000.

The free reserves at 31/12/24, after taking account of the designated reserves, was £1,528.

Other policies and procedures

We have reviewed our policies and procedures, taking into account the policies and procedures which the Charity Commission checks when the Annual Return of a registered charity is submitted. We have identified a need to formalise our assessments of risk and our policy for due diligence.

Fundraising

Money is raised through donations from individuals, from Quaker Meetings and through applications to charitable trusts.

Risk Management

The projects in DRC are managed by CEEACO, who are conscious of the risks involved in this unstable region. Risks in DRC include: insecurity and violence, climate change, and the risk of epidemic disease including cholera, Ebola and Covid 19. Personal and collective risk assessments were made by trustees prior to visiting in 2024. During our earlier visits we did not have any difficulties and value the careful plans made by our partners.

Trustees hope to formalise the identification and assessment of the risks to the work of our charity and to our partners and the safeguards in place to mitigate those risks.

Communications

The trustees concentrate communications on the Quaker community of Britain Yearly Meeting, working at a range of levels.

Fred Ashmore, Patricia Skeet, Co-clerks

Julie Yates, Treasurer

4th July 2025

Accounts for financial year to 31/12/2024

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Donations	28,433	22,619	-	51,052	59,478
Grants		27,800	-	27,800	15,660
Fundraising	-	-	-	-	2,117
Gift Aid	4,682	2,369	-	7,051	844
Interest	9			9	
Commissioned training	-	4,500	-	4,500	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	33,124	57,288	-	90,412	78,099
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	33,124	57,288	-	90,412	78,099
A3 Payments					
Grant payments to CEEACO	37,215	59,764	-	96,979	52,508
Printing, postage, advertising, travel exps	35	-	-	35	195
Bank charges	308	-	-	308	157
Consultancy	-	-	-	-	
Independent examination	504	-	-	504	504
Meeting costs, rooms, catering	40	-	-	40	9
Cost of equipment taken to CEEACO on visit	-			-	372
Sub total	38,101	59,764	-	97,865	53,745
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
Total payments	38,101	59,764	-	97,865	53,745
Net of receipts/(payments)	(4,977)	(2,476)	-	(7,453)	24,354
A5 Transfers between funds	(201)	201	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	30,625	9,829	-	40,454	16,100
Cash funds this year end	25,447	7,554	-	33,001	40,454

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Bank	25,447	7,554	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	25,447	7,554	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets	Details		-	-
B3 Investment assets	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
B5 Liabilities	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
	Grant received on behalf of NE Thames Quaker Trust		2,896	16 January 2025
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval	
	FS Ashmore	Fred Ashmore	4/7/2025	
	PA Skeet	Patricia Skeet	15/7/2025	

Quaker Congo Partnership UK

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £	
Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024					
Donations		2024 Unrestricted ed funds	2024 Restrict ed funds	2024 Total funds	
Donations - standing orders		3,607	5,000	8,607	
Donations - local meetings		4,136	0	4,136	
Donations - website		3,473	1,324	4,797	
Other donations		17,217	16,295	33,512	
		28,433	22,619	51,052	
Grants		2024 Unrestricted ed funds	2024 Restrict ed funds	2024 Total funds	
Just Trust			800	800	
Kingston Friends Trust			23,000	23,000	
QPSW yearly meeting			4,000	4,000	
		0	27,800	27,800	
Restricted funds	Balance b/f	Incoming	Outgoing	Transfers	Balance c/f
	£	£	£	£	£
Water Fund	7,672	43,015	45,823	0	4,864
Southall Trust	245	0	245	0	0
Hospital equipment fund	500	0	495	-5	0
QPSW Yearly meeting	236	4,000	4,164	0	72
Dispelling rumours project	82	100	190	8	0
Sewing and women's income generation	27	3,054	2,876	0	205
International conciliation group BYM 2024	0	4,500	4,457	0	43
Goma appeal 2023	66	0	66	0	0
Anaesthetics training	1,000	250	1,448	198	0
Ambulance 22	0	1,841	0	0	1,841
Radley Trust	0	250	0	0	250
	9,828	57,288	59,764	201	7,553

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
Fund name	Purpose of restriction			
Water Fund	Following a QCP / CEEACO project 8 years ago to bring clean water to the village of Abeka, QCP has raised funds for a \$90,000 project to extend a clean water supply pipeline to the neighbouring village of Mkwezi. The work is well underway as we prepare these accounts. The impact at Abeka was considerable. Women no longer risk violence on their perilous journeys to fetch dirty water from a lake. Deaths from preventable waterborne diseases have reduced by 95%.			
Southall Trust	Towards peacebuilding, women's development projects and training for project leaders in the DRC. The current funding has come to an end and the last small payment was made in early 2025.			
Hospital equipment fund	This fund enabled QCP to fund the purchase of an ultrasound machine for the hospital in Abeka. The fund was supported by William A Cadbury Charitable Trust.			
Dispelling rumours project	Funds for a campaign and work aimed to prevent mob violence directed at those thought to be witches in eastern part of DRC. Initially a day of training and awareness raising.			
Women's income generation project	This fund has provided small grants to CEEACO to fund the purchase of sewing machines, equipment for soap making, seeds, tools and irrigation for women's agriculture projects and women's literacy and numeracy training.			
Goma Appeal 2023	Early in 2024 QCP sent the final small payment from the 2023 appeal for emergency relief to people who had fled their villages and left their fields for the city following attacks by M23 rebels.			
Anaesthetics training	For the training of a nurse anaesthetist. Grant from the CB & HH Taylor 1984 Trust			
QPSW Britain Yearly Meeting	Training for members of youth peace groups with a focus on peacebuilding, leadership and governance through the Turning the Tide workshops			

Funds held as agent

Quaker Congo Partnership (QCP) received £3,000 from the North East Thames Quaker Trust into its bank account on 15 December 2023. It held those funds on behalf of North East Thames Quaker Trust as agent and paid the fund to CEEACO on behalf of NE Thames Quaker Trust on 16 January 2024. This amount has not been shown in the accounts of Quaker Congo Partnership as at 31 December 2024.



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

Quaker Congo Partnership

**On accounts for the year
ended**

31/12/2024

**Charity no
(if any)**

1159781

Set out on pages

11 to 15

**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 31/12/2024.

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 (other than that disclosed below *) 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.

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

Signed:

Simon Bostrom

Date:

31/7/25

Name:

Simon Bostrom

Disclosure

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